

Dear Dr. Bonnie Henry and BC Leaders,

I am writing to you today asking for your support of the urgent but careful re-opening of our industry in the coming weeks. The industry I am referring to is outdoor adventure/sporting events. I understand that the word "event" has become a dirty one in recent times and any time we seem to use it these days we get shut down faster than we can speak of it. Unfortunately, all "events" have been clustered into one lump industry and for some reason event organizers have somehow been deemed not capable of safely operating using the same health guidelines as retail stores, restaurants, and schools through managing of their capacity and adapting policies and procedures.

I am not sure why this is, but I find it particularly hard to take for outdoor activities, which are actively being encouraged by yourself and all experts around the World. Only last week I read a quote from "Canada's top doctor" Theresa Tam as she encouraged people to get outside and avoid enclosed spaces, stating "We got to really give people some of these kinds of activities to look forward to." While at the same time we sent a Covid Safe Plan to Interior Health in hopes that we can run some small, local adventure racing events that would see no more than 10 people at a time starting a course, spread out over the trail or lake before another 10 people would start some time later. The response was of disapproval due to event organizers not being trusted to control people gathering before and after they start/finish the course.

I found this response extremely confusing as we are in fact mitigating this concern by allocating times for people to arrive and depart to ensure there is no gathering at any time, while keeping everyone outdoors, spread over many kilometers of trails during the event. To this logic, how are big box retail stores controlling how many people pull up in their parking lots at one time? Or how many people stand in a long line at the checkout at one time?

I am sure you can see how this would be confusing and frustrating. Outdoor events not only give people something to look forward to, but they boost our local economy. They provide options to keep people active for both their mental and physical well-being. They create purpose for people through participation, community volunteering and employment. If there is anyone that can be trusted to follow a plan, adapt when needed and always keep safety of top priority, it is event organizers. So, I ask you as we very quickly approach our outdoor event season, to please have equal confidence in professional event coordinators and consider the urgency in our industry within your reopening plan. We want to help you get people outside safely and hope that you can help us to ensure that our businesses also survive this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Lyndie Hill
CEO and Owner
Hoodoo Adventure Company Ltd.