



Active travel is propelled by the muscle power of humans and/or animals and includes various forms of walking, bicycling, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, canoeing, kayaking, horse riding, dog-sledding, or similar activities with accommodations for adaptive devices (wheelchairs or trailriders) or electrically-assisted machines (e-bikes or other mobility aids).

Motorized Off-Road Vehicles (MORVs) are propelled by anything other than muscular power (electric or internal combustion engines), or are capable of generating forces beyond those from averaged muscle power, and include dirt bikes or motorcycles, quads, all-terrain vehicles, side-by-sides, utility task vehicles, dune buggies, rock crawlers, 2 or 4-wheel drives, snowmobiles, snow bikes, powerboats, jet skis, or similar motor-powered machines for travel on land, air, snow or water.

According to the “BC Outdoor Recreation Participant Survey” conducted for Destination BC (in the government tourism portfolio) between 2022 and 2023, at least five times as many BC residents participated in forms of active travel as participated in MORV activities.

POSITION STATEMENT on Motorized Off-Road Vehicles

The Trails Society of British Columbia...

1. ...is willing to work with any organization, especially those representing the MORV community.
2. ...supports the safe and responsible operation of MORVs, when only on designated trails and in appropriate dedicated areas, where operators manage noise levels, pollution emissions, and environmental impact.
3. ...condemns the operation of MORVs off-trail or outside of dedicated areas due to well-documented, research-evidenced, and unavoidable impacts, such as soil degradation, vegetation damage, diminished air or water quality, and animal or wildlife disruption.
4. ...encourages education that provides for environmentally safe and legal MORV operation, like wearing approved helmets, not exceeding vehicle seating capacities, and protecting natural resources.
5. ...promotes the use of electric motorized vehicles to reduce the environmental impacts of fossil fuel consumption, emission pollution, and climate change contributions, and to reduce the health impacts of excessive vibration and noise.
6. ...considers all outdoor recreation access to be an earned privilege and not an inherent right, thus believing all natural resources should be deemed closed unless designated and signed as open for MORV use.
7. ...does NOT advocate for the sharing of trails between MORVs and all forms of active travel, because while the former does not see a concern, the latter’s outdoor recreation experiences seeking naturalness and solitude are irreparably disrupted and/or displaced by the presence or recent signs of MORV passage.
8. ...advocates for the spatial division of MORVs from active travel through the creation of separate zones for outdoor recreation and accepts that, on occasion, access and/or egress trails from one user group may need to pass through the zone of another.
9. ...discourages the use of temporal division using different days and/or times of day for multi-use of the same area, because evidence of recent MORV users can still disrupt and/or displace others.
10. ...accepts the seasonal division of MORVs and active travel, if considered appropriate on a case-by-case study that incorporates the evidence from scholarly literature.
11. ...represents self-propelled active traveller interests on the Trans Canada Trail or Great Trail: a 30,000+ km route (the longest in the world) connecting all ten provinces and three territories of Canada, with 6% of the trail passing through BC, travelling a southern route from the Alberta border to the capital of Victoria, engaging outdoor recreation and active transportation, and following rail trails, forest paths, and resource roads.
12. ...is mandated to assemble and preserve the British Columbian section of The Trans Canada Trail, as well as being dedicated to the expansion, sustainability, and preservation of provincial greenway trails.