



Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia

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June 27, 2011

The Honourable Terry Lake
Minister of the Environment
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Minister

Re: Your letter dated May 26, 2011 - Reference 140620

Thank you for your letter of May 26 in which you requested ideas on how to celebrate the BC Parks Centenary. We would respectfully draw your attention to our letter dated May 4 regarding the issues making it difficult for volunteers to do maintenance work in BC's Provincial Parks. The Outdoor Recreation Council and the 40 umbrella groups which form its membership (See Appendix B) can think of no better way to celebrate the BC Parks Centenary than to rectify the dysfunctional situation surrounding the question of how volunteers can do work in BC Parks. Your office acknowledged receipt of our May 4 letter but we have not yet received a response.

Subsequent to writing our May 4 letter we have learned that the situation is worse than we realized. At the Council's Annual General Meeting held on June 11 one of our members from the Okanagan reported that the only way they were able to do volunteer work in the local Provincial Park was to enter into a Park Use Permit with BC Parks. This document included an agreement whereby the non-profit organization was required to indemnify BC Parks against any claims which might arise from its work. We find the concept of having to indemnify BC Parks for doing work on its behalf to be counter-productive and we are surprised that any organization would agree to that.

Following that and similar reports from other member organizations which were represented at the Annual General Meeting a resolution was passed unanimously which requires the Council to urge your government to take measures to rectify this situation. The Resolution is set out in full as Appendix A to this letter.

The Council would be prepared to assist BC Parks by providing input, ideas and feedback so the BC Parks can re-introduce an effective volunteer program. We sincerely hope that you will provide us and our member organizations with some assurance that the problems we have outlined in this Resolution and in our May 4 letter are being heard by BC Parks and the Ministry of Environment and that you will commit to doing something about it. BC's Provincial Parks and the public which uses them for recreation and inspiration deserve nothing less during this Centenary year.

Yours sincerely

Robert Gunn
Chair

Jeremy McCall
Executive Director

