

2026 Provincial Election Priorities

PUBLIC WHITE PAPER | OCTOBER 2026

Non-partisan priorities for British Columbia’s 44th Provincial General Election to help build a stronger future for Powersports in British Columbia.

CENTRAL RECOMMENDATION

The next provincial government should recognize powersports as an important part of British Columbia’s outdoor economy and work with the sector to implement the Outdoor Recreation Strategy, protect access, improve road safety and establish fair, effective wildfire protocols.

Executive summary

Powersports connects British Columbians to transportation, recreation, tourism, skilled employment and community life. The sector includes on-road motorcycles, three-wheel motorcycles, off-road motorcycles, ATVs, side-by-sides, snowmobiles and emerging electric vehicles. It supports dealerships, training providers, tourism businesses, rural communities and thousands of riders.

BCPDA supports British Columbia’s new Outdoor Recreation Strategy and its direction toward coordinated leadership, stronger access, sustainable infrastructure and inclusive decision-making. The opportunity now is to implement that strategy with dedicated authority, predictable funding and formal participation from motorized recreation and the powersports industry.

Election priority	Provincial commitment requested
1 Implement and fund the Outdoor Recreation Strategy	Recognize powersports and motorized recreation as contributors to B.C.’s economy, tourism, skilled employment and rural communities; establish a dedicated Ministry of Outdoor Recreation with appropriate authority and funding.
2 Establish the Road to Recreation Working Group	Create a consistent process to assess high-value Forest Service Roads before closure or deactivation and transition suitable routes into recreation management.
3 Modernize licensing and educate all drivers	Improve motorcycle licensing and training while strengthening education and awareness for every road user to reduce collisions and support safe riding.
4 Develop wildfire restriction policies together	Include BCPDA and recreation organizations in a standing working group that develops evidence-based, proportionate closure policies and communication protocols that protect communities.

The economic and community contribution

BCPDA's 2026 economic-impact work estimates that more than 140 powersports dealerships contribute approximately \$808 million in economic output and support about 3,820 jobs in British Columbia. Related powersports tourism contributes an estimated \$423 million in economic output, while retail activity contributes approximately \$124 million and generates an estimated \$69 million in provincial tax revenue.

The BC Outdoor Sector Coalition estimates that the broader outdoor sector contributes \$11.1 billion to British Columbia's economy, supports approximately 127,500 jobs and generates about \$3 billion in tax revenue. Powersports and motorized recreation are an important part of this larger outdoor economy.

On-road motorcyclists travel British Columbia's highways and scenic routes, attend events and rallies, and make multi-day trips between communities. Off-road riders travel to trail systems, recreation sites and regional destinations. Together, they support accommodation providers, restaurants, campgrounds, fuel suppliers, dealerships, repair businesses and other local services. These benefits are particularly important in rural and smaller communities, where visitor spending and seasonal activity help sustain local economies.

Powersports dealerships also provide skilled service capacity. In a smaller community, one technician may work on automobiles, motorcycles, ATVs, side-by-sides and other equipment across a large region. These workers can be difficult to replace, making apprenticeship, technical training and workforce retention important parts of rural economic resilience.

Sources

1. Government of BC, "B.C. Outdoor Recreation Economic Indicators" (Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, 2024 data). www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/support-business-community/outdoor-recreation-economic-indicators
2. MotoCanada, "BC Motorcycle & Powersports Economic Impact Study 2024, [Reports & Statistics | Moto Canada](#)

Priority 1 - Implement and fund the Outdoor Recreation Strategy

Why it matters

The new provincial Outdoor Recreation Strategy creates an opportunity to treat outdoor recreation as essential economic, tourism and community infrastructure. Successful implementation requires more than commitments spread across several ministries. It needs clear accountability, dependable funding and an organization with the authority to coordinate access, tourism, infrastructure, stewardship, workforce and community priorities.

Both on-road motorcycle touring and off-road motorized recreation must be formally recognized within this work. Dealers, riders, clubs, trainers, event organizers and tourism operators contribute local knowledge, safety education, trail stewardship, visitor spending and skilled employment. Their participation will help the Province develop scenic touring routes and rider-friendly destinations, strengthen off-road trail experiences and make practical decisions that support responsible recreation and economic growth.

What BCPDA is asking for

- Establish a dedicated Ministry of Outdoor Recreation with a clear mandate, appropriate authority and predictable multi-year funding.
- Publish an implementation plan for the Outdoor Recreation Strategy with responsible ministries, budgets, timelines and measurable outcomes.
- Provide formal representation for BCPDA and motorized recreation on provincial outdoor recreation advisory and decision-making bodies.

- Recognize on-road motorcycle touring and off-road motorized recreation within provincial tourism, outdoor recreation and regional economic-development strategies.
- Work with tourism partners to develop and promote scenic touring routes, rider-friendly communities, events and responsible motorized travel experiences.
- Invest in trails, staging areas, access routes, bridges, route connectivity, visitor amenities, safety education and other infrastructure that supports both on-road and off-road travel.
- Make powersports tourism, motorized recreation organizations and related infrastructure projects eligible for appropriate tourism, recreation and regional-development grants.
- Support apprenticeship, technical training and skilled-worker retention, recognizing the importance of multi-skilled technicians in rural and smaller communities.

What success looks like

British Columbia has one accountable provincial lead for outdoor recreation; the strategy is supported by stable funding and public reporting; motorized recreation participates formally; and investments strengthen tourism, infrastructure, stewardship, skilled employment and rural communities.

Priority 2 - Establish the Road to Recreation Working Group

Why it matters

Forest Service Roads and former industrial roads often provide the only practical access to trails, recreation sites, lakes, hunting areas, private properties and remote destinations. When industrial use ends, roads may be deactivated before their continuing recreation, tourism, emergency and community value is properly assessed. Once bridges, culverts and road structures are removed, restoring access may be unaffordable or impossible.

What BCPDA is asking for

- Establish a cross-ministry Road to Recreation Working Group with Indigenous Nations, local governments, recreation organizations, tourism partners and BCPDA.
- Require an assessment of recreation, tourism, emergency, community, tenure and private-property access values before irreversible deactivation begins.
- Pause deactivation of candidate high-value routes while a time-limited assessment is completed.
- Create practical transfer, designation, licence and shared-management options supported by technical standards, liability guidance and funding.
- Publish proposed closures, assessment outcomes and final decisions with meaningful notice, reasons and an escalation process.

What success looks like

High-value routes are assessed before infrastructure is removed, suitable roads can transition into recreation management, and communities and businesses have greater certainty that public access will not be lost without a transparent process.

Priority 3 - Modernize licensing and educate all drivers

Why it matters

Motorcycle safety depends on effective training, accessible licensing and responsible behaviour by every road user. Licensing changes should be supported by evidence, reward approved training and avoid unnecessary barriers. A safe and practical licensing system also supports participation, training schools,

dealerships, events and on-road motorcycle tourism. Three-wheel motorcycles have distinct handling and training needs and require an appropriate pathway.

Collision prevention cannot focus only on motorcyclists. Drivers of passenger and commercial vehicles must be taught to recognize motorcycles, share the road safely, judge speed and distance accurately and understand the consequences of inattention. Education, enforcement, licensing and public awareness must work together.

What BCPDA is asking for

- Base motorcycle licensing changes on published evidence, meaningful consultation and measurable safety outcomes.
- Maintain practical licensing timelines and recognize approved rider training so safety improvements do not create unnecessary barriers to participation or sector growth.
- Develop a dedicated three-wheel motorcycle course, testing pathway or curriculum.
- Strengthen motorcycle-awareness content in Class 5 education, testing and driver-licensing materials.
- Deliver recurring public campaigns that address visibility, intersections, following distance, distracted driving and safe passing.
- Include safe motorcycle touring and rider education in provincial tourism and road-safety partnerships.
- Use collision, licensing and training data to evaluate results and adjust programs.
- Work with trainers, riders, dealers, ICBC, RoadSafetyBC and enforcement agencies on a coordinated motorcycle-safety strategy.

What success looks like

More riders complete effective training, licensing remains accessible, all drivers receive stronger motorcycle-awareness education and provincial safety policy addresses the actions of every road user. Safer participation also supports training providers, dealerships, motorcycle events and touring activity across British Columbia.

Priority 4 - Develop wildfire restriction policies together

Why it matters

Wildfire conditions can require urgent action to protect people, communities and responders. BCPDA supports evidence-based restrictions when they are necessary. The 2026 Southeast Fire Centre ORV closure also demonstrated the need for industry participation, regional evidence, clear communication, defined review dates and a consistent process for lifting or adjusting restrictions as conditions change.

Dealers and recreation organizations can help government understand vehicle types, operating practices, regional conditions and business consequences. They can also communicate requirements quickly through established networks and support education and compliance.

What BCPDA is asking for

- Establish a standing Wildfire Recreation and Powersports Working Group before the 2027 fire season.
- Include BC Wildfire Service, responsible ministries, Indigenous Nations, local governments, BCPDA, recreation organizations and tourism representatives.
- Develop objective risk criteria and a graduated range of measures, including regional, activity-specific and time-limited restrictions where appropriate.
- Use the narrowest effective restriction capable of protecting communities and responders.

- Set defined review dates for broad restrictions, normally no longer than 14 days, and publish reasons for continuation, adjustment or reopening.
- Consider different vehicle and ignition profiles, including electric vehicles, where evidence supports differentiated treatment.
- Use dealers and recreation organizations as formal communication partners for education, notices, maps and reopening information.
- Complete and publish an after-action review following major restrictions.

What success looks like

Wildfire decisions protect communities and responders, restrictions are proportionate to demonstrated risk, the sector participates before and during events, communication improves and reopening decisions are reviewed transparently.

A coordinated first year

Timing	Action
First 100 days	Confirm the mandate and funding pathway for a Ministry of Outdoor Recreation and establish interim sector advisory representation.
Within 6 months	Publish the Outdoor Recreation Strategy implementation plan; convene the Road to Recreation Working Group; and begin the coordinated motorcycle-safety review.
Before the 2027 fire season	Adopt the wildfire working group terms of reference and publish closure, communication, review and reopening protocols.
Within 12 months	Launch road-transition pilots, identify infrastructure investments and report publicly on strategy implementation, road safety and wildfire-protocol outcomes.

The choice in this election

British Columbia can build on its outdoor identity by recognizing powersports as part of the provincial economy, tourism sector and transportation system. BCPDA is asking all parties and candidates to support these four priorities and work with dealers, riders, Indigenous Nations, recreation organizations, local governments and tourism partners after the election.

About BCPDA

The BC Powersports Dealers Association unifies and represents British Columbia's powersports dealers through advocacy, collaboration, education and industry engagement. BCPDA advances practical policy that supports safety, consumer confidence, responsible recreation, employment and strong communities.

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