



## Outdoor recreation in British Columbia: a quality of life issue

British Columbia has spectacular mountains, rivers, and the ocean – right at the doorstep of over half of the province’s population. Many of us live here specifically for the variety of recreational opportunities, and we make frequent use of the outdoors for recreation.

British Columbians derive many **benefits** from outdoor recreation. We

- are fit and healthy, and
- contribute significantly to both regional and provincial economies. We choose to vacation at home because of the superb geography that surrounds us.

**But all is not well.** Several serious problems mean that the full benefits of outdoor recreation are not being achieved. Among these problems are

- Responsibility for outdoor recreation is spread across several ministries of government, making it difficult for us to discuss management with officials.
- Planning for recreational access has been virtually non-existent in the past few years, leading to lost opportunities and overuse of others.
- There is no provincial recreation policy, so decisions about non-commercial outdoor recreation and commercial tourism are made in a policy void. This often results in conflict.
- Fees were recently imposed for certain activities with little or no public consultation on the acceptability of the types of fees.
- In short, the recreation sector has felt quite neglected over the past few years.

### Looking ahead: what would you do?

The Outdoor Recreation Council of BC is extremely interested in how you would work to solve these problems. Please indicate what you would do about each of the issues listed below.

1. Creation of a central, coordinating agency within the provincial government for outdoor recreation.
2. Adequate funding to plan and manage Forest Service recreation sites, maintain key access roads, and BC Parks recreation services.
3. Developing a provincial recreation strategy for British Columbia.
4. Implementing land use plans that were developed at community planning tables.
5. Protecting rivers and streams with high recreational values.