

# HOW DOES RECREATION IMPACT THE ENVIRONMENT?

## TRAIL USE TIPS



- STAY ON APPROVED TRAILS.
- DO NOT APPROACH WILDLIFE AND LEAVE AN AREA IF YOU SEE A GRIZZLY BEAR.
- PLAY. CLEAN. GO. AVOID INTRODUCING INVASIVE PLANTS AND CLEAN YOUR GEAR.
- PACK OUT WHAT YOU PACK IN. DON'T LITTER!
- KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEASH OR LEAVE THEM AT HOME IF YOU ARE NOT CONFIDENT YOU CAN STOP THEM FROM CHASING WILDLIFE.
- RIDE SLOWLY THROUGH PUDDLES TO KEEP SOIL WHERE IT IS. GOING AROUND WET AREAS CAUSES TRAIL WIDENING.
- CALL OUT SO ANIMALS KNOW YOU'RE COMING.



**WILDLIFE:** Activities that alter habitat have an impact on behaviour, survival, reproduction and distribution of a species. When habitat gets carved up into small pieces rather than a wide spreading **corridor**, it can limit how animals can move over a landscape creating barriers to resources such as food and water. If humans are all over the place, there is no space for sensitive wildlife.

**VEGETATION:** Impacts of **trampling** can cause physical damage to plants and their roots, a reduction in height, change in the composition of species, and loss of vegetative cover exposing bare ground. Loss and reduction of species lowers the biodiversity of an area, a key indicator of **ecosystem health**.

**EROSION and SOILS:** Removal of vegetation through development and **trail widening** can cause soil disturbance in many ways including erosion and soil compaction. Roots that help to stabilize soils can become exposed from trails over time.

## Why are biologically rich and sensitive alpine environments more vulnerable?

Sometimes referred to as '**islands in the sky**' alpine environments face many challenges because of their isolated nature. Many **plants** found in the alpine are rare, delicate and have a long growth time. There are 34 plants that only grow in the alpine and 555 plants that are threatened in British Columbia. Impacts can be amplified because less sun brings less energy for growth, creating a shorter growing season for plants to reach maturity. **Animal species** that live in the alpine are less adapted to seeing people. They may choose to **abandon an area** if humans are present. During one year a grizzly bear can cover up to 800 km (size of Calgary, Alberta), and a wolverine can cover up to 1600 km (the size of Yoho National park). Increased human presence in the alpine can reduce the amount of **suitable habitat** available for animals like these.



Please do your part in respecting the environment while enjoying the outdoors by staying on trail and giving wildlife space. It is illegal to damage the environment and build trails on Crown Land without government approval. Help out further by reporting observed violations Wildlife or Environmental Protection laws to BC Conservation Officers at 1-877-952-7277.