



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

August 25, 2021

West Coast Communities Urge Regional and National Travelers to Plan Ahead for Accommodations in Response to Backroad Camping Concerns

PACIFIC RIM, B.C. – Communities of the West Coast strongly urge travelers to have a lodging reservation at an authorized accommodation provider, including Resort, Hotel, Motel, an authorized Campground, B&B, or Vacation Rental. The West Coast is experiencing a highly active summer, to help maintain safety and reduce overcrowding, having reservations before arriving to the area is necessary.

Territorial lands are highly sensitive and have been suffering the impact of un-authorized campers. There is zero tolerance for unauthorized camping and unauthorized overnight parking within the areas of the Clayoquot Arm, along the Kennedy Lake Watershed, within Tla-o-qui-aht, Yuu?if?ath, and Toquaht traditional territories, and within BC Parks and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.

Un-authorized camping degrades environmental sustainability and public safety, which could lead to:

- Potential wildfire risk.
- Threat to local wildlife.
- Impact to the Kennedy Lake Watershed due to human made and dumped waste.
- Increased traffic and safety concerns for visitors.
- Increased stress on various emergency services.

Regional and National travelers are asked to consider the environmental and public safety aspects of the area and check ahead to confirm reservations and avoid camping in unauthorized areas.

Quotes:

“Unauthorized camping results in siloed gates, pushing campers throughout alternate areas within territorial lands and into the communities, which creates a larger issue. Yuu?if?ath Government and governing bodies are not able to effectively monitor the backroads due to limited resources. 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, Yuu?if?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**

“The District of Tofino looks forward to helping find a solution to unauthorized and irresponsible back country behavior.” **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 the National Park Reserve outside the peak season when visitation to the area is lower.” **Karen Haugen, Superintendent Pacific Rim National Park Reserve**

“We have limited emergency resources on the west coast. Unauthorized camping ties up these resources unnecessarily.” **Rick Geddes Fire Chief, Ucluelet Fire Brigade**

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Contacts

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