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Environmental Management  
Program for Horse Riding in the  
Table Mountain National Park

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**The Cape Peninsula Horse Riding Working Group**

March 2004

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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Horse riding is a popular and well-established recreational and commercial activity in specific areas of the Cape Peninsula. A number of horse riding routes have been created and used for many years by the horse riding fraternity. It is a healthy, fun, clean recreational activity and can be enjoyed by people from all walks of life - young and old, male or female. The Table Mountain National Park (TMNP)<sup>1</sup> has the potential to be an excellent venue for horse riding and could be a significant leisure and tourism asset to both the local horse community and visitors to Cape Town. There is a long-standing need however to formally recognise recreational and commercial horse riding and horse-riding events as an appropriate recreational and commercial activity within the area currently managed by the Table Mountain National Park.

Horse riding activities, as with any other recreational use of the park, has impacts on both the environment and other users of the park. The TMNP has adopted the Environmental Management Program (EMP) format as the management framework to mitigate those impacts so that horse riding may be undertaken in the park without compromising the ecological, social and cultural integrity of the park or the experience of other users.

In this EMP, an overview of the *current status* of, and a brief summary of the *impacts and issues* associated with, horse riding is presented. An overarching *environmental policy* is presented to provide the context for the development of the *strategic approach* to respond to these impacts and issues. *Guidelines for the implementation with maps of the approved routes and entry/exit points* of the EMP are documented as a mechanism to operationalise the strategic approach. A popular *Code of Conduct* to support the implementation of the EMP is presented. The *implementation schedule* will enable park management to prepare for the phasing in of the implementation of this EMP.

The consultative approach adopted in the compilation of this EMP is the iterative development of the draft EMP, and associated Code of Conduct, with a working group comprising representatives of stakeholder groups and users (Phase 1). The draft EMP, after discussion with the working group, is then made available for wider public comment (Phase 2). After the integration of the broader public inputs into the EMP, the working group and the park finally approve the EMP (Phase 3).

The representation of the working group and the minutes of all meetings are appended in Annexure 2 and 3.

This EMP only addresses horse-riding activities within the defined extent of the TMNP. The EMP does not accommodate horse riding on any other private and public land, either adjacent to the park or separate from it. The EMP may however prove useful in discussions with other landowners across the Peninsula regarding access, especially where it can be integrated with the approved park routes.

The NRA is acknowledged for the preparation of the first draft of the EMP. This version of the EMP has attempted to complement, and build on, the NRA initiative.

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<sup>1</sup> The park was originally called the Cape Peninsula National Park and has recently been renamed as the Table Mountain National Park

## 2. OVERVIEW – CURRENT USAGE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

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### 2.1 RECREATIONAL HORSE RIDING

The type of rider and riding style varies amongst recreational horse riders. There are various different styles of riding but predominantly this falls into two main categories.

Cross-country/trail riders. These prefer mostly level or slightly sloping terrain that is scenic and is undertaken for outdoor pleasure, relaxation and scenic viewing – most visitors/tourist/less experienced riders would fall into this category. Reasonable horse riding skills are required. This sort of riding accounts for the majority of riders. The preferred terrain are jeep and wide tracks and open single-tracks. These riders usually go in groups. Most of this riding is walking with a bit of trotting and negligible cantering and no galloping. Examples of areas used for this riding style include the Red Hill catchment and the access routes to Noordhoek beach through the Noordhoek wetlands.

Hackers. These are usually more experienced riders who enjoy riding out for fun and exhilaration. These riders may ride out on their own or in small groups as riding pace is very personal. The riding pace will vary but will comprise walking, trotting, cantering and, occasionally, even a gallop when the terrain and circumstances permit. Examples of areas used for this riding style include the Hout Bay dunes and Noordhoek beach.

Recreational horse riding is primarily, but not exclusively, concentrated in five areas of the park:

#### 1. The *Blackhill/ Red Hill* area

This area is used, primarily over weekends, by cross-country, trail riders and hackers who are, for the most part, members of the Glencairn stables. Horse riding generally starts in Glencairn or the park-approved Blackhill access point, via the Glencairn stables, to the park and uses the existing network of jeep tracks in the Simon's Town catchment area to get to the Kleinplaas and Lewis Gay dams. Shorter rides generally take place on tracks and trails around Da Gama Park. Horse riding occurs illegally on tracks traversing private conservation land (Red Hill Fynbos Private Nature Reserves) in the Red Hill plateau area.

#### 2. The *Noordhoek/Kommetjie wetlands and beach*<sup>2</sup>

This is an ideal area for horse riding and a number of trails are already well established. Numerous horse riders live in Noordhoek and can ride in this area without using a horsebox. The wetlands currently have a number of existing tracks and access routes through the wetlands and to the beach. It is estimated that there are about 800 horses in the Noordhoek valley. Most horse riders in Noordhoek belong to the Noordhoek Riding Association (NRA). The NRA has approximately 180 members, utilising the beach and wetlands<sup>3</sup> on a daily basis. The Noordhoek Pony Club, a member of the worldwide Pony Club organisation and also member of the NRA, caters for small children and their families. The NRA and Sleepy

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<sup>2</sup> A history of riding in the Noordhoek valley, kindly compiled by Lisa Hare and Kevin McCarthy, is appended in Annexure 1

<sup>3</sup> The wetlands as defined here include Cape Farm 933. Riding on what were previously private wetland properties (Red Cliff Property and Kommetje Estates), and now included in the Park, was historically not allowed by the private owners

Hollow Farm are involved in Riding for the Disabled, where disabled children from all communities are given therapeutic riding lessons with helpers. Permission was obtained from the then Divisional Council for bona fide members of the NRA to ride horses on Noordhoek beach with the proviso that no horses were allowed near the car park and braai spots (now closed) and no 'wild riding' would be tolerated near any members of the public. All riders were to give way to any member of the public. The NRA has formulated, and enforces, rules and regulations for riders utilising Noordhoek wetlands and Noordhoek beach. Cross-country, hacking and trail rides take place on the wetlands and beach, with galloping taking place on the beach and designated gallop tracks. Permits are not currently issued by the City of Cape Town and the horse riding activities in the area do not have any formal sanction from any public authority, including the park (the park is in the process of issuing NRA an interim permit, under specific conditions, for riding in the wetlands whilst the development of the EMP is ongoing). Horse-riding is being undertaken on private land, often without permission of the owner/s. The beach and wetland areas are accessed for short or long-distance endurance rides and hacks. There are currently no management arrangements and few, or no fences, preventing or limiting access to the wetland and beach areas.

### 3. The *Karbonkelberg/Sandy Bay* area

Horse riders in the area are generally affiliated to the Hout Bay Equestrian Association (Glenellan Farm, Hout Bay Pony Club and The Riding Centre). No official management arrangements for access and control exist between the TMNP and the horse riding fraternity in the Hout Bay area although a bridal path to Sandy Bay is indicated in the management plan for the 250ha WWF-owned property contracted into the TMNP on the Karbonkelberg. The majority of horse use in this area is through access routes from Hout Bay to Kronenzicht, along the constructed bridal path adjacent to Eustegia Way in Kronenzicht or over the Hout Bay dune system, along "Rocket Road" and/or down along the park management track to Sandy Bay.

### 4. The *Hout Bay valley* area

Horse riders in the area are generally affiliated to the Hout Bay Equestrian Association (Glenellan Farm, Hout Bay Pony Club and The Riding Centre). In the Hout Bay valley area, trail riding in the park takes place on a daily basis, although it is a lot busier over weekends. Longer trails include those from Hout Bay, up along the Pipe Track and into Cecelia Forest. Access to Cecelia Forest is also gained via Orankekloof through the Forest Hill road gate. A special arrangement has been negotiated between the Hout Bay Equestrian Association (HBEA) and the TMNP for the control of the key to the gate administered by a HBEA member living close to the gate. HBEA members must be Green Card holders, and are only allowed to remain on a specified management track en route to Constantia Nek. A number of problems with this arrangement have been documented and it clear that this currently is an inequitable and inefficient management solution. Cecelia Forest then allows for a connection to the Constantia Greenbelt network. Rides along, and on tracks off, the fire belt running from Suikerbossie to Longkloof are also common with a number of uncontrolled and highly eroded access points from the urban areas above Valley road. Two examples are through Tarragona Estate (POS at the end of Farriers Way) and through the Longkloof. From the Longkloof access, horse riders illegally access the Orankekloof area or turn left onto the contour path through Myburgh's Waterfall Ravine.

Bethel Farm in Hout Bay accommodate beginners and experienced riders. Lessons are also given mostly during the week. Every Friday afternoon a group of children from Kronendal

Primary School, and two afternoons a week a group of mentally handicapped teens, have lessons and once or twice a month go on outrides.

Access to the beach areas in Hout Bay is strictly controlled and regulated by the City of Cape Town.

#### 5. The *Swartkopberge* area

No formal riding association is known to exist in this area. Riders are generally landowners proximate to Plateau Road and residents of Scarborough. Riding occurs primarily along Plateau road and, in limited numbers, on trails in the Swartkopberge. Illegal access to tracks traversing private properties in the Red Hill area occurs through Fernibrae (CF 980). Although unrecorded, there are also signs of horse riding along gravel tracks in the Klaver valley area. Riders in the area also make use of the picnic area at Wildeschutsbrand and Scarborough beach for riding.

#### 6. *Other sites*

In the Constantia area, the Tokai plantation<sup>4</sup> is used on a daily basis for cross-country, hacking and trail riding. Access is gained off Zwaanswyk road, from Uitsig and at the Arboretum main gate. An annual permit of R160 is required from MTO Forestry (PTY) LTD for any riders utilizing the upper part of Tokai forest (ie. the area above the Arboretum). No permit is required for riding in Tokai Lower Forest (the area between Spaanschemat river road and the M3) - dogs are also allowed in this section. The remaining areas of Tokai Forest (middle and upper Tokai Forest) - except the arboretum, the picnic areas and the residential areas where horse riding is not allowed - require a permit for horse riding. Most of the riding schools in the area are members of the Swaanswyk Horse Riding Association (SHORA) or Constantia Valley Riding Association (CVRA). SHORA has 160 members. Approximately 30 riders a week use the Tokai forest from Constantia Uitsig. Sunbury Riding Stables in Firgrove Road have 8 horses and provide outrides in the lower portions of Tokai for approximately 50 pupils per week. Other users include Tokai Pony Club, Cape Hunt and Polo Club and the Porter School and MTO Forestry stables.

Occasionally riders use Dassenberg, Peers Hill, Newlands Forest, and Silvermine for recreational riding although this is without any formal, or implicit, approval from the park authorities. In the past, horse owners in the Cape Point area were allowed to ride in the former Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve (CGHNR). The arrangement was of an informal nature and restricted to horse owners living in close proximity/bordering the CGHNR boundary fence. This informal arrangement was stopped because of a concern that domestic animals posed a health threat to the game in the reserve.

## 2.2 COMMERCIAL VENTURES

There are currently four businesses doing beach and bush horse rides in Noordhoek. All of them belong to the Noordhoek Riding Association (NRA). The businesses are Sleepy Hollow Horse riding (operating for 22 years), Noordhoek Beach Rides (operating for 10 years), The Dunes (operating for 10 years), Cactus Bend (operating for 2 years) and Wolf Power Riding

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<sup>4</sup> The Tokai and Cecilia plantations, currently under the management jurisdiction of Mountain-to-Ocean (MTO) Forestry (PTY) LTD, are intensively utilised areas for recreational horse riding. These areas however do not currently fall within the management jurisdiction of the Park and are hence not specifically addressed in this EMP. Once these areas are included into the park, this EMP will be updated to reflect these areas, along with any special management arrangements that may be required.

School. Many of the hotels, B&Bs and guesthouses in the Cape Peninsula have guests that specifically ask if they are able to ride on Noordhoek Beach. The riding on Noordhoek Beach is considered an important tourist attraction in Cape Town.

Sleepy Hollow Horse Riding and NRA have drawn up rules and regulations for the commercial beach rides. The rules include:

- May not use the same paths to the beach as beach walkers and their dogs use
- Paths to the beach that may be used are the pipe path at the bottom of the beach road complexes, the access path (northern boundary or what was previously Mr. van der Horst's property and now included into the Park), the path at the southern end of the beach on to the recently acquired Park land.
- May not ride to the north of the pipe path (to ensure that riders stay away from the picnic areas)
- May not ride in the sand dunes (protect the sand dune flora)
- May not ride along the middle of the beach (between the high water mark and the lagoon edge), other than to cross over directly to the water edge (this may only be done at the walk). As this is where the oystercatchers and *strandloper* birds will often nest.
- May not ride to the south of the rocks at the southern most edge of the beach, where penguins and black mussels are found.
- A maximum of 6 riders per guide, ensuring small controlled rides.
- Limited number of permits allowed for commercial businesses.
- All guides need to be at least 17 years of age, must have a good knowledge of the history of Noordhoek, its fauna and flora, thereby teaching visiting riders about the environment that they are privileged to be riding in.
- No galloping allowed
- Schools must abide by the rules and regulations set out by the SPCA and Pony Club in their management of their stable yards and the treatment and condition of their horses.

Situated on Imhoff Farm, *Noordhoek Beach Rides* (NBR) takes visitors and tourists for outrides on Noordhoek beach. A large proportion of the clientele are foreign visitors who pre-book the rides and accommodation prior to their visit to South Africa. NBR is a member of the Noordhoek Riding Association (NRA) and the outrides conform to the rules and regulations for commercial riding in the Noordhoek wetlands and beach developed and enforced by the NRA. Rides start at Imhoff Farm, then across TMNP land via the track along the Wildevoelvllei outlet onto Noordhoek beach from the Kommetjie side, past the Kakapo towards Chapman's Peak and back. Three rides a day are offered of approximately 2 hours duration.

Bethel Farm in Hout Bay has been offering commercial riding since June 1974. They offer hourly rides along the green belt (Hout Bay River) down Bethel Road, 2 hour rides to Sandy Bay, 2 hour rides to Hout Bay beach and 4 hour rides to Cecelia Forest and Constantia green belt for locals, holiday makers and tourists.

The film industry uses Noordhoek beach for local and international adverts and film - local riding schools and businesses often supply horses for this commercial activity.

Other related commercial activities:

Based in Ottery, Horse Trail Safaris (HTS) currently run trails in Namibia, Napier, Hermanus and Ottery and provide security on horseback services to the V&A Waterfront. HTS do not

currently operate any commercial rides in the park but are exploring possible future opportunities for expansion of its operations. Based in Pinelands, Oude Molen Stables provides rides within the Two Rivers urban park (Black and Liesbeek rivers), trails in Hermanus and Stanford and also used to provide rides to Newlands Forest until requested by the park to wait and submit an application for permission to continue this activity. Small-scale commercial rides take place in the Tokai area.

### **2.3 HORSE RIDING EVENTS**

The Simonstown Military Sports Bureau Club (SMSBC) has organized an annual endurance ride since 1990. The race is registered with the Endurance Race Association of South Africa (ERASA) and the SMSBC is the host for one of the ten endurance events held annually within the Western Cape area (61 in the whole of SA). Members who participate can qualify for Western Province colours and eventually be selected for National Colours. Being affiliated to ERASA, the club is bound by its rules of professionalism and maintenance of standards. A joint EMP between the park and the SMSBC provides for the mitigation of the environmental impacts of the event.

## 3. IMPACTS AND ISSUES<sup>5</sup>

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### 3.1 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The potential impacts that have been identified in relation to activities associated with horse riding include soil erosion and compaction, littering, damage to vegetation, disturbance to animals and other trail users, and conflict with other Park users. Of these, few are considered of major significance but, in many instances, will have to be effectively managed to either eliminate them or mitigate their collective impact.

A number of North American and Australian studies provide a useful context for identifying the environmental impacts of horse riding. These have recently been summarized and reviewed by Widner and Marion (1994), Phillips (2000), Landsberg *et al* (2001), and Philips and Newsome (2003). The results of these studies will not be repeated in this EMP, but the impacts of horse riding on the biophysical environment have generally been demonstrated to comprise damage to vegetation, increased trail depth and width, soil compaction, soil erosion and the introduction of weed species. Australian and North American studies have also shown that, because of increased visits to protected areas and the public need for a diversity of recreational experiences, user conflicts have arisen. These user conflicts are however currently very small within the park, but with increased usage, this may potentially increase.

#### 3.1.1 Path and track damage

The type of terrain that is being used for riding will dictate the impact. Riding on a jeep track will have very little impact. Similarly riding on disused jeep tracks would have minimal impact except in some areas where there has been prior erosion damage.

The major biophysical impacts to footpaths and single tracks from horse use are erosion, formation of muddy quagmires, and informal trail development.

*Erosion* is considered to be the most severe form of impact because its effects are long-lasting, if not permanent. Excessive erosion often makes trails difficult or even dangerous to traverse and can create siltation problems in nearby streams and water bodies. Erosion can also be self-perpetuating when treads erode below the surrounding soil level, preventing the diversion of water from the tread. Soil erosion resulting from horse use is a product of the trampling and eventual loss of vegetative cover, soil compaction leading to lowered water infiltration rates, and the churning and lifting of surface soil particles. Many studies demonstrate that trampling by a horse is more destructive to vegetation than trampling by foot. It has been found that vegetation on horse trails is churned up and often cut off at the roots, instead of flattened, as on hiking trails. By example, an experimental trampling study found vegetation loss to be four to eight times greater from horse trampling than hiker trampling. A horse carries a heavy weight on a small, usually shod, hoof. This weight has been shown to exert as much as 680kg of pressure per square inch. Horse traffic causes significant compaction to the underlying soil layers, thus reducing water infiltration and

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<sup>5</sup> The listing of these environmental impacts is not a value judgement of the relative desirability of horse riding in the National Park when measured against other recreational activities. The scale of many of these impacts in the park is relatively small, or in some instances only suspected. It must be noted that impacts will be more intense when access is restricted to a few sites on the Cape Peninsula and, as a consequence, numbers of users will be high at these sites. The objective of identifying the actual, and potential, impacts is to ensure that the formulation of the management strategy, management controls and identification of entry points and routes for horse riding mitigates these impacts wherever this is practicable.

increasing surface runoff. In addition, the action of a horse hoof tends to dig up and puncture the soil surface. In a study comparing the erosional impacts on hikers, horses, on-road bicycles and motorcycles, the sediment yields from horse trails were shown to be greater than for any other type of use. However, it has been demonstrated that although horse use generally causes more damage than hikers, the degree of difference depends on the soil, vegetation, topographic and climate characteristics. The most influential landscape factors governing path deterioration are often parent material, grade of trail and side-slope, soil texture and organic content, rockiness, vegetation, and drainage. Measurements of physical changes along trails receiving a constant amount of horse use resulted in a wide spectrum of erosional impacts as influenced by one or more of these landscape factors. It is concluded that horse traffic is not the single most important agent contributing to path degradation. Most problems on horse and hiking paths on the Peninsula can be traced to poor path design. Path layouts that traverse wet (e.g. Noordhoek wetlands) or highly erodible soils (e.g. Hout Bay valley), excessively steep slopes (e.g. Hout Bay valley), and fragile vegetation types (e.g. coastal zones at Noordhoek and Scarborough) are not uncommon on the Peninsula and have severe ecological impacts.

The same process that leads to erosion can also result in the *formation of muddy quagmires*. Loose soil is more apt to form mud than compacted soil and the highly impacted subsurface soils prohibit water infiltration. The resulting impermeable basins that form retain water and mud long after rainfall. Muddy sections can be a temporary or seasonal problem, making travel difficult and often resulting in significant trail widening when trail users skirt around the edges of muddy areas. This is a particular problem in the Hout Bay valley (Myburgh's Waterfall ravine to Hout Bay corner) and in the Noordhoek wetlands where paths are shared with other users.

Other trail problems attributed to horse use are the proliferation of *informal trails*. Although this does not appear to be a major problem on the Peninsula at present, multiple trail formation could become especially problematic in open areas on single-track footpaths where large groups have the potential tend to spread out rather than ride in single file. Furthermore, user-created trails are often poorly routed and not maintained, resulting in an increased potential for degradation.

### **3.1.2 Horse manure**

Manure in the park has both an *ecological* and *social* impact.

Horses are often perceived as a vector for the introduction and dispersal of exotic plants in protected areas. Manure often contains the seeds of exotic plants, although seeds may also be introduced from horse feed, equipment, and mud stuck to horses hooves. Horse feed generally contains oats, rye, barley, lucerne, grass seeds, etc. A number of studies have shown that the majority of seeds that have passed through the digestive tract of horses showed little or no loss in viability. The studies showed that horses can disperse weed seeds for up to ten days after ingestion and pass relatively large amounts of viable seed four days after ingestion. In relation to this, experimental work has shown that weed establishment is however generally limited to the extent of manured plots. The highest mean number of seeds in manure was also found where grazing animals was excluded and in plots where the soil had been disturbed. Although results showed that weed seeds are viable in horse manure, it is uncertain to what extent weeds would eventually colonise away from the manure. There is a concern expressed by the park that seeds in manure may result in the invasive spread of plants from horse feed into the fynbos and forests within the park. However, where horse food seeds have sprouted

in the park it however appears to be on a very limited basis and only in proximity to the paths. Any period of dry and hot weather or burns seems to destroy the fledgling growth. On the Glencairn Mountain and Noordhoek areas where horses have been ridden over many years, no notable outbreak or spread of seed as a result of spread from horse manure has been documented. There are however no known objective studies to test assertions that germinating seed from horse manure does not persist in the park or become invasive.

Excessive amounts of manure have also been demonstrated to pose a threat to water quality. It has also been shown that horse manure upsets the nutrient balance of the Australian bushland that has been noted as being phosphate deficient. The extra nitrogen introduced in the manure has also been shown to upset the nitrogen balance of the bushland. Alteration of both of these cycles leads to altered floral assemblages. There is no information on the possible effects in the nutrient-deficient soils of the Cape Peninsula and may require further investigation.

### **3.1.3 Breeding birds**

The Peninsula's beaches are home to a variety of waders. The most important resident breeding species is the African Black Oystercatcher. It breeds on sandy beaches (e.g. Noordhoek and Scarborough beaches) and is very susceptible to disturbance by horses that traverse these areas to access the beach areas below the high water mark and dried out pans. It has been documented that the oystercatcher breeding colony, which nests above the high water mark in the southern corners of Chapman's Bay, is under threat from people, horses and dogs. The other resident wader likely to be impacted is the White-fronted Plover – it also nests on sandy beaches and its inconspicuous nest is also vulnerable to disturbance by horses.

### **3.1.4 User conflicts**

There is no research into the attitudes of different user groups on the Cape Peninsula. The generally held view is that user conflicts between horse riders and other recreational users on the Peninsula are low. Where the extent of horse riding, and numbers of horse riders increase, most international research and analysis into the attitudes of different user groups suggests that a significant number of walkers/hikers develop negative attitudes towards horse-riding groups. Many of the people who complain about horse users suggest that horse use and its associated impacts are not appropriate for natural areas and that the managing agency should take some action to eliminate it or reduce its impacts. There are equally strongly held views that horse riding on the Peninsula, at the current scale of use, adds both an experiential and an economic benefit (in respect of tourism and employment opportunities) to the park. There are however perceived, and real, conflicts between riding and other activities in the park, often due to the narrow widths of some of the paths within the park. The main conflicts appear to arise where routes would be shared with Mountain bikes and walkers with dogs - many dogs are known to attack horses and can cause serious injury. This is especially evident in Tokai plantation and Noordhoek beach. The high number of uncontrolled dogs on Noordhoek beach and the increasing levels of crime within the wetlands often make it unsafe and dangerous for horse riders. This user conflict is however readily manageable.

### **3.1.5 Rider impacts**

Although not specific to horse riders *per se* the riders in the park may proportionally have the normal impacts associated with irresponsible visitor use – these include littering, fire hazards, defecating in the bush, damage to plants, etc.

### 3.1.6 Experiential impacts

There are several positive experiential impacts of recreational horse riding - these include physical exercise, experiencing the diversity of the park and a positive psychological experience. A number of tourists have equally had positive experiences of the park through the use of the park for horse riding by commercial operators. Some users have suggested that the presence of horses enhances their experience of the park.

### 3.1.7 Safety and security

The presence of horse riders in an area may act as a crime deterrent, discouraging criminals from operating in the park – especially if this is done in collaboration with park staff, the SAPS and volunteers. Equally, horse riders may act as the “eyes and ears” of the park in areas not normally accessed by park staff and other users. Horse riders may also provide a complementary support service to the park in emergency situations.

## 3.2 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

The potential impacts that have been identified in relation to activities associated with horse riding are presented in Table 2. The status of these potential impacts is also indicated i.e. whether they are positive (+ve) or negative (-ve). A significance rating has been determined for the potential impacts that have been identified. The criteria used to determine the significance ratings are presented in Table 1 and the significance of the potential impacts are outlined in Table 2.

**Table 1.** Criteria used to determine the significance ratings

Criteria	Categories
Spatial extent/influence of impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site specific or local</li> <li>• Regional</li> <li>• National</li> </ul>
Magnitude of impact at spatial scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High:</b> Natural and/or social functions and/or processes are severely altered</li> <li>• <b>Medium:</b> Natural and/or social functions and/or processes are notable altered</li> <li>• <b>Low:</b> Natural and/or social functions and/or processes are negligibly altered</li> </ul>
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temporary (&lt;1 year)</li> <li>• Short term (1 to 6 years)</li> <li>• Medium term (6 to 10 years)</li> <li>• Long term (more than 10 years)</li> </ul>

Given these criteria, the significance ratings have been defined as below:

- *High:* impacts of high magnitude locally for longer than 6 years and/or regionally and beyond
- *Medium:* impacts of moderate magnitude locally to regionally in the short term
- *Low to very low:* impacts will be localised and temporary.
- *No impact:* a potential concern or impact that, upon evaluation, is found to have no significant impact at all.

It should be noted that the significance of some of the potential impacts will vary from area to area. This will depend on the specific conditions present in a particular horse riding area. For example, the impact of horses on erosion and compaction will depend on how susceptible the soil and underlying substrate is to erosion. In Table 2, the significance ratings have been assigned for impacts both without and with management actions.

**Table 2.** The potential impacts of horse riding

Potential Impact	Categories of Potential Impacts	Status	Significance	
			No Management	Management
Path and track damage	• Erosion of trails	-ve	Medium	Low
	• Loss of vegetative cover	-ve	Medium	Low
	• Soil compaction	-ve	Medium	Low
	• Formation of muddy quagmires	-ve	High	Low
	• Proliferation of informal trails	-ve	High	Low to no impact
	• Primary dune erosion and blowouts	-ve	High	Low
Horse manure on path and track	• Vector for spread of exotic plants	-ve	Low	Low
	• Water quality	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
	• Nutrient balance of soils	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
Disturbance of breeding birds	• Disturbance of breeding	-ve	Medium	Low
	• Damage to nests/eggs	-ve	Medium	Low
User conflicts	• Conflicts with walkers	-ve	Low to no impacts	Low to no impact
	• Conflicts with dogs	-ve	Medium	Low
	• Conflicts with mountain bikes	-ve	Medium	Low
Rider impacts	• Littering	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
	• Fire hazard	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
	• Disturbance of heritage sites	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
	• Damage to vegetation	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
	• Disturbance/ removal of fauna	-ve	Low	Low to no impact
Experiential impacts	• Physical exercise	+ve	Medium	Medium
	• Exposure to the scenery and diversity of the park	+ve	Medium	High
	• Positive psychological experience	+ve	Medium	High
	• Tourism experiences	+ve	Medium	High
	• Other users	+ve/-ve	Medium (+ve/-ve)	Medium (+ve)
Safety and security	• Crime deterrent	+ve	Low	Medium
	• Emergency support	+ve	Low	Medium
	• Park support	+ve	Low	Medium

### **3.3 MANAGEMENT ISSUES<sup>6</sup>**

#### **3.3.1 Access**

A key issue for Cape Town horse riders is the lack of available riding areas. The mountain above Glencairn; Tokai forest; Noordhoek wetlands/beach; parts of Hout Bay and Constantia/Tokai and Phillipi are the main Cape Town urban riding areas but it is still very restricted. Very few properties are large enough for satisfactory riding other than formal schooling/ teaching/ dressage. A fit horse and rider can easily undertake a 20-30km ride over a couple of hours and this should preferably be done without too much overlapping/ repeating. It is also important to provide for short slow rides (1 hour – 10kms).

#### **3.3.2 Entry/Exit points**

It is often impossible for riders to access recreational riding areas from where their horse is stabled without trucking the horse(s). Therefore any riding routes need entry/exit points which have suitable parking facilities for vehicles with horse-boxes and satisfactory for unloading horses. This requires a large level car park without tight turns and the need to reverse. It should also be safe from vandalism. The car park must be away from main roads as horses are often difficult/flighty to load/unload.

#### **3.3.3 Toilets and watering points**

In the development of longer routes, the provision of existing toilet facilities for riders and watering spots for horses, needs to be considered as part of the route design.

#### **3.3.4 Signage**

Adequate signage is of great importance to the responsible use of the park by horse riders – approved routes should be clearly marked and the code of conduct made widely available.

#### **3.3.5 Alternative routes to busy roads**

Riding on roads with other road users is extremely dangerous. One of the main goals for riders in Hout Bay for example is for the community to be able to ride alongside the Hout Bay River for the full length of the Valley. This will provide access to all rides in the Valley and prevent riders having to use Valley Road to get to most rides and Trails.

#### **3.3.6 Types of surfaces/tracks that are suitable for horse riding**

Surface - The footing is of the utmost importance. Paths cannot be too stony as sharp stones bruise horse's feet and cause endless foot problems.

Gradient - The gradient cannot be too steep as regular use causes erosion. Horses have high foot loadings and any paths with unsound stone steps or man-made wood/ stone/ rock steps are unsuitable, as these will get damaged rapidly. The present high altitude and steeper trails within the TMNP have not been maintained for horse riding purposes and are prone to erosion and compaction.

Width - Paths could be wide enough for 2 horses to pass each other safely but must be as narrow as possible to minimise the environmental impacts

Motorised Vehicles - Paths need to be as far away from vehicular traffic as possible. A number of terrible accidents have occurred during the past years as a result of horses not having controlled crossing points or bridle paths with a safe distance from traffic.

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<sup>6</sup> These are issues/needs raised by horse riders in the park. Although these may be valid issues, the listing of the issues is only used as a guide for the development of the EMP and will be specifically addressed only where it is practicable and desirable

### **3.3.7 Path maintenance**

There are many existing Bridle Paths, which need attention and maintenance to make them usable and safe for riding.

### **3.3.8 Communication and linkages**

Horse trails through municipal public open spaces (POS) need to be linked to bridle paths in the park and these POS's need to be kept open and maintained and used or they will be lost. There needs to be effective communication between Local Riding Associations to ensure that all groups work together to improve the Bridle Path network within the Peninsula.

### **3.3.9 Liability**

Liability for damage, loss of property, injury, safety and security for the horse riders must be investigated

### **3.3.10 Research and Monitoring**

Adequate monitoring and research programs will need to be implemented to assess the efficacy of the routes, the ongoing impacts of horse riding and the qualification and quantification of the impacts identified in 3.1.

## **4. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

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In developing the strategic and management framework for future horse riding in the park, this EMP will adopt the following broad policy objectives:

1. Minimising the impact of riding activities and routes on the bio-physical integrity of the park
2. Minimising the impact of riding activities and routes on the heritage sites of the park
3. Reducing conflicts with other users
4. Establishing a collaborative and cooperative relationship between the park authorities and the horse riding fraternity
5. Optimising access to, and enjoyment of, the Park and adjoining / related areas by horse riders
6. Adhering to environmental and social norms and standards established to mitigate the impacts of horse riding in the park
7. Adhering to a horse riding Code of Conduct
8. Monitoring the efficacy of this EMP and, through an ongoing working relationship, review and adapt this EMP

## **5. STRATEGIC APPROACH TO THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF HORSE RIDING IN THE PARK**

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In developing the management framework for future horse riding in the park, this EMP will adopt the following strategic approach:

### **5.1 PATH CHARACTERISTICS FOR HORSE RIDING**

The path characteristics path for horse riding will ideally be:

- Firm, smooth and lightly sandy
- Gently sloping
- Not overgrown – up to 2m clear width (ie. jeep tracks) but preferably narrower. Path widths do not necessarily need to be wider than 1m – horses may step aside and stand to let other horses pass

Where the environmental and user conflicts can be mitigated, the following types of path will also be accommodated for horse riding:

- Soft sandy tracks
- Stepped rocky tracks
- Loose gravelly surfaces (ie. gravel jeep tracks)

The following paths will not be accommodated for horse riding:

- Very steep and/or slippery paths
- Paths traversing permanent wetlands or vlei's
- Paths with large loose and/or sharp rocks
- Paths on the edge of cliffs – horses can shy unexpectedly
- Paths with low overhanging obstructions – less than 2400mm
- Areas with extensive mole activity
- Paths traversing dune areas where oystercatchers and plovers are known to nest
- Dedicated Mountain bike tracks
- High intensity dog walking areas

It is in this regard then that most of the horse riding activities should take place on the lower, and intermediate, sandy slopes of the park. However flat sandy areas may be prone to tread muddiness, which is a strong contributing factor in track widening and multiple trail creation as hikers seek to circumvent muddy sections. This will need to be mitigated through route selection and active management interventions.

### **5.2 HORSE RIDING ROUTES**

- A range of trails will be provided
- Shorter circular routes, using only existing track networks, for everyday riding will be located near car-parks and/or access points from stables/livery yards where practicable
- A single long route traversing the park may not be practicable due to the landscape/other use/biological sensitivity/user conflict constraints but opportunities to connect to other bridled paths through the urban areas must be optimised
- As it is extremely dangerous and difficult to cross a busy road with a horse, the routes will try to minimise road crossings and where these are inevitable, provision will be made, wherever practicable, for locating crossing points in safe areas.
- Routes will minimise opportunities for conflicts with other recreational users
- Erosion will be limited by avoiding steep path grades on a route

- Muddiness will be limited by avoiding routes traversing wet organic soils on flat terrain
- Designated routes will be restricted to areas under the parks management control and will not include those that traverse both private property and property administered by other public agencies
- Access routes to beaches approved for horse riding will be provided. Routes to beaches will be restricted and strictly controlled to minimise the impacts on the sensitive dune ecosystems
- Routes will align with the Parks “Conservation Development Framework” and any other local area plans that have undergone a public consultation process
- Routes will avoid jumps and hurdles

### **5.3 MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCESS AND USE BY HORSE RIDERS**

- Provision will be made for a sensitive path or route to be closed at certain times of the year when conditions are exceptionally wet, although the preference will be for no routes in sensitive areas such as wetlands
- The impacts of horse riding in sensitive areas may, where appropriate and if required, be mitigated by controlling numbers of riders
- Special management arrangements will, where appropriate, be put in place in allowing access to these sensitive areas
- A clear protocol will be established on who gives way to whom
- A permitting system or licensing system for horse riders will be developed in which people can be clearly identified when breaking the park rules
- Horse riders will pay a nominal fee for the right to use the park for horse riding and for the ongoing maintenance of the park facilities and services
- A mechanism for regular review of the EMP will be developed
- When used, single tracks will have a regular program for monitoring damage, maintenance requirements, re-routing requirements or closure needs
- Opportunities will be explored to link horse riding with security and enforcement arrangements in high crime areas
- A code of conduct will provide the framework for the respectful and considerate use of the park for horse riding
- Key designated sections of tracks and trails will be specially managed by horse riders and/or the park to mitigate the impacts of horses (eg. wood chips)
- Approved access gates will be made more user friendly
- Normal hours of access to the park will apply

### **5.4 COMMUNICATIONS**

- Adequate signage will be provided at access points and along designated routes
- Communication media will be used to educate horse riders on routes and the code of conduct
- Mechanisms for report backs, reviews, proposed amendments to the EMP and discussion of new routes/closures need to be developed between the park and a group representing horse riding interests

## **6. MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMP**

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This section provides the management framework for the implementation of this EMP.

### **6.1 HORSE RIDING ROUTES AND ACCESS POINTS**

This description and maps (Maps 1-4) of the approved routes in this EMP include only those to be opened immediately for horse riding. Each of these routes will require ground-truthing by the park and working group before the final alignment is agreed. It is envisaged that all routes may be used, subject to the SANParks approval and relevant prescriptions and guidelines, by recreational and commercial users and for special events. The total distance of the proposed horse trails traversing the park is estimated at ..km.

#### **6.1.1 Red Hill area (including Black Hill/Glencairn)**

The proposed bridal trail in this area is shown in Map 1. The route can be accessed from the Glencairn (Naval) stables in Welcome Glen. The proposed circular route/s run from the Black Hill area adjacent to the Glencairn expressway onto Red Hill road via Lewis Gay/Kleinplaas Dams. The route is aligned so as not to traverse private property within this area except where traversing servitudes exist. The route traverses existing gravel tracks with short interconnecting footpaths. The going underfoot is generally good albeit a bit rocky in places but the surface is hardy and robust. No horse riding will however be supported or allowed on the Red Hill Plateau south of Kleinplaas Dam<sup>7</sup>.

#### **6.1.2 Noordhoek/ Kommetjie wetlands and beach area**

The proposed bridle trails in this area are shown in Map 2. A number of the designated routes indicated in Map 2 will, in discussion with the working group (see 6.2), need to be re-aligned over time. The primary access points to the wetlands and beach are from the riding clubs and associations in the area. Visitors may park horseboxes and unload horses safely at the Noordhoek Riding Association area on the edge of the wetlands. The park is currently in the process of restoring the southern portions of CF 933 - including the eastern fringes of Papkuilsvlei and areas where sand plain fynbos is regenerating. Boardwalks may be established through this area to facilitate access for walkers. The routes proposed have hence been developed to avoid these sensitive areas and proposed boardwalks. The existing path network has been consolidated into a network of routes that connect the primary entry point to the wetlands – CF 933 – to the beach, the running track and portions of the wetlands. Until consolidated management by SANParks of the wetlands is achieved, it will be necessary to retain the existing bridle path (aligned along the southern fence line of private properties) as the route from CF 933 to the beach. Provision is thus made for a bridle path from CF 933 that skirts around the southern side of Papkuilsvlei<sup>8</sup> and links through to the beach at the break in the primary dunes<sup>9</sup>. An alternative access to the beach is provided from the privately owned Imhoff Farm, across park land via the track along the Wildevoelvlei outlet and onto

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<sup>7</sup> Most of this land is in private ownership with many of the owners belonging to the Red Hill Conservation Group.

<sup>8</sup> Note: the park will provide a bridge on CF 933 over the current drainage canal from the Lakes should the current access route be closed

<sup>9</sup> The park has undertaken to clear all invasive species along this route to ensure that it is more secure for riders

Noordhoek beach. A further path network has been designated which connects the Imhoff Farm/Wildevoelvllei outlet/ Noordhoek Beach path to the circular path from CF 933<sup>10</sup>. The prescriptive conditions for riding on the Noordhoek beach are described in point 6.4.2 of this EMP. The potential development of an Equestrian Centre at Imhoffs Farm may provide an opportunity for the centre to potentially maintain the southern network of bridle paths as a voluntary service to the park.

### **6.1.3 Karbonkelberg/ Sandy Bay area**

The proposed bridal trail in this area is shown in Map 3. The route can be accessed from stables and clubs in the area via Valley road to the Victoria road/Victoria Avenue intersection. The park and the working group will need to liaise with the City of Cape Town to provide for a horse-friendly crossing at this intersection. The route proposed provides for access to Sandy Bay beach via a bridle track adjacent to Kronenzicht. A short, out and back route along the rocket road is provided to add some variety to the route. The use of Sandy Bay beach for riding is prescribed in point 5.3 of this EMP.

### **6.1.4 Hout Bay Valley area**

The proposed bridal trails in this area are shown in Map 4. The first route proposed provides for access to Cecilia Forest via a single jeep track through Orankekloof to Constantia Nek from Forest Hill road. The second route provides for access along the *Pipe Track* on the Constantiaberg side of the Hout Bay Valley.

### **6.1.5 Swartkopberge area (includes Plateau road and, Scarborough)**

During this stage of the EMP, no routes are recommended in this area.

### **6.1.6 Rhodes Estate - commercial**

A pilot commercial concession venture is proposed in the animal encampment at Rhodes Estate. Consideration may be given to providing outrides into the expanded animal encampment from Rhodes Memorial with a focus on educating and informing visitors of the heritage significance of Rhodes Estate. The commercial operation may be managed on a short-term concessionary basis, to determine the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the operation. The management and regulation of the concession will be determined through the formal EIA and HIA process that is to be undertaken prior to initiating this commercial concession.

## **6.2 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in this EMP are:

### **South African National Parks (SANParks)**

South African National Parks (SANParks) are the statutory management authority for the Table Mountain National Park (TMNP) and have the final decision-making responsibility. The TMNP Management Policy (2000), Strategic Management Plan (2000-2004) and Conservation Development Framework (2001-2006) provide the policy and strategic management framework for the park operations.

- SANParks will, after consultation with the working group and the broader public, make the final decision on new routes, re-routing of existing routes and the closure of routes

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<sup>10</sup> This route will, in discussion with the working group, be re-aligned to run along the boundary of the Wildevoelvllei once the initial alien clearing has been completed.

- SANParks will be responsible for the construction, maintenance and upgrading of routes in the park.
- SANParks will derive income from the riding community to offset the costs incurred in management and maintenance of both the horse riders and the routes
- SANParks will be responsible, where required, for the signage requirements and enforcement of this EMP
- SANParks will be responsible for managing commercial operators. SANParks may enter into a formal agreement with a riding association or any other service provider to administer commercial horse-based activities, and horse riding events on it's behalf.

### **Cape Peninsula Horse Riding Working Group (the “Working Group”)**

The Working Group is currently a loose association of people representing interested horse riders, horse riding associations, commercial horse riding operators, other affected stakeholders and the Park. It is envisaged that this working group form the core of a more formally constituted Working Group representing the interests of all stakeholders and overseeing the implementation of the EMP

- The Working Group will identify, review and consider all proposals for the re-routing, closure, or establishment of new, recreational riding routes, commercial riding routes or special event routes
- The Working Group will monitor the efficacy of this EMP
- The Working Group may organise volunteer parties to aid with route maintenance and clean ups along routes where requested by SANParks.

### **Joint meeting**

A bi-annual meeting between this Working Group and SANParks will be held to review the effectiveness of the management of horse riding activities in the TMNP. Based on this review, the EMP will be updated to reflect any proposed changes.

Any proposals for the re-routing, or establishment of new, recreational riding routes, commercial riding routes or special event routes may be presented in writing (with at least a sketch of the route) by any individual or group from the horse riding fraternity and will be discussed and considered at these meetings<sup>11</sup>. Based on the recommendation of the working group, SANParks will, if required, conduct an environmental assessment of the proposal. The new route/re-routed section, if agreed to by SANParks, will be advertised for public comment. SANParks may approve/reject the route proposal based on the outcome of the above. SANParks may propose to the working group the closure of any existing routes for discussion and consideration. Although SANParks will make the final decision in respect of closures, it will seriously address any issues raised by the working group.

The joint meeting may liaise with the City of Cape Town to link urban horse trails to the park-approved trails and to motivate the installation of horse-friendly road crossings on park-approved routes.

### **Riding Associations**

Any riding association may administer, subject to a formal agreement with the park, the rules and regulations for commercial operations (see point 5.9 in the EMP) in any of the areas approved for horse riding.

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<sup>11</sup> It is important that a mechanism is established to consult local stakeholders on the proposed route prior to the final decision by the joint meeting

### **Hout Bay Equestrian Association (HBEA)**

The HBEA will administer, in liaison with the park, the access arrangements for horse riders to traverse the single access route through Orangekloof from the Valley Road Gate to Constantia Nek (see Point 5.4 in the EMP).

### **6.3 PERMITS AND FEES**

The current WILD card system will be used to identify registered recreational riders in the TMNP. This Infinity-based “smart card” loyalty program currently costs R195 per family, R175 per couple or R95 per individual for a full year access to the TMNP<sup>12</sup>. All recreational riders will be required to acquire a WILD Card as a pre-requisite for using the park for horse riding. A short-term WILD card for once-off visitors is being developed. A commercial WILD card is also being developed that provides a commercial operator access to the park with a fixed number of clients - this will then apply to tour operators and their clients once implemented. WILD card holders will also retain all the normal benefits of the card. For WILD cards bought through the TMNP, the Code of Conduct will be made available to horse riders. In time, the capacity to endorse the WILD card for a range of approved recreational activities in the park will be developed. As a “smart card”, enforcement staff in the field will be able to request from any rider, their WILD card, and with a portable scanner, obtain all the available information on the rider.

It is envisaged that income derived from the sale of the WILD card may be used to offset the park maintenance, security, management, education and enforcement costs incurred in effectively implementing this EMP.

### **6.4 SPECIAL ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR RECREATIONAL USE**

#### **6.4.1 Orangekloof**

Access to Orangekloof shall be administered by the HBEA. The HBEA and the park shall jointly fund and/or find sponsorship for, the installation of an electronic gate at the Valley Road entry point. The gate lock shall be enabled by an electronic “smart card”, of which 4 copies and a “master” shall be developed. The park shall retain ownership of the master and the 4 copies shall be held by the HBEA. The HBEA shall establish an equitable arrangement in which horse riders wishing to access Orangekloof may pre-book or sign out these cards. Each card shall enable a maximum group of 4 horses entry through this gateway – the card shall be kept by the group leader who holds responsibility for the behaviour of all members of the group and will be returned to HBEA at the end of a ride. For every transgression, the park shall confiscate a card for 6 months. If all 4 cards have been confiscated at the same time, the park will reassess the efficacy of entry to Orangekloof. If the system is not equitably administered by HBEA, the park will take over the administration of the card access system. If the card access system is, in the view of the park, abused or misused the park will, in consultation with the working group, close the bridal trail through Orangekloof

#### **6.4.2 Noordhoek beach**

No riding may be done in the middle of the beach (between the HWM and 20m from the start of the vegetated primary dune), in the dune areas and in the no-go areas (i.e. all areas not designated in Map 2 for use by horse riders). The approved beach routes are designated in Map 2. Signage at the entry points to the beach shall designate whether horse riders may turn

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<sup>12</sup> The WILD Card, for a small additional fee (eg. R245 per family) can also be programmed for access to all National Parks or access to all National Parks and all Western Cape Nature Conservation reserves (eg. R395 per family).

left, right or either direction onto the beach. Access points from the beach back to the Noordhoek wetlands shall be adequately designated. Where the lagoon areas on Noordhoek beach are flooded and the routes designated may not be accessible, riders are to ride on the hard surfaces as close to the seawater as possible.

#### **6.4.3 Sandy Bay beach**

The access points to the beach shall be restricted to the designated routes only. Horse riders must then follow the shortest route over the beach to the area below the high water mark, and back. Any sensitive areas (eg. vegetated dunes) along this route shall be marked by the park, and must be avoided. Horses may not ride in any of the dune areas abutting the beach and are restricted to the area below the HWM only.

### **6.5 SIGNAGE**

TMNP will signpost all open approved horse trails and their special conditions where relevant (periods of closure, maximum numbers, etc.). Conversely, trails that are closed for horse riding will be marked as such. Appropriate signs along the routes may be used to reinforce key code of conduct points. Signage in certain areas may include 'yield signs' to advise mountain bike riders, dog walkers and hikers to give way to horse riders as horses would do the most damage if they have to step off the paths and horses are generally often less 'controllable' in tight situations and could injure someone if frightened. It is envisaged that signage is restricted to a practical minimum and integrated into existing signage in the park.

### **6.6 EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

It is vital that riders be educated about what areas are legal to ride in. Riders will also need to be educated on an ongoing basis about how they can contribute to minimising the impact of horse riding in the park. The core of the educational message from this EMP is the Code of Conduct. It is critical that horse riders and horse groups be informed of the Code of Conduct and its implications for them. The Working Group and the Park will make use of the media, groups/club newsletters, notice boards at entry points and other methods to disseminate information regarding approved routes and the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct and map of approved routes will be placed at horse tack shops and at the riding clubs, centres and associations in Cape Town. The Table Mountain National Park website (<http://www.cnp.co.za>) and park marketing and communication materials will also be used to disseminate information on horse riding in the park.

A database of the email addresses of interested horse riders/groups has been established and may be maintained by the Working Group. Notices of relevant activities related to riding in the TMNP in relation to this EMP may be sent out to parties on the database.

### **6.7 ENFORCEMENT**

SANParks staff will enforce this EMP, unless specifically designated to an equestrian association, in which case the park will provide a support service. Failure to comply with this EMP and any other park regulations by a rider, a commercial operator or an event organiser will result in the following possible outcomes:

- A formal warning
- A fine as laid down in the legislation and enabling regulations
- Withdrawal of the WILD card and subsequent blacklisting from any National Park in South Africa for a period of 1 year
- Withdrawal of the right to operate a commercial venture in any National Park
- Withdrawal of the right to host any future event in the park

- Where the cumulative number of transgressions reaches a critical mass, a review of this EMP as a mechanism for collaborative management of horse riding in the TMNP

### **6.8 IDENTIFICATION OF RIDERS**

The park will encourage, and support, the introduction of an identification system that is administered by the horse riding stables, clubs and/or associations to provide their members with a uniform, highly visible and clear form of identification such as a large coloured plastic numbered disc to be worn on the horse/rider. The working group may allocate areas to different riding clubs for administration. The identification disc/tag could be directly linked to the WILD card. It is hoped that this identification would enable a member of the public or park staff to clearly identify both the rider and their affiliation in instances where riders are not abiding with this EMP.

### **6.9 MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL OPERATORS**

Commercial operators may use all designated recreational routes for commercial activities, subject to the Code of Conduct, SANParks approval and any other general conditions prescribed in this EMP.

All current, and any future, commercial operators in the Noordhoek beach and wetlands area will need to be a paid-up member of the NRA (as is currently the case). The NRA shall, in collaboration with the park, develop a set of rules to manage the impacts of the commercial operations in the area. The park shall provide enforcement support to the NRA for the application of these rules as required.

Any additional commercial operations may, by negotiation with the park, be administered by the relevant riding association operating in that area, under the same principles as the NRA. Where this is not appropriate or the riding association do not wish to fulfil this function, the park will administer the commercial operation directly. Any concessionary commercial operation shall be managed by the park, subject to the prescriptions of the formal concessionary agreement.

### **6.10 MANAGEMENT OF EVENTS**

All horse riding events approved by the park shall be managed subject to the development and implementation of an Environmental Management Plan, specifically compiled to mitigate the environmental impacts of that event<sup>13</sup>. The park shall, at the expense of the event managers, appoint an Environmental Control Officer to administer and report on the EMP during and after the event. The horse riding working group shall be consulted by the park in the identification of routes and the formulation of the EMP.

### **6.11 RESEARCH AND MONITORING**

The park will integrate into its research and monitoring program a number of explicit monitoring activities and specific research projects to assess the efficacy of the routes, the ongoing impacts of horse riding and the qualification and quantification of the impacts identified in 3.1.

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<sup>13</sup> Event management, and mitigation of the associated environmental impacts, in the park follows a generic procedure. It is envisaged that this procedure is adopted for any horse riding event.

## 7. CODE OF CONDUCT

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### **Key themes:**

The rider's responsibility to protect and conserve the natural and heritage resources of the park

The rider's responsibility to respect the rules and regulations of the park

The rider's responsibility to ride with care and consideration for other users

The rider's responsibility for their own safety

### **Presentation of the code:**

Brief, clear and unambiguous

Able to be printed onto a single A4 sheet

### **Promotion of the code:**

The code shall be promoted using the following tools and media:

Technical version of the EMP

Park signage/notices

Park communication/marketing materials

Riding schools, stables, clubs and associations notices

Riding publications

### **Enforcement of the code**

The Park staff shall enforce the code, with the assistance of the riding associations, clubs and stables.

### **Message to all equestrians**

*When riders conduct themselves responsibly in the park by following the Code of Conduct, horse riding can be a safe and appropriate low impact means of enjoying and appreciating the Cape Peninsula's natural environment. Please do not abuse of this privilege as it may affect future access.*

#### **1. Protect and conserve the natural and heritage resources of the park**

- Take out what you take in
- Stay on the designated paths
- Use only the marked routes to traverse any water courses, wetlands or dune systems
- Ride in small groups of no more than 4 horses unless by special permission of park management
- Be observant and avoid unduly disturbing unstable or erosion prone soils
- Do not set up jumps or jump over any existing obstruction
- Avoid galloping in environmentally sensitive areas
- Do not ride with dogs

#### **2. Respect the rules and regulations of the park**

- At all times obey any instruction from an official or park notice
- Respect any temporary closures or diversions of approved routes
- Buy the Wild Card and carry it with you
- Give way to authorised vehicles
- Report all illegal activities to the 24-hour emergency call number (957-4700)

#### **3. Show courtesy to other users and landowners**

- Be friendly and civil to other users
- Leave the parking areas and all access points to trails clear of dung
- Do not ride on private property without permission from the landowner
- Take the initiative in avoiding any potentially dangerous situations involving your horses and other park users
- Leave all gates as you find them
- Slow down to a walk to pass other users – give plenty of room to families with small children and dogs

**4. Take responsibility for your safety**

- Ride a horse you are confident you can control
- Ride at a pace that enables you to stop or walk should you encounter another user or a hazard
- Take out public liability insurance for you and your horse
- When on tar roads, keep to the left and ride in single file
- Always accompany riders under 16

## 8. THE WAY FORWARD

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The following steps will be required to “activate” this EMP.

1. The joint working group shall be constituted by April 2004.
2. The final alignment of the approved paths shall be ground-truthed and agreed to by the park and working group by April 2004
3. This EMP must be formally approved and adopted by both the park and working group by April 2004
4. The EMP must be integrated into the park management system as a dynamic and adaptive document by April 2004. All changes to this document will need to be document controlled
5. The data indicating the geographic extent of the trails will need to be integrated into the park's GIS-based Information Management System (IMS) by April 2004. All changes made to the trail network will need to be maintained on this IMS and served to staff through the ARCIMS interface developed for the park.
6. The park and the working group shall establish key performance indicators to objectively measure the efficacy of this EMP by July 2004.
7. The park will liaise with Infinity and SANParks to ensure the use of the WILD card for commercial operators by July 2004.
8. The park must liaise with HBEA to implement the new security gate system and card management at Orangethloof by July 2004
9. The park and the working group shall communicate the approved routes, the need for horse riders to acquire the WILD card and the code of conduct, to all horse riders using the park by July 2004. The working group and the park shall use existing media communications to sustain the communication program,
10. The park shall investigate the development of park-specific regulations in the new Protected Areas Act to formalise the recreational EMP's by July 2004.
11. The park shall enforce this EMP from September 2004
12. The park shall investigate the feasibility of providing a concession from Rhodes Estate by December 2004
13. The park shall erect, or modify existing, signage to properly reflect the contents of this EMP by December 2004
14. The park shall upgrade and/or maintain all the bridal trails designated in this EMP by July 2005

## **9. TERMS AND ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT**

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CDF	Conservation Development Framework
CGHNR	Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve
Commercial Horse Riding	A business operation in which a fee is charged for horse riding
CVRA	Constantia Valley Riding Association
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Program
ERASA	Endurance Race Association of South Africa
CPPNE	Cape Peninsula Protected Natural Environment
Horse-riding Event	A once off organised horse-riding activity within a defined area
Fun Ride	Organized horse riding event open to all levels of rider
HBEA	Hout Bay Equestrian Association
HTS	Horse Trail Safaris
Jeep track	Vehicular access road
MTO Forestry (PTY) Ltd	Mountain to Ocean (PTY) LTD
NBR	Noordhoek Beach Rides
NRA	Noordhoek Riding Association
POS	Public Open Space
Recreational Horse Riding	Horse riding undertaken across the park for enjoyment
SANParks	South African National Parks
SHORA	Swaanswyk Horse Riding Association
Single track	Narrower, non-vehicle path suitable for horse riding
SMSBC	Simon's Town Military Sports Bureau Club
SPCA	Society for the Protection of Animals
TMNP	Table Mountain National Park
Wide track	Disused or impassable jeep track
WILD Card	The SANParks loyalty program "smart card"
WWF-SA	World Wide Fund for Nature (South Africa)

## 9. APPROVAL

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### For the Horse Riding Working Group

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### For the Table Mountain National Park

Park  
Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Regional  
Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Area  
Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_