



ANNOUNCEMENT:

THE 2015 QUEENSLAND OUTDOOR RECREATION AWARD WINNERS.

MEDIA RELEASE:

The Queensland Outdoor Recreation Awards celebrate excellence in the outdoor recreation community. These people and organisations deliver the outdoor recreation experiences and lifestyle for which Queensland is renowned.

The awards showcase the diverse range of outdoor recreation experiences available to Queenslanders, with representatives from mountain biking to motocross in the 2015 winners list.

Dom Courtney, Executive Officer of QORF (Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation), said the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Awards are an excellent opportunity to champion the commitment and passion of the businesses, government bodies and individuals who understand the importance of delivering consistently exceptional outdoor recreation experiences.

“Everyone who was nominated for the awards is dedicated to not only delivering the best outdoor recreation experiences throughout Queensland, but increasing the number of people participating in outdoor recreation activities.

“More people participating in outdoor recreation has significant health and economic benefits for our community, but we also know participation in outdoor recreation results in other benefits, such as deepening participants’ respect for our natural resources and a greater appreciation of the responsibility that governments, community and individuals have in the management of our natural resources.

“With more than 7,000 kilometers of coastline and some of the best natural assets in the country, the 2015 award winners show Queensland offers a truly diverse range of high quality outdoor recreation experiences that I believe are some of the best in Australia.

“This year’s winners come from across the State and represent a wide range of outdoor recreation pursuits, covering blue-water sailing, cycling, outdoor education, scouting and PCYC, adventure racing, mountain biking, right through to off-road motor-cycling.”

The winners of the 2015 Queensland Outdoor Recreation Awards were announced at a Brisbane-based ceremony tonight, Friday 30 October, which officially ends a month-long celebration of the outdoor recreation industry in Queensland coordinated by QORF called “Outdoor-tober”.

Further information about the awards are available at
qorf.org.au/resources/public-events-master/outdoor-recreation-awards

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2015 QUEENSLAND OUTDOOR RECREATION AWARD WINNERS:

1. THE QLD GOVERNMENT AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT: INDIVIDUAL

WINNER: Damien Boicos

Damien Boicos has been instrumental in developing first-class Outdoor Education programs for school students. Prior to his current role at the Rockhampton Grammar School, he was at the Trinity Anglican School in Cairns and was instrumental in establishing their Outdoor Education Program. From humble beginnings, this program went on to become the benchmark for outdoor education programs within the school curriculum. The program continues to provide the best outdoor opportunities for the entire student body. Damien's ability to encourage everyone's support and involvement from the school to colleagues to students, says much about his man and his passion for outdoor education. His commitment to the program went well beyond industry expectations and the outcomes of the program within the school speak for themselves – many leaders in the school executive come from the body of students who have been through the Cert 111 OE Program. Damien continues to work with organisations across the outdoor recreation industry, and across the country, to further the potential of his Outdoor Education program.

2. THE BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT: ORGANISATION

WINNER: South Passage

South Passage – Adventure under Sail owns and operates the 100 foot (30.5m) gaff rigged Schooner *South Passage*. Designed specifically for 14-17 year olds to experience adventure under sail, over 40,000 young voyagers have sailed on South Passage since her launch in 1993. *South Passage* is sailed in the traditional way. Everything is done manually – there are no winches or mechanical aids. Sails are raised and lowered by hand and every activity requires a number of people working together as a team. South Passage - Adventure under Sail is a non-profit organisation run by volunteers. Many have a background in sailing and all have a desire to make a difference in the lives of young people. Their mission is to “grow and develop young people through outdoor adventure under sail.” They receive no government funding and rely on voyage fees and community support to enable their unique youth development programs to operate. South Passage – Adventure Under Sail provides safe and challenging experience for young men and women using the ship as a medium to develop leadership, initiative, independence and self-discipline.

3. THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT AWARD FOR ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

WINNER: Cycling Brisbane

Cycling Brisbane is a free membership-based program offered by the Brisbane City Council which encourages people of all ages and abilities to cycle more often. Brisbane has more than 1,300 kilometres of bikeways and shared pathways across the city that connect to schools, local facilities, parks and public transport hubs. Whether you want to ride for fun, fitness or as a means of active transport, the Cycling Brisbane program provides information that helps participants embrace this enjoyable, healthy and sustainable way to get around. Cycling Brisbane offers information on how to improve riding technique, plan your journey, learn about bikeway projects, locate key facilities and most of all have fun on your bike. Cycling Brisbane offers members access to free bike skills sessions, special members-only deals and discounts from sponsors and all members receive a bi-monthly e-newsletter to keep them up to date on everything cycling. Whether you are new to riding, new to Brisbane, or a lapsed rider, there are various skills sessions to help you get on your bike, including sessions for cycling in traffic, riding as a family, mountain biking and bike maintenance. The Brisbane City Council is committed to improving Brisbane's active transport network and encouraging people to use active transport options to make Brisbane a clean, green, active and healthy city.

4. THE RIVERLIFE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN OUTDOOR INSTRUCTION & EDUCATION:

WINNER: PCYC State Youth Leadership Program

The PCYC State Youth Leadership Program (SYLP) is a multi-stage youth leadership development camp that takes place at Bornhoffen Leadership Development Centre in the Gold Coast Hinterland, bringing together young people who are passionate about developing themselves and contributing positively to their community. SYLP focuses on supporting young people to develop strategies and processes that will be useful in everyday life through a three-stage experiential learning and outdoor adventure program. Stage 1: “Leading Me”, is a six-day experience that looks at emotional intelligence and trust in self through a series of adventure development experiences that may include ‘creek-ing’ and high ropes. Stage 2: “Leading Others” is a six-day experience that picks up concepts learned from the Personal Development Course and focuses on strategies for working with others and strengthening individual processes. Stage 3: “Leading in Your Community”, is a seven-day experience where participants combine what they learnt in the previous stages and look at strategies for leadership, understanding basic group behavior and management. The PCYC State Youth Leadership Program is open to any young person aged 14 to 25 years who is interested in learning new skills, making new friends and taking on new challenges.

5. THE K2 BASECAMP ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD

WINNER: Jemima Michell

Jemima Mitchell is a 17-year-old high school student who is a passionate advocate for the benefits of outdoor recreation. Jemima was recently awarded the Queens Scout Awards, the highest award for a Venturer Scout in Australia. The Queens Scout Award includes a strong emphasis on developing skills in various adventurous outdoor activities. Award nominees need to display exceptional planning and leadership skills, problem solving and initiative skills, and a commitment to caring for the natural environment. Jemima’s outdoor skills include sailing, canoeing, kayaking, rock-climbing, archery, bushwalking and expeditioning. In January of 2014 and 2015, Jemima attended 2 Scouts Australia National Outdoor Adventurous Activities Schools in NSW and QLD; receiving instruction from leading outdoor instructors specifically chosen from across Australia. Jemima has a Certificate 11 (2) in Outdoor Recreation and is very close to completing a Certificate 111 (3). Jemima is presently completing Year 12 at Kenmore State School and is planning to take a gap year next year where she is hoping to find employment in the outdoor recreation industry.

6. THE QORF AWARD FOR GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENT

WINNER: Ipswich City Council

Ipswich City Council has devised a new recreation strategy which provides a five year targeted action plan to deliver greater recreation opportunities within the City. The strategy will support increased recreation opportunities via the delivery of effective recreation programs, facilities and services to diverse communities throughout Ipswich. The council is determined to lead the way in providing community access to a range of vibrant, diverse, innovative and inclusive sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities to help improve the community’s health and wellbeing. Regional sports and recreation events directly benefit the local community through tourist spending and facility upgrades. In 2014, Ipswich City Council was the first council in Australia to appoint a Nature-Based Recreation Officer to focus on the growth of sustainable recreation in the area and to attract suitable outdoor events. Recent successes include the Kholo Adventure Race that attracted visitors from as far away as Melbourne and Mackay and the Mud Lark in the Park that drew a sell-out crowd. More outdoor recreation events are currently being planned including further adventure races, a new trail running series and mud play and mountain bike events.

7. THE QORF AWARD FOR GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENT

WINNER: Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service for the Atherton Forest Mountain Bike Park and Walking Trail.

This magical part of Queensland is a mecca for outdoor recreation enthusiasts where visitors can ride the trails of the Atherton Forest Mountain Bike Park, walk to the summit of Mount Baldy or ride horses through the regional park. The QPWS maintain a network of mountain bike trails in the Herberton Range which are accessed from the northern entrance. These trails meander through an open forest of gums, bloodwoods, mahoganies, she-oaks, grasstrees and cycads. Some of the trails pass former forestry experimental plots of teak, blackbutt and tallowwood trees. These single-track trails are purpose-built for mountain bike riding. The area is home to many unique animals and plants and parts are protected in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. QPWS provide extensive on ground support for the mountain bike riding community through track maintenance, advice on safe and responsible riding practices, and recommendation on how participants should care for the park to ensure its protection for future generations.

8. THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

WINNER: Healthy Waterways “Connect To Your Creek”

Research shows that connection with nature, in particular with waterways, is good for our physical, mental and social health. Healthy Waterways' annual Connect to your Creek Week encourages South East Queenslanders to get outdoors and enjoy their local waterways. Through encouraging their members to host waterway events such as creek walks, canoe tours, tree plantings and much more, people are provided with an opportunity to connect with their local creek, river, beach or bay. All community groups are encouraged to host an event as part of Connect to Your Creek Week with events listed and promoted via the Healthy Waterways online events calendar. In 2015, Connect to Your Creek Week was held from Saturday 21 to Sunday 29 March.

9. THE BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL OUTDOOR EVENT AWARD

WINNER: The GRIN ‘n’ BEAR IT Challenge

The Bear Foreman Foundation was created to continue a legacy of supporting talented young athletes in pursuit of their sporting dreams. This legacy exists due to a man by the name of Michael Parnell Foreman, who was lovingly known as Mick or “Bear”. Bear passed away in 2013. During his life Bear like to perform “random acts of kindness” to family, friends and complete strangers, never promoting his actions. His humility, generosity and willingness to help others, underpins the creation of this Foundation. The inaugural Grin n Bear It Challenge was held on August 29, 2015 and was promoted as *“a rewarding challenge for the well prepared multisport athlete.”* Participants experienced a classic four stage, multisport event including an open water 2km swim, an out-and-back 12km lake paddle, a 60km mountain bike ride and a 16.5k trail run. The course was testing, tough and truly wild, but participants said it was also incredibly scenic and immensely satisfying. This exciting adventure race will now be held annually in far North Queensland as the main fundraiser for the Bear Forman Foundation which solely exists to support young athletes.

10. THE QORF AWARD FOR OUTDOOR PLAY AND SPACES

WINNER: Queensland Moto Park

The Queensland Moto Park offers trail bike enthusiasts a legal, family-friendly riding option that is suitable for beginner's right through to advanced riders. In 2008, there were more than 230,000 trail bike riders in South East Queensland. Many riders, due to lack of regulated sites and locations, were riding in national parks and not only damaging the bush but also the reputation of riders across the state. Council of Mayors (SEQ) recognised the need for a dedicated trail bike facility as a way to protect the environment and to reduce trail bike related deaths and injuries. Queensland Moto Park, located at Wyaralong, 30 kilometers from Beaudesert, was the result. Opened to the public in December 2011, it's the first facility of its kind in Australia. Queensland Moto Park has been developed on 745 hectares of land in the Wyaralong area of Scenic Rim council, and utilising many old logging tracks. Tracks are suitable for Motorcross, Trail, Endurance, Motor-trails, Quads and Pee-Wee riders. Facilities offered include coaching and camping. Queensland Moto Park operators claim riders may come for the tracks but will stay for the good times!

11. THE NATURE PLAY QLD AWARD

WINNER: Natureweavers

Natureweavers is a bush kindergarten based in Cooroy for children aged 2 – 5 years. It was founded on December 1, 2011, and is an innovative facility where children work and play interpretively and discover the wonder of nature. The Natureweaver philosophy is based on principles of ecology, anthroposophy and a love of natural spaces. Their work with children is based on the principle that regular immersion in green spaces is vital for a child's healthy physical and emotional development. Children are encouraged to experience their "wild space" by learning and playing outside. Through learning and playing in nature, Natureweavers believe children will not only be healthier and happier, but become the next generation's environment stewards.

ABOUT QORF:

QORF is the acronym for the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation and is the peak body representing the interests of outdoor recreation users in Queensland. QORF was formed in 1996 as a not-for-profit association representing a coalition of outdoor recreation groups to advocate on behalf of the industry. www.qorf.org.au

ABOUT NATURE PLAY QLD:

Nature Play QLD is a QORF project, with a mission of making nature play a normal part of childhood again for Queensland children. At Nature Play QLD, we believe that unstructured outdoor play ('nature play') is fundamental to a full and healthy childhood. We advocate the nature play message and increase access to nature play resources, events and programmes for Queenslanders. Nature Play QLD is made possible through the support of the Queensland Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing. www.natureplayqld.org.au

ABOUT OUTDOOR-OBER:

Outdoor-ober is a month long celebration of activities in the outdoors. Industry providers across Queensland encourage everyone to get outdoors in October. Why get outdoors?

- Lifestyle – Live the Queensland lifestyle in the great outdoors
- Challenge – experience challenge and a sense of achievement
- Detox – escape the digital clutter of modern life and reconnect with nature to unwind
- Connect – share activities and make memories with friends and families
- Appreciate – get outdoors and value our open natural spaces
- Live – pause, take time out, fully engage the senses in the outdoors
- Adventure – seek and explore the unfamiliar
- Learn – new skills
- Discover – more of our beautiful state through outdoor recreation

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