

The Honourable David Eby
Premier of British Columbia
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

November 13, 2025

Re: Prioritizing Outdoor Recreation and Parks as a Pillar of Look West: Jobs and Prosperity for a stronger BC and Canada

Dear Premier Eby,

We recognize that BC faces significant challenges. But every crisis comes with opportunities. To access them, we need to draw on our greatest strengths. In British Columbia, those are undoubtedly our unparalleled natural landscapes, our spectacular biodiversity, our many outdoor recreation activities, and our outdoor identity, culture, people, and businesses.

These strengths define who we are and are a source of shared values and unity. They are also a springboard to increased economic, health, and other benefits for British Columbia.

That is why we are prepared to advance an initiative to make BC the world leader in outdoor recreation and parks.

Doing so will create and retain jobs, produce revenue, generate innovation, and strengthen our economy, particularly in rural areas. It will enhance BC's global brand, advance working together with First Nations, and support the identity, health and well-being of every British Columbian.

We can pursue this vision without compromising other values. As you have said, economic choices are not 'either/or'. Innovation and overall revenue will grow through a 'made in BC' approach to integrating outdoor recreation, conservation and other natural resource sectors.

Evidence from other jurisdictions

In the United States, the \$1.2 trillion outdoor recreation industry accounted for 2.3% of the nation's economy. It grew by 3.6% in 2023, outpacing overall GDP growth by more than half of a percent, and created 5 million jobs. The number of outdoor participants grew for a ninth consecutive year to a record 181.1 million in 2024, reflecting a global trend in increased demand.

A range of jurisdictions are demonstrating how prioritizing outdoor recreation and conservation drives economic growth and resilience. More than 50% of US states now have offices of outdoor recreation. Here are a few examples:

- **Colorado's** statewide Outdoor Recreation Industry Office coordinates public, private, and Indigenous partnerships, supporting over 100,000 jobs and integrating recreation with climate action, land-use planning, and conservation. The Office was created in 2015 and by 2019 outdoor recreation value had nearly tripled from \$23-billion a year to \$63-billion. Contribution to GDP has grown to 3.2%.
- **Oregon** created the nation's first Office of Outdoor Recreation, which now contributes over **\$20 billion annually** to its economy and has become a cornerstone of rural revitalization. Contribution to GDP has grown to 4%.
- **Montana** chose to make outdoor recreation a central economic pillar and has increased visitation, economic output, jobs, and contribution to local and state taxes year over year. In 2023, outdoor recreation-adjacent business accounted for 4.6% of Montana's gross domestic product (GDP), the third highest percentage of any state. Since 2012, the value added to the state economy from winter recreation alone has climbed a whopping 161%.
- **New Zealand's** tourism and conservation strategy resulted in a visitor spend of \$11.6 billion in 2023/24 with 42% growth. Outdoor recreation is linked directly to conservation outcomes, with revenues funding restoration and community benefits.
- **Iceland** chose to pursue nature-based tourism as their economy's growth engine in 2010. It now represents 8-9% of GDP.

British Columbia - with our world-class landscapes, active population, gear manufacturing, and global tourism reputation - is uniquely positioned to grow and lead in this space. In 2023, our outdoor recreation sector directly contributed \$4.8 billion to BC's economy (1.5% of BC's GDP). In addition, \$17 billion in total revenue was earned by the outdoor recreation industry in 2023 and \$3.2 billion was paid in wages and salaries. Based on what we have seen other jurisdictions do through coordinated strategies, we believe there is room to grow the sector's contribution to GDP, jobs, and revenue in BC.

What we need from the Province

Our organizations are willing to step up to develop and pursue our goal of BC being the world leader in outdoor recreation and parks. We are not asking the Province to lead; we are asking the Province to join us at the table and focus on the actions that it is best suited to doing. As a first step, we request that the Province:

1. **Incorporate outdoor recreation and parks as a distinct pillar in Look West.** Outdoor Recreation and Parks are more than just tourism—they encompass gear manufacturing, technology, science, transportation and other economic drivers.

2. **Create a cross-ministry team**, lead through the Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth, to work with us to pursue our shared goal and to address the associated legislative, policy, and implementation needs relevant to government's role.

Our central strategy is to build an outdoor recreation and parks ecosystem including businesses, researchers, investors, users, volunteers, First Nations, governments, and other key parties. As founding members of the ecosystem, we look forward to working with you on the following six priorities:

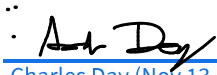
1. **Stimulate growth, investment and competitiveness** by a) accelerating innovation and capital flow through investment and incentives, b) building talent pipelines through training and education, c) fostering innovation through targeted grants, credits, blended finance tools and procurement programs, and d) an international marketing campaign.
2. **Link the costs of increased visitorship/use and associated infrastructure with revenue and reinvestment**, so that there are incentives and resources to reinvest in experiences, infrastructure, management, conservation, and restoration upon which sustainable and well managed outdoor recreation depends.
3. **Address infrastructure needs and opportunities** supporting managed visitorship/use (resource roads, bridges, waste facilities, etc.), improved accessibility, and iconic destination experiences.
4. **Strengthen BC's liability regime**, particularly for landowners, community groups and volunteers.
5. **Advance the development and implementation of artificial intelligence, robotics and emerging technologies** related to outdoor recreation and parks.
6. **Build on BC's international leadership connecting outdoor recreation and parks with improved health and education outcomes** (via the BC Parks Foundation's Healthy By Nature initiative)

Conclusion

Investing in outdoor recreation and parks is a high-return economic development initiative that creates jobs, supports local businesses, promotes health, and reinforces B.C.'s global reputation as a leader in sustainability and quality of life.

We urge your government to seize this moment to make outdoor recreation and parks a cornerstone of British Columbia's economic future. Our organizations and communities stand ready to collaborate on the implementation of this vision.

With respect and appreciation,



Charles Day (Nov 13, 2025 13:28:13 PST)

Andrew Day

BC Parks Foundation



Louise Pedersen (Nov 13, 2025 13:52:32 PST)

Louise Pedersen

Outdoor Recreation Council of BC



Shane Brett (Nov 13, 2025 16:47:23 EST)

Shane Brett

Stormtech Performance Apparel



Jill Davidson (Nov 13, 2025 16:50:40 PST)

Jill Davidson

Mustang Survival Inc



Anirban (JoJo) Das (Nov 13, 2025 13:34:11 PST)

JoJo Das

Sea to Sky Outdoor Adventure Recreation
Enterprise (SOARE)



Matt Mosteller (Nov 13, 2025 16:03:19 MST)

Matt Mosteller

Kootenay Outdoor Recreation Enterprise
(KORE)



Kara Walker

Capilano University



James Rodger (Nov 13, 2025 13:50:00 PST)

James Rodger

Thompson Rivers University



Rick Brant

Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity &
Recreation Council



Alex Feldman

Form3 Design Inc



Paul Hawes (Nov 14, 2025 13:49:28 PST)

Paul Hawes

BC Hotel Association



Joss Penny (Nov 14, 2025 14:28:15 PST)

Joss Penny

BC Lodging and Camground Association

Paul King

Paul King (Nov 14, 2025 12:52:56 PST)

Paul King

BC Apparel and Gear Association

JJ Belanger

JJ Belanger

Tourism Industry Association of BC
(TIABC)

Kathy MacRae

Kathy MacRae (Nov 14, 2025 17:10:05 PST)

Kathy MacRae

Wilderness Tourism Association
(WTA)

Kathy MacRae

Kathy MacRae (Nov 14, 2025 20:38:50 MST)

Kathy MacRae

Adventure Tourism Coalition

Doramy Ehling

Doramy Ehling

Rick Hansen Foundation

cc

The Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth
The Honourable Brenda Bailey, Minister of Finance
The Honourable Tamara Davidson, Minister of Environment and Parks
The Honourable Randene Neill, Minister of Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship
The Honourable Ravi Parmar, Minister of Forests
The Honourable Anne Kang, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport
Tom McCarthy, Deputy Minister
Shannon Salter, Deputy Minister
Andrew Cuddy, Policy Lead, Premier's Office
Fazil Mihar, Deputy Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth
Douglas Scott, Deputy Minister of Finance
Kevin Jardine, Deputy Minister of Environment and Parks
Lori Halls, Deputy Minister of Water, Lands, and Resource Stewardship
Mackenzie Leine, Deputy Minister of Forests
Silas Brownsey, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, and Sport