

# Perceptions of stakeholder organisations: Assessing the social impacts of the South East Queensland Horse Riding Trail Network



## **Prepared by**

Rossi, Sebastian D.  
Pickering, Catherine M.  
Byrne, Jason  
Environment Futures Centre, Griffith University for the  
Science Delivery Division  
Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts  
PO Box 5078  
Brisbane QLD 4001

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## Executive Summary

More than thirty-six State Forests are being converted to National Parks or Forest Reserves as part of the South East Queensland Forests Agreement. Although currently the government is revising this process, a network of 547 kilometres of horse riding trails has been established within these Forest Reserves. These trails are part of the South East Queensland Horse Riding Trail Network. A twenty-year scientific monitoring program to assess the social and biophysical impacts of this Horse Riding Trail Network was established by the former Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), now called the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.

Griffith University was awarded the tender to develop and test a program to monitor social impacts of the Horse Riding Trail Network. The first report on social impacts assessed visitor attitudes to the Horse Riding Trail Network. This report is the second of three reports, and it reports on research assessing the attitudes of stakeholder organisations. A third report assesses local community attitudes to the Horse Riding Trail Network.

Griffith researchers surveyed a range of recreation and conservation organisations to obtain information about issues potentially affecting stakeholders and about the characteristics of stakeholder organisations. Specifically, the study assessed: (1) the organisations and their functions, (2) organisation perceptions about the role of parks generally, including the relative importance of parks for the organisation and the appropriateness of different recreational activities within parks, (3) the organisations' knowledge about the Horse Trail Network, and their level of support and perceptions about the activities permitted on the Horse Trail Network, and (4) organisations' perceptions about the management and protection of national parks in South East Queensland.

The study used a methodology combining internet searches, lists of contacts provided by the park agencies, and additional names provide by surveyed organisations (snowballing). A total of 107 recreation and conservation organisations were identified, which represent the interests of users undertaking activities authorised on the Horse Trail Network. When contacted, 17 organisations advised they did not use parks in South East Queensland, reducing the sample to 90 organisations, from which 45 completed the survey questionnaire (a 50% response rate). This sample is comprised of 11 conservation-based organisations (including bird watching organisations), 31 recreation-based organisations, and one organisation focused on personal development. These organisations represented: bushwalking (10), mountain biking (8), conservation (9), orienteering (6), horse riding (3), running (3), bird watching (2) and other interests (2). Recreation organisations were selected based on the diversity of authorised recreation activities identified from visitor surveys of the Horse Trail Network.

Approximately seventy percent (70%) of organisations (n=31) considered parks very important for their functions. Activities reported to be inappropriate in parks by more than half of these organisations were trail bike riding and four-wheel driving. These

activities were also reported as negatively affecting the organisations' events in parks. Although some asymmetric conflicts were reported by the organisations, only conservation organisations were not supportive of some non-motorised activities such as mountain bike riding, running and horse riding.

The level of knowledge of the organisations about the Horse Trail Network was very high (+83%). Perhaps unsurprisingly, conservation organisations were not supportive of the Horse Trail Network whereas recreation organisations were generally supportive. Further, only conservation-based organisations were non-supportive of some authorised activities in the Horse Trail Network, such as mountain bike riding, running and horse riding.

## Background

A number of areas of State Forest and other Reserves within South East Queensland have been (or are in the process of being) transferred to National Park (NP) as an outcome of the South East Queensland Forests Agreement (SEQFA). Although currently the government is revising this process, most recreational activities will continue to be permitted within these parks (DERM, 2008), based on what is considered appropriate and sustainable for each protected area. Within the guidelines established by the Nature Conservation Act 1992, horse riding is permitted by regulatory notice in nominated areas of conservation parks, resources reserves, and forest reserves (DERM, 2008) (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Permitted activities in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas based on their current status (DERM 2008b)

Status	Bush Walking	Vehicles	Horse riding	Dog-walking (guide dogs excepted)	Grazing	Bee Keeping
National park (scientific)	X	X	X	X	X	X
National park	Ok	Ok on roads	X	X	X	X
National park (recovery)	Ok	Ok on roads	X	X	X	X
Conservation park	Ok	Ok on roads	Ok, by regulatory notice	X	X	Ok under permit
Resources reserve	Ok	Ok on roads	Ok, by regulatory notice	X	X	Ok under permit
Forest Reserve	Ok	Ok on roads	Ok by regulatory notice	Ok by regulatory notice	Ok under permit	Ok under permit

Ok = may occur, where permitted

X= No, cannot occur on this tenure

In South East Queensland, horse riding is a popular activity, including within State Forests (Pickering, 2008). Some of these State Forests have been traditionally used for horse riding, and the Queensland Government proposes to continue to provide access for this activity on some formed management roads traversing the newly created parks. Horse riding trails will be designated on narrow strips of forest reserve when the surrounding area is transferred to National Park (DERM, 2011). The Queensland Government created the South East Queensland Horse Riding Trail network (SEQ-HTN) in 2007 in recognition that horse riding has long been a part of the state's lifestyle and character. The SEQ-HTN is a network of existing formed management roads located within Forest Reserves that traverse some of the new national park and conservation parks (DERM, 2011). The SEQ-HTN consists of approximately 547 km of trails within five areas: Noosa, Mapleton, Kenilworth, Caboolture-Bellthorpe, Western Brisbane and the Gold Coast. There are also

approximately 340 km of trails within State Forest and forest plantations adjacent to the SEQ-HTN, and over 470 km of trails on other lands. In these trails, activities that are often permitted include horse riding, mountain bike riding and bushwalking. Equestrian activities will be restricted outside the SEQ-HTN in declared national parks (DERM, 2011).

As part of the establishment of the new National Parks, the Queensland Government established a long-term (20-year) scientific monitoring program to assess the social and biophysical impacts of the SEQ-HTN, and review its operation (DERM, 2011). A primary aim of the social component of the scientific monitoring program is to understand visitor, stakeholder organisation, and community attitudes and perceptions towards the Horse Trail Network (HTN) in South East Queensland (SEQ). To do this, the former Department of Environment and Resource Management issued a tender, for the provision of scientific and technical services, to develop and test a program to monitor social impacts of the SEQ-HTN. Griffith University was awarded that tender.

This report is the second of three reports examining people's perceptions and attitudes about the Horse Trail Network and parks in general. The first report included park visitors (Rossi, Pickering, & Byrne, 2013). The third report addresses the potential off-site impact of the HTN on local communities (e.g. park neighbours).

The protocols and survey instruments used for all three surveys were carefully designed for current and future monitoring of the attitudes and perceptions of park visitors, stakeholder organisations, and the broader community to the Horse Trail Network.

### **Aims of this report**

This report outlines the results of the survey of stakeholder's organisations about the Horse Trail Network and adjacent parks in South East Queensland (component A2 of the tender). The objective was to assess stakeholder organisations' perceptions of the Horse Trail Network, including different types of recreational activities and park management. By assessing organisations' perceptions, we aim to provide better information about the opinions of National Park and the Horse Trail Network user in South East Queensland.

This document specifically reports on:

- Stakeholder organisations' mission, functions and activities;
- Organisations' perceptions about the role of parks, their significance and appropriateness of different recreational activities;
- Organisations' knowledge about the Horse trail Network, level of support, and view about different activities permitted on the Horse trail Network;
- Organisations' perceptions about the management of national parks in South East Queensland.

## Methods

### How were the organisations selected?

To select which organisations to survey, three criteria were used. Organisations were included if they: (1) engage in, or have an interest in recreation activities that are authorised in national parks and the Horse Trail Network in South East Queensland and/or are organisations involved in their conservation, (2) were incorporated (clubs, associations, federations, alliances) complying with Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999, (3) were not commercial organisations.

To ensure broad representation of organisations fitting these criteria, we used three sources of information: (i) the internet, (ii) park agency advice, and (iii) information obtained from the organisations. First, an initial list of organisations was generated from the internet, using keywords entered into the Google™ search engine. Keywords included: “mountain bike clubs”, “bird-watching”, “conservation organisations”, “bushwalking”, “horse-riding”, “running”, “orienteeing” and “South East Queensland”. Incorporated organisations identified using these search terms were included in an initial list, which was then sent to nominated staff from the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. These staff identified additional organisations and types of organisations that may fit the criteria. Some stakeholder organisations, when contacted for the survey also identified potential organisations, although nearly all were already on the list. Based on these three data sources, a total of 107 organisations were identified, which matched the selection criteria. Data on incorporation were cross checked with the Queensland Government Office of Fair Trading.

Information about each organisation identified was entered into a database. This information included: the organisation’s name, incorporated status, key contacts, year of creation, principal activities undertaken, number of members, geographical range and internet URL.

### What method was used to contact organisations?

Initial searches identified a large number of relevant organisations. For this reason, data about organisations’ perceptions were obtained using a survey, rather than interviews (as initially intended). A standardised survey approach has several benefits over interviews: it is faster, more efficient and is less prone to potential bias. A survey also allows direct comparison of stakeholder data with results from the visitor and local community surveys, thus increasing the comparability of responses (Kitchin & Tate, 2000; Veal, 2011).

The survey questionnaire contained coded questions, likert scale questions and open-ended questions. The topics covered were similar to the previous visitor questionnaires, but focused on the organisations’ views. The survey instrument gathered information about five aspects: (1) the organisation’s mission and activities; (2) organisation’s representative information such as position and experience; (3) the role of parks, how important are parks for the organisation and organisations main concerns; (4) organisations’ knowledge about the Horse trail Network and their level of support; and (5) perceptions about the management of national parks in South-

East Queensland (Appendix I). The questionnaire was developed and revised based on agency feedback and was then submitted for ethics clearance by Griffith University's Human Research Ethics Committee (GUHREC).

## Data collection

The Tailored Design Method was used to collect the data (Dillman, 2007). Each organisation was contacted four times. All contacts, where possible, were personalised to improve the response rate (Dillman, 2007). The first two contacts were undertaken by e-mail or, where there was no e-mail address available (nine organisations), a package with the same information was sent to the organisation's postal address. The first contact consisted of a pre-notice letter (Appendix II) letting the participant know that they would receive a request to take part in this research. A total of 107 organisations were initially identified (Appendix V). Based on the initial contact, seventeen (17) organisations indicated that they did not use parks in South East Queensland, and were subsequently excluded. This resulted in 90 organisations fitting the full selection criteria and being surveyed.

The second contact occurred 10 days after the first contact. It consisted of a package including three elements (i) a cover letter introducing the research project (Appendix III); (ii) an information sheet addressing the nature of the research and providing information about the research team and ethics procedures (Appendix IV); and (iii) the questionnaire in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format (Appendix I). Participants were given three options to fill in the survey: (a) the PDF form, (b) a link to an 'on-line' version of the survey (using Survey Monkey), and (c) a hard copy with a reply-paid envelope, if requested.

The third contact was a phone call ~15 days after the first contact. A script was used to ensure consistency. This contact had three aims: (a) to remind participants about the survey, (b) to check that the information package sent to their e-mail/postal address was received, and (c) to use a snowball sampling technique to identify potential organisations missing from the database.

After three weeks, and to avoid the Christmas and New Year periods (Dillman, 2007), a reminder postcard was sent to all organisations that had not answered the questionnaire. The postcard (Figure 1) included a link to the survey on-line in case the organisation misplaced the information previously sent.



**Figure 1.** Personalised postcard sent to the organisations as a reminder to participate in the study.

## Data transcription and analysis

All but one of the responses was received digitally (via a PDF e-form or using the on-line link) with only one organisation completing the hard copy version of the questionnaire. Data was exported from Adobe Acrobat and Survey Monkey into Excel and combined into one dataset. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 19 was used to create descriptive analyses (frequencies, case summaries and cross tabulations) for all the quantitative data.

Qualitative data from the five open ended questions were entered into N-VIVO and coded for analysis. Word frequency, and cluster analyses were used to analyse this data. *Wordle*, a free on-line tool to create “word clouds”, was also used to analyse the most frequent used terms. This tool has proven useful in qualitative research, especially for preliminary analyses of open-ended written responses (McNaught & Lam, 2010). It provides a quick frequency analysis of the words in the text, and creates a cloud where more frequently used words appear to be bigger (i.e. they occupy more space in the graphic).

## Results

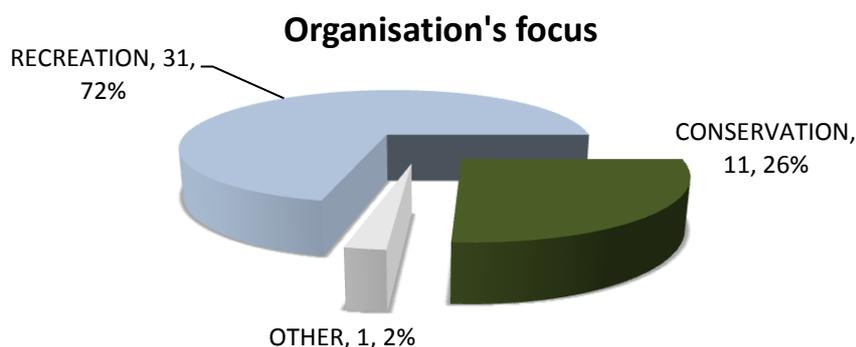
Of the 90 organisations that matched the selection criteria and reported use of parks, half (45 organisations) completed the survey. Of these respondents, two were excluded from further analysis because their questionnaires were incomplete. A total of 43 complete surveys were analysed.

### Organisation’s representatives

Surveys were completed by representatives who were nearly all long term members of the organisation. Representatives averaged 12 years membership, and 5 years in the current position. Nearly all representatives were the presidents / directors (33%) or secretaries (43%) of the organisations that responded to the survey.

### Characteristics of surveyed organisations

Representatives were asked to characterise the organisations by selecting from three options: “conservation-based”, “recreation-based” or “other”. Self-reported responses were: 10 conservation-based, 28 recreation-based, and five with an ‘other’ focus. These last organisations provided detail of their focus in an open-ended question (Table 2). By using the responses provided, it was possible to re-classify some of the ‘other’ organisations into recreation or conservation-based groups (Table 2). This resulted in 11 conservation-based organisations (26%), 31 recreation-based organisations (72%) and only one organisation focused in something different (personal development) (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Organisation's characterisation as if they are focused in conservation, recreation or other.

**Table 2.** Re-categorisation of organizations that selected "other" in question 6.

Organisation's answer	Category in which they were included
<i>An organisation that supports positive, sustainable engagement in outdoor pursuits in the range of natural and semi-natural environments and for a range of purposes including recreational, educational, therapeutic, tourism and development.</i>	RECREATION
<i>An organisation which offers educational and conservation activities relating to birds and offers recreational activities as part of this.</i>	CONSERVATION
<i>Both. Responsible mountain biking on sustainable trails. Fun for the riders, management of the activity and protection of the forest.</i>	RECREATION
<i>State Sporting Organisation representing competitive equestrian based activities, including the Olympic sports of Dressage, Eventing and Jumping</i>	RECREATION
<i>Focused on personal development using a range of activities including outdoor recreation</i>	OTHER

### **Organisation function(s)**

Representatives reported that the functions of the organisations were primarily sport and recreation, socialising, education and conservation. Each organisation ranked these functions by their importance to the organisation. For conservation-based organisations, following conservation, education was the second most important function and lobbying the third. Conservation-based organisations also reported socialising as a function, and half of them reported some sport/recreation functions.

Recreation-based organisations, as expected, reported sport or recreation as their primary function, but also reported socializing, followed by conservation, and education functions (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Conservation-based and recreation-based organisations reported their functions ranking them according to the importance for the organisation.

Organisations based on:	Reported functions	Rank - More important to less important						
		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
Conservation	Activism		2	2			1	2
	Conservation	8	2	1				
	Education	2	4	2	1	1		
	Lobbying	1	1	4				
	Socialising			1	4		1	
	Sport / Recreation		1	1	1	2		
Recreation	Activism		2	1		1	3	
	Conservation	1	1	7	2	2	1	
	Education		3	4	6	1		
	Lobbying		1	1	1	2	1	
	Socialising	1	17	4	2			
	Sport / Recreation	24	2	1				

Representatives were also asked to describe and expand on the type of functions their organisations perform. This information can assist in identifying the most important activities for the organisation within each function. To visually analyse this information, a word cloud was generated using the text provided by the organisations (Figure 3). All conservation-based organisations and 14 recreation-based organisations provided detailed information about the conservation functions that they perform. Frequently used words, when specifying the type of conservation functions organisations perform, were “regeneration”, “parks”, “protection”, “trails”, “surveys” and “conservation” (Figure 3). These terms refer to organised activities, in other words to activities organised by stakeholder groups, such as: forest regeneration, conservation of parks, or wildlife surveys. Interestingly, the abbreviation IMBA (International Mountain Bicycling association) was also frequently mentioned. This could be due to the type of practices IMBA conducts, including trail restoration, environmental codes of practice, and trail designs. Some of the conservation functions mentioned by representatives included:

- *“Protecting and conserving bushland”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Rainforest regeneration”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Help with regeneration and wildcare”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Sustainable trail design & construction”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Volunteers for National Parks working to bring trails up to IMBA specifications”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Weeding, planting, natural regeneration”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Wildlife surveys (quolls, gliders, platypus, echidna)”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Building only sustainable trail network to the IMBA standard in consultation with rangers from DNR Qld”* [recreation-based organisation]



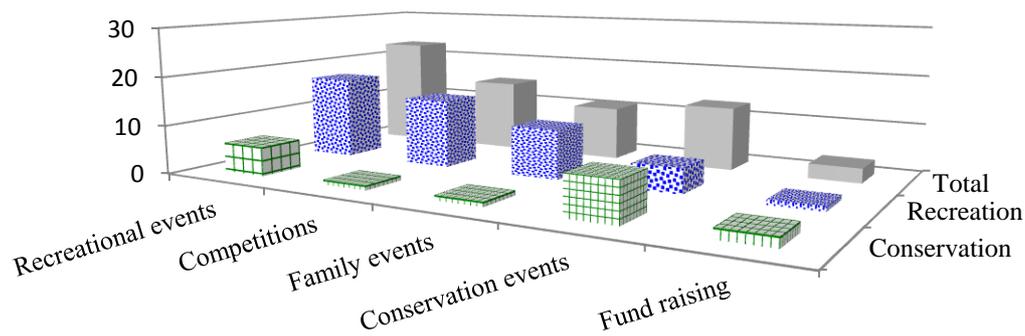


Some of the statements representatives of these organisations mentioned included:

- *“Mainly Local Government, but some State Government”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Letters to minister, politicians, local government”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Lobby Governments at all levels, serve on a range of Ministerial Advisory Committees, Government working groups”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Government based activity re horse related health and funding support”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“For acceptance of mountain bike riding & trails”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Trail access”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Attempting to gain great access to areas to in which to ride”* [recreation-based organisations]
- *“All legal outdoor recreation activities”* [recreation-based organisations]
- *“Lobbying for environmental protection legislation at state and federal levels”* [conservation-based organisations]
- *“For additions to the National Park estate, and best management practice of the same”* [conservation-based organisations]

### **Organisations’ events**

Organisations were also asked to specify and rank the type of events that they organise or conduct (Figure 6). For recreation-based organisations the most common events were: recreational events (16), competitions (14), family events (10) and conservation events (5). For conservation-based organisations, common events were conservation events (8), recreational events (5) and fund raising (2). For each of these previously events, organisations listed different activities. For example, conservation events included activities such as: volunteering, community planting, weeding, and track maintenance in National Parks. For recreational events, activities mentioned included bushwalking, bird watching, kayaking, mountain biking, social dinners, wildlife watching, camping and group running/triathlons. Competitive activities included: orienteering, bicycle racing, photographic competitions, dressage and hack, mountain biking, and fun runs. Family events included bicycle riding, children and adult camps, bush BBQs, planting, bushwalking, wildlife-watching and social events (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Main events organised and reported by conservation-based and recreation-based organisations.

Representatives of the organisations also reported examples of the activities that they perform. Frequently used words describing these statements included “maintenance”, “trails” and “regeneration”, suggesting that they organised trail maintenance and regeneration activities. Some of the examples given by organisations included:

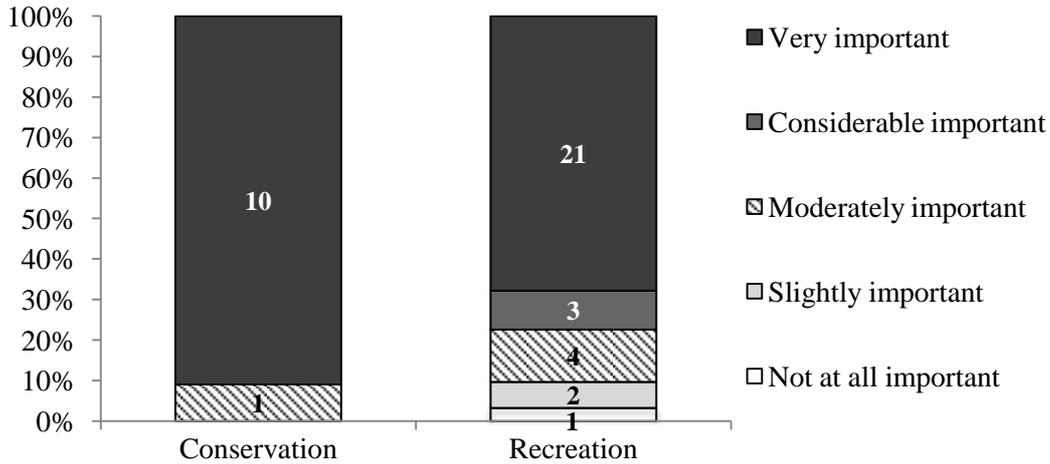
- *“Assisting QPWS in maintenance of tracks and monitoring of campsites”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Trail corrections where there is erosion”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Regeneration of areas when found to be degenerated.”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Organised landcare and trail building days with rangers”* [recreation-based organisation]
- *“Involvement in conservation projects relating to birds and their habitats either alone or with other conservation groups and alliances”* [conservation-based organisation]
- *“Weeding, helping with regeneration research”* [conservation-based organisation]



## Organisations' interactions with parks

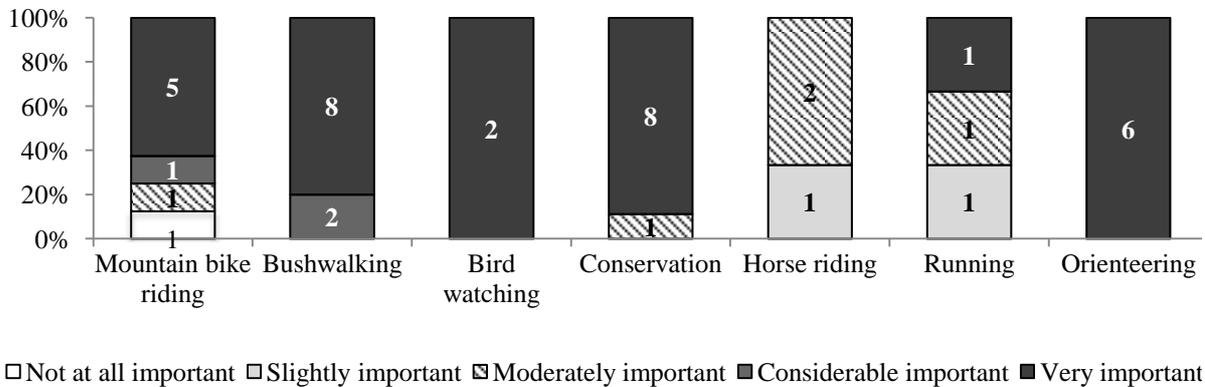
### Importance of parks for the organisations

Regardless of the focus of the organisations (recreation-based or conservation-based), three-quarters of the surveyed organisations (31), reported that parks are very important to the organisation. The remainder reported that parks were either slightly, moderately or considerable important (10). Only one recreation-based organisation reported that parks were not important for their operations (Figure 9).



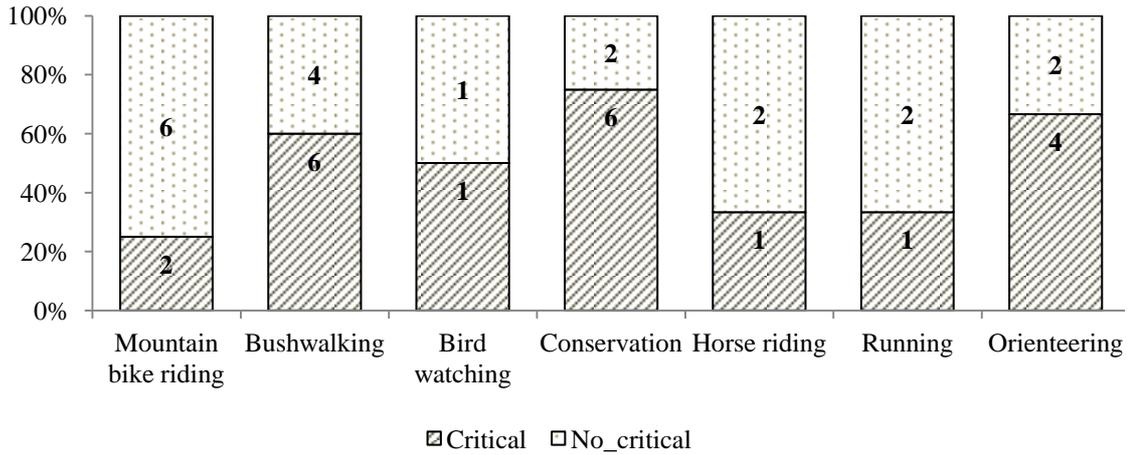
**Figure 9.** Importance of parks ranked from “not at all important” to “very important” for the organisations, based on their main focus (conservation-based or recreation-based).

Within recreation-based organisations, the importance of parks also varied, depending upon the primary activity undertaken (Figure 10). For example, the few organisations that considered parks as only slightly important included horse riding and running groups. Only one mountain bike riding organisation reporting that parks were not important for the organisation. However, other organisations such as bird-watching or orienteering groups reported that parks were very important (Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** Importance of parks ranked from “not at all important” to “very important” for the organisations based on the main activity that they conduct.

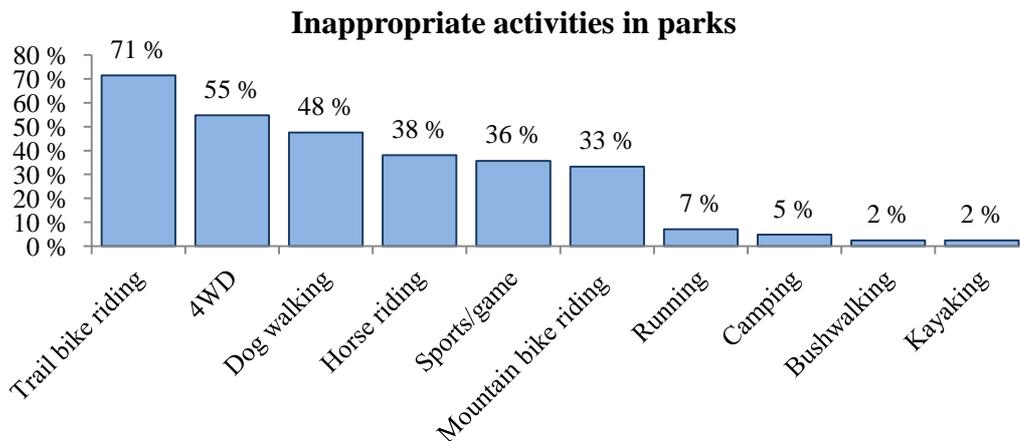
As might be expected, surveyed representatives reported that national parks are critical places for their organisations. Only three conservation-based organisations reported that national parks are non critical, yet 16 recreation-based organisations reported this (Figure 11). National parks are ‘critical’ for some organisations because they are unable to substitute other places for core activities. Organisations reporting that national parks are ‘non critical’ for conducting their activities, can substitute other areas. For example, one orienteering group reported using private lands to conduct their events (e.g. “...*Private land holders allow access...*”).



**Figure 11.** Organisations reporting the ‘criticality’ of national parks for their activities.

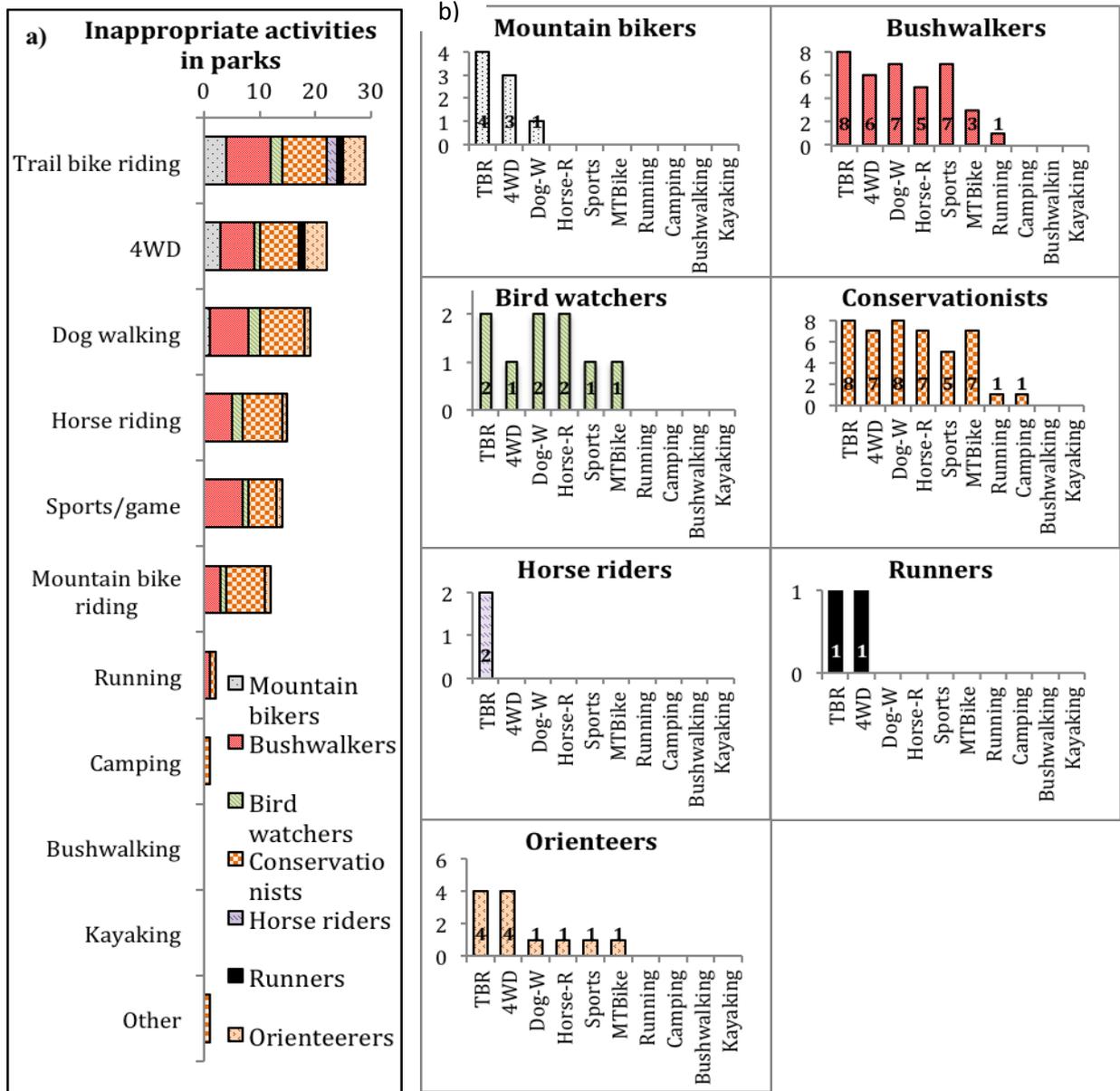
**Recreational activities in parks**

Of the ten recreational activities listed, most organisations reported that three were inappropriate in parks: trail bike riding (71%), four-wheel driving (54%) and dog walking (47%). Some organisations also reported that horse riding (38%), sports/games (35%) and mountain bike riding (33%) were inappropriate (Figure 12).



**Figure 12.** Stakeholders organisations view about the inappropriateness of different activities in parks in South East Queensland.

The relationship between the organisations' main activity and their perception about activities they consider are inappropriate in parks is illustrated in figure 13. As shown in Figure 13b, organisations conducting various activities considered trail bike riding as inappropriate, followed by four wheel driving. The only activity considered inappropriate by two horse riding organisations was trial bike riding (motorbikes) but not other activities including four wheel driving and mountain biking (Figure 13b). The organisations reporting most of the activities as inappropriate in parks were bushwalkers, bird watchers, conservationists, and orienteering groups (Figure 13).



**Figure 13.** Organisations' (mountain bikers, bushwalkers, bird watchers, conservationists, horse riders, runners, orienteers) views about which activities are inappropriate in parks (a), and b) the number of organisations responding to this question. TBR: trail bike riding, 4WD: four wheel driving, Dog-W: dog walking, Horse-R: horse riding, MTBike: Mountain bike riding.

Unsurprisingly, none of the organisations reported that their own activities were inappropriate in parks. Overall, activities not considered to be inappropriate by nearly all organisations were: bushwalking, kayaking, camping and running, with only one recreation-based organisation reporting running as inappropriate, and two conservation-based organisations reporting running and camping as inappropriate (Figure 13).

**Activities that negatively impact on organisations’ events**

Most activities were perceived as having negative impacts on organisations’ events, regardless of the organisations focus (recreation-based or conservation-based) or the activity that they undertake in parks. Motorised activities, including four wheel driving and trail bike riding, were the two activities most commonly listed as negatively affecting organisations events in parks, with 22 (52%) organisations selecting trail bike riding and 17 (40%) organisations selecting four wheel driving. Other activities such as mountain bike riding, horse riding, dog walking and sports/games also negatively affected organisations events. Running and camping were selected but only by two organisations (Figure 14).

The perception of negative impacts among organisations was asymmetrical. Bushwalkers and conservationists organisations selected mountain bike riding, horse riding, camping, sport/games, dog walking and running as negatively affecting their events in parks but not vice versa (Figure 14).

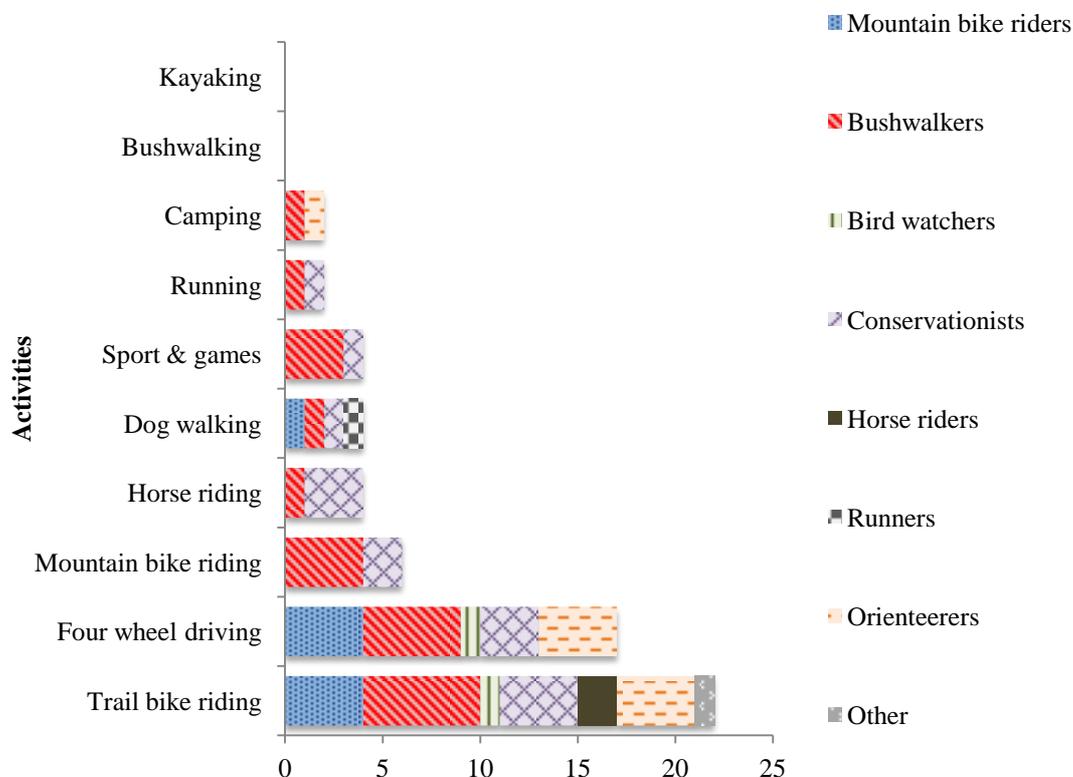
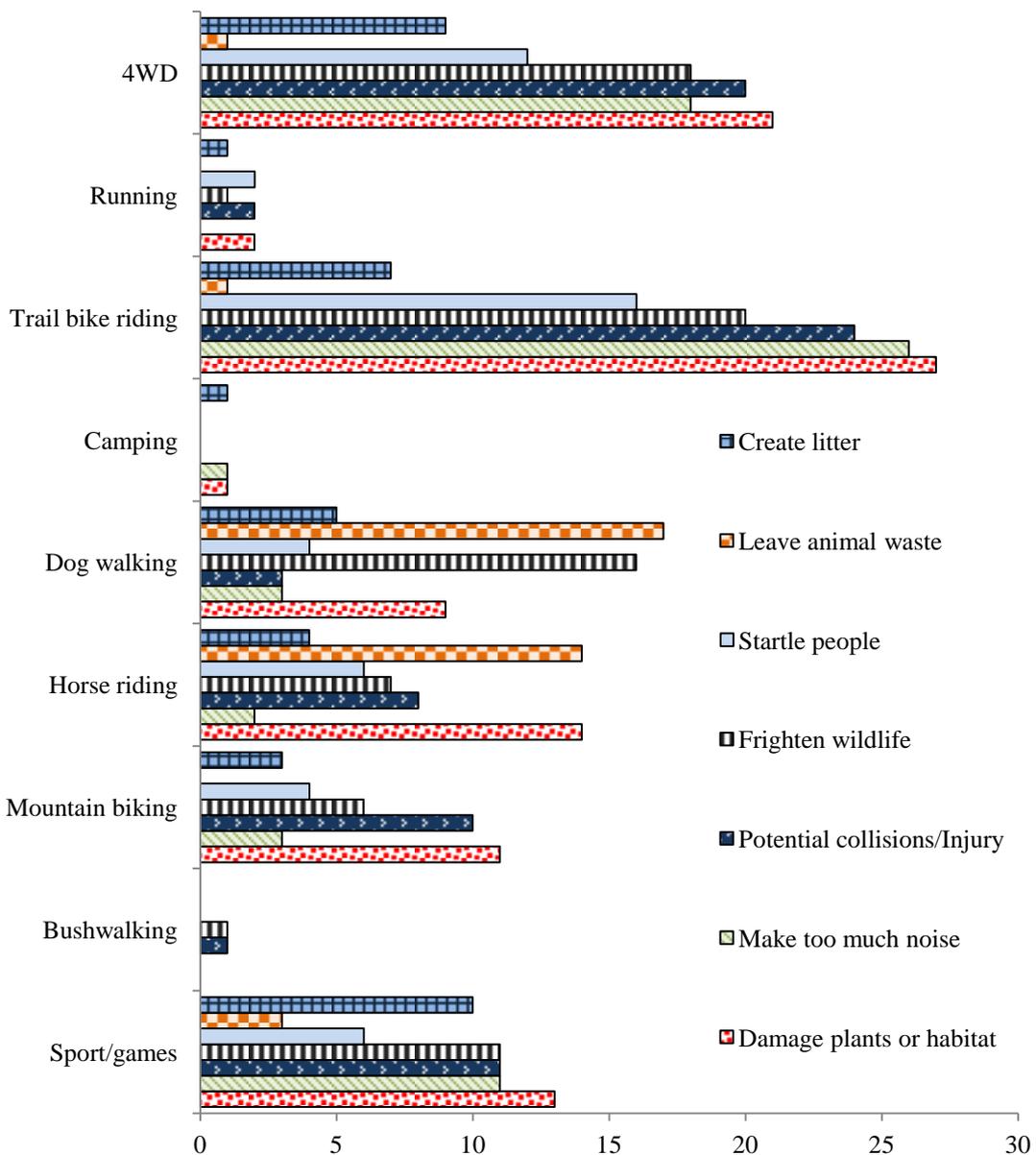


Figure 14. Activities that negatively impact the organisations’ events in parks.

**Social and environmental impacts of activities in parks**

Activities considered to have the highest number of impacts in parks (environmental and social) were trail bike riding, four wheel driving, sport/games, dog walking, horse riding and mountain biking. Other activities considered to have some impacts were running, camping and bushwalking (Figure 15).

The impacts more frequently mentioned were damage to plants or habitat, noise, frightening wildlife and safety issues such as the potential for collisions or injury. The activities affecting safety were trail bike riding, four wheel driving, mountain bike riding, horse riding and sports/games (Figure 15). Furthermore, dog walking, bushwalking and running were also identified as a source of potential collisions or injuries.

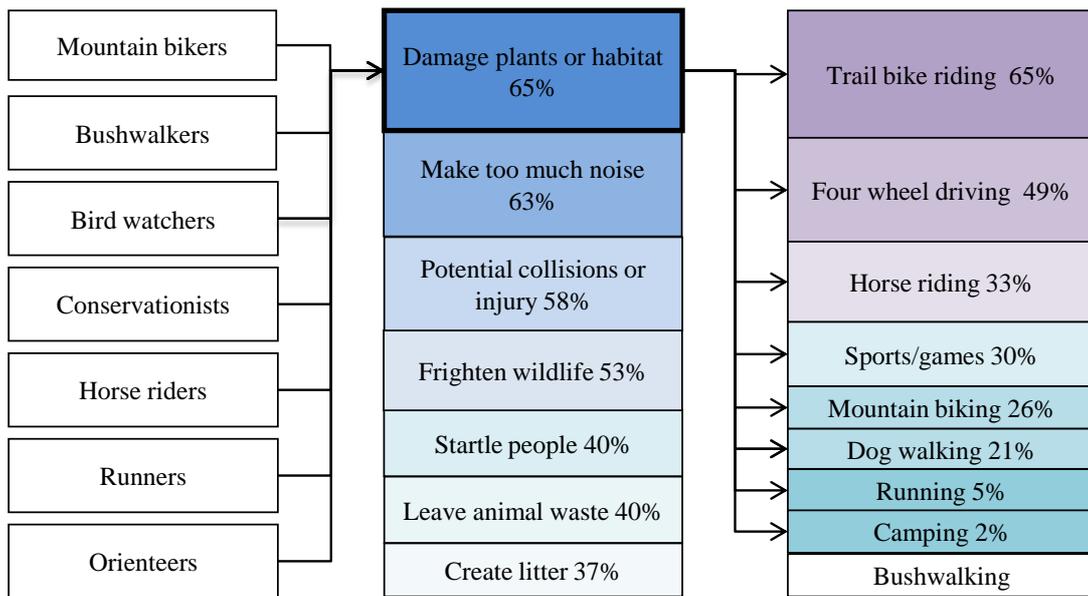


**Figure 15.** Stakeholder organisations’ perceptions about the impacts caused by different recreational activities in parks in South East Queensland.

When identifying the potential impacts caused by the different activities, organizations also identified the activities responsible for the impacts. The diagrams below represent which stakeholder organisation(s) (e.g. mountain bikers, bushwalkers, etc.) identified an impact and which activity(ies) was considered the source of that impact.

*Damage to plants or habitat*

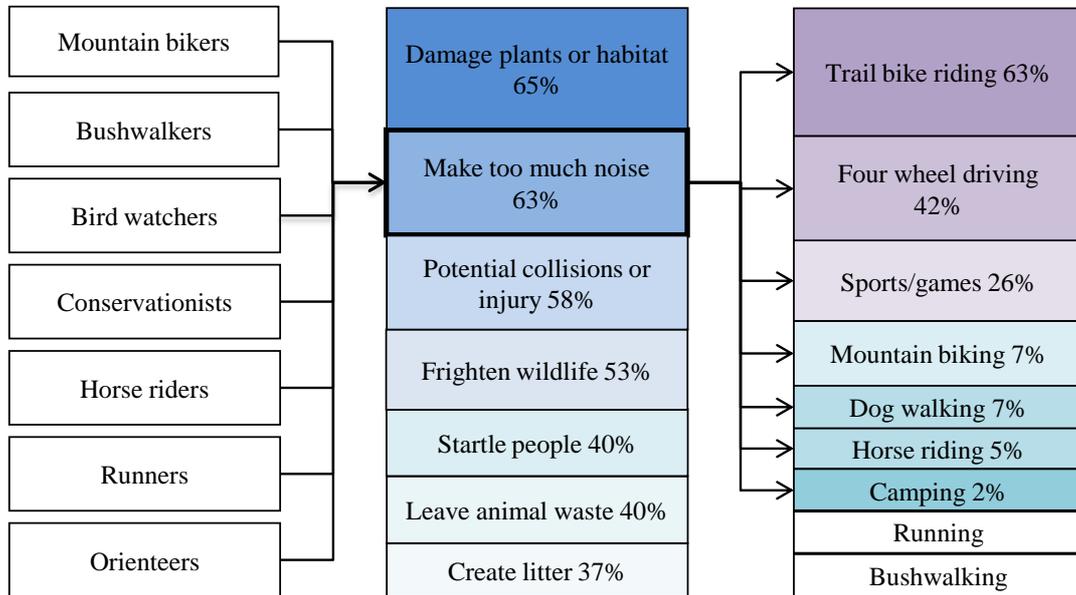
All types of organisations considered that most of the activities are responsible for damage to vegetation or habitat in parks. Trail bike riding and four wheel driving were considered the most important activities damaging plants and animals.



**Figure 16.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for damaging vegetation or habitat in parks.

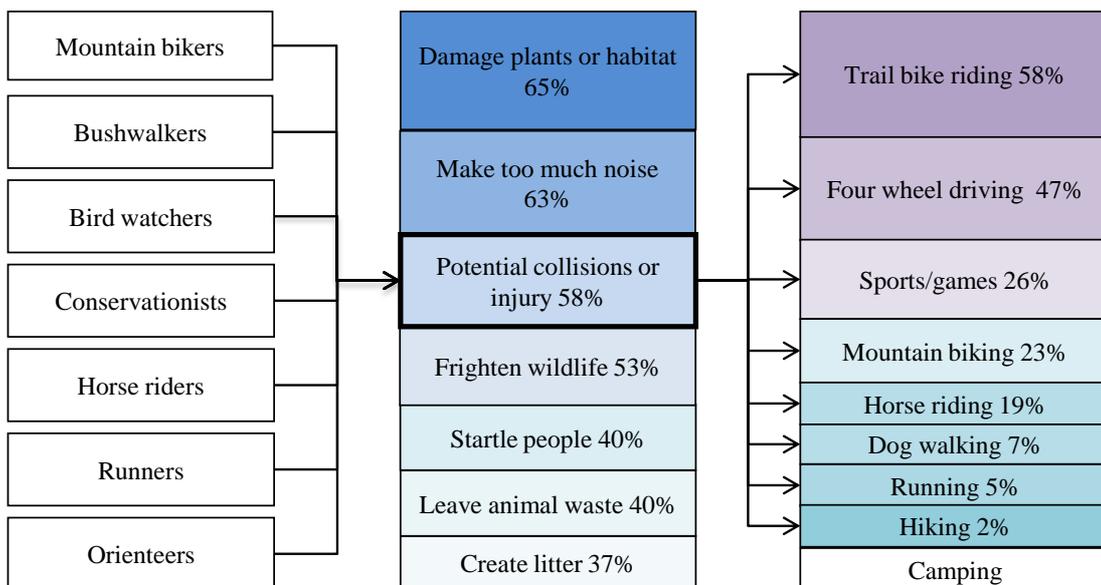
*Make too much noise*

All types of organisations (63%) also considered that noise was produced by most of the activities undertaken in the parks. Trail bike riding and four wheel driving were perceived as the noisiest activities, while running and bushwalking were not perceived as a source of noise in parks (Figure 17).



**Figure 17.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for causing noise in parks.

*Potential collisions or injury*



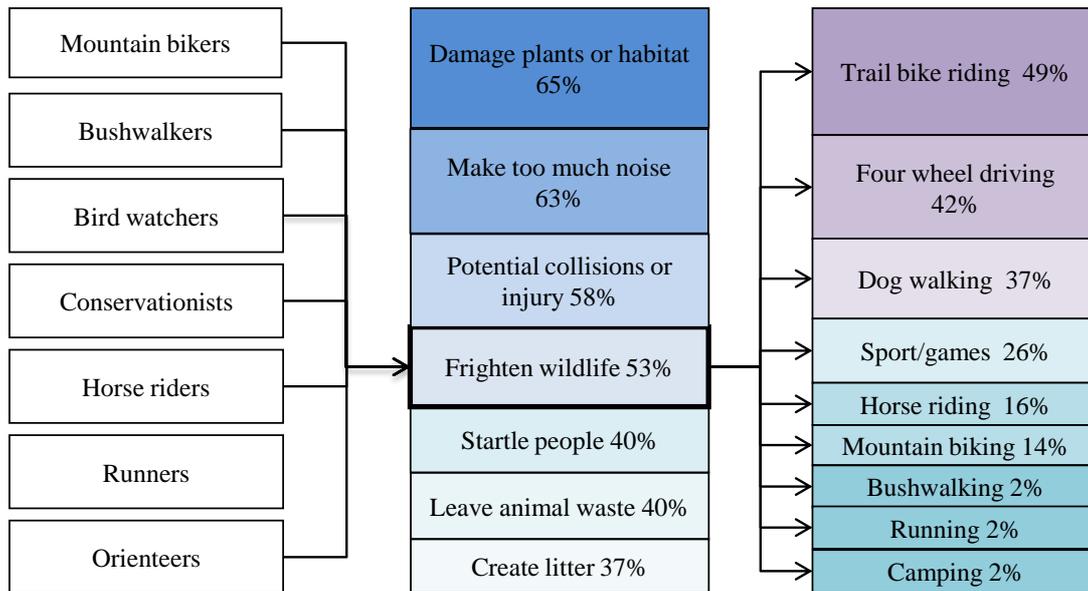
**Figure 18.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for safety issues (collisions or injury) in parks.

Potential collisions were considered also of concern by all type of organisations (65%), especially for trail bike riding and four wheel driving (Figure 18). Other

activities such as dog walking, running or bushwalking were also considered as causing potential collisions. Mountain bikers identified bushwalking and running as source of safety concern, probably because mountain bikers move faster and could crash into other users.

*Frighten wildlife*

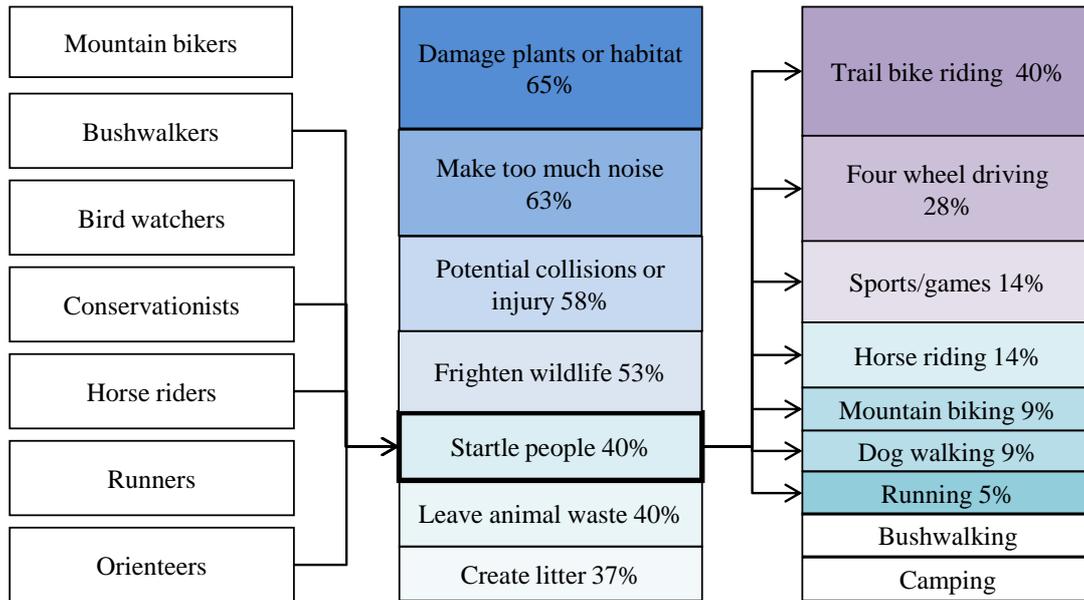
Except for runners, 53% of the organisations considered that all activities in parks frighten wildlife (Figure 19). As expected, trail bike riding and four wheel driving were the most frequently perceived activities as having a negative impact on wildlife.



**Figure 19.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for frighten wildlife in parks.

*Startle people*

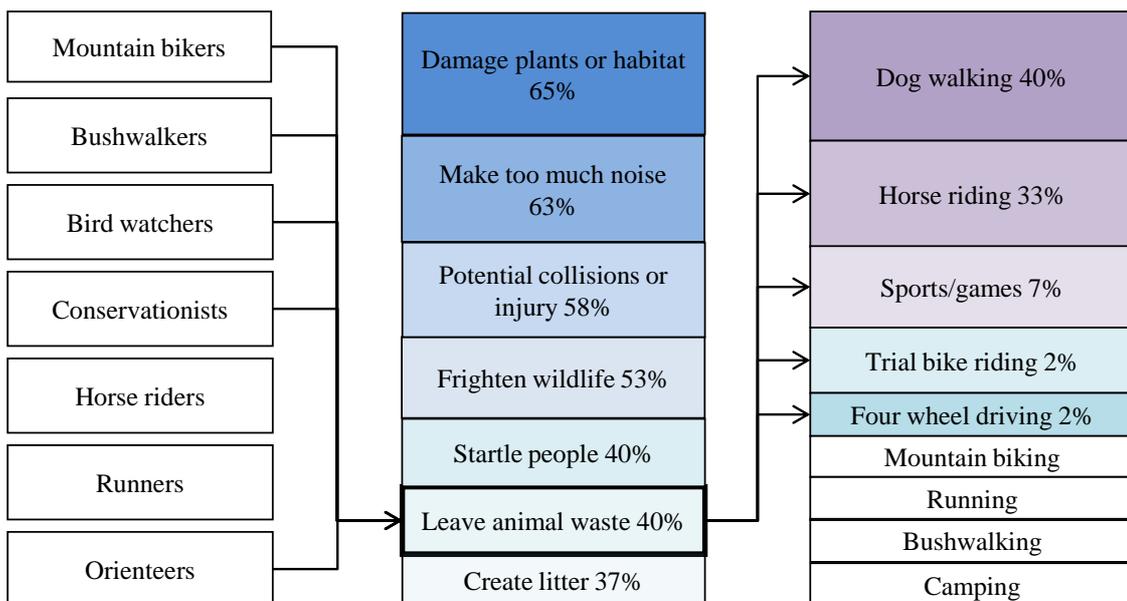
Bushwalkers, conservationists, horse riders and orienteer organisations considered that most of the activities startle people in parks (Figure 20). Similarly to the impacts considered by the organisations such as noise and collision or injury, the activities more frequently considered to be causing this impact were trail bike riding and four wheel driving. Activities such as bushwalking and camping were not perceived as startling people in parks (Figure 20).



**Figure 20.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for startling people in parks.

*Leave animal waste*

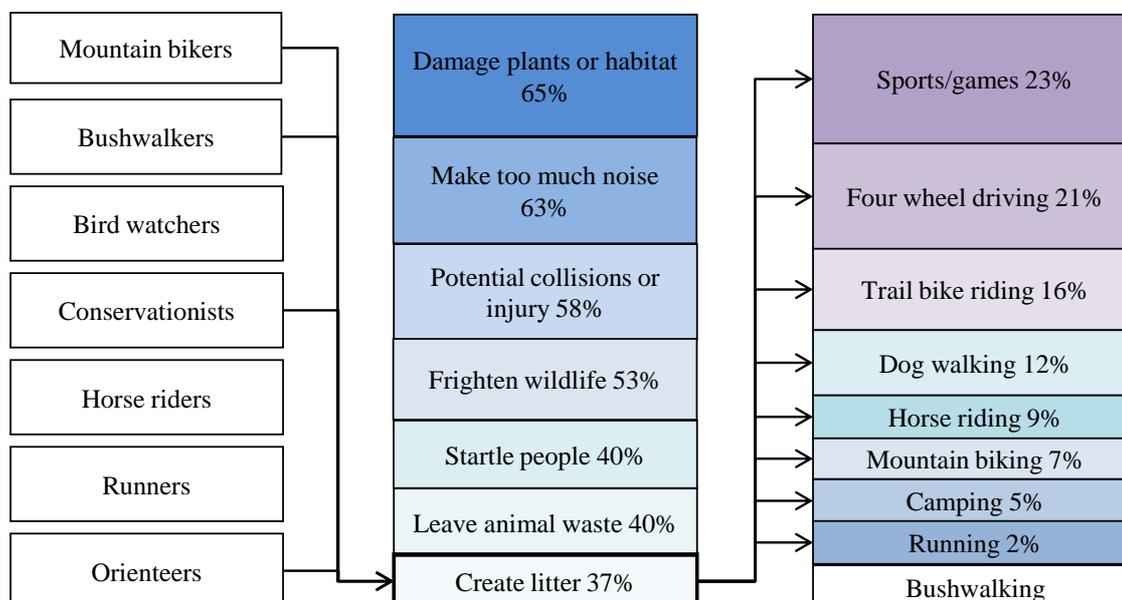
Except by runners and horse riders, all types of organisations considered that some recreational activities leave animal waste in parks (Figure 21). As expected dog walking and horse riding were the activities more frequently considered to be causing this impact, however, sports and games, trail bike riding and four wheel driving were also perceived as leaving animal waste in parks.



**Figure 21.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for leaving animal waste in parks.

### Create litter

Activities more frequently reported as responsible for creating litter in parks were organised sports and games, four wheel driving and trail bike riding. However, most of the activities, except for bushwalking, were perceived as creating litter in parks (Figure 22).



**Figure 22.** Activities perceived by stakeholder organisations (left) as responsible for littering parks.

### Qualitative information about the impacts of different recreational activities

Stakeholder organisations provided further information about the perceived impacts that different activities cause in parks. Some examples of these impacts for the most commonly listed activities such as trail bike riding were:

- *“Could also damage the track”*
- *“Damage the ground by making tracks that will cause erosion, expose tree roots, create wide paths causing even more erosion, destroy vegetation, fumes causing pollution, drip oil and fuel everywhere, potential fire risk”*
- *“Excessive noise, danger to people”*
- *“Safety”*
- *“Soil disturbance especially near creeks and gullies”*
- *“Totally inappropriate! Compact trails, erode trails, create fire risks, spread weeds, create user conflicts”*
- *“Unauthorised individual riders do not always accept the responsibility of care for the environment or other users.”*
- *“Unlicensed bikes and riders are an issue.”*

Some examples of these impacts for four wheel driving were:

- *“4WD vehicles target bog holes and clay pans and continue degradation of these areas”*
- *“Compact trails, erode trails, create fire risks, spread weeds, create user conflicts (except in remote areas)”*
- *“Damage the ground by making tracks that will cause erosion, expose tree roots, create wide paths causing huge erosion, destroy vegetation, fumes causing pollution, drip oil and fuel everywhere, potential fire risk, create huge camp sites, causing large amounts of litter , introducing too many people to wilderness areas”*
- *“Damage to environment, noise, danger to people”*
- *“Safety”*
- *“Soil disturbance especially near creeks and gullies”*

Some examples of these impacts for mountain bike riding were:

- *“Damage the ground by making tracks that will cause erosion.”*
- *“Possible damage depending on level of usage”*
- *“Unauthorised individual riders do not always accept the responsibility of care for the environment or other users.”*

Some examples of these impacts for horse riding were:

- *“Compact trails, erode trails, pollute waterways, spread weeds, create user conflicts”*
- *“Could also damage the track”*
- *“Seed dispersal through natural areas util”*

Some examples of these impacts for Dog walking were:

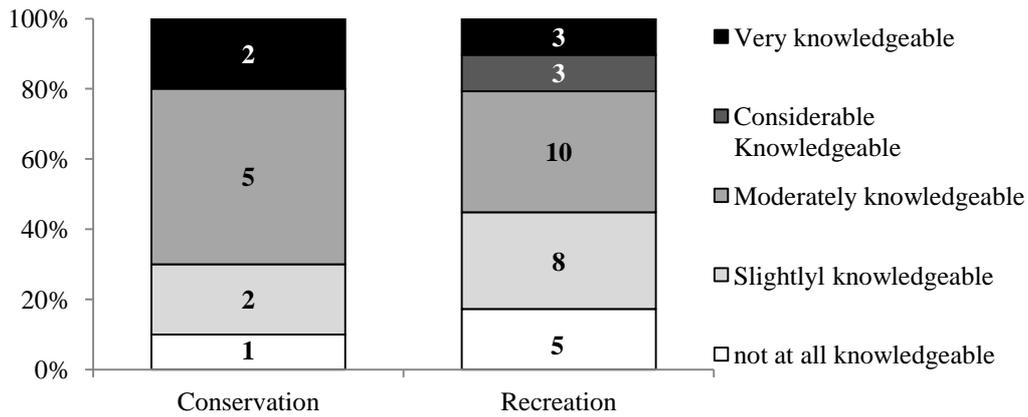
- *“Totally inappropriate! Destroy wildlife, spread weeds, create user conflicts, pollute waterways”*

Some examples of these impacts for organised sports or games were:

- *“Could also damage the track”*

## **Knowledge about the Horse Trail Network**

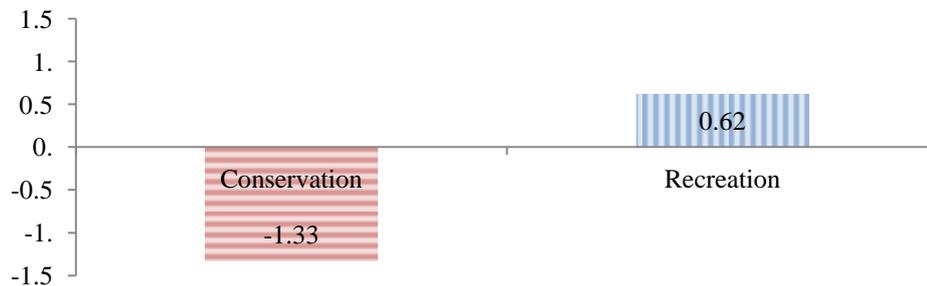
Organisations reported on their level of knowledge about the Horse Trail Network (Figure 23). Overall most organisations knew about the Horse Trail Network with only six organisations saying that they were not at all knowledgeable about the Network. Conservation-based organisations were slightly more knowledgeable (90%) than recreation organisations (83%).



**Figure 23.** Organisations' knowledge about the Horse Trail Network in South East Queensland.

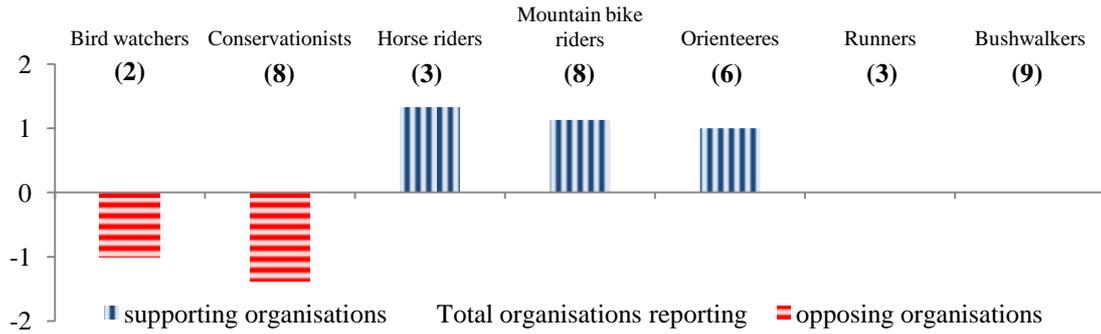
**Support for the Horse Trail Network and the authorised activities**

A total of 41 organisations (9 conservation-based and 29 recreation-based organisations) reported their level of support to the Horse Trail Network (Figure 24). Conservation-based organisations were neutral or non-supportive of the Horse Trail Network while, recreation-based organisations were more supportive of the Horse Trail Network, with over half of them supporting this initiative.



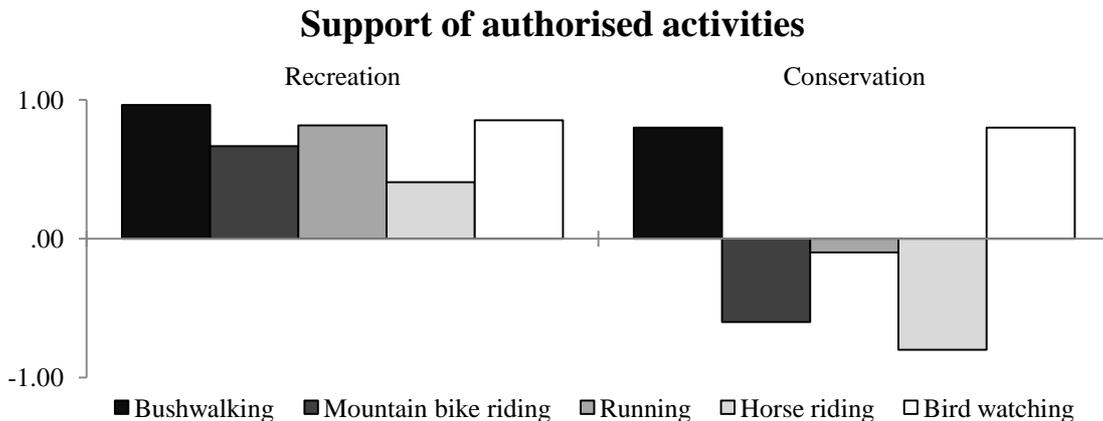
**Figure 24.** Organisations' level of support of the Horse Trail Network, represented by the mean of a likert scale question from strongly oppose (-2) to strongly support (2).

Organisations focused on activities such as bushwalking and running were neutral about the Horse Trail Network, while mountain bike riding, horse riding and orienteering focused organisations were positive about the network with bird watching and conservation organisations not supportive of the Horse Trail Network (Figure 25).



**Figure 25.** Number of organisations (in brackets) reporting their level of support to the Horse Trail Network. The line pattern represent the mean of a likert scale question, from strongly oppose (-2), neutral (0) to strongly support (2) the Horse Trail Network.

All authorised activities occurring on the Horse Trail Network are supported by recreation-based organisations while conservation-based organisations oppose mountain bike riding, running and horse riding in the same trail network. From the listed activities in the questionnaire, only two (bushwalking and bird watching) are supported by conservation organisations (Figure 26). The organisation focused on personal development supported all authorised activities except horse riding.



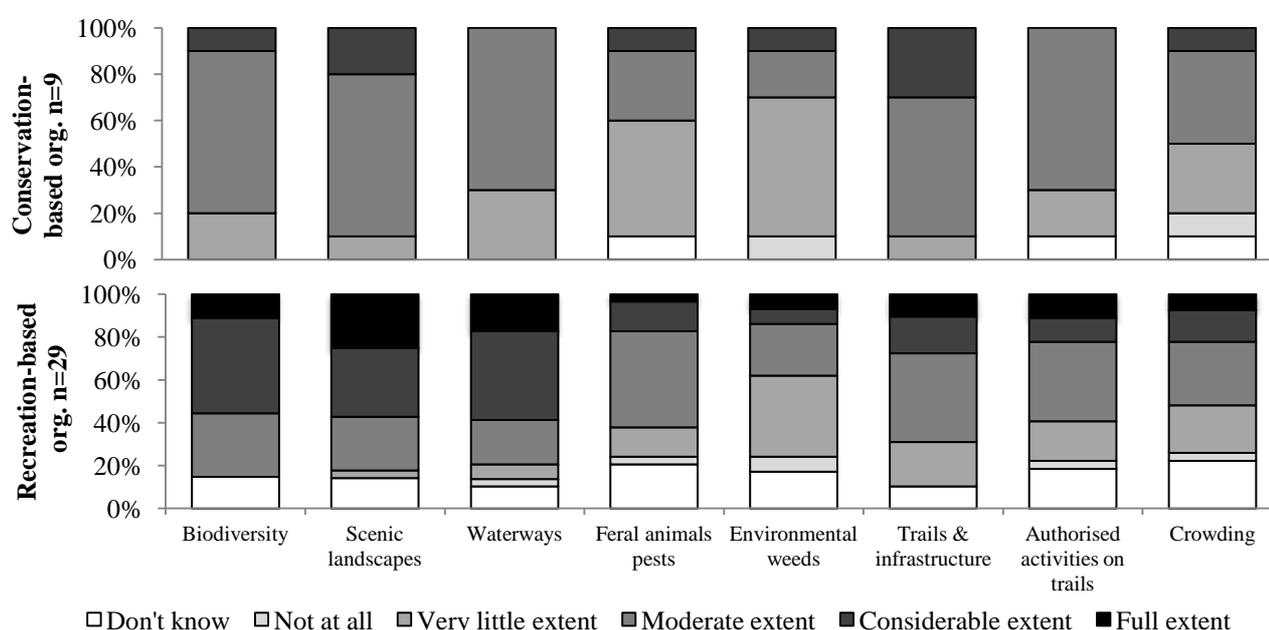
**Figure 26.** Organisations (recreation-based and conservation-based) support of the authorised activities in the Horse Trail Network expressed by the mean of a 3 point likert scale question; 1=support, 0=neutral and -1=oppose.

### South East Queensland’s national parks management and protection

Organisations were asked how different attributes (biodiversity, scenic landscapes, waterways, feral animal pests, environmental weeds, trails & infrastructure, authorised activities on trails and crowding) are being managed or protected in national parks in South East Queensland. The question was a five point likert scale (“not at all”, “to a very little extent”, “to a moderate extent”, “to a considerable extent”, “to the full extent”) including a “don’t know” option.

Conservation-based organisations were more aware about the management or protection of these attributes than recreation-based organisations; with only two reporting not knowing about crowding, environmental weeds or authorised activities (Figure 27). Recreation-based organisations reported more frequently not knowing about the attributes than conservation-based organisations, but they were generally more positive about current management or protection of these attributes than conservation-based organisations.

Overall organisations perceived biodiversity, landscapes, waterways, infrastructure and authorised activities as attributes moderately managed or protected in parks, while attributes considered as poorly managed in parks were feral animals, environmental weeds, and crowding.



**Figure 27.** Organisations' perceptions about the management or protection of different attributes. Organisations gave their opinion in a likert scale question (“not at all”, “to a very little extent”, “to a moderate extent”, “to a considerable extent”, “to the full extent”) including a “don't know” option. Org=organisations

## Conclusions

- Non-motorised, authorised, activities, including horse riding in the Horse Trail Network are not a source of conflict among surveyed recreation-based organisations
- Stakeholder organisations conducting different activities considered trail bike riding and four wheel driving as inappropriate activities in parks.
- Motorised activities, including four wheel driving and trail bike riding, were the two activities most commonly listed as negatively affecting organisations events in parks.

- Activities considered to have the highest number of impacts in parks (environmental and social impacts) were trail bike riding and four wheel driving.
- Surveyed conservation-based organisations are non-supportive of the Horse Trail Network while, the surveyed recreation-based organisations were positive about the Horse Trail Network, with over half of them supporting this initiative.

A survey instrument suitable for current and long term monitoring of the social issues associated with the Horse Riding Trail Network has been developed and tested. The instrument appears to be reliable and can furnish usable data. Use of the full instrument in South East Queensland is recommended to allow assessment of stakeholder organisations' perceptions about the Horse Riding Trail Network over time.

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# APPENDIX I. Survey instrument used to collect information about organisations' perceptions about the Horse Trail Network in South East Queensland.



Date of survey: <input type="text"/> <i>dd/mm/yyyy</i>	Respondent code: ..... <i>(To be completed by the researcher)</i>
---	--

## Questions about you and the organisation you represent

1. What is the full name of the organisation that you represent (work for)?  
  
*Please write your answer here*
2. How long have you been a **member** of this organisation?  Years  Months
3. What is your **position** in the organisation? *(e.g. director, treasurer, organiser, member)*  
  
*Please write your answer here*
  - a. and how long have you been in this **position**?  Years  Months
4. How long has the organisation been operating for?  Years  Months
5. What is the mission/purpose of the organisation? *(Please write your answer below)*
6. How would you characterise your organisation? *(Please select one only)*
  - a) An organisation focused around recreational activities .....
  - b) An organisation focused around nature conservation .....
  - c) Other .....

If other, please specify *(write your answer below)*:



**Questions about the organisation's functions:**

7. What are the main functions of the organisation? *(Please, select and complete the top three functions)*

*Example:*

Sport/Recreation.....  → Type:.. Mountain Biking, Horse Riding, Bushwalking..

- Activism ..... N/A → Type:
- Conservation..... N/A → Type:
- Education..... N/A → Type:
- Lobbying..... N/A → Type:
- Socialising ..... N/A → Type:
- Sports/Recreation..... N/A → Type:
- Other..... N/A → Type:

8. What type of events/activities does the organisation run? *(Please, select and complete the top three)*

*Example:*

Family events .....  → Type: ..... tree planting, trail riding .....

- Competitions ..... N/A → Type:
- Family events ..... N/A → Type:
- Fund raising ..... N/A → Type:
- Group conservation/restoration activities N/A → Type:
- Group recreational activities ..... N/A → Type:
- Other ..... N/A → Type:

9. Does the organisation run or organise any recreational activities for its members?

*(Please, tick as many as apply)*

- |                                    |                          |  |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Organised sports/games.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Camping.....                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hiking/bushwalking .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Trail bike riding ( <i>motorbike</i> ).....        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kayaking/canoeing/rafting .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Running/jogging .....                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cycling/mountain bike riding ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Four wheel driving ( <i>4WD</i> ).....             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Horse riding .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bird watching .....                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dog walking .....                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other, <i>please specify:</i> <input type="text"/> |                          |
| Wildlife watching .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |                          |



**Questions about the role of parks for your organisation**

10. From the perspective of this organisation, what are the main purposes of parks? *(please write your answer below)*

11. Which parks (or similar areas) are used by the organisation to conduct the activities mentioned in question 9? *(Please use the attached **map clicking here**) (please write your answer below)*

12. On a scale ranging from “not at all important” to “very important”, please rate the importance of parks for the organisation. *(Please tick one box)*

- |                                 |                               |                                 |                                   |                           |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Not at all<br/>Important</i> | <i>Slightly<br/>Important</i> | <i>Moderately<br/>Important</i> | <i>Considerably<br/>Important</i> | <i>Very<br/>Important</i> |
| <input type="radio"/>           | <input type="radio"/>         | <input type="radio"/>           | <input type="radio"/>             | <input type="radio"/>     |

a) Are national parks critical for the organisation to achieve its objectives or can activities be undertaken in places other than parks or similar areas? *(Please tick one box)*

- No Critical**     **Critical**

13. During a typical year, how many activities/events does the organisation run or participate in, within parks or similar areas?

*Write the number of events here*

14. What are the main issues or concerns for the organisation regarding parks? *(Please, select as many as apply)*

- Level of park visitation.....
- Management of parks.....
- Nature conservation.....

Other, please specify



15. From the perspective of this organisation, are there any **inappropriate** recreational activities (authorised or unauthorised) occurring in parks? If 'yes', please specify why. (Please, select as many as apply)

Activity name	Tick if inappropriate in parks	Frighten wildlife	Damage plants or animals	Make too much noise	Leave animal waste	Startle people	Create litter	Potential collisions or Injury	Other: (specify in the box)
Organised sports/games	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Hiking/bushwalking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Kayaking/canoeing/rafting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Cycling/mountain bike riding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Horse riding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Dog walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Camping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Trail bike riding (motorbike)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Running/jogging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Four wheel driving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
Other: (specify).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> .....
.....									

16. Do any of the following activities negatively impact on events run by your organisation in parks? (Please, select as many as apply)

Sports/games .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Camping.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hiking/bushwalking .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trail bike riding (motorbike).....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kayaking/canoeing/rafting .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Running/jogging .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cycling/mountain bike riding .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Four wheel driving (4WD).....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horse riding .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, (please specify below): .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 250px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>			

**Questions about the change in status for some parks**

17. Some areas of state forest in South East Queensland have been transferred from state forests to national park. How would you rate the organisation's knowledge of this issue? (Please tick one box)

Not at all knowledgeable	Slightly knowledgeable	Moderately knowledgeable	Considerably knowledgeable	Very knowledgeable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



18. How would you rate your organisation's level of support or opposition to the change in status from state forests to national parks? *(Please tick one box)*

*Strongly Oppose*      *Oppose*      *Neutral*      *Support*      *Strongly Support*

a) Why does the organisation support or oppose this issue? *(Please write your answer below)*

19. For the organisation, what are the benefits from accessing local national parks in South East Queensland? *(please write your answer below)*

20. For the organisation, are there any disadvantages with the presence of local national parks in South East Queensland?

**No**       **Yes**  *(if yes, please specify what and why)*

21. Since the change in status of these parks, does the organisation run or participate in activities in parks more, similar or fewer times than before? *(Please tick one response)*

More  
 Similar  
 Fewer

22. How would you rate the organisation's knowledge about the multiple use trail network, also known as Horse Trail Network? *(Please tick one box)*

*Not at all knowledgeable*      *Slightly knowledgeable*      *Moderately knowledgeable*      *Considerably knowledgeable*      *Very knowledgeable*

23. How would you rate your organisation's level of support or opposition to multiple use trails in parks? *(Please tick one box)*

*Strongly Oppose*      *Oppose*      *Neutral*      *Support*      *Strongly Support*



**On these multiple use trails, also known as Horse Trail Network, a range of different activities are permitted including bushwalking, mountain bike riding, running, horse riding, bird watching. The following questions relate to these trails.**

24. How would you rate your organisation's level of support or opposition to the following activities on the multiple use trail network? *(Please, select as many as apply)*

	Oppose	Neutral	Support
a) Bushwalking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Mountain bike riding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Running	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Horse riding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Bird watching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Has the organisation received any feedback from its members about these issues?

Multiple use trails / Horse Trail Network	No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/>
Authorised activities in those trails	No <input type="radio"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/>

26. Does the organisation, consider that the following attributes are adequately protected or managed in South East Queensland national parks? *(Please, select as many as apply)*

	Not at all	To a very little extent	To a moderate extent	To a considerable extent	To the full extent	Don't know
Biodiversity – plants, animals and ecosystems (protected)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Scenic landscapes (protected)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waterways (protected)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feral animal pests (managed)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental weeds (managed)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trails and infrastructure (managed)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Authorised activities on trails (managed)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crowding (high level of visitation) (managed)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



All the information collected through this survey is confidential and will not be transmitted to the former Department of Environment and Resource Management or any other Agency or organisation in a way that the person or organisation could be identified. From the information collected, a summary for all the organisations contacted will be reported.

The following questions relate to your organisations experiences of park management.

27. How positive or negative are the formal interactions of the organisation with the former Department of Environment and Resource Management? *(Please tick one box)*

- Strongly positive*       *Positive*       *Neutral*       *Negative*       *Strongly negative*       *No applicable*

28. Is the organisation actively involved in the management of parks?

- No**       **Yes**  *(if yes, please specify how)*

29. Does the organisation participate in volunteer activities that contribute to the management of parks? (e.g. restoration, trail maintenance, etc)

- No**       **Yes**  *(if yes, please specify which activities)*

Thank you for your participation.

## APPENDIX II. Pre-notice letter used to inform organisations that they were selected to participate in the survey.



**School of Environment**  
Environmental Futures Centre

Gold Coast Campus  
Parklands Drive  
Queensland, Australia 4222  
Telephone +61 (0)7 5552 8463  
Facsimile +61 (0)7 5552 7785  
s.rossi@griffith.edu.au

Room 4.20  
Building G24  
Campus Gold Coast Campus

November 7, 2012

Dear <SECRETARY NAME>,

A few days from now you will receive a request to fill out a brief questionnaire for an important research project being conducted by Griffith University.

The research is investigating the attitudes and perception of visitors, incorporated organisations, and the broader community to the change in status of some areas from State Forest to a conservation status under the Nature Conservation Act 1992.

I am writing to you in advance, because many people like to know ahead of time that they will be contacted. This is an important study that will help the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sports and Racing to better manage National Parks and Forest Reserves in South East Queensland.

<ORGANISATION'S NAME> was selected to take part in the research based on publicly available information on the Internet. <ORGANISATION'S NAME> has been identified as an organisation using National Parks or Forest Reserves in South East Queensland. If the organisation does not use parks in South East Queensland please let me know at your earliest convenience so that I can take the organisation off our contact list.

Thank you for your time and consideration. It's only with the generous help of people like you that our research can be successful.

Yours sincerely,

Sebastian Rossi  
PhD candidate and Co-investigator

## APPENDIX III. Cover letter accompanying the survey instrument with options and instructions to complete it.



School of Environment  
Environmental Futures Centre

Gold Coast Campus  
Parklands Drive  
Queensland, Australia 4222  
Telephone +61 (0)7 5552 8463  
Facsimile +61 (0)7 5552 7785  
s.rossi@griffith.edu.au

December 6, 2012

Room 4.20  
Building G24  
Campus Gold Coast Campus

Dear <SECRETARY NAME>,

I contacted you to introduce you to the research project that I am conducting as part of my PhD at Griffith University. I am now attaching further information about this research.

As mentioned in my previous email, to participate in this project I would like to request you to complete a questionnaire by one of the following options.

1. E-mail:

Open and fill the PDF form attached ("Griffith University survey form.pdf"). Once you have completed it, save it and send it to my email address.

2. On-line:

Use the following link:

<[www.surveymonkey.com/s/GriffithUniversity?c=00005](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GriffithUniversity?c=00005)> to respond to the questions and once completed click the bottom "Done" that appears at the end of the form.

3. Post:

Please fill the questionnaire accompanying this letter and using the reply paid envelope post it back to us, or you can also fax it to us on +61 (0)7 5552 7785.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or required assistance to send back the completed form. Thank you very much for your participation in this project.

Looking forward to your response

Kind regards,

Sebastian Rossi

PhD candidate and co-researcher

E-mail: [s.rossi@griffith.edu.au](mailto:s.rossi@griffith.edu.au)

Phone: +61 07 5552 8463

## APPENDIX IV. Information sheet provided with the survey instrument.



**School of Environment**  
Environmental Futures Centre  
Gold Coast Campus  
Parklands Drive  
Queensland, Australia 4222

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### **Change in Status of Protected Areas**

#### **Who is conducting the research?**

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Catherine Pickering (PhD), Dr. Jason Byrne (PhD) and Sebastian Rossi (PhD candidate) from the School of Environment at Griffith University.

#### **Why is the research being conducted?**

The research is being conducted as part of a larger project examining the change in status of protected areas: perceptions of visitors, incorporated organisations and local communities about the transition of some areas from State Forest to National Park in South East Queensland. This transition includes a multiple-use trail network, also known as Horse Trail Network. The research is investigating the attitudes of visitors, social organisations and the broader community to the change in status from State Forest to a conservation status under the Nature Conservation Act 1992.

#### **Why is the organisation you represent being asked to participate in this study?**

We are asking this organisation to take part in the research because we are seeking to learn more about the type of organisations interested in parks in South East Queensland, their attitudes towards national parks, their perceptions of park activities, and about whether conflict occurs in these parks. Your participation is strictly voluntary.

#### **What will we ask the organisation to do?**

We have identified you as a representative of an organisation with an interest in these parks and their management. Organisations were identified using publicly available information, including internet information. You will be asked to fill a questionnaire, which should take on average no longer than 20 minutes of your time. The questionnaire can be filled either in a paper version which you will then returned to the research team in a reply-paid envelope or online. You will give your consent to participate in this research simply by completing the survey and returning it to the researchers.

#### **Is participation voluntary?**

Participation is voluntary. The organisation can choose whether to be in this study or not. If the organisation volunteer to be in this study, it is possible to withdraw at any time during the completion of the questionnaire without consequences of any kind. As a representative of the organisation, you may also choose not to answer any questions that the organisation would not want to answer and still remain in the study, although we may not use incomplete surveys in our analysis. Once the questionnaire has returned it will not be possible to withdraw from the study, because your identity is completely anonymous.

#### **On what basis will we screen participants?**

Representatives of incorporated organisations that are involved in conservation, recreation or management activities in parks in South East Queensland will be eligible to participate in this study.



**School of Environment**  
Environmental Futures Centre  
Gold Coast Campus  
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Queensland, Australia 4222

#### **Expected benefits of the research**

The research will be beneficial to the organisation because survey results will inform park planning and recreational programs undertaken by park management agencies.

#### **Risks to you or the organisation**

Participating in the survey will not pose any risks to you or the organisation. We will not gather personal information or any other data that could be traced back to you.

#### **Will you or the organisation be paid to participate?**

Neither you nor the organisation will receive payment for completing the survey.

#### **Your confidentiality and privacy**

No information will be included in the survey or in publication of the results that would reveal your identity. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that could be identified with you or the organisation will remain strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Reports based in the data gathered in the survey will be provided to the department formerly known as Department of Environment and Resource Management to assist them with their park planning. When the results of this research are published and / or discussed in conferences, there will not be any discussion of information that could be traced back to you or the organisation you represent.

#### **More Information**

You may also contact either of the Principle Investigators by the end of December 2013 to obtain a summary of the overall research. Results will be later published in 2014 in a Griffith University research monograph and are expected to be published in English-language peer-reviewed academic journals.

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature of the research, please contact Dr Catherine Pickering: Principal Investigator, in the Environmental Futures Centre, School of Environment at Griffith University, Room 3.08 (G24) Science 1 Building, 07-5552 8059, [c.pickering@griffith.edu.au](mailto:c.pickering@griffith.edu.au), Dr Jason Byrne: investigator, in the Environmental Futures Centre, School of Environment at Griffith University, Room 3.06 (G31) Arts and Education 2 Building, 07-555 27723, [jason.byrne@griffith.edu.au](mailto:jason.byrne@griffith.edu.au), or Sebastian Rossi: PhD candidate, in the Environmental Futures Centre, School of Environment at Griffith University, Room 4.20 (G24) Science 1 Building, phone: 07-5552 8463, fax: 55527785, [s.rossi@griffith.edu.au](mailto:s.rossi@griffith.edu.au).

#### **Free to withdraw from the study**

The organisation may withdraw the consent and discontinue participation without penalty prior to returning the survey to the researcher. Neither you or the organisation you represent are waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of the participation in this research study.

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If potential participants have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project they should contact the Manager, Research Ethics on 3735 5585 or [research-ethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@griffith.edu.au).

## **APPENDIX V. Organisations identified through Internet searches, suggestions from the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing and suggestions from the organisations contacted during the survey.**

### **Bushwalking/Hiking**

Bushwalking Queensland  
Brisbane Bushwalkers  
Brisbane Catholic Bushwalking Club Inc.  
Bushwalkers of Southern Queensland Inc.  
Family Bushwalkers Club Inc.  
Ipswich Bushwalkers Inc.  
Queensland Bushwalkers Club Inc.  
Redland Bushwalkers Inc.  
YHA Bushwalkers Qld Inc. (YHA Bushies)  
Glasshouse Bushwalkers Club Inc.  
Gold Coast Bushwalkers Club Inc.  
Laidley Bushwalkers Association Inc.  
Sunshine Coast Bushwalkers Inc.  
Tamborine Mountain Natural History Association Inc.  
Brisbane Young Adventurers Inc.

### **Mountain biking**

Mountain Bike Australia  
Brisbane South Mountain Bike Club  
Bayside Hillbillies Mountain Bike Club Inc.  
D'Aguiar Range Cycling Club  
Daisy Hill Mountain Bike Club  
Downhill From Here Mountain Bike Club Inc.  
Ffast Cycling Club Inc.  
Gap Creek Trails Alliance Inc.  
Gap Cycling Club Inc.  
Gold Coast Mountain Bike Club  
Gravity Mountain Bike Club Inc.  
Ipswich Cycling Club Inc.  
Kenmore Cycle Club  
Noosa Trailblazers Mountain Bike Club Inc.  
North Brisbane Mountain Bike Club  
Queensland Bike Trials Club  
The Riders Club Inc.  
Brisbane Bicycle Touring Association  
Sunshine Coast Bicycle Touring Club Inc.  
Busranger Mountain Bike Club

### **Bird watching**

Birds Queensland -Queensland Ornithological Society Inc.-  
Birdlife

Birdlife Southern Queensland  
BOCA  
BrisBOCA

### **Conservation**

Australian Rain Forest Conservation Society  
Brisbane Regional Environmental Council  
Brisbane Rainforest Action And Information Network  
Gecko – Gold Coast And Hinterland Environment Council  
National Parks Association Of Queensland  
Noosa Parks Association  
Queensland Conservation  
Rainforest Rescue  
Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland  
Save Our Waterways - Now Inc.  
Sunshine Coast Environment Council  
Conondale Range Committee  
Springbrook Wildlife Appreciation Group  
Australian Wildlife Conservancy  
Wilderness Society  
Tamborine Land Care  
Protect The Bush Alliance  
Friend of Binna Burra

### **Horse Riding**

The Queensland Horse Council Inc.  
The Australian Trail Horse Riding Association (ATHRA)  
Gold Coast & Albert District Horse Trail Riding Club  
Rathdowney Trail Riding Social Club  
Beaudesert Shire Trail Horse Riders  
Logan River Redlands Horse Trail Riding Club Inc.  
Somerset Trail Riding Club  
Brisbane Valley Trail Riders Inc.  
South Burnett Trail Horse Riders Club Inc.  
Australian Horse Riding Centres  
Equestrian Queensland Inc..  
Bribie Island Rd Saddle Club Inc.  
Caboolture Dressage Group Inc.  
Cedar Grove and District Riding Club Inc.  
Cooloola Dressage Association  
Currumbin District Horse Club  
Hanoverian Horse Society of Australia Inc.  
Kingfisher Vaulters Inc.  
Lockyer Equestrian Group Inc.  
Logan Village Riding Club  
Nerang & District Equestrian Club  
Noosa Eumundi District Dressage Club Inc.  
Park Ridge Adult Riding Group Inc.  
Redlands & Southern Districts Equestrian Group  
Sunshine Coast Showjumping & Equestrian Club

Tamborine & District Riding Clubs Inc.  
Tamborine Equestrian Group Inc.

**Running**

Gold Coast Runners Club  
Intraining Running & Triathlon Club  
Moreton Bay Road Running Club  
Qeii Track Club  
Redlands Hash House Harriers  
South Pine Striders  
Southport Runners & Walkers Inc.  
Trail Running Association of Queensland Inc.  
River City Runners Brisbane

**Orienteering**

Orienteering Queensland  
Bullecourt Boulder bounders  
Enoggeroos Orienteering Club  
Multi Terrain Bike Orienteers  
Range Runners Orienteering Club  
Sunshine Orienteers Club Inc.  
Totally Tropical Orienteering Club  
Ugly Gully

**Other**

Queensland Outdoor Recreation Federation  
The Scout Association of Australia, Queensland Branch Inc.  
Girls Guide Queensland  
The Girls' Brigade Queensland Inc.  
The Boys' Brigade Queensland

## **AUTHORS**

### **SEBASTIAN ROSSI**

Sebastian Rossi is a PhD Candidate at the School of Environment, Griffith University, Gold Coast Campus. Email: [s.rossi@griffith.edu.au](mailto:s.rossi@griffith.edu.au)

### **CATHERINE PICKERING**

Dr. Catherine Pickering is an Associate Professor at the School of Environment, Griffith University, Gold Coast Campus. Email: [c.pickering@griffith.edu.au](mailto:c.pickering@griffith.edu.au)

### **JASON BYRNE**

Dr. Jason Byrne is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Environment and Urban and Environmental Planning, Griffith University, Gold Coast Campus. Email: [Jason.Byrne@griffith.edu.au](mailto:Jason.Byrne@griffith.edu.au)