



BC Parks

LICENCE PLATE PROGRAM FIVE-YEAR REPORT FISCAL YEARS 2017 - 2021



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This report honours and celebrates the five-year anniversary of the BC Parks Licence Plate Program and showcases the incredible impact the program has had in parks across the province in its first five years.

In January 2017, in partnership with ICBC, the Province launched the BC Parks Licence Plate Program. Since then,¹ with support from B.C. residents, Indigenous and community partners across the province, BC Parks has completed more than 325 projects that enhance and protect B.C.'s beautiful parks and protected areas.

B.C. motorists are able to choose one of three specialty plate designs depicting scenes from B.C.'s parks and protected areas. These include the Kermode bear, the Purcell Mountains of the interior region, and Porteau Cove overlooking Howe Sound. These specialty plates were the first of their kind offered to the public since the popular Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games plates.



OVER 325 PROJECTS IN 5 YEARS

¹ This report covers five fiscal years (FY) – beginning FY 2017 (April 2016 - March 2017) through FY 2021 (April 2020 - March 2021).

A BC Parks plate costs \$50 for the initial purchase, and \$40 to renew each year. All net proceeds from the sale and ongoing renewals of the licence plates are re-invested back into provincial parks through the Park Enhancement Fund (PEF), a special account separate from the B.C. government's annual budget to BC Parks. Created in 2008 within the 'Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act', PEF spending is governed by this Act.

FUNDING TO BC PARKS

- Initial BC Parks plate, cost of \$50*
 - ~\$20 directly to BC Parks
- Annual renewal of BC Parks plate of \$40
 - \$40, 100% directly to BC Parks

In March 2021, the BC Parks Licence Plate Program reached a milestone with the sale of 250,000 specialty plates. Through partnerships with Indigenous partners and community groups across the province, projects related to conservation, Indigenous reconciliation, fire-based ecosystem and land management, engagement, education and inclusion were completed over the last five years, as well along with support for the Student Ranger Program which started in 2018.

* Fee breakdown varies based on whether the plate is purchased as part of the initial licensing of a vehicle or as part of a mid-term plate substitution. Other costs include manufacturing, shipping, and ICBC broker commissions.

LICENCE PLATE PROGRAM AREAS OF FOCUS

Each year, BC Parks staff work with partners to develop provincial and regional projects that align within these priority areas:



CONSERVATION

Projects that strengthen conservation partnerships and deliver results on the ground. This can include the maintenance and restoration of ecosystems, climate change adaptation, as well as the protection and recovery of biodiversity.



ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION & INCLUSION

This program area helps connect people to BC Parks by supporting projects that foster public engagement, education and inclusion. Enhancing park visitor experiences, such as the BC Parks Foundation's Discover Park Ambassadors Program, is also a part of this program area.



INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

The Indigenous reconciliation program area helps BC Parks to action the articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (TRC) report, the Province's Draft 10 Principles and the 'Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act)'.



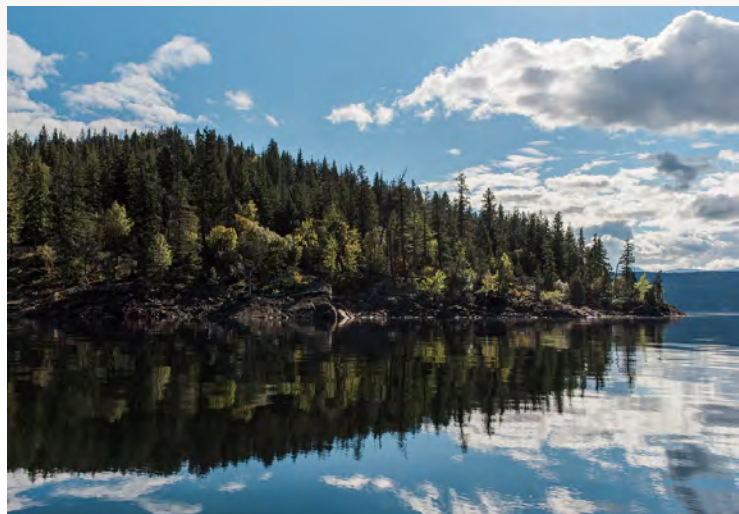
FIRE-BASED ECOSYSTEM & LAND MANAGEMENT

This program area supports the protection, restoration, and enhancements of habitats, ecosystems and infrastructure that are at risk from wildfire, or that may benefit from the planned and deliberate application of fire. It also includes fire-related projects that help solve park management challenges related to climate change, and the restoration of culturally significant areas or practices in the province.



STUDENT RANGER PROGRAM

The Licence Plate Program supports the BC Parks Student Ranger Program which provides outdoor employment opportunities for students that are interested in pursuing future studies or employment in a related field. Student rangers work in crews throughout B.C. during the summer on conservation, recreation, public outreach, and Indigenous reconciliation projects.



BY THE NUMBERS

From fiscal years 2017-2021, more than \$8,500,000 generated from the program has been invested directly into more than 325 enhancement projects in the following areas:



CONSERVATION



FIRE-BASED ECOSYSTEM
AND LAND MANAGEMENT



INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION



ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION
AND INCLUSION

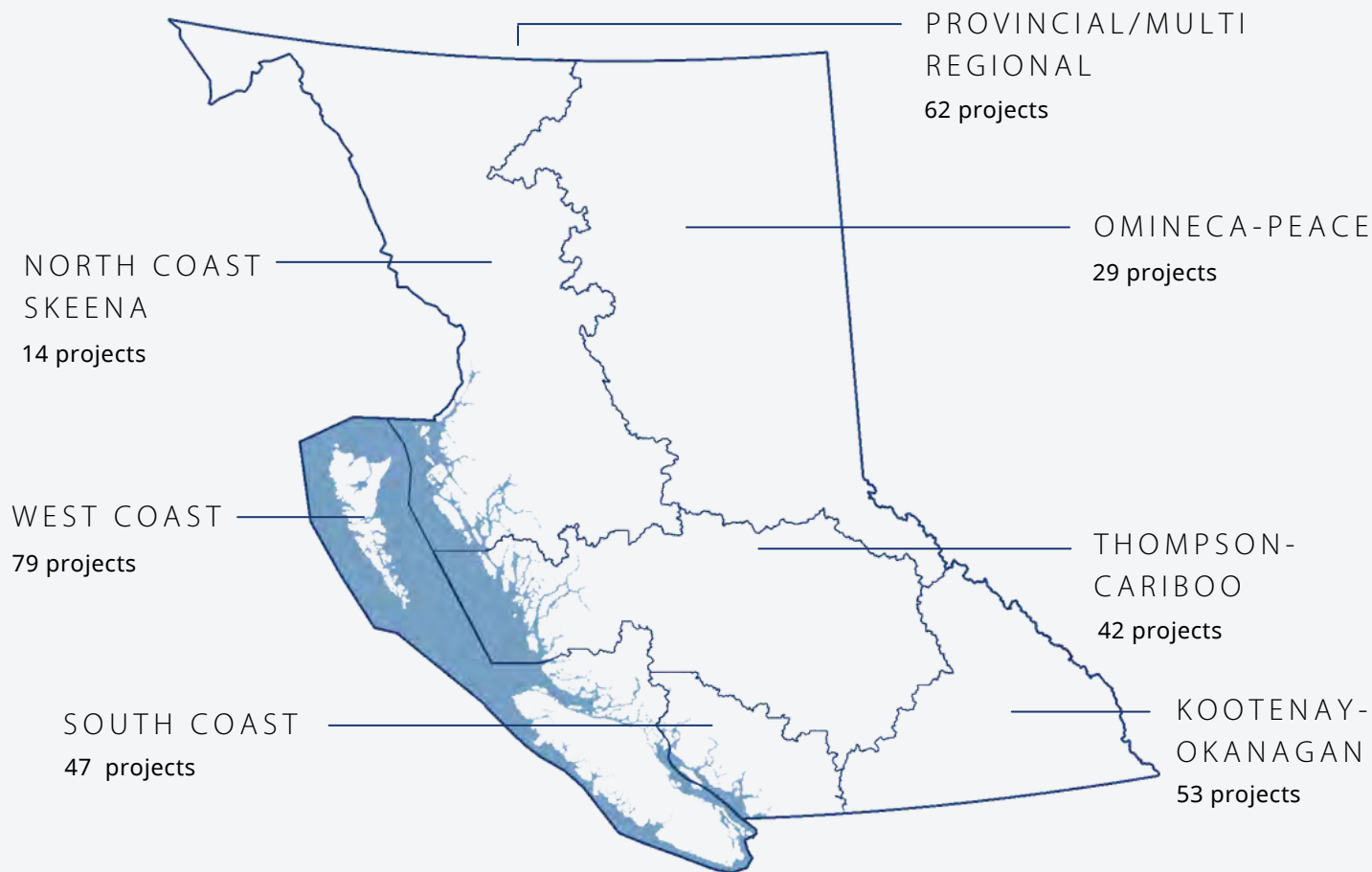


STUDENT RANGER PROGRAM



PROJECTS BY REGION

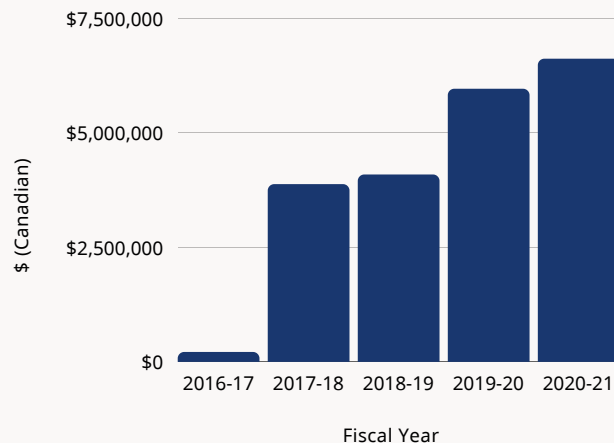
From fiscal years 2017 to 2021, BC Parks completed 326 projects in different regions across the province.



TOTAL REVENUE FROM FY 2017 - 2021

Total revenue is based on funds raised through licence plates sold. Total revenue from the Licence Plate Program has increased to over \$20 million as a result of British Columbians purchasing over 250,000 BC Parks plates.

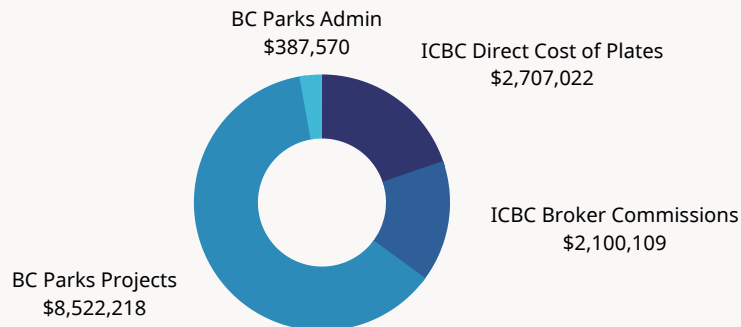
Any unspent revenue from the program each year is spent either on Park Enhancement Fund programs or remains in the fund for future years.



TOTAL EXPENSES FROM FY 2017 - 2021

The total Licence Plate Program expenses are over \$13.7 million, and include the direct cost of the plates, ICBC broker commissions, BC Parks program administration, and BC Parks projects.

For a complete list of projects, please see the Licence Plate Program projects list at bcparks.ca/licence-plates





PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

This section of the report contains a few examples of the over 325 projects supported within each area of focus over the last five years.



CONSERVATION PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

MOUNTAIN GOATS IN CATHEDRAL PROVINCIAL PARK

The Cathedral Mountain Goat Study first began in July 2018 in partnership with UBC Okanagan. In 2019, GPS collars were placed on 10 goats by scientists and technicians from the Lower Similkameen Indian Band and the Okanagan Nation Alliance in the Okanagan Valley.

The goal of the Cathedral Mountain Goat Study is to learn more about goat habitat use and identify the movement of the goats within the park, including their potential for conflict with humans.

The collars last three to four years and send out a GPS signal every six hours so that researchers can keep track of movement patterns, including within the boundaries of the campground.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| FY 2019 | \$ 40,000 |
| FY 2020 | \$ 32,417 |
| FY 2021 | \$ 50,000 |
| Overall Funding from LPP | \$ 122,417 |

The monitoring and collection of data continues in 2022. Preliminary results are currently being assessed by a graduate student at UBC Okanagan and will be developed into a peer-reviewed publication. Ultimately, this data will help BC Parks make informed management decisions for the park to support the mountain goat population.

To learn more about the study visit:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019ENV0091-001640>





CONSERVATION PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

iNATURALIST

The BC Parks iNaturalist Project is a citizen science initiative that encourages park visitors to record and share observations of wildlife and nature to increase biodiversity inventory in parks.

iNaturalist data is becoming one of the largest and most valuable sources for biodiversity information in British Columbia. People can access a list and photographs of species that are found in the park they are visiting.

iNaturalist in British Columbia's provincial parks (as of March 2021):

- 473,135 observations
- over 7,200 species
- over 3,800 identifiers
- 4,736 observers



The BC Parks iNaturalist Project initially started as a small project funded under the BC Parks Living Labs Research Program, which focused on impacts of climate change on vulnerable ecosystems, like alpine plants.

These observations help researchers develop a deeper understanding of the diverse animals and plants in our parks and can help BC Parks make informed decisions to protect these areas for future generations.

The BC Parks Foundation, BC Parks, University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University are collaborating on this project to ensure everyone can have a hand in the research and understanding of B.C.'s parks.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| FY 2020 | \$ 997 |
| FY 2021 | \$ 47,000 |
| Overall Funding from LPP | \$ 47,997 |





CONSERVATION PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT FOR TAYLOR'S CHECKERSPOT BUTTERFLIES

Support for the Habitat Enhancement for Taylor's Checkerspot Butterflies Recovery Project started in 2017 and focused on the coastal bluff ecosystem in Helliwell Provincial Park. This allowed for the re-introduction of the critically endangered butterfly species.



Butterfly Release - K'ómoks Chief Nicole Rempel, Councillor Katherine Frank, Elder Donna Mitchell at Helliwell Provincial Park

Extensive habitat restoration, including tree and invasive species removal as well as planting native plants and seeds, was required to support the reintroduction of endangered butterflies in this region.

In partnership with the BC Taylor's Checkerspot Recovery Project Team and with the support of additional partner funds, to date more than 2,000 caterpillars have been reared at the Greater Vancouver Zoo and larvae gently released in Helliwell's coastal bluff meadow.

Chief Rempel said, "The K'ómoks First Nation is proud to work along-side BC Parks in its endeavors to re-establish the Taylor's checkerspot butterfly within their territory. As stewards of the lands and resources within our territory, we view projects such as this as critical to the well-being of our lands, and the ecosystems within it."

The recovery of this coastal bluff ecosystem has not only benefited butterflies, but also dozens of other at-risk coastal bluff species including the western bumble bee, bats, and the western screech owls.

With the goal of establishing a self-sustaining population of Taylor's checkerspot butterflies at Helliwell, the recovery team is continuing to monitor the re-introduced population, control invasive plants and plant native species. Another release of larvae is planned for spring 2022.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| FY 2018 | \$ 10,000 |
| FY 2019 | \$ 7,500 |
| FY 2020 | \$ 9,825 |
| FY 2021 | \$ 14,821 |
| Overall Funding from LPP | \$ 42,146 |

The Taylor's Checkerspot Butterfly Recovery Project Team includes representatives from BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, BC Parks, biological consultants, Denman Conservancy Association, Garry Oak Ecosystems Recovery Team, Greater Vancouver Zoo, Mosaic Forests, Wildlife Preservation Canada, and others. There has also been local assistance from Helliwell Park neighbours in High Salal Ranch Strata, volunteers, Conservancy Hornby Island, the Hornby Island Natural History Centre, and Hornby Island Provincial Parks Committee.



INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

WOSS LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK GREASE TRAIL UPGRADES

The Grease Trail is part of a broader cultural-tourism initiative developed by 'Namgis First Nation. Located between the lands of the Mowachaht and 'Namgis First Nations, the trail creates a connecting path between the two communities across the Nimpkish Valley. This trail was originally used to trade goods, as well as for ceremonial purposes. By working with BC Parks, the Mowachaht and 'Namgis First Nations have been able to maintain both the trail and their cultural traditions.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

FY 2020

\$ 8,000

In the summer of 2019, students and park rangers undertook restoration work alongside the 'Namgis First Nation on the historic Grease Trail. They upgraded the facilities and cleaned up the camping area to ensure that it was accessible for community members. The project was an opportunity for BC Parks to work alongside 'Namgis and is a great example of how First Nations and BC Parks staff can work together collaboratively to preserve and steward protected areas in British Columbia.



KEMA EXPERIENCE

Kema means “a good place in nature” in Dane-zaa language. Located in the Swan Lake Provincial Park day-use area, the Kema Experience is a space that empowers people to feel rooted, connected, transformed, and energized through a fusion of contemporary art and Indigenous culture.

Participants learned about Dane-zaa culture during two Kema Experience events. The experience engages families through multi-sensory and interactive exhibits including drumming, painting, beading, and interacting with traditional plants and artifacts. Guided walks, speeches, food offerings, art exhibits, and virtual reality experiences were also made available through this collaboration with Doig River First Nation.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

FY 2020

\$ 40,000

Beatton, Swan Lake, Moberly Lake, and Charlie Lake

This program was an inclusive and immersive experience that welcomed all park visitors to participate and further explore Doig River First Nation's rich culture and history.





FIRE-BASED ECOSYSTEM & LAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

WEST ARM PROVINCIAL PARK WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION

Fire is an important part of many forest ecosystems, but more frequent and severe wildfire seasons have increased the importance of wildfire prevention activities. Fuel management treatments can help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and help limit the potential negative impacts on ecological, recreational, and cultural values of parks across the province.

In 2019, BC Parks assisted in cleaning up and removing the forest fuel build up from a fuel management project in West Arm Provincial Park. Every fuel management project produces forest and vegetation debris, because forest fuels are thinned or pruned. This material needs to be removed to complete the wildfire risk reduction, and using prescribed fire is an efficient and cost-effective way to remove the material.





BC Parks was also able to reintroduce fire into this ecosystem in a planned and controlled way to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, and increase wildlife habitat and ecosystem nutrient cycling. The focus was on preservation of biodiversity and habitats for species such as caribou and grizzly bear. These efforts also protect recreational activities like hiking, mountain biking, and back country skiing.

The partners and funders on this initiative have been critical to its success. Partners include many private land owners, the City of Nelson, Regional District of Central Kootenay, and BC Wildfire Service. Funders included the Forest Enhancement Society and BC Wildfire Service Wildfire Risk Reduction funding.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

FY 2020

\$ 86,827



FIRE-BASED ECOSYSTEM & LAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

E.C. MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION

The goal of this project was to protect public safety and reduce the fire risk to Manning Park Resort facilities through interface fuel reduction and ecosystem restoration. It included the removal of trees impacted by pine beetle, downed lodgepole pine trees, along with additional thinning to create operable ground for firefighting efforts and reduce fire intensity in the event of a fire coming from the west.

The project provided interface fire (a fire that has the potential to involve buildings and forest fuel or vegetation simultaneously) protection and created conditions for better vegetation growth and healthier ecosystems on over 15 hectares of land.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|---------|------------|
| FY 2019 | \$ 145,000 |
|---------|------------|

Fuel reduction and restoration work is ongoing elsewhere in the park with B.C. Wildfire Service, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Forest Enhancement Program funding.





ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION, & INCLUSION PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

DISCOVER PARKS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

In 2019, BC Parks partnered with the BC Parks Foundation to jointly develop, fund, and deliver the Discover Parks Ambassador Program. This program aims to create unique and authentic visitor experiences that helps transfer knowledge between generations while building pride and stewardship in our parks.

Ambassadors are post-secondary students who are out in the field actively engaging with visitors through interactive activities and educational initiatives. The goal of the program is to provide employment, training, and educational opportunities to B.C. youth, while also enhancing the experience of park visitors.

Through this, Discover Parks Ambassadors provide an inclusive, welcoming experience for all and create lasting connections to nature, while also educating visitors to enjoy parks safely and responsibly.

Discover Parks Ambassadors can be seen across the province interacting with visitors at trailheads, day-use areas, and campgrounds in a wide range of ways:





- Engaging park visitors in family-friendly and physically distant park activities and interpretive programming.
- Chatting with visitors about local flora and fauna that can be spotted in the area, and how to keep from disturbing or harming them.
- Educating visitors on responsible park recreation practices.
- Showing visitors how to collect important nature observations as part of the BC Parks iNaturalist project.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| FY 2019 | \$ 25,000 |
| FY 2020 | \$ 20,000 |
| FY 2021 | \$ 40,000 |
| Total Funding | \$ 85,000 |

In 2019, the Discover Parks Ambassador Program started as a feasibility study, and was piloted in 2020 with nine ambassadors. Throughout that summer, BC Parks found that having ambassadors present to greet visitors helped reduce litter, visitors wandering off trails, safety incidents, and negative wildlife interactions. As a result of its success, the Discover Parks Ambassador Program continues to grow. In 2021, the program expanded to 16 ambassadors.



ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION, & INCLUSION PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS (GO GRANTS) & TEACHER RESOURCES

In September 2018, BC Parks partnered with Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation in the development of resources for classroom educators to support outdoor learning in provincial parks. The goal was to create place-based learning materials to support educators on outdoor field trips to parks. One of the common challenges shared by educators was the need for ideas of places to go and things to do connected to the new curriculum with an emphasis on inquiry and place-based learning. In addition, educators also shared their desire for resources and support to help them feel more confident and comfortable teaching outdoors. Based on these needs the 'Let's Go' series and additional outdoor learning resources were created.

In 2018-19, the modules created were Let's Go to the Pond (K-3), Let's Go to the Grassland (4-6), and Let's Go to the Forest (7-9). The design of the materials provided pre trip planning and learning, field trip learning and post trip learning ideas and accompanying resources. In 2019-2020, two more modules were created: Let's Go to BC Parks (all grades) and Let's Go to the Ocean (5-7).





LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| FY 2018 | \$ 10,000 |
| FY 2019 | \$ 85,000 |
| FY 2020 | \$ 73,800 |
| FY 2021 | \$ 15,000 |
| Total Funding | \$ 183,800 |

In addition, GO Grants support K-12 classes to help take students outdoors to learn and experience B.C.'s biodiversity. GO Grants provide small grants to help cover bus transportation, field equipment and/or program leaders.

Some of the benefits and successes of this partnership include teachers learning more about the parks in their area, teaching curriculum in an outdoor classroom, repeat field outings to the same park throughout the seasons, connecting with local and/or Indigenous community leaders to accompany classes on the trips, and an increase in teacher confidence in spending time outdoors with their students.

| FISCAL YEAR | GO GRANTS | # OF STUDENTS | # OF PARKS VISITED |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2019 | 47 | 3,685 | 29 |
| 2020 | 35 | 2,831 | 26 |
| 2021 | 16 | 872 | 13 |
| Total | 98 | 7,388 | 68 (44 unique parks) |



STUDENT RANGER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

STUDENT RANGER PROGRAM

Since 2018, students have been able to gain hands-on work experience in four program areas including community outreach, conservation, recreation, and Indigenous reconciliation. Through their meaningful work as environmental stewards, student ranger crews have a lasting impact on parks and protected areas across the province.

Each summer, 48 student rangers are hired and placed on crews throughout the province. From 2018 to 2021, BC Parks student ranger crews contributed over 93,380 hours of work and training on hundreds of projects across the province.

The diversity of experiences and training opportunities for student ranger crews allows young workers to foster an interest in caring for and enhancing BC Parks' natural and cultural values. Chloe Sandahl was a student ranger for two seasons, working in Black Creek and Maple Ridge. For Sandahl, the overall experience was about building connections with parks staff, visitors, and stakeholders, and learning how to work on a team.





“The experience of being a student ranger was incredibly valuable. BC Parks was really supportive of entrusting crews with meaningful projects; therefore, this program feels as if my generation is being passed a torch,” said Sandahl. “While I look back with great fondness on the projects we accomplished, such as field surveys, trail maintenance and construction projects, I always enjoyed visiting new areas and learning about the history and management of various parks. We saw many benefits of our parks first-hand and that is very exciting to be part of.”

Since 2018, the Student Ranger Program has hired self-identifying Indigenous student rangers (23% to 38% of the crews each year) and facilitates Indigenous student involvement in projects located on culturally significant sites and traditional territories of Indigenous communities.

The federal government provided additional funding support to the Student Ranger Program through the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy, as part of their partnership with Project Learning Tree Canada (PLT Canada). This initiative is made possible through BC Parks’ membership in the Canadian Parks Council.

LPP FUNDING YEARLY BREAKDOWN

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| FY 2019 | \$ 674,651 |
| FY 2020 | \$ 779,816 |
| FY 2021 | \$ 860,178 |
| Total Funding | \$ 2,314,634 |

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who has proudly shown their support for provincial parks and protected areas by purchasing specialty licence plates through this program. Through our partnership with ICBC, and support from residents and community partners across the province, BC Parks has been able to further protect and enhance our world-renowned provincial parks for future generations. We look forward to continued success of this program for many years to come.

Learn more about the program and how to buy a BC Parks licence plate, visit bcparks.ca/licence-plates

CONTACT US

If you have any questions about the BC Parks Licence Plate Program, please contact parkinfo@gov.bc.ca.



