



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION NO.: **421-03370**

BY: **MR. RICHARDS (BANFF-AIRDRIE)**

DATE: **APRIL 10, 2019**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE CATHERINE MCKENNA**

Response by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

National parks

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

Canada's national parks, and the businesses which operate within them, must integrate environmental protection with offering Canadians opportunities to discover and enjoy these treasured places. For ski areas, leases and Site Guidelines are two of the key tools used to protect the environment and ensure high quality visitor experiences, while providing long-term predictability for operators. Site Guidelines form part of each ski area lease. Three of the four national park ski areas are working successfully within this framework and have been doing so for some time.

Site Guidelines define the boundaries of a ski area and set the framework for its future use, growth and development. They are developed according to consistent industry-based criteria, and finalised only after extensive consultation with the operator, industry experts, stakeholders and Indigenous groups, and after environmental review. All comments received during consultations were documented and carefully considered by Parks Canada specialists and, in some cases, analysed by external experts. They are summarized in a publically-available What We Heard document.

The Site Guidelines approved by Parks Canada in January 2019 have been openly discussed with the operator for years, along with the new lease. Sunshine Village was the last ski area to have Site Guidelines and this is a major step forward in managing the development and use of the ski area in ways that respect the national park setting.

The Sunshine Village Site Guidelines and lease support the preservation and protection of the ecological integrity of Banff National Park of Canada, while providing for exceptional visitor experiences. It is important to note that they also provide clear, substantial benefits for the operator, including an allowance for up to 30 percent growth in daily skier capacity, up to 80 hectares of additional developable ski terrain within the ski resort lease area, and up to eight new lifts and associated runs.