

# Recreation Management Plan

## Lakes Moogerah/Maroon/Wyaralong

March 2014

It's your water! Have your say...



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## Overview

*Healthy communities. Prosperous region.* This is Seqwater's vision and is intrinsic to our operations. Seqwater is responsible for ensuring a safe, secure and reliable water supply for almost three million people across South East Queensland. We are unique in South East Queensland in that our catchments are more open from both a recreational and broader land use perspective. In developing the recreation management plans for our water storages we need to consider, foremost, that this water is the source for all our drinking water.

Seqwater recognises the importance of recreation to the community and encourages the responsible enjoyment of our natural areas. In June 2013, Seqwater began the most extensive review of recreational activities and facilities at South East Queensland dams and catchments ever undertaken.

*Our Objective: Manage access to recreation opportunities while protecting natural resources and water quality.*

The challenge that faces Seqwater is how to manage our core role of providing drinking water to a growing population, while satisfying growing community demands and expectations for access to lakes and their catchments. Achieving our objective requires a risk based approach to the management of recreation, and the cooperation and support from the community.

Our promise to the community at the outset of the Recreation Review was to listen and learn about the recreational opportunities in and around the lakes, and within our constraints, deliver a management plan based on this feedback.

The response by the community and stakeholders to the Review has been outstanding. Special thanks are extended to the many people who provided input and participated in the surveys and workshops that helped us shape the new plans.



## The Value of Our Natural Areas

Seqwater currently provide more than 50 per cent of the region's green space (excluding areas of conservation), with our recreation assets attracting around two million visitors each year.

### **Natural Value**

Seqwater owns or manages approximately 60,000 hectares of land across South East Queensland. These assets not only supply water to a growing region, but also encompass some of the most scenic and picturesque sites in the region.

The natural areas around our lakes are home to an abundance of native wildlife, including providing important habitat for koalas that are listed as a vulnerable species.

### **Cultural Value**

Seqwater catchments encompass landscapes and places of great importance to Aboriginal communities in South East Queensland. Seqwater is committed to managing those places sensitively and in partnership with those communities.

### **Social Value**

Seqwater sites provide a range of social benefits, including recreation, tourism, education and social interaction between groups, families and others. They also support community wellbeing and provide opportunities for improving general health through outdoor recreation.

### **Economic Value**

Seqwater sites are being increasingly recognised for their potential to encourage economic activity in regional areas. Expenditure by people visiting Seqwater lakes contributes significantly to local economic activity and generates local employment.

Seqwater commissioned external advice on the *Economic Value of Recreation Undertaken on Seqwater's Land*. A travel cost study supported by an independent survey of dam visitors was undertaken in June 2013 to understand the value visitors place on recreation. In summary the study found:

- Queensland households place a significant value on visits to Seqwater lakes. On average, an adult visitor to a Seqwater lake values the experience at around \$60 per trip. This translates to a total intrinsic value of recreation of over **\$150 million per annum**.
- A high proportion of people stop at regional towns on the way to and from Seqwater sites providing significant benefits to local businesses.
- Almost 80% of respondents said they visited as part of a group
- 40% of respondents who visited Seqwater sites are in the 55+ age bracket

- The top 3 main reasons for visiting an Seqwater site were
  - Relaxing with families and friends
  - Enjoying the natural environment
  - Picnicking

Both the feedback from the community, and the results of the independent review, has highlighted that visiting our lakes and recreation areas is a highly valued experience. The majority of people that come want to enjoy the environment and natural areas. This aligns well with our objective regarding recreation management – *To manage access to recreation opportunities while protecting natural resources and water quality.*

Recreation also provides an opportunity to educate people regarding the importance of maintaining healthy catchments to protect our source water.

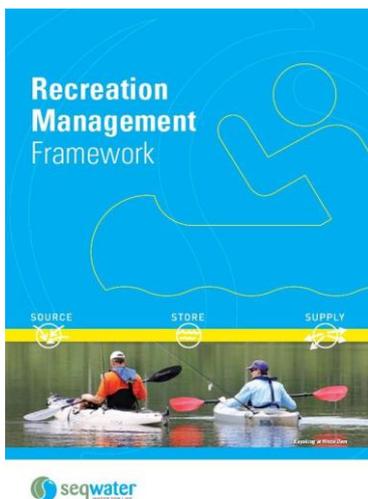
## Scope

This recreation management plan encompasses all land based and water based recreation undertaken on Seqwater owned or controlled sites at Lakes Moogerah, Maroon and Wyaralong, unless specifically addressed through legislation or other access arrangements including permits, licences or leases.

## Management Approach

Seqwater's Recreation Management Framework recognises recreation in natural areas as a legitimate use, however not all activities can be provided at every site, nor is it desirable to do so. The purpose of the Recreation Management Framework is to inform policy and guide decision making regarding recreational use of Seqwater sites.

The Recreation Management Framework has seven key principles:



- Minimise risks to water quality
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Diversity in the range of recreation activities, locations and settings
- Ensure all use is consistent with Seqwater's land management practices
- Facilitate sustainable recreation
- Engage with external regulating agencies
- Meet financial management outcomes

A key management principle in the Framework is *Diversity*. This principle recognises the importance of ensuring that there is a range of recreational experiences catered for so that recreation spaces meet the needs of the wider community. The fact that Lakes Maroon, Moogerah and Wyaralong are all closely located to one another provides an ideal opportunity to embrace and enhance the diversity of recreational settings and experiences in the region thereby maximizing the benefits to both the users and the local community.

Lakes Maroon and Moogerah are popular destinations for motorised watercraft including water skiing and jet skiing. Lake Wyaralong, on the other hand, caters for the more passive recreation activities such as rowing, paddling and sailing, as well as having an extensive trail network for walkers, mountain bikers and horse riders. This means that this cluster offers quite a diverse range of experiences for recreators both on and off the water, catering for both the more passive pursuits right through to the more high adrenaline activities.

The community feedback through the Recreation Review has supported that the diversity of activities permitted at these lakes should be maintained. Seqwater has, however, acknowledged that some changes need be made to the access and facilities at these lakes in line with the feedback received.

Seqwater recognises there are a range of other agencies, community groups and individuals who have an interest in the management and use of Lakes Maroon, Moogerah and Wyaralong. Seqwater will continue to work collaboratively with these groups to achieve sustainable recreational use and deliver on the changes to access and facilities highlighted through the consultation process for the Recreation Review.

Addressing any emerging issues for recreation and the consideration of new management arrangements, Seqwater will continue to include appropriate consultation with the community and relevant stakeholders.

## Funding

Seqwater's primary focus is to *"deliver safe, secure, resilient and reliable water supplies at least cost to its customers"*. While we recognise that recreation is an important element of the services we provide to the community, the provision of extensive recreation facilities and services is not something we are explicitly funded for. Seqwater's *Statement of Obligations* requires us, amongst other things, to *"review opportunities for recreation including strategies to recover costs from users and/or beneficiaries where appropriate"*. This will be an ongoing consideration in regard to the management and delivery of recreational facilities.

### Funding for Recreation Review Outcomes

The timing of the implementation of the changes highlighted in the recreation review will largely be dependent on when funding can be secured. Seqwater is currently working in partnership with Scenic Rim Regional Council to secure funding and develop an implementation plan for the delivery of many of the recreation review outcomes.

Regular updates on the progress of these initiatives will be forwarded to everyone that registered interest for these lakes online, key stakeholders, as well as updates on our website.

## Commercial Undertakings

Seqwater recognises that the use of its sites for commercial undertakings contributes to the economic activity in regional areas.

While our primary objective in the management of recreation is to manage access to recreation opportunities for the **public**, we recognise that commercial operators can play a role in supporting visitor needs and increasing the public's enjoyment and appreciation of our natural areas.

Seqwater has developed a *Commercial Activities Policy* which outlines the process and requirements for any commercial use of sites. Where sites are used either temporarily or more permanently for commercial purposes, a commercial fee will be applied.

Further information can be found on the Seqwater website at [www.seqwater.com.au](http://www.seqwater.com.au)

# Recreation Management

## Conditions of Access and Use

The *Seqwater Rules* outline the conditions of access and use by all visitors to Seqwater sites. These are referenced on the on-site signage. A full copy of the rules can be found on the website [www.seqwater.com.au](http://www.seqwater.com.au).

The primary purpose of the *Seqwater Rules* is to ensure the safety of visitors and to protect the environment and infrastructure provided so that the areas are safe for all to enjoy. All visitors are asked to comply with these rules.

Visitors should also remember that the lakes and catchments are operational assets and their use for recreational purposes cannot impact their primary purpose. The operational requirements of Seqwater's business **will always** override any recreational use.

## Public Notices

Seqwater endeavours to ensure that visitors are well informed about any issues at sites that may impact the visitor's experience. A number of methods are used to keep everyone informed including:

- Seqwater Website
- Facebook
- Direct stakeholder email notifications
- On Site signage

Seqwater recommends that all visitors check the Seqwater website or facebook page before visiting any sites.

## Enforcement

Seqwater actively enforces the use and activities on its sites. Any such enforcement activities are primarily aimed at visitor education and voluntary compliance to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all users.

Seqwater also partners with key enforcement agencies such as Queensland Police and Maritime Safety Queensland and coordinates the management and enforcement activities across all sites.

Feedback through the Recreation Review has highlighted how important appropriate enforcement is to visitors. As a result Seqwater will be reviewing its resourcing, its enforcement powers and the partnering opportunities that may exist to improve enforcement across all of its sites.

## Recreation Infrastructure

Visitors expect a wide range of settings, experiences and facilities reflecting wide-ranging outdoor interests and cultural diversity.

Any new facilities and amenities should be in harmony with existing settings and should not impact water quality or the environmental values of the area. They need to respect the cultural values, be functional and address visitor needs. Where practical Seqwater will utilise recyclable and/or renewable materials and adhere to energy and water efficiency guidelines.

Seqwater will endeavour to provide adequate, well maintained recreational infrastructure within its budgetary constraints.

## Education

There are a variety of opportunities to encourage the uptake of best practices by recreational users and for them to be active stewards for Seqwater lakes and catchments. Seqwater will make available and promote ways for the community and recreational users to contribute to the ongoing protection of our natural areas and drinking water catchments, and thereby ensure safe and sustainable recreation.

All efforts will be made to ensure that visitors are better informed of the opportunities at each Seqwater recreation site, and that the information provided enhances visitor experiences, understanding and appreciation.

## Safety

Seqwater's dams and lakes are part of natural systems and have naturally occurring characteristics that visitors need to be mindful of when recreating. These characteristics change regularly and include changing bacteria levels and hazards above and below water. This is a very normal and an expected occurrence in any natural system. Visitors are encouraged to comply with all on site signage, check the website for updates/changes to conditions, and take care when recreating.

# Summary of Feedback and Outcomes

## Consultation Feedback

The following provides a summary of all the issues raised throughout the consultation process identifying the common themes across all the data collected throughout the consultation period.

### Lake Maroon

Key findings:

- There is general satisfaction with the picnic and playground facilities.
- Majority disagree with the implementation of a boating permit scheme.
- There is satisfaction with fishing at the lake.
- There is overall satisfaction with access to the lake, however there was some commentary around the need for another boat ramp.
- There is a requirement for patrols and policing of behaviour.
- Changing opening hours to reflect the daylight hours is supported.

Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
Swimming	Overall, respondents were divided over the establishment of a designated swimming area, although it was generally supported by the attendees at the community workshops.	No change
Picnicking	Over 50% were happy with the current picnic facilities, 20% were indifferent. Some comments around the need to upgrade the existing picnic facilities.	Seqwater will make some cosmetic improvements to picnic area.
Playgrounds	The majority of respondents were indifferent regarding the need to improve facilities.	Nil required
Motorised Watercraft	Almost 60% disagree with introducing a boating permit scheme. Commentary against focused on the costs already associated with boating. Those in favour of a boating permit scheme would like the funds to be spent on improvements.	Decision on a boating permit scheme will be made at the completion of the recreation review.
	Majority in support for more water patrols, in particular to monitor skiers behaviour on the	Seqwater will continue to work with other enforcement agencies regarding additional patrols.

Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
	lake. Some commentary around zoning the lake to separate motorised and non-motorised.	Separating the lake into multiple areas was not considered feasible. While solving some potential conflicts it would create access and enforcement issues. Visitors may find Wyaralong a suitable alternative for the more passive recreational pursuits.
Non-motorised Watercraft	There is support to improve access for non-motorised craft. Respondents would like to see another access point established, possibly on the southern side of the lake.	Seqwater is investigating a potential access point on the southern side of the lake.
Fishing	Majority of respondents believe fishing is working well.	Nil required
Dogs	Almost 60% of respondents believe dogs should be allowed on leash at Lake Maroon day use area.	Dogs on leashes will be permitted in the day use area, however they will not be permitted to enter the water.
Site Access	There is overall satisfaction with access to the site however some commented on the need for another boat ramp.	Seqwater is investigating a potential access point on the southern side of the lake.
Opening Hours	66% support changing the opening hours to match daylight hours.	Decisions on opening hours will be made at the completion of the recreation review in October 2014.
Environment	Response divided between indifferent and agreement to the existence of environmental areas.	Seqwater is committed to protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

Key findings:

- There is strong support for the establishment of a swimming area.
- There is general satisfaction with the current picnic facilities.
- Respondents divided over the introduction of a boating permit scheme.
- Support exists for an additional access point.
- Environmental and safety concerns exist, particularly in two arms of the lake.
- There is a requirement for patrols and policing of behaviour.
- Support to change the opening hours to reflect the daylight hours.

Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
Swimming	Strong support for a designated swimming area.	Seqwater are investigating potential locations. Consultation with the Caravan Park Operator is required before a location is finalised.
Picnicking	Over 65% are happy with the current picnic facilities. Some commentary that more facilities are required or the existing ones need repair.	Seqwater will make some cosmetic improvements to picnic area.
Playgrounds	44% believe the existing facilities are satisfactory, 44% are indifferent and 12% believe the facilities could be improved.	Nil required
Motorised Watercraft	47% disagree with a boating permit scheme, while 45% agree. Those against believe there is already too many costs for boating and that all users should pay. Those in favour of a boating permit scheme believe it will control overcrowding at the lakes and will enable the funds to be spent on improvements to facilities.	Decision on a boating permit scheme will be made at the completion of the recreation review.
	61% would like to see more water patrols. Commentary focused on the number of boats ignoring the rules, speeding and causing safety concerns.	Seqwater will continue to work with other enforcement agencies regarding additional patrols.
Non-motorised Watercraft	Some support for changes to access for non-motorised craft. Commentary focused on the conflict between motorised and non-motorised and the resulting safety issues.	Separating the lake into multiple areas was not considered feasible. While solving some potential conflicts it would create access and enforcement issues. Visitors may find Wyaralong a suitable alternative for the more passive recreational pursuits.

Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
Fishing	17% believe change is required, 44% are indifferent, and 39% don't believe change is required.	Nil required
Dogs	Almost 50% of respondents believe dogs should be permitted at Haigh Park. Those in favour note that dogs must be on leash, and owners need to pick up the mess.	Dogs on leashes will be permitted in Haigh Park, however they will not be permitted to enter the adjoining National Park.
Site Access	Some support for improved access. Commentary centred on the need for an additional boat ramp and the issues associated with accessing the boat ramp through a boom gate.	Seqwater will work with Scenic Rim Council regarding an additional access point and to improve the access through the caravan park.
	Over 64% believe an additional access point would be of benefit. Commentary again focused on the difficulties accessing the lake through the caravan park and boom gate.	
Opening Hours	74% believe the opening hours should be changed to match daylight hours.	Decisions on opening hours will be made at the completion of the recreation review in October 2014.
Environment	50% are indifferent, while 37% believe there are areas of environmental concern. Strong commentary around the birdlife in the dead wood area and the need to protect this area. Feedback also received on the noise impacts to surrounding residents.	Seqwater is committed to protecting environmentally sensitive areas.  A 6 knot speed limit will be implemented in two arms of the lake in recognition of the submerged hazards in these areas, as well as the birdlife.

## Key findings:

- There was support for a designated swimming area to be established.
- There was general satisfaction with the current picnic and playground facilities.
- Support exists for camping opportunities to be improved.
- The majority did not want motorised craft on the lake.
- There was strong support for the lake to remain restricted to non-motorised watercraft, with particular emphasis on rowing.
- While majority are happy with the current trails, there is some support for improvements to be made, particularly for horse trails.
- There is some support to improve site access, particularly in regards to an extra access point to the lake and car parking.
- There support to change the opening hours to match daylight hours.
- There is a need to consider leaseholders and management of illegal access to properties.

Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
Swimming	There is support for the introduction of a designated swimming area.	A suitable and safe location could not be identified.
Picnicking	57% believe the picnicking areas at Wyaralong are satisfactory, and 30% are indifferent. Suggestions for improvement included more shade over the tables and extra barbeques.	Seqwater will install extra shade shelters over the existing picnic tables.
Playgrounds	Little support for change. Majority of respondents are either satisfied or indifferent to playgrounds.	Nil required
Camping	Some support for camping opportunities to be improved. Feedback focused on the need to open the Western Trailhead (Lilybrook) up to all users, establish areas for caravans and RVs, and the limitations around the small camping area at the Eastern Trailhead.	Seqwater will improve the camping area at Wyaralong at the Western Trailhead. This will enable greater access to camping and improved facilities. Seqwater has already commenced an upgrade to the Lilybrook Homestead at the Western Trailhead. Once completed, an external operator will be sourced to manage camping at both the Eastern and Western trailheads. Remote camping at Ngumbi Camping Area will continue to operate catering for the walk, paddle or ride in users. The feedback regarding the demand for sites that cater for caravans, trailers and RVs will be passed onto Council for their planning.
Motorised	46% agree with a boating permit	Decision on a boating permit scheme will

Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
Watercraft	<p>scheme, while 39% disagree. Some commented that it should be a user pays system with funds to be spent on improvements. While others felt that there were too many costs already.</p>	<p>be made at the completion of the recreation review.</p>
	<p>Limited support for opening up Wyaralong to motorised watercraft. Those who disagreed cited reasons of diversity among the lakes in the area, maintaining the existing ambience and for safety reasons. Those in support felt it would alleviate overcrowding on the other lakes and could be implemented with a restricted speed.</p>	<p>No change</p> <p>Lakes Moogerah and Maroon will continue to permit motorised watercraft and would be a suitable alternative for visitors.</p>
Non-motorised Watercraft	<p>Some support for access improvements for non-motorised watercraft improved. The majority of comments focused on establishing new launch points or access for rowing events.</p>	<p>A suitable location for an additional launch point for paddle craft could not be identified.</p> <p>Seqwater will continue to work with Rowing Queensland, schools and the local rowing clubs regarding lake access for rowing events and training.</p>
Fishing	<p>64% of respondents were indifferent, 19% believe change is required and 17% do not think change is required.</p>	<p>Nil required</p>
Trails	<p>52% of survey respondents are indifferent to trails, while 34% want change. Commentary centred around additional horse trails and facilities, and improved maintenance of trails.</p>	<p>Seqwater is investigating the possibility of opening new trails, in conjunction with the Beaudesert Shire Trail Horse Riding Club.</p>
Dogs	<p>54% believe dogs on leash should be permitted at Wyaralong, however there was a lot of commentary around the need for dogs to be controlled and the potential impacts to other users.</p>	<p>The impact to the wildlife and the potential conflicts with other park users remains a concern for Seqwater, particularly given the diversity of recreational uses and the extensive trail network. There is a strong possibility that appropriate enforcement could become resource intensive and costly. As such dogs will not be permitted at Wyaralong.</p> <p>Dogs on leashes, will however, be permitted in the day use areas at Moogerah and Maroon.</p>
Site Access	<p>There is divided feedback regarding the need to change</p>	<p>Seqwater will establish additional car parking closer to the entrance of the mountain biking trails (including additional</p>

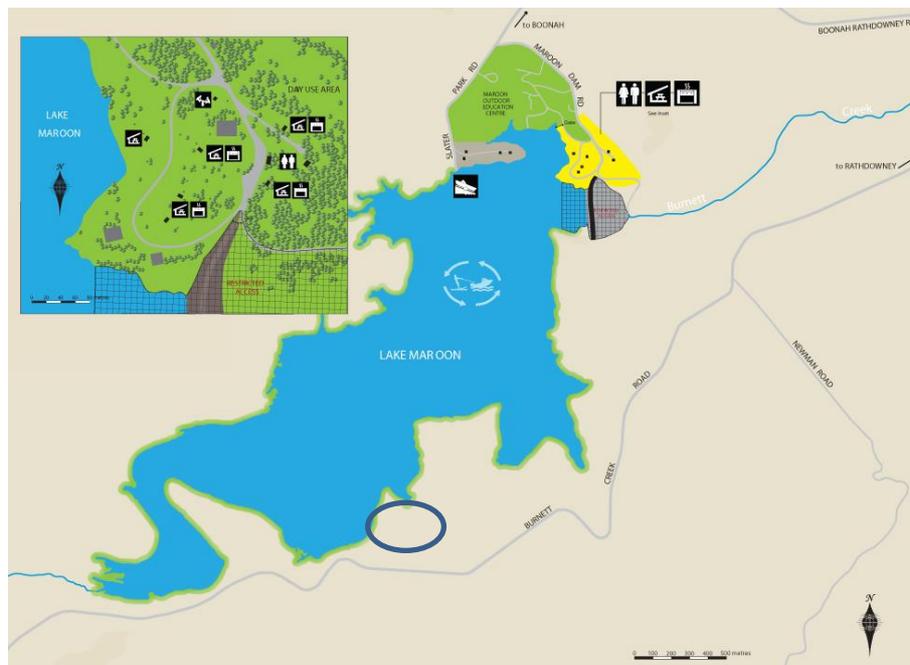
Activity	Issue Summary	Seqwater Response
	<p>access.</p> <p>Those who believe access can be improved would like additional access points for paddle craft, access to the lake for rowing events, and improved car parking.</p> <p>Trespass was also raised as a concern for surrounding residents.</p>	<p>toilet facilities). This will make access to the trails safer and easier.</p> <p>A suitable location for an additional launch point for paddle craft could not be identified.</p> <p>Seqwater will continue to work with enforcement agencies regarding additional patrols to address trespass and other behaviour issues.</p>
Opening Hours	82% believe the opening hours should be changed to match daylight hours.	Decisions on opening hours will be made at the completion of the recreation review in October 2014.
Environment	<p>Almost 67% were indifferent, while 24% believe there are areas of environmental significance.</p> <p>Most of the feedback related to the general abundance of flora and fauna in the area and sensitivity of the shoreline.</p>	Seqwater is committed to protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

## Recreation Review Outcomes

Based on the feedback received, priorities for changes to recreational activities and access have been identified at each lake as follows:

### Lake Maroon

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Establish a new access point for watercraft</b></p> <p><i>Planning and scoping of the works will be progressed in conjunction with Scenic Rim Regional Council. The timing of the works will be dependent on securing funding.</i></p>	<p>A potential site off Burnett Road has been identified and is being investigated.</p>



Outcome	Action
<p><b>Upgrade picnic facilities</b></p> <p><i>Planning and scoping of works will be progressed as a priority.</i></p>	<p>Implement cosmetic improvements to the established picnic facilities at the day use area.</p>

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Access for Dogs on leashes</b></p> <p><i>It is anticipated that this will be implemented by <b>May 2014</b>.</i></p>	<p>Update signage and undertake stakeholder notifications of changes</p>

## Lake Moogerah

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Establish designated swimming area</b></p> <p><i>Site is yet to be identified. Further consultation needs to be undertaken prior to implementation.</i></p>	<p>Potential site is currently being investigated.</p>

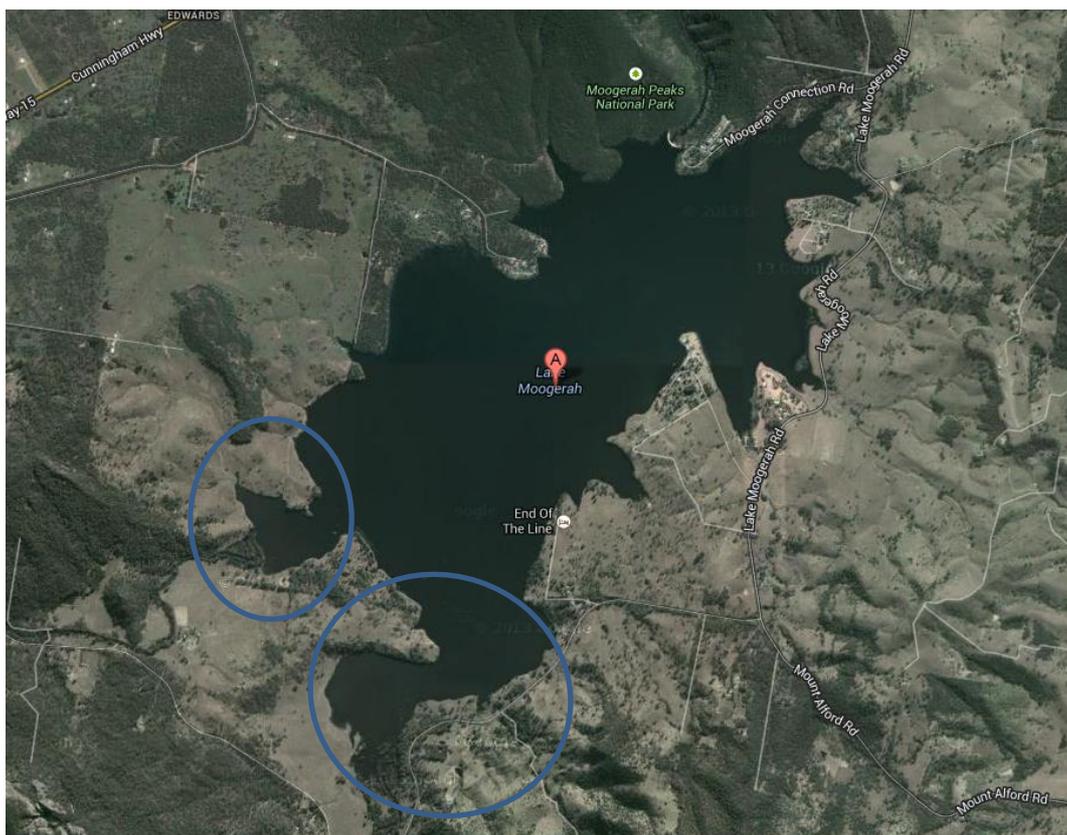
Outcome	Action
<p><b>Upgrade picnic facilities</b></p> <p><i>Planning and scoping of works will be progressed as a priority.</i></p>	<p>Implement cosmetic improvements to the established picnic facilities at the day use area.</p>

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Improve existing access for watercraft</b></p> <p><i>Options will be investigated in conjunction with Scenic Rim Regional Council.</i></p>	<p>Options to be investigated.</p>

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Establish an additional launch point</b></p> <p><i>Further consultation needs to be undertaken prior to implementation. Planning will be done in conjunction with Scenic Rim Regional Council.</i></p>	<p>Potential site for an additional boat ramp has been identified off Fritz Rd/Greville Road</p>



Outcome	Action
<p><b>Establish “restricted” zones</b></p> <p><i>This is being progressed as a priority with Maritime Safety Queensland.</i></p>	<p>Gazette a 6 knot speed limit in two arms of the lakes through Maritime Safety Queensland.</p> <p>Install buoys and update signage.</p>



Outcome	Action
<p><b>Access for Dogs on leashes</b></p> <p><i>It is anticipated that this will be implemented by <b>May 2014</b>.</i></p>	<p>Update signage and undertake stakeholder notifications of changes</p>

Lake Wyaralong

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Upgrade picnic facilities</b></p> <p><i>This improvement will be completed by <b>30 June 2014</b>.</i></p>	<p>New shade shelters to be installed at Eastern Trailhead.</p>

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Establish camping at Western Trailhead</b></p> <p><i>The upgrade to Lilybrook Homestead has already commenced and is anticipated to be completed by <b>30 June 2014</b>. The changes to camping will become effective during 2014/15.</i></p>	<p>Upgrade Lilybrook Homestead.</p> <p>Appoint a caretaker/operator to run the camping at Lilybrook Homestead and Meebun (Eastern Trailhead) sites.</p>

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Establish additional horse trails</b></p> <p><i>Trails are yet to be identified. Further consultation needs to be undertaken prior to implementation.</i></p>	<p>Potential trails are being investigated in conjunction with the Beaudesert Shire Horse Trail Riding Club.</p>

Outcome	Action
<p><b>Improve access to trails at Eastern Trailhead</b></p> <p><i>The planning and scoping of the works will be progressed as a priority. The timing of works will be dependent on funding.</i></p>	<p>Establish a new car park, including additional toilet facilities</p> <p>Update on site signage</p>

Regular updates on the progress of these initiatives will be forwarded to everyone that registered interest for these lakes online, key stakeholders, as well as updates on our website.

