

# This is our moment to turn the tide for BC Parks

Our provincial parks represent a diverse landscape which is a source of pride, strength and adventure for all people who make their home in British Columbia. From expansive valley bottoms to wild mountain peaks to the golden grasslands, one's curiosity can find no end. We are fighting to regain what BC Parks lost over 15 years ago when the budget was decimated, causing cascading effects for park staff, visitors and ecological integrity. Our current NDP Government promised to restore funding and hire more rangers during their 2017 election campaign, let's hold them to it!

Our provincial parks are seeing record numbers of visitors, people looking for adventure, learning or healing. We will speak to our neighbours, canvass our co-workers, and use new digital tools to spread our message and build our movement to a critical mass to demand that our parks get their long overdue resources and attention.

## Our demands are simple:

1. In Budget 2018, increase operational funding for BC Parks to \$60M;
2. Continue to increase the budget to eventually match leading parks agencies such as Parks Canada and Alberta Parks;
3. Continue to hire more rangers until we meet pre-budget-cut levels.



Similar parks agencies in  
Canada (per hectare):  
Alberta Parks: \$30/ha  
Parks Canada: \$33/ha  
**BC Parks: \$2.8/ha**

## Park users are the best advocates

We understand that the everyday issues - from crowded trails to streams of garbage to decaying infrastructure - are made unmanageable by the under-funding crisis. It does not have to be like this. We know that you can increase both biodiversity and visitor experience with the right tools. To do this, we need a long-term commitment from our government to increase funding for protected areas. Show your support for increasing resources for the hard working staff and volunteers of BC Parks.

## Join the movement

We need to show our political leaders that parks matter to us - their constituents and voter base. Here's how you can help make that happen at this critical time for parks:

1. **Collect signatures:** Collect signatures in-person [using this petition form](#) or by sharing [this online form](#).
2. **Spread the word:** Tell your family, friends and colleagues! Write into your community paper! Use social media to share why you #StandUpForParks and invite your networks to join the movement!
3. **Get outside:** Plan a trip into your local provincial park on Feb. 3

You will find resources for all these ways of getting involved in the next few pages.

## **On Feb. 3, we take it to the Parks!**

**Before the BC Government releases the 2018 Budget, we will gather in our local beloved wild places to let them know that we are keeping an eye on the future of our parks! On February 3rd, we will strap on our snowshoes, hop in our kayaks or stand by our favourite waterfall to demand better protection for our parks. We will use social media to bring our parks to the Legislature, communicating directly with our elected representatives.**

### **What are we doing?**

**On Feb. 3, groups will be head out into parks across the province to spread awareness of the funding issues which have been plaguing our magnificent system. You can do any activity (hiking, snowshoeing, skiing/snowboarding) so long as it is permitted by BC Parks and suitable for the group you'll be bringing out. More details on how to connect your trip to the larger movement in the logistics section below.**

### **Why are we doing it?**

**On February 20, the BC Government will release their budget for 2018. This budget outlines their priorities. We've been letting them know that parks are important to us but now it is time to make some noise and rise above the chatter. The BC Parks operating budget is but a rounding figure when you look at the whole provincial budget - but the small raise that we are asking for would make a huge difference to the protection of our parks.**

### **How can I be involved?**

**There are several different ways to be involved, here are a few:**

- 1. Plan or join a local trip: The number one ask is to plan or join a trip in your area. This could be from a meetup at the wheelchair-accessible viewing platform of Shannon Falls, adding this onto your already-planned backcountry Saturday ski tour, or anything in-between.**
- 2. Be part of the social media team: We'll need folks to help amplify the messages from the parks. If you aren't interested or able to head out into the park, join in online through social media!**
- 3. Write a letter: If you've got a pen and paper or access to a computer, you've got a role to play in getting the word out. Writing in to your local paper (there are guidelines below on how to write a letter to the editor) and sending a copy directly to your local politician can be done in less than an hour and make a huge local impact!**

## TRIP PLANNING & LOGISTICS

Beside your regular trip planning, here are a few things we'll be doing differently:

- **Collect petition signatures:** Bring along petitions to collect names to be added to the growing list of people showing they care about parks.
- **Make your own #StandUpForParks sign:** Having a sign to include in the photo will help to show our unity in standing up for parks together across the province. Or you can simply print the last page of this toolkit!
- **Share your experience:** Through social media, we will send messages directly to decision makers.

We want each group to feel empowered to make a trip plan that reflects their interests, skills and local needs.

To have your trip added to the interactive map, please send the following information to [tori@cpawsbc.org](mailto:tori@cpawsbc.org):

1. **Where and when will you meet?**
2. **What will you be doing? Where the trip will go and how long you expect it to take (in distance and time). Include a skill level of easy, medium or hard.**
3. **Local point of contact:** Someone to be the contact point between CPAWS and your group, as well as for others if your activity is open for other community members to join.

Groups should have at least one person fill out each of the following roles:

- **Coordinator:** Handle the logistics of where to meet and the route you will take.
- **Photographer:** Capture some images of the group's outing and send them to [parks@cpawsbc.org](mailto:parks@cpawsbc.org)
- **Social media/Tweet sender:** At least one person who will send some Tweets during or right after the outing.
- **Safety leader:** Someone who is only focussed on supporting the group, watching the weather and is knowledgeable on the dangers posed.
- **First aid:** You should always head out with several key first aid [supplies](#) and know who has the highest level of training in your group.

There are many resources for how to plan a group trip. If you are new to outdoor adventures, the best resource is finding an experienced trip leader or group in your area. Here is a compilation of trip planning resources that we think is super handy and helpful: <http://www.ashikaparsad.com/trip-planning-links/>

# Collecting Petition Signatures

## Why get signatures on a petition:

This is the easiest way to show our government that lots of their constituents care about BC Parks and want to see them protected. Lots of people show their love for parks by visiting them, and showing them off to their friends in-person or on social media - but now we need to add politicians and decision makers to that list!

## How to go about collecting petition signatures:

1. **Online:** Send people to our petition you can use [StandUpForParks.ca](http://StandUpForParks.ca)
2. **On paper:** [Download this paper form](#) and bring it with you on the trip or to any outreach your group is doing before Feb. 15.

# Media & Letter-writing Resources

## HOW TO GET INTO LOCAL MEDIA

[Here is a guide to writing a Letter to the Editor](#) from the U.S.A. National Parks Conservation Association

Some past letters can be found here:

The Pique Magazine: [PARKS NEED OUR HELP](#)

The Vancouver Sun: [Parks funding cuts result in closed trails](#) (via *Friends of Strathcona Park*)

## WRITING YOUR MLA

What you should say in your letter:

When writing to an MLA, begin with the words "Mr., Mrs. or Miss" followed by his or her name and MPP or MLA, whichever is applicable. When writing to an MLA who also happens to be a Cabinet Minister, the you should begin with "The Honourable".

You should include the following information:

Who you are,

What you are writing about,

How you feel,

What you want done,

A date by which you want to hear about what they are going to do, and

Your name and address.

You may also want to send copies of your letter to the opposition party and other Ministers.

# POLITICAL TARGETS

## Leaders & Cabinet Members

John Horgan, Premier and Leader of the BC NDP

@jjhorgan

[premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

Carole James, MLA for Victoria - Beacon Hill, Minister of Finance

@carolejames

[Carole.James.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Carole.James.mla@leg.bc.ca)

George Heyman, MLA for Vancouver-Fairview, BC Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

@GeorgeHeyman

[george.heyman.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:george.heyman.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Andrew Weaver, MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head, BC Green Party Leader

@AJWVictoria BC

[andrew.weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:andrew.weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca)

## Finance Committee Chairs:

Bob D'Eith, MLA for Maple Ridge Mission, Chair of Committee

@BobDEithMRM

[bob.deith.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:bob.deith.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Dan Ashton, MLA for Penticton, Deputy Chair of Committee

@DanAshtonBC

[dan.ashton.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:dan.ashton.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

## Committee on Finance and Government Services (a.k.a. the Budget) Committee Members:

Jagrup Brar, MLA for Surrey-Fleetwood

@JagrupBrar1

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Stephanie Cadieux, MLA for Surrey South

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Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA for Courtenay-Comox

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Peter Milobar, MLA for Kamloops-North Thompson

@TheKamloopsWay

[peter.milobar.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:peter.milobar.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Tracy Redies, MLA for Surrey-White Rock

@tracyrediesbs

[tracy.redies.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:tracy.redies.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Is your MLA not listed above? Find out who they are and [how to contact them here](#).

**Example tweets to send:**

**We are here to #StandUpForParks. Will you join us and show your support for #BCParks in #BCBudget2018? @jjhorgan @GeorgeHeyman @carolejames**

**I'm inviting you to #StandUpForParks @jjhorgan @GeorgeHeyman @carolejames. Immediately raise the #BCParks funding to \$60M in #BCBudget2018 for people, wildlife and nature to thrive!**

**Hey @\*YOUR\*LOCAL\*MLA\* will you support our call for overcrowded & underfunded #BCParks to get a much-needed lift in #BCBudget2018? #StandUpForParks <http://standupforparks.ca/>**

**If you have ideas of more resources which would be helpful don't be afraid to reach out to [tori@cpawsbc.org](mailto:tori@cpawsbc.org)!**

**Thank you for all the you do to stand up for BC's parks!**

**Sincerely,  
The CPAWS-BC Team**

**I  
STAND  
UP**

**FOR  
PARKS**



