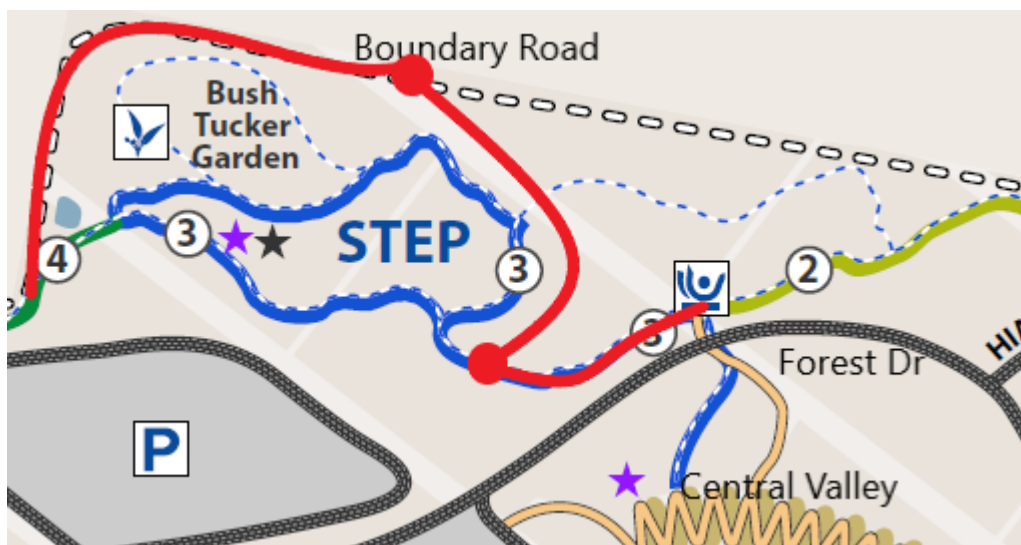


Cycle Trails National Arboretum Canberra

The National Arboretum Canberra has recently finished a series of multi-purpose trails for cyclists and walkers across 250 hectares. These tracks provide a great opportunity for scenic family rides and commuters. STEP (Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park), located at Forest 20, has experienced increased cycle use through the regional botanic garden it has developed.

The primary purpose of the STEP regional botanic garden is education and relaxation, where visitors and volunteers can experience a quiet contemplative space and learn about local native trees, understorey plant species and bird life. Forest 20 is particularly attractive to nature enthusiasts, families, tourists and education groups who value its diversity and quiet ambience. The mix of cyclists and pedestrians has become dangerous with many near misses. This is especially noticeable with differing mobility levels of pedestrians along narrow winding pathways. Additionally, cyclists are unfortunately damaging the granite footpaths designed for walkers, crushing tree root systems, compacting soil and creating potential damage to new plantings when they ride 'cross country' in Forest 20 (STEP).

To resolve the horticultural and public safety problems, the National Arboretum is permanently ceasing all cycling access to Forest 20 (STEP), and alternatively accommodating cyclists with a specially constructed external graded bike track that runs parallel to the regional botanic garden. This new cycling bike track links the Mesa Oaks Forest multi-purpose track directly to Boundary Road, ensuring cyclists have an enjoyable ride around the boundaries of Forest 20. (See map below)



If you are cycling downhill from the 'Backwards sculpture', the new bike track turns sharp right just after it emerges from the Mesa Oak Forest and before the bridge entry to Forest 20 (STEP). The cycle track now continues downhill between Forest 20 (STEP) and the Mesa Oaks forest, joining up with the Boundary Road where a left turn will take cyclists around the edge of Forest 20 (STEP).

If you are cycling in the reverse direction, along Boundary Road, there is now no access up the granite paths and into Forest 20 (STEP), but the new track connects the road with the track through the Mesa Oak Forest.

Your cooperation in following the signs and helping us in protecting STEP's planted areas and paths would be much appreciated. If you have any concerns or would like information about the Southern Tablelands Botanic Garden at Forest 20, please contact: secretary@step.asn.au

Many thanks

Judy Smith

(President – Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park Inc)