

LOOK WEST:

# B.C.'s Outdoor Recreation Strategy



**StrongerBC**  
*for everyone*

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# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Outdoor recreation in B.C. is built from the ground up. It is shaped by local knowledge, Indigenous leaders, volunteers, and community organizations with long-standing relationships to the places where outdoor recreation happens. These spaces support everyday activities for residents and are a long-standing attraction for visitors to our beautiful province.



**Honourable Tamara Davidson**  
*Minister of Environment and Parks*

Building on this foundation by supporting what already exists, this strategy aims at creating conditions for local communities and outdoor recreation leaders to succeed, and promoting responsible, sustainable and inclusive experiences. B.C. is the greatest place to get outdoors. This strategy supports the protections and the outdoor recreation experiences behind that. It recognizes outdoor recreation as a sector in its own right and sets out a coordinated provincial approach to guide future decisions. The strategy focuses on foundational actions that will strengthen the sector, and reflects the role of government in bringing partners together to address shared challenges and opportunities.

This strategy is grounded in a shared vision that time spent outdoors is a valued and celebrated part of everyday life in B.C. It affirms the vital role outdoor recreation plays in contributing to tourism and local economies, and to health and wellbeing.

The value of outdoor recreation in B.C. is clear. To fully realize the opportunities it presents, we must also acknowledge the pressures of increased use, rising costs, climate-related impacts, and the need for prudent fiscal management.

B.C.'s Outdoor Recreation Strategy provides a coordinated approach to meeting these challenges and ensuring long-term sustainability. It is a coordinated approach for governments, the sector and partners to make the most of the incredible opportunities offered by our exceptional landscapes and committed communities.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, expertise and ideas in shaping this strategy. Together, we are building a stronger future for outdoor recreation in British Columbia.

# SHARED VISION

***British Columbia is a place where outdoor recreation is a way of life***—connecting people to nature, supporting health and wellbeing, and helping communities thrive.

Our shared vision is a future where outdoor recreation is central to provincial identity, widely valued, accessible and a meaningful contributor to the well-being and vitality of communities across the province.

Everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy outdoor recreation. Time spent outside supports physical and mental health, brings people together and strengthens a sense of belonging. By supporting a diverse range of high-quality recreation opportunities and reducing barriers to participation, we can ensure that everyone across the province can access the experiences that enrich their lives.

Thriving communities are places where people come and stay. They attract and retain residents and bring visitors from around the world. Outdoor recreation is uniquely available to every rural community in B.C. and provides an essential opportunity for those transitioning from traditional resource sectors.

Outdoor recreation also nurtures a shared ethic of stewardship. This vision recognizes and honours the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Peoples hold with the lands and waters where recreation takes place, alongside the stewardship roles played by local communities, recreation organizations, and volunteers across the province. By working together to care for these places, partners help ensure outdoor spaces remain healthy, resilient, and welcoming for current and future generations.

In this vision, outdoor recreation in British Columbia is supported by a sustainable and collaborative system that reflects the province's cultures, communities, and shared responsibilities. People can enjoy meaningful recreation experiences close to home and across the province. With resilient infrastructure, healthy ecosystems, and partners working together to manage growing demand responsibly, outdoor recreation remains a defining part of life in B.C.—now and for generations to come.



# GROWING B.C.'S ECONOMY THROUGH OUTDOOR RECREATION

B.C.'s diverse landscapes offer some of the widest ranges of outdoor recreation experiences in the world. These places also support a growing recreation economy that includes more than 1,400 outdoor recreation and adventure tourism businesses, along with a developing recreation technology and manufacturing sector that benefits from real-world testing grounds and an active local market.

Outdoor recreation is a significant contributor to B.C.'s economy, yet it remains underdeveloped as a coordinated sector. In 2023, outdoor recreation participation directly contributed \$4.8 billion to the provincial economy, representing 1.5% of real GDP. It supports jobs, local businesses, and community development, especially in rural regions that are diversifying beyond traditional resource industries.

Demand for outdoor recreation is steadily increasing both within B.C. and around the world. This growth is fueled by a rising population, shifting lifestyle preferences, greater awareness of the health benefits of time spent outdoors and B.C.'s strong reputation as a year-round recreation destination.

B.C. is in a unique position. Most of the province's land base is publicly owned, including large areas of Crown land that are accessible for recreation, and many rural communities surrounded by parks and exceptional natural settings. Outdoor recreation is one of the few sectors where economic activity is naturally distributed across the province, creating opportunities in communities with fewer pathways for growth.

Investments in recreation infrastructure and services attract visitors and create demand for businesses that serve both residents and tourists. With the right support, outdoor recreation can help communities diversify, attract new residents and build a more stable and resilient future.

# COORDINATED LEADERSHIP

Outdoor recreation in B.C. is supported by a diverse network of people and organizations. Provincial programs support this work, but many of the broader decisions that shape outdoor recreation, including land-use planning, natural resource management, climate adaptation, access, tourism, public health, collaboration and agreements with First Nations and economic development are made across multiple ministries.

Each plays an important role, but without coordination, the benefits and opportunities of outdoor recreation are not realized. This strategy strengthens provincial leadership by creating clearer alignment and improving how government works with the sector. It calls for a stronger provincial role that elevates outdoor recreation as a strategic priority.

It establishes a framework for consistent leadership, integration into policy and investment decisions, and better alignment across government and with Indigenous partners. The intent is to provide visibility, advocacy and system-level support for the organizations and communities already doing the work.

British Columbia's public lands have long supported the province's economy through forestry, mining, energy, tourism and other resource-based industries. These lands also play a vital role in supporting outdoor recreation, which is an increasingly important contributor to B.C.'s diversifying economy and to the health and well-being of communities across the province.

Together, the goals in this strategy guide a coordinated provincial approach that aligns investment, supports regional development and secures the long-term benefits of outdoor recreation for people and the places they rely on.





# OUTDOOR RECREATION: DEFINITION AND SCOPE

Outdoor recreation refers to activities undertaken in natural environments for enjoyment, relaxation, health, learning and cultural or social connection. While the range of activities is diverse, outdoor recreation is characterized by an intentional relationship with land, water and natural spaces.

Activities within the scope of this strategy include:

- Leisure activities in natural settings
- Physical activity or passive enjoyment
- Experiences that centre cultural and social connections with land and water
- Non-motorized and motorized activities (e.g., ATV riding, e-biking)
- Activities in parks, trails and natural areas
- Organized or competitive events (e.g., trail races, mountain bike events)
- Nature interpretation, immersion and learning
- Commercial outdoor recreation and tourism activities, including guided trips
- Hunting, fishing and foraging

Activities outside the scope of this strategy include sports that take place on confined courses or pitches constructed specifically for those sports, as well as concerts, festivals and fairs.



# A CRITICAL MOMENT FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

British Columbia's outdoor recreation system is entering a period of significant change. As the province's economy continues to diversify, outdoor recreation is becoming an increasingly important contributor to community well being and regional development, helping draw people to B.C. as a place to live, work and visit.

This shift presents an opportunity to strengthen how the Province manages recreation across B.C. Core programs such as BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC come from public taxation through operational budgets, special accounts like the Park Enhancement Fund and fees collected and retained by service operators.

Growing visitation, climate-driven impacts, and rising costs across staffing, maintenance and infrastructure have increased operational demands for both government and contracted service delivery partners.

In this context, a sector-based approach presents an avenue to align existing programming across municipal, provincial, federal, non-profit and for-profit actors in the sector to reliably deliver the level of service British Columbians expect.

Across B.C., a dedicated community of recreation organizations, mostly volunteer run, has stepped in to fill this gap. Increasingly, these groups are navigating an operating environment that has become far more complex than their organizations were ever intended to manage.

At the same time, major economic shifts in resource industries closely tied to recreation are underway. Access for outdoor recreation has co-evolved with the forest industry, particularly through the extensive resource road network. As forest companies reduce operations and road maintenance at an accelerating pace, communities risk losing valuable recreation access and the economic benefits that flow from it.

This strategy responds to these shifts by outlining a more coordinated and forward-looking approach. Strengthening the frameworks that guide outdoor recreation in British Columbia is a consistent theme throughout. A sustainable system will require shared direction and responsibility across ministries and sectors, modernized approaches to collaboration, and strengthened capacity for community and volunteer organizations.

Addressing pressures on the current system requires broadening the conversation to include all partners, sectors and agencies that benefit from a strong outdoor recreation system.

To support this shift, collaboration is central to our first priority—Inspiring Action—because only by bringing these voices together can we build the shared commitment needed to sustain outdoor recreation for the long term.

# STRATEGY AT A GLANCE



## INSPIRE ACTION

**Grow awareness of the value of outdoor recreation.** Show how outdoor recreation benefits health, supports communities, culture and local economies—and make it easier for people and businesses to get involved.



## INVEST IN GROWTH

**Strengthen the foundations of a thriving recreation economy.** Invest in the conditions that enable responsible growth and support opportunities for businesses, innovators and Indigenous partners to participate in the recreation sector.



## DELIVER EXPERIENCES

**Deliver and sustain the experiences that make B.C. exceptional.** Invest in trails, sites, infrastructure and access so residents of all abilities are supported and inspired to get outside, and visitors are drawn to B.C.



## SUPPORT PEOPLE

**Support the people who make it happen.** Empower clubs, volunteers, recreation organizations and community leaders who bring outdoor experiences to life. Strengthen partnerships with Indigenous leadership.



## PROTECT WHAT WE LOVE

**Outdoor recreation begins with stewardship.** Respectfully care for and protect the natural environments that make B.C. unique, recognizing that these landscapes are more than recreation spaces.



Northern BC Tourism/Johnie Gall



# INSPIRE ACTION

Alice Lake Park/Johnnie Gall

## Grow awareness of the value of outdoor recreation

*Show how outdoor recreation benefits health, supports communities, culture and local economies—and make it easier for people and businesses to get involved.*

### STRATEGIC GOALS

#### COLLABORATION

Build a coordinated, trusted and inclusive outdoor recreation system through strong partnerships.

#### RESEARCH

Develop and deliver data-driven research paired with a compelling narrative that demonstrates the economic value of outdoor recreation to strengthen the case for increased investment and funding in the sector.

#### STORYTELLING

Use communication and storytelling to motivate participation, advocacy and support for the outdoor recreation sector; including its contributions to health, community resilience and quality of life.

*Top of the World Plateau*

## TARGET 1

***An empowered and effective coalition of stakeholders, First Nations partners and industry aligned to support outdoor recreation.***

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Establish a Provincial Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee.
- Explore the establishment of a coordinating Office of Outdoor Recreation.
- Continue to expand and support the B.C. Outdoor Sector Coalition.
- Compliment the coalition by supporting the development of a youth council to include youth perspectives and leadership into provincial planning.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Cross-Ministry Alignment: Guided by B.C.'s Look West strategy.

A recently formed cross-ministry Outdoor Recreation Committee bridging natural resource, economic and social ministries.

A newly established B.C. Outdoor Sector Coalition.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Outdoor recreation spans multiple agencies, but no single office coordinates these shared priorities. With responsibilities spread across multiple ministries and no unified governance structure, fragmentation affects recreation access, investment and prevents alignment with broader objectives and shared interests.



## TARGET 2

*A consistent framework to measure, track and report on the economic value of outdoor recreation.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Launch the B.C. Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account (B.C. ORSA) and publish results annually.
- Develop a framework for assessing health related economic benefits, including reduced healthcare costs and lower demand on health services, with attention to how these benefits are unevenly distributed across populations.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

BC Outdoor Recreation Economic Insights published November 2025.  
BC Parks' Visitor Use Surveys published every two years.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Economic data allows outdoor recreation to be evaluated alongside other sectors, supporting better decisions and investment across government. A B.C. ORSA will make it possible to understand the full value of recreation, including the broader benefits it generates for communities and the economy.

## TARGET 3

*A storytelling platform that showcases the value of outdoor recreation.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

Support the outdoor recreation sector in creating a community-powered multi-media hub to share and discover outdoor stories for use in promotion and advocacy.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

A storytelling platform strengthens advocacy, elevating the sector's profile and inspiring broader support. Communities and partners across B.C. are developing innovative approaches to outdoor recreation planning. A centralized platform can share examples, tools and lessons learned.



# REVELSTOKE'S THANKSGIVING BACK

Tourism Revelstoke's Thanksgiving Back campaign encourages visitors to support local nonprofits through volunteerism, fostering stronger connections with both the community and the natural environment.

Over the past four years, Thanksgiving Back has successfully attracted visitors to Revelstoke during a traditionally quieter season, resulting in increased tourism and positive community impact. Visitors are invited to volunteer with local nonprofits, providing volunteer labor for projects such as trail maintenance and invasive species weed pulls. In exchange for their time and effort, they receive a reimbursement on their accommodation expenses.

Through the program, visitors gain an authentic experience, connecting with locals and immersing themselves in the community. At the same time, important conservation and community projects receive much needed manpower to meet their objectives. The initiative also brings economic benefits to Revelstoke, with 96% of program costs remaining within the community.

For every dollar invested in by Tourism Revelstoke, an additional dollar is left in the community through visitor spending while in the destination.

The campaign provides an opportunity for visitors to experience the community in a meaningful way while contributing to its sustainability and well-being. Feedback from both residents and visitors has been overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing a deeper appreciation for the town and its natural surroundings. Visitors have also expressed sentiments around wanting to visit the community again in the future.

Thanksgiving Back is a win-win for all involved; visitors form lasting connections, nonprofits receive valuable assistance, and the local economy is bolstered during the off-season. By blending tourism with community engagement, the program strengthens ties between visitors, residents, and the environment, creating an impactful model for community-based tourism.

# INVEST IN GROWTH

**Strengthen the foundations of a thriving recreation economy.**

*Invest in the conditions that enable responsible growth and support opportunities for businesses, innovators and Indigenous partners to participate in the recreation sector.*

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### INNOVATION

Leverage the burgeoning outdoor gear and manufacturing industry to build on economic opportunities in rural B.C. communities.

### PERMITTING

Provide better certainty for businesses and recreation enthusiasts through improved and coordinated approaches to permitting and authorizations.

### COMMUNITIES

Drive increased outdoor recreation investment in rural and communities transitioning from resource-based economies.

## TARGET 4

*Grow outdoor gear and recreation-tech manufacturing in rural communities.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Partner with regional economic development organizations, post-secondary institutions and provincial ministries to leverage funding and support the growth of outdoor-recreation and gear-technology innovation.
- Support the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC and academic partners to evaluate the economic potential of the outdoor recreation sector including job creation, business development and workforce growth.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Across B.C., regional outdoor gear and recreation tech clusters are emerging with support from initiatives such as the Kootenay Outdoor Recreation Enterprise and Sea-to-Sky Outdoor Adventure Recreation Enterprise, representing dozens of growing outdoor recreation gear businesses in rural communities.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

This strengthens rural economies and provides access to applied training that leads directly to jobs for youth and emerging talent. Locations near outdoor landscapes enables real-world design and field testing, attracting entrepreneurs and supporting rural economic development.



## TARGET 5

*Indigenous-led opportunities in B.C.'s outdoor recreation economy.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

Advance Indigenous economic development in outdoor recreation through government-to-government collaboration with First Nations, in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport and Indigenous Tourism BC to build capacity, Indigenous-led business development and advance collaborative projects.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Numerous park operations contracts and partnership agreements across the province strengthened by Indigenous expertise and leadership.

Indigenous-led programming and interpretation in BC Parks.

Over 41 Collaborative Management Agreements.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Indigenous-led businesses in outdoor recreation allow communities to benefit from economic activity, lead to deeper collaborative relationships with government and support the growing demand for meaningful, cultural and land-based experiences.

*Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton*





Destination BC/Andrew Strain

## TARGET 6

***Improve and coordinate recreation permitting processes across multiple provincial agencies to increase business certainty and expand opportunities for users.***

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Undertake permitting transformation in BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC by addressing backlog, reducing timelines and making process improvements.
- Pilot an Adventure Tourism Hub for permitting to coordinate select commercial recreation authorizations across legislative and agency processes.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

In 2025, the Ministry of Environment and Parks conducted user research that identified 20 focus areas for BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC authorizations improvements, ranging from process and systems improvements to capacity and knowledge challenges.

A refreshed and digital application process is being piloted for trails and recreation facilities (Section 57's) on Crown Land.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Commercial recreation operators provide a valuable gateway to responsible recreation opportunities and more diverse participation amongst visitors and users. Commercial operators report multiyear wait times for permits and amendments, and industry surveys identify permitting delays as a major barrier to growth and service delivery.



# DELIVER EXPERIENCES

**Deliver and sustain outdoor recreation experiences that set B.C. apart.**

*Invest in trails, sites, infrastructure and access so residents of all abilities are supported and inspired to get outside, and visitors are drawn to B.C.*

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### SERVICES

Strengthen the provincial approach to outdoor recreation services so that they remain relevant, efficient and supportive of a growing sector that includes new operators and businesses.

### ACCESS

Sustain and manage recreation access to ensure it is planned for and supported as essential recreation infrastructure.

### SYSTEMS

Establish, maintain and provide centralized, high-quality digital information and reservation services that consistently inform decisions and planning while effectively meeting user needs.

### DESTINATIONS

Position British Columbia's trail system as a signature provincial asset that showcases the province's landscapes and cultures, attracts visitors and strengthens community wellbeing.

## TARGET 7

*A renewed, sustainable service model for BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Continue renewal efforts already underway by BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC to integrate service delivery and management frameworks across both branches.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

In 2023, BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC, the foundational agencies of outdoor recreation in B.C., were aligned under the same ministry.

In 2026, BC Parks introduced a more sustainable model for maintaining camping services and infrastructure.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

These sites support tourism, community recreation and broader economic activity across the province. Rising demand and climate-driven costs are straining services, making a sustainable model an essential foundation.

## TARGET 8

*A modernized framework for high-value recreation access and resource roads.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Advance a coordinated policy, planning and management approach that responds to shifts in forest and industrial recreation road management and is grounded in strong partnerships.
- Plan for and secure key lands that enable recreation opportunities such as trailheads, campgrounds and access routes to ensure long-term public access in priority areas.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Recreation access in B.C. depends heavily on resource roads, which provide the primary routes into much of the province's backcountry. These roads were built and maintained largely to support forestry and other resource industries, but they now serve a much broader public role, providing access to rural communities and high-value recreation sites across Crown land. As shifts in the forest sector accelerate and the industrial base that has historically funded road maintenance continues to shrink, new solutions need to be explored.

## TARGET 9

*A centralized outdoor recreation digital experience for visitors to BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

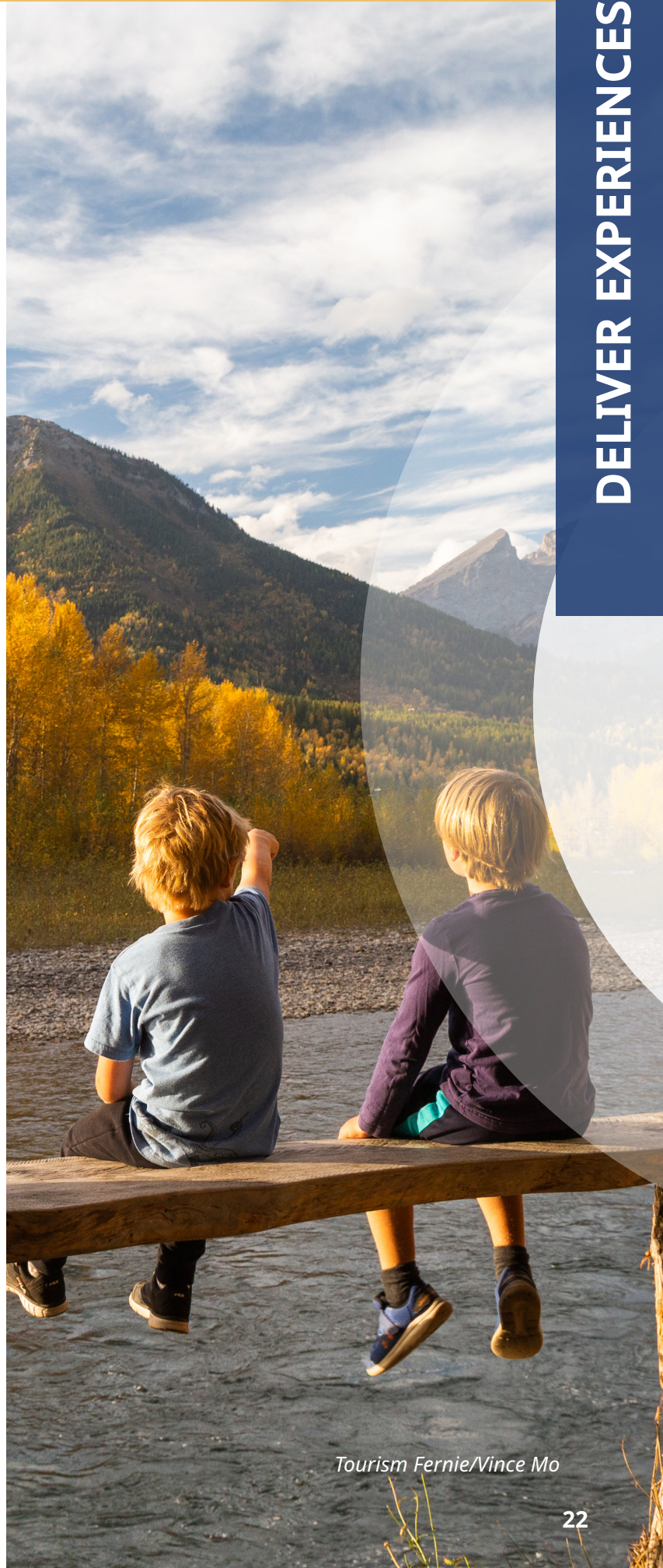
Integrate BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails BC information, inventory and reservations into a single, unified system that makes it easier for people to find, plan and book all types of outdoor experiences.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Recent updates to the BC Parks camping reservation system, ongoing development and improvements as well as a refreshed Recreation Sites and Trails BC website.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Friendlier, more centralized access that reduces booking stress, supports management of recreation sites and parks, and creates a seamless visitor experience from website to campground.



## TARGET 10

*An iconic trails program for B.C.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Explore the creation and implementation of an iconic trails program that identifies priority routes and exceptional trails to coordinate planning and investment for the trails with the greatest potential for community, cultural and economic impact.
- Position B.C. as a leader in accessible trail-based recreation by investing in accessible and adaptive trail experiences to reduce barriers to participation and diversify accessible recreation opportunities.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

B.C. is home to several major iconic trails, including the Sunshine Coast Trail, the West Coast and Juan de Fuca Marine trails, the Berg Lake Trail and rail-trail corridors.

BC Parks' Commitment to Inclusion sets out a vision for reducing barriers to outdoor recreation and creating a parks system that is welcoming and meaningfully accessible to all.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Iconic trail programs are expanding globally as governments recognize their tourism and regional development value. B.C.'s landscapes and community momentum create strong potential for long-distance routes and culturally significant journeys that can become signature experiences for residents and visitors.



*Northern BC Tourism/Angela Percival*



# THE UNITED RIDERS OF CUMBERLAND (UROC)

Founded in 2003 and incorporated as a non-profit in 2008, UROC transitioned from a local mountain bike club into a comprehensive trail stewardship organization.

In 2015, UROC entered into a formal Access Agreement with the Village of Cumberland, Mosaic Forest Management and Manulife Investment Management. This agreement secured non-motorized public access to over 6,500 acres of mixed-use forest, encompassing more than 200 kilometers of trails.

In addition to private land agreements, UROC manages recreation access across the Cumberland Community Forest.

UROC fulfills a critical stewardship role, maintaining access to trails and protecting the recreational landscape on private lands that would otherwise be managed primarily for timber production and curbing the creation of unauthorized trail construction.

The trail network's immediate proximity to the village allows residents and visitors to access trails within minutes, enhancing the community's appeal as a recreational destination. In addition to building trails, UROC offers programs such as school-based initiatives, women's rides, and group events.

Thanks to UROC's stewardship and long-term stability provided by formal access agreements, Cumberland and the Comox Valley is now home to bike and wheel manufacturers and successful bike stores. The thriving trail culture has supported the growth of over 50 local businesses, including cafes, breweries, accommodations, establishing the location as a centre for recreation-driven entrepreneurship.

In addition, UROC hosts multiple events annually, including mountain bike races and trail running competitions, attracting up to 5,000 annual visitors to Cumberland and contributing to the local economy.



# A ROLE IN RECONCILIATION

Many Indigenous partners emphasize that outdoor recreation takes place in areas that are not simply places for leisure but living lands with deep cultural significance. Working with communities ensures that recreation in these places is respectful and supports strong stewardship outcomes.

To reflect these priorities, the strategy recognizes three interconnected areas of focus:

- 1** Advancing conservation and stewardship by applying approaches that respect Indigenous knowledge, sustain healthy ecosystems, and address the growing impacts of visitors. This includes working with Indigenous governments and communities to support stewardship initiatives. Indigenous Guardians provide an important presence on the land, contribute to monitoring and stewardship, and help guide responsible recreation.
- 2** Expanding participation by identifying and addressing barriers to outdoor recreation and supporting opportunities for Indigenous youth to connect with their territories.
- 3** Strengthening the recreation economy by creating opportunities for Indigenous businesses, supporting cultural tourism and enabling community-led initiatives.

Together, these areas of focus reinforce the importance of stewardship grounded in Indigenous knowledge and values and support continued collaboration with Indigenous governments and communities as recreation evolves across the province.



# SUPPORT PEOPLE

## Support the people who make it happen:

*Empower the clubs, volunteers, recreation organizations and community leaders that make outdoor experiences in British Columbia exceptional. Strengthen partnerships with Indigenous leadership.*

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## STRATEGIC GOALS

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### FUNDING

Achieve stable and dependable funding for community organizations that deliver, build, maintain and provide recreation opportunities.

### PARTICIPATION

Expand Indigenous participation in the outdoor recreation management, land use and economic growth.

## TARGET 11

*Dependable and diverse funding for outdoor recreation organizations.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Work with agency and external partners to explore innovative funding approaches for recreation organizations that develop and maintain recreation infrastructure and assets.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

The Outdoor Recreation Fund, administered by the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC. The Off Road Vehicle Trail Fund, co-administered with the BC Powersports Coalition.

Stewardship Partnership Insurance Program: Provides liability insurance coverage for volunteer groups and partners working under agreements with BC Parks or Recreation Sites and Trails BC.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Volunteers and community groups are the heart of outdoor recreation in B.C., building and maintaining trails and generating the opportunities that drive tourism and economic value. As use grows, organizations need stable capacity funding to maintain critical infrastructure and services. This work is also fundamental to stewardship, ensuring that recreation areas, ecosystems and community assets are cared for responsibly as demand increases.



## TARGET 12

*Indigenous involvement in outdoor recreation.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

Co-lead the creation of an Indigenous-focused collaborative group to understand existing strengths, roles, and needs, and to determine how best to enable and support Indigenous leadership in outdoor recreation.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Early foundations for a collaborative approach to Indigenous outdoor recreation leadership are emerging through co-led outreach with Indigenous partners such as iSPARC, and collaborative projects with the Guardians Program.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Ensures outdoor recreation supports Indigenous community-defined cultural, ecological and economic priorities and advances reconciliation through shared stewardship.



*Destination BC/Stirl and Rae Photo*



# LEGACY FUNDS WITH BC PARKS FOUNDATION

## BUILDING SUSTAINABLE FUNDING, ONE REGION AT A TIME

*By working closely with local businesses, BC Parks Foundation has developed a sustainable funding model where small, consistent contributions create meaningful, long-term impact.*

The Sea to Sky Legacy Fund, created and managed by BC Parks Foundation, connects regional businesses and communities to long-term conservation impact in one of BC's busiest tourism seasons. Supported by organizations like the Sea to Sky Gondola and Gibbons Hospitality Group, the fund backs initiatives from Horseshoe Bay to Pemberton in four key areas: Stewardship, Accessibility, Experiences and Safety.

Through the early support of these tourism operators, who collect a surcharge on every ticket sold, the Sea to Sky Legacy Fund has blossomed into a successful program that contributes more than \$150,000 annually to parks and recreation sites and trails in the Sea to Sky corridor. Since 2019, numerous projects have been completed, including:

- Campsite improvements at Semaphore Lake and Watersprite Lake
- Installation of food storage lockers at multiple parks and recreation sites
- Solar panel upgrades at Elfin Lakes shelter
- New toilets at Helm Creek and Callaghan Lake
- Discover Parks Ambassadors delivering free, inclusive nature programs for thousands of park visitors every summer at Alice Lake
- New interpretative signage, including a virtual park tour, at Stawamus Chief
- Funding support for local Rangers and Recreation Technicians

The success of the Legacy fund has also inspired expansion plans into two more regions: the Okanagan and southern Vancouver Island. Tourism businesses are encouraged to reach out to BC Parks Foundation to join a Legacy Fund and be part of a growing movement for nature.

# PROTECT WHAT WE LOVE

## Outdoor recreation begins with stewardship

*Respectfully care for and protect the natural environments that make B.C. unique, recognizing that these landscapes are more than recreation spaces.*

### STRATEGIC GOALS

#### PLANNING

Align development and management of provincially delivered outdoor recreation opportunities with the spectrum of community interests, user demands, resource management and land stewardship.

#### EDUCATION

Use education and values-based storytelling to inspire responsible recreation, conservation behaviour and care for natural and cultural spaces.

#### YOUTH

Expand outdoor recreation programming and outreach for youth.

#### STEWARDSHIP

Build and maintain public trust in the province's stewardship of recreation, environmental and cultural values.

## TARGET 13

*Integrated recreation planning that is community-centred.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

Develop a community-centred recreation planning framework and tools that reflect local values and diverse users, supports recreation opportunity development and informs integrated resource planning across regions.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Regional plans such as the Sea-to-Sky Visitor-Use Management project, bringing together First Nations, local communities and ministries.

The Outdoor Recreation Council of BC's *Outdoor Recreation Community and Economic Development Guidebook* provides practical tools and real-world examples.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

It leads to better decisions by grounding recreation planning in local knowledge and lived experience, reducing conflict and ensuring investments align with community priorities and long-term regional needs.

## TARGET 14

*Conservation efforts are aligned with responsible recreation use and growth.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

Collaborate with the federal government, First Nations, local communities and partners to ensure recreation values are considered in land-use planning processes, including efforts that increase the amount of land protected or managed for conservation and recreation initiatives, including the goal to protect 30% of B.C. by 2030.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

BC Conservation Fund: a BC Parks Foundation and provincial government partnership to support long-term conservation of priority landscapes.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Conservation, stewardship and recreation are interconnected. Sustaining recreation opportunities for the future depends on effective stewardship and the protection of ecological values and cultural heritage.

## TARGET 15

*A coordinated framework for responsible recreation.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Build collaboration with on-site partners and other ministries to further develop guidance and deepen the understanding of responsible recreation.
- Expand on current human-wildlife co-existence programs, including bear-safety practices, to support safe recreation and healthy ecosystems.
- Collaborate with the BC Parks Foundation, academia and other partner organizations to expand inventory, monitoring and ecological research.
- Strengthen public understanding by using behavioural insights and social science research to improve education and social marketing efforts that help visitors recognize the importance of protected areas and make responsible choices.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Human-wildlife co-existence strategies and infrastructure.  
Several inventory and monitoring approaches and partnerships.  
Impact assessment tools, data inputs and training.  
Invasive species management strategy.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

These actions strengthen visitor behaviour by creating clear, well-informed guidance on how to recreate responsibly and by building the partnerships needed to ensure that guidance is widely shared and understood.

*Jos Krynen/Eagle Eye Adventures*



## TARGET 16

*A provincial visitor-use management framework.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

Apply visitor-use management planning, strategies, and tools to understand and manage the impact of visitors on cultural and ecological values, while maintaining high quality outdoor recreation experiences.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

Completed and implemented Visitor Use Management Plans, developed with Indigenous Nations, local communities and recreation partners.

Monitoring visitor use patterns, volumes, peak times, perceived crowding and quality of experience.

Implementing the Day Use Pass in areas experiencing acute visitor use pressures impacting visitor experience.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

This work matters because understanding what “busy” feels like for most visitors helps us protect high-quality experiences while supporting conservation and reconciliation.

## TARGET 17

*Strengthened outdoor recreation monitoring, compliance and enforcement.*

### WHAT'S NEXT:

- Work with internal, external and agency partners to support guardian programs.
- Expand coordination with natural resource enforcement agencies to focus efforts on high risks to recreation values.

### WHAT'S IN PLACE:

The Ministry of Environment and Parks is working with natural resource agency partners to realign enforcement efforts and responsibilities across the sector.

Collaboration between BC Parks and the Nuxalk and Kitasoo Xai'xais Nations through a shared compliance and enforcement model as well as 40 Guardian partnerships across the province.

### WHY THIS MATTERS:

Indigenous Guardians provide on-the-ground stewardship, monitoring, and knowledge that supports First Nations' self-determined care for lands and waters and strengthens collaborative stewardship with the Province.

## HOW WE GOT HERE

Bringing together diverse contributions into a united vision was both challenging and rewarding. Engagement efforts brought together 215 sector attendees across four sessions, 23 Indigenous participants through virtual sessions and meetings and 105 agency staff via presentations, briefings and discussions. A government advisory group across several agencies was involved in the shaping of the vision, and a broader focus group including government representatives and First Nations contributed to the development of the priorities.

The Province of British Columbia acknowledges that outdoor recreation takes place on the traditional territories of First Nations who have cared for these lands and waters since time immemorial. The development of this strategy occurred across many territories and treaty areas. We are grateful to the First Nations who shared their perspectives, teachings and worldviews throughout this work.



*Destination BC/Andrew Strain*



Ministry of  
Environment  
and Parks



BC Parks



Recreation Sites  
and Trails BC