



PRESS RELEASE

Trails and Outdoor Recreation in BC

Vancouver BC, June 2, 2023 — A new online poll conducted on behalf of the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC shows that British Columbians are enthusiastic about outdoor recreation. They believe outdoor recreation amenities are important to their community and the province. They recognize trails on public land need to be maintained, yet most are unaware that trail maintenance largely falls to volunteers.

Outdoor Recreation Participation

Nearly seven-in-ten adult British Columbians have participated in outdoor recreation activities in the last 12 months, including things such as hiking, bird watching, camping, bike riding, horseback riding, dirt biking, fishing, hunting, canoeing, Nordic skiing, and snowmobiling. Participation rates are higher among men (73%), younger people between 18-34 years (85%), those with an annual household income over \$100,000 (79%), and those with children in the household (83%). Those least likely to participate in outdoor activities include women (64%), people living in Metro Vancouver (65%), and those over the age of 55 (48%).

Reasons for Outdoor Recreation Participation

Outdoor enthusiasts have many reasons for participating in outdoor recreation in the past 12 months, but the survey identified three primary motivators: spending time in nature (50% listed this benefit in their top 3 reasons), being physically active outdoors (49%) and relaxing and disconnecting (44%). The survey finds that Gen Z is engaging in outdoor recreation for different reasons than their older counterparts. Their top reason for participating is “to spend time with family and friends” (22% vs 17% among all respondents) compared to Boomers who cite “be physically active outdoors” as the number one reason (29% vs 18% overall).

Importance of Outdoor Amenities

The survey also looked at the importance to British Columbians of having access to outdoor recreation amenities (trails, parks, recreation sites, day-use areas, campsites or access roads) close to home and in the province. Eight-in-ten (80%) said access to outdoor recreation amenities such as trails in their community is important (including 42% who said very important). For access to outdoor recreation amenities in the province, outside of their community, 81% of residents say it is important (48% very important).

Trail Maintenance

Almost all (93%) British Columbians recognize that trails on public land require maintenance. However, British Columbians are largely unaware of the significant role volunteers play in maintaining trails, with approximately half (51%) believing paid trail crews are maintaining trails.





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About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC. The poll of 800 adult (18+) British Columbians was conducted online via the Ipsos I-Say Panel from May 12-15, 2023. These data were statistically weighted by region, age, gender and education to ensure the sample composition reflects that of the actual British Columbia population according to Census data. The precision of Ipsos polls containing online data is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the overall poll (n=800) is accurate to within +/- 4.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all British Columbia adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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