
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Nov. 22, 2006

The Editor
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Re: BC Parks Fixed-Roof Accommodation Policy

Maurine Karagianis is plain wrong when she suggests that the development of fixed-roof accommodations in provincial parks is geared toward the wealthy. For instance, visitors to Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park are charged as little as \$22 per night to stay in the Kokanee Glacier Cabin.

It's important to note that more than 160 fixed-roof structures already exist in BC Parks. And Karagianis may need to be reminded it was the former NDP government that approved the most recent privately-operated lodge in a B.C. park in the late 1990s. Is she advocating a double-standard, where it is okay for the NDP to develop privately-operated lodges in parks, but not anyone else? The NDP approved lodges on an ad-hoc basis without clear guidelines or principles in place.

That's why our government developed a comprehensive Fixed-Roof Accommodation Policy for BC Parks that provides clear principles and guidelines for new facilities. The policy is available at www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/fixed_roof/index.html.

Any proposal for fixed-roof accommodation will have to consider the park's recreational values and respect the park's conservation objectives. That means any new development will have to complement the natural BC Parks experience – not detract from it. In addition, proponents are encouraged to showcase green technology to minimize any environmental footprint.

For those who prefer a tent, BC Parks provides more than 11,000 campsites. Existing campsites will not be affected by any new fixed-roof accommodations.

Barry Penner
Minister of Environment