



CANADIAN CAMPING
AND RV COUNCIL
CONSEIL CANADIEN DU
CAMPING ET DU VR



FUR INSTITUTE INSTITUTE DE LA FOURRURE
OF CANADA DU CANADA



April 24, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Ottawa, ON

Dear Prime Minister:

As members of the Canadian Outdoor Recreation Roundtable we are writing to request that your government work with us to support the outdoor industry and its workers, which have been especially hard hit by the economic fallout from COVID-19.

The Canadian Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (CORR) is the country's leading coalition of outdoor recreation trade associations, made up of 12 national trade associations serving tens of thousands of businesses. Outdoor recreation is a crucial part of the Canadian economy. CORR members represent thousands of businesses that produce vehicles, equipment, gear, apparel and services for the millions of Canadians who enjoy our national parks, waterways, byways, trails and outdoor spaces. The collective outdoor recreation industry is conservatively estimated to produce \$24.6 billion in economic activity for Canada each year, generating an estimated 472,713 direct jobs, \$7.1 billion in taxes and \$52.1 billion in total revenues.

While our industry on the whole has a big economic impact, we are mostly made up of small businesses that play a vital role in the health and economic well-being of their communities, many in rural areas. A good number of our business owners closed their doors early in the pandemic to be responsible members of their communities. However, they are now suffering and in danger of failing because of the COVID-19 outbreak and the ensuing efforts to mitigate the virus' spread, including social distancing, travel restrictions, caps on mass gatherings, and more.

Outdoor recreation businesses are often lifelines for their communities, providing jobs and economic stability. However, they rely on trips and travel bringing a steady stream of visitors to our public lands and waters. Other factors that our industry relies on – accessibility to recreation assets, adequate recreation infrastructure, and the certainty of manufacturing and trade – have also been interrupted by COVID-19.

In this light, we put forward these policy ideas for your consideration:

Keep outdoor areas open and accessible if it can be done safely and within guidelines. Outdoor recreation businesses – and the communities they support – rely on access to public lands and waters to survive. As long as these areas can be kept open and in compliance with guidelines, federal agencies and provincial governments should avoid unnecessary closures. We would draw your attention to the recent joint action by the governors of New York, Connecticut, and New

Jersey to reopen marinas and boatyards for personal use while maintaining strict social distancing and sanitization protocols.

The mental and physical health benefits of outdoor recreation are well known. Studies have shown that healthy, active outdoor recreation helps combat obesity, depression, diabetes and more. As people grapple with the effects of social distancing, outdoor recreation can be an essential outlet. Hiking, biking, paddling, boating, fishing, hunting, camping, SCUBA diving, ATVing, horseback riding, and more can all be engaged in while adhering to guidelines for social distancing and preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Deem outdoor recreation businesses as “essential.” Outdoor recreation businesses provide essential services to their communities and the country as a whole. These businesses are often the economic drivers of their communities and provide opportunities for Canadians to enjoy healthy activities that connect them with their natural heritage and cultural resources. In addition to the broad benefits, outdoor businesses provide more specific essential services. For example, many private campgrounds provide gas used for home heating; RVs are relied upon for temporary living quarters and mobile clinics, portable office and lab trailers, temporary quarantine units and bathroom and shower trailers. At a time when doctors are telling people to get outside for Vitamin D, stress relief, exercise and mental health, we need to ensure our businesses are there to support Canada’s health and quality of life. Moreover, for many families including First Nations, hunting and fishing are a method of gathering food for sustenance.

Invest in Canada’s recreational infrastructure. We applaud your government’s call for “shovel ready” infrastructure projects that can be launched once the crisis has eased. Like the 2008-09 economic downturn, there is a huge opportunity to jump-start Canada’s workforce and enhance our recreational infrastructure for today’s and future generations to enjoy. There are many smaller projects – improving and expanding trails, marinas, campgrounds, and other recreational infrastructure – that could be started quickly and done this fiscal year. The jobs and economic impact of these investments would be a great boon to all regions of Canada, including rural and remote and Indigenous communities.

Support Trade Associations. The nonprofit trade associations that support and advocate for these businesses and the outdoor recreation economy at large are also facing significant headwinds. The cancellation of conferences, trade shows and other events crucial to the financial health of these organizations severely decreases their ability to support the buying and selling of product and to advocate for their members. These gatherings depend on in-person attendance at convention centers, hotels and other facilities, which is impossible given social distancing guidelines. We urge you to provide financial assistance for associations, nonprofits and other tax-exempt organizations whose survival is placed in jeopardy by COVID-19.

We appreciate your attention to, and consideration of these important issues. We look forward to working with you to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the nation’s citizens, small businesses and economy.

Sincerely,

Sara Anghel, National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) Canada

James Baker, Fur Institute of Canada

Tony Bernardo, Canadian Shooting Sports Association (CSSA)

Dennis Burns, Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO)

Shane Devenish, Canadian Camping and RV Council (CCRVC)

Eleonore Hamm, Recreational Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA)

Ed Klim, International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association (ISMA)

Mike Melnik, Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association (CSIA) & Canadian National Sportfishing Foundation (CNSF)

Paul Pinchback, Canadian Ski Council

Robert Ramsay, Motorcycle & Moped Industry Council (MMIC)

James St. Michael, Safari Club International