

January 2, 2026

Text finalized December 2, 2025

To: Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Committee via
Committee Chair John McEwen [REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com>,
Committee Vice Chair Rebecca Bligh [REDACTED]@vancouver.ca>,
GM of Metro Parks, Mike Redpath <Mike Redpath>,
Division Manager, Regional Park Planning & Resource Management, Jamie Vala
[REDACTED].[REDACTED]@metrovancover.org>

Re: **"Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results"**
(item E1 in [Nov 5 2025 Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Committee minutes](#))

We are excited to see a discussion of new camping opportunities in the region!

We believe that as you consider new camping opportunities, it is also **a key opportunity to strengthen cycle tourism and active outdoor recreation in Metro Vancouver through a few new campground policies and lightweight infrastructure in our parks.**

What is cycle tourism? It is simply travelling and exploring by bike.

- popular in Canada and around the world
- affordable, healthy, and environmentally-friendly
- **useful both as recreation for local residents and as an economic tourism driver**
 - "BC is positioned as a leading destination for cycling enthusiasts from around the world" – Destination BC, [March 2025 cycling tourism sector profile](#)

As you might be aware, there are many different kinds of cycle tourism:

- road / gravel / mountain
- e-bike / "acoustic" bike
- local overnigher / through-traveller
- vehicle supported / self-contained
- solo / small groups / commercial groups
- "credit card" hotel / **camping**

Why is cycle tourism relevant to the Metro Vancouver Regional Parks committee right now?

- as a region we have strong bike route infrastructure, strong cycling adoption, and are located on internationally-renowned long-distance cycling routes, but **we lack important cycle touring facilities for locals and visitors**
- in particular, existing Metro Vancouver camping policies and infrastructure are not well aligned with the needs of self-contained cycle campers
- provincial park campgrounds are too distant/pre-booked to support cycle tourism alone
- **self-contained cycle tourism was not considered** in the recent 2025 Metro Vancouver Regional Parks camping opportunities report

- a few small **policy and infrastructure changes** in Metro Vancouver regional campgrounds would unlock this activity in our region for locals and visitors
- many other groups, such as thru-hikers, paddlers, and those taking transit also benefit from cycle-friendly policies and infrastructure
- increased camping access without increased vehicle traffic is particularly valued in some of our communities
- additional campsite capacity is potentially revenue-generating for Metro Parks

What makes self-contained cycle camping distinct, attractive, and important?

- cycle campsites can be small, communal, and/or primitive
- cyclists have a few unique needs: no car trunk to keep food from animals!
- travel distance matters, so it is helpful to have sites in as many parks as possible
- it is particularly challenging to make detailed plans/reserve months ahead (due to weather, fatigue, injury, mechanical issues, etc), to arrive early for a first-come-first-served site, or to travel farther if a campground is full

What can Metro Vancouver Regional Parks do now to embrace and strengthen the cycle tourism opportunity through its campgrounds?

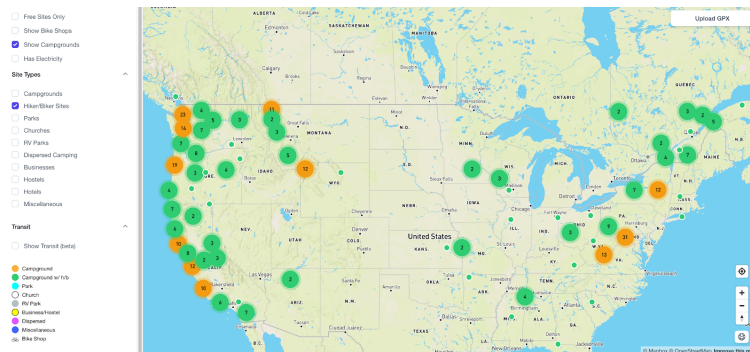
We propose five steps:

1. **Adopt a policy of no turn-away** for those who arrive by active transportation, even if the campground is otherwise full. This can be accommodated through a communal overflow space or small distributed areas. This has been a successful policy in many regions, including:

- [103 campgrounds](#) in Quebec certified as [Bienvenue cyclistes!](#), including 17 [provincial/Sépaq parks](#)
- all 30 Washington State Park campgrounds, since their [policy was adopted in 2000](#)
- the State Park campgrounds in [10 additional US states](#)

2. **Establish small hiker/biker/paddler/transit sites** and/or communal non-vehicular tent sites within existing multiuse campgrounds. Examples:

- The CRD includes [tent sites for cyclists at Sooke Holes Regional park](#) campground
- BC Parks includes [19 "walk-in" campgrounds](#)
- the popular Pacific Coast bike route [includes many hiker/biker sites](#) in WA, OR, and CA:



Hiker/biker campsites from <https://gobikecamping.com/map>

3. **Create additional hiker/biker/paddler/transit camping areas** in the regional parks and greenways currently without multiuse campgrounds, for example alongside trails, group campgrounds, or day areas. Innovative examples:

- Alberta added [hiker/biker areas in 2021](#) to Spray West Campground, Buller Mountain day-use area, Sawmill day-use area, and Pocaterra overflow campground ([more info](#))
- San Juan County campground in WA has [a communal hiker/biker/paddler area](#) that accommodates 20+ tents
- C&O canal towpath (greenway) in eastern USA includes [over 30 primitive hiker/biker sites](#), with a small site every 10-15km, set between the trail and the canal
- YMCA in Cumberland MD offers [bike camping in their day-use area](#)
- [PA Maple Syrup festival hosts tent camping](#) outside of festival season

4. **Install food storage lockers** (to deter bears/raccoons/etc) as needed. Promote safe bike travel to/from/within campgrounds through traffic calming measures and links to nearby trails. Other appreciated amenities include potable water, bike racks, flush toilets, showers, picnic tables or shelters, hammock posts, and electric charging areas, but cyclists can get by with just the basics if that's all that is available.

5. **Market the bike tourism friendliness** of Metro Vancouver campgrounds! Others will soon help spread the word, given that Metro Vancouver sits on both popular and burgeoning long-distance road and gravel routes already ([Trans-Canada Trail](#), [Experience the Fraser](#), [Great Blue Heron Way](#), [Pacific Coast route](#), [Vancouver Crossing Loop](#), [Great Northern Bikepacking Route](#), etc) and the infrastructure for regional bike loops is good and getting better every year.

Next steps

Thank you for considering this policy and infrastructure proposal.

Adopting a **"no turn-away for active transportation campers"** policy would be the single **most impactful change**, though any/all of the above steps would make a big difference for cycle tourism in the region.

We look forward to hearing from you if you would like more details on how these policies and amenities have worked in other areas, if you identify issues where our organizations and volunteers could help, or if you have any other questions or suggestions.

The primary contact for this letter is Heather Piwowar, Director at Trails BC,

@trailsbc.ca.

We look forward to building a strong cycle tourism sector together in Metro Vancouver!

Sincerely,

- **Trails BC**
- **BC Cycling Coalition**
- **HUB Cycling**
- **Outdoor Recreation Council of BC**
- **UBC Varsity Outdoor Club**
- **Let's Go Biking**
- **Our Community Bikes**

Additionally, letters of support are attached from these organizations:

- **Destination BC**
- **Trans Canada Trail**
- **Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC**
- **BC Marine Trails**

Finally, these organizations also express support:

- **Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Foundation**
- **CTS Youth Society**



December 12, 2025

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Committee via:
Committee Chair, John McEwen
Committee Vice Chair, Rebecca Bligh
General Manager of Metro Parks, Mike Redpath
Division Manager, Regional Park Planning & Resource Management, Jamie Vala

Sent via email

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Vancouver, Coast & Mountains (VCM) tourism region to express support for the policy and infrastructure recommendations shared by Trails BC to grow cycling tourism. VCM is part of Destination British Columbia, a provincial Crown corporation, committed to supporting the continued growth of British Columbia's visitor economy through responsible and sustainable tourism initiatives. The release of the Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results for Metro Vancouver, and the potential to expand camping opportunities, is welcome news for residents and visitors.

Cycling tourism aligns with themes in the [Vancouver, Coast & Mountains Regional Destination Development Strategy](#). The strategy identifies cycling as a tourism experience with strong potential to motivate day trips and short getaways. In the [Metro Vancouver Destination Development Strategy](#), cycling and other sustainable transportation is included for its importance for supporting visitor dispersion and providing sustainable travel options for visitors. Destination BC's [Cycling Tourism Sector Profile](#) highlights its economic value and the role that thoughtful policy and infrastructure can play in supporting this sector. Metro Vancouver Regional Parks can further contribute to this growth by considering the needs of people who travel by bicycle.

In its letter dated December 2, 2025, Trails BC outlines five recommendations for consideration as part of the Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results. The recommendations are well researched, supported by relevant examples, and align with the regional tourism strategies noted above. Their implementation would expand cycling tourism across the region and offer broader benefits to non-motorized travellers, including hikers, paddlers, and visitors and residents who use transit.

I support the review of these recommendations as part of implementing the Camping Opportunities Study Results. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to providing high quality infrastructure and experiences for all who live in, and visit, the region. If you have any questions, please contact me at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@destinationbc.ca or 250-[REDACTED]-[REDACTED].

həyšx^wqə (thank you),



Karen Tunkara
Director
Indigenous & Regional Partnerships



December 11, 2025

To: Chair and Members, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Committee

Re: Support for Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results and Strengthening Cycle Tourism in Metro Vancouver

Dear Chair and Members,

I write to you today on behalf of Trans Canada Trail to express support for the recommendations put forward in Trails BC's proposal, "Strengthening Cycle Tourism in Metro Vancouver: Regional Park Campgrounds."

Trans Canada Trail is the organization that stewards and champions Canada's nationwide trail system, the longest multi-use trail network in the world. Through collaboration and partnerships, our mission is to lead, develop and steward an accessible system of connected urban and rural trails. Our vision is a future in which everyone embraces the outdoors, connects with one another, and experiences the restorative power of nature along Canada's trails.

In the Metro Vancouver region, segments of the Trans Canada Trail connect communities and regional parks, providing residents and visitors with opportunities to experience the incredible nearby nature.

We appreciate the work Metro Vancouver has undertaken through the Camping Opportunities Study to thoughtfully expand and improve camping experiences in regional parks. As you consider implementation, we see a strong alignment between your goals and the proposals advanced by Trails BC. These measures are modest in cost, yet high in impact. Our experience in communities across the country shows that hiker/biker sites and flexible, active-transportation-oriented policies support vibrant cycle and trail tourism while maintaining the quality and character of parks.

At Trans Canada Trail, we believe in connecting communities, fostering healthy and active lifestyles, and strengthening local economies through sustainable tourism. These enhancements would do just that, by making it easier for locals and tourists to explore the region's vast trail network and travel between parks and communities without a motor vehicle. This would help make outdoor experiences more inclusive for people who do not own vehicles and encourage climate-friendly travel choices that reduce congestion and environmental impacts in and around parks.

We recognize the complexity of balancing ecological integrity, public safety, operational capacity and community expectations in regional parks. Our intent is not to be prescriptive, but to encourage Metro Vancouver to consider these active-transportation-oriented camping options as part of a balanced implementation of the Camping Opportunities Study.

Thank you in advance for your consideration, and for all the work you do to connect the people of Metro Vancouver with your region's natural beauty.

Sincerely,

Stacey Dakin
Chief Program Officer
Trans Canada Trail



Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Accessing the backcountry one step at a time

December 1, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Support for "Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results"

The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (FMCBC) is a coalition of over 50 clubs representing thousands of non-motorized backcountry recreationists across the province. Our member clubs promote and advocate for non-motorized outdoor recreation by maintaining trails and huts, organizing trips, and offering instructional and mentorship programs. FMCBC is committed to enhancing access to these spaces for public recreation while supporting grassroots initiatives that align with our values of accessibility, inclusion, and environmental responsibility.

On behalf of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia, it gives us great pleasure to support the recommendations outlined in Trails BC's proposal "*Strengthening Cycle Tourism in Metro Vancouver: Regional Park Campgrounds*" as they relate to the *Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results*.

As an organization that advocates for safe, sustainable, non-motorized recreation, we see a clear alignment between these recommendations and our own priorities. Cycle tourism and self-supported bike travel complement hiking, backpacking, and paddling by enabling people to connect multiple parks and communities under their own power. Improving camping options for people arriving by bike, on foot, by paddle, or by transit directly supports climate-friendly transportation choices, broadens access for people who do not own vehicles, and helps reduce pressure from motorized traffic in and around our regional parks.

We are particularly supportive of:

- Adopting a "no turn-away" policy for campers arriving by active transportation, even when campgrounds are otherwise full, using small overflow or communal areas as needed;
- Establishing simple hiker/biker/paddler/transit tent sites within existing multi-use campgrounds;
- Creating additional low-impact camping areas in regional parks and greenways that currently lack multi-use campgrounds, especially along key trail corridors; and
- Providing basic amenities such as food storage lockers, potable water, safe bike access, and other low-cost infrastructure that improves safety and visitor experience.



Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

Accessing the backcountry one step at a time

We note that similar approaches have been successfully adopted in other jurisdictions, including provincial parks in Quebec, Washington State Parks, and several other North American regions, where hiker/biker sites and “no turn-away” policies have supported a vibrant cycle tourism sector with relatively modest infrastructure investments. These examples demonstrate that small policy shifts and simple campground design changes can generate significant social, environmental, and economic benefits.

From FMCBC’s perspective, these recommendations are also important for the broader non-motorized community. Hikers, backpackers, paddlers, and transit-using visitors all benefit from more flexible, affordable camping options that are not dependent on vehicle access or long-range pre-booking. Expanding such opportunities in Metro Vancouver’s regional parks will help nurture the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts and stewards, while supporting local economies and reinforcing the region’s reputation as a leader in healthy, outdoor lifestyles.

We respectfully encourage Metro Vancouver to adopt Trails BC’s recommendations as part of the implementation of the *Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results*. FMCBC and our member clubs in the region would be pleased to collaborate by sharing user perspectives, helping communicate new policies to our networks, and supporting stewardship and education initiatives where appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration and for your ongoing work to provide high-quality, accessible, and sustainable regional park experiences for residents and visitors alike.

Sincerely,

Liz Bicknell, President
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

@mountainclubs.org

mountainclubs.org



December 5, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: Support for "Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results"

BC Marine Trails is a non-profit and charitable organization working together to help secure long term public access to the BC coast. Our mission is to work with First Nations and stakeholders to build, protect and promote a public network of marine trails allowing recreational navigation of the BC coastline with minimal impact on the environment.

We are very supportive of the recommendations outlined in the proposal "Strengthening Cycle Tourism in Metro Vancouver: Regional Park Campgrounds" as they relate to the Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results. Policies and infrastructure for non-vehicular camping was a notable omission from the original study. The newly recommended policies and infrastructure do not just benefit cycle tourism: in waterfront parks **they also strongly benefit paddlers and coastal recreation in BC.**

Our support has one proviso: the "no turn away" policy for campers who arrive by active transportation should be limited to **small groups of private individuals**, and not include groups travelling as part of a commercial tour. In the past few years, the use of marine trails by commercial groups has been growing and in some key areas this use has been taking away significantly from public use, reducing public access to recreation sites.

We respectfully encourage Metro Vancouver to adopt the proposed recommendations, with this proviso, as part of the implementation of the Regional Parks Camping Opportunities Study Results. BC Marine Trails would be pleased to collaborate by sharing the perspectives of the paddling community, communicating new policies to our members, and supporting stewardship and education initiatives where appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kyounk".

Karina Younk, Chair

BC Marine Trails Network Association

<https://www.bcmarinetrails.org/>