

# Redwood removed from bike trail plan

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MOUNTAIN biking trails will no longer be built through a delicate ecosystem on the Toowoomba escarpment, with the council voting to change its plans for the area.

In a massive win for grassroots community action, councillors voted unanimously at Wednesday's committee to scrap planned trails through Redwood Park as part of the previously-approved Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley Escarpment Mountain Bike Master Plan.

The original proposal included more than 70km of trails to be built across both Redwood and Jubilee Parks, in a bid to boost tourism through the sport.

Environmental consultants Redleaf's 20-month investigation into Redwood found "significant" flora and fauna species at Redwood that could be impacted by biking trails.

It comes after months of advocacy by environmental groups, who believed Redwood needed to be preserved.

"This to me is a win-win," Councillor Tim McMahon (above) said during the meeting.

"We have those who say they want 100km of nationally significant trails ... and on the other side they said the environmental and cultural significance of Redwood is not to be overlooked and we said OK (to both)."

The council will now start work on alternative routes across the escarpment, as well as consider funding for the ongoing maintenance of biking trails in future budgets.

Friends of Escarpment Parks president Hugh Krenske praised the council for the decision, saying the next step was to designate Redwood as a national park.

"We think there's enough there in Redwood to get it declared as something significant," he said.

"I had a 90-minute chat with State Environment Minister Meaghan Scanlon (and) put the case across and we're working with her to bring extra protection to Redwood."