



Joint Provincial News Release

May 16th/2023

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. Unauthorized camping along back roads creates unacceptable risk to our communities."

The West Coast experiences an unacceptably high level of illegal and backroad camping. The disrespectful behaviours of some users have had a negative impact on Indigenous territorial lands and highly sensitive surrounding ecological areas including local aquifers. With some of the warmest and driest summers on recent record, unauthorized camping has also contributed to an increase in wildfire risk, which increases risk for our much needed first responders.

To help limit the visitor impact on this region, increased patrols and enforcement in 2023 will target dispersed and unauthorized camping within the areas of the Clayoquot Arm, along the Kennedy Lake Watershed, within Tla-o-qui-aht, Yuułu?if?ath, and Toquaht traditional territories, on municipal streets and 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 or 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 or motel in the area, delaying their trip to the West Coast, or finding a campsite reservation in another community.

We look forward to welcoming well-prepared visitors to our beautiful region.

For media inquiries contact:

Heather Thomson Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Communications Coordinator

email: dsailland@acrd.bc.ca

and/or

Daniel Sailland, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Chief Administrative Officer

email: dsailland@acrd.bc.ca

Quotes:

"Unauthorized backroad camping enhances (the probability) for campers to stay for undisclosed amounts of time, putting stress on the environment and local communities. We may be embarking on a regionally dry summer; this requires more control and oversight on wildfire management and safety, to protect the natural habitat. We strongly encourage visitors to come prepared, whether for one night or a week, with accommodation when travelling to the West Coast." **President Charles McCarthy, Yuułu?iŋ?atŋ 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." **Mayor Marilyn McEwen, District of Ucluelet**

"I am proud that the West Coast communities have come together as a unified group to stop unauthorized and destructive backcountry behaviour. 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, Beach-Keepers, Coastal Stewards and Parks Canada staff work together to encourage and promote respectful visitor behaviour. Parks Canada advises visitors to book ahead and recommends visiting Pacific Rim National Park Reserve outside the peak season when visitation to the area is lower." **Dave Tovell, Acting Superintendent Pacific Rim National Park Reserve**

Contacts for Media

President Charles McCarthy
Yuułu?iŋ?atŋ Government

Saya Masso, Natural Resources Manager
Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation

taayii Һawit Anne Mack
Toquaht Nation

Mayor Marilyn McEwen
District of Ucluelet

[Keegan McColl](#)
Communications Coordinator
District of Tofino

Dave Tovell
Acting Superintendent, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve

Vaida Siga
Area "C" Director, ACRD

Denise Stys-Norman
Executive Director, Tourism Ucluelet

Brad Parsell
Executive Director, Tourism Tofino

