



PO Box 5 ABN 46 101 092 637
Carina 4152
Phone 3420 4800
Fax 3420 4811
E-mail b4c@bulimbacreek.org.au

Winner 2005 National RiverPrize, 2005, 2004 & 2003 Healthy Waterways Community Group Award; 2004 Arbor Day Regional Award Winner; 2004 Australia Day Award; 2003 2nd in Landcare, Rivercare Award; 2001 Qld Landcare Award, Community Group

16th October 2006

G:\Whites Hill\Mountain Bikes\Mountain Bikes Lord Mayor Oct 06.DOC

Hon. Campbell Newman
Lord Mayor

Re: Brisbane's Nature Reserves and Recreation

Dear Lord Mayor,

I write in regard to the uncertainty facing our urban nature reserves and the on-going threat to them by high-impact recreation activities.

Mountain Biking and recently Orienteering are impacting on the conservation values and biodiversity of these reserves. The reserves have been protected under conservation zoning because of their high conservation values. This has been for the common community interest.

To provide any recreation use the conservation values and other community uses should not be compromised. This is not achieving balance.

With recreation you may not be able to deliver a range of experiences to user groups, without destroying a small reserve. This could be achieved in large reserves, like Brisbane Forest Park, but the reality is we are dealing with small and valuable reserves in an urban landscape.

Urban Reserves are already pressured by fragmentation, edge effects, unnatural fires, weeds, etc. No reserve should be dominated by one or two "user" groups and pseudo management by individual user groups can infer this.

Mountain Bikes are one of many groups who wish to enjoy a bushland experience and active sport at the same time. However, their impacts are often intolerable in conservation areas and certain settings.

To allow managed high-impact recreation, like mountain biking, in the small urban reserves is a real threat to their sustainability. If this sport grows inside a reserve, to the desire of the Mountain Biking Association, the exponential increase will exacerbate any existing problems of abuse and degradation being experienced now. Better the devil you know.

This is the danger to our nature reserves.

We believe the Mt Cootha trial has largely marginalised the local environment groups and their opinions and concerns. Council may believe that mountain bikers are the majority in any numbers game. This is not the case. The community, when properly informed, will support conservation over recreation in our nature reserves. Whites Hill proved this in its management plan public consultations.

We would like to propose the following to achieve the best outcome for the common community interest regarding recreation and conservation in Brisbane. . .

1. Council supports the development of two of the three major resolutions (Dec. 2005) put forward by the Biodiversity Advisory Committee (BAC) – “Neighbour and Community Consultation” and “Recreation”. Biodiversity Advisory Committee – natural area planning and management resolutions December 2005. Although a Mt Coot-tha Forest Mountain Bike Advisory Committee” was instituted in 2004 with two community members with biodiversity expertise and interests, little or no account of their concerns has been adopted by the Committee, which is totally focussed on mountain biking interests.
2. That the “Position Paper on Mountain Biking in Urban Areas” (Biodiversity Advisory Committee, February 6, 2004) be used as the basis of any future decision-making by Council on this issue.
3. That Council look to developing a facility for Mountain Biking at a less critical or a degraded site with enough area to spread the impacts (eg Mt Crosby). Are Mountain Bikers concerned with biodiversity or natural values? This activity could be carried out equally as well in areas with minimal natural values.
4. Develop an Impact Recreation Local Law. To enable natural area staff to deal with these activities. Enforceable by parks staff and not just local laws staff.
5. Solving younger rider (BMX) needs as a separate entity. Skateboard rinks considered in areas of need and “in sight”, with access for police and ambulance.

We trust you will continue to look to the common community interest in retaining the value and future of our urban reserves network in Brisbane.

Kind regards,



Wayne Cameron

CC: Cr, Cr Geraldine Knapp, Mr Colin Chua, Cr Margaret De Witt