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SUBMISSION TO PREMIER'S TASK FORCE ON TRADE & ECONOMIC SECURITY

Submitted by:

Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia

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Executive Summary

> *Tourism is obviously very important for any place but if you don't invest in areas like digitalization and greening the economy, then we're missing out on a trick to use tourism as a cross-sectoral opportunity to transform other sectors. Instead of looking at tourism as a sector, it's actually cross-sectoral and can transform all sorts of different areas. Tourism is absolutely essential and can be a catalyst for transformation and structural change but not if we just look at it as a sector*
>
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> Advisor to Province of B.C. on Economic Strategy

British Columbia is in the midst of a pivotal economic moment. Slowing global growth, combined with impacts of U.S. tariffs on softwood lumber and other resource exports, threatens a sizeable share of the Province's traditional foreign-exchange earnings.

One sector, however, already delivers tariff-free export revenue at scale and can expand quickly with the right policy signals: TOURISM. By framing tourism as a strategic trade asset, rather than merely a hospitality activity, government can stabilize jobs, tax receipts and regional prosperity while the rest of the economy retools for an uncertain trading environment.

The numbers justify urgency. In 2023 the visitor economy generated $9.7 billion in provincial GDP, equivalent to 4% of the entire economy, out-performing mining, forestry and agriculture. Tourism receipts reached $22.1 billion, up 12% year-over-year. Nearly 17,000 small businesses employed 126,000 British Columbians and paid $5.9 billion in wages and salaries. While similar measures are unavailable for BC, every dollar invested in national tourism marketing yields $23.85 in economic activity, an unmatched fiscal multiplier.

Crucially, tourism growth is inclusive and regional. More than 95% of operators are small or medium-sized enterprises located in every riding. The sector is a first employer for students and youth, new Canadians and Indigenous peoples, offering a career ladder that supports advancement into management and executive roles. Indigenous-owned experiences are also opening credible pathways to economic self-determination and reconciliation. Moreover, tourism receipts arrive in export currencies but stay in local communities, buffering rural economies from commodity price swings, exactly the kind of diversification the Premier's Task Force was convened to accelerate.

Timing matters. Investment and regulatory streamlining today will pay off when the world's attention turns to B.C. for FIFA World Cup 2026, and a line-up of climate-friendly outdoor events. Every seat added on an international flight, every trail made accessible, and every visa issued to a skilled hospitality worker before further tariffs take effect strengthens the Province's economic shock absorbers. Delaying action risks losing market share to better-funded competitors such as Alberta where destination marketing levies and workforce programmes have already scaled up.

Executive Summary

Industry consultations coordinated for this submission point to five systemic bottlenecks that government can relieve quickly:

- **Regulatory friction** – fragmented land-tenure rules, short-term-rental fees on designated tourism accommodation in resort towns and slow permitting dissuade private capital.
- **Workforce gaps** – immigration caps and the 90-day probationary period to trigger paid-sick-leave benefits exacerbate acute staff shortages in peak season.
- **Infrastructure deficits** – regional airports, highways and digital connectivity lag demand, and BC Parks campground fees no longer keep pace with maintenance costs.
- **Climate & emergency resilience** – back-to-back wildfire periods show the need for sustained funding for the B.C. Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative and destination emergency management.
- **Marketing under-investment** – Destination BC's core budget has been flat for a decade despite 20% inflation over the last five years, eroding B.C.'s share of high-value long-haul visitors.

Addressing these pressure points does more than help a single sector. It fortifies B.C.'s trade and economic security by replacing at-risk commodity revenue with high-margin, low-carbon exports, brings private investment to small communities, and demonstrates that reconciliation, sustainability and inclusive growth can move from rhetoric to results. With decisive action in Budget 2026 and a cross-government implementation team, the Province can lock in a virtuous cycle of visitor demand, employment and tax revenue, precisely when diversification is needed most.

This submission outlines critical barriers and proposes strategic solutions to enhance industry resilience. Streamlining regulations, securing long-term tenures, and fostering collaboration between First Nations and tourism operators will provide much-needed stability. Further investments in workforce development, climate adaptation initiatives, technology and infrastructure are essential to ensuring the sector remains competitive.



Photo credit to: Kai Jacobson

Summary of Challenges & Solutions

SECTOR	CORE ISSUES	SOLUTIONS
ADVENTURE TOURISM	Land tenure uncertainty and renewals, land use conflicts, investments at risk, funding shortfalls, regulatory barriers, STR registry fees, lack of process for implementing DRIPA, climate change impacts.	Streamline tenure applications, ensure consistent regulations, remove fee for STR registry for resort communities, secure funding model for stewardship, collaborative land use planning, clear process for First Nations consultation.
AGRI-TOURISM	Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) restrictions on events and permanent facilities for agri-tourism activities.	Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) restrictions on events and permanent facilities for agri-tourism activities.
AVIATION	Low carbon fuel standards, competition, under investment in infrastructure, skilled workforce.	Provide aviation tax relief, increase funding for sustainable aviation initiatives, and balance fuel regulations.
CAMPING	Rate differences between private & public campsites, lack of infrastructure, tenancy status of seasonal campers, crisis response.	Annual COL rate adjustments for provincial campsites, disaster mitigation funding, grants/loans for infrastructure upgrades, recognition of seasonal campers under license to occupy.
COMMUNITY DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS	Lack of infrastructure investment, risk to MRDT, public safety concerns, air service.	Financial incentives for private investment in new products & infrastructure, secure MRDT for existing purposes, additional mental health supports, marketing support for increased air services.
CRAFT BREWERS	Cash flow, funding for marketing, increasing operating costs.	Approval of mark-up proposal, funding for BC Ail Trail, buy local campaign.

Summary of Challenges & Solutions

SECTOR	CORE ISSUES	SOLUTIONS
GOLF	Climate change, water access, land use, housing for seasonal staff.	Regulatory review process for golf courses on ALR lands, funding support for sustainable practices and technology.
HOTELS	Workforce shortages, immigration barriers, rising operational costs, competition from Alberta.	Expand immigration pathways for tourism workers, adjust BC tax policies, and invest in workforce training.
INDIGENOUS TOURISM	Funding shortfalls, strained resources, inequitable distribution of tourism tax funds.	Increase financial support, improve access to tourism development funds, and ensure fair revenue distribution.
LARGE BUSINESS OPERATORS	Increasing operating costs, negative sentiment, trip cancellations, sick days policy.	Prorate sick days by contract length, increased marketing to Americans, diversify international markets.
LIQUOR & CANNABIS	Regulatory restrictions around cannabis tourism and sales at public events.	Framework for cannabis consumption lounges, elimination of restrictions on marketing legal cannabis businesses.
MARINE TOURISM	Proposed regulatory changes to whale watching, tenure security, adequate moorage, climate change.	Industry consultation, enhanced investment incentives, additional marking of Canadian hatchery stocks.
REGIONAL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS	Lack of resources for emergency management and climate readiness.	Secured, long-term funding for regional tourism emergency management and sustainability of the BC Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative.

Summary of Challenges & Solutions

SECTOR	CORE ISSUES	SOLUTIONS
RESTAURANTS	Labour supply and high operating costs.	Dedicated tourism & hospitality PNP stream, pause new labour and environmental policies.
WORKFORCE & LABOUR	Scope & pace of occupational health and safety regulatory changes.	Additional industry support & resources to understand and comply with regulations.



Photo credit to: Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Mitch Winton

About B.C.'s Visitor Economy & The Tourism Eco-System

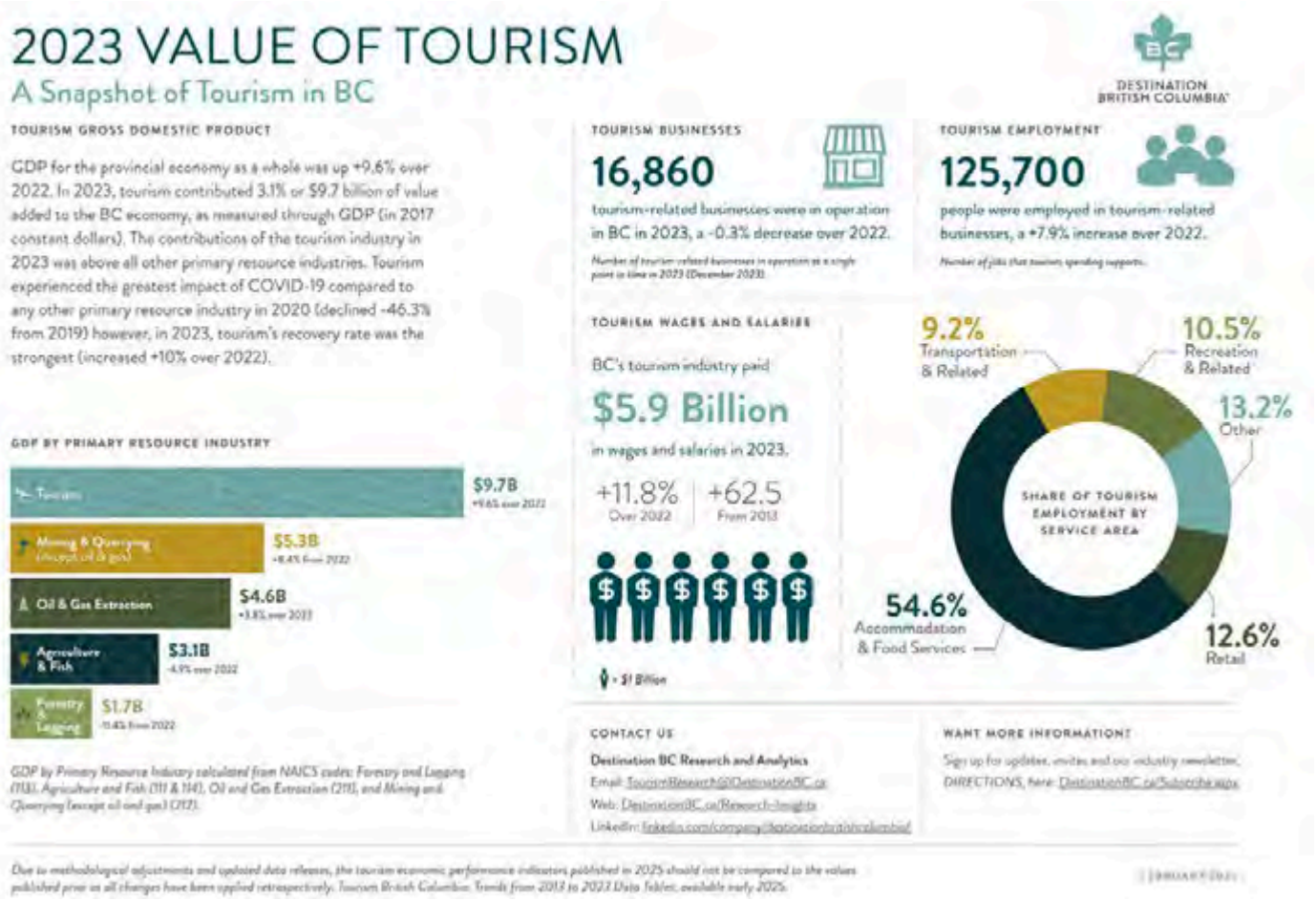


Tourism is a critical industry within B.C.'s economy. In 2023, the tourism industry generated over $9.7 billion in provincial GDP (2017 dollars) – some 4.0% of total provincial GDP, an amount greater than any of B.C.'s primary resource industries. Some 16,860+ B.C. tourism and hospitality businesses were estimated by Destination B.C. to have employed approximately 125,700 people and paid over $5.9 billion in wages and salaries. Aside from first or part-time jobs for young people, the visitor economy supports tens of thousands of people and families with good paying careers.

As a destination and gateway for international tourists, tourism has been one of B.C. largest export industries. In 2023, tourism generated export revenue of $22.1 billion, an increase of 12.4% over 2022. Tourism export revenue was estimated to be higher than that of the mining and quarrying sector ($5.3 billion) and agriculture and fishing ($3.1 billion).

The B.C. tourism industry fosters the establishment of many small businesses, which comprise around 95% of tourism employers. The sector has been a large employer of women, youth, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, and immigrants, and constitutes one of the most inclusive workforces in the province.

About B.C.'s Visitor Economy & The Tourism Eco-System



According to the **Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport (TACS)**, B.C. continues to be a preferred Canadian destination for tourism. However, British Columbia's visitor economy remains challenged to attract tourists worried about affordability and some business operators face challenges attracting and retaining employees.

The world outlook for tourism notes that it is increasingly vulnerable to global inflation driving up costs, climate change affecting destinations, and conflicts between countries. While domestic travel in B.C. has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, the more lucrative market of international visitors continues to lag due to demand and the slower re-establishment of international flight connectivity.

Business and conference travel is also returning and operates within a highly competitive international market. Hosting international sporting events over the next two years will provide both an economic boost and an opportunity to showcase B.C.'s natural beauty and cultural diversity.

Indigenous communities are playing key roles in these events and are growing their number of tourism offerings, recognizing tourism as a doorway to greater understanding, reconciliation, and economic opportunity.

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS, CULTURE & SPORT PERFORMANCE PLANNING

GOAL 1. British Columbia's tourism economy is resilient and growing sustainably.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Support the sustainable growth of the tourism sector.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Build on previous investments in tourism infrastructure to create iconic, inspirational routes and places that will strengthen travel appeal in all regions of B.C.
- Work with the tourism industry to leverage the opportunities provided by the FIFA World Cup in 2026 and other events to maximize the economic development and tourism impact across the province.
- Support the work led by the Ministers of Agriculture and Food and Public Safety and Solicitor General to grow the economy by supporting food and beverage producers, farmers, restaurants and the tourism sector with flexible liquor, land use, and cannabis regulations in relation to the development of innovative tourism products and unique experiences.
- Continue to support a resilient tourism sector that is regenerative and adapting to climate change.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Focus tourism-related policies and investments on creating healthy, inclusive, resilient communities.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Work with Indigenous Tourism BC to support Indigenous communities and businesses to create exceptional tourism experiences and economic development following the principles of self-determination.
- Work with tourism and community organizations to support events that create economic benefits and enhance community vibrancy.
- Continue the development and implementation of heritage policy and programs related to geographical naming, heritage conservation capacity building, historic places recognition, fossil management, and the stewardship of physical heritage resources.
- Continue to build sector resilience through emergency management planning to support visitor safety, business viability, and maintain B.C.'s reputation as a safe and welcoming destination.

Performance Measures	Target 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target 2026/27	Target 2027/28
B.C. Tourism Revenue Target	$22.5B	+ 5% over previous year	+ 5% over previous year	+ 5% over previous year

About B.C.'s Visitor Economy & The Tourism Eco-System

According to **Destination British Columbia (DBC)**, the operational landscape for tourism in B.C. offers a wealth of future opportunities. Continued investment in destination development is aimed at improving infrastructure, accommodations, and recreational facilities, ensuring visitors enjoy world-class experiences. Enhanced highways and transportation networks make it more convenient for travel to B.C.'s diverse regions and destinations.

Respectful growth of Indigenous tourism provides opportunities for B.C. residents and visitors to understand the diversity of Indigenous peoples and share in authentic Indigenous experiences. Ongoing commitment to creating accessible and inclusive tourism products, services, and activities ensures safe and barrier-free opportunities for exploring B.C.. Stewardship and sustainable tourism practices contribute to environmental protection and creating a sense of responsibility among visitors and the industry, preserving B.C.'s nature for future generations.

Increasingly, visitors are seeking out responsible travel opportunities that help to preserve, rather than degrade, natural spaces and B.C. is well positioned to offer those travel experiences. These multifaceted opportunities will continue to position the province as a premier destination for sustainable, inclusive, and culturally immersive experiences.

Tourism industry growth is a key indicator of the success of the province's visitor economy and Destination BC's activities. However, from year to year, many factors may affect the tourism industry's performance. The combination of weather-related emergencies in 2023, such as wildfires, severe flooding, landslides, and drought along with the ongoing economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing labour shortages, have had a significant impact on B.C.'s tourism industry.



Photo credit to: Kootenay Rockies Tourism/Aaron Hagen

DESTINATION BC'S PERFORMANCE MEASURES

GOAL 1 Growth of overnight visitor expenditures

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Captivate travellers and create an emotional urgency to visit British Columbia.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Deliver captivating B.C. travel content through online and offline channels that will inspire potential visitors to B.C.
- Amplify Destination BC's global social media community of brand advocates.
- Promote travel within B.C. to all areas of the province, during all seasons of the year.
- Build industry alignment around the strong and shared brand of Super, Natural British Columbia® and launch sub-brands to elevate visitor perceptions of B.C. and drive long-term sustained growth in all regions and seasons of B.C.

Performance Measures	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
B.C. Tourism Revenue	$20.4 B	+ 5%	+ 5%	+ 5%
Consumption of B.C. travel content promoted by DBC	31.1 M	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve
Size of DBC's global social media community of brand advocates	2.1 M	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve

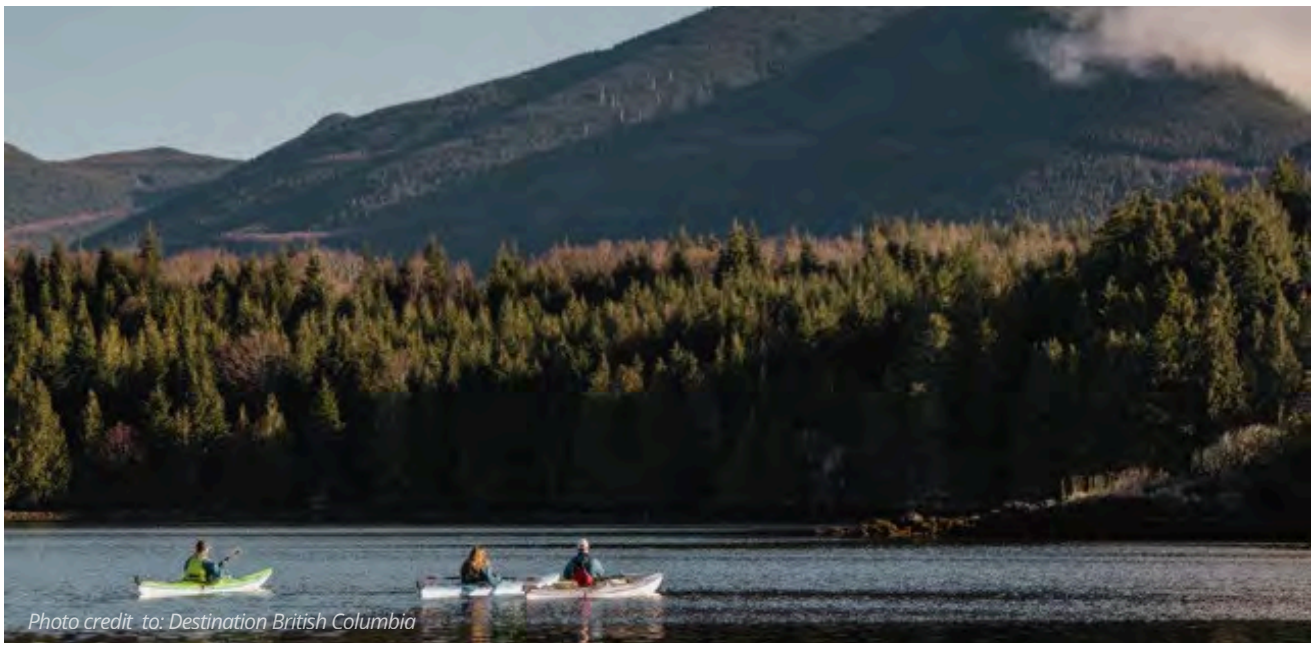


Photo credit to: Destination British Columbia

GOAL 2 B.C.'s tourism industry delivers remarkable guest experiences

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Work in partnership with industry to assist tourism businesses to meet and exceed guest needs and expectations.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Deliver online and on-demand industry training and resources to tourism organizations across the province, as well as to rural communities that are diversifying, growing, and strengthening their economies
- Work collaboratively with 'Visitor Services Network' members, community partners, local businesses, and government partners to create more contemporary, innovative, and authentic approaches to meeting guests' information needs as they travel throughout the province.
- Provide research and insights on tourism industry performance and outlook to support industry decision making.
- Continue to work with TACS on the strategic planning and development of the B.C. Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative, a foundational program to support a resilient tourism sector that is regenerative and prepared to adapt to climate change.
- Continue to support the Tourism Emergency Management Framework, supporting the long-term destination reputation of B.C. through planning and coordinating communications, initiating marketing campaigns, coordinating training delivery, and conducting research on tourism emergency management, when appropriate.
- Continue to help make B.C. a more inclusive and accessible tourism destination.

Performance Measures	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
Competitive ranking of B.C.'s Net Promoter Score	Ranked #1 in 2 of 5 key N.A. markets	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve
Net Promoter Score of participants in all ongoing DBC delivered workshops and seminars	50.0 or greater	50.0 or greater	50.0 or greater	50.0 or greater

GOAL 3 A globally competitive tourism marketing and development ecosystem

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Collaborate with Indigenous Tourism BC, regional, city, community and sector organizations, and other key partners and communities to align and focus on collective marketing and destination development efforts.

KEY STRATEGIES

- Continue to work with TACS and the regional destination management organizations (RDMOs) on the strategic planning and reporting of destination development initiatives to ensure alignment with provincial tourism priorities outlined in the Strategic Framework for Tourism in British Columbia, and Destination BC's 'Invest in Iconics Strategy'.
- Continue Destination BC's Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program to effectively leverage public and private funds, enhance Destination BC's marketing capacity, and drive greater alignment and coordination of marketing efforts across each of B.C.'s six tourism regions.
- Work with Indigenous cultural tourism partners in B.C. and provide support for Indigenous Tourism BC to implement Strengthening Our Roots and Branches: Corporate Strategy 2023-2027, increasing revenues, jobs, and the number of market ready Indigenous tourism businesses across the province, and partnering with Indigenous Tourism BC in the development of the 'Invest in Iconics Strategy'.
- Continue to create opportunities for the strategic alignment of marketing and data technologies across tourism organizations and businesses in all regions of B.C. to advance marketing capabilities, to drive the long-term competitiveness of B.C.'s visitor economy.
- Continue working with TACS and host cities and organizers of upcoming marquee events to ensure these events provide positive benefits for business, communities, and the tourism sector.

Performance Measures	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
Destination management & tourism organizations' satisfaction with DBC programs and services	8.0 (out of 10)	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve	Maintain or improve
Number of communities and sectors participating in Destination BC's application-based Co-op Marketing Partnerships Program.	120 (total)	120 (total)	120 (total)	120 (total)
Number of participating communities outside Metro Vancouver, Victoria, and Whistler.	100 (regional)	100 (regional)	100 (regional)	100 (regional)



Photo credit to: Destination BC/Reuben Krabbe

APPENDIX A

SECTOR CHALLENGES, RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

B.C.'s tourism and hospitality industry had an average labour force of 340,000 workers in 2024, across four sectors - accommodation, food and beverage, recreation and attraction and travel transportation and services.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING B.C.'S TOURISM WORKFORCE

- Scope and pace of occupational health and safety regulatory change, and the implications for employers. Employers will need to develop capacity/devote resources to interpret and implement these changes internally in their businesses.
- Both the cost of implementing the new policies and the increase in the cost of claims. While the impact on each employer will depend on individual circumstances, the cumulative effect of these changes will result in an increase in costs across the workers compensation system, which will eventually be borne by all employers. Any additional costs to employer in this environment is difficult.
- Creating alternate work options, effectively communicating the changes, and managing staffing constraints all represent operational challenges.
- Impacts of immigration policy changes on labour supply vis-a-vis international students, temporary foreign workers (TFW), B.C. PNP.
- Overall labour supply availability to deliver world-class experiences and support short, medium and long-term industry growth. The five-year ROI on FIFA investment will be in jeopardy if businesses do not have the skilled people needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Slow down occupational health and safety regulatory changes and ensure appropriate notice period/effective date.
- Consider additional industry support/resources to understand regulatory changes and work toward compliance.
- Invest in industry recruitment and retention initiatives across the province.
- Advocate to the federal government for:
  - An increase of international student work hour cap (currently at 24 hours)
  - Remove ineligibility of two-year programs for post-graduate work permits (PGWP)
  - Dedicated tourism and hospitality Temporary Foreign Worker stream
  - B.C. PNP allocations increase (reduced 50% in 2025)

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The work that Indigenous Tourism B.C. (ITBC) does to advance innovation, sustainability and growth for an inclusive economy will benefit present and future generations that reflect Indigenous values, interests, goals and worldviews. We are planning for the short to long term while staying focused on our goals that create a healthy, sustainable and prosperous Indigenous cultural tourism industry in B.C.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM BC

In 2024, there were over 2,750 Indigenous tourism businesses in Canada, an increase from 1,900 in 2021. British Columbia accounts for approximately one-third of these businesses, the most in the country. Indigenous Tourism B.C. (ITBC) represents over 600 operators.

The capacity building that ITBC has done over the last few years has allowed us to increase our outreach through engagement, relevant programs and collaboration. This resilience work has been a catalyst for ITBC and the Indigenous tourism industry and has allowed the sector to restore and grow businesses by providing pathfinding and building a stronger network.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING INDIGENOUS TOURISM

- ITBC has grown in the last few years to provide an increase in services to Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs for development, training, outreach, advocacy, digital content and marketing. As more and more Indigenous/First Nation communities are seeing tourism as an economic driver, as well as for regenerating culture and language and providing an avenue for reconciliation and alignment with DRIPA, investment is required to advance Indigenous tourism to reach its full potential.
- ITBC core funds come through the partnership with DBC and the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport. The appropriation has remained largely the same for 15+ years albeit with a nominal increase to support our growing organization.
- With an increasing demand for additional resources to support development and training in Indigenous communities, more advocacy, and a greater need to market Indigenous businesses to ensure they maintain existing operations during high season and growing the shoulder seasons, ITBC is under increasing pressure. With over 200 First Nations/ Indigenous communities in B.C. with the majority in rural areas, resources are stretched and over-prescribed.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- As we are all looking for increased support for our work – the largest issue tends to be in the area of funding support. Additional funds for tourism are needed, especially during these uncertain times and support our growth.
- In the dynamic tourism industry, agility and the ability to respond to changes are crucial for businesses to thrive, innovate and stay competitive, as is a strong foundation and certainty. As the saying goes, "A rising tide lifts all boats." There is an opportunity for the tourism and hospitality industry in B.C. to work more collaboratively for development, investments, infrastructure and marketing. To that end, MRDT should be reviewed to be more equitable for the tourism industry.
- Increase funding for Destination BC. When DBC is leading, the overall industry is elevated, the locals benefit, and the overall economy is bolstered.



Photo credit to: Destination Vancouver/Vision Event Photography Inc.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Tourism Whistler is a not-for-profit destination marketing and management organization responsible for promoting Whistler in target regional, national and international markets using data insights, festivals & events, communications, marketing, and sales to attract visitors for the benefit of our members and the resort community – balancing economic, social and environmental interests. The organization has approximately 8,200 members who are either property owners (7,000) or businesses (1,200).

Whistler annually attracts more than 3 million visitors, generates upwards of $2 billion in consumer spending, as well as $720 million in annual tax revenues, and employs some 15,000 people in the tourism sector alone.

While Whistler has not yet seen the return of our key international markets such as the UK and Australia, visitation from the US has been strong, although tariffs pose a potential threat. A further concern is the sustainability of our industry, noting that rising costs of goods and labour due to inflation, and shrinking business margins are increasing pricing that visitors are not always prepared to absorb. Furthermore, rising costs for municipal services such as police, fire, and transit are increasing property taxes which residents are also not willing to accept.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING TOURISM WHISTLER

- Although YVR enjoys excellent air access from key markets, there are gaps in non-stop, direct air service from prime markets such as New York, Boston (in winter), and Melbourne, along with lucrative new-development markets in South America.
- The tourism industry is a massive driver of export revenues but requires investment and ongoing re-investment into infrastructure (e.g. expanded convention centre) and product development in order to be compelling and competitive.
- The Municipal & Regional District Tax (MRDT) is a critically important funding tool that supports tourism destinations in visitor experience development, as well as marketing and sales investment but is not sufficient to support additional uses such as housing and infrastructure, which requires separate and additional funding.
- Having a short-term rental (STR) registry confirms legal and/or removes illegal rentals from the visitor rental inventory while preserving much-needed residential and employee housing. However, while the new registry is a good idea, it has not been communicated well to independent owners within the relatively short rollout period. Moreover, the annual registry fees are seen as onerous, on top of many other fees that owners face.
- Businesses and jobs in Whistler have grown over the years, as has the population base in the Sea-to-Sky Corridor, increasing commuter volumes on the highway and adding to congestion and carbon emissions. However, transit investments have remained relatively static. Service from Pemberton is limited and there is currently no bus service between Squamish and Whistler.

- Whistler has one access/egress from the Lower Mainland. However, winter road conditions can be challenging for drivers with accidents being a regular outcome, undermining driver safety for both visitors and residents, as well as access /egress to/from the destination and airport, interrupting trips, undermining the visitor experience, and reducing business revenues.
- The federal government has created an Underused Housing Tax (UHT) intended to discourage international second homeowners from leaving their residential properties vacant. However, this tax should not apply to tourist-zoned accommodation such as hotels and strata hotels, where the intended property use is for nightly tourist rentals (not residential use).
- Whistler and other Resort destinations are heavily reliant on temporary foreign workers, working holiday visas, and post-graduate hospitality students, although recent legislation changes are reducing or limiting these programs. Despite average wages of between $20 and $30 per hour, businesses are still unable to attract Canadian employees to many of these positions.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Support YVR and DMO efforts to attract new carriers and routes, and use provincial influence with the federal government to open up air routes to new carriers that are currently being held by the national carrier but are not being utilized.
- Increase Provincial Government focus on economic development, working closely with destinations to identify key opportunities and proactively attract new investors, utilizing tax and other monetary incentives.
- Maintain MRDT funding for its core purpose of tourism programs, projects and promotion while providing interest-free or low-interest loans to support housing and infrastructure; and/or attract corporate investors to support new infrastructure.
- Increase communications about the STR registry, ensure the government software platform and phone lines are working and available, extend the 50%-off fee deadline for another month, and make this a one-time fee, not an annual fee.
- Consider a motor fuel tax of $2.5 cents to pay for increased transit, as was recommended by a Sea-to-Sky Regional Transit Committee of the three municipalities and two First Nations in the corridor in 2019.
- Create a central barrier along the entire Sea-to-Sky Highway 99 (not just in sections) to prevent cars crossing into oncoming traffic.
- The Province could influence the federal government to remove the residential UHT from tourist-zoned properties in resort destinations, as the legislation requires international homeowners to stay in their properties for a minimum of 28 days, taking this accommodation out of the tourist rental pool. Many international homeowners purchased these properties as an investment and to support tourism, and now feel betrayed that this tax is in conflict with the tourist-accommodation zoning.
- The Province could influence the federal government to lift caps on international workers, especially in resort destinations that do not have a large local population base to draw upon for employees.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Established in 2008, BCDMOA is a non-profit society advocating for over 50 community-based destination marketing and management organizations (DMOs). A respected industry leader, its diverse membership represents a range of communities in terms of size and scope, with over $120 million in spending on strategic tourism marketing and management projects.

BCDMOA
British Columbia Destination Management Organization Association

Most community DMOs are largely funded by the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT), which is an effective, legislated taxation instrument on customers of the commercial accommodation sector. MRDT results in the responsible growth of the B.C. visitor economy while delivering a triple bottom line return of tax revenue, jobs/wages, and positive economic impact to communities.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING B.C. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS

- Civic government attempts to change the core purpose of the MRDT system for tourism marketing, projects and programs (as well as affordable housing) could have significant consequences for the tourism industry if implemented.
- In the vast majority of situations, the intended use of MRDT funds has close alignment and strong support amongst industry, community, and local government. However, a few instances have arisen where differences occur, particularly around the definition of 'tourism projects'. These examples include infrastructure/capital projects that may or may not benefit the tourism sector. Although important, infrastructure projects should be funded outside of MRDT.
- There have been some examples whereby local industry, the accommodation sector and local government cannot agree on an operating model of the eligible entity or organization to execute the local program supported by MRDT. This has resulted in a scenario where a community is not served by a DMO and the benefits it brings.
- Expanding the current approved uses of MRDT would dilute the focus of the intended funds and undermine their effectiveness in supporting tourism industry priorities and programs. Additionally, further increasing the percentage of MRDT tax collected could weaken B.C.'s long-term competitiveness and customer perception of value for money in an already-inflated economic environment of increased costs and pricing.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- To prevent further dilution of MRDT, which would compromise the valuable work of DMOs, the current uses should not be expanded beyond tourism marketing, projects and programs, as well as affordable housing for workers.
- A stronger or clearer definition of 'projects' as one of three approved uses of MRDT within the current scope of MRDT regulations must be introduced to avoid confusion about what constitutes a tourism project versus those related to or impacted by visitors to a community.
- The percentage amount (2% or 3%) on MRDT collected via hotel room stays should not be increased unless or until a thorough analysis is undertaken to determine the benefits and risks of such a move, and subject to the current approval process for MRDT applications or renewals.



Photo credit to: Destination BC/Reuben Krabbe

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Destination Vancouver is the non-profit, member-based destination marketing and management organization for the City of Vancouver. Our purpose is to transform our communities and our visitors through the power of travel and to be thoughtful leaders, advocates and ambassadors for our city.

We work with many partners in Vancouver's visitor economy to develop compelling experiences and offerings for visitors and to promote Vancouver in key Canadian, U.S. and international markets for leisure travel and to attract major business conferences and destination events.

Metro Vancouver's visitor economy supports 63,000 jobs and generates over $9 billion in direct economic impact annually. In 2024, Vancouver welcomed 11.2 million overnight visitors, up 3% over the previous year. 26.2 million passengers transited through YVR, while 327 cruise ships carried 1.3 million passengers, up 7% year-over-year. Hotel occupancy averaged 80%, up 1.6% over 2023 while revenue per available room was $276, the highest among major Canadian metropolitan cities.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING DESTINATION VANCOUVER

- Continued public safety concerns, violent crime and street disorder and their impact on businesses, residents and reputational damage on visitation. There is also an increasing (or perceived to be) decline of the downtown core, which is replicated in communities across the province
- Increasing weaponization of travel and its potential impact on U.S. visitation. Given current tensions in the Canada / U.S. relationship, there is a pressing need to mitigate any potential decrease in U.S. visitation.
- Limitations with the Tourism Events Program (TEP). The current process allows application for funding only once business is secured.
- Expansion of Vancouver Convention Centre (East). This has been discussed for years but with limited concrete action. Continued high demand for the VCC supports the need for its expansion.
- Air Service Development. Provincial funding supports in other provinces impact B.C.'s air service competitiveness. Passenger leakage to other provinces erodes YVR's reputation, seat capacity and global competitiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Conduct a data-focused review on the outcomes of the three-year provincial trial of decriminalization. Consider rolling back of that program if the evidence dictates.
- Relocate or replace the Luugat low-barrier SRO (former Howard Johnson's) adjacent to Granville Street to reduce the level of disorder and create a safe environment.

- Disperse low-barrier supportive housing across the region and improve specialized services at those facilities.
- Increase Vancouver Police foot patrols and community policing offices across the downtown core to improve safety and security.
- Provide greater access to mental health resources, more treatment beds across the province, and consider mandatory treatment for individuals at greatest risk.
- End the revolving door of catch-and-release through advocating for federal bail reform and review of the minimum sentencing guidelines.
- Coordinate (shared) messaging that balances the 'buy Canadian' message with being welcoming to visitors and that our destination is open for business.
- Implement a proactive strategy for collaboration, messaging and thought leadership between key Canadian and U.S. markets (e.g. Vancouver / Seattle or B.C. / Washington State), particularly in the lead-up to FIFA World Cup 26.
- Ensure the visitor economy is included for consideration in any discussions of industry-specific government relief or support as economic condition evolve.
- To strengthen Vancouver's competitive advantage, allow application for funding during the bid stages for major events, not after the bid has been approved or rejected.
- Stabilize the events funding model to mitigate against inconsistencies with the funding process and availability.
- Partner with other levels of government to take explicit action in support of the expansion of the east convention centre and of the broader redevelopment of the waterfront. Establish an inter-governmental and industry taskforce with clear deliverables and timelines to establish feasibility of the expansion and next steps.
- Together with industry consultation and representation, establish and implement an on-going provincial program of financial incentives and marketing support to attract new airlines, increase air services into B.C. from international markets, and increase frequency and year-round service from existing markets.
- Consider other regional airports for inclusion in the program that would benefit from YVR's increased capacity and therefore encourage increased air travel throughout B.C.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Destination Greater Victoria (DGV) is the official not-for-profit destination management organization, comprised of 950 member businesses and municipalities. Greater Victoria is a world leading destination, consistently ranked as a preferred destination. As British Columbia's capital city, Victoria is the province's second international gateway for tourism with international air, ferry and cruise access.

DESTINATION GREATER VICTORIA

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING DESTINATION VICTORIA

- Greater Victoria is an underserved market in terms of hotels. DGV's recent Destination Master Plan noted that the region is in urgent need of 800–1,200 hotel rooms immediately and that the market could absorb up to 2,000 hotel rooms (i.e. full-service hotels with meeting rooms and amenities) in the next 10 years. While there is private sector interest in investing in hotels, with several developments in the pipeline, there are barriers to hotel development. Many developers are frustrated by the length and unpredictability of local government zoning/rezoning and applications processes that can span over many years driving up both hard and soft costs.
- Victoria has become a very successful destination for business events, meetings and conferences. However, the current Victoria Conference Centre is too small (circa 77,000 square feet) to meet demand, and significant business is being turned away. In addition, the current business lease agreement between the City of Victoria and Fairmont Empress/Bosa Corporation expires in 2037.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Examine what levers that the Province has to stimulate faster and more predictable development application processes for hotel developers who are ready to invest and create jobs. In the context of seeking to stimulate growth in our current environment, there is an opportunity for the Province to work with municipalities, exerting positive pressure where possible to speed up and make more predictable the development application and zoning process for hotels. By encouraging municipalities to prioritize hotels, as well as housing, existing demand will be met, B.C. construction workers and trades will be put to work, and tax revenues at all levels will be increased to provide resources for other priority programs.
- Through its Destination Master Planning Process, Destination Greater Victoria has identified three high level options for a new conference centre. While we understand the fiscal situation the Province of B.C. is in at present, now is the time to study and formulate a business case to prepare for the future. DGV proposes to work with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport to develop medium-to-long-term options for conference facilities in B.C.'s capital.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The B.C. Regional Tourism Secretariat (BCRTS) represents the shared interests of the regional tourism associations in the province: 4TVI (Vancouver Island), Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism, Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association, Northern British Columbia Tourism Association, and Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association. By working together across the province, B.C.'s regional destination management organizations are maximizing their collective expertise and resources and leveraging the local knowledge and long-standing relationships they've held across the province for more than 50 years.

Among its many initiatives, BCRTS is working with provincial and community organizations to improve outcomes for destinations in a crisis situation. Major emergencies have affected all regions of British Columbia at some point in recent years. While prevention of these disasters would be ideal, emergency preparedness and tourism coordination is the next most effective step to ensure both residents and visitors are informed and safe.

Under the guise of the Tourism Emergency Framework, which outlines the roles and responsibilities of all levels of government and non-government tourism agencies and identifies how destination marketing/management organizations play a role to support and assist communities if and when they are asked, BCRTS's role is to ensure familiarity with the Framework and to support the creation and completion of a crisis communications plan for those who would be the key point of contact for visitors to their area.

Another key priority of the BCRTS is to support a more sustainable and resilient tourism industry across British Columbia. As such, the BCRTS developed the The Tourism Resiliency Network, a program, launched in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program provided B.C. tourism businesses with hands-on support to navigate challenges and adapt to change, including access to advisory services, training, and resources. The success of this program led to a larger partnership with Destination British Columbia and the province wide BC Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative (BCTCRI). With initial funding from the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport, administered by Destination British Columbia, BCTCRI was a provincial project focused on building a foundational program to support a resilient tourism sector that is prepared to adapt to climate change. BCTCRI was comprised of four key program areas that invest in facilitated sustainability and adaptation planning for tourism businesses, micro-grants to support implementation, the formation of a data framework, and province-wide networking opportunities. The initial investment provided support for the program to run for 2 years.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING REGIONAL DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS

- Despite consistent, annual major climate events (e.g. wildfires, heat domes, flooding), regional destination management organizations (BCRTS) do not have consistent and sufficient funding available to support the planning, training, and delivery of emergency management services as outlined in the Tourism Emergency Framework.
- Despite its overwhelming success, the majority of the previously committed funding for BCTCRI expired on March 31st.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Through Emergency Management & Climate Readiness, provide immediate and annual secured funding in the amount of $500,000 to allow BCRTS to execute its emergency management plans.
- Through CleanBC 2030 or other provincial initiatives, provide annual funding for the BCRTS to support and sustain the BC Tourism Climate Resiliency Initiative for the next five years.



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The British Columbia Hotel Association (BCHA) represents the interests of over 700 hotels, motels, resorts and accommodators, as well as Allied members and Premium Partners who support the sector, across the province. Our industry contributes significantly to British Columbia's economy, supporting more than 60,000 direct jobs and generating over $8 billion annually in economic impact through accommodation, tourism, and associated activities.

BRITISH COLUMBIA HOTEL ASSOCIATION

The accommodations sector is an essential pillar of B.C.'s tourism economy, providing year-round employment and welcoming millions of international and domestic visitors. The challenges posed by the pandemic have left our sector navigating critical operational issues, particularly in relation to workforce shortages and the ability to grow capacity in a highly competitive market.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE HOTEL SECTOR

- The hospitality sector faces acute workforce shortages that are compounded by restrictive immigration policies. Barriers to securing international visas and seasonal work permits limit the ability to access a reliable workforce for both high-demand peak seasons and year-round operations.
- Seasonal operations, particularly in resort destinations, are significantly impacted by visa challenges, which prevent timely access to foreign workers who could fill vital roles. Delays in the approval process and restrictive eligibility criteria exacerbate operational difficulties. The current system does not adequately consider the unique, fluctuating labour demands of the tourism industry.
- The hospitality industry is grappling with increasing operational costs, which are putting added strain on hotels. Insurance premiums have seen dramatic hikes in recent years, adding significant financial pressure. At the same time, inflation has driven up the costs of goods and services, impacting everything from food and beverage supplies to energy expenses. Labour costs continue to rise, compounded by recruitment challenges and demands for competitive wages. These factors, combined with tariffs and supply chain disruptions, have raised the perception that hotels are becoming unaffordable for both visitors and operators. The overall cost burden jeopardizes the profitability and sustainability of many small and medium-sized businesses within the sector.
- Alberta's provincial government is developing a provincially mandated Destination Marketing Fee (DMF) platform, a move that will significantly increase marketing and destination development investments and allow Travel Alberta's investment to be fully focused on destination management. Alberta's consolidated approach will give it a competitive edge in attracting domestic and international visitors, potentially impacting B.C.'s market share.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Enhance Immigration and Work Visa Processes:
  - Implement expedited immigration pathways specific to the hospitality and tourism sectors to ensure a more predictable and accessible workforce, similar to the model Alberta has created.
  - Implement streamlined visa and work permit programs to reduce delays in bringing seasonal and skilled international workers to B.C..
  - Collaborate with the federal government to introduce sector-specific visa categories that prioritize hospitality workers and address peak-season labour demands.
- Expand Seasonal Work Permits:
  - Introduce more flexible and responsive seasonal work permit criteria tailored to the cyclical nature of tourism.
  - Establish a faster and more reliable process for resort towns and seasonal tourism operators to secure necessary labour, particularly in high-demand winter and summer months.
- Collaborate with Alberta's tourism strategy:
  - Monitor Alberta's development of its DMF platform and explore potential cross-border collaborations to jointly market Western Canada as a premier tourism destination, benefiting both provinces.



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Restaurants Canada is a growing community of 60,000 foodservice businesses, including restaurants, bars, caterers, institutions, and suppliers. We connect our members through services, research, & advocacy. Canada's foodservice sector is a $100 billion industry. As Canada's number one source of first jobs, we directly employ more than one million people in every Canadian community.

Restaurants Canada
The voice of foodservice | La voix des services alimentaires

In British Columbia, there are currently 15,300 food service businesses in operation employing 197,000 people which makes up 7% of the province's workforce. The foodservice sector produced $20.7 billion in revenues in British Columbia in 2024 and purchases $6.7 billion in food and beverage products annually. Our industry in British Columbia also contributes $4.5 billion in federal, provincial, and municipal taxes.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE FOOD SERVICE SECTOR

- As a labour-intensive low margin industry, our members need adequate labour supply and stable labour costs to survive. Recent B.C. labour policies including; new delivery driver regulations, Employer Health Tax, paid sick days, and new statutory holidays, combined with the highest provincial minimum wage in the country make B.C. the highest labour cost jurisdiction in Canada. At the same time due to demographic labour shortages many restaurants, especially in rural and resort areas cannot attract enough staff to be fully operational.
- Our industry also depends on British Columbians having enough disposable income to visit their local hospitality business as well as stable operating costs to be profitable. Unfortunately, British Columbians are the most indebted Canadians which has led to a decrease in restaurant sales while overall operating costs including food, labour, and lease costs, have increased by more than 20% leading to 53% of the industry being unprofitable which resulted in a record number of restaurant bankruptcies in 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

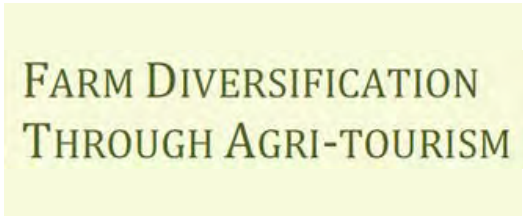
- "Do no further harm" with new labour and environmental policies that increase operating costs.
- Remove the CleanBC 2030 natural gas ban and do not include IC&I waste to EPR.
- Provide income tax relief to all British Columbians to increase their disposable income which will increase their spending at restaurants & bars.
- Implement a Tourism & Hospitality PNP stream reserving several Permanent Resident immigration spots for in demand tourism & hospitality occupations.
- Permanently eliminate the paused WorkSafe BC all verifiable gratuities as assessed payroll policy directive which contravenes CRA's direct tip policy.
- Provide hospitality employers with a labour rebate to help offset growing labour costs through a WorkSafe BC premium rebate for tourism & hospitality classifications.
- Eliminate new permitting and licensing red tape.
- Implement policies to reduce the growing costs of dealing with rising property crime including vandalism/graffiti, loitering, waste & litter, break-ins and theft.



Photo credit to: Destination Vancouver/Kindred & Scout

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Agri-tourism is a niche sub-sector of the growing Rural Tourism sector in British Columbia (DBC). While the sector is primarily supported by the Ministry of Tourism, agri-tourism operations are subject to regulations set out by Ministry of Agriculture & Food (through the Agriculture Land Commission - ALC) and by variable bylaws set out by independent local governments.



In 2016, B.C.'s Ministry of Agriculture set out new regulations to "clarify the definition and scope of (allowable) agri-tourism activities." Eight years later some farmers are struggling to develop their agri-tourism experiences with the barriers some regulations impose and due to uncertainty caused by confusion and resistance from ALC and local government staff.

As a significant contributor to the growing Rural Tourism sector, agri-tourism aligns with British Columbia's Tourism Strategy Framework by attracting visitors into less traveled regions while helping to reduce the risks and impacts of "over-tourism". It also significantly contributes to rural visitor economies with direct benefits to farming families and their communities, provides farmers with much needed opportunity to diversify their products and revenue streams to increase farm business viability, offers low impact, high-in-demand regenerative tourism and hospitality experiences across British Columbia, and further meets the desire of visitors to connect food and drink with People and Place.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING AGRI-TOURISM

- ALC regulations limit the number of annual events to 10 which is not sufficient to maintain an agri-tourism operation.
- ALC regulations do not permit permanent facilities for agri-tourism activities.
- ALC staff are confused or do not understand regulations including use of existing structures and definition of non-farm vs agri-tourism events.
- Alcohol production farms are provided more agri-tourism opportunities than food production farms.
- Cafes and restaurants are not allowed on most agri-tourism farms.
- There is little to no room for innovation, creativity, or to tailor agri-tourism offerings to align with farmers' strengths and stories to provide authentic experiences for our guests.
- Allowance for on-farm accommodation for visitors/guests is very limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Level the Playing Field' for ALR farms without alcohol production to allow:
  - Unlimited events
  - Permanent facilities
  - Catering, cafe and restaurants
- Update ALC Use Regulations and local government bylaws to:
  - Support a wide range of activities
  - Flexibility to allow farmers to adapt to the tourism market and find their niche
  - Reduce barriers and approvals
  - Provide consistent opportunities for all farmers
- Encourage ALC and local government staff to support agri-tourism in all its forms and help farmers navigate the regulations.



Photo credit to: Destination BC/Hubert Kang

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The British Columbia Craft Brewers Guild (Guild) is a member-driven, not-for-profit organization representing over 220 independently owned and operated craft breweries across more than 80 communities in B.C. Our industry is a powerful economic driver, accounting for $340 million of the Liquor Distribution Branch's projected $1 billion in revenue. We generate nearly 5,500 direct jobs across a range of sectors, such as agriculture, transportation and hospitality.

The Guild owns and administers the BC Ale Trail, a dynamic platform that promotes the sector, drives tourism and economic growth across B.C. by connecting over 200 craft breweries to 22 self-guided Ale Trails. The BC Ale Trail is also a key partner of Destination BC, encouraging travel through all regions of the province.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE CRAFT BREWING SECTOR

- Like many small business owners in our province, we have yet to recover from the impacts of COVID. The anticipated post-pandemic boom never materialized, and our industry continues to face significant financial pressures. Over the past three years, overall costs have risen by 32%, with packaging up 47% and ingredient costs increasing by 41%. Given that beer is already heavily taxed at 50%, these rising costs cannot simply be passed on to consumers. As a result, cash flow has become our most pressing challenge, which is only being exacerbated by the tariffs, particularly those on aluminum.
- The BC Ale Trail is incredibly proud of our partnership with Destination BC and the pivotal role we have played in the program's success as one of its founding business organizations. This year, we were informed that we would receive only 90% of our requested funding due to a 33% increase in applications. While it's encouraging to see such strong demand for the DBC's Marketing Co-op program, the overall budget has not increased in step with its success. As a result, more organizations are now sharing the same pool of funds. Additionally, funding has been extended for two years at the current rate, meaning that by 2026, our allocation will effectively decrease by more than 10% when adjusted for inflation. Given these constraints, we have no choice but to scale back our spending plan, including some promotional efforts aimed at increasing visitation across the province.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Immediately approve the BC Craft Brewers Guild's Markup Proposal, which was submitted to the Finance Minister and Public Safety Minister and Solicitor General Minister in August 2024. The current markup model, unchanged since 2017, no longer reflects today's economic realities and must be revised to sustain B.C.'s craft beer industry.
- Convene a roundtable with key stakeholders to review the Marketing Co-op program's funding model, its challenges, and opportunities for improvement.
- Propose a targeted campaign in 197 BC Liquor Stores, featuring BC Ale Trail breweries by tourism region, with local craft distilleries, wineries, and cideries, and leverage public momentum from recent tariff concerns to boost support for hyper-local products and businesses.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

ABLE BC is an industry association that advocates for smart B.C. cannabis policies that support diverse communities, contributes to local economies, and helps small businesses succeed.

ABLE BC
FOR A RESPONSIBLE CANNABIS INDUSTRY

Despite being one of the most highly regulated consumer packaged goods in B.C., the legal cannabis industry is a key economic contributor to the province. Legally licensed cannabis retailers purchase over half a billion dollars of wholesale cannabis annually, while licensed producers have paid nearly $400 million dollars of excise tax to the provincial treasury since legalisation. Additionally, data from the BC Liquor Distribution Branch shows that consumer demand for cannabis has grown consistently at about 20 per cent per year since 2018. Future projections indicate demand will continue to grow as more business-friendly policies come about.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE CANNABIS TOURISM SECTOR

- Despite these successes, industry has been unable to create and promote tourism experiences that would drive economic diversity and create new jobs. For example, regulatory restrictions around marketing and advertising make it impossible to promote cannabis tourism businesses.
- B.C. has still not developed a regulatory framework to permit cannabis sales at public events, licensed cannabis lounges, or other tourism and hospitality experiences. As a result, industry is reluctant to invest further capital into the province until government implement changes.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- To help industry prepare for international experiences such as FIFA 2026, fast-track regulatory work to permit sales of cannabis products at public events (including by launching a pilot program in summer 2025).
- Develop a framework for cannabis consumption lounges and hospitality spaces.
- Reduce or eliminate restrictions on marketing and promoting legal cannabis businesses.



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Pacific Whale Watch Association (PWWA) is a community of ecotourism professionals with a shared commitment to education, conservation, and responsible wildlife viewing in British Columbia and Washington state.

PACIFIC WHALE WATCH ASSOCIATION

14 PWWA member companies in British Columbia depart from 10 different locations

- 226,000+ guests served annually throughout the province
- 1,162 jobs supported in B.C. communities (593 direct, 271 induced, 299 indirect)
- $132.0 million total economic value supported in the province each year
- Average expenditure is $320 per person, per day

Most whale populations in B.C. are doing quite well, but salmon-eating Southern Resident killer whales are endangered. PWWA tours focus on non-endangered Bigg's (mammal-hunting) killer whales, Northern Resident killer whales, humpback whales, grey whales, and minke whales. Our tours do not view endangered Southern Residents, and have not since 2019 under Transport Canada's Sustainable Whale Watchers Authorization (SWWA) Program.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE WHALE WATCHING SECTOR

Fisheries & Oceans Canada is in the process of amending B.C.'s Marine Mammal Regulations in an effort to further protect endangered Southern Resident killer whales. We are gravely concerned about some of the measures being considered that would cause harm to our professional whale watching community, and the broader B.C. communities where we work and live. The proposed measures of concern include:

- Increased approach distances for all killer whales in B.C., including non-endangered populations upon which our businesses rely.
- Increased approach distances for other non-endangered whale species, such as humpback whales, which are also critical to our businesses.
- Eliminating the SWWA exemption that allows professional whale watch operators to view non-endangered killer whales from a distance of 200 metres.
- Implementing a professional whale watching license system that could limit the number of companies permitted to operate in B.C., restrict daily operating hours or tour offerings, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase the approach distance for endangered Southern Resident killer whales only. We do not view Southern Residents, so an increased approach distance would not impact our businesses or the local B.C. economies where we operate.
- Maintain the existing viewing distance of 200 metres for non-endangered killer whales (Bigg's, Northern Residents) and 100 metres for B.C.'s other whale species. Anything farther will negatively impact the quality of our tours and place B.C. at an extreme competitive disadvantage compared to other global destinations in which very few, if any, whale watching regulations exist.
- That any potential commercial whale watching license program not restrict the ability of whale watch operators to offer B.C. visitors a world-class whale watching experience.



Photo credit to: Destination Vancouver/Prince of Whales Whale Watching

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

As Canada's largest carrier, Air Canada services 14 airports in B.C. with direct service to 26 domestic, 27 USA, and 22 international destinations. The airline employs over 8,000 people in B.C. and its operations support some 41,000 direct, indirect, induced and catalytic jobs throughout the province.

AIR CANADA

Air Canada's GDP contribution to British Columbia stands at $4.9 billion with a total economic output of $10.5B. In 2023, the airline delivered more than 1.1 million foreign visitors to B.C., facilitating some $1.3 billion in tourist spending.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE AVIATION SECTOR

- In 2022, the Province expanded the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to apply to jet fuel. The LCFS sets targets for Carbon Intensity" (CI) reductions as of January 1st, 2026; and volumetric targets for the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). 1% in 2028, 2% in 2029 and 3% in 2030.
- To remain compliant with the LCFS, a fuel supplier must ensure that debits incurred from supplying higher carbon fuels are offset by credits. To achieve zero debits, a fuel supplier (including AC) would need to add low carbon fuel into the mix or buy credits. The CI reductions are set to come into force in 2026 . However, we are still dealing in a market that is not mature.
- When first proposed by government officials in 2022, we were advised that British Columbia would align the proposed regulations as they apply to jet fuel with schemes in place on the West Coast of the United States, namely in California, Oregon and Washington, to avoid creating a competitive disadvantage. As currently written, B.C.'s regulations are not aligned because Washington and Oregon have recently passed similar LCFS regulations where jet fuel is treated as an opt in fuel and offer an additional State SAF Tax Credit (Washington State) for the production, blending, and sale of SAF in the state. In addition, California recently agreed to pause its proposed legislation for an intra state SAF mandate scheme and focus on cost competitive SAF production and supply initiatives with industry.
- While policy interventions are necessary to accelerate the production and use of SAF in B.C. and Canada, we continue to have significant concerns about the current proposed timelines. Given that 2026 is just nine months away, with no local production established in the Province—except for a one-time production at Parkland in Burnaby—or elsewhere in Canada for that matter, and very limited options for SAF import at this time, the current schedule of CI reductions will not stimulate SAF supply availability.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- B.C. should follow the approach taken by California and the rest of the West Coast states and maintain aviation fuel as an opt in fuel at least until 2028. This will allow the market to attract new suppliers and incentivize domestic producers to switch over from RD to SAF.
- Alternatively, airlines will most likely rely on purchasing credits or pay a penalty in order to comply – which represents an additional cost on airlines with no net environmental benefit. This would put airlines operating at YVR at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis Seattle at the worst possible time.
- While we agree that measures need to be put in place to effect real change and actual availability on SAF, we recommend that jet fuel be covered by the regulations on a voluntary opt-in basis from 2026 to 2028 with ability to generate credits and that the carbon intensity (CI) mandate be delayed to 2028 with a review period every year thereafter to assess market conditions of availability of SAF. SAF needs a higher incentive than other renewable fuels to account for additional production costs and loss in yield. California adopted such an approach, and we have seen early positive results in terms of production and availability of SAF in that State.



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Rocky Mountaineer is an anchor tourism attraction and a significant contributor to the economy in Western Canada. Founded in 1990, Rocky Mountaineer is a luxury tourist train that showcases some of the most spectacular scenery North America has to offer via our spacious glass-dome train coaches.

Our world-renowned trains travel from April through October, connecting British Columbia and Alberta, with stops in Jasper, Lake Louise, Banff, Vancouver, Whistler, Quesnel, and Kamloops. In 2021, we expanded our operations to the Southwest United States, where we operate a similar tourist train that enables cross-promotion for greater guest growth.

Rocky Mountaineer welcomes more than 85,000 guests annually, with 95% arriving from international markets, including 40% coming from the United States. Each year, we contribute more than $250 million in GDP, with total contributions exceeding $5 billion to the Canadian economy. While we offer two- and three-day train journeys, our guests average a two-week stay in Canada, where they contribute further to local economies. Partners are critical to our operations, and we have a supplier network of more than 1,500 businesses, including hotels, tour operators, travel agencies, railroads and rail companies, catering and supply companies, mechanical manufacturers, merchandise providers, and more. We have a year-round employee base of more than 300 professionals in Canada, which grows to over 800 during our operating season when we hire seasonal frontline hospitality professionals. Over the past 35 years, Rocky Mountaineer has become a Canadian tourism icon, hosting millions of international visitors and generating significant economic benefits in British Columbia and Alberta.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING ROCKY MOUNTAINEER AND THE TOURISMINDUSTRY

The trade dispute and tariffs between Canada and the US could have a significantly negative impact on tourism.

- Negative perception and uncertainty: The continuing uncertainty and negative sentiment between the two countries discourages international travel.Travellers want stability, predictability, and sense of safety,and this trade dispute undermines that. There is the potential for long-term damage to Canada's reputation and resulting decline in traveller demand if the negativity continues.
- Greater financial burden: Tariffs on goods and services results in increased costs for businesses. This is then passed on to travellers, making travel, packages, accommodations, and activities more expensive.
- Trip cancellations and decreased demand: Declines in visitors results in revenue loss for our business and those in our supply chain, including hotels, tour operators, transportation providers, restaurants, and other tourism-related businesses. This loss of business would lead to decreases in employment and cascade through local economies, similar to what was experienced during the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Tourism is a major economic driver in communities, supporting small- and medium-sized businesses, creating valuable jobs, and contributing to community well-being. Competitive destinations worldwide actively invest in growing and promoting their tourism sectors, and Canada must do the same to remain competitive, enable sustained growth, and ensure long-term success.
- The US is the largest source market for Rocky Mountaineer and the largest source of international tourists to Canada. In 2023, Canada welcomed 21.2 million US tourists, contributing $12.9 billion in spending to the economy. Even a 10% reduction in travel could result in a notable loss for both our business and the visitor economy. Canada can leverage the current exchange rate, which favours US travellers, and encourage more visitors from south of the border.
- The growing negative sentiment toward Americans and cross-border travel could translate in a decline in US tourism to Canada. Canada needs positive and welcoming messages to encourage American visitors and reinforce Canada's reputation as a safe and inviting destination.
- We can continue to promote domestic tourism, but our visitor economy relies on international travellers. We need to diversify our marketing efforts in key international markets to leverage Canada's favourable reputation and support longer-term growth for the industry.



Photo credit to: Destination BC/@nomadasaurus

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

As the most powerful social economic development infrastructure in a modern economy, aviation and aerospace are critical to growing the Province. The sector supports British Columbians in their lives every day. The B.C. Aviation Council (BCAC), in partnership with supporters, stakeholders, and the community, positively influences the well-being of British Columbia's aviation and aerospace sector.

BCAC BRITISH COLUMBIA AVIATION COUNCIL

BCAC is an 87-year-old registered charitable organization with over 1100 supporting members. Our vision is for an aviation and aerospace industry that is visible, connected and thriving. The Council exists to promote, stimulate and encourage the sustainable development, growth and advancement of aviation and aerospace in British Columbia.

The aviation sector is vital to tourism growth as it is instrumental in the movement of people to and within British Columbia. Using conservative mythology, PwC estimated that in 2019, the B.C. aviation sector facilitated approximately $6 billion in GDP, employed 32,750 full-time equivalents, generated $3.2 billion in labour income, and contributed $1.2 billion in tax revenue to federal, provincial, and local governments.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE B.C. AVIATION & AEROSPACE SECTOR

- Most airports in British Columbia have experienced significant under-investment for many years. Across Canada and within B.C., few airports with under one million passengers annually generate net revenues. As a result, most airports are disadvantaged by depreciating assets – runways, aircraft parking, facilities, heavy equipment for firefighting, snow removal and runway maintenance – with little or no ability to upgrade, build or maintain these assets.
- There is a significant shortage of highly skilled aviation and aerospace employees ranging from pilots and aircraft maintenance engineers to customer service agents and ground handlers. COVID exacerbated the shortage, especially with non-flight crew employees. Consequently, many services and operations have been curtailed, which disproportionately hurts smaller or more rural communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Continued support for the B.C. Air Access Program (BCAAP) to ensure it remains Canada's best funded and most progressive smaller airport improvement cost-sharing program. Increase annual funding from $11 million (2024) to $20 million and expand its coverage to explicitly support sustainability projects. This funding is required to ensure all regions of the province can benefit from aviation-supported high-value tourism and under-recognized general (private aircraft) aviation tourism.
- Challenge the federal government to significantly enhance the Federal Airport Capital Assistance Program (ACAP) to increase program funding to at least match the per capita commitment by British Columbia, and press for flexibility to ensure airports without scheduled passenger traffic are eligible for support.

- Remove the quota restrictions on international students attending flight schools to obtain a commercial pilot license. It is estimated that at least 65% of these students hope to build their careers in Canada and each one contributes over $150,000 in tuition fees and basic living expenses to the provincial economy.
- Ensure that the B.C. Student Aid Program reflects the true cost of obtaining a commercial pilots license (tuition $125k plus living expenses) instead of limiting assistance to a maximum of $5,000.
- Compel the federal government to conduct a comprehensive review of aviation regulations, policies and programs with the goals of decreasing costs and regulatory burden without compromising safety. More emphasis must be made on applying cost/benefit analysis on proposed rulemaking to ensure proposals are truly enhancing safety without layering more unnecessary costs and regulatory burden on aviation and aerospace certificate holders. Of particular concern are the current flight and duty time regulatory amendments.
- Make public the recent ICAO Safety Audit that gave Canada a “barely passing grade” so the aviation industry can work with government to rectify this damaging finding.
- Compel the federal government to change its policy on large airport rents and other surcharges (e.g. security) collected and remitted to general revenues, to alternatively reinvest back into airport infrastructure, technology to address security issues, to Nav Canada services, and other measures to ensure a more competitive, stable and accessible airline sector in Canada.



Photo credit to: Destination Vancouver/Harbour Air

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Adventure tourism and ecotourism (also known as backcountry tourism) are vital economic drivers for rural British Columbia, deeply connected to the Super, Natural BC™ and the Wild Within brands. As a sector, we emphasize land stewardship, operate with a light environmental footprint, and provide high-yield tourism experiences. Guide outfitting, heli-skiing, and wildlife viewing attract the highest per-day, per-capita clients of all tourists visiting British Columbia.

Adventure tourism plays a significant role in British Columbia's economy, contributing $3.2 billion annually and supporting thousands of family-sustaining jobs. These businesses drive investments in infrastructure, purchasing, marketing, training, and public safety, particularly in rural areas. Tourism is the backbone of our economy, supporting countless jobs in both the front country and backcountry. It serves as both a gateway to employment and a long-term career path for many British Columbians. Moreover, the sector fosters strong partnerships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, embodying a deep commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING ADVENTURE TOURISM

- Adventure tourism businesses require financing for both startup and ongoing operations which enables capital development and growth. Investors assess risk before providing financing, evaluating a business's plan, risk level, and repayment capacity. In adventure tourism, the tenure type and duration significantly influence risk assessments, impacting loan values, interest rates, and repayment terms.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Key Adventure Tourism stakeholders emphasize a shared priority—regulatory changes and non-financial support to enhance business certainty and investor confidence, particularly in the area of land and marine tenure security and permits. For adventure tourism businesses, tenure and permit security means:

- Long-term tenures and permits with clear mid-term replacement language, proportional to the level of investment.
- Certainty in process steps and timelines for all applications (new and renewal).
- Clarity on how management plans will need to be updated over time.
- Provide a clear and predictable dispute resolution process for tenure denials.
- Defined cancellation provisions outlining process, timing, and fair compensation.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

HeliCat Canada (HCC) is the trade organization representing 42 helicopter and snowcat skiing businesses in British Columbia. These 42 businesses create $584 million in total annual economic output to B.C.'s economy, and provide 4,869 family-supporting jobs (mostly in rural communities). 84.1% of the sector's guests come from outside Canada, which makes it a globally unique export sector.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE HELICAT SECTOR

- Most of the sector's activities occur on Crown land and provincial protected areas. As a result, a strong and predictable Land Act tenure and Park Act permit system is critical to the sector's success. At present, policies and implementation of policies are threatening existing and future investments in the sector (in infrastructure, people, environmental stewardship, and partnerships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities).
- Tenure and permit term lengths are decreasing; application processes take many years to reach decisions; operating restrictions are added unilaterally by government without consultation or consideration of economic, employment or community impacts; and there is no certainty about compensation if tenures or permits are cancelled or substantially changed. These, together, are creating significant uncertainty and risk for the sector's 42 businesses.
- Existing investments are at risk, and new investments are either on hold or are shifting to other jurisdictions in North America because of the slow response permit approval process and reduced tenure length

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Direct Minister of Water, Lands & Resource Stewardship, as well as the Ministry of Environment and B.C. Parks to Issue long-term tenures and permits (standard of 30 years or more) commensurate with level of investment, with clear and unambiguous mid-term replacement language.
- Commit to clarity on process steps, and a 180-day turn-around time for all applications (new and replacement).
- Commit to a collaborative and transparent approach with the sector to manage tenures and permits.
- Develop clear tenure and permit cancellation provisions that define process, timing, and (where relevant) compensation.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Big White Central reservations employs a total of 150 staff members, 130 of whom are seasonal employees working from November to April.

Under the current regulations, they are required to provide eligible employees with up to five days of paid sick leave per year if they need to stay home due to illness or injury. While this policy is reasonable for full-time yearly employees, it poses considerable difficulties for seasonal staff.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING LARGE TOURISM OPERATORS

On average, we experience 500 sick hours per two-week pay period, with an all-time high of 613 hours per pay period. Seasonal ski area workers are often employed up to 6 months (e.g. Nov 15 – April 15). On average, each employee takes 4.2 days of sick time off during this period of employment.

The 90-day probation period usually falls between mid-February and mid-March. Experience has shown this creates a spike in sick days late in the season before contracts end (most notably in March). Seasonal workers are hourly and have varied schedules. An average days' pay frequently amounts to more than the employee was scheduled to work. Some work four 10-hour shifts per week, yet are paid for five, making them eligible for 50 hours of sick leave. Contract employees could receive more than 5 days of sick leave, due to multiple contracts.

This high rate of sick leave usage among seasonal employees creates several challenges:

- Increased Overhead Costs: When a staff member calls in sick, Big White is forced to pay both the sick employee and a replacement. This significantly increases overhead costs, making it financially unsustainable.
- Guest Experience: The frequent need to replace sick employees can negatively impact the guest experience, as low staffing levels produce slower attendant rates.
- Staff Burnout: The constant need to cover for sick colleagues leads to burnout among our regular staff, further exacerbating the problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Amend the eligibility requirements for seasonal employees.
  - Increase probation period to six months.
  - Pro-rate paid sick days by contract length (e.g. a four-month contract yields 1.6 days, not 5 days).
- Adjust how sick days are paid based on hours (not days).
- Provide alternative forms of support for seasonal employees.
- Change the eligibility criteria from 90 to 180 days that an employee must have worked with an employer before receiving sick pay benefits.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Boating BC Association represents over 300 businesses and organizations in the recreational boating sector. Boating BC owns and operates the Vancouver International Boat Show each year in downtown Vancouver and it provides recreational boaters with resources and information on safe boating practices and promotes recreational boating through a variety of digital and traditional media.

Recreational boating in B.C. is a $2B a year industry with roughly 5000 new boats sold each year in the province, coupled with economic spin offs. The industry supports over 15,000 jobs. There are close to 400,000 boats licensed in the province and almost 700,000 B.C. residents possess a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) This is in addition to the thousands of national and international guests who come to B.C. each year to enjoy both salt and freshwater boating opportunities.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE RECREATION BOATING SECTOR

- B.C., and particularly the South Coast, has a significant need for additional marina slips for seasonal and transient moorage alike. Marinas are typically granted 30-year water lot leases from the provincial government in order to operate their businesses. With climate change adaptation strategies, marinas are faced with ever-increasing demands on infrastructure to be both resilient, and environmentally friendly.
- As such, the 30-year lease terms are becoming less attractive for the financial institutions to loan money for infrastructure expansion and improvements. This is coupled with extensive delays currently being experienced by operators in acquiring water lot lease renewals. The renewal process is being slowed significantly by an extended consultation process and uncertainty regarding timelines and outcomes. This extended and uncertain process hinders infrastructure investment and business viability. It also over time, reduces the available inventory of moorage as infrastructure becomes too old and unsafe for marina operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Boating BC supports shared and equitable access to B.C.s waterways and wants to work with all stakeholders to achieve this goal.
- Boating BC can be a valuable resource for the provincial government providing input and resources in the management of moorage throughout the province. Boating BC can also be an information source for resident and non-resident recreational boaters supporting this valuable sector of the tourism and hospitality industry.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Marine Tourism is a key economic driver for B.C. representing high yield tourism experiences, driving investments in infrastructure and environmental stewardship for remote and urban coastal destinations.

Marine tourism is a consistent economic contributor. During COVID, boating flourished as a safe experience for Canadian boating enthusiasts. 2024 visitation is back to pre-covid levels with a balance of visitor origin from the USA. Coastal marine tourism provides access to remote Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, where environmental stewardship and sustainability focus on respect and cultural education.

The B.C. Ocean Boating Tourism Association (AHOY BC), is a non-profit society and launched AHOYBC.COM in April of 2015, which consists of an online travel planning site for West Coast boaters, in partnership with Destination BC. Activities and benefits for coastal boaters and 56 participating coastal communities in 12 coastal tourism regions are closely connected to core issues and opportunities identified by the Adventure Tourism Coalition, with a specific focus on marine characteristics.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING MARINE TOURISM

- Marine tourism businesses require financing for both startup and ongoing operations but the absence of long-term tenure security is making traditional financing extremely difficult.
- Before providing financing, investors assess risk by evaluating a business's plan, risk level, and repayment capacity. In marine tourism, the tenure type and duration significantly influence risk assessments, impacting loan values, interest rates, and repayment terms. Without long-term, secure permits, marine tourism businesses have little chance for survival.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Issue long-term tenures and permits with clear mid-term replacement language, proportional to the level of investment.
- Provide certainty in process steps and timelines for all applications (new and replacement).
- Provide clarity on how management plans evolve over time.
- Provide defined permit cancellation provisions outlining process, timing, and fair compensation.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Since 1980 the Sport Fishing Institute of B.C. (SFI) has represented the interests of over 350,000 tidal water public fishery participants and is independent of but serving as a key component of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Sport Fishing Advisory Board.

SPORT FISHING INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

In addition to work on collaborative projects intended to optimize the benefits that come from sustainable opportunities for the recreational fishing sector, the SFI raises issues of critical importance for B.C.'s public fishery with decision makers in Municipal, Provincial, Federal and First Nation governments in Canada.

- $1.1 billion in direct revenue to the B.C. economy
- 9000 jobs
- 350,000 tidal water sport fishing licenses annually
- B.C.'s recreational fishery accounts for $389.8 Million GDP, or 39% GDP created from all fisheries, including aquaculture, and 60% of jobs
- $4.5 million in annual contribution from public fishery license sales
- The public fishery in B.C. contributed to the above while harvesting 15% of halibut and 20% combined salmon species

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE RECREATIONAL FISHING SECTOR

- Marine tourism businesses require financing for both startup and ongoing operations but the absence of long-term tenure security is making traditional financing extremely difficult.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- To maximize the benefits of tidal water recreational fisheries to B.C., a stable, long-term funding mechanism is needed. The preferred model is based on B.C.'s successful user-pay fund, where freshwater recreational fishing license fees are directed to an independent society (FFSBC) for governance and program oversight, a model in place since 2003.While this is a federal initiative, Provincial support would be helpful and important to achieve success in B.C..
- Mark selective fisheries (MSF) allow anglers to retain marked hatchery salmon while releasing unmarked salmon, helping to protect wild stocks. This sustainable approach, tested by DFO in Canada and used in the U.S. for over 20 years, requires further progress in marking Canadian hatchery stocks. Collaboration to enhance marking capacity and continued support for hatchery improvements through the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative will help align Canadian practices with U.S. standards and allow exploration of new MSF opportunities.
- The Fishing BC app, integrated with DFO systems, enhances data collection and accountability in the recreational sector. The app stores licenses, records catches, and provides real-time regulatory updates. Despite significant investments by DFO and the B.C. Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, further work is needed to fully realize the app's potential for catch monitoring, enforcement, and communication.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Since 1944, the British Columbia Lodging and Campgrounds Association has represented small to medium-sized campgrounds, supported the camping, RV, and lodging sectors, and promoted service excellence.

British Columbia Lodging and Campgrounds Association

RVing and camping offer safe, affordable, family-friendly activities that build community, create lasting memories, and encourage exploration of British Columbia's natural beauty.

Over a million people go RVing and camping in B.C. annually, taking about 3 trips, staying for 4 nights on average, and spending an average of $118.57 per person per night. Over 320,000 B.C. residents own an RV, accounting for 33% of camping nights; tenting makes up 47%, and glamping/lodging covers 20%.

B.C. has over 1,878 campgrounds managed by Parks Canada, BC Parks, provincial recreation sites, and independent owners. These campgrounds generate significant economic activity, contributing jobs and prosperity to small and rural communities. By 2025, they are expected to contribute more than $1.7 billion in direct spending annually.

CORES ISSUES AFFECTING THE CAMPING SECTOR

- Inflation is increasing the rate difference between public and private campsites. Private campgrounds are facing rising operational costs, threatening their long-term viability.
- More seasonal campers in RVs or trailers are approaching the Residential Tenancy Branch to be recognized as tenants. However, most cases are dismissed as they fall under licences to occupy, not tenancy, causing stress for both businesses and campers.
- Campground operators need better government communication and support during emergencies like wildfires and floods recognizing that they are key muster points with amenities that can and do assist evacuees.
- Private campgrounds and RV parks require grants and low-interest loans to upgrade infrastructure to meet future consumer demands.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase revenue in the BC Parks system by implementing a one-time inflationary adjustment across-the-board province-wide increase of $5 per night for provincial campsite fees, the first such increase since 2016.
- Adopt a streamlined and results-oriented campsite fee-setting process for provincial campgrounds (BC Parks) that includes an increase tied to the rate of inflation, such as the Parks Canada model. Since January 1, 2020, Parks Canada has been adjusting fees every two years in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) , as required by the Services Fees Act. The next scheduled CPI increase of 10.7% will apply to all Parks Canada fees from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2027.

- Recognize temporary seasonal camper extended stays in campgrounds and RV parks as an automatic license to occupy arrangement rather than potential tenancies.
- Implement a province wide real-time campground inventory for tracking availability during emergencies to provide streamlined reporting and booking capability for individuals and tourists displaced by alerts and evacuation orders to locate a safe haven. This would likely be through a centralized booking portal.
- Establish Disaster Mitigation and Business Relief Fund (DMBRF), which is crucial for supporting businesses affected by natural disasters and emergencies. This fund aims to complement private insurance Business Interruption and Loss coverages available in the market.
- Provide economic grants and/or loan guarantees to enable campground and RV park businesses to upgrade their infrastructure over the next 10 years. Such infrastructure upgrades include electrical amperage, waste and recycling services, and emergency preparedness.
- Launch a "Travel B.C., Support B.C." Campaign: Implement provincial tax incentives or rebates for Canadians traveling within B.C. to encourage increased domestic tourism spending as a buffer against potential declines in American visitors.
- Focus on RV Snowbird Retention: Continue promoting the "Canadian Snowbird Corridor" to encourage Canadian RVers to remain in-province or within Canada for longer periods. Bolster off-season campaigns (e.g., "Winter Camping in B.C.") that showcase mild winter destinations.
- Syncing the opening and closing of attractions, museums, and B.C. parks during the shoulder seasons (May 1 – June 15 and September 15 to October 31) to allow for effective shoulder season marketing.



Photo credit to: Northern BC Tourism/Marcus Paladino

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

British Columbia is a global leader in mountain biking, recognized as the birthplace of freeride mountain biking and home to world-class trails, elite athletes, and iconic riding destinations. Mountain biking is a cornerstone of B.C.'s outdoor recreation and adventure tourism economy, drawing visitors from around the world and fueling local businesses, resorts, and tourism services.

Outdoor recreation and adventure tourism contribute billions of dollars annually to B.C.'s economy. In the Sea-to-Sky region, mountain bike visitor spending increased from $31.9 million in 2006 to $70.6 million in 2016[1]. Squamish alone has experienced a tenfold rise in mountain bike visitor spending since 2006.

Communities such as Squamish, Cumberland, Golden, Valemount, Rossland, and many others have successfully transitioned from resource-based economies to outdoor recreation hubs. Lift-accessed bike parks and mountain bike events extend tourism beyond the winter months for ski resorts, boosting summer revenue and supporting year-round employment. Indigenous-led mountain biking experiences present a significant opportunity for cultural and economic collaboration within the rapidly growing Indigenous tourism sector.

With strategic investments, B.C. can secure its position as a global leader in sustainable outdoor recreation, strengthening communities, boosting tourism, and enhancing our international reputation.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE MOUNTAIN BIKE SECTOR

- Trail networks are maintained primarily by volunteer-driven non-profits, yet these organizations lack consistent funding despite generating significant visitor spending.
- Navigating the increasing complexity of regulations poses a significant challenge for volunteer-run trail organizations, creating delays in trail authorizations and approvals.
- While other regions invest in trail networks, B.C. risks falling behind due to stagnant funding for recreation infrastructure.
- Unlike ski resorts, community-based trail organizations receive little direct revenue from the visitor experiences they enable.
- There is a gap in funding and collaboration to support Indigenous-led trail tourism initiatives and land stewardship.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Ensure long-term financial support for trail stewardship through stable, dedicated funding.
- Reduce bureaucratic barriers to improve the expediency of trail authorizations.
- Treat trail networks as economic drivers on par with other key industries.
- Enhance B.C.'s competitive advantage by funding trail expansion, events, and tourism marketing.
- Allocate funding for Indigenous-led trail initiatives and collaborate on tourism opportunities that honour Indigenous stewardship and cultural heritage.

[1] Sea to Sky Mountain Bike Economic Impact Study – MBTA, 2006 & 2016

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Canada West Ski Areas Association (CWSAA) is a not-for-profit trade association that represents the ski areas of Western Canada. Its primary areas of focus are safety and risk management, advocacy, industry growth and communications.

CWSAA represents 275 members, including 122 ski areas and 153 suppliers to the ski industry. Ski areas in Western Canada attract 10 million alpine skier visits, generate $2.5 billion in spending annually. They employ over 27,000 people (22,590 FTEs) and provide an economic cornerstone for the winter tourism industry.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING B.C.'S SKI SECTOR

- Since the five paid sick days were introduced, experience has shown pronounced spikes in sick days paid out in seasonal contracts immediately following 90 days of employment and prior to the end of work contracts. This experience is not replicated with year-round employees.
- B.C. mountain resort communities are intentionally planned and built with a balance of tourist and resident accommodation. This balance is unique, and different to non-resort communities. Thus the recent short-term rental policy intended to increase housing for B.C. residents has had unintended consequences in mountain resort communities by limiting investment, and removes needed inventory for peak demand periods of a seasonal business. For example, owners now required to register and pay a fee for infrequent rental of their unit, may now simply remove their accommodation from any nightly rental.
- Accommodation operators have cited concerns over the implementation date of an untested registry at the start of the critical summer tourist season for communities. Testing in other jurisdictions that have implemented similar policies has taken months. Given the particularly sensitive and unknown economic climate created by the US-Canada trade dispute, it is suggested to delay implementation until testing is completed.
- Similar to the natural resource sector, the outdoor recreation sector relies on the long-term certainty of land tenures to secure investment. Tenure renewals are often incumbered by a process that lacks clarity.
- Mountain resort community infrastructure requires on-going investment in maintenance, as well as incremental capital for new technology and recreational assets. Maintenance is an annual requirement, while other investments may be deferred based on annual earnings and other factors. The timelines of discretionary investments such as new technology (e.g.: snowmaking, low emission equipment, and recreational assets) can be accelerated with incentives.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase probation period to 180 days from 90 days, or pro-rate paid sick days by contract length.
- Designate the STR policy and registry non-applicable to mountain resort communities.
- If registry applies, remove fee.
- Provide tax incentives and/or interest free loans for housing. Mountain resorts invest in employee accommodation, and tax incentives would accelerate the investment.
- Establish reliable timelines related to public consultation processes related to tenure renewals and applications, clearly articulate all requirements necessary for the entire decision-making process, and evaluate applications based on stated timelines and criteria.
- Provide tax incentives and/or interest free loans for new technology and infrastructure investments.



Photo credit to: Destination BC/Ryan Creary

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The commercial rafting industry in B.C. consists of 36 companies. B.C. River Outfitters Association (BCROA) membership represents 28 companies and two university programs and is voluntary.

Canadian visitors account for 40–50% of clients, with 20–40% from the US and 20–35% from other international markets. This broad visitor base underscores the industry's dependence on regulatory certainty and operational stability to support its continued growth within B.C.'s tourism economy.

Business size varies, from small day trip providers to three-season resorts. Most operators report over $500K, with larger companies earning between $3M and $5M. Rafting companies employ between 15–75 seasonal staff per operator, plus some year-round positions.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING THE RIVER RAFTING SECTOR

In early March 2025, BCROA surveyed all member and non-member companies regarding tenure impacts, with responses from half of the operators reflected in this brief.

B.C. rafting operators face systemic government failures that significantly restrict business growth and local economies through arbitrary tenure revocations, delays and flawed processes that limit operations, financing, and market opportunities. While the industry also contends with staffing challenges and rising operating costs, tenure-related impacts pose the most immediate and serious threat to the sector's stability and future.

- Shortened tenure periods (often less than 5 years) do not justify capital investment.
- Extended delays in renewals and new applications cause severe operational uncertainty.
- Removal or significant alteration of tenured areas without adequate consultation and communication.
- Fragmented processes among multiple ministries cause delays, confusion and inconsistency.
- Lack of government personnel to administer tenure processes effectively and fairly.
- Extensive delays or no response to routine requests; further evidence of systemic dysfunction.
- Instances of violations of administrative law principles by government personnel.
- Inconsistent and unclear First Nations consultation processes.
- Failure to balance existing businesses' economic realities with reconciliation requirements.
- Despite hiring all local graduates, companies must rely on foreign workers, especially for trip leaders. TFW Programs are ineffective for seasonal businesses and, provincially, have unnecessary redundancies.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Standardize tenures based on business investment, historical use and economic impact: 10–20-year minimum.
- Designated, responsive contacts in ministries to handle concerns, renewals and FOI requests in 30–60 days.
- Transparent decision-making with written, public explanations for decisions affecting tenure or access.
- An approval or appeal process beyond the regional DDM, ensuring decisions are not left to a single authority.
- Set clear guidelines and fixed timelines for renewals and decisions.
- Create a fast-track appeal process for tenure decisions.
- Provide businesses with support to relocate or adapt operations when tenure cancellations are unavoidable.
- Mandate training for government staff on administrative law to ensure fair, evidence-based decisions.
- Create guidelines for fair, realistic benefit agreements between businesses and First Nations, and avoid unilateral vetoes.
- Use mediation when needed to support balanced agreements.



Photo credit to: Reo Rafting Resort/Ryan Robinson

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Wilderness Tourism Association of B.C. (WTA) advocates for the sustainable development and management of wilderness tourism in British Columbia. The WTA represents 40 operators that provide guided wilderness experiences across the province, contributing significantly to B.C.'s economy and conservation efforts.

WILDERNESS TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF BC

Wilderness tourism is a major driver of economic activity in B.C., supporting thousands of jobs and generating millions in revenue annually. The sector attracts domestic and international visitors seeking high-quality, low-impact nature-based experiences.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING WILDERNESS TOURISM

- Increasing land-use restrictions, unclear permitting processes, and regulatory uncertainty have created challenges for wilderness tourism operators. Many businesses face obstacles to securing long-term tenure and maintaining access to traditional operating areas.
- While the WTA strongly supports reconciliation, the transition to First Nations-led land management has led to access challenges and operational uncertainties. Clearer processes and support for negotiations are needed.
- Multiple overlapping regulatory frameworks create significant administrative burdens for small tourism businesses, reducing their ability to invest and grow.
- The industry faces increasing threats from wildfires, climate-related closures, and environmental degradation, impacting business stability and visitor experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Simplify and harmonize permitting and land use processes to ensure clarity and efficiency for operators.
- Establish a structured, transparent dialogue between wilderness tourism operators, First Nations, and the government to create long-term, sustainable land use agreements.
- Provide neutral facilitators to assist in negotiations between operators and First Nations to build mutually beneficial partnerships.
- Develop and fund initiatives that help operators adapt to climate change impacts, including wildfire mitigation strategies and infrastructure support.
- Acknowledge wilderness tourism as a key economic sector and provide incentives or funding to ensure continued investment and job creation in rural and remote communities.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Commercial Bear Viewing Association of BC (CBVA) was established in 2001 to promote sustainable bear viewing and protect wild bears and their ecosystems. The CBVA consists of 27 operators and trains 300+ guides annually, with the majority being career guides. Since its inception, the CBVA has certified approximately 1,000 guides.

The industry has seen consistent growth, with bear viewing guests increasing from 3,793 in 2017 to 12,414 in 2024.

A 2016 economic impact study showed that just 12 operators generated $3M in tourism revenue. A 2015 study by Honey et al. estimated bear viewing in the Great Bear Rainforest alone contributed $15M in revenue (including multipliers). The broader adventure tourism industry contributes $18B annually to B.C.'s economy. The CBVA and its members remain committed to reconciliation and sustainable tourism while seeking a fair and predictable regulatory environment that enables investment, job creation, and conservation efforts.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING WILDERNESS TOURISM

- The transition to government-to-government and what feels like secretive land management under DRIPA has created operational uncertainty for bear viewing operators. Businesses face increasing difficulties obtaining park use permits and securing long-term operational certainty.
- Some operators are experiencing arbitrary access denials, making it difficult to invest and grow. Many businesses that have operated for decades now face existential threats due to lack of clarity and a consistent permitting framework.
- While operators support reconciliation, many struggle with a lack of clear government guidance on navigating new land use policies, creating investment hesitancy and employment stagnation.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Establish clear, transparent land use and permitting frameworks to ensure continued operations for responsible, sustainable bear viewing businesses.
- Introduce neutral government-supported facilitators to assist in negotiations between operators and First Nations.
- Develop a standardized framework for protocol agreements with First Nations, ensuring fairness and commercial viability.
- Recognize bear viewing as a key contributor to B.C.'s sustainable tourism sector and develop policies that support its growth.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Backcountry Lodges of B.C. Association (BLBCA) is a member-directed association of privately owned lodges located in the major mountain ranges of British Columbia. Due to their remoteness, lodge access is mechanized in the winter (primarily by helicopter), and most are accessible by hiking during the summer months. Once at the lodge, all activities are non-mechanized, falling in line with a commitment to leave as small a footprint as possible.

BLBCA's mission is to offer adventurers the most extensive backcountry accommodation network in Canada and to provide a forum for communication and collaboration between member lodges. Our vision is to enable association lodges to touch guests' lives with awe-inspiring adventures throughout British Columbia's inimitable backcountry.

There are 32 independent businesses (lodges) in the mountainous regions across B.C., generally in southern regions (i.e. south of Smithers/Valemount) but no operations on Vancouver Island. The sector generates over $40 million in gross revenue, employs over 500 fulltime equivalents, hosts upwards of 21,000 visitors annually. Backcountry lodges support environmental and safety education, facilitate access to remote wilderness settings, support PEP and SAR during remote rescue scenarios, help to diversify the economies of rural B.C., and purchase over 75% of goods and services within 50 kms of base.

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING BACKCOUNTRY LODGES

- Understanding how the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) will impact adventure tourism operators as we adapt to a new regulatory structure and framework. The B.C. Government passed the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act , DRIPA, into law in November 2019.
- How changes to the Species-at-Risk initiative impact our operators. How can our operators support the preservation of wildlife habitat and species while maintaining viable operations?
- Managing "over-tourism". In a number of areas, it is clear that the environmental and experiential carrying capacity has been exceeded. Joffre Lakes, north of Pemberton is an example.
- Adapting to the impacts of climate change, such as receding glaciers, inconsistent snowpacks, wildfires, flooding, etc.
- Degradation of "Super Natural B.C.". Our backcountry environment, wildlife, wilderness habitat have all passed their peak values and under considerable stress. Our intact wilderness is what our operators desperately depend on. The degradation is caused by a number of factors including overuse and lack of regulatory framework that supports/value intact wilderness.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve the policy and regulatory environment to remove impediments and increase access for adventure tourism and public recreation. Upcoming changes to FRPA should reflect values other than harvesting for our forests.
- Understand the Socio-Economic Value of Adventure Tourism and work with communities/residents to develop and maintain sustainable adventure tourism and recreation opportunities.
- Include adventure tourism in the development of forest planning and practices regulations so that commercial and non-commercial recreation are planned and managed on the landscape.
- Increase business certainty by issuing tenure terms and conditions that reflect levels of investment, scale of operations, history of operation, operator compliance.
- Tenures should be administered and managed to ensure that tenure allocations are planned and commensurate with the carrying capacity of the resource base.
- Businesses with tenures that are expropriated or terminated without cause should be compensated for infrastructure and lost opportunity.
- The Ministry of Finance's annual mandate letter (along with other ministries) and business plans should include the Province's objectives for tourism.
- Ministries budget allocations will contain funding to support tourism objectives including infrastructure development and maintenance.



Photo credit to: Northern BC Tourism/Jeanine Philippe

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Allied Golf Association of British Columbia (AGA-BC) represents the unified voice of B.C.'s golf industry through eight (8) member associations: British Columbia Golf Association | British Columbia Golf Marketing Alliance | British Columbia Golf Superintendents Association | Club Management Association of Canada – Pacific | Western Canada Turfgrass Association | National Allied Golf Association | PGA British Columbia | National Golf Course Owners Association.

Golf is a major economic, environmental, and social contributor to British Columbia. The Golf in Canada Economic Impact Study 2023 presents national and provincial impacts. For British Columbia these translate to:

- $5.3B total contribution to B.C.'s GDP in 2023 (up from $3.7B in 2019)
- 51,708 person-years of employment
- $3.3B in labour income
- $1.1B in government tax revenue
- Over 300 golf courses supporting tourism, community engagement, and green space preservation
- Significant health and wellness benefits, with a strong connection to physical activity, mental health, and social inclusion

CORE ISSUES AFFECTING GOLF INDUSTRY

- Seasonal staffing is critically constrained by the lack of affordable and proximate housing for tourism and recreation workers.
- Despite its contribution to GDP and tourism, golf is often underrepresented in strategic planning and funding allocations given scale of revenue.
- US golf travellers have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Marketing and border-related infrastructure need improvement.
- Golf courses are proactively engaging in environmental stewardship yet face uncertainty over long-term access to water resources and support for climate adaptation efforts.
- Courses face increasing regulatory burdens related to land-use zoning, especially where golf overlaps with agricultural land reserve (ALR) regulations.

RECOMMENDATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Create a regulatory review process specific to golf developments on ALR lands and streamline approval processes for course renovations and expansions.
- Provide funding and incentives for sustainable turfgrass research, water conservation technology, and wildfire/flood resilience planning.
- Prioritize golf in Destination BC's high-value visitor strategies, including additional funding for marketing and visitor dispersal across the province.
- Partner on regional workforce housing projects that support seasonal tourism and recreation employers, including golf.
- Collaborate with federal partners to enhance US traveller entry experience and support golf-specific international marketing.



Photo credit to: BCGMA/Colby Johannson / Kootenay Rockies Tourism



Photo credit to: BCGMA/Colby Johannson / Kootenay Rockies Tourism

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE TOURISM & COMMUNITY PROJECTS AWAITING APPROVAL OR INVESTMENT

MULTI-DIRECTIONAL MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL

TRAIL CONCEPT & MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

A 4.5km beginner (green) multi-directional mountain bike trail that will connect an existing mountain bike network on Mt. Morrisey to McGillivray Lake. The trail will be designated as multi-use (mountain bike primary, hiking and fat bike secondary) and will serve to transport users from the base of Mt. Morrisey to McGillivray Lake, as well as offer a return to the Morrisey trailhead from the lake.

As the trail is likely to see a significant amount of two-way traffic, maintenance of clear sightlines is a priority. Strategically placed pullouts and wider sections should be present at semi-regular intervals to allow for passing. Trail aesthetics is a main objective in the construction of this trail and this should be considered throughout flagging and construction. The trail should appear to have been dropped in the woods, rather than cut through a broadly-cleared corridor.

Once complete, the trail will be used for mountain biking, hiking, and trail running in summer, and fat biking in the winter months. The trail will also be built with current KASA aMTB Trail Standards incorporated to make it suitable for use by adaptive mountain bikes.

PROJECT RATIONALE

The existing trails used to access McGillivray Lake are not purpose built for mountain biking/hiking/trail running. They mostly consist of Nordic ski trails that are wide, doubletrack dirt roads in the summer and are not very engaging for the majority of trail users. A new, purpose-built mountain bike/hiking trail in the area would have the following benefits:

- Improved user experience and recreation opportunities: McGillivray Lake is a popular destination for summer visitors to Sun Peaks. We believe this new, purpose built singletrack trail will offer a much better user experience for riders and hikers looking to visit the lake, encouraging increased recreation/visitation in the area.
- Improved year-round tourism offering: The trail will provide a new mountain biking/hiking opportunity to attract visitors in summer and fall, which will help to increase tourism during periods of the year that experience lower visitation in Sun Peaks.
- Improved sustainability: The current Nordic/multi-use trails in the area were originally designed with only winter use in mind. Due to this, there are issues with poor drainage and trail braiding in the summer. This new trail would be designed and built with sustainability as a key focus. It will be a mix of machine and hand building, with a maximum trail corridor of 2-3m.

- Reduced impact of Real Estate development on existing trails: Real estate development has been affecting access to the existing McGillivray Lake trail in recent years, shortening the trail and often blocking access to it. The new trail would provide a route to the lake that avoids these areas, connecting the base of Mt. Morrisey (where there is an existing cross country mountain bike trailhead) directly to the lake.
- Improved accessibility: The new trail will be built as a green (beginner) trail, meaning it can be used by a wide range of ability levels. It will also be built to Kootenay Adaptive Sport Association's aMTB standards, making it the first purpose built adaptive mountain bike trail in Sun Peaks.
- Winter Fat Bike use: Once built, it is planned that this new trail will be groomed for fat biking use in winter. This would improve the user experience for fat bike visitors in Sun Peaks, while also resolving existing user conflict between Nordic skiers and fat bikes on the Sun Peaks Nordic skiing network.
- Acknowledgment of First Nations heritage: Our plan is to give the trail a Secwépemc name (pending consultation and permission granted by local First Nations). This would be the first trail/piece of recreation infrastructure in Sun Peaks to have a First Nations name.
- Increased use of McGillivray Lake recreation areas: We are hopeful that this trail will encourage increased use of the campsites available at recreation areas near McGillivray Lake by mountain bike visitors to Sun Peaks. The new trail will provide an appealing option for visitors to commute between the rec sites and Sun Peaks on bikes, instead of driving the FSR.

The project has strong support from key community stakeholders in Sun Peaks, including Tourism Sun Peaks (who have awarded SPRTA $125,000 in funding for trail construction), Sun Peaks Resort LLP, and the Sun Peaks Nordic Club. We are currently working to secure an additional $121,000 in funding to cover the estimated total project cost of $246,000.

We are currently working through approval processes with Mountain Resorts Branch and RSTBC, and are hopeful these will be completed in spring/early summer 2025, at which point the project will be shovel ready. An RFP process to select a trail construction contractor is planned for spring 2025.

CASCADE SKYLINE GONDOLA PROJECT (CSGP)

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Cheam First Nation (CFN) and Bridal Falls Gondola Corp (BFGC), are co-proponents of the Cascade Skyline Gondola Project (CSGP), which is +$70M eco-cultural tourism project that will provide a safe, easily accessible world-class tourism attraction, similar to the very successful Sea-to-Sky Gondola in Squamish.

CASCADE SKYLINE

CFN and BFGC have spent the last 7+ years working together to advance the project but have been in a sustained holding pattern for last 4+ years.

According to CFN, *"This project is the most significant economic opportunity our Nation has ever had. We believe this project will bring long-term and sustainable benefits not only to our community and membership but also to the surrounding community in S'olh Temexw. This project will help create a sustainable eco-friendly, local tourism-based economy which aligns with the values we hold as Xwchiyo:m.*

Along with economic benefits, it will also create additional management and protection of our cultural and traditional resources. We firmly believe that this project reflects the values and long-term goals of Cheam and Pelolxw First Nations and its development will create a positive impact to the surrounding communities. We support the vision and ultimate approval for this project as Equity Owners and Partners and owners" Chief Darwin Douglas."

PROJECT RATIONALE

- Sto:lo Nation: Full support/partnership involving Cheam First Nation (CFN) and Pelolxw Nations as invested partners is a key component to their economic future and self-determination. CFN have invited other Sto:lo nations to join the partnership.
- Restores traditional Sto:lo Nation practices with Traditional Use Areas within and adjacent to the project tenure, which were lost due to current unregulated motorized and other use.
- Sto:lo Cultural Centre (culture, language, skills, heritage display, etc.) at the base area is forecast to have 150-200,000 visits per year, which would be the highest in Canada. This Center will also support the revitalization of Halqemeylem language with research, training and profile.
- The project has received extraordinary statements of support from business leaders, community leaders, local governments, MLA's, MP's, community groups and more. Economic viability has been deeply researched and confirmed.

BC Stats assessed the economic impacts/benefits for the Province and the Fraser Valley:

- Provide direct and indirect economic benefits and employment for the Sto:lo community and residents of the greater Chilliwack area and Fraser Valley.
- Over 2,500 jobs over the first 5 years of operation, as well as over 250 jobs during construction.

APPENDIX B: Sample Tourism & Community Projects Awaiting Approval or Investment

- Economic stimulation - $220M in consumer spending for B.C., $210M in the Fraser Valley alone.
- $82M in direct tourism spending just in the Fraser Valley at a time when tourism and the economy need significant stimulation.
- $70M of private investment capital in critically needed tourism infrastructure with a proven long-term, sustainable business model.

Importantly, if the Cascade Skyline Gondola Project were to receive indications from the Province that permits were imminent, the rezoning by the Fraser Valley Regional District could begin immediately. Their process, if expedited as part of the Provincial policy focus, could be less than three months which means that the project could potentially break ground this summer or in early fall.



Photo credit to: Destination BC/Blake Jorgenson

ELKO RIVER ACCESS PROJECT

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Over the past three years, the Elko River Access Project, led by Tourism Fernie in partnership with RDEK, has undertaken all the research, design, engineering, permits and approvals to become shovel-ready for 2024/2025.

The purpose of the project is to significantly improve the existing river access location and ensure sustainable access for years to come by:

- Making the area safer and more accessible for locals, visitors and local organizations such as the Elko Fire Department and Canfor that use the access for their permitted water needs
- Ensuring effective and safe egress off the Elk River, above the BC Hydro dam for river users by installing a formal ramp into the river
- Improving the access road that leads down to the ramp
- Improving the upper area parking
- Installing a precast concrete vault toilet, and small picnic area
- Installing signage kiosks that include information on river safety, river fish species and proper fish handling, First Nation's content, river geology and more

To date over $120,000 has been spent to get this specific project to shovel ready status, including the pre-purchase of the sign kiosks and vault toilet, thanks to many partners and funders including the RDEK Area A, BC Hydro, EVR, Province of B.C., Freshwater Fisheries Society of B.C., Columbia Basin Trust, Elk River Alliance, river operators and Tourism Fernie Society. This project is part of the larger Elk River Access Improvements Initiative that has already succeeded in multiple improvements at other key Elk River access sites including a new boat launch at Morrissey and parking and signage at Hosmer.

The completion cost for the remainder of the project is budgeted at $259,487. The project is working on multiple funding requests and is seeking support from private companies. To date $60,000 has been raised, leaving $199,000 left to confirm.

GREAT WHEEL AT CANADA PLACE PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

This world-class attraction will not only enhance the city's tourism industry but also highlight the cultural heritage of the Coast Salish First Nations. It will also create an exciting addition to the city's skyline and emphasize that Vancouver is a fun, vibrant international city.

BACKGROUND

- The Griffith family have built, owned, and operated Pier 57 Miners Landing and the Great Wheel in Seattle since 2012. It also features local food and beverage experience, showcases local history and culture.
- The intention is to bring this existing opportunity to Vancouver and work with the Coast Salish First Nations to incorporate a cultural and historical presentation that pays tribute to their history. There is currently nothing in Downtown Vancouver that recognizes their heritage or culture.
- The proponents have been holding meetings with various business associations, tourism industry leaders, First Nations, and key government officials to discuss this proposal. The feedback has been extremely positive and supportive. These consultations are ongoing and include an important meeting on May 2nd with the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority leadership.

BENEFITS

- The proponents will cover all of the construction costs, including any reinforcement of the Canada Place pier and the existing building.
- The budget has been set at $50 to $100 million (USO) for this project.
- Construction would take place during the cruise ship'soff-season. Various components of the construction will occur off site as much as possible to minimize any disruption.
- In addition to the Great Wheel they want to include a food and beverage experience and a First Nations animated and interactive exhibit built in close consultations with the Coast Salish First Nations.
- They will pay fair market rent for the space they will occupy as does the Pavilion Corporation and Flyover Canada.
- There will be a food and beverage experience available for "dining with a view".
- Vancouver will gain global recognition, like other major cities with a Great Wheel experience, such as London, Dubai, Cape Town and Montreal and of course, Seattle.
- The wheel will have a light changing display similar to BC Place.

BENEFITS

- There will not be any British Columbia or Federal tax dollars involved in this project.
- This project will in turn, generate rent and tax payments for all levels of government involved.
- It will create jobs in both the construction and operational phases.
- It will draw visitors to the waterfront, which will be beneficial for downtown hotels, restaurants, businesses, Flyover Canada, and the ConventionCentre.
- It will enhance the visitor and resident's experience in Vancouver.
- It will be a major attraction on the waterfront and the first new addition since the 2010 Winter Olympics.
- Vancouver will gain global recognition, like other major cities with a Great Wheel experience, such as London, Dubai, Cape Town and Montreal and of course, Seattle.
- This will be an amazing addition to the Vancouver skyline and showcase to the world that Vancouver is indeed a fun, vibrant, forward-looking city.
- The Griffith family believes in giving back and contributing to the cities they are investing in. Just as they currently do in Seattle, as a local Vancouver business, they will become members of various business associations and make donations and contributions to local charities and events.



The Seattle Great Wheel



London Eye



Cape Wheel - South Africa



Dubai Eye

CONCLUSION

Tourism is one of the few export sectors not threatened by tariffs—and it is already delivering outsized returns for British Columbia. In 2023 the visitor economy generated $9.7 billion in provincial GDP and $22.1 billion in export revenue, supporting nearly 17,000 businesses and 126,000 jobs province-wide.

Yet the sector's full potential will only be unlocked if government moves now to create the conditions for confidence and investment. This submission demonstrates clearly that regulatory uncertainty, short tenures on Crown land, workforce shortages and climate-related disruptions are constraining growth. Addressing these barriers...while leveraging tourism's cross-sector reach...can deliver immediate stimulus and long-term economic security.

Stakeholders have identified a clear, practical roadmap:

- **Invest in enabling infrastructure** – from regional airports, inter-community transit and highways, to broadband and electrification to connect communities and de-risk private capital.
- **Streamline tenure and permitting** to 30-year terms tied to investment, with transparent timelines and compensation language.
- **Expand targeted workforce programs** including sector-specific immigration streams and skills funding to secure talent for peak and year-round operations.
- **Scale Indigenous-led tourism and partnership projects** pairing capital with cultural stewardship and reconciliation goals.
- **Accelerate climate-resilient and low-carbon initiatives** such as sustainable aviation fuel incentives, electric-charging corridors and risk-mitigation funds for emergencies.

Combined, these actions will diversify B.C.'s economic base, cushion resource-sector volatility and position the province as North America's benchmark for sustainable visitor growth. The opportunity cost of delay is high: competing jurisdictions are already increasing destination marketing budgets, modernizing regulation and targeting the same high-value travellers and investment capital.

By adopting the top-five action priorities and embedding tourism considerations across trade, labour, infrastructure and climate files, the Province can secure a resilient, high-wage, low-carbon growth engine that benefits every region and community. The industry stands ready to co-invest and to deliver measurable jobs, tax revenues and social dividends.

In addition to the recommendations outlined above, the Province must take a leadership role in ensuring a supportive business environment for tourism operators through enhanced public investment, modernized regulations, workforce development initiatives, and active promotion of B.C. as an international destination of choice.

Strategic, coordinated action today will ensure that tourism continues to serve as a major engine of sustainable economic growth across all regions of the province.

A partnership between the tourism industry and government is critical to reinforcing B.C.'s position as a global leader in innovation, reconciliation, and destination excellence. The Task Force's leadership will ensure that, amid global headwinds, tourism continues to keep British Columbia open for business and open to the world.



About TIABC

The Tourism Industry Association of B.C. advocates for the interests of British Columbia's $22+ billion visitor economy. As a not-for-profit tourism industry association, TIABC works collaboratively with its members – private sector tourism businesses, industry association, destination management organizations, and post-secondary institutions to ensure the best working environment for a competitive tourism industry, and to help the sector reach its full potential economically, socially, culturally, and through the lens of sustainability.

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