

# ***Strategic Plan for Wildwater Canoeing in Australia***

***Draft prepared by the Paddle Australia Wildwater Canoeing Technical Committee  
for consideration by the Paddle Australia Competition Committee***

***July 2019***

### BACKGROUND

In October 2018 Paddle Australia released the 'Strategic Plan for Paddling in Australia' (the "SPPA"). This document was developed based on an extensive consultation and collaboration with the paddling community across Australia. A copy of the SPPA is available on the Paddle Australia [website](#).

This 'Strategic Plan for Wildwater Canoeing in Australia' (the "Wildwater Canoeing Plan") is a complement to the SPPA. One of the challenges facing Wildwater is that the sport in Australia is currently fragmented. We recognise that alignment of strategy across the sport and across the country is important, and the Wildwater Canoeing Plan is presented in the context of the **Vision** expressed in the SPPA of "a united paddling community".

Wildwater Canoeing is recognised under the International Canoe Federation, including both kayak and canoe disciplines. We are a passionate community which enjoys the challenges of our sport and we are invested in seeing Wildwater develop in Australia.

### WHAT'S IN THE WILDWATER CANOEING PLAN

It is acknowledged that there are limited resources available to meet objectives. Accordingly, the Wildwater Canoeing Plan will focus on providing an achievable roadmap for advancing the sport, recognising that it is not practical to try and tackle all opportunities and challenges at the same time.

The **Activities** and **Actions** that Wildwater Canoeing will undertake under this plan are broken down into **Strategic Areas**, numbered to correspond with the seven (7) Strategic Areas referenced in the SPPA, as follows:

- 1 Providing participation opportunities for all those wanting to join our community, whatever their age, background or ability
- 2 Promoting and supporting pathways for those seeking to be the best they can be in their chosen area
- 3 Developing our competitions into events that demand attention and involvement
- 5 Ensuring that our connected community benefits from strong, consultative leadership that adds genuine value
- 6 Reflecting a positive, shared brand, culture and values that make everyone want to be 'a part of paddling'

### REFRESHING THE WILDWATER CANOEING PLAN

The Wildwater Canoeing Plan will be a dynamic document. The Paddle Australia Wildwater Canoeing Technical Committee will meet each year with the express purposes of reviewing progress against the Wildwater Canoeing Plan and considering what changes, if any, are required to its priorities.

This process will align with the rolling nature of the whole of the SPPA, which will similarly be updated annually. Part of the purpose of the Wildwater Canoeing Plan is to inform these whole of sport discussions and to contribute to the ongoing dialogue around improving the standing of the sport of paddling within the Australian community.

Comments to the Wildwater Canoeing Plan are welcome via email to [Wildwater@paddle.org.au](mailto:Wildwater@paddle.org.au).

### 1 STRATEGIC AREA: Providing participation opportunities for all those wanting to join our community, whatever their age, background or ability

- We recognise that participation numbers have declined and that we must do a better job of engaging with the broader paddling community to bring participants into Wildwater
- Water access and development of infrastructure are issues that already limit participation in some areas. This challenge will continue and plans are needed to address this in the medium to long term

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACWTC Actions	PACWTC Measures/Status
1.5 Press for increased access to water and the development of appropriate facilities	Gather information and share best practice on the development of access to new bodies of water	Report available. Best practice shared on on-going basis	Support the proposal around the re-opening of Nymboida Power Station	Provide letter of support to Council feasibility study by end Aug
			Confirm 'rules of engagement' for discussing releases with Hydro Tas	Clarity within community as to proper process by end Dec
	Lead and support initiatives for the development of facilities for paddling generally and slalom and sprint facilities in particular	Facility development guide developed with arguments supporting increased water access	Determine opportunities for greater involvement in Queensland	Understanding of capacity for events on Tully and Barron Rivers by end Oct
1.6 Increase participation			Develop Wildwater within Queensland	Determine best point of contact for Wildwater in Queensland by end July

### 2 STRATEGIC AREA: Promoting and supporting pathways for those seeking to be the best they can be in their chosen area

- The most important function of the PACWTC is to improve the pathways for our athletes and to coordinate same on a national basis
- Well-defined athlete pathways are essential not only in encouraging participation and retention but also for the success of our participants at the international level. Our pathways should encourage participation and be consistent in each state, providing similar opportunities for athletes
- There is currently a risk of intellectual property from current and former participants being lost to the sport, so efforts must be made to engage these people within the sport's pathways.
- There is an opportunity for Wildwater to set the standards which are expected within the discipline, around areas such as: training programs; selection criteria; and expectations of national team members.

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACWTC Actions	PACWTC Measures/Status
2.1 Develop athlete pathway for all disciplines to encourage more participation, better retention and improved performance	Continue work to develop long-term pathway plans for all disciplines, working across these disciplines to optimise opportunities where appropriate	4-year development plans in place aligned to 4-year RSP	Develop athlete pathway with consideration to be given to using FTEM model	Determine what pathway models are in existence within BAS/VIS by end July
			Set expectations for standards within the sport	Develop policy around tour behaviour standards by end Dec
			Develop and publicise agreed selection criteria	Provide draft criteria for consultation by end Aug
	Develop consistent pathway programs across Australia in all disciplines	Pathway programs clearly documented for all disciplines	Confirm agreed athlete pathway model	Produce 'one pager' of athlete pathway to distribute to community by end Nov

2.3 Focus on the development of coach pathways, education and mentoring program	Review and agree framework for general and discipline specific pathways for coaches	Framework finalised, agreed and fully documented	Support PA coach education pathway	Support coach education review being undertaken by PA as required
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### 3 STRATEGIC AREA: Developing our competitions into events that demand attention and involvement

- Increasing the capacity of our sport across the country to plan and deliver Wildwater events must be a major priority
- We must confirm a national calendar of events which provides timely information and opportunities to Wildwater paddlers throughout Australia. While an Australian Wildwater Series cannot be achieved immediately, this is a longterm goal and we will make incremental steps towards it.
- We see opportunities for Wildwater Canoeing in the hosting of major international events, not only as participation opportunities for our athletes but as catalysts for the development of our sport. Before consideration can be given to bidding for international events, however, the domestic competition calendar must be strengthened
- As our numbers grow, so will interest in participation events. These events will become an asset, so we must seek to ensure that our community has an ownership stake in these events as they grow through our involvement

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACWTC Actions	PACWTC Measures/Status
3.1 Review the purpose of our major events and align programs and structure to purpose	Align our events with our overall strategic direction, create a long-term event strategy and establishing a clear purpose for all National and State events	A documented strategic direction for our events is in place and regularly reviewed	Support PA Competitions Committee and the production of the Competitions Strategy	Ensure Wildwater attendance at November meeting
			Work towards the development of a Wildwater National Series	Determine current events, including State Championships, which could form part of series by end July
				Prepare position paper on National Series by end Nov
			Develop three year national calendar	Draft provided by end Aug
			Develop post event survey to facilitate event feedback and encourage event improvement	Survey in place for National Championships end Dec, considering feedback provided in 2018/19

			Investigate the potential for Wildwater to be include as a part of multidiscipline events	Gauge athlete interest in linking with sprint rather than slalom events (due to better access to water) by end Sept
	Clarify the role of events in our selection processes and publish information on selection as early as possible based on the events that athletes are being selected for	Selection framework reviewed and modified	Develop and publicise agreed selection criteria	Provide draft criteria for consultation by end Aug
3.3 Build competition and event capacity to ensure consistent paddling offering	Update or develop comprehensive events manuals covering the planning an dexecution of all major events, reviewing and updating information after each event	Event manuals provide transfer of knowledge providing consistency between events and continuous improvement	Develop events manual	Draft to be provided by end Dec
	Review governance arrangements and clearly identify the role of Technical Committees in the planning and execution of events	Governance and management of events clarified, including role of Technical Committees	Confirm host agreement for National Championships	Confirm host agreement with PNSW WWTC by end Aug
			Ensure functioning STCs are in place for all States where Wildwater is possible.	Confirm status of all STCs by end Aug

### 5 STRATEGIC AREA: Ensuring that our connected community benefits from strong, consultative leadership that adds genuine value

- A strong national brand, with all the organisations involved aligned and providing relevant products, services and other offerings, is essential in people recognising the value of an on-going association with what we offer as a community
- We recognise that the Paddle Australia Wildwater Canoeing Technical Committee has a responsibility to provide leadership and stability for the sport

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACWTC Actions	PACWTC Measures/Status
5.3 Reinforce the role of PA as the 'authority voice' in advocating for paddling	Build a stakeholder engagement plan, focused on those that are engaged in, or have the potential to engage in mutually beneficial relationships with the paddling community	Stakeholder engagement plan documented and agreed.	Ensure that the PACWTC is a functional and consultative body that adds value	Add two further members to the Committee by end Aug



### 6 STRATEGIC AREA: Reflecting a positive, shared brand, culture and values that make everyone want to be 'a part of paddling'

- We believe that Wildwater Canoeing has a culture of thriving on challenges presented in a natural setting
- We are far stronger as a unified whole and need to be more connected at local, state and national levels. More regular interaction is important, ideally as part of an on-going planning and review process
- As a community, we need to be clear about what we stand for and this needs to be reflected by all of us, in everything we do
- Tasmania in particular is home to some of the best courses in the world, in large part due to a longterm collaboration with Hydro Tasmania. We must ensure that we champion this relationship within the national paddling community and look at ways to deliver value to Hydro Tasmania under this partnership

Activities	Actions	Measures/Status	PACWTC Actions	PACWTC Measures/Status
6.1 Agree and promote our core values and what we stand for as a paddling community	PA Board to workshop and agree, then canvas at state workshops held to discuss the strategic vision and plan	Views sought from the community show an increasing understanding of our culture and values and pride in being involved. Methodology to be established but likely to be on line census	Include discussion of culture and values within National Championships survey	Collate survey information by end Jan
6.4 Work with organisations whose values and activities are consistent with our own	When discussing partnerships, ensure that our culture and values are aligned and that any involvement is in our mutual interest	Relationships formed with partners that share our culture and values	Continue and build on the successful relationship with Hydro Tasmania	Ensure that partner's needs are met around recognition for services provided
				Collaborate with Hydro Tasmania on future endeavours which promote Cataract Gorge releases by end Jun