

Parks and Protected Areas Program Youth Group Policy

1. Introduction

Purpose

To provide direction on programs available to youth groups.

Scope

This policy applies to youth groups which meet all of the following criteria:

- a BC k-12 school, not-for-profit youth organization¹ or recreational centre operated by a municipality or regional district for the benefit of the members of the group who are 18 years of age or younger; and,
- supervised by an adult representative of the school, not-for-profit organization or recreational centre; and,
- a group of 12 or more persons (youth plus adult supervisors); and,
- undertaking a camping or day use trip in a provincial park.

This policy applies to all BC Parks campgrounds and day use areas, whether operated by a Park Facility Operator, independent operator, ministry staff, or other agency (e.g., local government, First Nation or community group).

2. Strategic Direction

Goals/Objectives

This policy will remove barriers for youth groups to access provincial parks in order to increase attendance by this target market.

3. Operational Policy

Youth group free parking pass:

- A recognizable school bus being used by a youth group does not need to pay for, or display, a parking pass. These buses always park for free in BC Parks.
- Youth groups using vehicles other than a school bus may register for a youth group free parking pass.
 - Only k-12 schools, recreation centres and not-for-profit youth organizations located within BC and taking a minimum of 12 people (youth plus adult supervisors/parents) are eligible for free parking passes.
 - Recreation centres are only eligible for free parking passes if the specific program is targeted at youth (age 18 or younger).

¹A not-for-profit organization means an organization incorporated under the BC *Societies Act* or with a Charitable Registration Number from Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

- An on-line form is available on BC Parks website (see appendix). This form must be submitted 10 days prior to the proposed trip date, with all requested information, in order for BC Parks to generate the requested parking passes in time.
- The youth group free parking passes are date and park specific. They cannot be used in other parks or for other dates. They are also numbered and can only be used for the number of vehicles declared on the form (i.e. if an additional vehicle joins the group, you will be required to pay the parking fee for that extra vehicle).
- The youth group must be supervised by an adult (19 or older) representative of the school, recreation centre or youth organization. There must be a minimum of one supervisor to every 30 youth, with no more than one adult to every three youth. Higher supervision ratios for youth with special needs may be permitted (e.g. one to one supervision) if this requirement is noted on the form.
- There are no fees to register for a youth group free parking pass. These passes will be processed in Victoria, with information sent to the relevant region and PFO. The passes will be sent electronically (via email) to the applying school/organization.

Youth group camping:

- A k-12 school, not-for-profit youth organization, or youth program run by a recreation centre taking a minimum of 12 persons for overnight camping can stay in a group campsite, if available.
- The nightly camping fee for a youth group using a group campsite will be \$50. A reservation fee may also apply.
- Front-country campgrounds require a supervision ratio of not less than one adult (19 or older) to eight youth, and not more than one adult to every three youth.
- Backcountry camping areas may require higher supervision ratios. This information will be posted on the website for specific parks/areas.
- Higher supervision ratios for youth with special needs may be permitted (e.g. one-to-one supervision) if this requirement is noted on the form. Note: the above fees do not apply to a party containing one or more persons who produce BC Parks approved evidence of receiving federal or provincial income assistance for persons with disabilities.

Date

Executive Director
BC Parks