



SUSTAINABLE RIDING GUIDE

KEEPING OUR FORESTS OPEN

We ride these forests because we love them. That's the starting point, and everything else flows from that.

Off-road motorcycling doesn't always get a pass from the public. Trail riding is often painted as reckless, noisy, and destructive — even though most riders couldn't be further from that stereotype. The problem isn't riders. It's perception. And perception determines whether these forests stay open or are locked down forever. When complaints pile up, the response is rarely "let's work with the club." It's "close the trails." We've seen it happen across Australia — when a handful of riders do something reckless, the public loses trust in all of us, and entire riding areas get shut down as a result.

DSMRA work with forestry to keep riders and loggers on separate tracks, protect waterways, and stay out of restricted zones. That coordination is why these forests are still open. But it only works if every rider does their part. Riding conditions matter: wet trails mean deep ruts and damage, so give them a day or two to dry after rain. Respect other forest users. Horses, walkers, MTB riders — they have just as much right to be there. Slow down, give them space. Know which areas are off-limits. Steer clear of active Logging zones, restricted catchments, unauthorised or closed tracks — these are boundaries for a reason, and staying out protects everyone's access. Leave no trace. If you find rubbish left by others, bin it. Your riding attitude affects whether this sport survives. Be the rider people don't complain about.



ACT
Government

**Communities
Climate Action
Grants Program**

*With assistance from the ACT Government under the
Communities Climate Action Grants Program*



We value your feedback!

Please use this QR code to fill in our
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think.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES ARE THE FUTURE

Noise is the number-one reason riding areas are closed, and it's not going away. Sound carries easily half a kilometre or more in open forest conditions. Your "isolated" trail might be someone's backyard 400 metres away. Electric motorbikes aren't a trend — they're an inevitability, and the sooner riders accept that, the smoother the transition is for everyone. Two-stroke engines burn 20–30% of their fuel as unburnt exhaust. It's physics, not a design flaw. Electric produces zero emissions at the point of use. Zero. Not "less." Zero. But the real difference for riders is noise. The same thing that shuts down riding areas is what electric solves instantly. An electric bike doesn't just reduce your carbon footprint — it reduces the reason your local trails get closed. It makes you the kind of rider neighbours wave at instead of complain about.

Electric dirt bikes are not golf carts disguised as motorcycles. You twist the throttle, and it happens, with instant torque from zero RPM, no clutch engagement, no rev-matching, millisecond-precise control. Maintenance is nearly non-existent — no oil changes, no air filters, no spark plugs, no carburettor tuning. A battery and a motor. That's it. Range sits at 2–3 hours of hard riding per charge, which most riders actually do on a weekend, and is more than enough.

DSMRA has been running Stark Varg bikes on Kowen trails since December 2025 for track construction, maintenance, and inspection. They've been tested in mud, on steep climbs, and on technical singletrack. The answer is yes — electric handles dirt, and do it well!

It's not just bikes. Trail tools are going electric, too. Chainsaws screaming, brush cutters spitting fumes, leaf blowers creating dust and noise — now picture the same work, but quiet. Electric tools from a single manufacturer's platform run on one battery system. Swap batteries mid-job, keep working all day. DSMRA has deployed portable solar panels and battery storage to power tools at Kowen without grid access. Solar charges a battery bank during the day, which charges your tools throughout the day. No fuel cans needed. The goal isn't perfection — it's progress. Each petrol tool replaced means emissions avoided, noise reduced, and fumes kept out of the forest air. The technology works today.

DSMRA invested \$40,000 in two Stark Varg bikes plus a \$20,000 ACT Government grant — over \$60,000 total in electric and renewable technology. We're replacing petrol chainsaws, brush cutters, and blowers with commercial-grade electric alternatives. One battery platform. No fumes. Dramatically quieter. Available for members to see at events like the Kowen Forest Ride. We are not telling you to throw out your petrol bike tomorrow — rather showing you that this works, in real conditions on real trails. The evidence speaks for itself. Ask questions. Share your experience. Spread the word — if riding areas stay open, this matters to all of us.

