

4 January 2022

The CEO  
Healthy Land and Water  
PO Box 13204 George St  
Brisbane QLD 4003

Email – [info@hlw.org.au](mailto:info@hlw.org.au)

Dear Ms McLellan,

**Submission regarding The South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Plan  
(2009–2031) 2021/22 Update**

Outdoors Queensland is the peak body for the outdoor recreation sector in Queensland. We represent outdoor recreation organisations and individuals in Queensland, consisting of a range of outdoor industry stakeholders, including local governments, schools with outdoor education programs, small businesses and commercial operators, activity-focused peak bodies, clubs and community organisations.

The mission of Outdoors Queensland is to ensure that all people have opportunities to create connections with Queensland's outdoors. Our vision is to create a world where the outdoors is a vital part of every healthy life - a healthy world comes from a balanced life, incorporating outdoor activities for all people.

The goals of Outdoors Queensland significantly align with those of Healthy Land and Water, and we support the objectives of The South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Plan (2009-2031) (SEQ NRM Plan (2009-2031)).

The SEQ NRM Plan (2009-2031) 2021/22 update acknowledges the need to assess how natural assets are doing against the targets set in 2009, and ask whether there are things that should be done differently in updating the plan. Outdoors Queensland supports this approach, and is pleased to provide this submission to this process on behalf of Queensland's outdoor community.

Outdoors Queensland broadly supports the Consultation Outcomes stated at Section 5 of the SEQ NRM Plan (2009-2031) 2021/22 update document, and makes the following comments on this section:

1. The theme of "Green space and recreation" is particularly significant to Outdoors Queensland, and we are pleased to support the stated priority of "Facilitate improved community connections to natural areas with the intent of increasing the communities' understanding of the values of natural areas".

Outdoors Queensland believes that allowing appropriate access for positive outdoor experiences is a crucial method of achieving improved community connections to natural areas. Positive outcomes can be significantly enhanced by providing accessible information in a various ways for visitors to natural areas, whether the outdoor activities are undertaken as part of an organised group with an outdoor leader or independently by members of our communities.

Outdoors Queensland would be pleased to play a role alongside HLW in delivery of this priority action.

2. Outdoors Queensland notes the theme of “Economic Diversification”, and the associated priority action of “Take pressure off protected areas by promoting ecotourism on private land.” While supportive of expansion of outdoor activities onto private land, Outdoors Queensland believes that appropriate ecotourism activities also have a place within Queensland’s protected area estate.

Access to public land for outdoor activities is an important element in creating a healthier community in SEQ, while ensuring that the protected area estate is valued and enhanced. A wholesale push to remove ecotourism activities from protected areas could backfire through a reduction in visibility of SEQ’s wonderful natural areas and a removal of those areas from public consciousness.

Outdoors Queensland is pleased to provide comments regarding the Asset Themes in Section 6 of the SEQ NRM Plan (2009-2031) 2021/22 update. In this section of the document, recreational use of natural areas is repeatedly identified as a threat or a pressure point for the various assets.

While the draft document acknowledges the need to increase the amount of publicly available greenspace in Section 6.5, in other parts of the document, recreational use is presented in a negative sense. Use of wording such as “uncontrolled recreational use” (section 6.1.3) positions recreation as being in direct conflict with nature conservation, whereas we believe that appropriate access for outdoor recreation activities should be encouraged, rather than discouraged.

As stated above, it is the position of Outdoors Queensland that recreational access can assist in education of people regarding the value of natural areas and the importance of protection of those areas. Rather than being seen as a threat to be managed, we submit that recreational use should be considered an asset to be harnessed to ensure that there is public pressure to achieve the overall objectives of the SEQ NRM Plan (2009-2031).

In 2019, the Queensland government released the *Activate! Queensland 2019-2029* strategy, with the stated vision of that strategy being that “Physical activity enriches the Queensland way of life.” *Activate! Queensland 2019-2029* sets out a range of priorities that Healthy Land And Water could consider for inclusion in the update to the SEQ NRM Plan (2009-2031), particularly the statements that are made under the priority area of “Activate Environments”, with the stated goal to “Inspire activity with places and spaces that invite an active lifestyle”.

We welcome discussion on any points raised in this submission. Outdoors Queensland understands that this submission may be published by Healthy Land and Water as part of the consultation process. Outdoors Queensland looks forward to ongoing involvement this process.

Yours sincerely



Dom Courtney  
Executive Officer

