



# ATVBC

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## **Re: Decision to Deactivate 67 km of the Kettle Valley Rail Trail (Princeton to Coldwater River)**

Date: February 17, 2026

Daniel Scott  
A/ Director, Trails and Trail Infrastructure  
Ministry of Environment & Parks  
Parks and Recreation Program

Via email: KVR.Trail@gov.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Scott,

On behalf of the Quad Riders ATV Association of BC (ATVBC), we are writing in response to the February 4, 2026 stakeholder notification advising of the Province's decision to permanently deactivate a 67-kilometre section of the Kettle Valley Rail Trail (KVRT) between Princeton and the Coldwater River.

This announcement comes as a significant surprise to our organization and the broader trail user community. Since 2022, ATVBC has actively engaged with Recreation Sites & Trails BC (RSTBC) and multiple ministries seeking updates on the assessment work underway. At that time, we were advised that technical assessments were in progress and that no decisions would be made until findings were complete and shared.

Since our last meeting on April 5, 2023, no reports, findings, or updates have been provided to ATVBC. The sudden announcement, without prior briefing or stakeholder review, raises serious concerns regarding transparency, consultation, and decision-making process.

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### **Request for Technical Reports & Decision Basis**

Given the magnitude and permanence of the proposed deactivation, ATVBC formally requests access to:

- Engineering and geotechnical assessment reports
- Environmental and hydrological studies
- Cost-benefit analysis comparing restoration, partial restoration, rerouting, and deactivation options
- Risk assessments related to public safety and infrastructure stability
- Documentation of consultation undertaken with affected communities and user groups

The Province's letter states that the decision was based on site investigations, cost-benefit analysis, and engagement. However, stakeholders most directly affected have not had the opportunity to review this information.

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### **Stakeholder Engagement & Consultation Concerns**

The notification letter indicates the decision followed “deep engagement with First Nations and other stakeholders.”

ATVBC and local trail organizations were not included in any stakeholder engagement process related to this decision.

We respectfully request clarification on:

- Which stakeholders were consulted
- Which organizations or communities expressed support for deactivation
- Why ATVBC and local user groups were not included

We share and support the concerns raised by MLA Donegal Wilson and local organizations regarding process transparency and long-term regional impacts.

Local recreation clubs have similarly expressed concern regarding the lack of meaningful consultation and the permanent loss of safe, multi-use access routes connecting communities and recreation areas.

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### **Community, Tourism & Accessibility Impacts**

The communities of Tulameen and Coalmont function largely as resort and recreation-based economies, with the KVR at the center of their year-round activity and visitor appeal.

The KVRT provides:

- safe, easy riding routes for families, seniors, and novice users
- essential access for cabin owners and seasonal residents
- a gateway corridor to alpine trails, lakes, streams, and backcountry recreation areas
- year-round recreation including snowmobiling, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing

Without the KVRT, access to surrounding recreation areas becomes significantly more difficult and, in many cases, unsafe or impractical. This loss of accessibility threatens visitation patterns and may reduce tourism, property use, and economic activity throughout the region.

Local businesses and service providers depend on visitors who come specifically for the connectivity and ease of access the KVRT provides. If access is removed, it is reasonable to question whether visitors and cabin owners will continue to travel to the area, and what the resulting economic consequences will be.

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## Economic Impact of Motorized Recreation

Motorized recreation is a significant contributor to British Columbia's economy. Provincial data indicates ATV and side-by-side recreation generates approximately **\$808 million in economic output**, contributes **\$430 million to GDP**, and supports thousands of jobs while driving tourism spending in rural regions.

The KVRT corridor plays an important role in enabling this activity within the Similkameen region and supporting rural economic resilience.

Previous correspondence to the Province also highlighted the trail's role in tourism development, transportation connectivity, and rural economic vitality.

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## Alignment with Provincial Rail Trail Management Strategy

We are concerned that the proposed deactivation appears inconsistent with the [Province's strategic approach to managing rail trails](#). Provincial guidance emphasizes:

- prioritizing segments with strong community support and tourism potential,
- maintaining infrastructure where feasible, and
- collaborative governance with local governments and stewardship groups.

The KVRT corridor demonstrates long-standing community support, tourism value, and multi-use importance. Any decision to remove infrastructure and connectivity should be reconciled with these established management principles.

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## Funding Transparency & Disaster Recovery Questions

We request clarity regarding the funding source and financial rationale for the proposed deactivation:

- What is the total projected cost of deactivation and rehabilitation?
- What funding sources are being used?
- Is Federal Disaster Financial Assistance (DFAA) funding the only option being applied or has other avenues been pursued?
- Was funding requested to the DFAA for repair, and if so, what was the outcome?

Stakeholders deserve transparency regarding why removal — rather than restoration — is being prioritized, and what avenues government have taken to find funding to pursue restoration or partial restoration.

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## Request for Pause & Collaborative Review

Given the irreversible nature of deactivation activities, ATVBC respectfully calls for an immediate pause on implementation until:

1. Technical studies and analyses are released for public and stakeholder review.
2. All affected stakeholders are meaningfully engaged.
3. Alternatives — including phased restoration, partial preservation, rerouting, and partnership management — are evaluated.

ATVBC remains committed to working collaboratively with the Province and regional partners to identify solutions that balance environmental responsibility, public safety, fiscal accountability, and long-term community benefit.

Decisions of this magnitude must be made with full transparency, inclusive engagement, and careful consideration of long-term community, economic, and recreation impacts — not after the fact.

We request a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss next steps.

Sincerely,



**Kristin Parsons**

Executive Director

ATVBC – Quad Riders Association of BC

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**cc:**

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