

BC Powersports Dealers Association



Unity through Advocacy, Collaboration & Education

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KVR Trail Closure Threatens Rural Economy, Business Leaders Sound the Alarm

February 19th, 2026 - The BC Powersports Dealers Association (BCPDA) is raising concerns about the Province's proposed deactivation of 67 kilometres of the Kettle Valley Rail Trail, citing potential impacts on rural economies, tourism, and small businesses.

Outdoor motorized recreation is a major economic driver in British Columbia. ATV and side-by-side recreation generates approximately **\$808 million annually**, while snowmobiling contributes an additional **\$299 million**, resulting in **over \$1.1 billion in combined annual economic activity** supporting rural communities and sustaining thousands of jobs.

"The KVR supports year-round visitation," said Kristin Parsons, Executive Director of the BCPDA. "Summer riders and winter snowmobilers bring essential economic activity that rural businesses depend on."

"Trail access drives economic activity," said Parsons. "When access disappears, visitors decline — and that affects accommodations, fuel stations, restaurants, repair shops, and the small businesses that rely on recreation tourism."

The KVR corridor provides essential access to recreation areas that attract visitors to the Similkameen region and support local commerce in communities such as Tulameen, Coalmont, and Princeton.

Powersports dealers serve recreation users through equipment sales, maintenance, safety training, and technical support. The association notes that connected trail systems support industry stability, employment, and consumer confidence.

BCPDA's concerns align with those raised by ATVBC, local recreation clubs, MLA Donegal Wilson, and local governments in the Similkameen region, all of whom have called for greater transparency, stakeholder engagement, and consideration of economic and community impacts.

"This is not one voice raising concern," said Parsons. "Recreation organizations, local governments, elected officials, and the business community are all asking for transparency and meaningful engagement before irreversible decisions are made."

BCPDA is calling for transparency and stakeholder engagement before irreversible actions are taken.

"We are asking government to pause implementation, release the technical analyses, and ensure affected industries and communities are part of the conversation," said Parsons.

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