

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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FVRD Launches Outdoor Recreation Economic Impact Analysis

Chilliwack, BC – The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) is pleased to announce that it is launching a first-ever comprehensive initiative to measure the value of outdoor recreation in the Fraser Valley.

The study will assess outdoor recreation usage patterns in the region, including but not limited to quantifying the number of people participating in activities such as hiking, mountain biking, and fishing, as well as motorized activities such as snowmobiling and ATV/motorcycle trail riding. The research will also estimate the total spending of tourists on outdoor recreation in the region, as well as recreation usage and expenditure patterns of residents.

A central feature of the study will be to evaluate outdoor recreation user experiences, including their satisfaction levels with recreation activities, perceptions about opportunities to sustainably increase participation in these activities, and current challenges with factors such as trail crowding, incompatible activities, access, signage, and others.

The study will be conducted by Larose Research & Strategy, a Kamloops-based tourism and land use consultancy, in partnership with Align Consulting (Kamloops) and Laura Plant Consulting (Chilliwack).

The project will be guided by a Working Group with representatives from the FVRD, Stó:lō Tourism, and Sts'ailes Development Corporation.

To gather information, a team of field surveyors will be deployed at key outdoor recreation trailheads, parking lots, facilities, and other access corridors in the region to directly count the number of participants in each activity. Field surveyors will also conduct interviews the characteristics and perceptions of recreationists in the region.

"This is a truly remarkable opportunity for the FVRD to gain a detailed understanding of outdoor recreation in the region," says FVRD Board Chair Jason Lum. "This region is blessed with a spectacular array of recreational opportunities, but there is a broadly-held perception that we haven't fully capitalized on these opportunities. We hope to change that."

The FVRD is looking forward to working with regional and provincial outdoor recreation and tourism organizations to ensure the project fully incorporates the insights and perspectives of these key organizations.

If you would like to volunteer as a field surveyor to assist with conducting field interviews with recreationists, or would like more information about this project, please contact David Urban, Manager of Outdoor Recreation with the FVRD, at durban@fvrd.ca.

If you are engaging in outdoor recreation activities in the Fraser Valley between December 2018 and September 2019, please support this ground-breaking initiative by responding to interviews in the field.

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