

**From:** Nancy Harris <NHarris@sci-bc.ca>  
**Date:** August 6, 2019 at 3:29:41 PM PDT  
**To:** "mwagner@cariboord.ca" <mwagner@cariboord.ca>  
**Subject:** ACCESS BC update and request

Dear Chair Wagner and Directors

Following up on a presentation we gave to the NCLGA board of directors on July 27th 2019, Spinal Cord Injury BC (SCI BC) appreciates the opportunity to provide a digital format and information package to all NCLGA Regional Districts and Municipality members for their consideration. SCI BC is working and collaborates with communities and tourism associations across the NCLGA area and all other areas of the province to advocate, educate and promote sustainable accessibility and universal design practices. Interest in resource availability, regional development and our education works shops is for sure a first step. If why accessibility and universal design is not understood, it is very hard to embrace what is needed to move forward. There are so many simple low cost things that can be done that will make a huge difference for anyone that has accessibility requirements. (eg: changing door knobs, proper placement of signage or grab bars to list a few )

Spinal Cord Injury BC is putting together a letter of intent for a federal funding opportunity, that if successful will match all contributing funds. To this end we are hoping that the Regional areas with in the North Central Local Government Association can offer support to their communities and this application by:

- providing an impact statement to add to the highlight document (attached)
- being able to help us further our work for access and inclusion in the North and set an example for the other Regional Districts in the province to follow. We are asking for a MINIMUM of financial and/or in-kind support of \$3,000.00 from EACH regional district, to be used over a three year period in the NCLGA area to establish and deliver:

- Universal Design and accessibility education and training for stakeholders
- Best practice models and evaluation for accessible community and tourism-related practices
- Regional access and inclusion specialists through out the NCLGA area
- Accessible employment and customer service resources
- Create more partnerships and leverage other funding opportunities to move towards our goal of a fully accessible province, with the related physical psychosocial, health and economic benefits that it would bring.
- Accessible tourism products/experiences and promotional materials

The attached highlight document was presented recently as information to all Ministers and MLA's and Destination BC on behalf of our tourism and community partners. It will be the base for the federal grant proposal in progress. It was also presented recently to the standing committee on finance.

Moving forward we would appreciate the opportunity to have this document and request presented to your directors and members as appropriate.

Please let me know if there are any questions or thoughts on this proposal

Regards Nancy

NANCY HARRIS

Regional Development Liaison

Spinal Cord Injury BC  
777 Kinsmen Place, Prince George BC V2M 6Y7  
250-613-2270

"What if the first question we asked was.....  
what is so unique about this situation that it justifies exclusion instead of.....  
how much does it cost to make it accessible? "  
- Dr Scott Rains

We know British Columbia is beautiful.  
Together, we are making it accessible.

## Spinal Cord Injury BC's Access BC Program Highlights

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A summary of how Access BC (a program of Spinal Cord Injury BC) is helping to improve accessible outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities for people with disabilities and their families in BC.





## About Spinal Cord Injury BC

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The Spinal Cord Injury Organization of British Columbia (Spinal Cord Injury BC) helps people with spinal cord injuries (and related disabilities) and their families adjust, adapt, and thrive as they deal with a new injury or struggle with the ongoing challenges of living and aging with a physical disability.

Since 1957, [Spinal Cord Injury BC](#) (SCI BC) has been helping to break down barriers to access and inclusion for British Columbians with disabilities and their families. From removing driving speed restrictions for drivers with physical disabilities to making Vancouver's buses accessible, from informing the development of accessible building standards to improving the accessibility of our province's outdoor recreation spaces, Spinal Cord Injury BC has and continues to be a constructive partner in making BC more accessible to and inclusive of all.

## Access BC: A Spinal Cord Injury BC program focused on making BC accessible for all

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We believe in the principles of Universal Design and the benefits it brings to all citizens. In 2007, SCI BC was a driving force behind the Measuring Up the North project that engaged 41 local governments, disability and seniors' organizations, businesses and citizens in Northern BC in active dialogue, assessment and planning for their communities to develop universally designed and inclusive communities for all residents and visitors. This three-year initiative gave us valuable experience in working with communities and organizations in the region.

In order to maintain the momentum of the Measuring Up the North initiative and share information on progressive accessibility projects, we launched a new Access North program. The success of this program in Northern BC provided the impetus for us to broaden the scope of the program to cover the rest of the province and to rename the program Access BC.



Recognizing that accessible tourism and accessible communities go hand in hand, we have developed key partnerships with regional tourism associations, governments and other public and private sector stakeholders to further our objectives. Going forward, we will look to leverage these partnerships in order to advance opportunities of mutual interest that will build stronger, more inclusive communities that support accessible tourism and sustainable economic development. Working together, we can help make BC the best place for people with disabilities and their families to live, work and be active.

What follows is a list of Access BC program highlights over the past three years.





## Access BC Program Highlights: 2016–2019

### Improving the accessibility of BC's outdoor recreation spaces

#### TRAINING | UNIVERSAL DESIGN | ACCESSIBILITY AUDITS

#### Northern BC outdoor recreation accessibility audits and Universal Design training:

In 2016, through a partnership with the Province of BC's Job Creation Partnership program, we audited the accessibility over 450 parks and other outdoor recreation spaces, and provided recommendations for priority accessibility improvements. We shared this information through a publicly-accessible website so that everyone can see which parks have the amenities they need to make use of our outdoor spaces. We were pleased to work with BC Parks and other stakeholders to create the tablet-based accessibility audit toolkit we used for the audits, and to provide our partners and stakeholders access to the database we created to house the audit data. Further, we have provided Universal Design training for staff from various levels of government across BC to help them better understand why Universal Design is so important and how to implement it in their facilities.



#### Accessible roadside rest stops:

Working with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Access BC performed accessibility audits of all roadside rest stops along 3,200 km of the Great Northern Circle Route.

#### Universal Design training for Rec Sites and Trails BC:

Building on a longstanding relationship with Rec Sites and Trails BC, our Access BC team provided Universal Design and accessibility training for staff in workshops held in Prince George, Penticton, and Kamloops.

#### BC Parks unveils its first universally accessible playground:

Working with BC Parks, SCI BC's Access BC team provided input and guidance in the construction of an accessible playground at Purden Lake Provincial Park. Access BC continues to work with BC Parks to help with further accessibility-related improvements to the playground. [Read the media release.](#)

#### City of Prince George:

SCI BC's Access BC team conducted audits of civic facilities and parks spaces in Prince George, and prioritized recommendations for accessibility improvements to City staff. Consultation with City staff on new projects is ongoing.

**Accessibility training and resources for the Okanagan:**

In summer 2018, the Access BC team provided training and resources to and with the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA), including product and content development for The Quaaoutlodge Lodge, Tourist Information Centres and wineries in the Okanagan Region.

**Bringing accessibility to the Okanagan's Kettle Valley Rail (KVR) Trail:**

In May 2018, SCI BC's Access BC team initiated accessibility audits of the KVR Rail Trail. Our work focused on a 40 km section between Little Tunnel and Penticton, including the Kettle River Heritage Museum and Midway Area Trail systems. In addition to cataloguing the accessible opportunities for the trail section, the Access BC team is providing recommendations for short and long-term accessibility improvements. We also supported a TOTA-led federal Enabling Accessibility Grant bid that, if successful, will help fund accessibility improvements for the region.

**Championing access and inclusion at the 2019 Para Nordic World Championships:**

SCI BC's Access BC team led Universal Design and accessibility education and recommendations for the 2019 Para Nordic World Championship staff, volunteers and hospitality industry in Prince George. This work ensured this world-class event was accessible and inclusive of all.

**Supporting new accessibility legislation for Canada and BC:**

In partnership with SCI Canada, SCI BC (Chris McBride is the Chair of SCI Canada's Executive Directors Council) has been a lead partner on the Canadian Access and Inclusion Project and member of the SCI Canada-led Federal Accessibility Legislation Alliance, a national alliance of 90 disability sector non-profit organizations that is informing the federal government on the development of Canada's historic new accessibility legislation. Now introduced as Bill C-81, the Federal Accessibility Legislation Alliance is working with government to help strengthen the Bill and move it through to Royal Assent. In BC, SCI BC has recently been invited to participate in the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's Roundtable on accessibility legislation for the province.

**Making information resources about accessible outdoor recreation and tourism in BC available to all****AccessibleBC.ca website:**

Locals and tourists with disabilities and their families alike need access to information about accessible outdoor recreation, travel and accommodation options. Questions relating to these topics are consistently amongst the most frequently posed to our toll-free and online InfoLine services. This is why we recently launched [AccessibleBC.ca](https://www.accessiblebc.ca), a new website that allows people with disabilities and their families to explore and plan



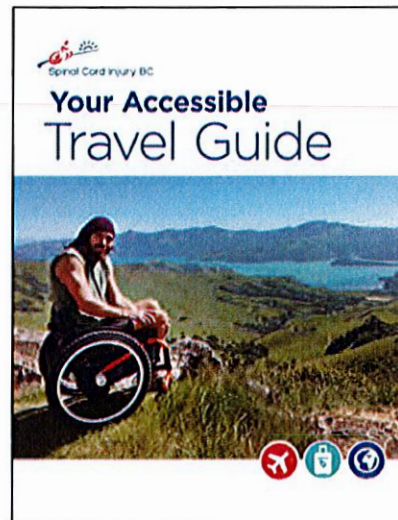
outdoor recreation and other tourism-related adventures in BC. Presently focused on Northern BC, the AccessibleBC.ca website features:

- In-depth accessibility specifications for municipal, provincial and federal parks, recreation sites, and visitors' centres in Northern and North Central BC
- [3-D virtual reality tours](#) of 11 parks allow people to plan and experience an immersive outdoor experience
- Videos highlighting accessible outdoor tourism opportunities in BC for people with disabilities
- Suggested driving routes and maps, accessible tourism tips, and more.

#### Accessible travel guide, videos, and experiences:

In partnership with YVR Airport, we have recently updated [Your Accessible Travel Guide](#), an invaluable resource designed to help travelers with disabilities get the most out of their travel experience, regardless of their level of mobility.

- The guide is available online and in print.
- The guide is accompanied by a series of [instructional videos](#) that demystify the process of air travel, as well as travel stories told by people with physical disabilities.
- With YVR Airport, we host an annual YVR Peer Experience Day, through which people with disabilities and their families are led through the process of navigating the airport and boarding an airplane.



#### Tourism video with rec sites and trails:

A short video describing how Spinal Cord Injury BC's Access North initiative is cataloguing and showcasing accessible parks and outdoor recreation opportunities in Northern BC. [Watch here.](#)

#### Access North (Access BC) promotional video:

Imagine a world where the beauty of nature is accessible for everyone to experience and enjoy. See some of SCI BC's favourite accessible northern locations and begin planning your next outdoor adventure. [Watch here.](#)

#### Access BC Days:

To celebrate and raise awareness about accessible recreation and tourism opportunities in communities throughout BC, we are working with our regional tourism association partners and other stakeholders to host Access BC Days. The first Access BC Day was held in February 2018 in Prince George. Over one hundred community members, school kids, and representatives of local, provincial, and federal governments came out to celebrate advances in access and inclusion in communities throughout the North.

#### Partnering with University of Northern BC researchers:

SCI BC is the community partner on a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Engage Grant held by the University of Northern BC's Dr. Mark Groulx. The

objectives of the project, entitled *Advancing accessible and inclusive nature access in British Columbia through interdisciplinary partnerships*, are to (i) evolve and expand SCI BC's current accessibility evaluation protocol through a review of global best practice and (ii) support greater evidence-based decision-making by mobilizing results from accessibility research within relevant policy, planning and management communities in BC. We recently presented and facilitated a workshop of this work at the 2018 BC Protected Area Research Forum. This project is of direct relevance to the current BC Parks Accessibility Audits project, our partners and community stakeholders with learning's being applied to our work. In addition, students working on this project will be given the opportunity to partner with our Peer staff or trained volunteers for the ongoing accessibility audits.

### **Accessible communities make for accessible tourism opportunities, and accessible tourism makes for stronger communities: Partnering with BC's tourism and hospitality sector**

SCI BC has established MOUs with BC's five regional tourism associations, the Tourism Industry Association of BC, the North Central Local Government Association, and other local government and associations:

- Through these MOUs, SCI BC's Access BC team is working with tourism and community partners and stakeholders to establish a coordinated approach to the development of accessible travel and tourism products and services in the associations' regions of BC.
- This work helps to promote the adoption and development of accessible tourism industry practices to stakeholders through audits and assessments of relevant regional sites, products and services. Including, Universal Design and accessibility education and awareness and resource development processes implemented through our partnership. Our Regional Development Liaison is a member of planning and working groups in several areas for the Destination Development Strategy, providing a constant lens for accessibility for this provincial strategy.
- The first MOU was established with the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) in 2018. Through this relationship, SCI BC supported TOTA's successful bid for the region's Biosphere designation, which includes accessibility as a component of sustainability, and their nomination for the World Travel and Tourism Council's 2018 Tourism for Tomorrow Awards, for which they received the Destination Award.
- This work directly supports the Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture's *Strategic Framework for Tourism in British Columbia 2019-2021*.

#### **Creation of a Regional Universal Access Tourism Specialist for the Okanagan:**

In the summer of 2018, TOTA and SCI BC have extended their MOU to include a new, jointly funded Regional Universal Access Tourism Specialist position, the first of its kind. The role, filled by SCI BC Peer Support Specialist and three-time Paralympic Wheelchair Curling Champion, Sonja Gaudet of Vernon, BC, is centered out of the TOTA office and serves as a dedicated resource for the Thompson Okanagan region that will be responsible for advancing the following:



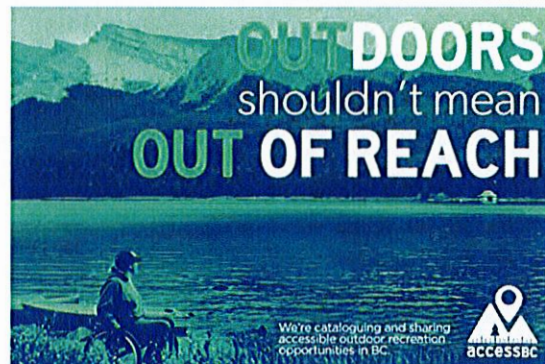
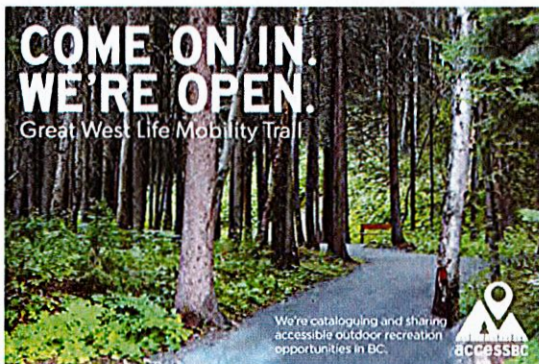


- Building a comprehensive Thompson Okanagan Universal Access Strategy that is in alignment with national, provincial and regional strategic plans and engages the regional Communities, Indigenous Communities, special interest groups and stakeholders
- Planning and activating Universal Access awareness at key events in the Thompson Okanagan Region
- Assisting TOTA and Spinal Cord Injury BC in the acquisition of accessibility content for marketing and social media activities
- Supporting Thompson Okanagan stakeholders in becoming aware of and implementing their own accessibility programs and training in their businesses
- Identifying best practices to bring forward to regional stakeholders for implementation
- Regional coordination focusing on implementation of universal accessibility under the sustainability focus outlined in the Thompson Okanagan Regional Strategy, *"Embracing Our Potential"* and Spinal Cord Injury BC's Access BC program.



#### Access and inclusion training for BC's tourism and hospitality industry:

SCI BC's Access BC team has established a collaboration with go2HR, through which we provide recommendations, resources and expertise to their SuperHost "Service for All" customer service training program. The training is essential for developing an inclusive environment for customers and employees with disabilities. The course is now available on the go2HR website. Our Regional Development Liaison was also an active mentor of the teams participating in the 2018-19 "Winning Pitch" Competition, a post-secondary case competition where student teams had to develop a new product or service that supports the development of accessible tourism opportunities in their respective regions.





## What's next and what's needed to get there

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As a provincial, non-profit community service organization that has worked tirelessly over the past six decades to improve access and inclusion for British Columbians with disabilities and their families, Spinal Cord Injury BC is genuinely excited by the province's commitment to increase accessibility and inclusion for all British Columbians. In this context, we are excited and motivated to continue expanding our Access BC initiatives to all regions of the province as we help make BC the best place for people with disabilities and their families to live, work and be active.

To date, we have achieved our impact with minimal support, but further advances will require additional, dedicated funding that will allow us to expand the scope of our impact and leverage the invaluable partnerships we have developed.

We believe a base investment of \$300,000 per year over the next five years will enable us, with our partners, to significantly move accessibility and inclusion of outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities forward in the province, bringing with it a broad spectrum of psychosocial, health and tourism benefits (accessible tourism contributes \$81.7 billion to the global economy). Priority initiatives to be undertaken with this funding include:

**Regional Universal Access Tourism Specialist positions:** Following the lead of the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, we are working with our regional tourism association partners to create accessibility specialist positions within each regional association. These roles will be filled by qualified individuals with disabilities.

**Leveraging additional opportunities and funding through partnerships:** With our tourism association, government, non-profit and private sector partners to develop and deliver (these items have been included in a federal multi-sectoral partnership grant that is currently being developed):

- Accessible tourism products/experiences and promotional materials
- Universal Design and accessibility education and training for all stakeholders
- Best practice models and evaluation for accessible tourism-related practices (eg, with Hotel Association)
- Accessible employment and customer service resources (eg, with go2HR)
- Will position BC as a global leader in accessible tourism

**Access BC days and related events:** Annual events in each region will highlight and celebrate accessible outdoor recreation opportunities, accessible tourism, and accessible communities.

**Online information services and resources development for accessible outdoor recreation and tourism:** Planning holidays and trips to the outdoors requires detailed accessibility information for people with disabilities and their families. Furthermore, trusted sources of valid information are essential to providing confidence in the information provided. We will work with our partners to increase the amount of accessibility-related information provided through our AccessibleBC.ca website, and provide more topic-specific resources such as those on handcycling, adapted mountain biking, accessible fishing and more. These information resources will complement our toll-free InfoLine (also available via email) and online information services.





## What some of our partners are saying about our collaborative impact

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### Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association

In 2010 the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA) completed a 10-year tourism strategy – *Embracing Our Potential*, which outlined key regional development goals. The strategy recognized a local sentiment for a more responsible approach to tourism development and a consumer demand for more universal and sustainable tourism products. With these recommendations in mind TOTA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Spinal Cord Injury BC (SCIBC) to work jointly on the Access BC initiative supporting universal accessibility products throughout the region and to expand partnerships for further support.

Through this partnership TOTA and SCIBC have jointly funded the position of Accessibility Specialist to help implement Access BC objectives throughout the region and provide support to local businesses. TOTA and Access BC continue to develop opportunities to view and evaluate accessibility through the tourism lens, focussing primarily on:

- Accessibility education and promotional material
- Accessibility training for industry and visitors
- Accessibility reviews for tourism products
- Investments in accessibility infrastructure

This partnership has been fundamentally important for our organization to better understand our role in developing these initiatives and will continue to support regional accessibility education and infrastructure adjustments. To date Access BC has provided professional and in-kind support to move our regional priorities forward. The positive impacts universal accessibility will have on our industry have yet to be fully realized, however through the efforts of Access BC we are continuing to see the positive changes through education and collaboration.

Sincerely

THOMPSON OKANAGAN TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Glen Mandziuk, BA, MEdes, MCIP  
President and Chief Executive Officer

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### Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia

The Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia (TIABC) represents the interests of some 19,000+ tourism businesses with more than 133,000 employees around the province. Our role is to work with government to address issues and pursue opportunities on behalf of businesses, destination marketing organizations, and partners such as Spinal Cord Injury British Columbia (SCIBC).

Last fall, TIABC entered into a partnership with SCIBC, which among other things, establishes a coordinated approach to the development of accessible travel and tourism products and services in BC. Our mutual objectives and actions include the adoption, development and promotion of accessible tourism industry practices to various stakeholders through audits and



assessments of relevant regional sites, products and services, universal design, accessibility education and awareness, as well as resource development processes.

TIABC enthusiastically supports the work that SCIBC does to educate our members and broader stakeholders about accessibility, ultimately with the goal of realizing more inclusive communities for locals to live in, along with benefits to visitors, particularly those with disabilities.

We are excited about the opportunities associated with our partnership and look forward to seeing the results of our collective efforts in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,

Walt Judas  
CEO, TIABC

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### **Tourism Vancouver Island**

Tourism is a powerful force for good. It expands world views, positively impacts our lives and connects people together. For these reasons alone, we know that we need to increase our inclusive travel opportunities so that everyone can experience the natural and cultural beauty of Vancouver Island. Our partnership with Spinal Cord Injury BC (SCI BC) is based on a shared commitment to transform the Vancouver Island Region into an accessible and inclusive destination in partnership with our communities, businesses and many other organizations. Together we will support opportunities for industry learning, we will foster the development of inclusive travel experiences and we will promote these experiences to our Region's guests. Accessibility and inclusive travel are key themes in Tourism Vancouver Island's strategic business plan for FY20 and in Tourism Vancouver Island's Destination Development Strategy. We Look forward to advancing these shared priorities with tourism businesses, community tourism organizations, Spinal Cord Injury BC and our partners at the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture.

Anthony Everett  
President & CEO  
Tourism Vancouver Island

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### **Kootenay Rockies Tourism**

Recognizing the importance of offering accessible tourism experiences and opportunities for all, Kootenay Rockies Tourism entered into an MOU with Spinal Cord Injury BC in 2018 with a goal of working together to identify the business opportunities and create the climate and investment opportunity to attract new 'all ages, all abilities' attractions. We would first focus efforts on experiences and attractions that are easily accessible and provide information and create a method to connect opportunities with potential investors.

Within the Destination Development four planning areas in the Kootenay Rockies region 'accessibility for all' was identified as a strategic priority. Physical limitations of people with





mobility challenges and the aging population may require businesses and organizations to address accessibility concerns. It is important to offer a range of product offerings to meet the broad interests, skill level, and physical limitations of all travellers.

The planning areas identified that core visitor attractions should be well maintained and accessible. And that communities and businesses should consider accessibility requirements, and family needs in all infrastructure planning. In tandem, the strategic plans also highlight the opportunity to identify experiences with mobility barriers and develop a plan to address these barriers.

Kathy Cooper  
CEO  
Kootenay Rockies Tourism

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## Northern BC Tourism

### Northern BC Tourism Impact Statement – Spinal Cord Injury BC April 23, 2019

Northern BC Tourism Association values the ongoing efforts of the Spinal Cord Injury BC program - Access BC (a program of Spinal Cord Injury BC) and the work undertaken to improve and develop accessible outdoor recreation and tourism projects for people with disabilities and their families who visit or live within the Northern BC Tourism Region.

The ongoing community outreach and relationship building by Spinal Cord Injury BC's Measuring Up the North project and Access North Program has contributed to generating awareness about the importance of age-friendly, universally designed and inclusive communities during the Destination BC Destination Development Planning process. As a result, key actions are included in both the 10-year Destination Development Plans for Northwestern BC and Northeastern BC.

The progressive accessibility projects that have been undertaken over the past three years have enhanced opportunities for accessible communities which, ultimately, broadens tourism experiences for all. Projects of note include the accessibility audit of the Northern BC Parks system and other outdoor recreation spaces, development of the tablet-based accessible website, and design training for various levels of BC government staff. Additional work to review roadside rest stops on the Great Northern Circle Route will help with future investments in upgrades and benefit residents and visitors. Additionally, the tourism video created in partnership with BC Rec Sites and Trails sends a strong message about the importance of accessible outdoor recreation. A model for future sports events, is the work undertaken to develop access and inclusion of the Para Nordic World Championships including the legacy component of Prince George training staff, volunteers and the hospitality industry.

We would also like to acknowledge volunteer Nancy Harris's and tireless commitment to build awareness, develop and leverage partnerships, conduct audits, and provide advice to inspire others to support the ongoing work to build more inclusive communities that support accessible tourism and sustainable economic development.



Northern BC Tourism looks forward to continuing our relationship with Spinal Cord Injury BC by supporting the important initiatives that are identified in our Memorandum of Understanding with the organization.

Respectively submitted  
Clint Fraser  
CEO  
Northern BC Tourism Association

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Nancy Harris  
Spinal Cord Injury BC  
777 Kinsmen Place  
Prince George BC  
V2M 6Y7

Re: Letter of Support  
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Northern Region

We all know British Columbia is beautiful and the provincial highway network is an important piece in linking communities together. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has 170 rest areas across the province. They are the perfect spot to refresh and recharge before heading out on the highway. The ministry is continually improving on the service rest areas provide, so they are well-designed for everyone to use.

In 2017 Spinal Cord Injury BC partnered with the ministry and performed accessibility audits of all roadside rest stops along 3,200 km of the Great Northern Circle Route that included portions of Highway 16, Highway 37 and Highway 97. A total of 43 sites were reviewed. A summary report with findings and recommendations was created and shared with local ministry staff. The report summarised examples of accessible infrastructure with recommendations on how to improve accessibility at all sites. Spinal Cord Injury BC evaluated items such as: washrooms, stairs, trails, trash and recycling, picnic tables, viewing areas and water supply. Spinal Cord Injury BC also provided training and professional development with some of our operational staff.

While the ministry has been steadily working towards accessibility improvements at our rest areas, the report was a good reminder of how best practises could be incorporated at the various sites and into future designs. The findings and recommendations will be used by ministry staff going forward when we evaluate our rest areas during planning exercises; many have already been implemented. In remote locations across the province, rest areas may be the only accessible washroom available for long distances between communities. Efforts to enhance accessibility and inclusion through positive rest area experiences is essential to enable residents and visitors alike to fully participate in all of the amazing experiences that British Columbia has to offer.

While improving ministry infrastructure is an important step moving forward, training and education are also a big piece of getting better. The ministry is currently examining additional training opportunities for staff relating to Universal Design and Accessibility Education.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure	Northern Region	Mailing Address: Prince George, BC V2L 3J9 #213-1011 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Telephone: (250) 565-6185 Fax: (250) 565-6165	<a href="http://www.gov.bc.ca/tran">www.gov.bc.ca/tran</a>
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The ministry looks forward to continuing our positive relationship with Spinal Cord Injury BC and Access BC by supporting important initiatives, improving accessibility to our infrastructure and educating our organization.



Carl B. Lutz  
District Manager, Transportation  
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Northern Region







## Recreation Sites and Trails BC

June 19, 2019

Nancy Harris  
Spinal Cord Injury BC  
777 Kinsmen Place  
Prince George BC  
V2M 6Y7

Re: Letter of Support

Dear Nancy Harris;

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Spinal Cord Injury BC and your vision of increasing accessibility at Recreation Sites and Trails throughout the Cariboo Chilcotin Natural Resource Region.

Recreation sites and trails provide the public with opportunities to connect with nature and enjoy the outdoors, providing both physical and mental health benefits. At Recreation Sites and Trails BC, we recognize that many of the recreation sites and trails are not easily accessible to those with mobility issues, and we support the efforts that your organization is undertaking to increase awareness, education and opportunities to make these public recreation facilities universally accessible and enjoyable for all members of society.

Several members of our staff have benefited greatly from the training and expertise that you have shared with us over the past couple of years, and this information has been invaluable to guiding the planning and development work that we've undertaken at several recreation sites in the Cariboo region, including the Howard Lake, Greeny Lake, and Dugan Lake recreation sites.

While Recreation Sites and Trails BC have been steadily working towards improving accessibility at our recreation sites and trails throughout the province, it is clear that there is still so much more work that could be done, and I believe that a strong partnership with Spinal Cord Injury BC will help us to fulfil our mutual goals of improving accessibility and getting more people out into nature to enjoy all of the physical, mental, social, spiritual, and cultural benefits that recreation sites and trails can provide.

Page 1 of 2

Ministry of Forests,  
Lands, Natural  
Resource Operations and  
Rural Development

Recreation Sites and Trails BC  
100 Mile House and Chilcotin Districts

Address:  
200 - 640 Bodand St  
Williams Lake BC V2G 4T1

Phone: 250-398-4345  
Fax: 250-398-4836  
Toll Free: 1-877-855-3222  
Website: [www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca](http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca)



Recreation Sites and Trails BC appreciates the important work that is being done by Spinal Cord Injury BC, including the hands-on training, and education opportunities that have been provided to several of our staff and contractors, and we look forward to continuing our positive relationship with your organization in the future.

Sincerely,



Curtis Ofstie, RFT  
District Recreation Officer  
100 Mile House & Chilcotin Recreation Districts

Page 2 of 2

Ministry of Forests,  
Lands, Natural  
Resource Operations and  
Rural Development

Recreation Sites and Trails BC  
100 Mile House and Chilcotin Districts

Address:  
200 – 640 Bodland St  
Williams Lake BC V2G 4T1

Phone: 250-398-4345  
Fax: 250-398-4836  
Toll Free: 1-877-855-3222  
Website: [www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca](http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca)





June 18, 2019

To Whom It May Concern

**RE: Spinal Cord Injury BC**

In British Columbia, the tourism industry ranks as one of the largest sectors of the economy, as measured by revenue generation and employment. Annual revenues in 2017 exceeded \$18 billion, with 6.1 million international overnight visitors and in 2018 there were 302,700 tourism-related jobs. Development and expansion of world-class product offerings and sustained, focused marketing efforts are projected to stimulate annual revenue growth levels of 4-6% through to 2028 with employment growing to over 350,000 in the next ten years.

go2HR has developed British Columbia's Tourism Human Resources Strategy to meet industry's vision of "a thriving and skilled workforce that delivers exceptional experiences to our guests". From this perspective, everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy tourism and recreation products and services, and go2HR is pleased to support the Access BC program as a way to improve accessible outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities for people with disabilities and their families in BC.

Spinal Cord Injury BC has been a great partner in helping go2HR develop the content for its *SuperHost Service For All* course, which helps employers and front line employees develop skills to meet the specific needs of a wide range of customers, including those with disabilities. By creating awareness and training staff on the best practices of providing an accessible tourism experience, we can deliver exceptional experiences for ALL guests.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Keis", is positioned above the name and title of the signatory.

Arlene Keis, CEO  
go2HR

## Spinal Cord Injury BC's Access BC Team Bios

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### **Chris McBride, PhD**

#### **Executive Director, Spinal Cord Injury BC**

Since 2010, Chris has served as the executive director of Spinal Cord Injury BC, where he brings a passion for making a difference for people with disabilities and their families. He also brings 25 years experience as a researcher and research-community network builder. Chris's past roles include managing director of UBC's ICORD spinal cord injury research centre, managing director of the Rick Hansen Institute, and co-leader of the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research-funded Disabilities Health Research Network. Presently, he is on the executive of the SSHRC-funded Canadian Disability Participation Project and chairs Spinal Cord Injury Canada's Executive Director's Council.

### **Pat Harris**

#### **Access North Project Manager (Volunteer)**

Pat has 35+ years of professional experience working with people with spinal cord injury and other physical disabilities. A Diamond Jubilee Medal recipient, Pat is a recognized leader in wheelchair sports in BC and has traveled extensively to visit outdoor spaces in our province. Pat has done hundreds of presentations to community groups and government on disability and universal design, and a key leader with Measuring Up The North initiative. Pat was also responsible for the development and implementation of Spinal Cord Injury BC's Information Services Program, which includes a toll-free Infoline service and free, online information database with over 900 resources relating services, programs, and all aspects of living well with a disability in BC. He also led the development of Spinal Cord Injury BC's Access North project, which has subsequently evolved into the Access BC program. The fact that Pat himself has a spinal cord injury provides immediate and impactful context to the work Access BC undertakes. Pat and Nancy Harris were named Prince George's 2018 Citizens of the Year for their tireless efforts toward improving accessibility and inclusion.

### **Heather Lamb**

#### **Information Resources Specialist**

Heather is a Registered Social Worker with SCI BC and our Information Resource Specialist. She is highly knowledgeable about services for people with disabilities, including: recreation and leisure activities, transportation, tourism, and universal design. Heather has teaching experience in a variety of settings and a good understanding of the diversity of issues that affect people with disabilities and seniors. Heather has been instrumental working along side G02hr's content development of their inclusive services course. In 2016 Heather was recognized as one of Prince George's Top 40 Under 40 and received the Bridget Moran award for impact in social work. In 2019, she was appointed to the CSA Standards Committee on Accessibility.

### **Nancy Harris**

#### **Regional Development Liaison**

Nancy has 30+ years of experience advocating for increased accessibility for people with disabilities in BC. She sits on a number of provincial and regional committees that work to implement universal design in recreation and leisure, tourism, the built environment and community planning. Nancy has extensive experience consulting on and conducting accessibility audits and universal design concepts, especially for outdoor spaces throughout BC. The work Nancy does to increase awareness of accessibility in outdoor spaces throughout BC is at the heart of our Access BC initiative. Nancy was recently acknowledged by the province through "Putting People First" communications initiative.









August 6, 2019

Spinal Cord Injury BC  
c/o Nancy Harris

To whom it may concern,

To create successful and sustainable change Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism believes we must collectively provide a holistic approach to accessibility and inclusion in building healthy communities who welcome all visitors and support residents.

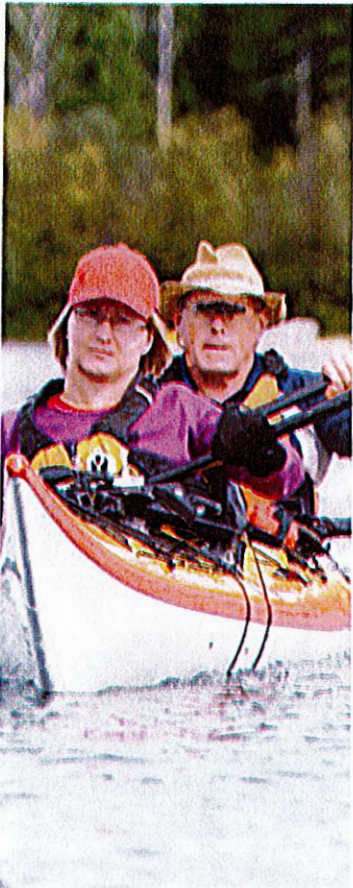
Access and inclusion are inherent in the strategic regional destination development plans of the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast but are also found in all plans, communities, cultures and the welcoming lifestyle of rural BC. Moving this energy into activating universal design, engaging the learning's from Access BC and Spinal Cord Injury initiatives, and implementing tactics of the CCCTA/SCI MOU we will be able to grow more sustainable, healthy communities with naturally diversified economies.

We strongly support SCI's applications for funding and investment into this strategic growth area to support healthy communities in Rural BC and thank Nancy Harris for her tireless support and unwavering vision for a better tomorrow for all British Columbians!

Sincerely,

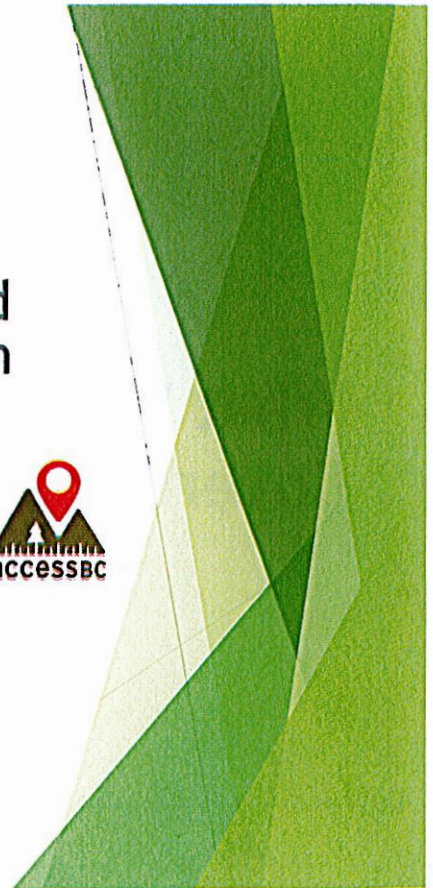
Amy Thacker  
Chief Executive Officer





## SPINAL CORD INJURY BC

What Is Universal Design and  
How Does It Apply In Tourism  
and Our Communities.

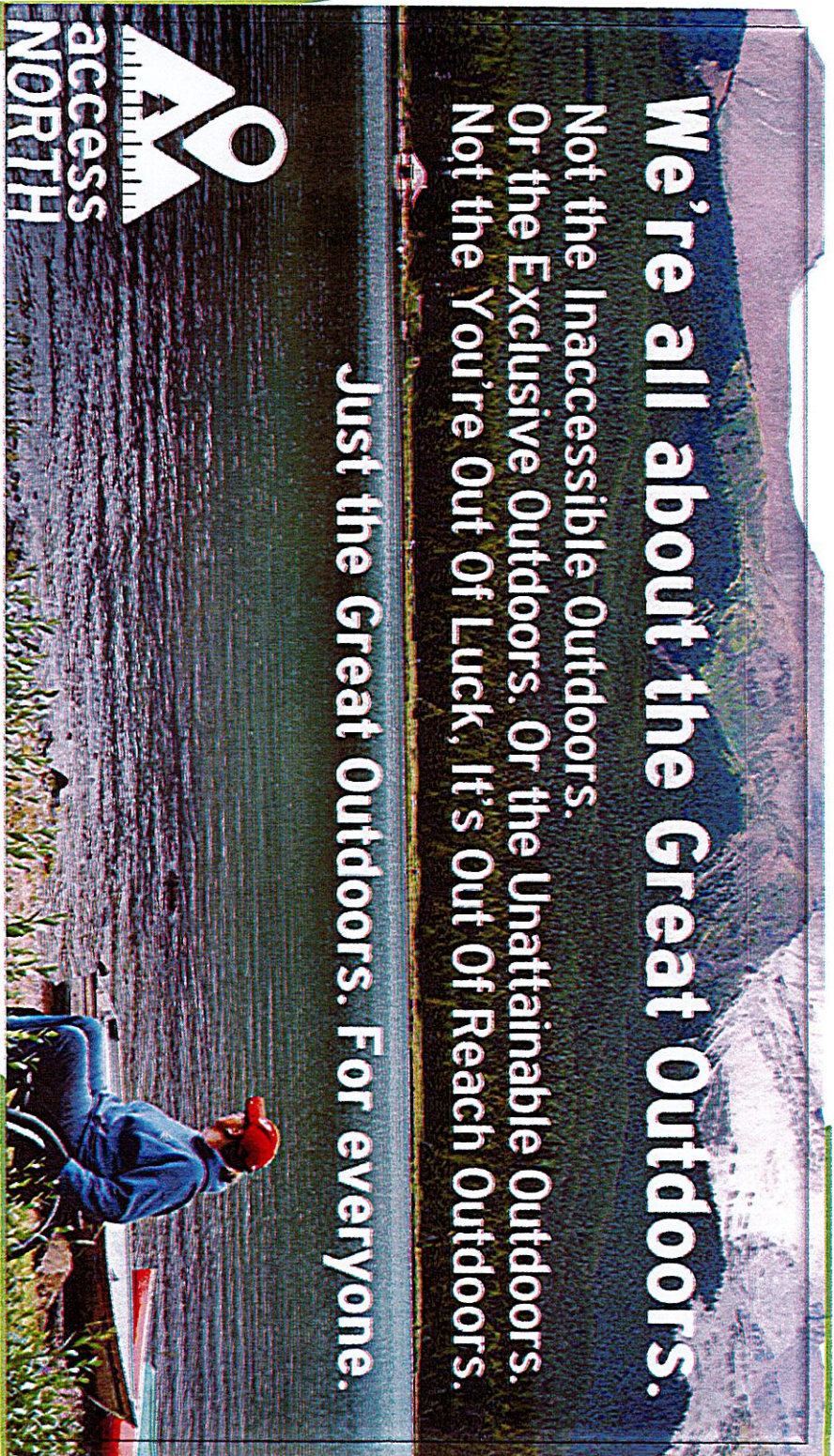


## What We Will Cover Today

What is Universal Design

Why is Universal Design  
important





**We're all about the Great Outdoors.**  
Not the Inaccessible Outdoors.  
Or the Exclusive Outdoors. Or the Unattainable Outdoors.  
Not the You're Out Of Luck, It's Out Of Reach Outdoors.

**Just the Great Outdoors. For everyone.**



**access  
NORTH**



## How Did We Get Here?

- ▶ Measuring Up the North
- ▶ Access North
- ▶ Access BC



# What Is Universal Design?

The Design Of Spaces & Products That Are Usable By  
People Of Any Age, Size Or Ability

(Ron Mace, North Carolina)



Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important

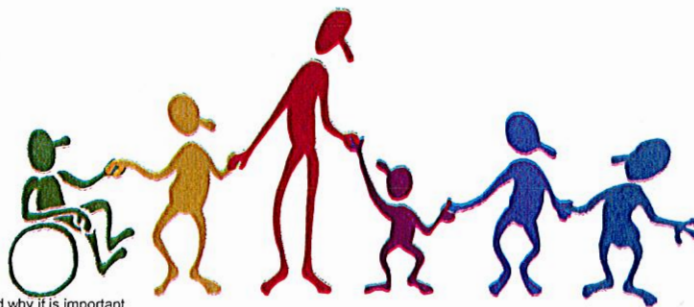




# What Is Universal Design?

Universal Design is not a fad or a trend but an enduring design approach that originates from the belief that the broad range of human ability is ordinary not special

(<http://udeducation.org/udeo/learn.html>)



Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important



# Universal Design is



Chun T'oh Whudujut Provincial Park + Protected Area

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important



- ▶ Seamless
- ▶ Planned
- ▶ Sustainable design
  - ▶ By not having to make renovations later that create increased waste is beneficial to the environment





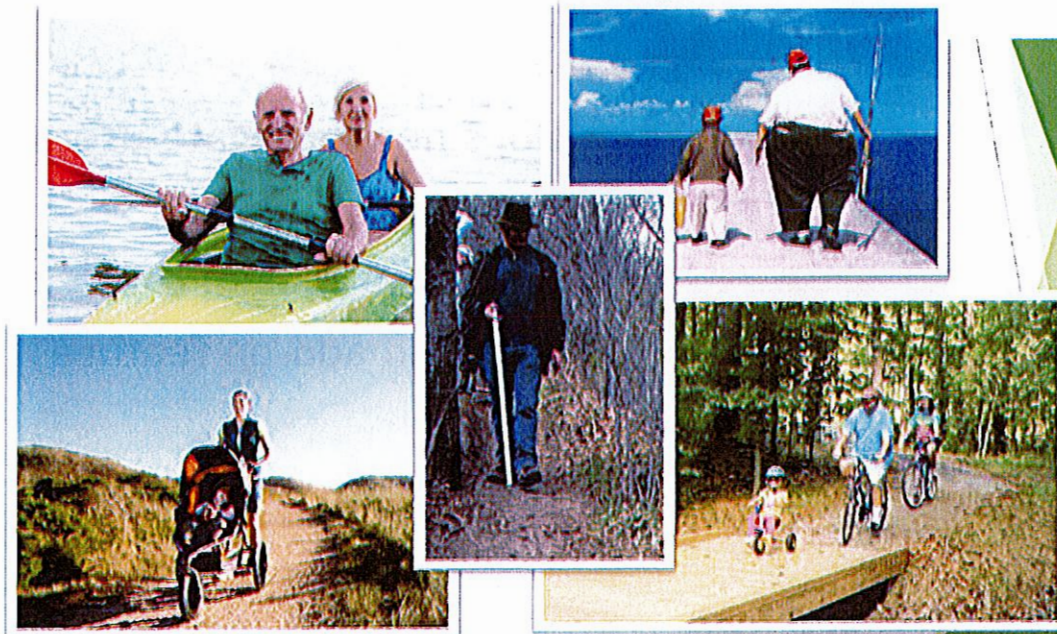
# Universal Design Includes all Users



Mount Robson Visitor Centre

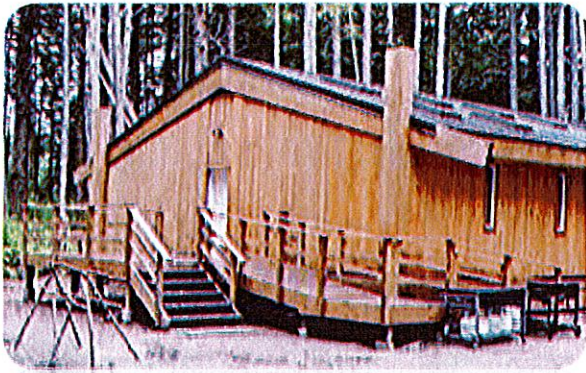


# Designing for a range of human requirements is better for everyone





# Universal Design



- ▶ Does not segregate users
- ▶ Is not adapted
- ▶ Is not the special route
- ▶ Is not an add-on feature

# Seven Principles of Universal Design Help to Make Our Facilities More Useable by Everyone

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Principle 1: Equitable Use: **All People use the Same Entrance**

---

Principle 2 : Flexibility in Use: **2 heights for Service Counters**

---

Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive **Use: Motion responsive lights**

---

Principle 4: Perceptible Information: **Tactile Exhibits**

---

Principle 5: Tolerance for Error: **Handrails appropriately Placed**

---

Principle 6: Low Physical Effort: **No Step Entrance & Automatic Door**

---

Principle 7: Size & Space for Approach and Use: **Universally Designed Pit Toilet**





**Equitable Use:** The design is useful and marketable to everyone's abilities.

**Flexibility in Use:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities

**Simple and Intuitive:** Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.

**Perceptible Information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory ability.

**Tolerance for Error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

**Low Physical Effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

**Size & Space for Approach and Use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation and use regardless of user's body size, posture or mobility.

## What Matters in Our Parks and Outdoor Spaces?

- ▶ Parking and Transportation
- ▶ Access Routes
- ▶ Toilets
- ▶ Ability to see or experience the “attraction” that brings visitors to the site
- ▶ Access to information about the site and to the available services

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important





# Why is Universal Design important?

Many more people  
can enjoy our parks  
and facilities

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important



**"Guaranteeing Improved Accessibility Means that Many More People & Their Families Can Enjoy Our Parks & Protected Areas"**

The BC Parks' Future Strategy



10 Mile Lake Provincial Park

# Why is Universal Design Important?

Because Universal Design removes barriers to participation

**"People with Disabilities Should Be Able to Enjoy Outdoor Activities with No Barriers"**

The BC Parks' Future Strategy





## Because Universal Design removes barriers of access routes to amenities



Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important



## Why is Universal Design important?

There are misconceptions about people with disabilities and older adults being interested in the outdoors

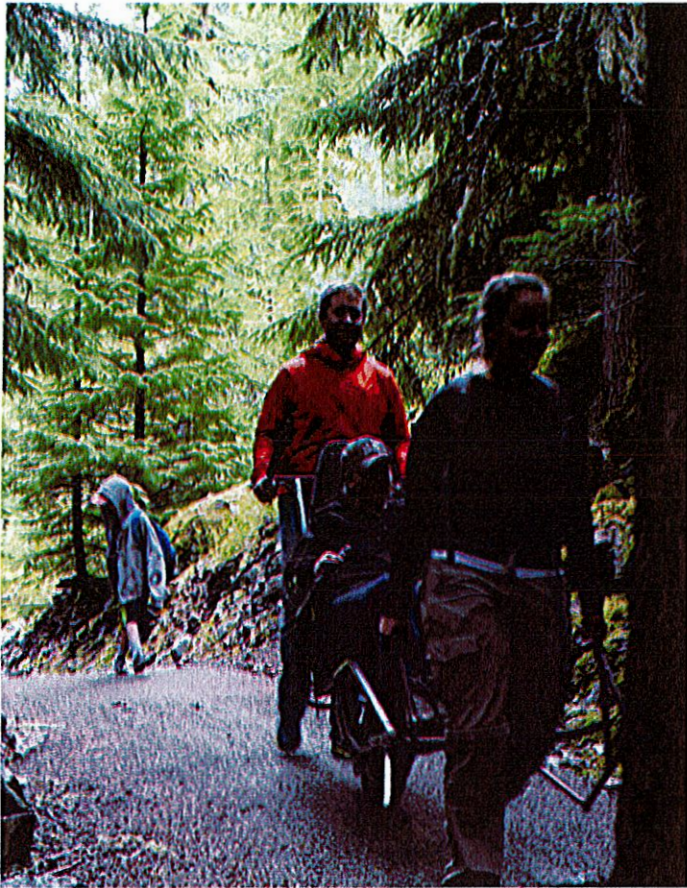
"British Columbians expect of us enhanced protected areas to enjoy: more clean & safe campsites: greater accessibility: and safe, up-to-date programs and facilities."

The BC Parks' Future Strategy

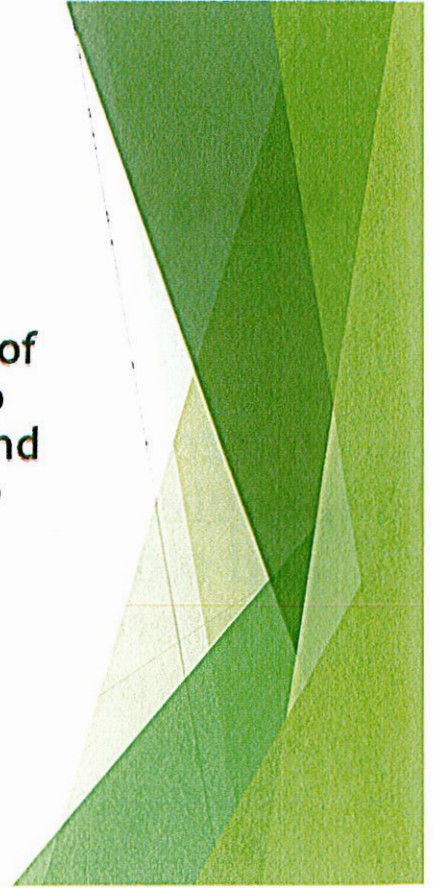


Ross Lake Provincial Park





**Not surprisingly,  
people with a range of  
abilities want to do  
the same things as and  
with everyone else**





**Any of us  
Can Have  
Temporary  
Changes in  
Our Abilities**

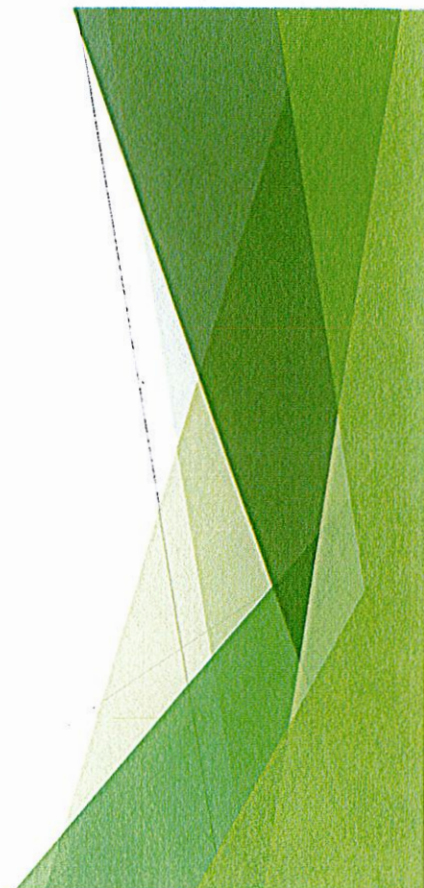






## Unsafe Conditions and Lack of Maintenance Can Also Create Barriers

- ▶ Falls on steps
- ▶ Lack of handrails
- ▶ Slippery floors
- ▶ Poor lighting
- ▶ Dangerous trail slopes
- ▶ Parking issues at roadside areas



What if the first question we asked was:  
“What is so unique about this situation  
that it justifies exclusion?”

instead of

“How much does it cost to make it  
accessible?”

“Dr Scott Rains”





Misty Meadows Campground - Naikoon Provincial Park

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important





**Why is Universal Design  
important to Tourism  
and our Communities ?**

**Because it is an  
economic imperative!**



## What is the % of people with permanent disabilities?



Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important



- ▶ 18% of BC's population
  - ▶ 700 Thousand
- ▶ 14% of Canada Population
  - ▶ 5.1 Million
- ▶ 14% America's Population
  - ▶ 45.5 million

## Multiplier Effect



- ▶ People with Disabilities and Older Adults **travel with other people**
- ▶ So There is a Multiplier effect for how much money they bring to a Park and to the local area

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important





## Older Travelers Are a Growing Market



- ▶ 2016 more seniors in Canada are over 60 than under 14 (over 25%)

- ▶ 9.2 Million

- ▶ And this is similar for international visitors

## Other Community Benefits

- ▶ Social well-being and health of all citizens
- ▶ Emergency Preparedness
- ▶ Ability to attract large events

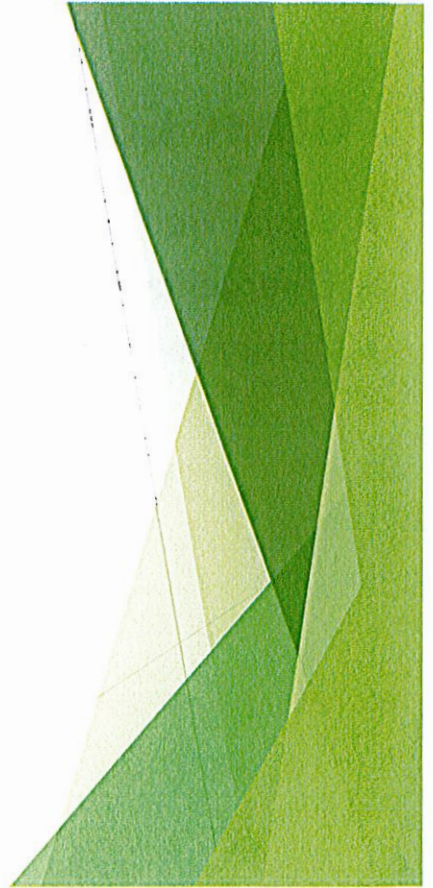




go2hr

<https://youtu.be/bty2rxnAzK8>

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important



# Universal Design in Action

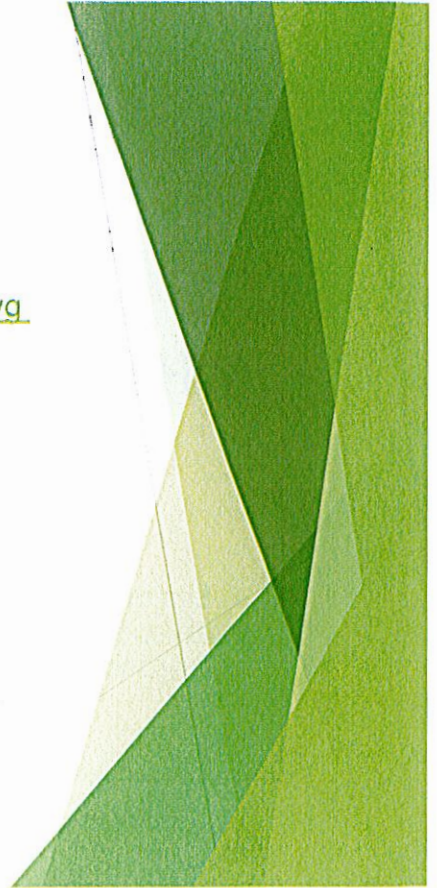
Accessible Tourism video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSQ7vUlr8wg>

Access North video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RR8ni7Yjix4>

Virtual Tours <http://sci-bc.ca/resource-centre/accessible-recreation-leisure/accessible-bc-virtual-tours/>

Accessible BC website <https://accessiblebc.ca/>

Spinal Cord Injury BC - Universal Design, and why it is important





## SUMMARY

### WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN?

Seamless design that is used by everyone regardless of age, gender, economic status or mobility requirement

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Broadens and creates larger user groups

Provides equitable access

Brings in visitors (and money)







Any Questions?  
Thank you





# Certificate of Participation

THIS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT

HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED  
SPINAL CORD INJURY BC - LEVEL ONE - INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND ACCESSIBILITY EDUCATION  
UNDERSTAND OBSTACLES AND DISCOVER SOLUTIONS THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

HEATHER LAMB - ACCESS BC TEAM - INFORMATION RESOURCE SPECIALIST

DATE: