

FORMAL POSITION STATEMENT & COMPLIANCE CHALLENGE

TO: Ministry of Transportation & Transit (MOTT) **CC:** BC Parks; Destination BC; Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS)

DATE: July 7, 2026 **SUBJECT:** Structural Damage to Ecological Connectivity, Public Infrastructure Access, and Tourism Integrity along the Highway 3 Corridor (E.C. Manning Provincial Park Segment)

I. EXPOSING THE CONTRADICTION: "SUPER, NATURAL BC" VS. INDUSTRIAL MEDIANS

Destination BC aggressively markets the province to international travelers under the banner of "BC Wild," promising pristine wilderness, untouched ecosystems, and world-class provincial parks. The installation of a continuous, 4-kilometer concrete median barrier directly through the heart of E.C. Manning Provincial Park exposes this global marketing campaign as fundamentally deceptive.

What global tourists are now encountering along this corridor is not pristine wilderness, but an industrial partition wall that has converted a protected provincial park into a high-speed containment trap. The visual and ecological presence of heavy concrete barriers directly contradicts the provincial mandate to preserve and showcase natural heritage.

II. OBSERVATIONAL EVIDENCE: WILDLIFE TRAUMA AND ENTRAPMENT

The 4km segment paralleling the Similkameen River riparian zone is a critical, generational wildlife corridor utilized by large mammals migrating from high-elevation ranges down to their primary water source. The installation of solid concrete medians has resulted in severe, documented ecological fallout:

- **Maternal Unit Separation:** Large mammals, including moose, deer, and bears, are facing immediate operational barriers. Maternal animals are regularly observed separated from their young, as immature wildlife cannot physically clear the height of the concrete medians. This forces young animals to remain stranded on the live asphalt or isolates them from their mothers, causing severe physiological panic.
- **Corridor Trapping and Stress:** Onsite observations from regional travelers and park visitors confirm a severe increase in visibly distressed wildlife. Trapped within a high-stimulus environment featuring heavy commercial traffic, animals exhibit acute flight-response exhaustion, turning a protected park ecosystem into an active hazard zone for both wildlife and motorists.
- **Obstruction of Documented Crossings:** The Ministry has left active, official "Moose Crossing" warning signage standing along this exact corridor. Despite this explicit acknowledgment of a high-frequency animal crossing zone, the Ministry has installed an unbroken concrete barrier across it, providing zero unobstructed paths to the other side of the highway.

III. RESTRICTION OF RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE & REVENUE LOSS

Beyond the severe environmental toll, the continuous median layout completely chokes off access to long-standing public infrastructure, severely damaging local tourism operations.

- **The Hampton-to-Blowdown Reroute:** Historically, guests staying at the Hampton campground could seamlessly cross to the Blowdown area to safely access the Similkameen River. The new concrete median completely blocks this access. To reach the riverbed now, visitors are forced to execute an arduous 8-kilometer reroute to the end of the barrier system, where they must perform a highly dangerous U-turn with trailers and recreation vehicles in the middle of a high-speed highway layout.

As requested, the specific spatial and operational profiles for the two heavily impacted day-use corridors have been extracted and detailed below:

1. Blowdown Day-Use Picnic Area

- **Ecological & Recreational Value:** Located directly within the active valley bottom adjacent to the Similkameen River riparian ecosystem, the Blowdown site serves as a vital frontcountry day-use rest stop. It features critical public infrastructure, including designated picnic tables, mandatory wildfire information signage, shelter facilities, and rustic pit toilets.
- **Impact Profile:** The installation of the concrete median barrier completely cuts off left-hand turning access into the Blowdown day-use parking lot for westbound/northbound corridor traffic, effectively rendering the site inaccessible to half of the traveling public and driving down park facility utilization.

2. Monument 78 / Monument 83 Trailhead Axis

- **Historical & Infrastructural Value:** This specific corridor serves as the staging ground for two of the most significant historical backcountry routes in the Cascade region:
 - **Monument 78:** A highly frequented backcountry trail extending directly to the international boundary line at the 49th parallel, heavily utilized by wilderness hikers, multi-day backpackers, and campers.
 - **Monument 83:** A historic access route leading directly to the alpine peak, which features a structurally preserved, historic forest fire lookout tower at the summit.
- **Impact Profile:** The un-passable concrete median blocks safe vehicle deceleration and entry into the trailhead pullouts from the opposing lane. By forcing hikers and historical researchers to seek distant turnarounds, the Ministry has restricted access to a key heritage trail network, severely dampening the regional eco-tourism economy.

IV. DEMAND FOR REMEDIAL ACTION

The current infrastructure deployment is untenable, dangerous, and destructive to the reputational integrity of British Columbia's park system. The Ministry of Transportation & Transit, in coordination with BC Parks, must immediately:

1. **Halt further solid concrete barrier deployments** within the protected boundaries of E.C. Manning Provincial Park.
2. **Implement immediate mitigation cuts** or install specialized wildlife-engineered pass-through structures along the 4km river corridor to alleviate animal entrapment.
3. **Restore unobstructed left-turn ingress and egress** to the Blowdown and Monument trailhead day-use sites to ensure public safety and preserve historical recreation access.

Submitted by:

[Your Name/Title]

Eastgate Heritage Enclave / Local Business Operations