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Statement to Outdoor Recreation Council, for AGM June 8, 2019
Regarding Motorized Recreation in BC Parks

BC Nature (Federation of British Columbia Naturalists) does not support increasing areas for motorized recreation within our provincial, national, or municipal parks, nor other land trust properties.

Relative to the size of our province, protected areas represent a very small proportion (about 15.4%) of our land base. Meanwhile, population continues to increase, so these protected areas become increasingly valuable for the well being of wildlife and for humans enjoying ‘quiet’ recreation based activities.

The wording of ORC Resolution 2016 – 06, Terrestrial motorized recreation in BC Parks" draws attention to our concerns about increasing areas for off-road motorized recreation within parks. The first request, for a listing of which provincial parks allow winter or summer motorized recreation, is not contentious. However, BC Nature opposes the suggestion to open up additional areas for motorized off-road recreation.

We find this Whereas statement offensive, because the wording is presented almost as a bribe:
WHEREAS the terrestrial motorized community is reluctant to support initiatives related to BC's Provincial Parks unless they have some incentive to do so;
BC Nature strongly opposes this wording of the resolution:
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that BC Parks be requested to consider the needs of the motorized community in future park planning so that terrestrial motorized recreation can take place in those parks where it would be acceptable.
We regret that our organization overlooked this resolution from 2016 during its original consideration.

We encourage ORC to consider this BC Nature position at the ORC AGM and that ORC not pursue further such initiatives aimed at expanding motorized off-road vehicle recreation within parks.

Our Board has noted that Spaces for Nature recently withdrew its membership from ORC, stating concerns similar to ours.

Yours truly,

Cornelis (Kees) Visser, Ph.D., P. Geol.
President, BC Nature