



PRESS RELEASE

Trails and Outdoor Recreation in BC

Vancouver BC, May 29, 2024 — A new online poll conducted on behalf of the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC shows that most British Columbians have participated in outdoor recreation in the past 12 months. Amongst those who participated, community parks and trail networks are the most popular destinations for outdoor recreation. Just over half of BC residents report that where they live is influenced by having access to trails and outdoor recreation amenities. Most BC residents believe that increased government investment in outdoor recreation amenities will benefit them or their community.

Participation in Outdoor Recreation

76% of survey respondents have participated in outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, climbing, bird watching, camping, bike riding, horseback riding, dirt biking, fishing, hunting, kayaking, canoeing, nordic skiing, snowshoeing, backcountry skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling in BC in the past 12 months. This suggests a gradual improvement in participation (70%) since the first Ipsos poll on behalf of ORCBC conducted in 2022 (Please note that in the 2022 poll, the question was a Yes/No participation question, whereas in the 2024 poll it is a participation frequency question).

Frequency of Participation in Outdoor Recreation

About half of BC residents (51%) are frequent participants (once a month or more) in outdoor recreation activities in the past 12 months. One-quarter (25%) of British Columbians are infrequent participants, engaging in outdoor recreation less often than once a month, and 23% have not participated in outdoor recreation in BC in the past 12 months. Frequent participants are more likely to be male (52%) and under 55 years of age (69%), while infrequent participants are more likely to reside in Vancouver (64%). Those who have not participated in outdoor recreation in the last year are more likely to be retired (52%), above the age of 55 (71%), and female (60%).

Preferred Destinations for Outdoor Recreation

For British Columbians who participated in outdoor recreation in the past 12 months, community parks and trail networks (66%) stand out as the most visited destination for outdoor activities. These are followed by beaches and coastal areas (48%), rivers and lakes (45%), and national and provincial parks (41%).

Influence of Outdoor Recreational Amenities on Residential Choices

Just over half (56%) of British Columbians say they are influenced ('A lot of influence' or 'Some influence') by having access to trails and outdoor recreation amenities when making decisions about where they live. Millennials (73%), high income individuals (\$100K+) (63%), and households with children (79%) are more likely to factor access to outdoor amenities into their residential decisions. (Scale for this question: 'A lot of influence', 'Some influence', 'Not much influence', 'No influence', and 'Don't know'.)





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Support for Increased Government Investment in Outdoor Recreation

About 9 in 10 British Columbians think that increased government investment in outdoor recreation amenities will benefit them or their community. Some of the benefits recognized are improved physical and mental health (62%), protection and preservation of biodiversity and nature (50%), and improvement of the local economy (e.g. keeping residents spending locally rather than travelling) (44%).

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 3-6, 2024. 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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