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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

### **B.C. MANAGES OFF-ROAD VEHICLES**

KAMLOOPS – Rules for off-road vehicle registration and licensing, helmet use, youth safety and environmental measures will be implemented over the next two years under a new off-road vehicle (ORV) management framework, announced Tourism, Culture and the Arts Minister Kevin Krueger today.

“We’ve heard much from ORV groups, the public, and other stakeholders, including the chief coroner and the Union of BC Municipalities on this topic,” said Krueger. “There is a broad consensus that it is time for ORV regulations; we have a common vision and a solid blueprint for action.”

Under the new framework, all ORV riders using Crown land will require one-time registration with a licence plate for their machines, in addition to wearing helmets and using lights at night. Age-appropriate safety measures and adult supervision will be required for young riders.

All ORVs will require registration and licensing at time of sale and re-sale. New standards for mufflers will minimize the noise impact on wildlife and spark arrestors will reduce the risk of forest fires. Additional measures to connect communities and trail networks will mean licensed ORV riders will be able to cross public roads more conveniently with an annual vehicle licence and basic insurance.

“This initiative, in part, is about allowing law enforcement officials to track stolen ORV's, something almost impossible today. It is absolutely not about taking away anyone's safe, responsible fun,” said Minister of Community and Rural Development Bill Bennett. “I own a quad, and I know this is the right thing to do. Recreationists have lots of fun riding their ORVs in Ontario and Quebec with a similar system and it will work well here in B.C. too.”

“The requirement to display a licence plate on ORVs will make it possible for conservation officers, park rangers and law enforcement agencies to identify those who are damaging sensitive habitat or harassing wildlife, so they can be held accountable,” said Environment Minister Barry Penner. “It will also give members of the public a way to help us by calling our toll-free 1-877-952-RAPP (7277) line to report licence plate numbers of irresponsible operators.”

“For over 30 years, we’ve known that B.C. has lagged behind when it comes to ORV regulations, to the detriment of personal safety, environmental responsibility, tourism potential and enhancement of ORV sport,” said Bruno Delesalle, co-chair of the ORV Coalition, also the executive director for the Grasslands Conservation Council. “The coalition is pleased that the provincial government, after receiving 47 recommendations from coalition stakeholders, is taking action with the implementation of expanded regulations for all ORVs.”

“We expect that these regulations will improve safety, environmental impacts and trail development for ORV use, as well as make those who are currently causing property and environmental damage accountable,” said Bev Felske, co-chair of the ORV Coalition, and member of the Quad Riders Association of B.C. “This is an incredible province to explore and work on the land; the majority of riders do so responsibly, and those that do not will now be identifiable and liable for their actions.”

The proposed framework is the result of extensive consultations over a number of years with a wide variety of interested organizations. The regulations define ORVs as including dirt bikes, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles, and will not apply to private lands.

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A backgrounder follows.

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# BACKGROUND

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## ORV MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

There are several key elements contained in the ORV Management Framework:

### Registration and licensing:

- Mandatory vehicle registration of all ORVs at sale and resale.
- A clearly visible licence plate or decal to better assist compliance and enforcement efforts in identifying irresponsible ORV riders and help track stolen ORVs.
- An expanded definition of ORVs to include all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes. This allows local government to enact bylaws for the range of ORVs.

### Public Road Crossings:

- All ORV riders who choose the option of an annual vehicle licence and basic insurance will be able to legally cross public roads/highways or portions of the right-of-way at designated locations

### Safety:

- All ORV riders will be required to wear a helmet and use lights for low-visibility conditions on Crown land, including road rights of way. Seatbelts must also be worn where installed by the manufacturer.
- Additional measures to better protect youth under 16 years of age include: adult supervision, appropriate size machine for age/weight and reduced speed limits.

### Environment:

- Improved muffler standards for ORVs will reduce noise disturbance to wildlife and recreationists. Spark arrestors will reduce the risk of forest fires.
- B.C. supports the federal government's proposed emission standards for ORVs under the Marine Spark-Ignition Engine and Off-Road Recreational Vehicle Emission Regulations; once approved, these standards will apply to B.C.
- The Forest and Range Act has already been amended to add penalties for mud bogging, which damages sensitive habitat. This management framework will help with compliance and enforcement.

Compliance and Enforcement:

- A provincial ORV compliance and enforcement strategy will be developed and will include an education component to help achieve voluntary compliance.

Implementation:

- A committee of legislators who will oversee implementation has been formed, including Ministers Kevin Krueger, Pat Bell, Bill Bennett, Shirley Bond, Rich Coleman, Blair Lekstrom and Barry Penner.

Registration and licensing costs will be based on a user-pay approach and comparable to other small vehicles. For more information, please visit the website at [www.tca.gov.bc.ca/tourism/ORV](http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/tourism/ORV).

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