



Hon Paul Lucas MP



**Queensland  
Government**

---

**Deputy Premier  
Minister for Infrastructure  
and Planning**

09 MAR 2009

Donna Little  
Chief Executive Officer  
Outdoor Recreation Federation Queensland  
Via email: [info@gorf.org.au](mailto:info@gorf.org.au)

Dear Ms Little,

Thank you for your letter of 26 February 2009 to the Premier seeking the Queensland Government's views on Labor's approach to outdoor recreation. The Premier has asked me to respond on behalf of the Government.

The Bligh Government is committed to protecting the unique Queensland lifestyle, and improving access to outdoor recreation opportunities. Importantly, a re-elected Bligh Government will continue working to deliver our Toward Q2 target of protecting 50% more land in Queensland for nature conservation and public recreation by 2020.

As requested I have enclosed detailed responses to the issues you have raised.

I would like to thank the Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation for the opportunity to set out the Government's position on these issues.

Yours sincerely

**PAUL LUCAS**  
**Deputy Premier**  
**Minister for Infrastructure and Planning**

Level 12 Executive Building  
100 George Street Brisbane 4000  
PO Box 15168 City East  
Queensland 4002 Australia  
**Telephone +61 7 3224 4600**  
**Facsimile +61 7 3224 4781**  
**Email [deputypremier@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:deputypremier@ministerial.qld.gov.au)**  
ABN 65 959 415 158

## **ALP Response: Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation**

**1. Active and informed involvement in state and local planning issues to ensure the creation and maintenance of green space and water sources for outdoor recreation purposes that meet the current and future needs of the Queensland community, including, for example, mechanism for encouraging access to private land.**

The Bligh Government is committed to protecting the unique Queensland lifestyle, and improving access to outdoor recreation opportunities. Our Toward Q2 target is to protect 50% more land in Queensland for nature conservation and public recreation by 2020.

The Government is actively developing a regional inventory of places for outdoor recreation and of land for public recreation as part of this strategy, and a re-elected Bligh Government will continue to implement strategies to meet this target.

Underpinning the delivery of this target are strong regional plans that identify areas of growth while strongly supporting the protection of greenspace and rural residential living. The current draft South East Queensland Regional Plan earmarks 84% of the region for protection against urban development. Regional open space provides for outdoor recreation and other regional landscape values. In addition, the SEQ Regional Plan provides an integrated, high quality and accessible regional open space network to cater for a range of community and environmental needs.

In South East Queensland, the SEQ Recreation Trails Program, established in 2007 and with a budget of \$8.8 million for 5 years, is focussed on developing regional recreation trails. Horse riding, cycling and walking trails are planned for the Brisbane Valley, Boonah/Ipswich region while a canoe trail is planned for the Maroochy River. A re-elected Bligh Government is committed to continuing this program.

In response to the specific issues associated with trail bike riding, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation has developed three documents and a funding program to help people wanting to develop trail bike riding areas and facilities. These include:

- Guidelines for facilitating provisions for trail bike riding in local government planning schemes
- So you want to set up a private trail bike park? Guidelines for establishing and managing trail bike riding facilities;
- So you want development approval to set up a private trail bike park? A guide to the development application process for trail bike site developers; and
- Trail bikes and off-road vehicles program 2008–2011 – a funding program to help establish trail bike and off-road vehicle facilities outside urban areas.

The draft SEQ Regional Plan also recognises that “outdoor recreation activities are important to the community’s wellbeing and lifestyle. They contribute to better social, health, economic, tourism, cultural and environmental outcomes”. To meet this aspiration, a re-elected Bligh Government will also continue to work with stakeholders to finalise the draft SEQ Outdoor Recreation Strategy.

**2. A State Government and Industry agreed agenda to drive research into areas that will advance the development of outdoor recreation in Queensland on topics such as: the economic and social contributions of the industry to the Queensland economy and lifestyle; the extent, nature and costs of participation, investigation of the allocation of green space that can be used for outdoor recreation purposes, and the activities that are catered for; barriers to participation.**

The Bligh Government is committed to working closely with sport and active recreation industry organisations as they play an important part in helping the community get more active. Through this collaboration of work, further development of an overarching strategic direction for outdoor recreation that is relevant to the sector and reflective of Government priorities can be achieved.

Identifying and recognising suitable greenspaces for outdoor recreational activities is part of an ongoing commitment of the Queensland Government. By 2020, the Bligh Government has committed to increasing land held in National Parks to 12.9 million hectares. This represents a 50 per cent increase on an earlier target that five per cent of land in Queensland would be held in National Park estate. This will protect more of our unique biodiversity and offer Queenslanders more opportunities to enjoy our natural wonders.

Another initiative completed by the Bligh Government in 2008 was the declaration of the new KULLA (McIlwraith Range) 160,000 hectare national park in Cape York, the largest undisturbed tropical rainforest area in Australia.

The number of the Great Walks across Queensland is also increasing, with the Government constructing four new "Great Walks" – the Conondale Range Great Walk, the Cooloola Great Walk, the Carnarvon Great Walk and the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail. All these walks will provide a range of short and long distance walking opportunities. These will add to the six existing Great Walks of Queensland on Fraser Island, Gold Coast Hinterland, Mackay Highlands, Sunshine Coast Hinterland, Wet Tropics and Whitsunday.

**3. A State Government commitment to maintaining at least the same level of funding support for outdoor recreation through programs such as the State Sport and Recreation Development Program, enhances by CPI increases.**

The Sport and Recreation Development Program (SRDP) will be maintained as a competitive funding program and will continue to be reviewed so as to assess the level of funds committed to this program.

The Queensland Government understands the importance of encouraging all Queenslanders to embrace healthier, more active lifestyles by getting involved in sport and active recreation initiatives in their local areas. Provision of funding by Government can greatly assist sport and active recreation organizations in providing access for the community to these initiatives.

**4. The establishment , or allocation, of an agency to oversee the delivery of outdoor recreation opportunities. Currently no State Government agency has outdoor recreation as its core business; as such access to land and water for this purpose is ancillary (at best) to other core activities.**

Outdoor recreation includes a range of leisure, recreation and sports activities undertaken in natural, rural and urban open spaces, the most popular being picnicking, surfing, swimming (in rivers, lakes and the sea) and walking/nature study. Most outdoor recreation takes place in public space owned and managed by state or local governments, including national and local parks, state forests, beaches and rivers.

Consequently, responsibility for outdoor recreation places, activities and issues in SEQ is spread across numerous government agencies as well as private companies and community-based organisations.

The Bligh Government, in consultation with the public, is committed to finalising for public comment a Draft South East Queensland Outdoor Recreation Strategy. The strategy is intended to provide a framework for coordinating the assessment, planning, delivery and management of outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities across the region. As you would be aware, a discussion paper on the SEQ Outdoor Recreation Strategy was available for public feedback in 2007, and a re-elected Bligh Government will release a draft strategy in 2009.

The Bligh Government generally agrees that greater coordination of the various agencies' work is essential if we are to satisfy community needs for a wide range of high-quality, safe and sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities. As part of this draft strategy, a re-elected Bligh Government will therefore consult with stakeholders about allocating a lead-agency in government to oversee the delivery of outdoor recreation opportunities.

**5. Maintain the delivery of the Active Trails Strategy to expand trail based outdoor recreation in regional Queensland.**

The Bligh Government recognises that South East Queensland (SEQ) has hundreds of regional and district recreational trails. These range from urban bicycle paths to canoe trails on rivers to rugged hinterland trails and cover thousands of kilometres.

These trails are fragmented and recreational trail planning, development and management by government agencies is uncoordinated. This problem is addressed in the SEQ Active Trails Strategy, which will inform and guide future investment in regional recreation trail planning, development and management.

Under the SEQ Regional Recreation Trails Program, the Active Trails Strategy is being implemented over a five year period. Costing \$8.8m, three new regional trails, the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, the Boonah to Ipswich Trail, and the Maroochy River Trail are being developed and will add to the expanding regional network of trails for South East Queensland.

A re-elected Bligh Government will continue our commitment to improving outdoor recreation opportunities, including through the Active Trails Strategy.

**6. Develop and implement recommendations from the SEQ Outdoor Recreation Strategy, and widen the application where applicable on a state-wide basis.**

In recognition of the key role outdoor recreation plays in our lives, a re-elected Bligh Government is committed to finalising for public comment a draft SEQ Regional Outdoor Recreation Strategy in 2009.

The Bligh Government has implemented a number of initiatives that have delivered and improved on current outdoor recreational activities, such as the Great Walks across Queensland. Under the *Towards Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland* strategy the Government has set long-term targets that clearly identify what the Bligh Government want to achieve by 2020. A cooperative and coordinated approach across Government will ensure that these long-term targets are delivered for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

**7. A commitment to enabling and promoting achievement of industry training needs and standards throughout all of Queensland.**

Through programs such as its Club Development Program, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation will continue to support the training needs of the outdoor recreation industry throughout all of Queensland.

Standards such as the Adventure Activity Standards will be considered by Government on the recommendations of the sector and taking into account the implications for the wider community.