

**Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers (Inc)**

PO Box 534

Leederville WA 6903

[enquiries@bushwalkingwa.org.au](mailto:enquiries@bushwalkingwa.org.au)

<http://www.bushwalkingwa.org.au>

ABN: 53 076 160 216



Letters to the Editor

WA Newspapers

GPO Box N1027

PERTH WA 6843 (fax 9482 3830)

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re Trans Fitzgerald River National Park Walk Trail**

The Federation of Western Australian bushwalkers inc, representing the nine organised bushwalking clubs in Western Australia and their 1000 members, is in favour of the Trans Fitzgerald River national Park walk trail, and has written to the Premier supporting his decision to proceed.

Dieback is a potential hazard in the Park, however the proposed new development will alleviate the risk of the spread of dieback.

There is already a Trans Fitzgerald River National Park walk trail. It is an informal route, and was first written up in *Forests on Foot* (Kathy Meney and P Brown, Campaign to Save Native Forests 1985). One would guess they wrote up a route that was already in use. Being informal means walkers follow an unmarked corridor through the bush, and may divert some distance from the intended line. Access is unrestricted. There are serious water supply problems on the route necessitating water drops and the carriage of large quantities of water. In the event of road closure (often at short notice after rain to reduce the spread of dieback), which make the water drop impossible, walkers must either abort the expedition, carry even more water, or attempt to do it with less than they should. Thus the route is restricted to the super fit or foolhardy.

The proposed alignment will be a marked trail. It will direct walkers along the coast away from dieback affected areas. It will have water points. It will be possible to register walkers and provide instruction on how to avoid spreading dieback. It will be a vast improvement on all counts over what is currently the situation.

In addition there is no scientific evidence that bushwalkers spread dieback. It is known that vehicles do, particularly those that carry mud. Animals can and do spread dieback.

The Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers Inc has faith in the Department of Environment and Conservation and their leadership in the control of dieback

Best Regards,

Ian McDonald  
President

26 March 2011