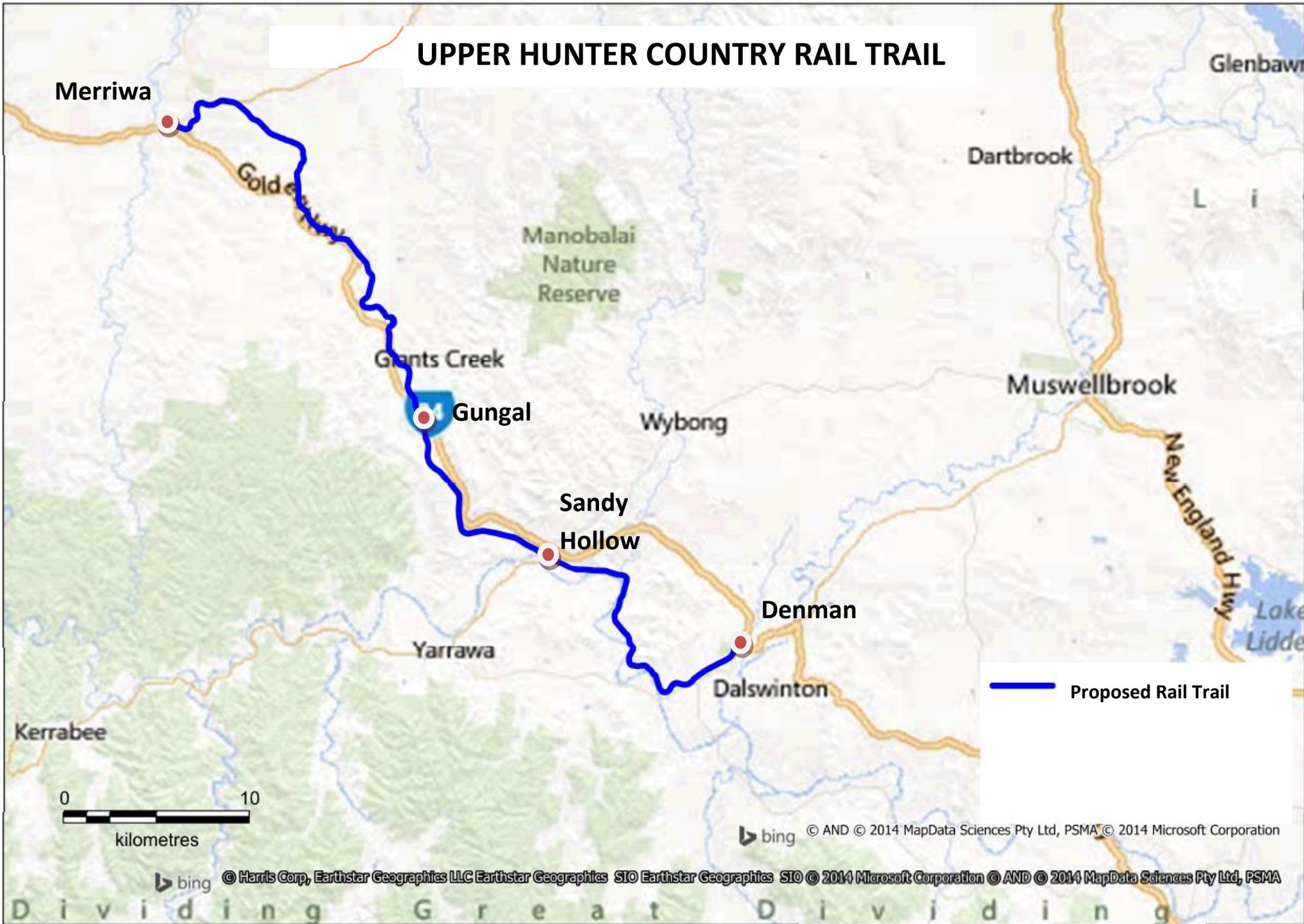


UPPER HUNTER COUNTRY RAIL TRAIL



0 10
kilometres

Proposed Rail Trail

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D i v i d i n g G r e a t D i v i d i n g

UPPER HUNTER COUNTRY RAIL TRAIL

Merriwa – Gungal – Sandy Hollow - Denman

Experience the fabulous Upper Hunter Country in all its grandeur on this historic rail trail from Merriwa to Denman. With a distance of 64km of winding trail from the picturesque cropping and grazing country of Merriwa, through the sandstone bluffs and escarpments of Gungal to the river flats of Sandy Hollow and Denman.

The Upper Hunter Country Rail Trail follows the Golden Highway, part of the historic Great North Road. Follow the magnificent Goulburn River as it winds its way to the Hunter River at Denman.

HISTORY

The extension of the Denman to Merriwa branch line was built in the period of 1915-17. Many culverts, station yards and sidings were built as well. A few bridges were required to be built so the trains could travel across the many creeks found in the area

The extended branch line was opened in October 1917 with much fanfare from the locals.

A turntable was in use at the Denman depot but after Merriwa became the terminus from 1917, it was transferred to Merriwa for use. The depot at Denman was also closed after Merriwa became the end of the line. Eventually Merriwa had a small depot building/equipment to support the steam and later diesel locomotives.

The railway line was built roughly running parallel to the Golden Highway as it snakes it way up the valley towards Gungal. Shown also below is an old NSWGR diagram showing the various stations and yards layout on the Merriwa branch line.

The last rail stock left Merriwa in 1988. Since this time the line has been neglected and with the increase in road freight it is apparent that the line will not see rail freight ever again.

LOCATION

The Rail Trail can be accessed at several points from the Golden Highway, a major route connecting Newcastle and the Central West of NSW. The Trail is centrally located between major population centres of Dubbo, Newcastle and Tamworth, with a total resident population of nearly 600,000 people.

Denman is situated 25km west of Muswellbrook and 2 hours drive from Newcastle. Merriwa is located 2 hours from Dubbo and Newcastle, making it an ideal stop-over point for travellers.

The Trail is less than 1 hour's drive from Scone, Australia's Horse Capital, where visitors can experience a tour of a working thoroughbred stud first hand. Sydney is 3.5 hours away.

The Kandos – Gulgong Rail Trail is only 90 minutes away also.



MERRIWA

The “end of the line” provides a glimpse of yester year, with a rare timber railway station and museum, intact sheds and siding infrastructure and a turntable that was used to switch the locomotives for the return journey. Have a drink and a meal in the restored Rail Carriage Cafe, take a ride into town and meet the locals, visit some to the great old pubs, bottle museum and historical society. Stay the night and enjoy the friendship of true country town.



Merriwa station



Possible rail car dining at Merriwa Station



Views of Denman wine country

GUNGAL

Stop at the store for a much needed refreshment at your half-way stopover.

SANDY HOLLOW

Have a drink and a meal at the hotel, wander the streets and meet the locals. Here is the first sight of the Goulburn River as it makes its way out of the hills and onto the river flats before it joins the mighty Hunter River.

DENMAN

Now known as the food lovers delight of Upper Hunter Country, Denman has a wide selection of fine dining restaurants and cafes to choose from. The magnificent local hotels provide entertainment, meals and drinks for all. With several cellar doors in the area you can also ride out or grab a bus and enjoy the scenery whilst sampling some of the award winning local vintages.



Denman station

LOCAL EVENTS

Don't miss the Denman Wine and Food Affair in May, Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces in June and the Merriwa Springtime Show in September.

James Estate at Denman provides a range of mountain bike trails for the enthusiast when they reach the end of the line, with some wines to wash the dust away.



Come on up!