



CANADIAN CAMPING  
AND RV ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
DU CAMPING ET DU VR

Version: Expanded Edition – April 2026

# 2026 FEDERAL ADVOCACY KIT

*For the  
betterment of  
Canada's RV and  
Camping Industry*



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ccrva.ca

Best practices for effective and impactful  
meetings with elected officials.

## KEY MESSAGE 1

### *Amendment to the Income Tax Act:*

**Amend the Income Tax Act to ensure small family-owned private campgrounds with less than five full-time employees year-round are classified as active businesses, making them eligible for the small business tax deduction.**

**The Issue:** Camping is one of the most accessible, affordable ways for Canadian families to connect with this country's natural landscapes. But the campgrounds that make that possible are being taxed as passive investments. The Income Tax Act currently classifies campgrounds as "Specified Investment Businesses" (SIBs), the same category as rental properties and investment portfolios, despite the fact that running a campground is entirely hands-on, requiring year-round management, seasonal staffing, infrastructure maintenance, and active guest services. As a result, campground owners face a tax rate of roughly 50%, compared to the 15% Small Business Deduction available to most other small businesses in Canada. Compounding this issue, the application of this classification is not consistent - campground operators are subject to case-by-case reassessments by the CRA, creating significant uncertainty across the sector. This lack of predictability makes it difficult for operators to plan, invest, and operate with confidence, despite running fundamentally active, service-based businesses.

## WHY IT MATTERS

- **Operational Uncertainty:** The current case-by-case reassessment approach creates ongoing uncertainty for campground owners, who cannot reliably predict their tax treatment from year to year. This instability directly impacts business planning, limits access to financing, compresses profit margins, and delays or prevents critical reinvestment in infrastructure, services, and guest experience.
- When campground owners cannot reinvest in their operations, the impact is felt by campers: prices rise, services decline, and parks close. The campgrounds that remain open and thriving are the ones that keep camping affordable and accessible for Canadian families.
- 75-80% of Canada's private campgrounds are family-run operations with fewer than five full-time year-round employees – the very businesses most affected by this misclassification, and most essential to maintaining diverse, affordable camping options coast to coast.
- Correcting this classification doesn't create a new program or new spending – it simply gives campground owners the same fair tax treatment as every other small business in Canada, so they can continue to be the places where Canadians experience the outdoors.

- **Financial Burden:** When campground owners can't access the same tax treatment as other small businesses, the consequences are felt by campers. Operators facing a 50% tax rate cannot afford to upgrade electrical and water hookups, hire additional seasonal staff, or improve the guest experience – and in many cases, they cannot afford to stay open at all. Every campground that closes or deteriorates is one fewer affordable option for Canadian families looking to experience the outdoors. This financial pressure is further compounded by inconsistent CRA reassessments, which introduce risk into long-term planning and reduce operators' ability to confidently invest in improvements that enhance affordability and the overall camping experience for Canadians.
- **Impact on Small Campgrounds:** An estimated 75–80% of Canada's 2,347 private campgrounds are family-run operations with fewer than five full-time year-round employees. These are the campgrounds that offer affordable, accessible camping to Canadians in communities large and small – not luxury resorts, but the backbone of outdoor recreation in this country. When the tax system works against them, it works against the Canadians who depend on them.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:



**Legislative Change:** Amend the Income Tax Act to classify small, family-run campgrounds with fewer than five full-time year-round employees as active businesses eligible for the Small Business Deduction – so the campgrounds Canadians rely on can afford to stay open and invest in their operations.



**Exemption for Seasonal Businesses:** Provide an exemption for seasonal businesses from classification as a "Specified Investment Business," recognizing that hands-on, guest-facing operations are not passive investments.



**Simplified Qualification Process:** Establish a streamlined, permanent qualification process for the Small Business Deduction, eliminating the need for ongoing case-by-case adjudication by the CRA. The current approach creates financial uncertainty, undermines business planning, and places campground viability at risk year over year.



## KEY MESSAGE 2

### *Electrical Infrastructure Improvements:*

**Address the growing electrical supply gap in rural and remote Canada — through grid upgrades, public-private partnerships, strategic investment, and targeted incentives — so that campgrounds can continue to serve Canadians as demand for power grows and EV travel becomes the norm.**

**The Issue:** The challenge facing rural and remote campgrounds is not simply a matter of funding EV chargers — it is a fundamental electrical supply problem. Many campgrounds already operate at or near the limit of available grid capacity, and that gap will only widen as demand grows. EV adoption, increasingly power-dependent RV technology, and heightened guest expectations are accelerating a crisis that already exists today. Without action to stimulate overall electrical supply and grid capacity in rural Canada, campgrounds will be unable to meet current demand — let alone future needs. Campgrounds cannot solve a supply-side infrastructure problem on their own, and the Canadians who depend on them for affordable outdoor recreation will bear the cost if government does not act.

### WHY IT MATTERS

- **Growing Demand for EV Charging:** Electric vehicles and electric RV components are no longer emerging technology — they are mainstream. RV owners are increasingly selecting campsites based on charging availability, and campgrounds without it are losing bookings. Rural and remote campgrounds, which serve Canadians seeking to escape urban centres, are the least likely to have the capital or grid access needed to keep pace.
- **The Rural Access Gap:** Urban campgrounds near population centres have greater access to capital, proximity to grid infrastructure, and stronger cash flow to fund upgrades. The campgrounds most likely to be left behind are the rural and remote ones — often the very destinations Canadians most want to reach. Without targeted support, the electrical infrastructure gap will widen, and camping access in Canada's more remote regions will narrow.
- **Sustainability and Federal Alignment:** Upgrading campground electrical systems supports Canada's own climate commitments — enabling EV charging, reducing generator use, and supporting green energy solutions at tourism destinations nationwide. Campgrounds are doing the work the federal government has said it wants done; dedicated rural tourism infrastructure funding would ensure they can actually do it.

- **Data and Anecdotes:**

- A campground owner in British Columbia reported that growing demand for EV charging among RV guests outpaced what their electrical infrastructure could support – and without funding to upgrade, they had no way to meet it. For campers travelling with EVs in that region, the result is fewer viable overnight options and longer detours to find sites with adequate power. This is not an isolated story – it reflects a gap that is widening as EV adoption accelerates and rural campground infrastructure falls further behind.

- **Economic Impact:**

- Canada's private campgrounds contribute an estimated \$10.3 billion in tourism spending annually – but that figure depends on campgrounds remaining open, competitive, and accessible to the travellers of today and tomorrow. As the camping public increasingly travels with electric vehicles, campgrounds that cannot offer EV-capable infrastructure risk losing relevance not just as businesses, but as destinations. Investing in campground electrical infrastructure is investing in continued public access to outdoor recreation across the country.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:



**Increase Funding:** Allocate dedicated funding for electrical infrastructure upgrades at rural and remote campgrounds – the destinations most likely to be left behind as EV demand grows and least equipped to self-fund the upgrades Canadians need.



**Upgrade Electrical Grids:** Prioritize rural grid upgrades that enable campgrounds to support increased electrical demand, including EV charging – ensuring that Canadians can access Canada's most remote and scenic camping destinations regardless of how they travel.



**Public-Private Partnerships:** Facilitate partnerships between government, utility providers, and campground operators to accelerate infrastructure upgrades, particularly in areas where grid limitations make individual investment unviable.



**Strategic Investment:** Direct infrastructure investment toward regions with the greatest gap between EV adoption rates and available charging capacity – ensuring that public access to camping doesn't become a function of geography or proximity to urban centres.



**Incentives for Development:** Provide tax incentives or grants for campground owners who invest in electrical upgrades, recognizing that these improvements serve a public function – keeping camping accessible to Canadians who travel by EV.



**Research and Development:** Support applied research into cost-effective electrical solutions for remote and off-grid campground settings, where conventional grid upgrades are not feasible and innovative approaches are needed to close the access gap.



## KEY MESSAGE 3

### *Disaster Mitigation and Business Relief Funding:*



**CCRVA advocates for the establishment of a Disaster Mitigation and Business Relief Fund (DMBRF) to provide financial assistance to campground owners affected by natural disasters and to support proactive mitigation measures — so that the places Canadians go to experience the outdoors can recover, rebuild, and remain open.**

The Issue: Natural disasters — wildfires, floods, extreme weather events — are increasing in both frequency and severity across Canada, and campgrounds are on the front lines. Located in the forests, valleys, and lakeshores that Canadians love most, campgrounds are uniquely exposed to climate-related risk. Canada's 2023 wildfire season was the worst on record; 2024 continued the trend. Yet many campground owners still cannot access government disaster relief because they are seasonal operations — and existing programs are designed for year-round businesses. When a campground is destroyed and cannot access recovery funding, it often doesn't reopen. That means a camping destination — sometimes one that has served a community for generations — is simply gone.

### WHY IT MATTERS

- **Vulnerability to Natural Disasters:** Campgrounds are disproportionately located in wildfire and flood zones — the same landscapes that make them destinations for Canadians seeking nature are the ones most exposed to climate risk. Their seasonal operating structure means they routinely fall outside the eligibility windows of existing disaster relief programs, leaving them without support precisely when they need it most.

- **What's Lost When Campgrounds Don't Recover:** When a campground closes permanently after a disaster, the loss isn't just economic — it's a loss of access. Rural and remote campgrounds serve communities that have limited alternatives; when they're gone, camping in that region often becomes inaccessible. A dedicated relief fund isn't just about helping business owners — it's about ensuring those destinations can come back.
- **Financial Recovery and Resilience:** The DMBRF would provide campground owners with timely access to financial support after a disaster, and fund proactive mitigation efforts — fire-resistant infrastructure, flood barriers, emergency preparedness planning — that reduce the risk of closure in the first place. Investing in campground resilience is investing in the long-term availability of affordable, accessible outdoor destinations for Canadians.
- **Data and Anecdotes:**
  - A campground in Alberta faced a devastating wildfire that forced them to close for several months during the peak summer season. Unable to access government relief programs designed for year-round businesses, they struggled to recover — resulting in staff layoffs, deferred repairs, and a campground that reopened at reduced capacity. For the families who had camped there for years, it meant one fewer place to go. This is the human cost of a relief system that doesn't account for how seasonal tourism businesses actually operate.
- **Economic Impact:**
  - Campgrounds are often the economic anchor of rural tourism — drawing visitors who spend on fuel, groceries, local restaurants, and regional attractions. When a campground closes after a disaster and can't access recovery funding, the ripple effect moves through the entire community. A well-structured Disaster Mitigation and Business Relief Fund would protect not just campground owners, but the rural economies and the outdoor recreation access that depend on them staying open.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:



**Establish DMBRF:** Create a dedicated fund tailored to the realities of seasonal campground businesses affected by natural disasters — with eligibility criteria that reflect how these operations actually function, not how year-round businesses do.



**Financial Assistance:** Provide timely funding to cover property damage, lost seasonal revenue, and business continuity — ensuring campgrounds can reopen for the following season rather than face permanent closure.



**Proactive Mitigation:**

Fund campground-specific mitigation measures — fire-resistant infrastructure, flood barriers, emergency access planning — so that the places Canadians count on for outdoor recreation are better equipped to withstand the climate events that are becoming the new normal.

# RESOURCES

Click the tabs to access additional resources.

## ADDED ECONOMIC VALUE

# \$16.2 B

PRIVATE CAMPGROUNDS

# 2,347

JOBS (FULL TIME EQUIV.)

# 141,400

CAMPING NIGHTS IN 2023

# 93.3 M

ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

CCRVA ADVOCACY SITE

INFOGRAPHICS & FILES

ONE-PAGE RESOURCE

## CONTACT US



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