



Joint Provincial News Release

May 10th/2022

Citizens of Vancouver Island's West Coast Urge Campers to Reserve Sites at Authorized Campgrounds Before Venturing to the Area

PACIFIC RIM, B.C. – Citizens of Vancouver Island's west coast are asking all *overnight vehicle and tent campers* to make a reservation at an authorized campground before arriving on the West Coast, and to only camp at authorized campgrounds.

"The environmentally friendly and responsible way to camp in the region is to make a reservation at one of the many authorized campgrounds in the area" says Daniel Sailland of the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District "There are no serviced camping sites on backroads along Kennedy Lake or highway pullouts and there is zero tolerance for unauthorized camping and unauthorized overnight parking within all communities."

Over the past two camping seasons, the West Coast has experienced an unacceptably high level of illegal and backroad camping. The impact of this disrespectful behaviours has had a negative impact on Indigenous Territorial lands and highly sensitive surrounding ecological areas including local aquifers. It has also put our much needed first responders at risk. With some of the warmest and driest recent summers on record, this camping has also contributed to an increase in wildfire risk.

To help limit the impact on this region, increased patrols and enforcement in 2022 will target dispersed and unauthorized camping within the areas of the Clayoquot Arm, along the Kennedy Lake Watershed, within Tla-o-qui-aht, Yuułu?it?ath, and Toquaht traditional territories, on municipal streets/lots, and within BC Parks and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.

Patrols on the West Coast will be communicating regulations and respectful camping practices, and where needed, they will be issuing tickets/fines.

Reservations at West Coast campgrounds do fill up quickly, so if campers don't already have a reservation at an authorized camping area, they should find alternative arrangements such

as booking a hotel/motel in the area, delaying their trip to the West Coast, or finding a campsite reservation in another community.

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Quotes:

"Backroad 'living' puts stress on the environment and local community members. We strongly encourage visitors to come prepared with accommodation when travelling to the west coast." **President Charles McCarthy, Yuułu?iŋ?ath Government**

"I am privileged to live here, and I hope those visiting show respect to the region in all their actions. We are expecting you to." **Mayco Noel, District of Ucluelet**

"I am proud that the west coast communities have come together as a unified group to stop unauthorized and destructive backcountry behavior. Our region's natural amenities are a precious shared resource - misuse will no longer be tolerated." **Mayor Dan Law, District of Tofino**

"Parks Canada works closely with local First Nations, the Districts of Tofino and Ucluelet, as well as local tourism organizations to ensure a memorable, safe, and respectful visit. Guardians, Junior Guardians, BeachKeepers, Coastal Stewards and Parks Canada staff work together to encourage and promote respectful visitor behavior. Parks Canada recommends visiting Pacific Rim National Park Reserve outside the peak season when visitation to the area is lower." **Karen Haugen, Superintendent Pacific Rim National Park Reserve**

Contacts for Media

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Yuułu?iŋ?ath Government

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Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation

Chief Anne Mack
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