



Gabriola Land & Trails Trust

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February 11, 2021

The Honourable Douglas Routley, M.L.A.
Email: douglas.routley.mla@leg.bc.ca

Re: Increased Funding for BC Parks

Dear Mr. Routley:

The Gabriola Land and Trails Trust is writing to add its voice to those asking for increased funding for BC Parks.

While we applaud the small funding increase recently announced by government, there is an urgent need for more. BC Parks has been under-funded for decades, and the steady rise in park visitations has not been met with the necessary resources to protect, maintain, and upgrade park ecosystems and existing facilities or to fund much-needed new infrastructure. As an organization committed to outdoor recreation and conservation, we are particularly concerned with the current lack of operational funds and staffing for protecting and restoring natural habitat and for maintaining eroded trail infrastructure. Our non-profit organization has worked extensively with BC Parks and we have great respect for the individuals who are doing the best they can with limited resources. However, inadequate funding has led to a situation in which it has become impossible for the agency to do the work it is designed to do.

The health of our provincial parks is an indicator of our province's health in many ways. They hold significant ecological and cultural values and are important factors in the process of reconciliation. As venues for outdoor recreation, they contribute significantly to the well-being of our population and the understanding of the interconnectivity of ecological and social systems in a world where the effects of climate change are an immediate danger to the health and sustainability of communities. As drivers of tourism, they provide opportunities for local employment and investment and thus can help spur our economic recovery throughout the province in these difficult times.

Expanded funding for BC Parks is critical to the health of not just the parks themselves, but to the communities that host them and to the province as a whole. We are therefore calling on the government to raise the annual BC Parks budget to \$100 million for capital, land acquisition, and operational investments.

Yours truly,

Rob Brockley
President, Gabriola Land and Trails Trust

cc: The Hon. George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
The Hon. Selena Robinson, Minister of Finance