



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

5 JUNE 2025

Blind and Low-Vision Travellers Set to Explore Northern Rivers Rail Trail and Support Accessible Tourism in the Tweed

This weekend, a group of blind and low-vision adventurers will experience the stunning Northern Rivers Rail Trail, offering a valuable “boots on the ground” perspective for local tourism operators in the Tweed region.

The initiative is led by Cocky Guides, an award-winning not-for-profit tour operator dedicated to providing blind and low-vision Australians with multisensory small-group travel experiences. Since 2018, Cocky Guides has opened up new horizons for over 1,500 travellers, across 70 destinations nationwide—their latest milestone: launching their first-ever active itinerary in the Tweed region.

With growing demand from participants to include physical activity in their adventures, Cocky Guides has responded by creating new itineraries that integrate walking, hiking, and other mobility-based experiences. The Tweed marks the first region to host these active, inclusive trips.

“We’ve always incorporated physical elements in our experiences — from kayaking to sensory walks,” said James (Buck) McFarlane, founder of Cocky Guides. “But now more of our travellers want to actively connect with local communities. This weekend, we’ll join the Kingscliff Parkrun and explore the Northern Rivers Rail Trail, supporting and spotlighting inclusive tourism experiences along the way.”

Cocky Guides has collaborated with The Tweed Tourism Co to curate an itinerary that highlights the region’s accessible and inclusive offerings. The group will visit a diverse mix of local attractions and businesses, including:

- Husk Farm Distillery, North Tumbulgum
- Mantra on Salt Beach, Kingscliff
- Tropical Fruit World, Duranbah
- Tweed Regional Gallery & Margaret Olley Art Centre, Murwillumbah South
- Tweed Valley Farmhouse Cheeses, Burringbar
- Club Burringbar, Burringbar



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Sally Scott, General Manager of The Tweed Tourism Co, praised the initiative:

“I’ve seen how hard local operators are working to improve accessibility and inclusion. Hosting Cocky Guides and their travellers is a powerful opportunity to put those improvements into action and gather valuable feedback from real guests with lived experience.”

To take these learnings further, Cocky Guides and The Tweed Tourism Co are looking to coordinate accessible tourism workshops and famil trips for local businesses, offering operators the chance to gain knowledge directly from travellers with low vision.

Looking ahead, Cocky Guides and The Tweed Tourism Co will co-host accessible tourism workshops and famil trips for local businesses, offering operators the chance to learn directly from travellers with low vision.

Interested in Getting Involved?

If you're an accommodation provider, tourism attraction, or hospitality venue in the Australian visitor economy and would like to support blind and low-vision travellers, reach out to partnerships@cockyguides.com.au

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CONTACT

For further information, please get in touch with James (Buck) McFarlane at james.mcfarlane@cockyguides.com.au or call 0403 827 666

ABOUT COCKY GUIDES

Since its launch on August 15, 2018, Cocky Guides has become Australia’s leading provider of adventure and travel experiences for blind and low-vision travellers. Their purpose is to inspire independence, connection, and discovery — one sensory journey at a time.

Cocky Guides was awarded Gold for Excellence in Accessible Tourism at the 2023 NSW Tourism Awards and was a national finalist at the 2023 Australian Tourism Awards.

With over 575,000 Australians living with blindness or low vision, Cocky Guides is on a mission to make travel more inclusive, accessible, and empowering.

Learn more: www.cockyguides.com.au