



Key tourism issues for BC Election 2013

For Immediate Release

(Campbell River, BC; May 1, 2013) The Wilderness Tourism Association of BC (WTABC) has released a paper that highlights the issues and constraints that stand in the way of the tourism industry's growth and prosperity.

“We have prepared this document to inform party leaders and candidates, and to help identify issues leading up to the 2013 British Columbia general election and beyond,” said Jim DeHart, President of the Wilderness Tourism Association of BC. “In order to protect the scarce resources that support sustainable wilderness tourism in the province, and to create business environment where there tourism industry can be successful, certain parameters must be applied. We also need to raise strong awareness among governments, industry sectors and the public about the value of tourism in BC's regions and communities and the issues our sector faces.” The paper was sent to the four main parties and their leaders today with requests to respond to the issues.

“Tourism is a key contributor to British Columbia's GDP and a significant private sector employer for BC,” said DeHart. “It has also been identified as a growth sector able to make a significant contribution to jobs and wealth creation in the future. Direct tourist expenditures on nature-based tourism products in BC is approximately \$1.5 billion dollars and provides the equivalent of over 26,000 full time jobs. Nature based tourism is also a major driver of BC's \$13 billion plus tourism industry.”

“However, the viability and growth of BC's tourism industry is in jeopardy, and we are dependent on the consideration and cooperation of governments and other industries using the land and marine resources,” said DeHart. “We have highlighted four main issue areas that need to be addressed by the next government: Land Rights, Tenure Access and Security; Land and Resource Use/Planning; Transportation and Access; and, Marketing. By addressing these issues, BC's tourism industry can continue to be in a competitive position in the expanding global tourism marketplace, and contribute fully to the province's future growth.”

- 30 -

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Please see the WTABC issues summary document attached. To see the full document please visit our website at www.bcwta.ca.