

4.1

RECREATION ASSESSMENT

QUEENSLAND CRA/RFA STEERING COMMITTEE

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QUEENSLAND CRA/RFA STEERING COMMITTEE

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Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Queensland and Commonwealth governments. The Queensland and Commonwealth governments do not accept responsibility for any advice or information in relation to this material.

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SUMMARY

This report has been prepared for the joint Commonwealth/State Steering Committee which oversees the Comprehensive Regional Assessment (CRA) of forests in the South East Queensland CRA region.

The Comprehensive Regional Assessment provides the scientific basis on which the State and Commonwealth governments will sign a Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) for the forests of the South East Queensland CRA region. This agreement will determine the future of the region's forests, providing a balance between conservation and ecologically sustainable use of forest resources.

This study was undertaken to identify the impact of potential allocation of forested land to the conservation estate on the diversity of and opportunities available to recreation in South-East Queensland. The study concentrated on a number of activities that for legislative or policy reasons are discouraged from the conservation estate. Horse riding, four wheel driving, mountain bike riding, trail bike riding and camping with a dog or horse were identified as the activities most affected by any change in tenure resulting from the RFA.

An inventory of those State forests in which these activities occur was conducted and the data analysed to determine the Recreation Site Significance of each. Recreational Site Significance (RSS) is the level of **importance** an individual site has in the provision of a particular recreational opportunity. The higher the site significance the greater the potential loss of opportunity with tenure change and the greater the potential community discontent. The purpose of the RSS data is to demonstrate to future decision makers within the RFA process, the level of social cost, that would result from the potential loss of recreational opportunity for each tenure change decision.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Forest-based outdoor recreation opportunities exist on forested land of all tenures. The majority of demand for recreation access however, falls on land managed by either the Department of Natural Resources (State Forests) or the Department of Environment and Heritage (conservation reserves including national parks). Each manages its resources according to different legislation and individual policies resulting in different recreation opportunities offered, activities allowed and facilities provided.

The majority of passive recreation activities such as camping, bush walking and picnicking are treated in a similar manner by the two management agencies. There are however a number of activities that, for legislative or policy reasons or as a function of the resource base, are discouraged or cannot be offered according to land tenure. Activities of a more active nature, or involve the introduction of non-native species such as horses tend to be discouraged from the conservation estate. Potential changes in tenure resulting from establishment of a CAR reserve system will have an impact on the recreation opportunities provided on the current tenure.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- to identify current tenure related legislative and policy constraints placed on recreational use of forested land in SEQ
- to identify current provision of ‘indicator’ recreational opportunities in forested land in SEQ
- to identify the impact of potential allocation of forested land to the conservation estate on the diversity of and opportunities available to recreation in SEQ.

2. RECREATION MANAGEMENT

Outdoor recreation is in demand and the demand is increasing. Provision of a diverse range of quality outdoor recreation opportunities is essential if this demand is to be satisfied.

The growth in outdoor recreation over the past few decades has made the task of recreation planning and management more complex. A number of issues need to be addressed in managing outdoor recreation and these include:

- the nature of nature based outdoor recreation
- access and supply issues regarding recreation sites
- managing for quality.

2.1 WHAT IS NATURE BASED OUTDOOR RECREATION?

To clarify exactly what outdoor recreation is, the following definitions are offered:

Recreation (as opposed to sport) can be identified as those activities:

- that people undertake for enjoyment in their own time
- are not based on formal competition and/or organised administration
- that lack a formal set of rules.

Outdoor recreation activities are those that:

- are undertaken outside the confines of a building (ie outdoors)
- do not involve organised competition or formal rules
- can be undertaken without the existence of any built infrastructure
- may require large areas of land, water, and/or air
- may require outdoor areas of predominantly unmodified natural landscapes.

In addition the outdoor recreation offered on both conservation reserves and State forests is considered nature-based. Nature-based recreation activities are those:

- not requiring substantial modification to the environment (modifications usually limited to managing impact eg tracks, camp sites etc)
- where a natural setting is critical to client participation
- which foster an appreciation of natural resources or their management.

The requirement for activities to be nature-based is outlined in the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (conservation reserves) and in policy (State forests).

For the purposes of this report the term 'recreation' will be used to refer to nature-based, outdoor recreation.

It is acknowledged that there is a competitive component to some of the recreation pursuits currently conducted on State forest ie. competitive mountain bike riding. These activities are considered less nature-based than the non-competitive component of the activity and as such their management is affected.

2.2 THE NEED FOR ACCESS

The basic requirement for recreation is an area in which to recreate ie access to land that is suitable and desirable. A lack of available, suitable, desirable and accessible land makes outdoor recreation neither possible nor satisfactory.

Very little recreation demand is currently met by freehold land. The exact reason for this is unclear, however concerns over possible injuries and associated legal liability, may be a factor. Freehold land suitable for recreation has also been lost to urban development, placing more recreation demand on public sector lands. The need to protect areas remaining available to recreation is becoming more critical.

In Queensland most of the large areas of public land available are located far from major centres and, consequently much of the demand for some types of outdoor recreation experiences or activities cannot be met close to major population centres. Sufficient land is simply not available in the public estate to satisfy current recreational demand (Batt 1997). In addition, not all public land is available to recreation. Availability is affected by tenure and as a result the majority of the recreational pressure is felt by the conservation reserves (DEH) and State forests (DNR).

Population growth in South-East Queensland is the highest in Australia, with the population expected to increase by one million by 2030 (Batt, 1997). It can be expected that demand will increase with population growth and with the current inadequacy in supply of recreational land on the public estate, future problems can be expected.

The sections below provide a brief overview of lands in which recreation may legally occur within South-East Queensland. Land tenure is under the management of the Department of Environment and Heritage (conservation reserves), Department of Natural Resources (State forests, reserves for community purposes, timber reserves, unallocated State land) and South East Queensland Water Board.

2.2.1 Lands under the management of Department of Environment and Heritage

(Further detail of the Department of Environment and Heritage's position on recreation management is provided in 3.2)

Category	Legislative basis	Significance for outdoor recreation
National park (Scientific)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recreation is incompatible with intent of park recreational access prohibited.
National park	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation horse riding and hunting prohibited recreation may need to be managed to limit impact and conflict with park values (may include access restriction, group size limitations etc)
National park (Aboriginal land) and national park (Torres Strait Islander land)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation recreation may need to be managed to limit impact and conflict with traditional or customary management and other park values (may include access restriction, group size limitations etc)
Conservation park	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation recreation may need to be managed to limit impact and conflict with park values (may include access restriction, group size limitations etc)
Resource reserve	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation horse riding and hunting prohibited recreation may need to be managed to limit impact and conflict with park values (may include access restriction, group size limitations etc)

Nature refuge (Landholders are management agency)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation Recreation access negotiated on case by case basis Recreation access as per management plan
Coordinated Conservation Area (landholders and the DEH are management agency)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation Recreation access as per management plan
World Heritage Management Areas (Landholders and the DEH are management agency)	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Regulations 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for outdoor recreation (probably currently utilised for recreation) declaration would have little impact on provision of recreation currently available.

2.2.2 Land under the management of the Department of Natural Resources

Category	Legislative basis	Significance for outdoor recreation
Reserves for community purposes	<i>Land Act 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for outdoor recreation • access depends on purpose for which reserve was established • some reserves are not intended for recreation • no mechanisms for managing recreation exists under Land Act 1994. • Recreation management provided through appointment of trustees
State forests (detail of the Department of Natural Resource's position on recreation management is provided in 3.1)	<i>Forestry Act 1959 and Regulations (currently under review)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for recreation • State forests are multiple use reserves • physical attributes and legislative control allows State forests to be managed for wide range of recreation opportunities. • other State forest uses may be incompatible (eg logging) and access may be restricted at different times in specific areas.
Timber reserves	<i>Forestry Act 1959 and regulations (currently under review)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • area of timber reserve relatively small. • similar opportunities to State forests
Unallocated State land	<i>Land Act 1994</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No function or purpose designated by law • unallocated State land intended for NP, SF or recreation area may be available for recreation

2.2.3 Land under the management of the South East Queensland Water Board

Category	Legislative basis	Significance for outdoor recreation
South East Queensland Water Board Areas	<i>South East Queensland Water Board Act 1979 and Regulations 1996</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential recreation value • majority of recreation water based • recreation managed to protect water quality • recreational use may be restricted during periods of low water and toxic algal blooms

(adapted from Batt 1997)

2.3 QUALITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

The aim of the Queensland Government, as the major provider of outdoor recreation opportunities, is not simply to provide quantity but quality of recreation. In the annual report of the Department of Environment (1996) one of the desired outcomes within the Conservation Strategy is 'better community access, safety and nature-based recreation opportunities'. The statement 'ensuring that high quality, safe and sustainable opportunities are provided' appears in the DNR document *What we do for you...* (1998). Both these statements infer the provision of quality, and quantity does not equate to quality.

If any generalisation can be made about outdoor recreation it is that people have very diverse motives and desires. Individual perceptions of 'quality' outdoor recreation experiences varies significantly not only between different activities but also within each activity (not all bush walkers, horse riders and campers are alike). Managing outdoor recreation and providing opportunities for the 'average' visitor is not satisfactory as the 'average' visitor does not adequately represent the

heterogenous nature of recreationists. Quality of recreation experience is best, therefore, assured through the provision of a diverse range of opportunities.

Promoting diversity of recreational experiences is also important for social equity reasons. Failing to provide diversity of opportunities suggests elitism, favouritism and discrimination (Clark and Stankey 1979).

In addition, the current framework of regional level criteria and indicators of forest management in Australia states that a 'diverse range of recreation opportunities is important. Minority forest use interests need to be supported not just 'popular activities' (Montreal Process Implementation Group 1998 p60).

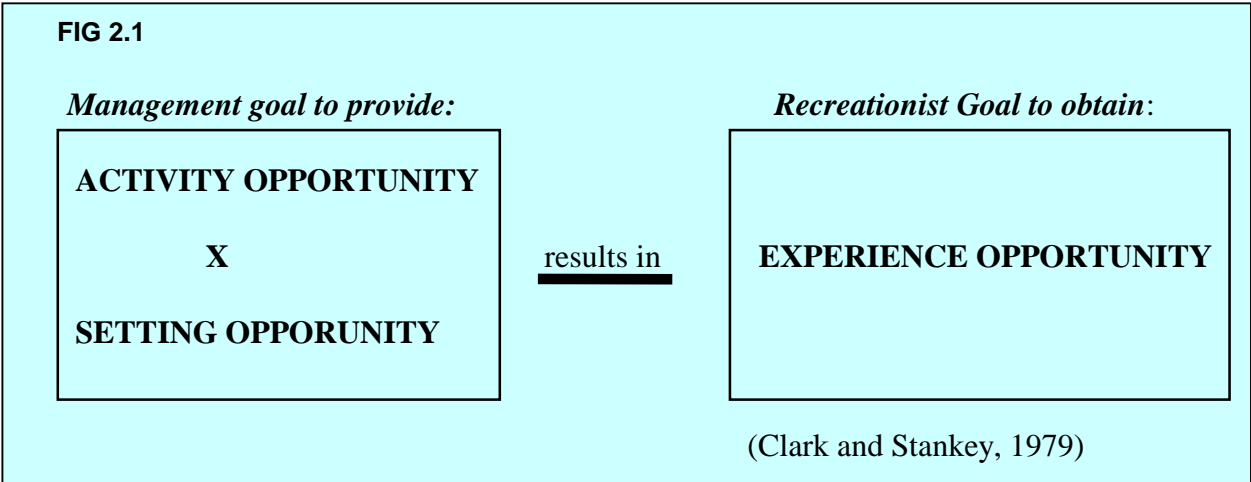
2.3.1 Recreation opportunities vs recreation experience

While the goal of the recreationist is to obtain satisfying *experiences* it is the role of the resource manager to provide a broad range of *opportunities* for obtaining these experiences.

A recreation opportunity is the opportunity to undertake a particular activity (eg horse riding) in a particular landscape setting (eg urban park or wilderness area). Each combination of activity and setting represents a different recreation.

Diversity of opportunity can be achieved by allowing a broad range of activities to occur and by managing a range of landscape settings. (A landscape setting is a description of the level of naturalness of an area that can be classified by a combination of physical, social and managerial characteristics.)

The personal *experience* that an individual recreationist has will be based not only on the opportunity but, among others, an individual's motivations and experience. Within one opportunity each individual will have a different experience. By providing a range of opportunities the recreationist can select the opportunity best suited to the desired experience.



2.4 CONCLUSION

Recreation demand on Queensland's State forests and conservation reserves is high and increasing constantly. Sufficient land is not presently available within these reserves to adequately cater for the current needs of recreationist. With the increase in population this pressure will only increase.

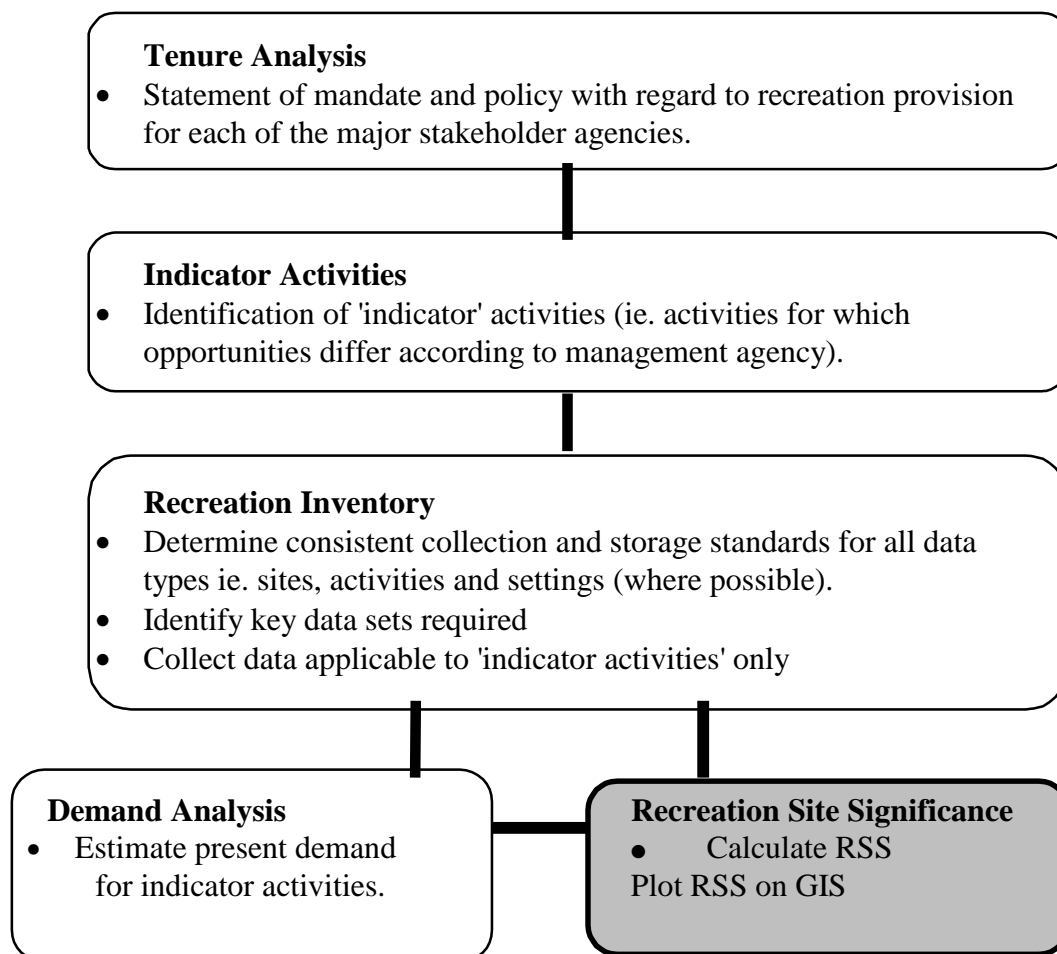
Perhaps the greatest challenge faced in the public provision of recreation opportunities is to meet the diversity of demand that exists and will continue to grow (Scheyer 1988). We are currently fortunate to have a very diverse resource base with which to meet this challenge.

State forests and conservation reserves play different roles within the broader landscape and in the provision of recreation opportunities due to differences in legislative constraints, management mandates and subsequent policies. Together they provide a diverse range of opportunities. Diversity of opportunity is important to the community.

3. METHODOLOGY

A tenure analysis of the two major land management agencies (DEH and DNR) was conducted as a means of determining the impact tenure change would have on the provision of recreation opportunities. As an outcome of this analysis a number of activities that would most likely be viewed as incompatible with conservation estate and therefore impacted by possible future tenure changes were identified. Each State forest was then evaluated to provide its Recreational Site Significance (RSS), for a number of 'indicator activities'. The purpose of the RSS data is to demonstrate to future decision makers within the RFA process, the level of social cost, that would result from the potential loss of recreational opportunity for each tenure change decision.

3.1 OUTLINE



3.2. TENURE ANALYSIS

The following statements were prepared by both the Department of Natural Resources (concerning State forest management) and the Department of Environment (now known as the Department of Environment and Heritage) concerning the management of conservation reserves.

3.2.1 Recreational Use of State Forests

The cardinal principle of management of State forests, as outlined in the Forestry Act 1959 Section 33 is:

...the permanent reservation of such areas for the purpose of producing timber and associated products in perpetuity and of protecting a watershed therein.

In carrying out the objects and purposes of this Act in respect to State forests the corporation shall use and manage the area concerned in such a manner as appears to the corporation most appropriate to achieve the aforesaid purposes and therein shall have due regard to –

...the possibility of applying the area to recreational purposes

In addition, Section 34 empowers the corporation to –

promote and encourage the use of a State forest or any part or parts thereof for recreational purposes

The *Forestry Act 1959* encourages the application of multiple use management principles in which a range of values of State forests, including recreation, are considered in an even handed manner with no one value being given priority over another. The *Forestry Act* is currently under review and any amendments are intended to strengthen the multiple use management approach to State forests. The *Forestry Act* and its associated regulations provide extensive recreation management powers, however the *Forestry Act 1959* places no legislative restrictions on the recreation activities possible within State forests. Departmental policy, based on an assessment of the greater public interest, therefore defines the recreational use of State forests. Current policy is to provide a diversity of quality recreation activities that are:

Nature based

Most State forests are natural or predominantly natural and in such DNR's policy is to provide nature based recreation opportunities that are defined as those:

- not requiring substantial modification of the natural environment
- where a natural setting is critical to client participation and
- which foster an appreciation of natural resources or their management.

Activities that value State forests for reasons other than their naturalness, (eg. availability, size etc) or place their primary focus on goals other than the appreciation of nature (eg. winning, fitness equipment etc) are not inherently nature based.

Setting appropriateness

Within the wide range of State forest sites which are classified as natural, there are degrees of naturalness and therefore a range of settings (defined by a combination of managerial, social and biological factors). DNR manages recreation to ensure diversity of opportunities and as different recreation activities and experiences require different settings DNR tailors its management of areas to ensure a diverse range of settings. Setting appropriate recreation activities do not inappropriately change the characteristics of the place. The level of impact an activity has on a setting is dependent on the manner in which an activity is conducted as well as where it is undertaken. The management decision required is to satisfy client needs with the minimum of impact on the natural environment. In practical terms this means finding the most disturbed/least natural settings which will satisfy clients needs.

The settings that DNR manage, while varying widely, have a high proportion of predominantly natural areas that are significantly impacted by humans. In addition the settings available within the State forest estate, due to the very nature of State forests, often contain uses which reinforce disturbed settings and maintain them over time. The disturbed settings found within State forests are able to accommodate a wide range of recreational activities.

Safe

DNR has guidelines for identifying hazards and assessing risks. DNR make a reasoned judgement on the safety of an activity based on the probability of an occurrence and the severity of the outcome along with the residual liability and duty of care retained by the Department.

The manner in which an activity is undertaken will affect the associated level of safety with factors such as speed increasing the level of risk. In effect higher risk activities would not be considered without considerable risk management, insurance and indemnity.

Sustainability

An activity is demonstrably unsustainable if, after applying normal management standards to the activity, unplanned impacts to the State forest, its settings or its facilities are detectable, persistent and increasing. It is inappropriate to allow unsustainable use to continue on the basis that additional resources would reduce the impact. If changes to an unsustainable activity are not possible the activity will be terminated.

Attuned to community needs

The legitimate aspirations of the community for the use of State forests are vital considerations in prioritising recreation management. Favoured activities are popular, have substantial, unsatisfied demand, and would increase the diversity of recreational opportunities available to the community.

Compatible with other forest uses.

An assessment of compatibility of use is dependant on the site itself and the existing rim of legitimate forest uses on the site. Recreational activities that are less likely to have compatibility problems are those which:

- require a small area
- are flexible in the site characteristics they require
- can be relocated
- are passive or slow
- are quiet
- are non-destructive or non-consumptive.

The need for activities to be compatible with other forest uses can both limit recreation opportunities (eg. use of logging roads, exclusion from areas and visual damage to the forest while other activities occur etc) and increase opportunities due to the infrastructure established for other activities (ie. extra roads, tracks and maintenance.)

Exclusivity

The exclusive use of State forests by individuals or groups is discouraged. On occasions exclusivity is desirable due to the safety of non-participants, a high degree of incompatibility, to protect commercial interests or to protect ‘special’ user experiences. Exclusivity is inherently incompatible with State forest tenure and the community access rights they guarantee and is therefore not acceptable except in extraordinary circumstances.

Exemptions

Activities not meeting one or more of the preceding criteria they may still be considered as possible in State forests if the activity can be demonstrated to be:

- overwhelmingly in the public interest
- the activity cannot be reasonably located off State forest (all other possible venues have been investigated)
- the area of State forest to be used is not natural.

3.2.2 Visitor Use of Protected Areas

(draft 14 August, 1997)

Note

This paper provides a brief overview of the Department of Environment’s [now known as Department of Environment and Heritage] position on visitor use of protected areas. It is intended to provide guidance as an interim arrangement while more detailed policies and guidelines are developed. This preliminary position has not been reviewed or endorsed and may not reflect that which is finally adopted by the Department.

The Department of Environment, through Queensland National Parks and Wildlife, manages nearly seven million hectares of Queensland’s land area under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and caters for about 8–10 million visits each year.

The *Nature Conservation Act 1992* identifies 11 classes of protected areas. Four of these can apply only to State owned land — National Parks (Scientific), National Parks, Conservation Parks, and Resources Reserves. National Parks (Aboriginal land) and National Parks (Torres Strait Islander land) can be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander land leased back to the State, or leasehold land subleased to the State. The remaining five classes of protected area — Nature Refuges, Coordinated Conservation Areas, Wilderness Areas, World Heritage Management Areas and International Agreement Areas — can occur over various tenures (including other protected areas) with support

from the land holder, though a compulsory nature refuge can be declared by the Minister. Additionally, there are four recreation areas managed under the *Recreation Areas Management Act 1988* that cover some national parks and associated lands.

Each class of protected area has management principles that specify how the area is to be managed. For example, the Act directs that a national park is to be managed to:

- provide, to the greatest possible extent, for the permanent preservation of the area's natural condition and the protection of the area's cultural resources and values
- present the area's cultural and natural resources and their values
- ensure that the only use of the area is nature-based and ecologically sustainable.

The management principle mentioned in subsection (a) is the cardinal principle for the management of national parks. This ensures that, in the case of national parks, where presenting the values may compromise their protection, protection takes precedence. The management principles for each class of protected area are documented in Appendix 1.

Within this legislative framework, the Department of Environment is committed to providing a diversity of high quality recreation opportunities to ensure that the widest possible cross section of the community is able to access and appreciate the special natural and cultural values of Queensland's protected areas, commensurate with their reasonable needs, interests, capabilities and expectations. Apart from National Park (Scientific) which requires a permit for access, the remaining 10 classes of protected area do not of themselves preclude community access, although controls may be implemented in line with area-specific management requirements.

Consistent with this, placing priority on maintaining the natural and cultural features of a protected area is considered the best way of protecting both the special values of the park and the opportunities they provide for visitor use.

The Department recognises that parks are for people — but every part of every park is not for every single visitor. This is based on the firm belief that protected areas (parks) cannot and should not be managed to be all things to all people. By providing a diversity of visitor opportunities (at a regional scale) that are consistent with the protection of natural and cultural values, conservation objectives can be achieved and quality opportunities provided. Quality in this context is defined as the extent to which the needs and expectations of visitors are met or exceeded by the reality of the experience. As managers, we have the ability to manipulate both sides of the quality equation — by providing information to develop appropriate pre-visit expectations or by managing the site to conform to the needs and expectations of visitors. In most cases a combination of both approaches is used in the quest to provide quality opportunities.

As a principle of social justice, different classes of users should have equitable access to recreational opportunities, while taking in the need to minimise environmental impacts and to maintain the range of available opportunities and quality of experiences. Equitable access means access to opportunities on a consistent, fair and reasonable basis. It does not mean that everyone will have equal access to every site (which may have the effect of diminishing opportunities). Nor does it mean that particular opportunities must be made more available. What it does mean is that users from different 'groups', including those with special needs, should have opportunities to access and appreciate a representative range of the natural and cultural opportunities contained within protected areas.

The appropriateness of activities in each class of protected area can be assessed according to the extent to which the activity:

- is consistent with the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, the *Nature Conservation Regulation 1994*, protected area policies, and provisions of a management plan for the area
- is based on presenting or appreciating the natural and cultural values of the protected area
- conflicts with or complements other uses of surrounding areas (in or near the protected area)
- requires the construction or provision of additional infrastructure and support services
- can be supported by the natural resource (ie. is sustainable)
- has safety, risk management or liability implications
- has the potential to impact on the natural and cultural values of the protected area.

In terms of the diversity of recreational opportunities, national parks and similar protected areas are intended to provide the less developed, nature-based opportunities, with the more developed opportunities generally left for other tenures and service providers.

3.2.3 Analysis of the impact on recreational use of forested land due to a change in tenure.

There are differences in the way national parks and State forests are managed. These differences are, however, not as clear as may be anticipated. Other than the legislative prohibition of horses and dogs on national parks, differences in management are subtle, blurred and in some cases site specific. This makes the analysis of the implications of potential tenure changes on recreation a consideration of a set of complex issues including the current political and social climate.

The major difference between the two departments is their overall management mandate. The Department of Environment and Heritage has the mandate of conservation of natural and cultural values. The Department of Natural Resources manages State forests as multiple use reserves which infers that several goods and values are simultaneously produced and utilised in a sustainable manner, as a means to optimise the net social benefit to the community

Under these management mandates, the majority of passive recreation activities such as bush walking, picnicking etc are treated in a similar manner by the two management agencies. There are however a number of activities that, for legislative or policy reasons or as a function of the resource base, are discouraged or cannot be offered according to land tenure. Within the conservation estate, where *'presenting the values [visitor access] compromises protection of the values of the area, protection takes precedence'* (Department of Environment, 1997). As a result activities of a more active nature or those that involve the introduction of non-native species such as horses tend to be discouraged from the conservation estate.

Potential changes in tenure resulting from establishment of a CAR reserve system may, as a result, have an impact on the recreation opportunities provided. Each activity and site would need to be considered on a site-by-site basis by management however the activities most likely to be considered a threat to conservation and as a result affected by tenure change include:

- horse riding
- trail bike riding
- mountain bike riding
- 4WDing

- camping with horse or dog

For the purposes of this study these activities have been termed ‘indicator activities’.

3.3 RECREATION INVENTORY

This project deals specifically with potential changes to recreation opportunities resulting from allocation of State forest to a CAR reserve system. As an outcome of the RFA, a number of State forests may or may not be converted into some form of conservation tenure. As a result, the recreation opportunities currently available on State forests may be impacted by such a change. For this reason this study concentrated on the indicator activities currently occurring on State forests

All State forests within Queensland are divided into one or more management units. Each of these units are assigned an identification number and are known as MUIDS. These MUIDS form a convenient means of subdividing each State forest into smaller areas for recreation assessment.

Those MUIDS in which one or more of the identified indicator activities currently take place were assessed for the following data:

- activity
- site condition
- site quality for each activity
- setting
- visitation.

An inventory form (see Appendix 2) was developed to assist in the collection of raw data regarding the indicator activities. Meetings with DNR and DPI-F staff were arranged within the South-East Queensland biogeographical region and those staff members most familiar with each State forest completed the inventory forms. This raw data was put through a rigorous analysis as part of the process in determining the recreational site significance (RSS) for each MUID for each activity. This value was plotted on a series of maps (see Maps 1–4).

3.4 ANALYSIS

3.4.1 Site based activities

The site based activities include developed camping sites where camping with a dog or horse is allowed or catered. The number of locations in which facilities have been developed and where this form of camping is allowed are very few and scattered within the region. Due to this factor they have not been mapped. Results are instead provided in a list format (Appendix 5).

3.4.2 Linear activities.

Linear activities including horse riding, 4WDing, trail bike riding, and mountain bike riding are not isolated to one site but instead utilise many kilometres of track network through individual State forests and in some cases through more than one State forest. All data for linear activities has been analysed and mapped.

The analysis of the data was designed to incorporate the raw data (site condition, visitation etc) into a calculation of recreational site significance for each activity.

Outlined below is a description of the analytical approach taken.

Recreational setting

Within the wide range of State forest sites which are classified as natural, there are degrees of naturalness and therefore a range of settings. DNR has for a number of years managed these settings using a management tool known as the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS). The underlying assumption of management by setting is that the most important ingredient in meeting a community's recreational needs is variety – variety in the recreational activities available and the surroundings (settings) in which they can be undertaken. By allowing for a range of activities to be undertaken across a range of settings many different recreational opportunities become available to the community. The experience of a single activity can vary greatly depending on the setting in which that activity takes place. An example would be walking in a developed State forest recreation area compared to the experience of walking in a very natural undeveloped semi-wilderness area. Each experience is very different, satisfying different requirements and expectations.

By managing a range of settings DNR hopefully satisfies as many people as possible. The original US-developed ROS divided natural landscapes into six classes or settings. In 1996 this spectrum was expanded by DNR and Office of Sport and Recreation to include nine landscape classes to encompass less natural settings ensuring the spectrum ran from completely altered landscapes such as factory sites or urban infrastructures to the most remote wilderness. This study used the 1–9 scale. The physical, social and managerial criteria used to classify areas are included in Appendix 3.

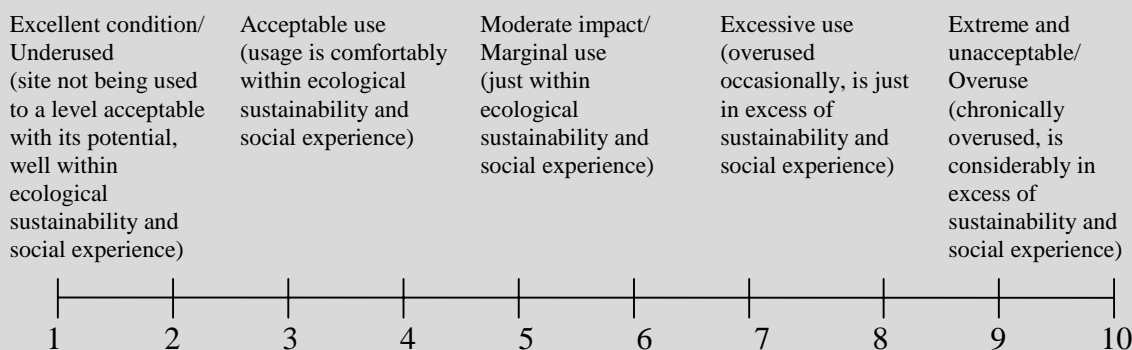
Due to differences in the experience of each activity in a different landscape setting, each combination of setting and activity is accepted as representing a different recreational opportunity and has been treated as such in the analysis.

Site condition

Site condition was recorded on a 1–10 scale for each MUID associated with each activity. The scale used is outlined Fig 3.1

Figure 3.1: Site condition and use levels

Overuse should be taken to mean a level of usage that is corrupting the setting or experience. A physical indication of overuse is site damage. A social indicator is crowding. Select the number that best represents the current level of use and impact.



Individual site condition is considered secondary to the regional site condition. Poor regional site condition indicates overuse of the majority of sites thus indicating demand outstrips supply. Removal of one site from supply would therefore have a major impact as already overused sites would probably be unable to accommodate the additional use thus causing a displacement of current users. Good regional condition indicates underutilisation of a majority of sites, sufficient supply for demand and the possibility of excess supply. Removal of a site would have little effect as other currently underutilised sites could generally absorb excess usage.

The relationship between the importance of regional site condition vs local or individual site condition is assumed to be 2:1. To assist in developing a site condition factor to be used in the calculation:

- the local site condition data was converted to a 10 score
- the average site condition for a particular activity in a particular setting (representing regional site condition) is compared to the local of site condition (that recorded for each MUID) in a look up table
- final condition factor score determined.

Table 1. Site Condition Factor Calculator

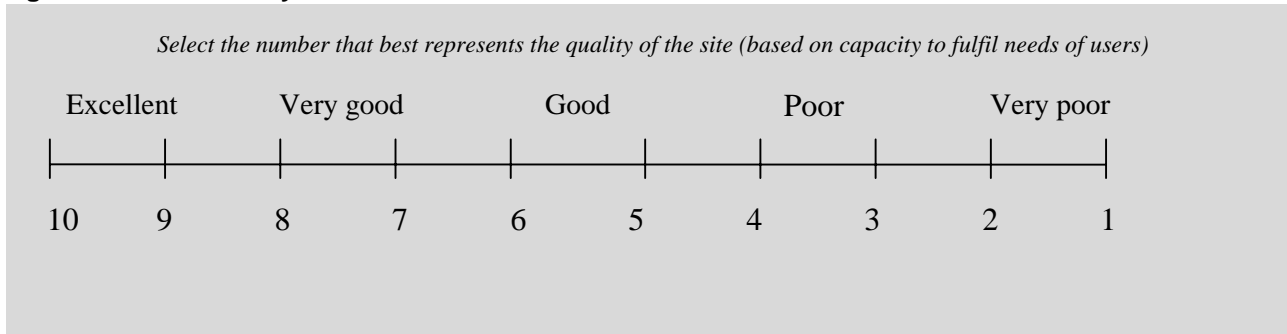
10	7	7	7	8	8	8	9	9	10	10
9	7	7	7	8	8	8	9	9	9	9
8	6	6	7	7	7	7	8	8	9	9
7	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8	8	8
6	5	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	8
5	5	5	5	5	6	6	7	7	7	7
4	4	4	4	5	5	5	6	7	7	7
3	3	3	3	4	4	5	6	6	6	6
2	2	2	2	3	3	4	5	5	5	6
1	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Regional impact Localised impact

Site quality

Each MUID was assessed as to its quality for a particular activity. Different activities require different components within the landscape before a site could be termed a good site for a particular activity. Site quality is determined by assessing the quality (diversity, naturalness, scenic value, attraction and significance) of a site’s natural attributes in relation to their affect/influence on the users level of recreation satisfaction. The fundamental question is –*How do the site’s natural attributes contribute to the quality of the user’s experience?* The scale used in inventorying this factor is outlined in Fig 2.

Figure 3.2. Site Quality



Visitation

The percentage contribution each State forests makes to the overall visitation for each activity/setting combination was converted to a score on a 1–10 scale. The entire State forest was used in this instance as most of the activities inventoried are of a spatial nature and the connection between or the contiguous nature of the MUIDS is important in the overall experience.

Popularity of activity

The popularity of the opportunity (activity by setting) is determined by both the gross visitation numbers for each activity and the use of a recent participation survey conducted by AC Nielson on behalf of the South East Queensland Outdoor Recreation Demand Study Steering Committee.

Management decisions to ensure sustainability and reduce conflict with other forest uses would restrict recreation visitation numbers in some areas and as a result gross visitation may not accurately reflect popularity. Due to this factor the results of the participation survey was weighted higher than gross visitation numbers by a ratio of 2:1 in calculating the popularity factor.

Recreation Site Significance

Recreational Site Significance (RSS) is the level of **importance** an individual site has in the provision of a particular recreational opportunity. The higher the RSS the greater the potential loss of opportunity with tenure change and the greater the potential community discontent and social cost.

The equation used to calculate the RSS for each activity, which incorporates all of the above factors, is:

$$RSS = (P + 3Q + 2C + 5V) / 11$$

RSS = Recreation Site significance

P = Popularity Factor

V = Visitation Factor

Q = Quality

C = Condition Factor

The RSS for each activity was plotted on separate RSS maps (see maps 1–4).

Testing of model

The model used to calculate RSS was tested using a group of recreation management experts. Three recreation managers familiar with the complex nature of recreation assessment and familiar with the State forests of South East Queensland were each asked to rate in their opinion the RSS of each of

nine state forests for a particular activity (ie horse riding). All managers were unaware of either the score calculated by the model, or those of the other individuals. The only additional information given was that of the values of the variables used in the calculation. The correlations between the managers and the model were statistically analysed by Queensland University of Technology's Statistical Consulting Unit and it was found that *'highly significant correlations existed between the three expert ratings and that of the model, and that there was no significant difference between the means of the expert ratings and the model rating. We can therefore conclude that the sample data provides no evidence of differences between expert and model ratings.'* (Queensland University of Technology, 1998). The full statistical report can be found in Appendix 4.

3.5 MAP INTERPRETATION

RSS for each MUID and activity within the State forests of South-East Queensland biogeographic region has been plotted in Maps 1–4.

An RSS is not recorded for every MUID or every State forest and a MUID may appear blank on the map. Lack of an RSS indicates either an insignificant level of use for that particular activity or a lack of data.

As previously mentioned RSS is the level of **importance** an individual site has in the provision of a particular recreational opportunity. The higher the RSS the greater the potential loss of opportunity with tenure change and the greater the potential community discontent. In addition the RSS of individual MUIDs should not be considered in isolation. A majority of the activities included in the study (horse riding, trail bike riding, 4WD'ing, and mountain bike riding) are linear activities (requiring a length of track) and are as a result, not isolated to one MUID. These activities involve travelling across the landscape and may involve entire State forests or, on occasions more than one State forest. The contiguous nature of MUIDs and State forests can be important to the recreational experience.

Additional information regarding the setting, site condition, site quality and visitation of each MUID is available in a database. This information is important when considering potential displacement of recreationists. If alternate sites are to be found, they should be of an equivalent setting [in order to ensure the same opportunity (see 2.3.1 for definition) is offered, and that quality of and condition of the sites is comparable to ensure equitable quality of opportunity]. Sites already experiencing impact should not be considered as alternate sites, as further use would be unsustainable.

3.6 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

A series of four workshops were held to which a full range of recreation groups were invited. Two of these workshops involved indicator activity recreation groups and the two non-indicator activity recreation groups.

3.6.1 Indicator Activity Recreation Workshops

The aim of the two indicator activity recreation workshops was:

- to present the report to the recreationists most likely to be affected by possible tenure change
- to verify data collected
- to allow the recreationists an opportunity to make a submission to the process.

A copy of the draft 4.1a Recreation Report was provided to each of the recreation groups invited.

Participants at these workshops represented:

- horse riding (endurance and trail riding)
- mountain bike riding
- 4WDing
- trail bike riding.

Although camping with a horse or dog were also identified as indicator activities no representative group could be identified to represent the views of participants.

This series of workshops confirmed that, in the view of the participants, activities identified within the study as indicator activities, would experience some impact should State forest tenure change to that of conservation reserve.

Where discrepancies between the RSS and participant views were expressed, data was checked. In a majority of cases the RSS could be explained and remained as originally calculated. In a few instances data deficiencies were identified and the RSS recalculated.

Written submissions completed by each representative group in attendance outlining the views of participants in each indicator activity have been included as Appendices 6–13.

3.6.2 Non-indicator Activity Recreation Workshops

The aim of the two non-indicator activity recreation workshops was to:

- present the report to the recreation groups not identified with the study (eg orienteering, camping etc)
- identify any other recreation activities other than those identified as indicator activities within the study that may be impacted (positively and negatively) by possible tenure change
- allow the recreationists an opportunity to make a submission to the process.

A copy of the draft 4.1a Recreation Report was provided to each of the recreation groups invited.

Participants at these workshops represented:

- orienteering
- rogaining
- camping/caravanning
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- scouts
- Girl Guides
- Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation
- Queensland Naturalists

- fossicking
- National Parks Association.

A full list of groups invited to the workshops is provided in Appendix 14.

Participants in this series of workshops identified very little difference between the management of State forests and conservation reserves and as a result identified very little impact (positive or negative) expected as a result of possible tenure conversion. This confirms the identification of indicator activities as those activities most likely to experience change as a result of tenure conversion.

The results of the workshop were documented and have been included as Appendix 15.

4. CONCLUSION

The provision of and management of recreation opportunities is a complex business. To meet the needs of the Queensland recreating public, sustainable recreation opportunities of appropriate quantity and quality of recreation opportunities need to be provided.

4.1 CURRENT SITUATION

Very little recreation demand is currently met by freehold land. Freehold land suitable for recreation has also been lost to urban development, placing more recreation demand on public sector lands. Within Queensland the vast majority of this demand is satisfied by conservation reserves and State forests.

The conservation estate plays a significant role in the provision of recreation opportunities. This is evidenced by the gross visitation numbers estimated for the reserves at 5.1 million people in SE Qld and by the proportion of the budget spent on expenses related to recreation and visitor management. national parks and similar protected areas are intended to provide the less developed, passive opportunities, with the more developed and active opportunities generally left for other tenures (refer 3.2.2).

State forests as multiple use reserves also play a significant role in recreation opportunity provision. Not only do large numbers of people choose to recreate within State forests (3.1 million visitors in SE Qld) but the opportunities offered differ from those offered within the conservation estate. State forests are multiple use reserves and by the very nature of more disturbed settings allow for the more active recreation that is either prohibited or discouraged from the conservation estate as well as passive recreation.

The provision of both the passive and active opportunities ensures diversity of opportunity. Quality of recreation experience is best assured through the provision of a diverse range of opportunities (Clark and Stankey 1979) and as such maintaining a balance of both tenures is essential.

4.2 EFFECT OF TENURE CHANGE

The potential effects that converting State forest into conservation reserve may have on the recreation opportunities currently available to the Queensland public include:

4.2.1 Potential increase in visitation

It is quite feasible that, due to the higher profile of national parks, there will be an increase in visitation. Such increases have been documented in the cases of iconic locations such as Fraser Island. Debate does, however, still exist as to whether the increase in visitation was a result of the higher profile possessed by national parks or the significant media attention the area received due to both the conflict over timber harvesting and the conversion. The question that needs to be posed is whether an 'average' State forest (average in terms of attractiveness for recreation) would experience any increase in visitation when converted to an 'average national park' or would only those areas representing natural icons experience an increase in visitation. In addition, quantity does not equate with quality.

4.2.2 Decrease in diversity

Any increases in visitation that may occur in converted areas would occur within the range of recreation opportunities currently offered in the conservation estate. Any increase would, therefore, be experienced solely within the more passive less developed activities. Any decrease in the multiple use estate, due to conversion of State forest to conservation park, would result in a decrease in opportunity and visitation within the more active and developed activities. This would indicate a reduction in diversity of opportunity offered. A loss of diversity has been equated to a loss in quality (Clark and Stankey 1979). By reducing diversity in this manner, the less active activities and opportunities are favoured, raising the issue of equity.

A recent South East Queensland Outdoor Recreation Demand Study was conducted by AC Nielson on behalf of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Outdoor Recreation Demand Study Steering Committee. In order to ensure a broad range of outdoor recreation activities was included in the study, broad categories of outdoor recreation (12 in total) were identified. The indicator activities identified within the CRA Recreation Study represent four of the 10 categories associated with a forested environment. Should a loss of opportunity be experienced by all four indicator activities 40 per cent of the recreation opportunities currently available within the forests of SE Qld will be impacted.

Change in tenure and the resulting loss of opportunity may lead to displacement of users. Displacement of users into areas remaining available will, through an increase in visitation change the landscape setting (see definition p. 25). This change would be due to an impact on the social characteristics defining the setting. A shift to more developed settings due to increase in visitation is not satisfactory. A loss of the more natural less developed settings reduces the diversity of opportunities available (see 2.3.1).

Non indicator activities experience a higher recreation demand (eg 65 per cent for picnicking and 60 per cent for bush walking) than indicator activities (eg. 25 per cent for bicycle riding, 20 per cent for 4WD'ing, 7 per cent for horse riding and 7 per cent for trail bike riding). However, the current

framework of regional level criteria and indicators of forest management in Australia states that a 'diverse range of recreation opportunities is important' and that 'minority forest use interests need to be supported not just "popular activities"' (Montreal Process Implementation Group, 1998 p60).

4.2.3 Displacement of recreationists and pressure on conservation reserves

Demand for more active opportunities is expected to continue to grow, and recreationists potentially displaced by any loss of opportunity will continue to demand access to the crown estate. This is evidenced by the establishment of the Forest Recreation Reference Panel, the aim of whom it is to maximise a full diversity of outdoor recreational access within the Crown estate. As a result of any loss of opportunity, additional pressure may be placed on the management of conservation reserves to change legislation and policy to ensure opportunities for active recreation are provided. This would undermine the integrity of the conservation estate and its ability to fulfil its vital role in conserving the natural and cultural values of Queensland.

4.2.4 Cost to society

As set out under the Nationally Agreed Criteria for the Establishment of a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative Reserve System for Forests in Australia, '*where different configurations of reserves can be identified as meeting the criteria, the option which imposes the least cost on society should be adopted*'. Any loss of opportunity represents such a cost to society and any cost to society is accompanied by a degree of community discontent. The importance that recreationists place on their ability to access Crown land in pursuit of their goal needs to be adequately accounted for.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: SE4.1 (a) Forest Recreation Assessment Project Specifications

CRA/RFA PROJECT SPECIFICATION

PROJECT NAME:	Forest recreation assessment
PROJECT IDENTIFIER:	SE 4.1 (A) Forest recreation assessment
LOCATION/EXTENT:	SEQ Biogeographic region
ORGANISATION/S:	DNR ABARE
CONTACT OFFICER/S:	DNR: George Antony (J.R. Peter Hardman until 8/4/97), <i>Resource Economist</i> DNR: Brett Waring, <i>Senior Policy Officer</i> DNR: Lee-Ann Header, <i>Recreation Planning Officer</i> BRS: Dan Sun
POSTAL ADDRESS:	GA: CRA Unit, 80 Meiers Rd, Indooroopilly, Q 4068 BW: Mineral House, 41 George St, Brisbane Q 4000 LH: Mineral House, 41 George St, Brisbane Q 4000 DS: John Curtin House, PO Box E11, Parkes, ACT 2600
TELEPHONE:	GA: (07) 3896 9448 FAX: (07) 3896 9858 BW: (07) 3234 0140 (07) 3234 0326 LH: (07) 3224 6408 (07) 3224 2933 DS: (06) 272 5694 (06) 272 3882
EMAIL ADDRESS:	GA: antonyg@indcrm002.prose.dpi.qld.gov.au BW: waringb@dnr.qld.gov.au LH: headerl@dnr.qld.gov.au DS: dsun@mailpc.brs.gov.au
LINKAGES/DEPENDENCIES:	SE 4.1 (B) Economic valuation of tourism potential (Part A to provide some base data for part B) Option development process (base data set)
TYPE OF STUDY:	Resource/economic

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- to identify current tenure related legislative and policy constraints placed on recreational use of forested land in SEQ.
- to identify current provision of 'indicator' recreational opportunities in forested land in SEQ.
- to identify the impact of potential allocation of forested land to the conservation estate on the diversity of and opportunities available to recreation in SEQ.

2. BACKGROUND

Recreation opportunities exist on forested land of all tenures. On public land, the majority of passive recreation activities are treated in a similar manner by the various management agencies. There are however a number of activities that, for legislative or policy reasons or as a function of the resource base, are discouraged or cannot be offered according to land tenure. Activities of a more active or competitive nature or involve the introduction of non-native species such as horses tend to be discouraged from the conservation estate. The impacts of potential changes in tenure resulting from establishment of a CAR reserve system on recreation needs to be assessed.

3. SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

- project to deal with public forests, with focus on those under DoE and DNR management
- project to deal specifically on potential changes to recreation opportunities resulting from allocation of forest to a CAR reserve system
- estimated capacity will to the greatest extent possible be based on the principles of ESFM.

4. METHODOLOGY

This part is divided into five components:

1. Recreation Inventory
 - determine consistent collection and storage standards for all data types ie. sites, activities and settings (where possible).
 - for all indicator activities, existing data collated and assessed and data deficiencies identified.
2. Tenure Analysis
 - statement of mandate and policy with regard to recreation and tourism provision for each of the major stakeholder agencies.
 - identification of 'indicator' activities (i.e. activities for which opportunities differ according to management agency).
3. Supply Analysis
 - identify requirements of indicator activities
 - analysis of impact of allocation.
4. Demand Analysis
 - estimate present and future demand for indicator activities.
 - potential changes and predicted trends highlighted.
 - implication of demand on reservation and vice versa.

Outcomes/Outputs

- policy statement from both the DNR and DoE with regard to provision of recreation and tourism opportunities.
- compilation of inventory for forest-based indicator recreation activities.
- analysis of supply and demand for indicator activities, incorporating participation rates and population trends.
- prepare report.

Reporting

Final report to detail data collection methods, data, method of analysis, analysis and conclusions. Report will describe methodologies and outline any limitations due to timeframe, resources and staffing levels.

Support material to include map-based and electronic form of recreation inventory including facilities, opportunities and ROS classification (where available).

Progress Reports will be submitted to the SE Technical Committee at monthly intervals.

Milestones

Milestones, Timetable and Task Dependencies

Task description	Duration (w,d)	Earliest/ actual start	Actual finish	Task dependencies diagram	Who	Link to payment yes/no amount
Data collection	6,0	24/3/97	2/5/97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation of recreation inventory • Policy Statement from both the DNR and DoE with regard to recreation provision 	LH	
Analyse data	4,0	5/5/97	30/5/97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of supply and demand incorporating participation rates and population trends. 	LH, BW	
Tourism strategies & linkages	2,0	19/3/97			LN	
Write report	4,0	2/5/97	27/6/97	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare report. 	LH	

DNR: LH – Lee-Ann Hearder, BW – Brett Waring, LN – Luke Nicholls

6. BUDGET

Commonwealth	In kind:	\$.....
	Cash:	\$.....
Queensland	In kind:	\$14,000
	Cash:	\$30,000

TOTAL: \$44,000

7. PAYMENT DETAILS

NA

8. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Project performance can be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- the project outcomes are useable to distinguish between tenures
- improvement in the extent and quality of existing information
- completion of the project components in timely manner.

9. QUALITY CONTROL

Project quality will be maintained by implementing the following measures:

- Appointment of experienced recreation planner to undertake the project;
- Regular review by project management team including recreation experts.

Appendix 2: Summary of management principles for each class of protected area

Class of protected area	Management principles	Visitor opportunities	Focus
<i>National Park (Scientific)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect the area's exceptional scientific values and, in particular to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure that the processes of nature continue unaffected in the area - protect the area's biological diversity to the greatest possible extent - allow controlled scientific study and monitoring of the area's natural resources. 	Severely limited opportunities for public access.	low
<i>National Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide, to the greatest possible extent, for the permanent preservation of the area's natural condition and the protection of its cultural resources and values • present the area's cultural and natural resources and their values • ensure that the only use of the area is nature-based and ecologically sustainable. 	A range of low key, nature-based visitor opportunities towards the undeveloped end of the spectrum.	high
<i>National Park (Aboriginal land)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (to be managed as a national park), as far as practicable, in a way that is consistent with any Aboriginal tradition applicable to the area, including any tradition relating to activities in the area. 	As for national park but consistent with special management arrangements for Aboriginal interests.	med-low
<i>National Park (Torres Strait Islander land)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (to be managed as a national park), as far as practicable, in a way that is consistent with any Island custom applicable to the area, including any Island custom relating to activities in the area. 	As for national park but consistent with special management arrangements for Islander interests.	med-low
<i>Conservation Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conserve and present the area's cultural and natural resources and their values • provide for the permanent conservation of the area's natural condition to the greatest possible extent • ensure that any commercial use of the area's natural resources, including fishing and grazing, is ecologically sustainable. 	A range of nature-based visitor opportunities, potentially more diverse than that provided on national park. For example, multiple use trails (walking, horse riding and mountain biking).	high-med
<i>Resources Reserves</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise and, if appropriate, protect the area's cultural and natural resources • provide for the controlled use of the area's cultural and natural resources • ensure that the area is maintained predominantly in its natural condition. 	Potentially more diverse range of opportunities including 'consumptive' activities such as vehicle rallies.	low-med
<i>Nature Refuges</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conserve the area's significant natural resources • provide for the controlled use of the area's natural resources • provide for the interests of land-holders to be taken into account. 	Provide a diversity of recreation opportunities consistent with the interests of the various landholders.	
<i>Coordinated Conservation Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conserve the area's natural and cultural values by coordinated management involving the area's various land-holders • take account of the area's values, including its recreational, educational and commercial values • provide for the interests of the various land-holders to be maintained. 	Provide a diversity of recreation opportunities consistent with the interests of the various landholders.	

<i>Wilderness Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect or restore the wilderness values, and the cultural and natural resources, of the area to the greatest possible extent • maintain the area to preserve its capacity to evolve in the absence of significant human interference • provide opportunities for solitude and appropriate self reliant recreational and spiritual activities. 	Focus on providing outstanding 'wilderness' opportunities characterised by solitude and self reliance in unmodified, remote and natural settings.	
<i>World Heritage Management Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet international obligations in relation to the area • protect the area's internationally outstanding cultural and natural resources and its biological diversity • transmit the area's world heritage values to future generations. 	A range of recreation opportunities are possible consistent with the protection of, but usually focussed on presenting, the area's World Heritage values.	
<i>International Agreement Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain the area's importance to the conservation of nature that is the subject of significant international concern • conserve the area's native wildlife habitat as far as practicable • provide for the interests of land-holders to be taken into account. 	A range of recreation opportunities is possible, consistent with the protection of, but usually focussed on presenting, the values for which the area is subject to the international agreement.	

Appendix 2: Inventory Sheets

**C.R.A RECREATION STUDY
RECREATION ASSESSMENT**

SHEET 1

Lot/Plan No	State Forest Name	Assessor	Date

***C.R.A RECREATION STUDY
RECREATION ASSESSMENT***

SHEET 2 – LINEAR ACTIVITIES (Horse Riding, 4WD, Mountain Bike Riding, Trail Bike Riding)

State Forest	Activity type	MUIDS	Site condition (scale A)	Site quality (scale B)	Visitat.	Setting

C.R.A RECREATION STUDY RECREATION ASSESSMENT

SHEET 3 – CAMPING ACTIVITIES (with a horse/ with a dog)

Activity type	State forest	AMG	Site condition (scale A)	Site quality (scale B)	Visitat.

Appendix 3: Landscape Class Criteria

PHYSICAL

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Minimum size (ha) Terrain type a)Flat b)Undulating c)Rough d)Sea	a)50,000 b)30,000 c)10,000 d)200,000	a)20,000–50,000 b)10,000–30,000 c)3,000–10,000 d)100,000–200,000	(a)5,000 – 20,000 (b)2,000 – 10,000 (c)1,000 – 3,000 (d)50,000 – 100,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Prevalence and durability of recreation impacts	No impact on natural condition	Temporary loss of endemic vegetation in small areas which recover to pre-impact condition seasonally. Endemic fauna behavior and populations are not known to be affected by use.	Temporary or minor permanent loss of endemic vegetation and soil in small areas. Some areas only partially recovering each year. Endemic fauna behavior and pop. are infrequently changed by use for short periods.	Moderate loss of vegetation and soils on heavily used areas. Impacts persist. Sensitive endemic fauna displaced as a result of use. Behavior of other endemic fauna is occasionally modified. Endemic fauna pop. changes are noticeable.	Impacts on endemic vegetation and soil are obvious and widespread with little chance of recovery. A significant proportion of the endemic fauna displaced as a result. Endemic fauna behavior and pop. changes are obtrusive.	Impacts are widespread and pervasive. The natural condition is unlikely to recover.	Impacts are widespread, pervasive and permanent. The natural condition exists only in small remain areas.	Impacts are widespread, pervasive and permanent. The natural condition exists only in very small remnant areas.	Impacts are widespread, pervasive and permanent. The natural conduct is non-existent.
Viewscape	0% of visual landscape modified from natural condition.	<1% of visual landscape modified from natural condition	1–5% of visual landscape modified from natural condition	5–10% of visual landscape modified from natural condition.	10–25% of visual landscape modified from natural condition.	25–50% modified from natural condition.	50–85% is modified from its natural condition	85–99% is modified from its natural condition	100% is modified from its natural condition
Indicative appearance	A natural site or landscape that has not been affected by modern technological use. A wild, natural, remote area.	Predominantly natural appearing site or landscape or vegetation community. Modifications are few and dispersed.	Predominantly natural appearing site or landscape or vegetation community. Modifications are concentrated to a few dispersed nodes. Natural elements very dominant away from nodes.	Mostly natural appearing site or landscape or vegetation community. May contain some substantially modified nodes to cater for, or as a result of, use. Natural elements dominate outside these nodes.	Large blocks of native vegetation interspersed with cleared land. Structures are dispersed but readily apparent. For example a predominantly rural-agricultural site or landscape.	Structures are prominent. Natural elements just dominate in landscape, eg. a mixed rural-rural residential landscape with areas of intense cultivation.	Acreege residential intensive cultivation or other agricult; extensive urban parkland with playing fields. Built structures and other mods to the nat. landscape dominate. Natural elements exist as scattered remnants some of which may be quite large.	Residential landscapes with small commercial and industrial nodes. Natural elements exist only as small scattered remnants.	High density urban, industrial or commercial landscape.

Naturalness of overstorey	100% of natural vegetation intact.	99–100% of natural vegetation intact. <1% cleared or regenerating.	95–99% of natural vegetation intact. <5% cleared or regenerating.	90–95% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	70–90% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	50–70% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	30–15% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	< 15% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	N/A
Naturalness of understorey	100% of natural vegetation intact.	99–100% of natural vegetation intact. <1% cleared or regenerating.	95–99% of natural vegetation intact. <5% cleared or regenerating.	90–95% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	70–90% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	50–70% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	30–15% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	< 15% intact or regenerating. Remainder cleared or non-endemic ssp.	N/A
Water quality	No detectable effect on water quality or aquatic ecosystem.	No detectable effect on water quality or aquatic ecosystem.	Short term and relatively minor changes to natural stream dynamics and/or water chemistry, eg. increased turbidity, nutrient load or sediment load. Aquatic ecosystem is substantially natural.	Short term and relatively minor changes to natural stream dynamics and/or water chemistry, eg increased turbidity, nutrient load or sediment load. Aquatic ecosystem is substantially natural.	Long term and/or permanent changes to natural stream dynamics and/or water chemistry, eg. increased turbidity, nutrient load or sediment load. Aquatic ecosystem is substantially modified.	Long term and/or permanent changes to natural stream dynamics and/or water chemistry, eg. increased turbidity, nutrient load or sediment load). Aquatic ecosystem is substantially modified.	Permanent changes to natural stream dynamics, structures and/or water chemistry (e.g. increased turbidity, nutrient load, channelisation or sediment load). Aquatic ecosystem is substantially modified.	Permanent changes to natural stream dynamics, structures and/or water chemistry, eg increased turbidity, nutrient load, channelisation or sediment load). Aquatic ecosystem is substantially modified.	Permanent changes to natural stream dynamics, structures and/or water chemistry, eg.increased turbidity, nutrient load, channelisation or sediment load. Aquatic ecosystem is completely modified.

SOCIAL

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Evidence of other people (eg. signs, sounds and smells)	Non existent. No evidence present.	Short term and relatively minor evidence at nodes and along main routes. Nodes small, low impact and dispersed. No evidence (sights, sounds, smells) elsewhere.	Minor permanent evidence at nodes and along main routes. Nodes small, low impact and dispersed. Negligible evidence (sights, sounds, smells) of use elsewhere.	Substantial permanent evidence at nodes and along main routes. Nodes may be moderate and concentrate activities and people. Some evidence (sights, sounds, smells of people) elsewhere.	Readily apparent evidence of use (i.e. sights, sounds and smells) pervades use nodes, main routes and their surrounds. Nodes may be extensive with heavy concentrations of people and	Readily apparent evidence of use (i.e. sights, sounds and smells) pervades use nodes, main routes and their surrounds. Nodes may be extensive with	Widespread, pervasive and permanent except in relatively small remnant areas.	Widespread, pervasive and permanent.	Widespread, pervasive and permanent.

					activities.	heavy concentrations of people and activities.			
Sense of isolation and opportunity for solitude	Very high	High	Moderate	Moderate–low	Low	Very Low	Infrequent and usually short opportunities for solitude during daylight hours.	Rare opportunities for solitude.	No or very rare opportunities for solitude
Interparty encounters while at nodes or destinations	Non existent. Chance encounters with others are rare and usually avoidable.	Low. Users are most often alone and should be surprised to have to share locations with others.	Low to moderate. Frequent opportunities for solitude but contact with others should be expected.	Moderate to high. Frequent opportunities for solitude but contact should be expected and usually cannot be avoided.	High. Infrequent opportunity for solitude during the day. Contact should be expected and usually cannot be avoided.	Very high. Almost no opportunity for solitude during the day. Continuous and unavoidable contacts should be expected	Continuous and unavoidable contacts should be expected	Continuous and unavoidable contacts should be expected.	Continuous and unavoidable contacts should be expected.
Interparty encounters while traveling	Very few. <1 group per day	Low. < 5 groups per day	Low–moderate, 5 – 10 groups per day	Moderate to high 10 – 30 groups per day.	High. 30–50 groups per day	Very high >50 groups per day	Usually constant	Always constant	Always constant
Interparty encounters while traveling	Very few. <1 group per day	Low. < 5 groups per day	Low–moderate, 5 – 10 groups per day	Moderate to high 10 – 30 groups per day.	High. 30–50 groups per day	Very high >50 groups per day	Usually constant	Always constant	Always constant
Density/ha PAOT	< 1	< 3	3 – 5	5 – 10	10 – 60	60 – 200	>200	Unlimited	Unlimited

MANAGEMENT

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Access	No roads. Only unformed and unmarked trails.	No currently used vehicle tracks. Some formed and maintained trails.	Rough and infrequently maintained roads. Gravel surface.	Well maintained roads and tracks. Gravel roads following natural features with some steep grades and tight corners.	Gravel roads with engineered and modified alignments. Some narrow sealed roads.	Most roads and tracks are sealed and maintained. Two lane roads are common	Roads and tracks are usually sealed. Unsealed roads and tracks are maintained at a high standard.	All roads, paths and tracks are sealed or paved. Motorized access everywhere.	All roads, paths, spaces are sealed or paved. Motorized access everywhere.
Evidence of management personnel	Minimum usually to monitor resource conditions.	Minimum management presence – only as necessary to achieve minimum management obligations.	Rare construction and maintenance activity. Rare patrol by enforcement staff.	Occasional construction and maintenance activity. Occasional patrol by enforcement staff.	Common construction and maintenance activity. Common patrol by enforcement staff.	Common construction and maintenance activity. Common patrol by enforcement staff.	Frequent and regular presence of management and enforcement staff.	Management and enforcement personnel are obvious and permanent.	Management and enforcement personnel are obvious and permanent.
Presence and extent of single	None	Signs may only be present for resource protection – few and dispersed.	Minimum road and track names, regulatory notices and directional	Regulatory and directional signs located at key points. Minimum interpretation	Interpretation, regulatory notices, boundary, and directional signs	Interpretation, regulatory notices, boundary, and directional signs	Interpretation signs, regulatory notices, boundary, and directional signs	Unlimited	Unlimited

			signage.	signage.	sufficient to orientate and inform all visitors.	sufficient to orientate and inform all visitors.	at all intersections and regularly along roads and tracks. Advertising signs may be present.		
Rules, regulations and law enforcement	Communicated off site. Users unaware of management.	Communicated off site. Minimum patrol for sustainability monitoring and life preservation. Users rarely aware of management.	Communicated off site. Minimum patrol for sustainability monitoring and life preservation. Users rarely aware of management.	On-site signage and supervision as required for safety and sustainability. Users occasionally aware of management.	A strong and visible management presence. Users commonly aware of management.	A strong and visible management presence. users commonly aware of management.	A strong, visible management presence. Users are almost always aware of management rules and regulations.	Constant education, reinforcement or enforcement.	Constant education, reinforcement or enforcement.
Presence of management and visitor infrastructure.	Nil	Only constructed where no other alternative can be found (e.g. communications towers). Structures are dispersed and unobtrusive.	Rare, dispersed and unobtrusive structures.	Few, small, dispersed structures are apparent, but blend into natural background.	Structures are readily apparent and can be quite large but blend in to natural background.	Structures are readily apparent and can be quite large but blend in to natural background.	Built structures are readily apparent and often designed to stand out. Infrastructure is usually provided in all public spaces.	Built structures are readily apparent and often designed to stand out. Infrastructure is usually provided in all public spaces.	Large, obvious, attention grabbing, dominating all senses. Unavoidable.

Appendix 4: A Comparison of Expert and Model Rating of State Forests in Southeast QLD.

The following data were obtained regarding expert and model ratings of state forests in southeast Queensland. The first three columns are the ratings given on nine forests, and the last is that given by the model under examination. All persons rating the forest were unaware of either the models rating, or those of the other individuals. The only additional information given was that of the values of the variables used in the model-rating scheme for each forest. It was found that highly significant correlations existed between the three expert ratings and that of the model, and that there was no significant difference between the means of the expert ratings and the model rating. We can therefore conclude that the sample data provides no evidence of differences between expert and model ratings.

Data and methods

Expert1 (E1)	Expert2 (E2)	Expert3 (E3)	Model (Model)
2.0000	2.4000	3.0000	2.6000
2.0000	2.4000	3.0000	2.6000
4.0000	2.8000	4.0000	3.1800
5.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.2700
5.0000	3.4000	5.0000	3.9000
5.0000	3.6000	5.0000	4.3200
6.0000	4.8000	5.5000	5.2100
6.0000	5.0000	6.0000	5.2000
7.0000	7.1000	8.0000	7.6000

The sample correlation coefficients without correction are

$$\begin{aligned} \text{corr}(E1,E2) &= 0.8552 \\ \text{corr}(E1,E3) &= 0.9129 \\ \text{corr}(E2,E3) &= 0.9752 \\ \text{corr}(E1,Md) &= 0.8727 \\ \text{corr}(E2,Md) &= 0.9944 \\ \text{corr}(E3,Md) &= 0.9861 \end{aligned}$$

Due to the small sample size however ($N = 9$), we must make a correction to the sample correlations so that we have an unbiased estimate. ie. so that the expected value of the sample correlation coefficient is actually the true correlation coefficient. This correction takes the form, for a particular sample correlation 'r', of

$$(\text{Adjusted correlation}) \text{adj_corr} = \sqrt{1 - (1-r^2)*(N - 1)/(N-2)}$$

and then gives us the matrix of unbiased sample correlation coefficients

$$\begin{aligned} \text{adj_corr}(E1,E2) &= 0.8324 \\ \text{adj_corr}(E1,E3) &= 0.8997 \\ \text{adj_corr}(E2,E3) &= 0.9716 \\ \text{adj_corr}(E1,Md) &= 0.8530 \\ \text{adj_corr}(E2,Md) &= 0.9936 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{adj_corr}(E3, \text{Md}) = 0.9841$$

which are still quite high. 95% confidence intervals (CI) for these adjusted sample correlation coefficients are

$$\text{CI}(E1, E2) = (0.3764, 0.9638)$$

$$\text{CI}(E1, E3) = (0.5854, 0.9789)$$

$$\text{CI}(E2, E3) = (0.8668, 0.9942)$$

$$\text{CI}(E1, \text{Md}) = (0.4357, 0.9685)$$

$$\text{CI}(E1, \text{Md}) = (0.9689, 0.9987)$$

$$\text{CI}(E1, \text{Md}) = (0.9236, 0.9968)$$

suggesting that all correlations are significantly different from zero, and that there is a strong linear relationship between experts and the model ratings. This relationship is especially strong for experts 2 and 3. All computations above were done using Matlab version 5.2.

To test whether there is any differences in means between the three experts and the model, we should perform a one-way analysis of variance. The following calculations were done using Minitab for Windows.

One-way Analysis of Variance

Analysis of Variance for C5

Source	DF	SS	MS	F	P
C6	3	5.54	1.85	0.71	0.556
Error	32	83.79	2.62		
Total	35	89.33			

Individual 95% CIs For Mean
Based on Pooled StDev

Level	N	Mean	StDev	-----*-----
1	9	4.667	1.732	(-----*-----)
2	9	3.833	1.544	(-----*-----)
3	9	4.833	1.581	(-----*-----)
4	9	4.209	1.609	(-----*-----)

Pooled StDev = 1.618 3.0 4.0 5.0 6.0

The null hypothesis assumed for the above analysis is that there is no difference between the means the four variables. A p-value of 0.556 indicates that there is little evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Based on the sample data, we can therefore conclude that there is no significant difference between the expected forest rating by any of the experts or the model.

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Appendix 5: Data Site Based Activities

Activity	Lot /plan	State forest name	Camp site name	AMG	Site condition	Site quality	Visitation
Camp (with a dog)	283FTY1651	Benarkin State Forest	Clancy's Camp	416948, 7016267	3	8	500
Camp (with a dog)	695FTY1570	Amamoor State Forest	Amamoor Creek	455625, 7084406	3	6	3700
Camp (with a horse)	135FTY1638	Kenilworth State Forest	Charlie Moreland	465562, 7056303	4	8	0

Appendix 6: Queensland Endurance Riders Association

Submission to the Department of Natural Resources on the Recreational Assessment for the Regional Forest Agreement.

1. Purpose

This submission has been prepared by members of a sub-committee representing the Queensland Endurance Riders Association (QERA) Inc. in response to a document written by L. Hearder titled '4.1 Recreation Assessment' for the Queensland CRA/RFA Steering Committee.

2. Background

The recreation Assessment document was distributed to Outdoor Recreation Organisations for the purpose of seeking submissions on the potential effects upon outdoor recreational stakeholder groups of possible tenure changes to State forest land.

The Department of natural Resources (DNR) conducted a workshop on 19 August 1998 for outdoor recreation organisation representatives to identify forest areas of significant recreational importance to various user groups. However, due to policy issues regarding the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) that arose, the objectives of this workshop were not achieved.

The Recreation assessment study provides an overview of the potential impact on forest users if there were to be an increase in the allocation of State forest land to the Conservation Estate as an outcome of the RFA. The DNR has requested recreation organisations, including the QERA, to make a submission including the identification, from maps supplied, of State forest areas which are of significant importance to the future of Endurance riding.

3. Introduction

3.1 QERA Position Statement

The members of the QERA are endeavouring to secure access to State forest resources for the future of endurance riding in Queensland. To be able to do this and to allow this recreational sport to flourish and grow it is absolutely necessary that the areas available for horse riding activities is not diminished or lost to National Parks. We believe that forest resources should be placed in a tenure which allows for a diverse range of multiple use opportunities with appropriate management strategies.

The members of the QERA are of the strong belief that horse riding activities are compatible with conservation objectives for State forest areas. The position supported by our members is to identify all State forest areas as potentially significant for horse riding activities and events as they all may play an important role in future Endurance Riding. In selecting 'Hot Spots' the potential for jeopardising diversification, by limiting horse riding to certain forests is probable, therefore it is not in the interests of sustainable management of the forests resources or the interests of horse riding. By highlighting all State forest areas as potential horse riding a greater range of diverse

opportunities is retained as available for recreational activities according to sustainable management of the resource.

3.2 Position Statement of Outdoor Recreation Organisations

The QERA endorses the following Position Statement, which has been prepared by a working party comprised of representatives of various outdoor recreation stakeholder groups.

Position Statement 'Access to State Forests may be lost'

The use of State forests is under threat. The State Government is examining the use of State forests with a view to enlarging the national park estate. National parks preclude horse riding and constrains four wheel driving, mountain bike riding and trail bike activities in most areas. The threat of exclusion of these activities from areas that are presently State forests is real. The current review of forest use is to be completed by the end of this year. There is a strong and influential conservation lobby pressing for the enlargement of the national park estate.

The representatives of the Outdoor Recreational organisations have endorsed the following position statement on the potential loss of State forests for recreational purposes.

1. The national park estate should not be increased at the expense of State forest. National parks should be gazetted in areas of pristine wilderness. We are all conservationists and are not at odds with national parks but do not wish to see current multiple use areas of State forests declined.
2. The use of State forests for recreational purposes such as horse riding, 4WDs, mountain and trail bikes is a legitimate and sustainable role for such areas. The demand for multiple active recreational use is increasing.
3. The setting aside of State forests for recreational purposes compliments national parks and contributes to the conservation of valued areas. Reduction in State forest areas for recreational; use will lead to over usage of those areas remaining, resulting in over use and therefore ultimate exclusion.
4. Recreational activities, such as those mentioned, make a significant contribution within the economy – providing employment in primary and secondary industries such as: textiles and clothing, motor vehicles, adventure/eco-tourism and scientific fields to mention a few. Threats to the viability of these activities will lead to a decline in employment for a significant number of people.
5. All age groups within society are able to participate in and benefit from outdoor recreation activities. In particular, it provides an avenue for family involvement as well as a valuable activity for youth, teaching respect and responsibility for life and property.
6. Recreational activities are compatible with the conservation of forest resources. All persons participating in such activities do so in a responsible manner, taking great care to protect our valuable parks and forests.

7. State and local governments should cooperate to develop long term planning of both forests and reserves for the use of a diverse range of recreational activities.

4. Response to the Report '4.1 Recreation Assessment'

Following are concerns held by the members of the QERA sub committee about sections of the content of the Recreation Assessment.

- 3.1 The assumptions implied in the report regarding horse riding, and endurance riding, which suggest that the Department is not familiar with the motivations of horse riders or the types of activities which are undertaken.
- 3.1 There is a serious concern regarding the overall implication to horse riding, and endurance riding in particular, should the RFA agreement be applied as indicated in the aforementioned document.
- 3.1 The Recreation Assessment document identifies a genuine need on behalf of recreationists for access to State forest areas for the purpose of pursuing recreational activities. Further, the paper highlights the fact that the demand for access to State forest areas will continue to increase with future population growth and the growth in outdoor recreational activities.

The QERA would suggest that any decrease in the amount of available State forest areas available for recreational use by implementing a change of tenure that would increase the conservation estate, in the face of this increasing demand for active pursuits, would seem an impractical management strategy. In particular, this approach would decrease the flexibility available to management for multiple use and the application of ecologically sustainable management strategies. We believe that the need to protect areas available for active recreation is critical. Population growth in SE Queensland is the highest in Australia and most of the available public land is located away from populated areas.

- 3.1 We firmly that any current State forest areas that are included into national park tenure, which under current legislation precludes entry to horses, is a loss to horse riders and discriminates against the activity. Further, a transfer of State forest land into national park tenure will impact on the remaining areas of State forest by increasing the visitation rates on these areas. These impacts will be heightened over the long term. Consequently, sections of the remaining areas are likely to be withdrawn from access due to the potential for unsustainable use as a result in the decline of available recreational areas from a change in tenure, further decreasing available areas and further placing pressure on remaining resources.
- 3.1 It has been indicated under item 4.2.1 Potential increase in Visitation: that an increase of visitation that has been noted to occur with tenure changes from State forest to national park. Concern exists that the approach represented in this RFA document may not be the most appropriate course of action over the long term with regard to the sustainable management of Queensland's forests. The combined impact of an increase in visitation to any future conservation estate and the added burden being applied to the reduced State forest areas which may come about as a result of this RFA would seem to have a detrimental rather than preserving effect.

- 3.1 Increasing the conservation estate has a compounded impact on those people living adjacent to these areas. Property values are likely to change. If you were in a horse riding area that is subject to tenure change, your land value drops. You can no longer ride in the surrounding forest. Tenure changes disadvantages active recreationists as referred to in the summary, 4WDs, trail bike riders, mountain bike riders, horse and endurance riders who form a significant part of the population and therefore should not be discounted.

Outdoor recreationists have a legitimate right to have access to these areas and that right needs to be preserved. The government has a role to provide recreational opportunities.

- 3.1 There is no indication within this Recreational Assessment document as to the amount or limit of State forest that could be subject to a tenure change to conservation estate.
- 3.1 Representatives of outdoor recreation organisations, or the QERA, were not availed the opportunity to have representation on the RFA Reference Panel Steering Committee. Outdoor recreational interests have had no direct voice into the process of the RFA. The RFA is an agreement that is proposed to span for the next 20 years. We would like to suggest that decisions made with such long lasting consequences without the direct input of legitimate stakeholders, is not only insulting, but a serious lack of consultation on the part of the Department of Natural Resources and the management of this study. This being the case, there is a concern about the level of importance active recreationists, such as endurance riders, have within the RFA process.
- 3.1 The QERA questions the definition of recreation within the context of the Recreation Assessment document. It is a subjective interpretation to state that recreation can be identified by those activities that are not based on formal competition and/or organised administration; and lack a formal set of rules (see 2.1 What is nature based outdoor recreation). This definition is a narrow interpretation of active outdoor recreation and is pointed and discriminatory against those activities which are outdoor recreational pursuits and are in the form of organised events, are competitive and have rules. These activities cater to a broad range of motivations and objectives that are held by recreationists.
- 3.1 The resources allocated by the DNR towards comprehensive research to provide accurate recreational usage data has been inadequate, and thus fails to provide a true indication of recreational visitation, and the significance of recreational participation within the general community. Our enquiries suggest that DNR together with the firm AC Nielson and 3 Recreation Managers (familiar with the forests of the south east) analysed nine state forests areas to determine participation levels without consulting the local rangers and managers of these areas and therefore have not achieved a true indicator of the correct usage of these particular areas.

Rangers would provide a better assessment of usage in their own backyard and their consultation is imperative. The rangers know if any damage is being done, and in most cases they are pleased horse riders use the fire breaks and tracks, keeping these tracks open and clear of debris and from being overgrown with lantana. Endurance riders only use established roads, tracks and fire breaks, they do not wander through natural bush and uncleared areas and provide a vital monitoring role within SE Queensland forests.

- 3.1 It is unclear under the CRA as to the position of recreation in conservation parks. In southern states, horse riding (endurance riding) is conducted in both conservation parks and national;

parks ie. the Shazada marathon ride in NSW is conducted on national park estate. With the increase in population, impact on reduced available tenure would lead to unstable site conditions, and possible over use. We suggest that legislation on the conservation reserves be changed to provide adequate opportunities for recreationalists who would be otherwise displaced by change of tenure. Conservation and recreation can co-exist with correct management.

- 3.1 Endurance riders do not require exclusive use of forest areas, or privileged treatment. We can co-exist with other users, who generally enjoy to watch horses pass by. The Department seems to have a picture of endurance riding as a competitive speed event, this is not the case. There may be a minority who are competitive, but most are there to complete a task of endurance, completing a course with a sound horse and enjoying a different area of country they would not be able to appreciate otherwise. We feel our sport is solely nature-based, the natural setting of the forest is critical to our sport. Distance riding would become impossible with tenure changes and potential loss of opportunity for this sport along with the social and economic costs would be immense. See attached Economic Assessment.

5. The QERAs Response to Points Raised in Section 3.2.1 Recreational use of State Forests of the Recreation

The members of the QERA firmly believe that endurance riding activities within all areas of State forest are compatible with the goals of forest conservation and multiple use.

The goals being:

- nature based
- appropriate to setting
- safe
- sustainable
- attuned to community's need
- compatible with other forest users
- not requiring exclusive use.

5.1 Endurance riding is *Nature based*

Endurance riding does not require substantial modification of the environment; in fact the environmental modification are minor and temporary. The only modification to natural forest areas is the temporary placement of recyclable paper/plastic signs as markers indicating the direction of the designated route of the ride. These are attached to trees/posts using tape or string and are removed shortly after closure of the ride.

A natural setting is critical to client participation in endurance riding; and the use of natural forestry areas fosters an enormous sense of well being and appreciation for the environment. Since its establishment in 1966, endurance riding has grown enormously. Those participating in this leisurely sporting activity would agree that the primary attraction of endurance riding as opposed to other forms of equestrian events is the fact that it combines the pleasures of riding with the exhilarating feeling that accompanies a visit to our beautiful Queensland forests. Furthermore, if the use of our natural environment to horse and nature enthusiasts were unimportant, we would not have pursued

this recreation, but rather taken up other form of horse riding not involving such natural aspects. To enjoy the wonders of our natural environment from horseback is equally as important and satisfying as successfully completing the course.

5.2 Endurance riding is *Appropriate* to the Setting

Aside from the temporary use of signs as previously mentioned, endurance riding does not involve inappropriate alterations to the environment. Ride organisers plan rides using only existing tracks and trails, and riders

5.3 Endurance riding abides by *Safety* regulations

Rides are restricted to formed forestry tracks, and although the riding speed and the number participating varies, there are only limited amounts of numerous riders together. Within a short time the field of riders spreads out. As endurance events range in time from four to five hours up to a whole day and the rides are not 'sprint races'. Sensible riders set a pace at which the horse will be capable of enduring the lengthy kilometres of ride. In most circumstances this means that the pace is sustained at a trot with many periods of walking which allows plenty of time for the appreciation of the natural resources.

Ride organisers endeavour to maximise the safety of their rides by erecting temporary warning signs to alert fellow visitors to the forest area that a horse event is in progress. Substantial public liability insurance is provided by the QERA. Further, prior to every event, participants are informed of potential hazards and risks on the course and are instructed to take due care and consideration for other forest users.

5.4 Native bush land is Sustainable despite its use by endurance riders

Considering there are only (approx) 30 rides held in South-East Queensland each year, with only one or two rides in any location, the actual time spent using various forestry areas is minimal. The infrequent visits to these areas together with the usage of existing tracks only minimises the potential for adverse affects, thereby making it unlikely that unmanageable degradation would ever occur.

5.5 Endurance riding is attuned to community needs

According to DNR, an activity is attuned to community needs if it is popular. An interpretation of 'popular' in this context can be rather subjective. The QERA perceive that endurance riding is indeed a growing and popular sport. This is evident through the rapid growth in membership over the last decade. Members are extremely keen to continue using our natural forests, and the continuation of this recreational activity will increase the diversity of opportunities available to the community.

5.6 Endurance riding is compatible with other forest uses

According to the DNR there are 4.2 million hectares of state forest in Queensland, including thousands of kilometres of existing roads and tracks. The suggestion made by the DNR, that activities should require relatively small areas in order to be compatible with the other forest uses appears irrelevant. In fact, the use of small areas intensifies the potential for damage of an unsustainable nature, due to repetitive coverage of the ground rather than sparse use of vast areas.

The DNR stipulated in their definition of ‘an activity that is compatible with other forest uses’ that horse riding is potentially incompatible with other nature-based activities because it requires a relatively long length of track. Vehicles, cycles, and pedestrians ALL use varying lengths of track. Some of great length! There is potential for any forest user to use long lengths of tracks. The statement made in the document that competitive horse riding is incompatible with activities such as driving, cycling or walking may hold some truth however, it would be discriminatory to eliminate any one of these activities from forest use. All could be seen as incompatible with each other; but, such a view is merely subjective, and therefore could not be substantiated.

3.1 Endurance riders do not require exclusive

It is not a requirement of the QERA that riders have exclusive use of forest areas.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the members of the QERA are concerned with the objective of increasing the Conservation Estate by changing the tenure of State forest land as a method of management. We suggest a more appropriate and satisfactory management strategies may be applied to adequately maintain our valuable State forest resources. This would prove a fairer more equitable approach to accommodating all legitimate forms of recreational activity.

Liaison between the QERA and the DNR should continue in the interest of maintaining a cohesive partnership which would enhance the opportunity to resolve the perceived injustices that may occur should there be changes in tenure to increase the Conservation Estate within the Regional Forest Agreement.

Members of the QERA Forestry of the QERA Forestry Access sub committee

Sue Daniel
Robyn Penbroke
Bob Bartlet
Rod Strahan

1 October 1998

An Economic Cost Analysis of Campaigning an Endurance Horse for a Year

Endurance riding in Queensland impacts on a variety of different businesses in any community area. These include produce merchants, veterinarians, farriers, saddlery shops, horse chiropractors, horse float manufacturers and repairers, motor mechanics, four wheel drive workshops, horse studs, horse trainers, magazine publishers, caterers, Endurance riding association employee, and clothing retailers. Also, other volunteer organisations (such as scout groups, SES branches, rural fire brigades, show societies) which provide services (such as catering, radio support, use of facilities) at endurance events benefit from the staging of such events. Rural local community businesses also benefit when an endurance ride is staged within a rural town from the swell in population and the injection of expenditure into that particular community.

A significant amount of time and money is spent training and looking after an endurance horse. An endurance horse is a highly trained athlete, which requires the maximum amount of care and attention to achieve the best possible performance. An endurance horse takes several years of training and care before it is ready to compete as a competitive horse. All through this process of activity, the endurance riding enthusiast is supporting local business and employment.

The sport caters to riders of all ages with many family groups actively involved in the participation of varying aspects within the sport. This aspect provides the opportunity for families to share an interest together and to be actively involved contributing to create socially cohesive families.

An analysis of the direct costs associated with campaigning one horse over the period of a season is provided below. This analysis is provided to demonstrate the direct expenditure within the community as a result of the sport of endurance riding. Further to this are indirect costs, such as expenditure on four-wheel-drives, finance, property, building industry, clothing and footwear, etc, not to mention the multiplier effects of this expenditure.

Membership fees	QERA	\$ 55
	Local Club	\$ 20
Nomination fees	Marathon ride	\$160
	5X80km rides	\$240
	1X120 –160km ride	\$100
	State Championship	\$100
Saddlery	Initial cost of saddle \$1200 (life of 6 years)	\$200
	Repairs	\$100
	Bridles, halters girths etc	\$150
	Saddle blankets (2 per year)	\$160
Farrier	Horse shoeing (every 5 weeks in work)	\$520
	Trims	\$ 20
	Teeth	\$ 30
Feed	Hay – 2 bales/week @ \$7	\$728
	Chaff – ½ weeks @ \$14	\$364
	Grain	\$532
	Supplements / electrolytes	\$500
	Worming – 6 times @ \$15	\$ 90

Chiropractic	3 visits @ \$50	\$150
Horse rugs	Summer rug	\$120
	Winter rugs	\$220
	Repairs	\$ 50
Vehicle	Float registration	\$ 90
	Travelling to 8 local rides	\$480
	Some riders travel interstate	
Rider equipment, boots, jodhpurs and riding clothes		\$300
Veterinary expenses		\$400
TOTAL		\$5 879

This total provides an average direct annual expenditure for competing with one horse over a period of a year. Many riders train and compete with two horses and own several other younger horses which they have bred or purchased for future mounts. The expenditure by these members would be significantly increased. Others travel greater distances depending on where they live and the number of rides which they attend in a year. Many riders also travel interstate to compete at National Championship events.

The number of members in the QERA is approximately 600. If this individual figure of \$5879 for one horse is multiplied by 600, on the assumption that each member has one horse in work, then the total economic expenditure within the community from endurance riding would be approximately \$3.5 million per annum. Some members do not ride in endurance, however, there are many members that train and ride with two or more horses at any one time. Thus, 600 horses in work for endurance riding would be considered a reasonable assessment.

Endurance riding makes a significant contribution within local economics contributing to many and varied businesses. Along with the indirect expenditure and the resultant multiplier effects endurance riding deserves recognition as providing a legitimate recreational activity which is family based and provides benefits for all participants and communities in general. If access to State forest areas became constrained then the travelling costs associated with training for and competing in endurance events would be increased. These effects would flow through the whole sport constraining the number of events, the number of participants and the growth in the sport. State forest areas are a safe venue for horse riding activity, the QERA believe that horse riding is compatible with forest conservation and require forest areas to continue to conduct endurance events.

History of Endurance Riding in Australia

Endurance riding commenced in Australia in 1966 when a group of Australians set out to prove that Australian horses had the stamina and courage to cover 100 miles in one day and still remain sound. It was initiated by a group of horse riding enthusiasts that had witnessed similar events in the United States.

The Australian Heritage of horsemanship and the tradition of travelling long distances on horseback has allowed the sport to flourish to where it is today. Currently there are approximately 600 members in the QERA. The number of horses registered for the sport is approximately 1000. It can be seen by the way the sport is growing that what started out in 1966 as a single 100 mile ride event has developed into a range of rides catering for a variety of needs throughout every State in Australia

Structure

The governing body of Endurance riding is the Australian Endurance Riders Association (AERA). Each state has its own management committee whose role is to oversee the sport within each state division. The management committee comprises of a group of dedicated individuals who volunteer their time to ensure the long term management and accountability of the sport. Each state division is comprised of incorporated clubs that are responsible for organising endurance events which are affiliated with the state division and come under the rules and regulations of the AERA.

Insurance

The AERA has an insurance policy to which each division contributes. This policy covers each affiliated endurance event for public liability.

Background

Endurance riding is an alternative to the more regimented forms of equestrian disciplines such as dressage and eventing. It is an activity that allows for a more relaxed approach and a greater freedom to enjoy the environment. It is undertaken by riders and horses covering a range of distances. For example, Introductory rides are approximately 20 km; Training rides are generally 40–60 km; and endurance rides range from 80 to 160 km to be completed in one day. Marathon rides of approximately 80 km/day over several consecutive days (up to five days) are also held.

The sport is stringently monitored both by its code of conduct and the strict veterinary regulations that have been put in place. Horse welfare is of paramount importance. This is demonstrated by the number of veterinary inspections each horse must undergo in order to be deemed 'fit to continue'.

In order for riders to complete the pre-determined course, preliminary preparation must occur. Ride organisers must identify the course with arrows that are secured to trees. This allows riders to traverse the course at their leisure. As a consequence to the course being mapped out for them they are under no obligation to ride in a group. Instead they may choose to enjoy the solitude and ride the course alone. They are under no pressure to rush, this is their recreation time. Completion times for an 80 km endurance ride vary from 4 to 9 hours depending upon the terrain and weather.

Each year the QERA formulate a ride calendar. This year it comprises 37 rides in Queensland, nineteen of which are in South East Queensland. As each ride is based in a different location, the forest area where access is required is also varied therefore reducing the impact on these areas generally to one visit per year.

Government Funding

The QERA is recognised by the Department of Sport and Recreation as a recreational sport. Considerable funding has been provided under the state-wide development program to assist in the administration and development of the sport.

Objectives

This sport attracts a broad diversity of people and is considered a family sport. Due to the way the sport has been developed it provides great opportunity for social interaction and camaraderie to flourish between people with similar interests and concerns. It is in the interest of QERA to ensure that each incorporated club manages their annual ride within the codes of conduct so as not to compromise the future of the sport.

In the statement of objectives as outlined in the constitution of the QERA the first point states “ ... to promote and foster the highest ideals of sportsmanship and horsemanship, and the spirit of endurance riding as embodied in the motto ‘ to complete is to win’ .”

A test of horsemanship over a set distance with varying terrain and under differing climate conditions with the aim of completing the distance, having enjoyed the many and varied experiences along the way. At the completion of the ride the horse must meet all the horse welfare criteria and be considered by the veterinary team as ‘fit to continue’.

Access

Horse and bush go hand in hand. Endurance riders enjoy taking their horses into forest areas where they can appreciate the diversity of scenery, vegetation and terrain that each organised ride has to offer. The importance of maintaining access to the native forest areas is brought about by this fact. Further, the requirements for such large tracks of land which can offer this diversity, eg freehold land is much more complicated to gain access to, or is simply not available for the distances required. As a rule, most endurance riders locate their ride base off-site of State forests. Consequently there is little or no requirement for amenities such as barracks, toilets or shelter sheds. It has been suggested that the main point of focus of endurance riding is to get from point A to point B in the shortest possible time, therefore the primary focus of endurance riding is not on the immediate environment. This suggestion is challenged. Intelligent individuals are capable of immersing themselves within their environment and absorbing the wonders of the bush, whether they are in the context of an endurance ride or merely riding for pleasure. It is considered that those who are leisure-riding take greater interest in their environment than those involved in an endurance ride. It must be remembered that on the average, endurance riders (during their training sessions) are leisure riders for the most part of the year. A riders ability to appreciate the surroundings is not blurred or compromised simply because they are partaking in an organised event. If anything, the sense of pleasure is heightened when competing in organised rides.

Safety

Wherever and whenever possible it is preferable to discourage use of the public road network. Unfortunately when rides are committed to the predominant use of freehold land, the use of public roads is at times unavoidable. Plantation areas, although interesting in themselves, offer far less diversity of vegetation and in some cases due to the commercial nature of that type of forest the impact which the hard-surfaced roads designed for logging trucks are quite detrimental to the legs of endurance horses, immediately and in the long term. Contrary to some belief, endurance riding is not a race from start to finish in the true sense of the word. Each rider is set on the course with the primary object of enjoying the journey and also to keep their horses within the requirements of the veterinary parameters, as was indicated in the earlier motto ‘to complete is to win’. Furthermore, the range of speeds at which horses cover the course is an indication that it is not a fast sport.

Appendix 7: Queensland Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs Inc

Recreation Assessment Queensland CRA/RFA Steering Committee

**Submission by :
The Association Land Use Committee**

1. Introduction

The Queensland Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs (QAFWDC) represents recreational four wheel drive clubs throughout Queensland and is affiliated with similar organisations throughout Australia in all involving over 35 000 vehicle owners. It is also a founding member of the Tread Lightly! program in Australia.

The QAFWDC recognises that our membership is a significant source of opinion for responsible four wheel driving and it is our belief that the aims of most four wheel drive recreationalists are consistent with our own. Therefore the QAFWDC believe that the Queensland CRA/RFA Steering Committee must recognise the regions overwhelming interest to recreational drivers for camping, fishing, driving and enjoying the forest areas and National Parks.

This response addresses the major issues and places a strong emphasis on methods of informing and educating visitors. As well, the Queensland Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs offers its assistance to the committee in determining the future of the region's forest tenures and provide a balanced view and understanding of recreation, conservation, ecological sustainability and use of 'our' forests.

The Queensland Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs appreciates the opportunity to contribute and respond to the Recreation Assessment and welcomes the opportunity to discuss any aspect of our suggestions in more detail.

3 General Comments

2.1 Trend towards Increased Leisure Activities

There is a growing emphasis within both the Commonwealth and State Government towards increased leisure activities with both seeking to prosper from increased internal and overseas tourism.

Queensland in particular is currently undergoing a transformation which is turning many once popular local holiday spots into areas catering more towards tourists. The QAFWDC acknowledges both the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments increasing reliance on foreign exchange earnings from leisure. However, it is important not to overlook the strong forces at work in the Australian community leading to extra local and regional pressure on leisure areas, particularly those within reasonable access from major population centres.

Significant factors concerning usage of leisure areas and specifically forest areas are:

- 'escapism' – a genuine and growing need for the urban dweller to get away from it all and experience a natural environment. Modern daily pressures are greater than ever before and there

is a corresponding need to leave this quick paced environment to relax the mind and soul in a peaceful locality.

- decrease in leisure time – with the trends towards longer working weeks, increased pressure to spend longer hours at work and weekend work specifically, the public now appears to enjoy less quality leisure time. Whereas in the past holiday and recreational habits were more traditional and predictable, our society enjoys less time for mobility and variation in recreational pursuits. Many of these take place in areas in local national parks and state forests close to major population centres.
- outdoor activities trend – With the decline of Australians travelling overseas and turning to the bush, the greater public are becoming more aware of the great range of outdoor activities. There has been a corresponding demand on public lands to pursue such activities and as holiday periods are for shorter durations this impacts both local and regional areas.
- decrease in disposable income – With the decrease in leisure time, the majority of the community now has less disposable income. Available disposable income is spent on outdoor camping equipment, hiking gear and the commonly available small and mid sized 4WD vehicles. Outdoor recreation is now pursued by a greater proportion of the community and again this usage has been translated into a greater demand for leisure areas.
- increase in community awareness on environmental matters – An increase in schools visiting forests and parks for educational purposes and a greater range of recreation are dependent directly on access to public lands. Remembering that this is also influenced by the international community being ‘sold’ and lured to the great Australian experience and its associated pressure on public venues.

2.2 4WD Driving and State Forest Characteristics

As noted in paragraph 2.1, there is an increasing demand for leisure areas by the Australian community and particularly in South East Queensland with areas in relatively close proximity to major population centres. There is currently a limited diversity of opportunity available in the State forests. There is limited access to a few areas and in recent years there has been a large number of track closures. This has seriously undermined the diversity and further diminishment will seriously effect the enjoyment of visitors and our members.

Currently the QAFWDC enjoys a relationship with the Department of Natural Resources whereby the association administers a rotational state forest access roster. Individual clubs are issued permits and vehicle access is limited to club members either experienced or trained in 4WD driving techniques offered through individual clubs. In all cases the designated ‘trip leader’ is responsible for a trip planning, reconnaissance and restricts members to open tracks. Additionally members are advised to keep an alert for ‘other’ vehicles and to note and report particulars to DNR.

On many occasions, trees and other obstacles that have fallen across tracks are removed to facilitate safe and easy access for all. Obstacles which are not easily removed without specialised equipment are reported to DNR at the first opportunity and included on trip reports.

From our own personal observations and department records, it should be obvious that although permits are required for legal entry to many of these areas, there are significant numbers that enter without permits. This indicates the unfulfilled public desire for suitable places to legally engage in their recreation.

Some of the features enjoyed by our enthusiasts include:

- the ability to drive and traverse various forest environs and enjoy the attendant scenery

- the ability to drive to remote areas, park and access point of interest for those less capable (generally younger children, elderly and handicapped) of long hikes and arduous treks
- the opportunity to enjoy a less hurried environment with less intrusion of rules and regulations
- experience which can be self reliant and not expecting or demanding the modern conveniences of resort facilities
- the ability to undertake these activities at a reasonable cost.

Our members seek to maximise their enjoyment from state forest areas by sensible use of their 4WD vehicles to transport themselves and their families. Recreational driving by four wheel drive is one of the most equitable experiences available because of the important attribute of it being accessible to persons of all age groups and physical differences. 4WDs allows all to appreciate and enjoy the harmony, serenity and remoteness of our natural environments.

An appreciation of the environment, flora and fauna is a primary factor influencing recreational driving by 4WD and is an adjunct to a whole range of other recreational activities. These include:

- photography – scenic and wildlife
- nature study – insects, plants, birds etc
- history – learning new facts, putting others into perspective
- environmental studies – observing the balance of the ecosystems
- geology – observing various formations
- bushwalking – canoeing, – transport to areas of interest
- sightseeing – experience of unusual or spectacular sights
- camping – in agreeable surroundings, with restricted access to modern conveniences and distraction from technological appliances.

2.3 Aspects which Currently Discourage Members or Visitors

Feedback from our members indicates that the following aspects discourage visits to certain areas:

- irresponsible use of vehicles by other visitors
- overcrowding during school holiday periods and long weekends
- lack of commitment to camp site reservation system when implemented
- overly restricted access to management and particular fire tracks
- fear of over zealous use of otherwise reasonable regulations
- inconsistent information and regulation from area to area.

Furthermore, it is felt that many holiday makers are not conversant with the regulations covering visits to certain areas and that information sheets should be readily available both at the site and at key information centres. Additionally vehicle lease and rental companies should be required to provide clients (primarily international visitors) with a shovel and educated in the disposal of human waste when such facilities are not available.

3 Specific Comments on the Assessment Plan

The following are responses to the questions submitted at the CRA Workshop. The questions are included to allow the reader to follow the response logic.

3.1 Do you believe that a conversion of State forest tenure to that of conservation reserve tenure would have an impact (positive and negative) on your activity?

Response : Yes

If so:

3.1.a What impacts do you envisage?

Response: It is envisaged that the change in tenure may result in:

- track closures and imposition of other limitations to the recreation opportunities of visitors. This has been the realisation experienced in the Fraser Island tenure change and has resulted in high and possible unsustainable tourist use of specific areas and the proliferation of facilities designed primarily for tour operators and day use facilities. As well, the exposure of these areas to large, heavy tourist buses and vehicles appear to be having a detrimental environmental impact.
- improvements to the more popular areas with the addition of impervious or hard road surfaces reduces the wilderness experience and encourages increased visitation. This erodes the 'wilderness experience' by altering the natural setting and has a greater environmental impact on these areas. As a consequence the erosion potential to the environment increase as well.
- It is also a perception by our members that state forests overall are better managed than national parks. This is a generality, however an example is tendered. On a recent weekend trip to Springbrook National Park extensive day use facilities were the agenda and for the most part underutilised. The camp ground on the other hand was crowded, over utilised and continued usage not sustainable. Discussions with the local ranger indicated an awareness of these issues and an acknowledgment that another area has been under consideration for camping, however funding was not available. Similar experiences with state forests facilities are much more positive in the enjoyment of the wilderness experience.
- it is understood that tenure changes have already been effected in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania with negative impact to recreational users. Specifics are not available at this time, however liaison with organisations in these areas has commenced and relevant issues will be tendered at a later date.

3.1.b Why do you believe these impacts will occur?

Response: These impacts will occur because:

- the RFA relates to all tenures. The information kit clearly indicates that areas for inclusion in the reserve system will be drawn from publicly owned forests, namely state forests, timber reserves, forested national parks and other state reserves. It appears that the agenda has been set and forest areas will fall under the control of the Department of Environment and either closed for conservation purposes or 'upgraded' to cater for tourism. This certainly was not proposed as an option but rather as a predetermined mandate with no other proposed alternatives.
- RFAs have been implemented in other states and the feedback from the general recreation community indicates less than favourable reception.
- there are many written statements made in the Information Kit regarding "community involvement" and 'community participation'. The QAFWDC and other recreation indicators were only recently invited to participate in workshop and given a limited time period to respond. And given the long term intent of 20 years, the QAFWDC, and surely other recreationalists, perceive this as inappropriate and unacceptable.

- participation on the Forest Reference Panel and RFA Steering Committee is represented by the industry, commercial forest users, graziers, beekeepers and conservation groups. From our perspective it appears that the panel and committee does not value the recreation community or its input, concerns and issues.

3.1.c What are the consequences of these impacts?

Response: The consequences of these impacts will be:

- tenure change to national park will potentially result in an increase in visitation. As stated in the assessment report the most relevant case is the conversion of Fraser Island. State forests in the Brisbane and other urban areas are already experiencing capacity visitation levels and increases will have a detrimental impact on the environment.
- when similar changes were made in the Victorian High Country, the environment, from a conservation perspective, was partially destroyed to facilitate road access for standard vehicles to remote bushwalking/camping sites. The majority of 4D drive enthusiasts have an interest in conservation. It is the natural bush that lures us away for the weekend or for the occasional day trip.
- it is anticipated that the loss of recreation opportunities may have negative social impacts. These benefits include the ability to:
 - enjoy contact with relatively intact natural areas;
 - discover and be educated about natural areas and satisfy human curiosities;
 - recover and liberate oneself from the normal responsibilities of everyday life;
 - create opportunities for social contact in a non-urban setting;
 - create opportunities for self discovery and self-actualisation.
- literature also suggests that excluding the community from environmental areas does not result in increases in the appreciation for these areas. Who will be there to fight for these and other areas if they are not appreciated by the community?
- undoubtedly some tenure changes will result in closure for conservation purposes and will be lost to opportunity and recreation. That is except to the elitists and ‘conservationists’ committed to long and arduous treks.
- many extra visitors are attracted to the area simply because of the tenure name change, that is from forestry to conservation park. This style of visitor generally has a much higher expectation as to the standard of road and facilities. These improvements are costly and beyond the financial resources of the land manager to provide. The management response to this problem is generally to close the area completely thus compounding the problem and causing greater use of the open areas.
- by removing opportunities from a system that is experiencing a high level of use, there is an increased risk of illegal use. As mentioned previously, it has been observed that there are significant numbers of people who now enter areas illegally. The QAFWDC and its affiliated clubs educate their members in the issues of access, such as which areas are available and the methods of obtaining access to these areas. They are also educated in the consequences of not acting responsibly. Such actions not only affect themselves, but everyone with the same club sticker on their vehicle and club members in general. However it is plausible that with access for four wheel driving restricted and difficult to come by, more four wheel drivers may become frustrated and enter areas illegally to satisfy their unfulfilled desires. Illegal use has the potential to cause damage to sensitive areas. Legal regulated use such as currently used in state forests is much more sustainable.

3.1 What issues, specific to your recreational activity, needs to be addressed?

Response: The following issues need to be addressed:

- a greater variety of experience options should be pursued. A key element should be education and within our recreation, certification in 4WD driving including appreciation of conservation. Currently a national accredited 4WD driver course developed by the Australian National Four Wheel Drive Council exists and is presented by several state 4WD associations and commercial training providers.
- four wheel driving is a legitimate form of recreation and opportunities should be provided for its participants. Each form of recreation is entitled to and should be provided with opportunities for their own form of wilderness experience, from the tourist coach passenger through to the self sufficient bush walker. For four wheel drivers, current management methods mean that state forests are our major source of this experience.
- the Recreation Assessment broadly acknowledges the importance of state forests to recreationists and that such areas are being well patronised. However there are no assurances that the total area available for our form of recreation will be maintained through opening additional areas to compensate for the loss of existing areas. Further to this additional areas should have similar recreational opportunities, such as large continuous tracts of forest for our type of wilderness experience.
- the Recreation Assessment report has identified that certain types of recreation will be severely impacted by changes in state forest tenure. However there is no suggestion that such an impact warrants inclusion on the CRA/RFA Steering Committee or Forest Reference Panel. The report should conclude that there is an oversight in the management of the study in this regard and that this oversight should be corrected by the inclusion of representatives on the appropriate committees in numbers commensurate with other interested groups represented on the existing committees.
- four wheel drivers use the forest for day trips, weekend trips and occasionally for longer stays. The state forests of this region offer large tracts of forest which are ideally suited for exploring during a weekend or longer trip. The four wheel driver can easily spend the weekend driving without encountering a bitumen road if so desired. It is highly likely that large tracts of state forest will be split into a number of smaller sections separated by national park in the CRA/RFA process. The new national parks will not offer four wheel drive access between the remaining sections of state forest. The four wheel drive users will have to make a lengthy detour along mundane bitumen roads if they are to travel between the two separated sections. Their alternative option is to use one section of the state forest more intensively. In both cases their outdoor experience is detracted from by the resultant lack of diversity of opportunity due to the change.

3.3 Are there any areas of the CRA Recreation Report that are of concern to you?

Response: Areas of the CRA Recreation Report that are of concern include:

- the assessment appears to be the only study conducted on recreation for the RFA process. The aim of this study is stated as ‘to identify the impact of potential allocation of forested land to the conservation estate on the diversity of and opportunities available to recreation in South East Queensland.’ (p. 10). If this is the case and it was aimed at identifying the impact on recreational groups, it has fallen short primarily by not utilising recreational user groups in the course of the study.
- the report seems to support the legitimacy of outdoor recreation but has not offered any of the ‘economic contribution to the region’ (p. 13), as proposed in Fact Sheet Four of the Information Kit. The assessment should study the benefits gained by allowing recreational activities to continue in forested areas, not just in economic terms but also in the benefits to society as well

By not including this element, the Steering Committee has shown that it has already come to a conclusion on the future of recreational activities in forest areas.

- the assessment recognises that "Sufficient land is simply not available in the public estate to satisfy current recreational demand", and yet asserts that more land will be lost to recreational activities. It is obvious then that the growing population indicated in the assessment will have a resultant increase on demand for forest usage. If the RFA actually intended to identify the best uses and management of all parks in the region, why doesn't the Recreational Assessment examine all of the National Parks as well as the State Forests for recreational activities? Additionally why didn't the assessment base as one of its criteria on suitability for recreational activities instead of visitation? Most of these areas have already been closed to recreation and visitation has no relationship to potential usage.
- the maps do not reflect qualitative information. The basis of the RSS rating was determined by calculating the site condition, popularity, quality and visitation figures using a calculation (p. 28). There is no means of finding a qualitative evaluation of the State Forests under threat other than the quantitative statistics, which seem to be considerably deficient in detail. As a summary, these maps do not help the interpretation of the data and the raw data is not presented in a discernible form. What is the Steering Committee going to do with these maps? How will they use or understand them?
- the approach made to the Queensland Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs in early August, after the assessment was released, seems to indicate that there was no serious intention to conduct this process in a consultative manner. The assessment is seen as an attempt to convince a major user group, namely recreational users, that the Steering Committee recognises the legitimacy of outdoor recreation, yet clearly has no intention to allow it to continue using much of the public land.

3.3.a Any areas that you disagree with

Response: The areas that we disagree with are:

- section 2.2 implies that the needs of recreationalists are not being met because of a lack of public land. The QAFWDC believes consideration should be given to areas that are currently closed including some of the management roads. These areas are closed to the timber industry and there is little commercial value to the state and commonwealth governments. As a result, there is little or no incentive to manage these for recreation potential
- data validity is questioned. The report indicates that three recreation managers familiar with recreation assessment were used to rate site significance. Firstly, the question as to why "experts" were used. Why weren't recreational users and or the public invited to rate and at the very least why wasn't this data obtained as a control and quality check? Secondly, why were the values of the variables provided? Isn't this really predetermining the results? Furthermore, QUTs Statistical Consulting Unit clearly states that the source data was not independently verified and is believed to be reliable.
- the site-based activities referenced in Appendix 5 is incomplete. The QAFWDC agrees that there are few sites with these types of facilities however there at least two that not included. These are:
 - Booloumba Creek Camping Grounds located in Kenilworth State Forest. It is assumed that the regulations are the same for both campgrounds.
 - Big Trees Camp Grounds located in Bellthorpe State Forest. It is assumed that since the forest is posted with horse traffic markers that camping with dog or horse are permitted.
- figure 3.1 indicates a single scale to represent both site condition and use levels. We would suggest that the indicated correlation between these variables is not a direct relationship, We argue that a site can be in excellent condition and the use level 'high' given a managed approach

to both visitation and recreation. It is therefore recommended that two scales be used. One to grade the usage and the other to grade the site condition.

- forest areas are closed to access. Therefore the usage scale should also include a 0 in the scale rating. This would facilitate mapping areas currently closed to the public and allow the "owners" to visualise and compare the various areas and their classifications.
- in Appendix 5 under the column titled Visitation there are a series of numbers. The Visitation paragraph on page 28 of the report however states that this should represent a percentage and converted to a score on a 1–10 scale. As the numbers in Appendix 5 do not represent a percentage, what do the numbers represent? Why is there a 'X' for Charlie Moreland's campground.
- the impact of the RFA on recreation is flawed because it:
 - doesn't provide an appropriate terms of reference
 - doesn't meet the direction indicated in the Information Kit ('economic – contribution to the region' (p. 13))
 - doesn't attempt to evaluate the cost to society if these activities are diminished
 - didn't directly use the recreation users for data gathering
 - doesn't study all of the public land suitable for recreational activities
 - doesn't accurately evaluate the potential of State forests
 - doesn't recognise that some State forests are already intensely managed in a partnership between the DNR and recreation groups
 - doesn't attempt to evaluate the true social and economic impacts of closures
 - doesn't provide a substantial conclusion based on the data obtained during the study
 - doesn't provide options or recommendations based on the data obtained during the study
 - doesn't provide the information required to interpret the key maps
 - doesn't seem to have any influence in the final RFA process.

3.3.b Any areas you believe require more explanation

Response: Areas that require more explanation include:

- cost to society
- access to crown land is an issue and yes, don't under estimate our determination.

3.3.c Any aspect missing from the report

Response: Report aspects that should be considered are:

- options. Generally most reports are written much like this one with one major exception – options. The conclusion in thin report states the obvious risks and clearly notes that the least cost on society is the recreation opportunity. There does not appear to be any attempt to develop options. Management practices can be altered and recreation opportunities facilitated in national parks as well as state forests. Some examples:
- there are management roads and fire trails within national parks that can be opened to recreational drivers to augment state forest conservation closures. Rostered trip "patrols" could be organised and vehicle numbers limited to reduce impact.
- access could be restricted to areas unless drivers are certified by a nationally recognised driver training program which includes conservation education and affiliation to "Tread Lightly" concepts.
- driver education and facilities provided to ensure vehicles are "weed seed free" prior to entry.
- quantitative data on the number of users which are likely to be affected by tenure changes. While it is recognised that it is important to determine the importance of various natural areas to recreationalists, there is no evidence of quantitative data to indicate the importance of these areas to recreationalists.
- the report indicates that the loss of recreation opportunities may negatively impact on recreationalists but it does not describe what these impacts may be. For example, the reduction of recreational opportunities for particular types of users may have negative social impacts.
- an explanation of how this report fits into the RFA process. In other words – where to from here? Our members are not empowered by this report to understand the process.
- the report does not describe any alternative management options and seems to condone outright prohibitions rather than site specific management responses to real impacts.
- the report does not outline the process by which limitations will be imposed. Will our members be consulted?

3.4 Do you agree with the map? (Please remember that this map is based on regional comparison and legal 'use only. In addition the map does not reflect only visitation levels but a combination of a number of variables including site quality and condition)

Response: It is difficult to interpret and comment on the maps because:

- the maps included in the report are not presented in a scale which allows detailed interpretation
- the maps do not include sufficient label attributes so as to make them understandable
- unless totally familiar with the specific areas, it is difficult to identify specific forest areas
- the RSS is presented on a scale of 1 to 8. Shouldn't this be represented on a 1 to 10 to be consistent with other report scales?
- there is no legend to the RSS scale to provide a qualitative description of the numeric value of the data.

4. Summary.

A number of issues and concerns have been raised in this submission. These are not to be considered a criticism but rather as input from a group of concerned users. Rather than repeat specific points or try to prioritise them, please note that all elements are of concern and important to us.

We fully understand the enormous amount of work and effort involved in putting such an assessment together and we realise the response received will take time to digest. However, we are concerned and we appreciate the opportunity to respond.

We look forward to the opportunity of timer consultation and offer the services of our associated clubs both here in South-East Queensland and other regional areas. There is valuable input and data to be gained. We would also like to invite you to attend one of our club driver trig sessions. You will undoubtedly be impressed with the professionalism and attention directed at conservation and 'Tread Lightly!' skills.

As well we strongly recommend and urge that a nomination from our association and other recreational users be appointed to the committee. With four conservation groups represented, it does seem just a bit biased. We certainly would appreciate a fair go. And please DON'T FENCE US OUT !

Appendix 8: Queensland Horse Council

Our representative to the Natural Resources Workshop, Dr Brian Sheahan, has put together these ideas towards the use of these areas on our behalf.

- We do press for the continued use of these areas for recreational use:
- The national parks should not be increased at the expense of State forests. National parks should be gazetted in areas of pristine wilderness. We are all conservationists and are not at odds with national parks but not wish to see our current forest areas decline.
- The use of state forests for recreational purposes such as horse riding is a legitimate and sustainable role for such areas.
- The setting aside of State forests for recreational purposes compliments national parks and contributes to the conservation of valid areas. Reduction in forest for recreational use will lead to over usage of those areas left, resulting in degeneration and therefore ultimate exclusion.
- Recreational activities, such as horse riding, four wheel driving, motor cross and trail bikes, make a significant contribution to the economy – providing employment in primary industries, textile and clothing, motor vehicle and scientific fields to mention a few. Threats to validity of these sports will lead to loss of employment to a significant number of people.
- Recreation sports provide a valuable activity for youth, teaching respect and responsibility for life and property.
- All persons participating in such activities do so in a responsible manner taking great care to protect our valuable parks and forests.
- State and local government should cooperate to develop long term planning of both forests and reserves for the use of recreational activities.

The Horse Council has been approached by several horse sports – Endurance Riders and Trail Riders etc for our help in this area.

(Mrs Marion Sharman Hon. Sec)
Queensland Horse Council

Appendix 9: Dual Sport Motorcycle Riders Association

Dual Sport Motorcycle Riders Association Submission to the South East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement Process and Response to the CRA Recreation Study.

Background

The DSMRA was formed in 1995 as a direct consequence to the current trend of land closures throughout Australia. The main thrust determined at the inception of the association was to provide the framework for off road riders to become a cohesive body and to fight the current trend of closures by demonstrating the positive aspects of off road motorcycle riding, and the fact that we can co-exist with the environment.

Who is the DSMRA?

- people who are passionate about their sport and caring for the environment
- enjoy self reliant adventure riding
- fully licensed and registered
- ride well muffled bikes
- ride in a responsible and considerate manner
- who wish to co-exist with other users in a managed approach to the environment ensuring the values of all user groups are met.

Dual Sport Motorcycle Riders' Association is committed to the development of and care for natural riding areas throughout Australia in a manner which preserves access and promotes alliances for members.

DSMRA Aims

- to improve the perception of off-road motorcycle riders in the wider community
- establish channels of communication with regulatory bodies to ensure that the interests of the DSMRA are considered in the evaluation process of public and private lands
- to become established as the recognised body representing the interests of off-road riders and to gain the support of those riders
- improve the cohesiveness of off-road motorcycle riders at a national level
- aid off-road riders in the pursuit of their recreational activities.

Benefits to the Community

- eyes and ears of land managers alerting them to the problems occurring in the bush.
- provide valuable local knowledge and quick access to mount search and rescue missions.
- through organised social rides, races, etc provide valuable cash flow to local communities.
- support the local motorcycle industry and the associated infrastructure.
- promote the 'Great Outdoors' and 'Self Reliant' recreation.

DSMRA Mandate for an RFA Submission

The National Forest Policy Statement (1992) defined a vision for management of Australia's forest resources which included the following characteristics:

- a holistic approach to managing forests for all their values and uses so as to optimise community benefits
- effective management responsive to the community
- sound community understanding of forest values, sustainable forest management and participation in decision making.

The recent Resource Assessment Commission Forest and Timber Inquiry (RAC, 1992) recognised recreation as a legitimate use of State forest.

It is understood that the RFA process for South East Queensland is open to submission from all interested parties.

DSMRA and the RFA

The DSMRA's main concern with the Regional Forest Agreement process is that areas that are currently enjoyed for adventure riding will become off limits to motorcycle riders. This has been apparent in southern states where Wilderness Declarations have resulted in locked gates being erected around areas that have been enjoyed by motorcycle riders for many years.

Summary of Main Issues

1. **Land Tenure Conversion Concerns.** The major land tenure utilised by adventure riders in Queensland is State forest. The use of State forests for recreational purposes such as trail bike riding is a legitimate and sustainable role for such areas.

The DSMRA would oppose any conversion of State forest tenure to national park status as motorcycle riding tends to be discouraged from the conservation estate. The DSMRA would be particularly concerned if a total lack of access areas occurred as a result of conversion of tenure action.

Some previous examples highlighting this point include Fraser Island, Cooloola and Conondale National Parks, after which areas of State forest were added to the national park, access restrictions resulted in the form of closed tracks and locked gates. The DSMRA supports the multiple use management policy espoused by the Department of Natural Resources for management of State forests.

There is a concern that a reduction in State forest areas for recreational use will lead to over usage of the remaining areas, affecting the sustainability of these areas and ultimately lead to the exclusion of active recreation pursuits in these residual areas.

2. **Provision of Access Tracks.** We see a direct correlation between native forest timber harvesting, provision of fire breaks and access for motorised recreation. Timber harvesting and related fire management over the years, appears to have resulted in the construction of the majority of tracks that we utilise for adventure riding. The DSMRA would oppose any RFA option which results in a significant reduction in the number of roads, fire trails etc accessing the forested estate.
3. **Economic Benefits of Motorcycle Adventure Riding.** Adventure riding provides additional economic benefits to small country towns adjacent to large forested areas. Groups of riders regularly visit small country towns contributing to the economy of these sometimes struggling

communities. In addition, occasionally larger organised rides occur, which provide significant boosts to small country economies. Examples include:

Suzuki Sidetrack Adventure Ride Series– In 1997 this occurred at Kilkivan and over 100 riders were involved in the two day event which included camping at the Kilkivan show grounds. State forests utilised included SF 639 Wrattens and SF 220 Oakview. This ride injected considerable dollars into the local economy. For 1998 the event is to be held at Kin Kin, and parts of State Forest 1004 Toolara and Cooloola National Park will feature during the ride.

Recreational activities such as trail bike riding also provide significant employment in primary and secondary industries such as motorcycle sales and accessories, textile and clothing, and adventure/ecotourism. Many clubs involved in organised trail rides donate proceeds to local charities and organisations. The most significant of these would be the Darling Downs Trail Rides series which annually contributes tens of thousands of dollars to local school P&C Associations.

4. **Recreation Opportunity Equity.** There has been a recent growth spurt in the sport of motorcycle adventure riding and land managers haven't adequately catered for this trend. It is suggested that some forms of passive recreation (bush walking, wilderness experience) have been over provided for in terms of recreation opportunities, often at the expense of more active (motorised) forms of recreation. This applies more so for areas of national park.

Forests are used by more than just bushwalkers and should be available to a wide range of recreationalists. Government has a role to provide the spectrum of recreational opportunities.

5. **Ecotourism Opportunities.** The DSMRA sees the ecotourism potential of motorcycle adventure based tours through forested areas. Numerous motorcycle tour groups exist in SE Qld and their operations also provide added economic benefits to townships adjacent to the forest estate.
6. **Decision Making Input.** Motorcycle adventure riders are legitimate and significant users of forests in South East Queensland and would like to be more involved in any decision making process. The DSMRA could offer input into solutions to land management problems such as Management Priority Zoning issues. An agreed process should be put in place to consider issues such as track closures. The DSMRA suggests that an advisory committee of motorised recreationalists (motorcycle adventure riders, 4WD clubs etc) be formulated for this purpose and state land management agencies recognise their input.

DSMRA Response to the CRA Recreation Study

The main point of interest to the DSMRA in respect to the CRA Study is the Recreation Site Significance Map for Trail Bike Riding, as shown on the last page of the report. The DSMRA sees this map as a starting point, giving some indication of site significance, however not the complete picture.

The DSMRA has conducted its own analysis of public riding areas (mainly State forest and national park tenures), and this data is shown in Appendix 1, the DSMRA Riding Area Database for South East Queensland. The database details riding areas of interest to adventure riders in the SE Qld RFA area. Some attempt has been made to prioritise these in terms of perceived importance to riders. An outline of the three main categories of importance follows:

H: High – High importance to adventure riders. Regularly utilised for riding/touting and/or areas of strategic importance, ie links to other areas. Many attractive natural features and ideal road track network.

M: Medium – Sometimes used although not on a regular basis. May have some potential in the future.

L: Low – Either too small to be of interest, inaccessible, or of little interest to adventure riders.

Whilst this categorisation is more subjective than the Recreation Site Significant (RSS) analysis as conducted by DNR in the Recreation Study, there would still be some correlation between the two methods. As mentioned in the Recreation Assessment Report RSS is a measure of the level of importance a site has in the provision of a particularly recreation activity. As a guiding principal it is suggested that the following adaptation be considered:

DSMRA Importance Classification	DNR Recreation Site Significance Rating
High	8,7,6
Medium	5,4,3
Low	2,1

It must be pointed out that due to the short time frame required for submission, not all feedback has been received from the various clubs etc consulted and therefore the DSMRA Riding Area Database must be viewed as a dynamic document subject to further updating and input.

Some other comments on the report are as follows:

Page 12 – The DSMRA wish to state that in many instances competitive events should also be regarded as ‘recreation’.

Page 13 – numerous examples of riding areas on freehold land being lost to urban development and concerns re liability could be provided by the DSMRA if required. We support the need to protect areas of public land remaining available to active forms of recreation.

Page 28 – It is suggested that popularity and visitation factors for some activities could be influenced by legitimacy of use. It is known that for areas which aren't heavily regulated or lack signage, usage is occurring without permit issue, and therefore a real measure of use might not be reflected in permit issue data.

Page 29 – The DSMRA Riding Area Database may prove to be useful in areas where DNR hasn't mapped RSS for trail bike riding activities due to lack of data or perceived insignificance.

Specific Comment on Recreation Site Significance Map for Trail Bike Riding

As mentioned previously the DSMRA Riding Area Database should be considered by DNR as the Motorcycle Adventure Riders position regarding importance of certain areas.

In respect to the map as provided, some deficiencies need to be questioned.

SF1239 Gheerulla and SF 893 Mt Mee are used extensively by trail bike riders, with area/tracks zoned specifically for this use, it is questionable as to how they could rate anything less than a 7 or 8 (very high importance).

Other areas for which District DNR Offices must certainly have permit issue data for would include SF 220 Oakview (used by over 100 riders in Adventure Ride Series), and the following state forests– SF 57 St Marys, SF 546 Kandanga, SF 289 Yarraman, SF 242 Widgee, SF 124 Glastonbury, SF 1004 Toolara to name but a few, which are regularly covered by groups of trail bike riders. In addition areas like SF 316 Kroombit Tops, SF 391 Granite Creek, SF 54 Bania all have enormous potential for motorcycle adventure tours, and have been used for such on occasions in the past.

Consultation List

The following individuals/organisations were consulted either directly or indirectly during the course of compiling this submission.

Numerous Queensland DSMRA members
Capricorn Dirt Riders Club Rockhampton
Gympie Din Bike Club
Northern Districts Motorcycle Club
Reliability Trials Club of Brisbane
Dalby Motorcycle Sporting Club
Southside Motorcycle Club
Sunshine Coast Motorcycle Club
Brooweena and District Trail Bike Club
Central Burnett Motorcycle Club
Childers Motorcycle Club
Motorcycling Australia Queensland
Queensland Enduro Subcommittee
Border Ranges Bike Tours and Accessories

4. Visitation numbers will vary greatly as permits are the only gauge of Mountain Bike usage, most visitors I see and meet riding locally aren't aware that cycling in State Forests requires a permit. There could be up to 300 per cent more usage than what is being recorded the **1997 Outdoor Rec. Participation Demand Study**, reflects these inaccuracies (a point of use permit system is needed, or more permit free areas such as Parklands). The current system is a discouragement for recreation. Cycling was considered by the Australian Bureau of statistics as the highest winter recreational participation activity in 1997, with probably
5. 10 per cent cycling off-road regularly, it's time to realise cycling off-road is not a fringe sport, but a popular, healthy, sustainable, legitimate activity for public lands, conservation areas inclusive.
6. The Muids perception of Off-road cycling may be slightly skewed due to statistical aberrations or interpretation. On reading the MTB map for RSS, it left myself and the club members rather confused, having visited the most popular areas, I cannot concur with at least 75 per cent of these map indicators (contacting the users may have been a more accurate method than the formula in 3.4.2).
7. Examples 783/and 918 are marked high significance, yet I don't believe these areas have ever been navigated by cyclists, also 467 N.W. of Borumba Dam is very unaccessible from the dam campsite as far as I know, most riding in the area takes place in 256 and 135 around the dam and is a very low use area, most frequent high use in 135 is out of Charlie Moreland Campsite or Boloumba (lots of potential around there). As a club we encourage diversity in our group social rides. We ensure that are riding is spread between as many areas as possible, thus reducing overuse, it also adds a interesting element of surprise to each ride (pigeon holing non-motorised users to only a few areas never worked, just ask any Park land managers in North America).
8. The area some call it centre of Queensland Mountain Biking, **Mapleton State Forest 1239** only managed a RSS of 3, this area provides an incredible diversity for scenic values combined with interesting topography that lends itself to some of the **best off-road cycling in the state**. This would have to be the highest use area on the Sunshine Coast, with little or no evidence of degradation in the decade of cycling use.
9. **Parklands 249** could be an excellent example of regenerating forest, combined with non-motorised recreation (permit free), close to the coastal suburbs, well frequented and very challenging terrain for cycling and equines alike, it is an ideal urban example of a native forest experience close to the urban sprawl. That was until recently, our natural experience has been put on hold for a year or more while timber contractors carefully dissect each precious km. of single track trail that may never be the same again. Even the fire roads have been **rendered unpassable** in places due to the liquidation of the terra (working through heavy rain periods due to financial constraints no doubt). An area with this unique recreational potential should be considered for **social conservation** as well as ecological conservation.
10. Other highly desirable areas that are frequented by MTBer's are 127, 959, 952, 997, 989 at Tewanin. This sandy stretch of forest is another unique opportunity, providing a much needed forest recreation component to the "beach scene" within riding distance of most Noosa suburbs this is another **possible social conservation area**.

In conclusion I would like to enforce our premise that like conservationists, **off-road cyclists have a reverence** for the biodiversity of our lands. Preferring to share, and maintain the trails with other non-motorised users, not with 4 wheel drives and motorcycles, this is what we seek to escape from by riding off-road.

Please, **encourage community reference groups** to deal with recreational concerns in the future, it is the only equitable way to plan for the environmental, and social needs of the community's you serve.

What is the cost to society (4.2.4) when we lock up our treasured land and throw away the key?

Yours in sport:
David A. Lalik (Land Access Chairperson)

C.C.
ML A Fiona Simpson
MLA Bruce Laming
MLA Mr. R. Gibbs
MLA Hon. Rod Welford
MLA Peter Wellington
Mr. S. Hogan, Dept. of Sport and Recreation.
Australian Mountain Bike Access/Q.C.A.
Jan Scudamore, Tread Lightly Australia
International Mountain Bike Association

CLUB PROFILE

Vision Statement

The Bushrangers aim to provide a distinctive conduit for members and the general community to participate in off-road bicycle activities.

The Bushrangers are about:

- social rides
- competitive. events
- junior development
- family riding fun and health
- environmental awareness
- land access
- community participation.

The growth of Mountain Biking to the ranks of Olympic competition has changed the sport forever. Thousands of endorphin seeking cyclists fuelled with the desire to ride bikes in natural surrounds are taking up the sport.

The Bushrangers provide pro-active programs in the bush, emphasising responsible riding codes and the tread softly ethics.

Our efforts ensure Mountain Biking is good for the mind and the soul.

P.O, Box 5646
Maroochydore South,
4558
Ph, (07) 54794283
Email: bartsirnp@ozemail.com.au
Internet: <http://bushranger.mtbaus.com>

30th November 1997

Attention: Lee-Ann Hearder
Dept. Natural Resources
Moreton District
GPO Box 2692
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Ms Hearder,

RE: CRA RECREATION STUDY

The Bushrangers Mountain Bike Club Sunshine Coast Inc is pleased to present this submission for your consideration. The Bushrangers Mountain Bike Club has a diverse range of members. We meet weekly to ride in organised events. The club currently represents 73 members coast wide with ages ranging from 0 to 55 years and an average of 28 years.

The club hosts rides every Sunday, setting a 6 monthly calendar in advance. Enclosed is a copy of our most recent calendar (nearly expired) showing the extensive range of our rides, the majority of which utilise state forest area. Venues alternate between Mapleton State Forest on the 1st and 3rd Sunday every month and another state forest on the remaining Sundays. Conducting rides from the Glasshouse Mountains to Gympie allows the participation of all our members residing throughout the Sunshine Coast. We also host a ride each Thursday night, again alternating throughout the coast to allow broad membership participation. Our Sunday social rides often see up to 40 cyclists out on the trail.

We enjoy riding in these naturalised areas and appreciate the spectacular natural environments offered on the Sunshine Coast. The expansive forest system allows long rides during which a sense of isolation is developed – a true feeling of being at one with nature. These areas also offer specific technical challenges essential and unique to the sport that road riding does not allow. Most of our members don't enjoy challenging the traffic on our high speed roadways.

Our members are also involved in the competitive side of the sport. Following their success at state level competition throughout the year some members are currently racing in the National Mountain Bike rounds. Although the majority of these events are held in Southern States, last year we had 2 members represent Australia at the World Cup in Cairns. This year things are looking even better. Mountain bike riding is now an Olympic sport, with an increasing public profile. As members aspire towards Sydney 2000 the availability of suitable training areas is vital. To remain competitive members ride several times a week in non club organised rides, for both enjoyment and training. Training is essential. Access to state forest in close proximity to their homes is vital if Australia's mountain bikers are to maintain their competitive status and represent their country.

The club is an affiliate of the Qld Cycling Association (QCA) and as such we also host race events complimenting a state wide calender for members of the QCA. All club members are insured under the QCA, and guests attending our rides are also insured (even visitors from overseas!). Similarly when we host QCA races, all competitors must have a QCA racing licence and associated insurance.

The Bushrangers is also the only Australian member of the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA), who have advocated the sport for many years in the US and Canada. IMBA's main aim is to promote land access and provide education on the value of maintaining the environmental quality of all trails used. After years of utilising volunteer groups to maintain and develop extensive trail networks IMBA has published manuals on trail construction and maintenance. We are aware of the potential for erosion from overuse and poor riding practices. At all times our members are vigilant in respect to minimising our impact on the environment.

Our club is pleased to have an excellent relationship with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). both Eric Glassop and Dave Pengally have been supportive and open to communication regarding club activities. The Bushrangers consistently endeavour to meet our duty of care in all activities, both in and outside of state forest areas. Recently the club, working with DNR, was able to develop a DNR/Bushrangers permit which all club members carry whilst traversing state forests. The club is authorised to issue these permits to new members on DNR's behalf. The permits are displayed to any Rangers we see in the forest. Furthermore, many members carry individual permits to traverse state forests throughout SE Qld, and we encourage other riders met in the forest to apply for a free permit through DNR, further advocating responsibility throughout the sport.

Regular liaison with Dave Pengally, of DNR Kenilworth, took place during our recent State series cross country race in Mapleton State Forest. Permits were received and advice sought on preparing the course which had been damaged at creek crossings by unauthorised 4 wheel drive use. The 11km course followed existing fire roads and 'single track' established by motorised trail bikes over many years of use. The event attracted 176 competitors. Classes ranged from under 11's to masters. The result after 500 laps by cyclists was a neatly swept path approximately 30cm wide over the whole course, ie nil visible impact on soil stability or existing flora. Accordingly, DNR have classified mountain bikers as a low impact user group, having far less impact than horse riders or 4 wheel drivers who also frequent our local state forests

It must be noted that our club advocates multi-user trails, allowing walkers, cyclists and horse to share trails rather than limit particular recreational users to specific areas. Following years of addressing such management problems IMBA advocates share trail systems.

During your recent telephone conversation with Josie Mariott you may recall discussing the prohibition of bicycles in National Park areas. Our club supports the ruling that no bicycles shall utilise any area other than public roads in National Park areas in Queensland, We understand that to preserve the environmental values of these areas is important for all Australian. However tenure change of existing State Forests to a higher level of protection such as National Park status, will certainly affect our clubs activities on the Sunshine Coast. A reduced number of areas available for riding will make our organised activities less accessible, particularly to our youth members who have limited transport options.

It has been proven that by restricting non-motorised sports to a few specific areas the demand on these areas increases. Environmental degradation then becomes more problematic. Immediately after and area becomes 'protected' the users are banned. The users then move further away to

whatever areas remain and the vicious circle repeats itself. This is precisely the type of scenario we hope to avoid. Our club's policy of spreading rides between different areas reduces the demand on a single area and allows for all users to coexist. Accordingly, good design and considerate usage of trails can result in trails which are able to be successfully managed for a range of interests.

We also request that you consider the impacts of tenure change to state forests on the Bicentennial National Trail. The National Trail is a fantastic resource. Stretching from Cooktown in Qld to Charlestown in Victoria, it traverses many state forests in South East Queensland. Club members regularly enjoy sections of the trail. Tenure changes to a higher level of protection may prevent cyclists and equestrians (the most common users) from accessing the trail. This situation would essentially make the National Trail unusable.

The following information is provided on the sites most regularly used for organised club events. It addresses some of the social characteristics listed in your Recreation Inventory. Physical and management characteristics have not been addressed. Although best left to specific knowledge of your assessment officers the club is pleased to offer further assistance:

- **Mapleton State Forest**
- A predominantly natural appearing landscape allowing a high sense of isolation, long rides and a range of terrain. At the mid to outer extremities users are most often alone and surprised to share locations with others. Traverses sections of the Trail bike (motorised) track to reach extensive views at Oakey Creek lookout.
- **Wooroi State Forest** (from Tewantin and Noosa)
- A natural appearing landscape allowing extended rides, extensive climbs and descents, a strong sense of isolation, long rides and range of terrain.
- **Berwah State Forest** (from Glasshouse Mountains and Landsborough)
- A landscape of primarily plantation allowing extended rides, extensive climbs and descents, a strong sense of isolation, long rides and a range of terrain.
- **Yurol State Forest** (Pomona)
- A natural appearing landscape allowing extended rides and a strong sense of isolation. Meeting other user groups is infrequent.
- **Parklands State Forest** (Nambour)
- Adjacent residences visible from many trails in this small reserve. Good for short training rides, however distance only able to be achieved with multiple laps of the reserve. Meeting with other users is frequent, and area gets very hot and full of mozzies!
- **Charlie Moreland** (Kenilworth)
- Pleasurable landscape with available trails in both naturalise areas and pine plantation, offers extensive climbs and descants (Mount Allen), range of terrain and environments, long distance rides able to be achieved, however meeting with other user groups is frequent. Some potential for conflict with the masses of 4 wheel drive vehicles met along the way.
- **Amamoor State Forest** (south/west of Gympie)
- Pleasurable landscape with available trails in both naturalise areas and pine plantation, offers extensive climbs and descants, range of terrain and environments, long distance rides able to be achieved, meeting with other groups is infrequent.
- **Point Glorious** (from Yandina and Cooloolabin Dam)
- A popular ride allowing an extensive climb to the lookout and fun descent through a range of terrain. Strong sense of isolation, extensive views, meetings with other users rare.
- **Cooloolabin Dam**
Limited trail system thus short rides, regular meeting with other users.

Thankyou for your consideration of the issues listed in this letter. It is estimated that for every Bushranger in the forest there are 2 other cyclists not related to our club utilising local state forests. Accordingly, maintaining the available areas for riding that offer a natural environment and isolation, such as state forests, is essential to this growing sport.

We look forward to your response and further correspondence during the ongoing formulation of the Regional Forest Agreement. Should you have any further enquiries please don't hesitate to contact representatives of our Land Access Committee, Josi Marriott (554 7278) or David Lalik (5445 6778)

Yours faithfully

Troy Zwart

Secretray – Bushrangers Mountain Bike Club

Appendix 11: Southside Rats Mountain Bike Club

27th August 1998

Ms Lee-Ann Hearder
Recreation Planning Officer
Department of Natural Resources
GPO Box 2692
BRISBANE
Old 4001

Dear Lee-Ann,'

Re: Southside RATS Mountain Bike Club Reply Following CRA Workshop

I am writing on behalf of the membership of the Southside RATS Mountain Bike Club in response to your request for information on how change in land tenure would affect mountain bike riders activities.

Our club is part of the mountain bike community which is affiliated with the Queensland Cycling Association. Total affiliated riders in Queensland number 650. However these riders represent just the "tip of the ice berg". Bike Industry statistics indicate that 80% of push bike sold to the general public are mountain bikes. Last financial year there were approximately 32,000 mountain bikes sold to riders in Queensland, of these, 1–2% or 3840 are new riders. Only a small percentage of these new riders will venture into our forests. Approximately 15% or 576 would take they're bikes off road. We estimate that the total people with mountain bikes, riding in the forests in Queensland and in particularly, the south east Queensland region would number approximately 6500. Unfortunately very few of these would apply for permits to ride in the forests from the department of Natural Resources

Figures on people buying and riding mountain bikes have steadily increased since the introduction of mountain bikes in 1990 Based on industry information and our calculations, the growth of people utilising our bushland for mountain bike recreation is approximately 9% PA. or 600 riders per year. This trend is set to continue with mountain biking becoming an official Olympic sport and making its debut in Atlanta in 1996. With the opportunity for more leisure time and greater emphasis place on healthy lifestyles many people are looking for other alternate forms of recreation. Mountain biking has the added advantage of giving the participant the opportunity to access our bushlands easily with minimal impact on our environmental resources.

Converting state forests into national parks and thereby, banning people from riding their mountain bikes in these forests will have a significant detrimental impact on the growing number of recreational mountain bikers in Queensland. We believe the impacts of this decision would include:

- The limited forests that are available for recreation will have so much pressure put on them from all user groups that, they will become saturated with visitors and forest quality will decrease at an increasing rate. Our past experience of a concentration of many user groups on one small location has shown that this quickly leads to conflict, accidents and a higher chance of litigation which poses a significant cost to society.

- The government also needs to understand that as a user group, recreational mountain bikers require a variety of forests at a variety of locations to ride in. It has also been our experience that when we hold social rides our membership wish to mix up the variety of rides to cater for different skill levels. By having more areas to choose from we will visit a particular forest less frequently, on average twice per year. If riders are restricted in places to ride we, along with other user groups will be forced to use the same number of forest areas over and over and therefore put more environmental pressure on these areas.
- Another argument that the government needs to take into account is that banning riders from forests where people were previously allowed to ride, will NOT deter all riders and there will still be many riders continuing to use the trails illegally. Remember, the vast majority of mountain bike riders are not affiliated with a club. This would lead to a need to have a higher number of rangers to patrol areas and spend more time and resources on catching and keeping out offenders
- Conflict and confrontation seems to us to be an inefficient way to manage our forests when the Department could be working with the user groups to educate them and introduced a recreational code of practice. This approach has the advantage of achieving the goals of the department and at the same time allowing user groups quality access. In the United States, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Sierra Club, Autobon Society, International Mountain Bike Association and the American Hikers Association all work hand in hand to ensure a balanced approach to environmental and recreational needs. Our club feels that education of user groups and co-operation with government bodies is the key to good management outcomes for our forest resources in Queensland.
- If there is a need to convert a state forest into a national park because of the botanical significance of the area etc., we feel that it is vitally important that another area in the vicinity be opened up to user groups so that the pressure of recreational users can be channelled away from the national park area.

Mountain bike clubs such as ours have always held the view that we wish to be able to use a variety of areas in moderation. Riders are always keen to help out and work with rangers and government departments to ensure our forests are managed efficiently, so that they may be maintained for all user groups.

Our club has shown its commitment to good environmental management by taking initiatives to obtain government certification in track design and maintenance. We are working with Mountain Bike Access Australia (MBAA) and the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) to help land managers and government agencies develop strategies and plans to cope with the needs of mountain biking now and in the future.

Lee-Ann, thank you for your time and energies in preparing the Recreation Assessment Report and conducting the CRA Workshop. We fully concur with your findings thus far. As a stakeholder we would ask that you keep us up to date and involved in any further policy decisions and changes.

Yours sincerely

Leigh Christensen

Appendix 12: 7 Mile Lagoon Horse Trail Riders Club

To Ms Lee-Ann Hearder
Recreation Planning Officer
SEQ Regional Forest Agreement

Dear Ms Hearder,

With reference to the SEQ Regional Forest Agreement. On behalf of the 7 Mile Lagoon Trail Horse Riders Club Inc. I would ask that the interests of Trail Horse Riders be taken into account in assessing the use of forestry areas. The areas available for Trail Horse Riding are becoming harder to find. Our club has a history of using for trail rides Esk State Forestry No 531, Gatton Forestry No 616, Deongwar Forestry No 528. Ravensbourne Forestry No 575 also as members of the Australian Trail Horse Riders Association we also attend rides in other areas such as Woodford and Caboolture and Brisbane Forest Park. If Horse riding were to be excluded from Forestry areas it would greatly limit the areas available for horse riding, as closed development and bitumen roads are making it harder to find suitable riding areas.

Yours Sincerely

Sam Greer (Secretary)

Appendix 13: Caboolture Trail Horse Club Inc.

P.O. Box 1566 Caboolture 4510
PHONE/FAX 0754 985431

Attention: Lee-Ann Hearder,
Department of Natural Resources,
G P O Box 2692,
BRISBANE 4001

21st September, 1998

This submission is in response to a request made at the Comprehensive Recreation Assessment Meeting held in Brisbane on 19th August 1998, provided by the Caboolture Trail Horse Club Inc. (C.T.H.C.) detailing the impacts tenure conversion of SEQ State Forests in the R F A process will have on our recreational opportunities.

Briefly, the C.T.H.C. was constituted in 1980 and has since then maintained round 100 members. The club is affiliated with the Australian Trail Horse Riders Association ('A.T.H.R.A.'), a National body active in 5 States. The Queensland Branch has approximately 1,000 members. The C.T.H.C. conducts rides every 2 weeks in Caboolture and surrounding Shires. 75% of these rides include areas of State Forest of both native and plantation pine. Since 1992, club members have spent countless hours of voluntary time, effort and resources to establish a recreational multi-user trail, the Caboolture Loop (CL) linking to the Bicentennial National Trail (BNT). This was done with the complete approval and assistance from Councils: Caboolture Shire Council provided some financial assistance, Forestry: Personnel from Beerburrum, Jimna and Kenilworth assisted with the selection of tracks and the Department of Environment & Heritage, Nambour were all closely liased with, necessary permission sought and given. The CL from the Caboolture showgrounds to Commissioners View, here it joins with the BNT was opened and ridden as part of the annual A.T.H.R.A. September ride in 1994. The southern section from Burpengary Pony Club through Dayboro, out via The Bull's Knob & Mt Sim Jue to Toogoolawah joins the BNT on Eskdale Station is also approved with assistance from Councils and Forestry(now DNR). Marking of the trail from Eskdale commenced in June 1998.

Tenure conversion of our native forests will have a dramatic negative impact on our members. As mentioned 75% of our riding includes State Forestry of plantation and native forests. The majority of this is natural native forest and provides peace, natural beauty and variety throughout Beerburrum, Jimna and Kenilworth areas. As a leisure Trail Horse Riding group, all participants desire to be as close to nature as possible. 'W~ take only the memories.'

The proposed increase in National Parks from 4% to 11% in the SE Qld region, all of which is to be 'acquired' from native hardwood State Forest will seriously limit accessible areas for recreational horse riding and threaten the Caboolture Loop displacing us as recreational visitors.

For us, areas of natural quality within an acceptable radius will be limited causing increased visitation to the remaining available areas. This will lead to decreased site quality and condition.

The horse is our chosen means by which members and indeed many others prefer to enjoy the aesthetic wonders of nature and the companionship of fellow riders. It is important too, all generations remain aware of the history and heritage of horses throughout Australia and the magnitude of their role in the building of our nation. Where would we be without the horse? Horse riders as a group are discriminated against as Queensland is the only State in Australia where 'horses

are not permitted in National Parks'. Being National even if administered by individual States, it would be expected there be a National policy on such a matter.

Increases in constraints placed upon present legal users will only result in more recreationists resorting to illegal use of our forestry. We will never eliminate from our society, the minority who abuse the system. This is usually considered a risk management problem. Legal users such as A.T.H.R.A. affiliated Clubs who have the required Insurance and obtain the required permits are finding an increasing number of conditional requirements being placed upon them for forestry access.

Where are we to go if this access is denied?

Will changes include alternative locations provided for our recreational pursuit within the same proximity of equal quality, enjoyment, peace & beauty?

Why is it a handful of people have the power to lockup our Public forests denying access to the larger community of users?

The presence of organised riders can be beneficial to these areas, providing assistance in information gathering, reporting illegal and environmentally dangerous activities and discouraging unauthorised entry.

A.T.H.R.A. Clubs have in the past assisted in this monitoring process and have not in any way caused any damage, erosion or pollution. Any riding in these areas has always been with the approval and co-operation of regulatory authorities.

The previous Queensland (Borbidge) Government pledged to preserve the BNT through Queensland. The Bicentennial National Trail must be preserved for all future generations regardless of parties in power, as part of our heritage as proclaimed by then Prime Minister Hawke during the Bicentennial year. The BNT must not fall victim to deals with the Greens as were seen in N.S.W. following their last election.

Consideration must also be given to feeder trails to the BNT from other regions, in particular the Caboolture Loop.

Given the magnitude of the Equine Industry in the SE Queensland region and from this the mega \$\$ associated income generated. Our recreational pursuit cannot be overlooked.

In the past tenure conversion in the expansion of Conondale National Park in 1994 resulted in contact from Environment & Heritage in November 1995, querying CL trail markers through Conondale National Park and advice that the Caboolture Loop trail was not permissible for horse riding as a section of the Bellthorpe–Jimna Road being traversed was, and still IS NOT gazetted. Further to this any previous permission given was null and void as 'Horses are not permitted in National Parks' and all horse riding through this section was to cease. Totally stunned by all this, a request was made for all the above concerns to be put in writing to C.T.H.C. and that some alternate routes be suggested. Following this, another route as negotiated with Councils and Forestry. All except the section through Kenilworth Forestry has been remarked during 1997/98.

This action deprived horse riders of the experience of riding through the previously approved area and necessitated much time and energy being spent in planning, checking, negotiating and marking an alternate route round Conondale National Park. The booklet printed for the trail will need to be reprinted.

The clear-fell principle of past generations which was financially supported by governments of the day has had detrimental effects on our native flora & fauna and escalated erosion. Landcare studies have proven well managed grazing lands with green belts of trees remaining is more beneficial to production, eliminates erosion and assists with the return of wildlife. Locking up of our forests at the opposite end of the spectrum will result in unequal devastation with introduced plant and animal

species multiplying unchecked. The chief carriers of seed documented as being birds, wind and rain runoff are unstoppable.

We see grazing being reintroduced to the Victorian high country in an effort to regain weed control in this sensitive pristine area.

To introduce a comprehensive management plan with the resources to implement it effectively, would be more beneficial than locking up our forests.

Surely balance is the answer

Appendix 14: Australian Trail Horse Riders Association Queensland Branch Inc. (A.T.H.R.A.)

Introduction

A meeting of interested home riding people at Gatton in 1972 formed A.T.H.R.A. The meeting was headed by our living legend Mr. R.M. Williams. Mr. Williams is well known to have lived a lifetime riding our country in all its moods, droughts, rain, bush fires etc. The meeting was formed by like minded people to have our heritage retained. Australia was explored and settled by our spirited pioneers using horses as modes of transport, packhorses as a means of carrying their possessions and plough horses to till the soil. They opened up Australia and helped make it what it is today. Without the help of these noble animals, horses, we would still be exploring our country.

Horse riders are and have always been conservationists. We realise we will need to reuse grazing land, water holes, creeks, rivers, etc. on our return journey. Look after it today and tomorrow and thereby for everybody's future. Horsemen have been conservationists for near on two hundred years.

A.T.H.R.A. clubs Australia wide ride following the Thirteen Golden Rules for the environmentally aware horse rider:

1. Always be observant and avoid unduly disturbing unstable and erosion prone soils.
2. Avoid allowing horses to denude areas of vegetation, especially during stays more than one night in the same location. Be ready to relocate picket lines and portable yards wherever necessary.
3. Rather than risking damage to fragile creek, stream and riverbanks, use bridges wherever possible as this will help to ensure good water quality and limit erosion.
4. Carry and use canvas or collapsible buckets to water and wash horses, weft away from watercourses, thereby further reducing the potential for water pollution and bank erosion.
5. Be vigilant for weeds in your paddocks and feed. Only allow your horse to eat weed free feed at least 24 hours prior to entering bushland areas. (Weed free feed includes clean chaff, pellets, and cracked rolled or steamed grains), Never take meadow hay into bushland areas as it often contains huge quantities of weed seed.
6. Undertake some basic weed identification education so as to help with number 5, and possibly even assist land managers in quickly identifying and eliminating new outbreaks of problem species.
7. Bury or remove manure from overnight campsites as this will help to limit flies breeding and any potential weed dispersal.
8. Protect trees from ringbarking by picket line ropes with spacer sticks or tree protector straps and incorporate stops in the line to prevent horses from chewing the bark of trees. Never use bailing twine around trees.
9. Where possible make picket line length 6 metres or more to reduce concentrated impact.
10. Avoid yarding horses not already familiar as paddock mates, this will avoid unnecessary impact should they chase each other around establishing a new social structure or 'pecking order'.
11. Always camp horses well clear of watercourses. At least 30 metres away.
12. Remove all rubbish from campsites, don't just bury it and forget. Where possible remove unsightly litter left by others.
13. Always be friendly and civil to other bushland users. As you are probably the person with the greater horse sense and therefore legal responsibility, you should always take the initiative in avoiding any potentially dangerous situations involving your horses and other bushland users.

General Comments

- a) There is a growing trend towards leisure activities incorporating the family. The family may consist of just husband and wife or it may include children.
- b) A.T.H.R.A. QId. in the last two years has seen the number of clubs increase. This may be due to the increased interest of trail riding and the public's desire to enjoy the outdoor on horse back in the company of like minded people. Another factor could be the fact that A.T.H.R.A. QId. has a reputation of family fun and safety and the strict adherence to rules and the observation of conservation.
- c) A.T.H.R.A. QId. members affiliated with A.T.H.R.A. National are covered by insurance both public liability and accident insurance. Each member rides at no risk to private landowners and the land managers of Public State and Federal lands (forests etc.). Securing sound insurance over for our member's is we believe another reason for A.T.H.R.A. QId. present rapid growth.
- d) A.T.H.R.A. QId. has 1,000 members. Our statistical information leads us to estimate that our members are owners of approximately 3–4000 horses. This in itself is an important statistic involving a large flow of monies through their local communities –feed, saddlery, veterinary use, farriers, floats, vehicles, clothing etc. This creates a steady employment factor. Members travel to attend trail rides in different towns and they spend money in that community– eg. food, fuel, papers, repairs, feed etc. This in turn helps outlying communities.
- e) Because of today's stressful lifestyles quiet spots for leisure activities are highly sought after. By enjoying a leisurely trail ride in the forest our members and other riders are able to relax so they may front the next working week in a better frame of mind. It would be expected that this would increase productivity in society as spending quiet time in a bush environment has relieved the city's stressful lifestyle.
- f) Each of our members has horse float and a towing vehicle. One in four new vehicles purchased is a four-wheel drive or towing vehicle, creating demand and effectively increasing the productivity of our nation.
- g) Riding on private property or state forests are conducted on formed paths, roads and fire breaks. No rider is allowed past the trail boss or lags behind the drag (or tail) boss. The conservation and consideration of the environment together with the safety of riders requires us to keep the number of riders attending rides under close scrutiny.
- h) Over the years Trail Clubs have worked closely with the Department of Natural Resources (D.N.R.) and in most cases have overcome hurdles to each other's satisfaction. We hope we can continue to help the D.N.R., DO.E., and D.O.H.
- i) A.T.H.R.A. QId. understands that the concept of horse riding permits as a way of a statistical record keeping for the D.N.R. to help manage the forests. We believe each rider – man, woman and child should be issued with a permit for the entry to state forests. It is our belief some horse riders were previously unaware of the legal requirement for them to obtain a permit before taking their horses into State Forests. We have educated our members and made them aware of the need for obtaining permits to traverse.
- j) Our members enjoy the ride in the bush in many ways:
 - Riding a horse they like
 - Riding with friend and family whom similarly enjoy riding
 - Riding new areas
 - Riding undulating country
 - Enjoying the peacefulness of the surrounds
 - Enjoying the sound of the bush
 - Enjoying the natural bush as it is
 - The breeze in the mountains
 - Destroying nothing, leaving only prints

- Camping with people without the modern conveniences in a bush environment, being self reliant. Riding with people of all ages, children to elders approaching 80 years.

k) Children who have grown up caring for a pet, whether it be a horse or dog have benefited and learn to respect and to care for their animal. It is an education process of feeding, grooming and looking for signs of sickness in that animal. They also enjoy learning the animals' capabilities. Overall this teaches the child respect, consideration and self esteem. Working in partnership with the animal and the environment so that their journey through life is with pride and caring and they become beneficial members of the community.

COMMENTS TO 4.1 ASSESSMENT PLAN

1. Do you believe that conversion of state forests tenure to that of conservation reserve tenure would have any impact on your activity?

YES

If so

1.A What impacts do you envisage?

It is hard enough now to find areas to ride without the government further decreasing the access and usage of available forests etc. We have a National Park policy that does not allow access for horses on forest roadways in National Parks (only if they are gazetted roadways). As the horse is still recognised as a vehicle under Queensland Road Laws this seems to be a contradiction in law.

Horse riders love to experience a variety of different settings, bush tracks and trails, dirt roadways and coastal beach terrain. By denying horse riders the opportunity to ride, even on formed roadways in National Parks, the government is being discriminatory and is not being democratic.

All indications show that the equestrian sector of the community is increasing in size. It should be encouraged to develop, as horse riding is a wonderful activity for children and adults with few restrictions on age and ability. The increase in users coupled with the decrease in available land makes an unbalanced equation. Demand influences supply and it does not make any sense to decrease areas that could result in an overuse of remaining trails and areas.

1. B Why do you believe these impacts occur?

This has been answered above, these impacts will occur whilst SUPPLY DOES NOT EQUAL OR EXCEED THE DEMAND.

The concept of the R.F.A. was to satisfy a radical few who made enough noise. Mr. Average Australian just kept on working, doing his job and paying his bills. It does not seem fair that because of the cry by a few, and without reference to the majority, land will be drawn from public owned state forests, set aside, locked up and horse riders locked out. This is not an option for us; it seems to be a predetermined mandate with no other proposed alternatives.

Our feedback from other State Branches of A.T.H.R.A. seems to indicate it was a steam roller affair with little or no consultation to active recreational users.

1. C What are the consequences of these impacts?

Horse riders including young children riders will be forced into riding on busy urban roadways because of the shortage of available safe forest areas.

If areas in the middle of forests are turned into National Park it will result in illegal use. For example if an area of 300 acres in the middle of the Lake Manchester trail area is converted to National Park a track that has been used by horse riders for many, many years will be broken. We believe that this is an uninformed move, which will lead to illegal use. Why cause this to happen?

2. What issues specific to your recreation activity need to be addressed?

The greater the area to use the less impact. All A.T.H.R.A. members are educated in trail riding so as to give a low impact on our environment to allow for future rides singularly or as a club.

Our needs as horse riders in the forests owned by all Australians has not been taken to account. This is not an oversight it is a deliberate deletion of active recreational users by the powerful lobby groups of the minority – Conservationists.

(Clark & Stankey 1979) Talk about diversity of recreational experience is also important for social equity reasons failing to provide diversity of opportunities suggests elitism favouritism and discrimination.

Are there any areas of the C.R.A. Recreation Report that are of concern to you?

YES

3. A *Any areas that you disagree with?*

In Fact Sheet Four – Community Participation

Communication and community involvement is an essential part of the social economic and cultural assessment and social impact assessment. This community involvement will be facilitated through a process of consultation with groups such as

The general community and key community leaders Local Government

- forest users including logging contractors
- timber industry
- bee keepers
- graziers
- conservation groups (Why so many?)
- tourist operators

The views of the community will be sought through the Regional Forest Agreement (R.F.A.) process.

This information does not tally with the truth at all. The steering panel and reference panel shows clearly that there is a bias unbalance selection carried so as to load the outcome in favour of the United Nations and Federal Government. To act on the C.R.A./R.F.A. without honest representation is a downright put down to all Australians.

This process has to start again with all parties involved. We do not agree with the way it is shown in the 4.1. Recreation Assessment Qld. C.R.A./R.F.A.

We disagree with the process over the last few years where the areas of forests have been turned into National Parks without consultation to active recreationists. How many areas in Southeast Queensland have changed without notification to the people of Queensland? How long until they wake up to find Government Departments have converted enough land already. Why under the disguise of a R.F.A. do you need to change more or is it purely to be seen to be negotiation so the State Government can receive \$10million from the Federal Government? If this is the case, you have sold your souls cheaply.

3. B Any areas you believe require more exploration ?

Fact Sheet Four.

3. C Any aspect missing from the report

Yes! Active recreationists on the Reference Panel and Steering Committee, if it is to be a fair and balanced report.

4. Do you agree with the MAP?

No!

The scale of the map makes it too hard to accurately identify the individual areas for proposed further conversion to Conservation or National Parks.

We offer the following observations:

1. RSS Legend 8 –Red

We believe the forest areas of Brisbane Forest Park (including Lake Manchester), Beerburrum, Bellthorpe, Esk/Gatton and Mt. Mee State Forests together with Daisy Hill State Forest Park and Venmans Reserve should be shown in this category as the highest frequent use of horse riders. The majority of our Clubs are situated in semi urban areas in close proximity to these forest areas.

All areas in the Gold Coast Hinterland should be shown as being in this category as there are more members and clubs in proportion to any other area of your map.

2. RSS Legend 6– Orange

Areas such as Jimna, Kenilworth, Conondale, Blackbutt–Yarraman are used regularly by local Clubs and riders. These forests are also popular as venue for weekend camp over trail rides.

3. RSS Legend – National Parks

Effectively all coastal and island areas have been converted to National Parks, thus removing any opportunity for our members and other riders to take their horses for a ride on a beach.

For example for several years the Caboolture Club held an annual beach ride at Bribie Island. This ride was very attractive to all riders and was always well attended. Because of the changes of tenure to National Park the ride has been cancelled. We believe it was considered inappropriate to allow horses any access because they may soil the sand or deface the sand dunes. Any rider who attended this ride will attest the fact the horses were only taken onto the beach for a short distance and were removed from the beach area for the lunch or break spot. However, half the delinquent, water sportsmen and fishermen of Australia were buzzing on surf skis and four-wheel drives littering the beaches and spoiling this lovely natural setting.

4. Areas north to Bundaberg and Gladstone

We require further time to allow contact to be made with trail horse riders concerning the access and changes to the forests and timber reserves in their area. A.T.H.R.A. QId. has two clubs in the Gladstone area if you could supply further information and detailed maps they too wish to make comments.

SUMMARY

There is no report on the money that tourism and active recreationists move through Australia (A.B.S.) fact \$15billion for tourism and \$25billion active recreationists. We move more money through society creating employment and the majority of this money stays within Australia. Tourism dollars are mainly moved offshore which is not good for Australia. Access to State Forests is decreasing with the closure of roads into them. Why?

Access to National Parks on horseback has two rulings:

- (1) No access at all because the horse is an introduced species.
- (2) Access is acceptable under special conditions. Please explain special conditions.

You need to change the rules by an Act of Parliament now, not later. We have been told by one Iro Keto of the Forests Conservation Movement that the change of tenure of state forests to National and Conservation Parks will go ahead NO MATTER what facts or arguments we submit. If this is to happen, why then has she so much power in the D.O.E. AND D.O.H.?

FAIR GO; LET'S NEGOTIATE AS QUEENSLANDERS AND AUSTRALIANS. WE WERE CONSERVATIONISTS BEFORE IT BECAME A CATCHWORD AT COCKTAIL PARTIES.

Appendix 15 'Dirt Dogs' North Brisbane Mountain Bike Club

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Email: jnewrick@thehub.com.au Website: www.thehub.com.au/mob

Ms. Lee-Ann Hearder
Recreation Planning Officer
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 2692
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Dear Lee-Ann

Thank you for providing the opportunity for the North Brisbane Mountain Bike club to provide some input into the current discussion on the Regional Forest Agreement. There are a number of points and issues in relation to the process which concern the club (and surely, mountain bike riders generally) greatly and which we will address further in our response. At the outset, however, we would like to thank you for your efforts in alerting us to the RFA process and providing a discussion paper and excellent briefing, to which we can now respond.

Lack of Representation and Late Advice for Recreationalists

I need to make it clear that North Brisbane Mountain Bike Club is unhappy with the way the current assessment process is taking place in that we believe that appropriate representation of recreational groups should have been included in any assessment or steering committees. If the RFA process is to be a fair and equitable, then this representation needs to mirror the extent of representation of other groups involved, such as environmentalists and conservationists. The late introduction of recreationalists to the issue and the short timeframe for response suggests that we were not seen as key participants in the exercise. We believe that to be a serious oversight and that we should have been involved from the outset as decisions on public land use have such a direct impact on our activities. We ask that the current timeframe for completion of this assessment be extended to allow for the appropriate time and resources to be dedicated to a comprehensive (all users) recreational usage study of public forest areas. In the meantime we intend to continue to provide our full support to the activities being undertaken by the Outdoor Recreation Working Party to ensure that this happens.

Usage Data is Flawed

As we have drawn to your attention previously, the data used in your assessment of usage of forest areas by mountain bikers is flawed. This is not a reflection on your assessment but a result of a number of issues specifically in relation to mountain bikers and perhaps the way land managers have managed active recreation in forest areas to date. Some of the reasons are as follows:

- Mountain bikers have tended not to obtain permits to access State Forests, as the experiences with Rangers on the tracks have not always been positive. There is a tendency to not want to draw attention to us. Riders in clubs are more likely to hold permits than non-club riders because of better awareness in clubs. However non-club riders vastly outnumber those affiliated with clubs.

- There has been considerable confusion created by the number of authorities responsible for managing public forest areas in Southeast Queensland. Responsibility is shared between local Councils, the Department of Natural Resources, National Parks and Wildlife and Brisbane Forest Park. A number of these agencies have also undergone continuous name change, further confusing general understanding. The different management authorities have different policies regarding access for active recreational purposes and signage regarding policies and responsibility is decidedly lacking. Therefore it is not always clear as to who we need to approach regarding a permit and what the access policies are.
- To date mountain bikers have been a group which has not been represented by any parent body (at least in recreational issues) and this is how mountain bikers preferred to be. There is a cultural ethos which is similar in many ways to snowboarding which prefers the free spirit approach – it is not a structured recreational pursuit. Like snowboarding, there has been exponential growth in mountain biking putting pressure on access to recreational areas of choice. This growth will continue to put extreme pressure on land managers to provide facilities. Despite generalized perceptions and aggressive media presentation, recreational mountain biking is seen by its adherents as more closely allied to bushwalking than any other outdoor pursuits (a lot of mountain bikers are also bushwalkers) This should be accepted by land managers and equitable provision made for it just as snow skiers and resorts accepted and made provision for snowboarding. Like walking, mountain biking is something that most people can do 12 months of the year, placing a very high demand on access to forests.
- We believe that many more mountain bikers use the forests than permit applications and Ranger opinions suggest. The data which you have presented in your discussion paper on mountain bike usage in the parks identified, is probably underestimated to a large degree and it should not be used conclusively to assess the importance of these areas to mountain bikers. Furthermore, projections must be made for future usage which is bound to grow given the dramatic rise in popularity of adventure-type experiences within the general community. It would not be sensible to make long term decisions based on current usage alone.

Outdoor Recreation Needs More Land not Less

What mountain biking needs (as do probably all outdoor recreations) is more opportunity, not less (as would appear to be the way we are heading with the RFA).

The growth of mountain biking is significant. The Worldwatch Institute's annual report – "Vital Signs 1998" – on the state of the world and the environment, gives global bicycle production at two and a half times that of automobiles. More than 100 million bicycles were produced last year, compared to 40 million automobiles. In fact bicycle production outstripped world population growth which was only 80 million.

Anecdotal evidence from retailers suggests that mountain bike sales make up 60 – 70% of total bicycle sales in Queensland. In mountain bike racing alone (a very small sector of MTB use) membership of the Queensland Cyclists Association grew by approximately 70 % between 1995 and 1996.

With mountain biking accepted into Olympic competition at Atlanta, attracting high media and spectator coverage, it is certain that its role in the 2000 Olympics in Sydney will considerably raise the profile of mountain biking in Australia.

This will lead to many more people seeking opportunities to pursue this activity, particularly as mountain biking fits in with the growth in what is perceived as adventure/challenge recreations – the popular choice of the 90's.

Mountain bike clubs will be lobbying for increased access to the existing forest areas, increases in the areas available for mountain biking and significant funding for increased facilities to support recreational mountain biking. We would be looking for equity in relation to facilities and funding currently made available to walkers. People are now questioning land managers' traditional decisions to make elaborate provisions for walkers only – what about some equity for other users?

The Question of Compatibility

Mountain biking in the bush is really bushwalking on wheels – leg muscle powered, just like walking. The same things that attract walkers to an area appeal to mountain bikers. Our most favoured riding is on 'single track' i.e. walking tracks. We like to meander through dappled sunlight along creek valleys (away from the sounds and dangers of the roads) over water crossings, rocks and logs etc. just the way walkers do. Yet so often we are denied this relaxing experience – why? A problem with wrong perceptions seems to be the cause. Walkers tend to be intolerant to mountain bikes because they go faster and startle them. Walkers also believe that the bikers are not in control. Certainly some mountain cyclists have been unthinking in their approach to walkers. Both sides need education in tolerance with a view to shared use of the majority of trails. It is accepted that high-use, near-city trails and some particular-use trails should be exclusively for walkers. Authorities here currently seem to take the expedient line of avoiding conflict by banning cyclists from all walking trails. This restrictive policy needs review.

In terms of compatibility and user conflict, mountain bikers believe that there is certainly scope for integration of trail usage with walkers and mountain bikers (this is successfully happening in New Zealand) and probably horse riding would be compatible given education for general understanding of each groups needs.

Whilst motor cyclists (trail bikes) and 4WD recreationalists similarly seek to enjoy the relaxation of bushland experiences, and have legitimate and equal claim to this (which we support) their trail compatibility with walkers, cyclists and horse riders is questionable. We believe that separate provision should be made for motorized recreationalists

Such a separation is practical and justifiable. With a bit of give and take all parties can be accommodated without undue danger or conflict (Admittedly any one group could argue for exclusive use based on perceived conflict but in this climate of increasing demands some compromise must be introduced)

Economic Benefits

It is generally held that Australian mountain biking is still on a rapid upward curve. This has significant economic benefit to the community. The Queensland Events Corporation estimated the economic benefit of the 1996 World Mountain Bike Championships held in Cairns to be \$8 million. Many other goods and service industries derive income and jobs from mountain biking and associated activity.

Outdoor recreation as a whole is of tremendous economic benefit to the community. We are seeing significant increases in mountain bike promotional activities, both sport and recreation based. Mountain bikes are increasingly being used as a medium for the marketing of a wide range of products. Clubs and businesses will be undertaking a number of promotional activities, both existing and new, to raise the profile and interest in mountain biking. The bicycle and associated accessory and support industries are sizable

With an economic input of this magnitude from mountain biking, any assessment or policy/legislative changes which reduced the area available for mountain biking would be short sighted and indefensible.

Brisbane City Council's Pro-MTB Strategy

Mountain bikers were very heartened to read the recent Brisbane City Council 'Mountain Bike Strategy – Planning and Management Framework' report. We were pleased to read the progressive (for mountain biking) terms of reference:

' provide a framework for the planning, development and management of mountain biking in Brisbane, including the provision of a competitive venue.'

It did not question whether or not mountain biking was feasible for BCC venues, it took the positive line, provide for mountain biking. That report is seen as required reading for anyone with an interest in the subject, as it has been professionally produced, well researched and backs up its statements and findings with objectivity. Those findings scotch a number of the popular misconceptions about mountain bikes (they wreck the tracks, they'll run you down– they're maniacs) In particular the "Planning Framework" section is drawn to your attention as it recognizes the current lack of any co-ordinated approach within South East Queensland and makes recommendations to correct this situation. In the unlikely event that you have not studied that report, the executive summary is attached.

User Groups Can Assist

Drawing on that report and strategy developed by Brisbane City Council, we would be looking to assist in the development of management policies and facilities in relation to mountain biking in Southeast Queensland. We could provide:

Assistance with the development of facilities

- track maintenance
- education Coordination

North Brisbane MTB Club Resume

Additionally, we have attached a copy of the current North Brisbane Mountain Bike Club's quarterly newsletter to give some insight of our activities and aspirations. Currently we have 85 members and this number is rapidly increasing.

Summary of NBMTB Club's Concerns

In conclusion, I would summarize the position of the North Brisbane Mountain Bike Club to the RFA and forestry access issues, as this:

- there is current public demand for a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities
- with increasing leisure time and relative affluence, this demand is increasing
- most-used areas are those with ready access from population centres (simply put,
- more people, more use)
- this demand needs to be met to satisfy public expectations of tax-payer funded land managers, particularly when their charters include the provision of recreational opportunities

- to remove existing opportunities by transferring land to a more restrictive recreational charter will exacerbate matters. People are demanding more recreational opportunities, not less.
- The need for conservation of land and its natural values for today and the future is accepted. It is the management of this that needs to be objectively approached to ensure equity and balance in public usage decisions. The current National Park policies on recreational use should be reviewed to see if a greater variety of recreational pursuits could be accommodated– consistent with suitable protection of the natural values of each particular park.. Decisions should be publicly documented with supporting evidence made available. This review should be on a park by park basis rather than the adoption of an all-embracing inflexible National Park code to expediently exclude all but the most passive activities.
- There is a basic human need for a range of outdoors– recreational opportunities to counter the steady urbanization of the planet. Public expectation is that governments will provide this within the land that has been secured, maintained and managed for the communities' benefit. Closing existing avenues is surely a most regressive and contentious action.

Thank you for your forbearance in reading this long and admittedly critical response to the RFA/Forestry Access issue and your Recreation Assessment Report.

We await developments with interest.

Yours faithfully,

President
North Brisbane Mountain Bike Club Inc.

Executive summary

Overview

In 1984 Victoria held Australia's first National mountain bike race, but it wasn't until the late eighties that mountain bikes became common in bicycle shops in Brisbane. In 1996 mountain biking became a full medal sport at the Olympics and Cairns hosted the World Championships.

There are 81 bicycle shops listed in the Brisbane Yellow Pages. Anecdotal evidence from retailers suggests that mountain bike sales make up 60–75% of total bicycle sales. Mountain bike racer membership of the Queensland Cyclists Association grew by approximately 70% between 1995 and 1996. Their membership is mostly comprised of males in the 15–30 age group.

As mountain biking has grown, unmanaged, it has become considered 'a threat' by many land managers. The reasons for this can be divided into four main areas:

- environmental and track impacts
- safety concerns
- social conflict
- economic Issues

A degree of emotionalism and stereotyping of mountain biking exists, largely due to a lack of management, the anti-social behaviour of some riders and popular media images of aggressive mountain bike racing. Even with sound management these stereotypes are bound to persist for many years.

There is little scientific information on the impacts of mountain biking in Australia, however anecdotal evidence from land managers and pedestrian track users indicate that mountain bikers do impact on tracks. A planning and management framework which addresses environmental and social issues in a coherent fashion is required.

Overseas research suggests agreement on the fact that compaction and erosion impacts are the greatest at the early stages of track use and that thereafter the negative impacts of additional use slow considerably. The most crucial aspect to developing a track is its initial siting.

Cessford (1995) concluded that the degree of impacts from mountain bikes, relative to those of walkers, appears to be similar. However his conclusion was based on studies of riders when 'wheeling', not skidding. Skidding is the result of over braking on steep, loose or slippery track surfaces and causes a gouging effect. It generally occurs on slopes greater than 15 degrees or at switch-backs at the end of fast sections of track.

Soils in the Brisbane region are particularly erosion-prone. The Fire Management Plan for Mt Coot-tha identifies the risk of erosion for different slopes on different soils in the area. It suggests that the erosion hazard becomes high or very high on slopes greater than 15 degrees.

Any planning framework must take particular note of soil erosion and address any other unique environmental issues which may exist in particular areas.

Conflict between walkers and mountain bikers is accentuated by perceptions of difference in motivation, high environmental impact and safety hazards of riders. A similar conflict exists between most track users and off-road vehicles (including trail bikes).

Social conflict is generally considered to be the most difficult impact of mountain biking to manage. It is characterised by the experience or perception of:

- risk of injury due to speeding riders
- annoyance at being startled by riders ·
- being dominated by an often younger, faster, less passive track user ·
- unmanageable environmental impacts by bikers
- the idea that mountain biking is inappropriate in bush areas
- unfair hostility from walkers

Mountain biking policies in New Zealand have banned riding on high use walking tracks and nature trails but provided some single track riding opportunities and few restrictions on the use of vehicle tracks. They have concentrated on track user education and multiple-use of tracks in favour of enforcement of dedicated-use tracks.

The need for education of mountain bikers and other track users is paramount. Education strategies may take the form of:

- school training programs
- on-site signage, brochures, publication of the ‘Off Road Code’ and rider ethics
- education partnerships between manufacturers, retailers, land managers and other users – and finally, enforcement

For example Marin County, U.S.A, (the birthplace of mountain biking) has a policy of attaching an abbreviated copy of the Off Road Code to all new bicycles sold. In Wellington New Zealand, pamphlets explaining track etiquette and riding areas are available, free of charge, in outdoor and cycle stores throughout the city.

The off road code simply states:

- Ride on open trails only
- Control your bicycle
- Always yield trail
- Never spook animals
- Leave no trace

Statistically the risk of a mountain biker injuring him/herself is far greater than the risk of them injuring another track user, but for obvious reasons safety considerations are key issues in track design and / or management.

Risk management strategies will need to be developed in relation to areas considered suitable for mountain biking following the application of a planning framework. The two most critical factors influencing the risks inherent with mountain biking are speed and line-of-sight. These issues can and should be taken into account in any new track design.

Economic impacts from mountain biking can be both positive and negative. Queensland Events Corporation estimated the economic benefit of the World Mountain Bike Championships in Cairns to be \$8 m and the economic impact of a World Cup race for the host city is estimated at

approximately \$1 m. On the other hand the cost of track maintenance particularly in those areas currently used by mountain bikers which are poorly designed and/or haphazardly developed can be substantial.

SURVEY OF MOUNTAIN BIKING IN BRISBANE

Strategic Leisure Australia sought information about the attitudes, perceptions and characteristics of recreational and competitive mountain bikers in the Brisbane region. Questionnaires were distributed to 1000 mountain bikers and a 29% response rate enabled the analysis of some 289 returns.

The sample comprised the following:

- club members (70%)
- male (91%)
- aged 21 to 30 years (36%), 31 to 50 years (28%), and older teenagers (23%)
- majority lived on the south of the Brisbane River (63%)

The survey contained the following findings:

- 11% were members of an environmental group.
- Over 40% had from three to five years of riding experience
- Most (66%) said they preferred mural-lap cross country racing and just under half (45%) said they preferred downhill racing
- Riding mountain bikes once or twice a week was most common (42%) but many (33%) rode more frequently (3 to 6 times) per week
- Half (50%) of the surveyed mountain bikers preferred to ride for 1 to 2 hours but just less than half (46%) liked to ride for more than 2 hours

- Almost all of the surveyed mountain bikers (88.4%) reported they rode their bikes all year round.
- Just over half of the riders (53%) rode mostly on weekends but nearly one third indicated they rode throughout the week.
- Early morning is the most popular time for riding
- Their most important motivations for riding are:
 - getting exercise and being physically challenged (76%)
 - speed and excitement (53%)
 - skill challenge (46%)
 - riding and socialising with friends (41%)
- Younger mountain bikers tended to see speed, excitement and racing as more important whereas older mountain bikers tended to see exercise / physical challenge, appreciating views, nature and scenery and riding with friends as more important
- Respondents strongly agreed that riding in forests is preferable to riding in farmland
- Younger mountain bikers were less in agreement with the view that mountain bike access should be restricted in environmentally sensitive areas
- Older cyclists tended to agree that mountain bikes should not use high use walking tracks and that user pays systems are fair ways of covering the cost of maintaining mountain bike tracks whereas younger cyclists tended to disagree with these views

- The favourite riding location preferences of respondents were Daisy Hill Forest Park, Toohey Forest Park, Gap Creek, Mt Cotton / Karingal, Bardon side of Mount Coot-tha, Venmann Bushland Reserve and Bunya State Forest
- Four riding locations were used by at least half of the surveyed riders during the last year These were Toohey Forest Park (61%), Daisy Hill Forest Park (57%), the Bardon Side of Mt Coot-tha (52%) and the Gap Creek area (50%).

A 1996 B.C.C. survey of recreational mountain bikers in the Mr. Coot-tha (refer p. 34) found that the primary motivations of riders were pleasure (82.5%) and physical fitness (71.1%) with competition training perceived as much less important (36%).

Strategic Leisure Australia research conducted for this project had a high proportion of club members (approximately 70%) whereas the BCC survey comprised mostly non-club members (73%). It appears that the motivations of purely recreational riders are more heavily orientated toward pleasure and fitness than excitement and skill challenge.

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Techniques used in Australia, New Zealand and the United States were reviewed in order to manage mountain biking on a sustainable basis. These techniques are summarised as physical impact, risk management, social impact, and event management.

It is suggested that the walking track gradients given by Messer (1995) should be heeded in the construction of any new track in Brisbane. These are that tracks should have a maximum gradient of 11 degrees for short distances, and a gradient generally between 2 –6 degrees.

However, in almost all currently used areas in Brisbane there are sections of track which fall outside these gradient parameters. In order to limit the environmental and cost implications associated with the extensive construction of new track the following suggestions are made:

- short sections of existing track which are required for walking and/or mountain bike use and have a gradient between 11 and 15 degrees should be maintained in preference to re-routing. These tracks will require the extensive use of water control devices and may require some track hardening.
- sections of existing tracks which are in excess of 15 degrees should be re-routed with the old track closed and revegetated. If a section of track with gradient over 15 degrees is required for fire management it should be closed to all mountain bike use. Continued use of such tracks by other users should also be considered

Other physical impact measures may include:

- the use of water control devices
- use of wide switchbacks and following of contour lines to minimise erosion
- possible track closures
- particular care with stream crossings and track shoulders
- soil stabilisation measures – use of volunteers
- closing of illegal tracks
- publicising of a Council contact for the notification of problem areas on tracks and acting

- promptly to rectify problems

Risk management measures may include:

- speed limiting techniques
- consideration of 'line of sight' in track design and maintenance
- multi-use of narrow tracks on low to medium use areas
- risk assessments of sites where public access and recreational usage is permitted
- use of techniques such as monitoring and maintaining tracks, removing potential hazards (eg. low tree branches), and installing signage

It will be an important part of policy implementation to ensure that a majority of track users are satisfied that mountain biking, especially recreational riding, is a compatible and acceptable use of bushland when carded out in a responsible manner.

Measures to manage social conflicts may include:

- publication and distribution of the planning framework for public comment
- explanation of rationale and any restrictions to main mountain bike clubs
- provision of information about where to ride and how to ride in a socially responsible manner
- provision of information about mountain bikers to other track users (eg where they may ride, their motivations and scale of impacts)
- asking representatives of local track user groups to walk tracks to identify potential or existing trouble spots designating tracks which avoid areas of high social impact
- inviting mountain bike representation on management committees
- producing a pamphlet or booklet outlining the mountain biking opportunities in and around Brisbane City and distributing through information centres, clubs and cycle outlets
- placing of signs showing the Off Road Code at all major riding areas
- use of non-aggressive wording on closure signs
- posting of maps at major trail-heads indicating open and closed tracks
- seeking of sponsorship to cover the cost of signage and pamphlets/booklets
- requiring mountain bike event organisers to print the Off Road Code on their entry forms

While mountain bike events require special attention, managing and monitoring their impacts can be more readily controlled than casual use. The management of events is set out in detail at Section 5.5 of this report.

In addition the following conditions should apply:

- suitable car parking for participants and spectators or other appropriate transport arrangements – races should be postponed in the event of heavy rain prior to the event
- a bond from the race organiser should be held by the Council in the event that any remedial work is required
- a public notice should be printed in a local paper alerting other track users of the event
- provision of sufficient signage and marshals to ensure the safety of the general public
- the mountain bike Off Road Code must be printed on all event entry forms
- highlighting of any dangerous obstacles that cannot be padded
- commercial sponsorship signage should be discreet and unobtrusive in areas of reserve land.
- removal of all bunting, litter and signage immediately after the race.

A detailed safety plan should be required before an event is approved.

Planning Framework

The purpose of the planning framework is to provide a mechanism through which decisions can be made on the provision of mountain biking opportunities within the Brisbane Region. It is intended to be a practical tool which assists managers to systematically plan for mountain biking in a manner which recognises recreation and environment considerations.

The proposed planning framework comprises a series of steps and is shown diagrammatically on page 88. **It is recommended that high use areas (as concluded from the mountain bike questionnaire) take priority for application of the framework along with those sites being considered for mountain bike competition.**

These steps include:

- Step 1: Regional Policy Framework**
- Step 2: Regional Planning Approach agreement**
- Step 3: Define Objectives and Outcomes**
(eg specific activity, policy or management plan requirements)
- Step 4: Activity Specifications** – analyze and define types and diversity of activities(ie. for each activity defined determine the terrain, access, location, compatibility, landscape class requirements, participant setting preferences and opportunities for planning and management involvement).
- Step 5: Activity Demand identification** –conduct current and future demand analysis (including values, motivation and setting preferences)
- Step 6: Inventory identification (regional, district, local)**
identification of current and potential sites
broad gap analysis of supply
- Step 7: Sites Opportunities/Constraints identification**
(Performance Indicators for Individual Sites)
(ie. determine tenure, designated purpose, legislative requirements, biophysical (soils, fauna, vegetation), safety, risk management, sustainability (size, access, biophysical management responses), social impacts (eg. compatibility, existing uses, established track networks) etc.
- Step 8: Monitoring Process**
develop monitoring and feedback processes for planning and management implementation.
- Step 9: Feasibility Analysis**
overlay all factors based on activity requirements, demand analysis, regional inventory and site constraints/opportunities and BCC policies or existing management plans to determine whether site is feasible or not, with or without management responses.
- Step 10: Gap Identification**
- Step 11: Consultation** on results of overflow analysis with key stakeholders particularly users and land managers on feasibility analysis
- Step 12: Development of plans or policy**
strategic regional management plan
specific BCC policies and management plans cross agency policies and management plans (partnership/multi -tenure)
activity specific policies and management plans

Step 13: Undertake **evaluation** of policies and management plans implementation and review process.

Step 14: Identification of further research planning and monitoring implementation

Many of the steps can be undertaken in parallel, prior to undertaking the Feasibility Analysis at step 9. Some of the framework steps have been linked to objectives and example actions. This is to provide practical examples of how the steps can be interpreted depending on whether a broad or site specific feasibility analysis is required.

The process for decision making must begin with a broad policy framework for outdoor recreation in South East Queensland. At present the policy overlay required for decision making on outdoor recreation provision does not exist. Historically there has been a strong environment and conservation focus in the management of bushland areas within the Brisbane region and provision of areas for more formalised recreation (sport).

A **regional approach** is required to ensure that recreation planning considers the resources available across city/shire / district boundaries and amongst the variety of land owners and managers (both public and private). Through such an approach there will also be a consistent application of a broad policy framework over an extensive area.

By considering mountain biking opportunities outside of Brisbane City the recreational needs of the wider community will be met more effectively and the resources of the region will be more effectively managed.

The promotion of suitable mountain bike areas on a regional basis will:

- reduce the pressure on specific sites
- increase rider compliance with 'no-go' areas
- provide a greater mix of opportunities for riders
- give land managers the opportunity to implement common strategies.

The criteria in the following table can be applied to identify areas where recreational mountain biking:

- could be a sustainable activity with increases in use and management
- is an unsuitable activity
- should not be encouraged and promoted as a recreational activity, although a level of existing use could be accommodated and sustained.

The criteria outlined can be applied to a range of sites within, or close to Brisbane, to assess their suitability for mountain bike riding.

Table 1: Criteria for Identifying Site Issues Considered for Recreational Mountain Bike Riding (further assessment needed)

Fauna (f)

- is there any information to suggest the existence of any rare, threatened or otherwise noteworthy fauna species and/or communities (within a local, metropolitan and regional context) within and/or adjacent to the site. Are any likely to be affected detrimentally by activities and development. (eg. Refer to significant species database)

Flora – vegetation (v)

- is there any information to suggest the existence of any rare, threatened or otherwise noteworthy flora species
- and/or communities (within a local, metropolitan and regional context) within and/or adjacent to the site.

Waterways and Wetlands (w)

- are any waterways or wetlands located on or adjacent to the subject site;
- will there be any requirement to interfere (traverse, alter, etc) with any waterways or wetlands.
- (without management would the interference result in unacceptable levels of disturbance)

Management / Planning Status (m)

- is the subject site or adjacent lands affected by any of the following Brisbane City Council or Queensland State Government designations (eg. does the existing designation – 'purpose of use, zoning, development control plan, management plan specifically and definitively prohibits/excludes mountain biking):
 - Brisbane City Council Strategic Plan *Map 1 Preferred Dominant Land Use* areas identified as 'Green Space Area'; 'Green Space Link', 'Green Space Corridor'; 'Regional Green Space Link', 'Land with Environmental and Scenic Constraints', 'Areas for Investigation'.
 - *Map 2 Brisbane Green Space System Values; Map 3 Brisbane Green Space System;*
 - Areas covered by Vegetation Protection Orders;
 - Local Area Outline Plans (LAOP) categories: Environmental and Scenic Constraints; Environmental and Waterways Corridors; Natural Area Corridors; Non Urban Zone; Urban Nature Parks; and Open Space;
 - Areas flagged by the Environmental Status theme on Council's BIMAP geographic information system. Includes properties flagged by the most recent "Bushland", "Waterways", "Wet/and" or "Waterway Corridors" themes.
 - Land in the Conservation Zone
 - Land in the Non Urban Zone with a category of A or B.
 - Land identified on Council's Significant Flora and/or Fauna Species Maps
 - State Planning Policy 1/95: *Conservation of Koalas in the Koala Coast;*
 - Certain Areas listed in Schedule 2 of the Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act 1990.

Soils and Topography (st)

- does the site support soils or soil formations known to be susceptible to wind and/or water erosion (eg. Soils with humic crust where disturbance would generate instability) (eg can maximum cross 33° and back (batter) slopes 33°– 45° be accommodated);

- does the site accommodate a range of slopes of less than 12° – 15° ; if site accommodates maximum track gradients mountain bike use should be limited (eg for 15° gradient a length of less than 40 meters can be developed)
- can the subject site meet the topographic requirements of proposed activity

Reserve Size (rs)

- can the subject site meet the spatial requirements of proposed activity. (eg smaller size sites with high use potential, without high level management may result in informal tracks being developed).

Existing Recreation Uses (e)

- does the subject site support one or more existing types and levels of use which are incompatible with the proposed activity, even with management options. (ie. this criteria should not preempt avoidance of areas supporting existing uses. Relocation and transferring of recreational uses to alternative sites may or may not be an option (eg. Increasing uses of low use minor natural reserves, may not be necessarily appropriate or feasible).

Infrastructure (i)

- can the subject site or adjacent lands support all or some of required infrastructure (ie. this potentially reduces the impacts upon the natural environment).

User setting preferences (U)

- does the subject site setting meet the setting and experience requirements of mountain bikers

Safety/Risk Management (s)

- does the site meet specific state OH&S legislation, Local Government policies and liability requirements even with modifications and management what is the degree that the safety and risk management requirements impact upon the recreational and environmental opportunities

Appendix 16: CRA Recreation Workshop (Non-Indicator Recreation Groups)

Thursday 5 November 1998

Record of Workshop

Present

Facilitator

Anita Eggington

Organisations represented

Duke of Edinburgh Awards S. Strong (also has connection with Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation and Outdoor Educators Association of Queensland)

Scouts Association of Queensland J. Russell

Queensland Naturalists Club H. Horton, A. Gillies

Queensland Caravan and Camping Association R. Liekari, R. Chapman

Department of Natural Resources L. Header, M. Taylor, L. Sivyer

Issues and comments

Qld Naturalists

Corridors are important for wildlife – ie. continuous forest areas. Tenure is a lesser issue for Qld Naturalist activities than continuity of forested areas.

It is important to maintain places that support a diversity of interests/requirements. For example, Emu Creek State Forest Park (Benarkin) is not visited by the Qld Naturalists, but the Qld Naturalists want to see such opportunities retained for all users.

The educational role of State Forests and National Parks is important. Signage/interpretive information should be improved. Fire regime has an impact on recreation opportunities. Recent fires tend to lower the value of an area for Qld Naturalists' activities.

Duke of Edinburgh

Experience is that good relationships exist between adjoining State Forests and National Parks management. This improves the value of areas for activities.

Scouts

Uncertain about the impacts of a change in tenure on their activities. There are many unknowns. Differences will depend on area management as well as legislative requirements and this is difficult to determine *a priori*.

General comments

For specialised activities (eg. climbing, caving, canyoning), risk management is an increasing concern. Issues such as litigation and accreditation of clubs/organisations/recreationists are current topics of discussion between organisations and management agencies and need to be resolved. Concern was expressed that access could be curtailed, on any tenure, unless bodies are accredited. This could be difficult for small clubs/organisations or individuals.

Increased coordination of management across tenures would be appreciated – eg., being able to apply to one agency for Permits for activities which span several tenures.

It is difficult for forest users to know the difference between tenures and the implications for particular activities. Difficult to know just what are the differing constraints on activities across tenures.

All organisations wanted to be considered as stakeholders/interested parties in the RFA process and to be informed of developments and outcomes. Additionally, organisations could be a source for information that departments do not have – eg. the Qld Naturalists have botanical information.

Organisers comment on workshop

As a general observation about the proceedings, the points raised and discussed tended to focus on management and administrative problems encountered under existing tenure regimes, rather than the impact of a change of tenure on activities.

Appendix 17: CRA Recreation Workshop (Non-Indicator Activity Recreation Groups)

Friday 6 November 1998

Record of Workshop

Present

Facilitator

Anita Eggington

Organisations represented

Suncoast Gem and Fossicking Club	G. Campbell
Rogaining Association of Queensland	B. Hoey
Girl Guides Association	M. Linsley
Orienteering Association of Queensland	R. Sinsom
National Parks Association of Queensland	R. Lindgren
Department of Natural Resources	L. Hearder, M. Taylor, G. Clare, L. Sivyver

General discussion of issues raised by each organisation

Fossicking

G Campbell Cannot fossick in Conservation Parks or National Parks. It is difficult to gain access for fossicking to State Forests.

L Hearder Issue may be one of communication of policies. Fossicking is not considered a recreation activity by the Department of Natural Resources. Fossicking matters are considered a custodial (resource use) policy issue.

G Campbell There is a general sense that the activity is hindered. Deposits are known on State Forest but there is difficulty in gaining approval to access these. Because of this, most fossicking occurs on private lands and this requires the agreement of the landholder. There are also obvious resource constraints – the activity requires particular geological configurations.

R Lindgren Are fossickers prepared to pay?

G Campbell They currently do so to access some deposits on private land, but, as an organisation the preference is not to commercialise the activity and to maintain a focus on fossicking as a hobby/amateur activity.

Rogaining

B Hoey Generally the organisation has not tried to operate on National Parks. Generally operate on State Forest, a combination of State Forest and adjoining private land or wholly on private land. Rogaining requires large areas. If access to State Forest is denied, the adjoining private land usually is not sufficient. Preference is for open forests, undulating and large areas with vehicle access to start/finish areas. Rogaining regularly needs “fresh” areas – prefer competitors to not have detailed knowledge of the area. Areas tend to be used infrequently.

One area used did include a small part of a National Park. The Department of Environment has no particular policy on use of National Parks for rogaining. Much of the National Park estate in South east Queensland is unsuitable anyway – too steep, unsuitable vegetation types.

A change of tenure to a conservation tenure is not an issue if continued access is allowed. In other Australian states, rogaining occurs in National Parks.

Orienteering

Orienteering occurs in private land, local government reserves/lands, State Forests and Conservation Parks. Currently do not need to access National Parks as sufficient alternative land is available for orienteering use. Orienteering requires good maps that are usually purpose published by the orienteering groups. Thus, continued access to lands over time is necessary to allow data collection for map preparation and to recoup investment in map preparation. Also require vehicle access to start/finish area.

Biggest problems at present are administrative – eg. getting permits in a reasonable time. Previously could get decision often within 24 hours when dealing with local forestry staff. Now may take up to 3 months, permit conditions are not consistent and may be unrealistic for the activity – eg. “require vehicle to traverse area to check if anyone left”, but competition is not confined to tracks. Administration does not recognise the well developed procedures put in place by the Association.

National Parks Association

See limitations on use of National Parks as necessary for a variety of activities – eg. camping (especially vehicle based). Recognise a need for a wider range of tenures to accommodate the range of uses. Prefer to see National Park tenure/use tightened and restricted. Prefer to see the provision for “wilderness” in the Nature Conservation Act more widely used. Prefer to see a new tenure class established, reflecting the “national park in waiting” concept for areas currently too degraded for National Park reservation, but which could recover over time. Generally, see it as important for a range of tenures to be available so that National Parks can reflect the highest conservation purpose. Tenures other than National Park should accommodate the range of other uses, including recreation uses.

Girl Guides Association

No issues raised.

Comments recorded by facilitator and agreed by workshop participants as reflecting the discussion and the key points raised.

The majority of fossicking activity occurs on private land but these opportunities are decreasing

Rogaining is flexible in its requirements regarding tenure. Rogaining has not tried to operate on National Parks to date.

Orienteering currently has access to sufficient land for the sport. Land is available in private land, State Forests, Conservation Parks and local government Environmental Parks.

The current permits system (for State Forests) places constraints on orienteering activities because of time to get decisions and permit conditions. Conditions placed on Permits often do not reflect an understanding of the procedures and policies of the Orienteering Associations/clubs especially regarding safety and risk assessment.

National Parks Association is happy to see camping and vehicle access prohibited in National Parks. Some areas of National Parks would be suitable for bush camping.

Administration (of State Forests) does not understand the nature of specific activities. One general process/policy is not appropriate.

Special requirements for particular activities

Fossickers cannot operate in Conservation Parks and National Parks. State Forests require special areas declared and this involves policy decisions. Specific geological formations are required for fossicking activities and this limits opportunities.

Orienteering and rogaining have long lead times to organise/prepare for an event. Rogaining requires open vegetation. Rogaining occurs over adjoining tenures such as private land and State Forests. Rogaining occurs mainly in the south east corner of Queensland.

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