

Outdoors Queensland (formerly Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation Inc) is the peak body representing the interests of Queensland’s outdoor sector.

Outdoors Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters now known as Queensland, their Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledges the important role that Indigenous people continue to play in Queensland, especially on the land and water which has seen outdoor activities for countless generations.

Outdoor activities are important to Queenslanders. Outdoors Queensland assists to develop and promote quality human experiences undertaken in outdoor environments, as part of a balanced life.

Outdoors Queensland is a member-based organisation, which advocates on behalf of stakeholders in the outdoor sector, represents members, promotes members and outdoor activities, and educates our community.

Outdoors Queensland endorses an inclusive definition of outdoor activities. The outdoor sector is more than the activities done – the process and purpose of delivery must be considered. We recognise that outdoor activities are undertaken for a range of purposes including:

- **Non-competitive outdoor recreation** – activities in a non-competitive context (for example, outdoor play, bushwalking, bicycle touring, picnicking and camping),
- **Outdoor sports** – formally organised, competitive events such as orienteering, rogaining, geocaching, surfing competitions, long distance off-road motorcycle racing, car rallies and endurance horse riding,
- **Outdoor and environmental education** – using outdoor activities to help achieve formal and informal educational outcomes, from forest learning through to tertiary studies,
- **Health and lifestyle improvement** – active forms of outdoor recreation (walking, riding, canoeing, etc.) used to improve health and wellbeing,
- **Adventure therapy** – using outdoor recreation activities for therapeutic outcomes – improved physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being; and
- **Recreation tourism, eco-tourism and nature-based tourism** – outdoor recreation activities provided by commercial tourism enterprises.

The terms “outdoor sector” and “outdoor activity” are used to incorporate all facets of the outdoor community, and the stakeholders which we represent.

Outdoors Queensland recognises that being outdoors is good for people. The outdoors is great for well-being and can speed up healing. Nature can calm us down and increase creativity and productivity. Outdoor experiences connect people to their true selves, to others and to the natural environment.



Outdoors Queensland – where we go to actively Live Life Outdoors

- VISION** A world where the outdoors is a vital part of a healthy life.
- WHY?** Because a healthy world comes from a balanced life, incorporating outdoor activities for all people.
- MISSION** That all people have opportunities to make connections with Queensland's outdoors.
- Outdoors Queensland believes that the connections we make in the world around us and to those in it, influence and contribute to the quality of our lives. Everyone should have the chance to connect with all that is around us regardless of time, place, age, race, culture, experience, and limitations.

VALUES

- Participation – how people create connections to the outdoors.
- Promotion – partnerships to solidify the importance of the outdoors for the wellbeing of Queenslanders.
- Advocacy – being the guiding light for the outdoors and amplifying the voices of our community.
- Capacity – creating the environment to allow the outdoors to be accessible to all.

Outdoors Queensland – where we become best possible versions of ourselves

STATE OF QUEENSLAND'S OUTDOOR SECTOR – CURRENT CONTEXT

Part of our role is to monitor the state of Queensland's outdoor sector. We scrutinise trends, policies, customs and actions which may impact on the outdoor sector. We rely on feedback from our members and others to make decisions about priorities for the future.

There have been many societal changes since Outdoors Queensland was established in 1996 as Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation Inc. (QORF). These changes include the methods and tools that people use to connect with each other. We are an organisation that connects people across the outdoor sector and serves as a conduit for government.

Trends around the shift from traditional/organised sport to more organic unstructured or less-structured outdoor recreation have been noted for some time, which have been confirmed by the release of surveys including QSERSA (commissioned by Queensland Government) and AusPlay (commissioned by Australian Government).



Indigenous Cultural Heritage¹

For Traditional Owners, connections to land and sea country are integral to cultural values, identity, traditions and heritage.

The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures to the education of Australians is recognised through inclusion in the Australian Curriculum.

People regularly undertake outdoor activities in areas rich in Indigenous cultural heritage across Australia and Queensland. The cultural heritage inherent in some places can be the key drawcard that attracts visitors to those locations.

At times, certain outdoor activities have not been allowed in particular places due to conflicts with cultural significance or misunderstandings between the people involved. Land/water managers, who have responsibilities to protect and preserve the cultural heritage values, and responsibilities to facilitate public access to that land and water, can become trapped in the middle of a potential conflict situation.

Everyone in the outdoor sector has a responsibility to recognise and respect native title rights, land rights and interests, and to ensure that outdoor activities accord with the cultural and natural values of these areas.

Awareness of the cultural significance of places and sites is a key step. To avoid or reduce potential conflict with cultural significance, it may be necessary to modify some outdoor activities. Permission to enter sensitive areas should be obtained prior to access, and there should be compliance with all reasonable requests from recognised Traditional Owners and other Indigenous people with rights and interests in the area.

Outdoors Queensland may not have in-house specialist knowledge of Indigenous cultural heritage, however we will assist the Queensland outdoor sector to ensure that proper protocols are followed, such as those set out in the Australian Adventure Activity Standard and Good Practice Guides. We may be able to provide general information to help people within the outdoor sector understand and appreciate these issues, and we can seek to connect outdoor operators with the people who do have the specialist knowledge, such as the National Native Title Tribunal and particularly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have connections to this land and water for so many generations.

Climate Change

Queensland is renowned for having a wonderful climate for outdoor activities – the lifestyles of many Queenslanders and a large portion of Queensland’s tourism industry is dependent upon our climate and our amazing natural resources.

“Queensland already experiences climate extremes such as floods, droughts, heatwaves and bushfires. Climate change is likely to exacerbate the frequency and/or severity of these events and

¹ Text adapted from Section 3.3.2 Traditional owners and cultural heritage, Core Good Practice Guide Version 1.0, Australian Adventure Activity Standards



can be an amplifier of these and other hazards.” – *Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy 2017-2030*

Outdoor activities are dramatically affected by climate and weather. While outdoor enthusiasts have been known to claim that there is no such thing as bad weather, only poor planning or inappropriate clothing, climate change and extreme events are a different story.

Outdoors Queensland has a role to play in climate change adaptation. We can assist the outdoor sector to take the appropriate actions to understand, adapt and transition. This will range from considering climate change impacts in long-term strategic planning and investment decisions, assessing climate risks to assets and activities, implementing management strategies to reduce risks, investing in research and development to support adaptation and mitigation activities, and identifying and investing in emerging opportunities for new products or services.

Activate! Queensland 2019-2029

On 27 July 2019, the Queensland Government released *Activate! Queensland 2019-2029*, which aims to enrich the Queensland way of life through physical activity. *Activate! Queensland* is the State government’s “10-year strategy to embed activity in our daily lives, get more Queenslanders moving more often, and promote better connected communities.”

Four principles are stated in *Activate! Queensland*:

- Place Queenslanders at the heart of decision-making.
- Target support to Queenslanders and communities that need it most.
- Focus on lifelong participation through physical literacy and behaviour change.
- Prioritise quality and equity as fundamental to the physical activity experience.

Four priority areas are set out in *Activate! Queensland*:

- Activate Queenslanders – Empower more Queenslanders to enjoy physical activity to improve their health and wellbeing in active communities
- Activate Environments – Inspire activity with places and spaces that invite an active lifestyle
- Activate Success – Drive elite success and deliver and promote world-class knowledge and facilities
- Activate Collaboration – Create partnerships that maximise the impact of government and industry actions to benefit an active Queensland

Regarding Queensland’s Active Industry, *Activate! Queensland* aims to:

- Strengthen the active industry to provide participation opportunities to all Queenslanders
- Foster collaboration both within the sector and with government to achieve community outcomes
- Streamline funding and remove operational burdens from organisations, particularly those with volunteers



- Build cohesive relationships that harness the potential for the active industry to respond to whole-of-government outcomes

Queensland's outdoor sector is a key component of the Queensland active industry. As the leader of Queensland's outdoor sector, Outdoors Queensland needs to ensure that our section of the active industry has clarity regarding priorities, and we are working together to take advantage of opportunities and overcome challenges that might be presented by the *Activate! Queensland* strategy.

The Queensland outdoor sector already aligns with the core principles and contributes towards the priority areas set out in *Activate! Queensland*. However, the significance of the outdoor sector's contribution is not fully recognised. We need to ensure that we are recording and reporting every action taken by the outdoor sector to get more Queenslanders moving more often and better connect our communities – by highlighting those actions, we can increase the appreciation and support for the Queensland outdoor sector.

Outdoors Queensland has a vital role in ensuring that decision-makers in all disciplines who affect our sector understand the implications of their decisions, and that those decisions enhance outdoor activities for all Queensland communities.

The benefits of outdoor activities are widely accepted, from health at individual and community levels, creating and developing environmental advocates, connecting people with cultural heritage, and associated economic benefits. Outdoor activities develop physical literacy, contributing to knowledge and behaviours that give people the motivation and confidence to enjoy active lifestyles.

It is important that quality outdoor experiences are provided for the entire community, not just for our traditional client base. Outdoor products vary significantly from operator to operator, which is a strength - it allows us to work together to ensure that the sector continues to grow to meet demand and contribute to healthier communities.

Outdoors Queensland is an organisation for people within the outdoor sector, which has celebrated the hard-core people who like nothing more than sleeping under the stars after an exhausting trek to a remote location. The trends of increasing participation require Outdoors Queensland to consider the needs of the population which prefers inflatable beds and hot showers when "roughing it" – these people must be welcomed into the world of the outdoors.

Part of this challenge are perceptions that the outdoors is for the young/fit, and that you must be raised in Queensland or Australia to be able to handle our outdoor conditions. Outdoor experiences should be available for people of all ages, all abilities and all cultures.

COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic which emerged in late 2019 and early 2020 in various places around the world had a dramatic effect on all aspects of society, including the Queensland outdoor sector. COVID-19 caused increased levels of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity.

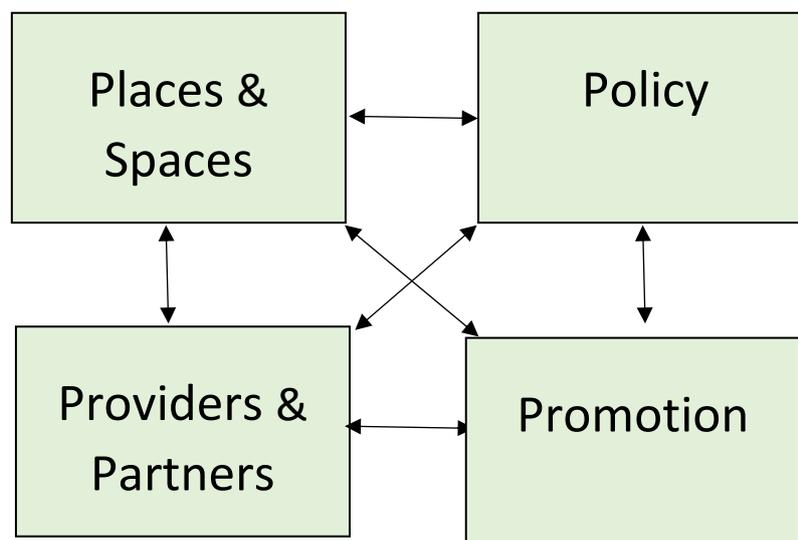


COVID-19 has had the effect of emphasising the value of outdoor activities, due to the fact that some other types of physical activity were cancelled due to risks of possible transmission. Outdoor activities that can be undertaken solo or in small groups were considered lower risk, and therefore more attractive options in a COVID-19 environment.

More people engaging in outdoor activities is great for the Queensland outdoor sector, but this also places additional pressure on areas that may be under-resourced or struggle to cope with added demand.

The COVID-19 pandemic has focussed people on limiting/preventing the spread of disease, while also challenging people about the importance of physical activity for their health and the health of their communities.

Outdoors Queensland – where we outdo ourselves



CHALLENGES

The following four inter-related challenges have been identified as facing Outdoors Queensland and the outdoor sector in Queensland:

- **Places and Spaces:** Enabling spaces for outdoor activities to be identified, secured and managed to integrate with other values and concurrent uses. This needs to be done with an understanding of the importance of Indigenous cultural heritage, environmental care and custodianship; and a realisation that across all of Queensland places, spaces and associated infrastructure need to be managed to cater for current outdoor activities and for future growth in both demand for, and variety of, outdoor activities. Appropriate actions must be taken to



understand, adapt and transition to the realities of climate change, and what that means for outdoor activities.

- **Policy:** Informing and encouraging quality policy, provision, planning and delivery of outdoor opportunities and experiences throughout Queensland, including the implementation of government policy such as *Activate! Queensland*, recognition and consideration of Indigenous cultural heritage values, and climate change adaptation.
- **Providers and Partners:** Developing quality education and training opportunities for outdoor leaders, building the capacity of individual and organisational providers, and identifying and developing collaborations and partnerships regarding outdoor activities for all ages, abilities and cultures.
- **Promotion:** Engaging with government, resource managers, private landholders, media and the community to build understanding, appreciation, support, and opportunities to participate in, outdoor activities and environments.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND INITIATIVES

1. Sector Leadership – a unified sector supported by a sustainable peak organisation
 - In providing leadership to our sector, Outdoors Queensland will promote *togetherness* and *unity*, while accepting that not all participants in a diverse sector will always agree.
2. Places and Spaces – securing and protecting appropriate places to participate in appropriate activities
 - Our integrity and reputation will assist in relevant discussions with stakeholders on what can be difficult topics, including situations of potential conflict. Outdoors Queensland will seek solutions to difficult questions, including climate change adaptation, and we will assist the outdoor sector with issues regarding Indigenous cultural heritage.
3. Capacity Building – building workforce capacity and organisational capacity
 - Striving for professional, well-trained staff and volunteers in quality organisations that meet the needs of Queensland communities and serve Queenslanders of all ages, all abilities and all cultures.
4. Promoting the Outdoors – broadening awareness of outdoor recreation
 - Outdoors Queensland will inspire people towards positive, challenging, nature-based experiences in the outdoors.
5. Researching the Outdoors – broadening and deepening understanding of the outdoor sector
 - Outdoors Queensland will identify gaps in knowledge, advocate for and collaborate on innovative research that contributes to the outdoor sector, publicise research outcomes, and undertake site audits/assessments.



Within the context of the *Activate! Queensland 2019-2029* strategy, these five strategic priorities can be broadly mapped as follows:

- **Sector Leadership** = Activate Collaboration
(Create partnerships that maximise the impact of government and industry actions to benefit an active Queensland)
- **Places and Spaces** = Activate Environments
(Inspire activity with places and spaces that invite an active lifestyle)
- **Capacity Building** = Activate Collaboration
(“Create partnerships that maximise the impact of government and industry actions to benefit an active Queensland”) + Activate Queenslanders (Empower more Queenslanders to enjoy physical activity to improve their health and wellbeing in active communities)
- **Promoting the Outdoors** = Activate Queenslanders
(Empower more Queenslanders to enjoy physical activity to improve their health and wellbeing in active communities)
- **Researching the Outdoors** = *Activate! Queensland* vision
(Physical activity enriches the Queensland way of life)



Strategic Priority 1 - Sector Leadership	
Goal - a unified sector supported by a sustainable Outdoors Queensland	
Objectives	Actions/Initiatives
1.1 Enhance relationships and communications	1.1.1 Engage with the sector to understand needs
	1.1.2 Deliver/attend relevant conferences, symposiums, forums
	1.1.3 Ensure websites and social media channels are effective
	1.1.4 Communicate with other organisations that promote benefits of outdoor activities
1.2 Strengthen the profile of the profession	1.2.1 Publicise and encourage relevant research
	1.2.2 Conduct and promote the annual outdoor awards
1.3 Advocate	1.3.1 Engage with relevant government agencies and elected officials
	1.3.2 Take an active role in the Outdoor Council of Australia as the national voice for the outdoor sector.
1.4 Identify resources	1.4.1 Create/identify/secure additional funding sources
	1.4.2 Maintain list of consultants/volunteers who can work with Outdoors Queensland to develop and deliver Strategic Priorities
	1.4.3 Partner with stakeholders to achieve shared goals
	1.4.4 Refine sector surveying to identify and report on trends and issues
1.5 Strengthen relevance and appeal of membership	1.5.1 Maintain database of outdoor businesses, providers and operators as a basis of expanding membership and encouraging investment in Outdoors Queensland programs
	1.5.2 Review Outdoors Queensland brand for market appeal and effectiveness
	1.5.3 Review membership structure
	1.5.4 Clarify and promote member benefits
	1.5.5 Provide members with opportunities to comment upon and understand advocacy outcomes
1.6 Build capacity of staff and management committee	1.6.1 Conduct regular staff meetings
	1.6.2 Review policies and procedures
	1.6.3 Offer relevant professional development
1.7 Enhance effectiveness of management committee	1.7.1 Where appropriate, establish expert sub-committees to oversee strategic projects
	1.7.2 Review skills and qualities of effective boards/committees, and seek individuals who will contribute positively to Outdoors Queensland
	1.7.3 Conduct annual management committee reviews to identify areas for improvement/training



Strategic Priority 2 - Places and Spaces	
Goal - to secure and protect appropriate places to participate in appropriate activities	
Objectives	Actions/Initiatives
2.1 Establish and maintain relationships	2.1.1 Communicate with relevant State Ministers, other members of parliament, bureaucrats, and local government elected and non-elected officials to highlight the significance, scope, benefits and opportunities required for outdoor activities
	2.1.2 Engage with land/water managers to advise on outdoor opportunities, infrastructure and access needs
	2.1.3 Enhance sector relationships and communication with Traditional Owners of land and water used for outdoor activities
	2.1.4 Enhance sector relationships and communication with land and water managers
2.2 Advocate with local and state government and other land/water managers	2.2.1 Contribute to relevant committees and forums to inform planning for and enduring access to land and water resources for outdoor activities
	2.2.2 Provide comment/advice on draft land and water management strategies and government policies that impact outdoor recreation
	2.2.3 Work with local government authorities regarding outdoor activities, including regional issues
	2.2.4 Engage with local government to influence and inform regarding outdoor opportunities, infrastructure and challenges
	2.2.5 Introduce Outdoors Queensland to relevant government Ministers with particular reference to their portfolio responsibilities and stated personal interests
	2.2.6 Advocate for empirical research on outdoor recreation participation, benefits and impacts (eg social, environmental, economic impacts)
2.3 Educate for appropriate use of land and water for appropriate recreation activities	2.3.1 Develop and disseminate advice on responsible use of land and water in collaboration with land and water managers, where appropriate
	2.3.2 Engage with sector regarding climate change adaptation, assisting the outdoor sector to understand, adapt and transition
	2.3.3 Provide and enable information sharing opportunities regarding places and spaces
	2.3.4 Partner with sector to provide information on minimum impact practices at community events and forums



Strategic Priority 3 - Capacity Building	
Goal - to build workforce capacity and organisational capacity across the sector	
Objectives	Actions/Initiatives
3.1 Educate the sector and key stakeholders about the need for training and opportunities for training	3.1.1 Engage with the outdoor sector to identify and develop internal training opportunities
	3.1.2 Provide forums and networks to allow the sector to learn about new developments, exchange ideas and provide views
	3.1.3 Encourage other organisations to consider the outdoor sector in their development offerings, and promote opportunities to the sector
	3.1.4 Promote sector awareness of and changes to adventure activity standards, high risk curriculum activity guidelines and National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (or equivalent)
	3.1.5 Work with the outdoor sector to build organisational development skills through hosting workshops on relevant topics (eg marketing and media)
	3.1.6 Develop and promote opportunities for outdoor leader/educator professional development
	3.1.7 Facilitate the delivery of appropriate training to the sector (source providers, inform industry, etc)
	3.1.8 Identify and distribute Human Resources and Industrial Resources information that assists in awareness and compliance of the sector to attract and retain workers and volunteers
3.2 Advocate to maximise access to quality training and education	3.2.1 Reinforce the importance for outdoor leadership training, compliance and assessment across different delivery models (eg education, tourism, recreation)
	3.2.2 Play an active role in driving national awareness and initiatives through membership of the Outdoor Council of Australia
	3.2.3 Maintain relationships with SkillsIQ and Active Queenslanders Industry Alliance to represent the sector specific needs in training and development and to contribute to the continuous improvement of the Outdoor Recreation Training Package
	3.2.4 Contribute to reports relating to the current state of training and education for the outdoor sector
	3.2.5 Communicate the need for government supported training opportunities for outdoor volunteers and organisations
	3.2.6 Work with state government for ongoing resource support for volunteer outdoor leaders throughout Queensland eg Duke of Edinburgh, not-for-profit providers
	3.2.7 Expand and enhance sector knowledge and professional development by including training and education sessions in relevant conferences



3.3 Develop mechanisms to strengthen the profession	3.3.1	Engage with and represent volunteers and volunteer organisations in outdoor activities
	3.3.2	Identify and update information on grants and funding opportunities to support outdoor sector capacity building
	3.3.3	Coordinate information on outdoor opportunities and benefits, and disseminate through various channels
	3.3.4	Monitor and contribute to the National Outdoor Leader Registration Scheme (or equivalent)
	3.3.5	Communicate the benefits of accreditation, adventure activity standards and National Outdoor Leader Scheme (or equivalent) to enhance responsible risk management for outdoor organisations
	3.3.6	Partner with organisations to collate, develop and disseminate advice on engaging target groups and varied markets within the outdoor sector, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people of all abilities

Strategic Priority 4 - Promoting the Outdoors Goal - to broaden awareness of outdoor activities		
Objectives	Actions/Initiatives	
4.1 Collate/develop evidence regarding the benefits of being in the outdoors	4.1.1	Promote research that quantifies and qualifies the benefits of being in the outdoors and/or participating in outdoor activities
	4.1.2	Collate accessible information snapshots that demonstrate the relevance and value of participation in activities in the outdoors
4.2 Determine key messages regarding the significance of participation in outdoor activities	4.2.1	Analyse and review government policy, research findings and media stories to identify current, relevant outdoor activity messages and trends
	4.2.2	Develop and disseminate marketing messages and guidelines for outdoor activities
	4.2.3	Engage with media to identify relevant and newsworthy outdoor stories, including inspiring local stories
4.3 Identify and deliver effective communication channels within and beyond the sector to disseminate outdoor messages	4.3.1	Use a variety of communication methods to promote physically active lifestyles and benefits of outdoor activities, to all people, of all abilities and all cultures.
	4.3.2	Promote the value and implications of well planned and delivered outdoor activities through educational organisations, including primary and secondary schools, early childhood education providers, out of school care etc
	4.3.3	Identify and share outdoor stories and activities that are of interest to the wider community



	4.3.4	Maintain 'where-to-go' template on the Outdoors Queensland website for the sector to share legitimate locations and guidelines for outdoor activities
	4.3.5	Promote outdoor activities and spaces through presentations at meetings and conferences
	4.3.6	Hold and promote public interactions that encourage communities to understand the value and benefits of outdoor activities
4.4 Conduct/support initiatives to inspire more Queenslanders towards outdoor experiences more often	4.4.1	Support and promote members' events and opportunities
	4.4.2	Identify activators and barriers to participation, and develop inspirational strategies
	4.4.3	Maintain the calendar of outdoor events on the Outdoors Queensland website
	4.4.4	Partner with organisations to deliver inspiring outdoor activities
	4.4.5	Engage with outdoor event partners who deliver opportunities for participation in outdoor activities
	4.4.6	Ensure Outdoors Queensland website is accessible and relevant

Strategic Priority 5 - Researching the Outdoors		
Goal - to broaden and deepen understanding of the outdoor sector		
Objectives	Actions/Initiatives	
5.1 Advocate for, and collaborate on, innovative research that contributes to the outdoor sector	5.1.1	Maintain communication processes to assist in identifying gaps in knowledge regarding the outdoor sector
	5.1.2	Contribute to research projects regarding outdoor activities with various interested parties
	5.1.3	Advocate with all levels of government to encourage research on outdoor activities
	5.1.4	Act as a conduit between both researchers and the outdoor sector, and outdoor sector and researchers to increase engagement
5.2 Publicise and promote relevant research outcomes	5.2.1	Maintain (on the Outdoors Queensland website) a library of research findings related to the outdoors
	5.2.2	Provide researchers with opportunities to promote outdoor research
5.3 Undertake site audits and assessments	5.3.1	Ensure that the need for site audits and site assessments is understood by land/water managers
	5.3.2	Work with relevant stakeholders to ensure site audits and site assessments are undertaken professionally

Outdoors
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Live life outdoors