



# Economic Impact of 2017 Wildfires on Tourism in the Kootenay Rockies Tourism Region

Final

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# Executive Summary

## Background and Survey

In 2017, British Columbia experienced the biggest wildfire season in provincial history with fires impacting almost every region of the province including the Kootenay Rockies Region.

This study was undertaken to determine the economic impact on tourism in the Kootenay Rockies Region. A survey was conducted among members of the Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association with a total of 159 participating to some degree in completing the questions.

## Estimate of Total Economic Impacts

The total number of tourism industry establishments was 783 in 2017. These operators were either adversely effected by wildfires in 2017 or not. Table ES-1 outlines the share in each category.

TABLE ES-1: ESTABLISHMENTS IMPACTED BY 2017 WILDFIRES

Indicator	Survey Sample Size	Population Estimate
<b>Adversely Effected</b>	87	549
<b>Neutral or Positively Effected</b>	37	234
<b>Total Establishments</b>	124	<b>783</b>

Based on the survey responses, sales revenue for Kootenay Rockies Region's industry totalled about \$850.0 million (Table ES-2 and Table ES-3). The total sales revenue of *adversely impacted* tourism businesses is estimated at \$671.9 million. The 2017 wildfire and ancillary consequences caused a loss of sales revenue estimated at \$38.4 million and an additional \$6.6 million in 2018, or a total revenue loss for the two years of some \$45.0 million. The reduction in business activity resulted in laying off some 483 persons for an average of about 4 weeks in 2017. The reduction in payroll costs is estimated at \$2.7 million in 2017.

TABLE ES-2: ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON KRT TOURISM INDUSTRY IN 2017 AND 2018

Indicator	Survey Average	Population Estimate
<b>2017</b>		
<b>Total sales in 2017 (\$)</b>	\$ 1,223,000	\$ 671,871,000
<b>Loss in total sales 2017 (\$)</b>	\$ 69,940	\$ 38,425,000
<b># of employees laid off (persons)</b>	0.88	483
<b>Lost Payroll (\$)</b>	\$ 4,990	\$ 2,741,000
<b>2018</b>		
<b>Expected Lost Total Sales (\$)</b>	\$ 11,980	\$ 6,577,000

The wildfire impacts on those adversely impacted are anticipated to dissipate relatively quickly in 2018 and 2019. Although 5% of operators adversely impacted in 2017 anticipate continued adverse impacts to continue on into 2019.

A relatively small number of tourism operators were either *not impacted* by the wildfires *or realized some increase* in sales associated with the 2017 wildfires. The gain in revenue is estimated at about \$8.7 million, which may be distributed to relatively small number of operators given the concentration in the survey. This incremental activity added about 5% to total sales of some \$178.5 million in 2017 (Table ES-3). This led to hiring of nearly 100 new staff and increased payroll by an estimated \$1.9 million. However, unlike the adversely impacted tourism businesses, there was either no, or it was unclear, that the 2017 wildfire experience would create on-going benefits moving forward.

TABLE ES- 3: POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON KRT TOURISM INDUSTRY IN 2017

Indicator	Survey Average	Population Estimate
<b>Total sales (\$)</b>	\$ 764,000	\$ 178,499,000
<b>Gain in sales revenue (\$)</b>	\$ 37,167	\$ 8,684,000
<b>Persons hired</b>	0.41	96
<b>Increased payroll costs (\$ 000)</b>	\$ 8,330	\$ 1,945,000

The adverse economic impacts associated with 2017 wildfires exceeded the positive effects to Kootenay Rockies Tourism industry by about 5-fold with respect to revenues and employment.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

In 2017, British Columbia experienced the biggest wildfire season in provincial history with fires impacting almost every region of the province including the Kootenay Rockies region. Kootenay Rockies Tourism (KRT) has proactively strived to understand the economic impact on the tourism industry in it's service area and develop a recovery strategy that will better assist the tourism industry during this natural disaster and support and assist tourism business in the event of future natural disasters.

KRT engaged Peak Solutions Consulting Inc. to complete an Economic Impact Assessment of the 2017 Wildfires in the KRT region. The objective in this assignment was twofold including:

- Determining the full economic impacts on the tourism sector in the KRT region that were subject to changes in business activities as a result of the 2017 wildfire season; and,
- Develop a recovery action plan that would build on the experiences of 2017 to prepare and recover from future natural disasters that may occur to the KRT region.

This study focuses on capturing impacts for three distinct impact periods including:

- Detailed impacts for the wildfire season which ran from roughly June to December 2017;
- Detailed impacts for the 2018 calendar year; and,
- An indication of whether tourism business thought they would be impacted in 2019 calendar year from the 2017 wildfire event.

## 1.2 Report Structure

There are five chapters in addition to the Introduction. **Chapter 2** is a brief profile of the Kootenay Rockies Tourism region, while **Chapter 3** is the economic impact analysis. **Chapter 4** is the legacy framework, providing insights on future surveys, while **Chapter 5** undertakes the recovery plan. Reference materials are noted in **Chapter 6**.

## 2 Kootenay Rockies Tourism Region Profile

### 2.1 Location and Area

The KRT region is located in the southeastern portion of British Columbia. The region is known as the “Mountain Playground” and includes a system of valleys and mountain ranges – the Purcells, Selkirks and Monashees, with the region aligned in an approximate north/south orientation embracing the Canadian Rocky Mountains that lie west of the Continental Divide. In total, the KRT region covers 58,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the province. Figure 1 outlines the six tourism regions in British Columbia including the Kootenay Rockies region.

In 2014, tourism in British Columbia generated 18.9 million overnight visits and \$9.2 billion in related spending. The KRT region, represents 9% of provincial overnight visitation and 7% of related spending. (Destination BC. 2017)

FIGURE 1: TOURISM REGIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA



Source: Destination BC. (nd).

## 2.2 Regional Overview

The population of the KRT region is approximately 147,093 and makes up 3% of the total provincial population in 2015. In addition, the population of the KRT region continues to grow and has increased by 3% between 2014-15. Overall, the Region is characterized by an older demographic than the province as a whole, with 53% aged 45 years or older compared to the provincial average of 46%.

## 2.3 Room Revenues

Table 1 outlines the room revenues for those communities that charge the municipal and regional district tax (MRDT). In the KRT region the communities with the MRDT includes: Columbia Shuswap-Golden, East Kootenay-Fernie, Kimberley, Revelstoke, Castlegar, Nelson, Rossland, Invermere, and Radium. Collectively, the total hotel revenues in 2017 was \$129.2 million. An increase of 9.3% over 2016.

TABLE 1: KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM REGION, MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL DISTRICT TAX, 2010 TO 2017

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Room Revenues in \$000, Annually</b>	69,641	75,915	81,710	89,001	97,246	109,437	118,181	129,204

Source: BC Stats. (2018).

## 2.4 Key Kootenay Rockies Markets

Table 2 outlines the top five market origins in the KRT region. As illustrated, the Kootenay Rockies is very dependent on the Alberta market. Collectively, British Columbia and Alberta make up 76% of the overnight visitation and 65% of the spending.

TABLE 2: KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM REGION, TOP FIVE MARKETS OF ORIGIN, 2014

	Visitation	Spending
<b>Alberta</b>	47%	46%
<b>British Columbia</b>	29%	19%
<b>Washington</b>	4%	5%
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	2%	5%
<b>Australia</b>	2%	5%

Source: Destination BC (2017).

## 2.5 Trip Characteristics By Origin

The Kootenay Rockies received 2,070,000 overnight visits in 2014 and generated approximately \$654.3 million in related spending. As illustrated in Table 3, Canadian based domestic overnight travellers in the KRT region accounted for 81% of visitation and 74% of related spending. Meanwhile US travellers accounted for 10% of visitations and 13% of spending.

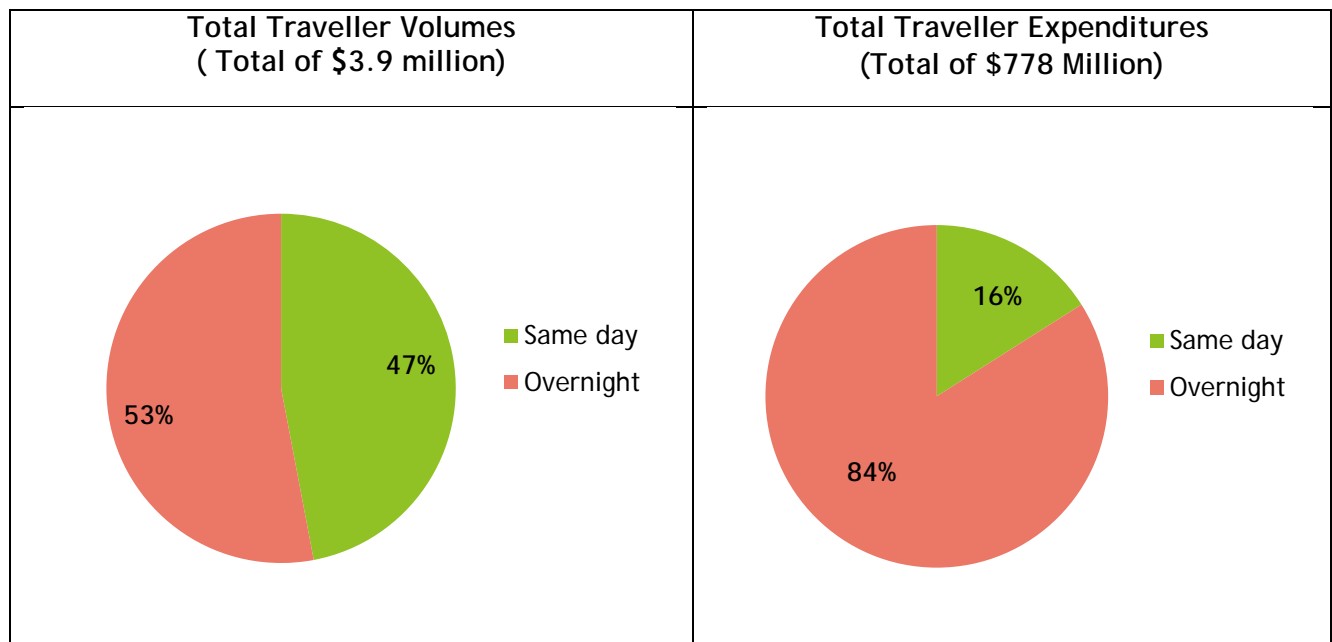
TABLE 3: OVERNIGHT VISITORS AND SPENDING BY RESIDENCY, 2014

	Total			Share of Total		
	Overnight Visitors (000s)	Spending (\$000s)	Nights (000s)	Overnight Visitors	Spending	Nights
<b>BC Residents</b>	595	\$123,419	1,431	29%	19%	21%
<b>Other Canadian Res.</b>	1,081	\$362,782	3,629	52%	55%	54%
<b>US Residents</b>	217	\$82,769	657	10%	13%	10%
<b>Other International Res.</b>	177	\$85,316	983	9%	13%	15%
<b>All Travellers in KRT</b>	2,070	\$654,286	6,700	100%	100%	100%

Source: Destination BC (2017).

Figure 2 outlines the travel volumes and expenditures for same day and overnight. As illustrated, 47% of travel volume and 16% of expenditures is associated with same day travel. Same day adds approximately \$124 million in spending for total visitor spending of \$778 million in 2014.

FIGURE 2: KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM REGION SPENDING AND TRAVELLER VOLUME SHARES, 2014



Source: Destination BC (2017).



## 2.6 Seasonality

Table 4 outlines the season when visitors travel to the KRT region. As illustrated, the summer months are by far the most important season for visitors to the region. This is also the season in which the 2017 wildfires were at their peak, resulting in the maximum tourism disruptions, when most operators are in their busiest period.

TABLE 4: KOOTENAY ROCKIES REGION SEASONALITY BY RESIDENCY

Season of Travel	BC Resident	Other Canadians	US Residents	Other International
January to March	20%	24%	2%	4%
April to June	20%	21%	48%	26%
July to September	36%	47%	43%	67%
October to December	24%	8%	8%	3%

Source: Destination BC (2017).

## 2.7 Trip Activity

Table 5 outlines the trip activities enjoyed by visitors by residency. As outlined, many of the activities are outdoor activities. The wildfires and dry season in the summer of 2017 saw backcountry access restricted with many parks closed across the province.

TABLE 5: KOOTENAY ROCKIES REGION TOP FIVE TRIP ACTIVITIES BY RESIDENCY

	BC Resident	Other Canadians	US Residents	Other International
1	Beach	Hiking or backpacking	National/provincial or nature park	National/provincial or nature park
2	Hiking or backpacking	National/provincial or nature park	Historic site	Historic site
3	National/provincial or nature park	Boating	Wildlife viewing or bird watching	Wildlife viewing or bird watching
4	Camping	Camping	Museum or art gallery	Hiking or backpacking
5	Fishing	Downhill skiing or snowboarding	Hiking or backpacking	Museum or art gallery

Source: Destination BC (2017).

## 2.8 Overview of 2017 Wildfire Season

The 2017 wildfire season in British Columbia was characterized by:

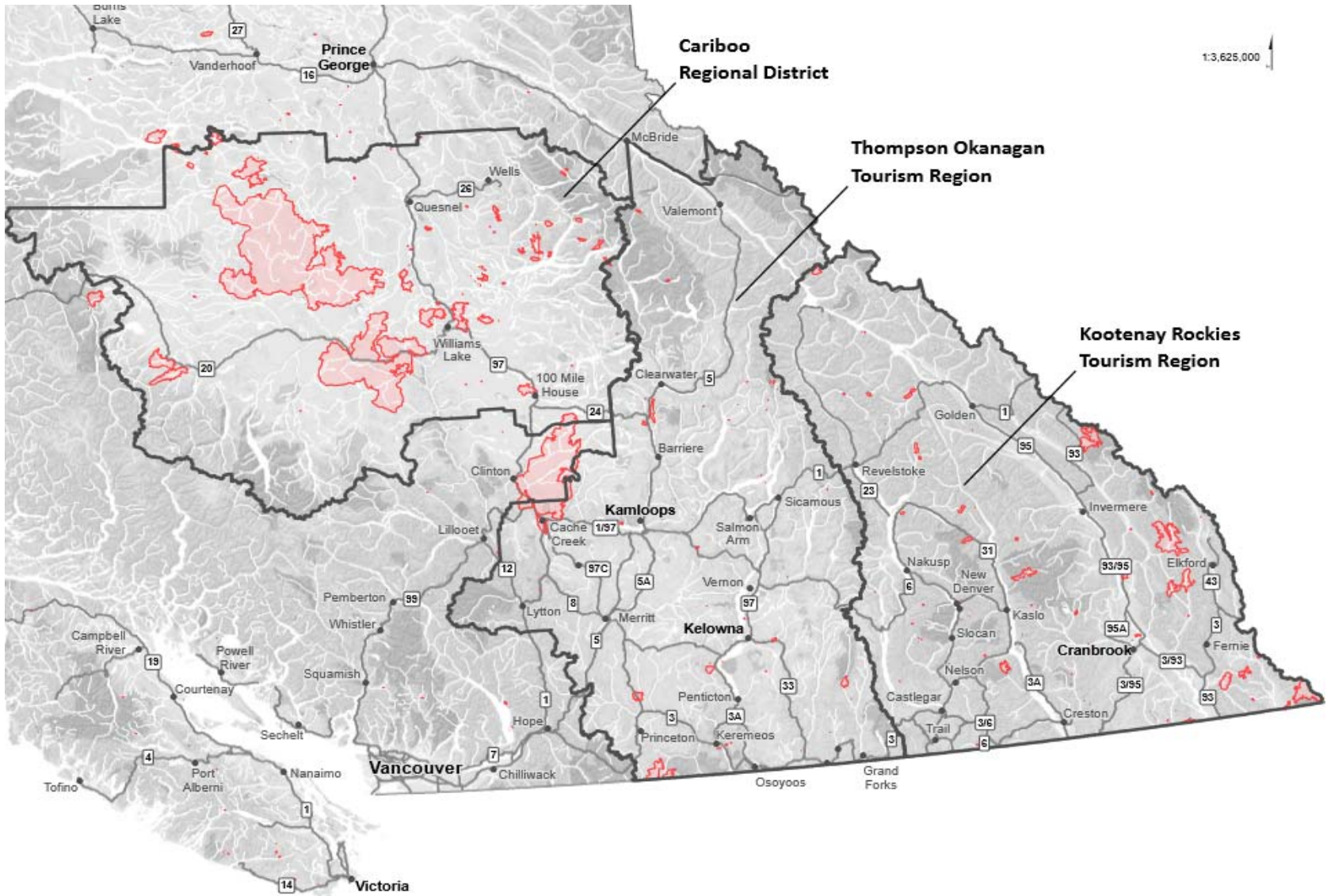
- Over 1.2 million hectares burned which is 8 times larger than the historical annual average of 142,000 ha.
- Approximately 96% of the area affected was in the Cariboo, Kamloops and South East Fire centers with 80% of that total located in the Cariboo alone.
- Total cost of direct fire suppression was over \$568 million. Total cost of the emergency response efforts is estimated at \$168 million.
- Approximately 65,000 people were evacuated in 44 geographic areas of the province.
- Provincial state of emergency was declared on July 7<sup>th</sup> and lasted 70 days, the longest in BC history.
- Over 1 million hectares of forest area was affected which is approximately 2% of the total forest area of the province (55 million hectares).
- A total of 192 homes and 252 structures were destroyed for a total of 444 structures. (Lions Gate Consulting Inc. 2018)

Within the Southeast Fire Centre, which approximates the Kootenay Rockies Tourism region, there were several “Fires of Note” (Figure 2). The “Wildfires of Note” are defined by the Wildfire Services Branch of FLNRORD as, “a wildfire that is especially visible or poses a threat to public safety”. In the Southeast Fire Centre, the “Fires of Note” included:

- Harrop Creek (3,117ha.), 4.5 kilometres south of Harrop-Procter, east of Nelson; discovered July 27; prompted Evacuation Alerts and was highly visible
- Lamb Creek (2,215ha.), 2.5 kilometres northwest of Moyie and 18 kilometres southwest of Cranbrook; discovered August 28; prompted Evacuation Orders and Evacuation Alerts
- Linklater Creek (1,285ha. on BC’s side of the border), 18 kilometres southwest of Newgate; discovered August 22; part of a larger fire in the U.S. that crossed over into BC; prompted Evacuation Orders and Evacuation Alerts
- White River (12,000ha.), 37 kilometres northeast of Canal Flats; discovered July 29; prompted Evacuation Orders and Alerts
- Kenow Mountain (15,449ha.), in the Flathead Valley; discovered August 30; burned into Alberta and the Waterton Lakes National Park (BC Wildfire Service. 2017)

In addition, another significant fire event in the Kootenay Rockies Region was the Verdant Creek Fire that took place in Kootenay National Park (Cooper, 2018 pers comm.).

FIGURE 3: BC FIRES OF NOTE IN SOUTHERN INTERIOR INCLUDING KOOTENAY ROCKIES REGION, 2017



Source: Hillcrest Geographics (2018).

## 3 Economic Impact Analysis

### 3.1 Methodology

The survey conducted for this report was prepared in consultation with Kootenay Rockies Tourism (KRT). The base survey questions were drawn from a similar survey prepared for the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association. The survey questions were then reviewed and discussed with staff at KRT and refined to suit the Kootenay Rockies focus. This was followed by piloting the survey with two Kootenay Rockies tourism operators. Revisions were made based on their feedback before being finalized for delivery to tourism operators in the KRT region.

The KRT delivered the survey through their standard distribution channels utilizing their e-blast email distribution system. KRT has a list of 783 tourism operators and businesses which it interacts with on tourism activities, and it was this group of operators that were targeted by the survey.

The survey was open from April 16, 2018 to May 21, 2018, a period of 35 days. Over the length of the survey, email reminders were sent out each week. In total 159 tourism establishments participated in the survey representing 20.3% of total tourism operators identified in the KRT region.

The survey is not necessarily a random sample because operators self-selected, which may impart a bias toward either responding or not responding to the survey. There is also varying sensitivities among operators with regards to revealing financial information even though all the data is confidential. Indeed, for those taking the survey, the questions seeking financial information recorded the greatest number of skipped responses (See Appendix A).

Nevertheless, the sample size is relatively large as compared to the population which would suggest the survey findings are reasonably reliable indicators of the KRT's tourism industry as a whole. To further explore the reasonableness of the survey respondents versus the tourism business population, the comparisons to the regional shares and spending size were undertaken and are highlighted below.

### 3.2 Survey Comparison to Region Population

#### 3.2.1 Location Comparison

As mentioned above, KRT tracks tourism businesses in their Region. Based on their database, there are an estimated 783 businesses located in the KRT region. Table 6 outlines the total tourism businesses reported in 2018 by regional district and compares this to the residency of the tourism survey respondents. As illustrated, the East Kootenay, Central Kootenay and Kootenay Boundary survey respondents are slightly over represented while the Columbia-Shuswap is under represented when compared to the actual business count population.

However, overall, the survey participation from these four regional districts in the Kootenay Rockies Tourism region is believed to be a relatively close representation of the region's tourism business count based on location.

TABLE 6: TOTAL ESTABLISHMENT COUNT AND SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY REGIONAL DISTRICT

	Total Establishment Count		Survey Respondents	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
<b>East Kootenay</b>	276	35.2%	66	41.5%
<b>Central Kootenay</b>	253	32.3%	53	33.3%
<b>Kootenay Boundary</b>	96	12.3%	24	15.1%
<b>Columbia-Shuswap</b>	158	20.2%	16	10.1%
<b>Total</b>	783	100.0%	159	100.0%

Source: Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association (2018) and Peak Solutions (2018).

### 3.2.2 Comparison by Spending

Destination BC estimates that tourism spending in the KRT region was \$778.0 million in 2014. If spending on accommodation is a relatively stable proportion of total visitor spending, we can compare the proportion of total spending and room revenue in 2014 to an estimated total that KRT provided for 2016 room revenue (Table 1). This yields an estimated total spending in the KRT region of approximately \$875.3 million in 2016 and an average total spending of \$1.12 million by businesses, assuming 783 establishments in the KRT region (based on the KRT member database).

Meanwhile 107 survey respondents identified total sales of \$125.1 million in 2016 for an average value of \$1.16 million, only 3.4% different from the population's estimated spending. Obtaining very similar values given alternative estimating approaches provides further confidence in the survey sample findings are representative of the KRT region tourism businesses.

## 3.3 Survey Findings

### 3.3.1 Survey Respondent Profile

Turning to the survey findings, a total of 159 participated to some degree in completing the questions. Survey results for several questions are presented in Appendix A and summarized here. Survey findings highlight that the median number of employees per establishment was 5 to 9 persons. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents were single proprietorships or one to two employee operations, while 7 respondents indicated more than 150 employees. The survey was successful in canvassing tourism operations of all sizes.

As noted in Table 1, room revenue has been growing at a steady pace in the KRT region, which may suggest continued growth across the industry. Indeed, respondents' sales expectations for 2017 prior to the commencement of the 2017 fires was buoyant, with almost half expecting 6 to 15% increase in business and another 15% expecting greater than 16% sales growth. Actual growth in room revenue was in the order of 10% so for most respondents their expectation's may have been met, even with the wildfires.

### 3.3.2 Survey Respondent Impacts

A key question asked respondents to indicate whether or not they had been impacted by the 2017 wildfires. There were 124 responses to this question, with about 70% (87 respondents) indicating that they had been adversely impacted, while the remaining 30% (37) indicated they had not been affected or they experienced a benefit. This provided the opportunity to sub-divide the sample and examine differences in effects.

Of the adversely impacted respondents, 58 indicated 2017 total sales averaged \$1.2 million, and a median value of \$143,700. The median value has equal number of respondents above and below it. The portion where the median is less than average value indicates there are relatively few respondents that have relatively large sales revenue. In contrast, the respondents that were not impacted by the wildfire reported relatively lower average total sales of \$764,124 but a relatively higher median value of \$300,000. The 2017 sales total of all 76 respondents was \$89.3 million.

For those that were impacted, the three most common causes that led to financial loss were guests staying away, smoky conditions, and a distant third cause was restricted access (i.e., road closures). The responses can be subject to various interpretations (i.e., whether the smoke caused the guests to stay away or instances where the two acted independently). Nevertheless, in the KRT region, tourism businesses were less frequently financially impaired by an evacuation order or physical damage caused by fire. In fact, only one survey respondent identified physical damage directly related to the wildfires. The duration of the disruption for most respondents was 3 to 8 weeks.

Fifty-three of the respondents that reported an adverse financial impact estimated the financial loss in excess of \$3.7 million, or a reduction in total 2017 sales revenue of about 5.2%. The average loss per establishment was \$69,944 and the mean value was \$25,000. It is reasonable to expect that managers might respond to the drop in sales by laying off staff and reducing purchases of goods and services. About one-third of the respondents did indicate they had laid off employees, but the majority of respondents did not. This is likely reflective of the HR requirements of the different types of tourism operations or that sales, while diminished by the fires, still required the full staff complement. The average reduction in person days was 17 days per establishment, but the median value is zero, reflecting the operators' decision to maintain staffing levels. The average reduction in payroll was \$4,990 per establishment (and \$0 median value).

Conversely, twenty-three responders indicated they did not experience an adverse impact. Most of these stated there was no impact while 6 indicated a positive effect. Most of the beneficially affected operators were in the accommodation, RV and food services businesses. The new patrons included firefighters, local evacuees, and recreationalists seeking better outdoor conditions than available in neighboring regions. The increase in business for the respondents spurred new hirings of about 9.5 persons and added payroll of almost \$191,500.

## 3.4 Estimate of Total Economic Impacts

The survey results were used to estimate the total economic impacts the 2017 wildfires had on the KRT Region. The estimation method is grounded on the assumption that the sample average is a reasonable approximation of the population's average. The estimate is subject to statistical variation which is reduced with increasing sample size. For clarity of presentation

we did not consider variation of the mean but emphasize that the impact value is an estimate subject to statistical variation rather than precise values.

The total number of tourism industry establishments is 783 in 2017. This number has been obtained from the Kootenay Rockies Tourism database of members. It was this group of tourism operators that were deemed to be either adversely effected by wildfires in 2017 or not. The *"not adversely impacted"* group includes operators that were beneficially affected or not affected at all. Based on the survey findings, of the 783 establishments, 549 were adversely impacted and 234 indicated no effect, or beneficial change (Table 7).

TABLE 7: ESTABLISHMENTS IMPACTED BY 2017 WILDFIRES

Indicator	Survey Sample Size	Population Estimate
<b>Adversely Impacted</b>	87	549
<b>Neutral or Positively Impacted</b>	37	234
<b>Total Establishments</b>	124	<b>783</b>

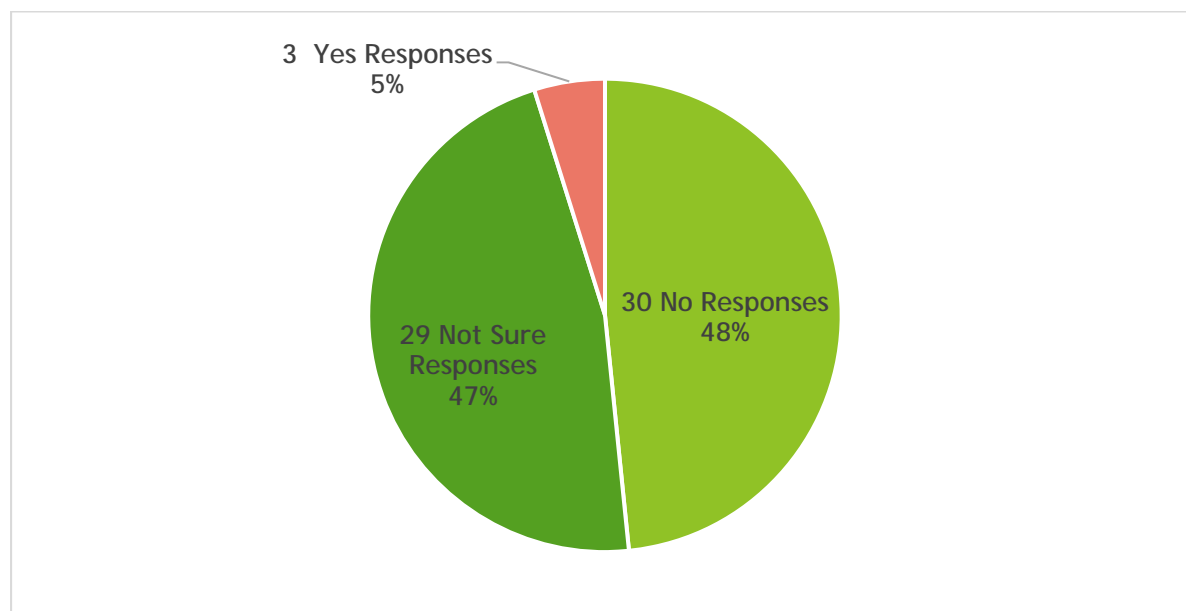
Based on the survey responses, the sales revenue for KRT's industry totalled about \$850.0 million in 2017 (Table 8 and Table 9). The total sales revenue of *"adversely impacted"* tourism businesses is estimated at \$671.9 million. The 2017 wildfire and ancillary consequences caused a loss of sales revenue estimated at \$38.4 million in 2017 and an additional \$6.6 million in 2018, or a total revenue loss for the two years of some \$45.0 million. The reduction in business activity resulted in laying off of 483 persons for an average of about 4 weeks in 2017. The reduction in payroll costs is estimated at \$2.7 million in 2017 (Table 8).

TABLE 8: ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM INDUSTRY IN 2017 AND 2018

Indicator	Survey Average	Population Estimate
<b>2017</b>		
<b>Total sales in 2017 (\$)</b>	\$ 1,223,000	\$ 671,871,000
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<b># of employees laid off (persons)</b>	0.88	483
<b>Lost Payroll (\$)</b>	\$ 4,990	\$ 2,741,000
<b>2018</b>		
<b>Expected Lost Total Sales (\$)</b>	\$ 11,980	\$ 6,577,000

While those that are adversely impacted saw the economic impact dissipate in 2018, it remains unclear if full recovery will be achieved for all by 2019. As illustrated in Figure 4, approximately 47% were unsure if they would still be experiencing adverse impacts from the 2017 wildfires in 2019, while 48% were confident they would not. Finally, 5% felt they would clearly still be experiencing adverse impacts in 2019.

FIGURE 4: SURVEY RESPONDENTS ANTICIPATING BUSINESS IMPACTS IN 2019



A relatively small number of tourism operators were either *not impacted* by the wildfires *or realized some increase* in sales associated with the 2017 wildfires. The gain in revenue is estimated at about \$8.7 million, which may be distributed to a relatively small number of operators given the concentration in the survey. This incremental activity added about 5% to total sales of some \$178.5 million in 2017 (Table 9). This led to hiring of nearly 100 new staff and increased payroll cost by an estimated \$1.9 million. However, unlike the adversely impacted tourism businesses, there was either no, or it was unclear, that the 2017 wildfire experience would create on-going benefits moving forward.

TABLE 9: POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON KOOTENAY ROCKIES TOURISM INDUSTRY IN 2017

Indicator	Survey Average	Population Estimate
<b>Total sales (\$)</b>	\$ 764,000	\$ 178,499,000
<b>Gain in sales revenue (\$)</b>	\$ 37,167	\$ 8,684,000
<b>Persons hired</b>	0.41	96
<b>Increased payroll costs (\$ 000)</b>	\$ 8,330	\$ 1,945,000

The adverse economic impacts associated with 2017 fires exceeded the positive effects to KRT's industry by about 5-fold with respect to revenues and employment.



## 4 Legacy Framework

The legacy framework provides a brief overview of lessons learned about the survey process and data availability that may be useful for surveying the tourism sector in the future.

### 4.1 Optimal Time and Survey Format

Table 10 outlines the period after the wildfire event when tourism operators felt it was best to contact them to collect economic impact data. The median response is approximately 61 to 90 days. However, what makes this challenging is that the length of the wildfire event varied on operators in the Kootenay Rockies Tourism region in 2017. Some operators only reported being impacted for one week, while others were impacted for more than 9 weeks.

TABLE 10: DAYS FOLLOWING NATURAL DISASTER BEFORE INTERVIEWING

	Percentage	Number
<b>Immediately following natural disaster (within one month)</b>	13.8%	12
<b>31 to 60 days after natural disaster</b>	23.0%	20
<b>61 to 90 days after natural disaster</b>	27.6%	24
<b>91 to 120 days after natural disaster</b>	21.8%	19
<b>121 to 180 days after natural disaster</b>	4.6%	4
<b>181 or more days after natural disaster</b>	9.2%	8
<b>Answered</b>	100.0%	87

The key in determining the optimal timing for reaching out to tourism businesses is to identify when the adverse impacts have subsided and then waiting 2 to 3 months as tourism businesses get back to normal operation levels and are able to confirm their economic impacts.

The on-line survey format was seen as effective in reaching tourism businesses in the Kootenay Rockies Region and is recommended for future surveys.

However, in looking at other surveys during the wildfire events, the more direct relationship the survey party has with the tourism businesses, the more likely a higher response rate will be achieved. For example, a survey of the Backcountry Lodge Association of British Columbia of its members on the wildfire and other related events achieved almost 100% (Harrison. 2018. pers comm). The wildfire survey in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Region saw a combination of on-line and phone interviews to reach respondents, with the overall response rate of 20.6% (Larose Research and Strategy).

For KRT, working with its partner organizations to help with connecting and raising awareness of the survey, enabled KRT to achieve a good participation rate from its members. Overall, the survey participation rate was 20.3% and supports the use of an on-line survey format.

Finally, there were at least six tourism surveys conducted across the province. Provincial efforts would have benefited from a standard survey template that predetermined the basic types of information and some standard questions that might have been asked. This would support the roll-up of provincial impacts of a specific natural disaster.

## 4.2 Industry Characteristics

The number of accommodations, attractions, and restaurants needs to be representative of the Region's tourism sector and was difficult to determine for the KRT region. However, Destination BC tracks the number of establishments by category in their data for each regional district. These are outlined in Table 11 below. Unfortunately, this data does not correspond to the tourism business population in the KRT region. Three specific factors need to be considered including:

- Firstly, the KRT region is made up of the East Kootenay and Central Kootenay regional district and the eastern portion of the Columbia-Shuswap Regional District and only the western portion of the Kootenay Boundary region, not the three Regional Districts used by Destination BC.
- Secondly, KRT membership is more closely aligned with tourism operators and directly linked to tourism activities. This is not necessarily the case with the Destination BC estimating process, resulting in the KRT numbers effectively reducing the share in the category such as restaurant, and increasing the share of businesses in the accommodation category.
- Finally, many tourism operators survey respondents in the KRT region have multiple tourism activities (i.e., restaurant, hotel, campground). In fact, 43% of the respondents of tourism operators in the KRT region listed two or more categories in the survey.

To better determine the share within the establishment counts, it is proposed that the KRT refine how they identify member business activities moving forward by using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) for industries. This would also support Destination BC in their regional establishment estimates in the future. Further, Destination BC should move to more accurately reflecting the Kootenay Rockies Tourism region in its statistical data by using electoral area data to more closely match the overall region.

Overall, this would allow a more informed decision on the share of businesses required to represent the Region's business population.

TABLE 11: ESTABLISHMENT CATEGORIES BY REGIONAL DISTRICT, 2016

	Establishment Count	Percentage Share
East Kootenay	72	
Central Kootenay	77	
Kootenay Boundary	24	
<b>Total Accommodation</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>21.5%</b>
East Kootenay	64	
Central Kootenay	45	
Kootenay Boundary	26	
<b>Total Amusement, gambling &amp; recreation</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>16.8%</b>
East Kootenay	162	
Central Kootenay	124	
Kootenay Boundary	68	
<b>Total Food &amp; beverage</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>44.1%</b>
East Kootenay	6	
Central Kootenay	9	
Kootenay Boundary	6	
<b>Total Heritage institutions</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
East Kootenay	7	
Central Kootenay	11	
Kootenay Boundary	6	
<b>Total Performing arts &amp; sports</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
East Kootenay	48	
Central Kootenay	34	
Kootenay Boundary	14	
<b>Total Transportation</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>12.0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Destination BC (2018).

### 4.3 Standard Questions

It is important to understand the characteristics of the tourism business and its anticipated activities. Therefore, questions 1 through 6 from the survey used in this process should be continued (See Appendix B for survey questions) in future surveys.

On the economic impact components, it is always challenging to get respondents to answer questions pertaining to revenues, employment and so on. Unfortunately, these questions are critical to developing the economic impact assessment. As illustrated in Appendix B there is a clear drop off in respondents participating in these questions. There is no magic bullet in dealing with this issue but it is important to:

- Reassure participants that the survey is confidential;
- Reassure participants that responses are being collected by a third party and survey data is not shared with KRT, only the rolled-up findings;
- Highlight that the results are to support their associations objectives in communicating their case to outside agencies and governments; and,
- Explain that without their participation the overall reliability of the survey deters.

In addition, as much as possible survey questions that only require the respondent to check the appropriate box have the best response rates and are the most consistently answered. This also allows more accurate year to year comparisons. However, this must be balanced with the need for detailed and specific data to more careful analysis of specific impacts.

Finally, the survey will always need to reflect the specific focus of the survey needs at the time it is conducted and will clearly change overtime.

#### 4.4 Linkages to Pre-existing Surveys

The research conducted during this survey did not identify any opportunities to link surveys that would minimize the administrative burden on KRT members. While it is likely that many of the tourism operators made applications to Red Cross funding, it is not practical to try and draw data from these confidential submissions. However, it would be helpful if Red Cross could publish further detail on business impacts in the future to further clarify what level of financial support is going to specific industrial sectors. This would allow data on breadth and depth of impacts on specific industries without extensive outreach and research.

Overall, it is suggested in the future that tourism businesses continue to be surveyed and the questions specific to the impacts be asked. However, the key will be to ensure it is done only once and at a duration after the event that allows the tourism operators to respond with a good understanding of what the impact has been on them.

KRT can take a leadership role in coordinating future surveys and timing with tourism businesses to help manage this issue.

## 5 Kootenay Rockies Recovery Plan

### 5.1 Challenges and On-the-Ground Experiences

There was concern on how negative news articles impacted the tourism sector despite not being closed or directly impacted by wildfires. Headlines such as “BC Burning” repeated across Canada resulted in many visitors not coming to the region, despite the fact that many Kootenay Rockies areas were open for business. In addition, some tourism operators were experiencing adverse impact before their area started to receive smoke from elsewhere. So, no fire or smoke but operators did see changes in behaviour to their anticipated guests.

In addition, survey respondents identified that the blanket closure of backcountry areas had an adverse impact on many tourism operators even if the business stayed open. Visitors simply moved out of the region. Conversely, others mentioned that visitors who had intended to travel to a different part of British Columbia and were instead diverted to the Kootenay area anticipate that these guests will travel back to the Kootenays in the future creating an unexpected benefit.

The 2017 fire season took place during the 150 Canada celebrations which was keying up to be an iconic travel season for the region, as many visitors were anticipated to visit the region as part of a once in a life time trip. As illustrated above, approximately half of respondents were anticipating sales to be up 6-15% over 2016 in 2017 and a further 15% were anticipating increases of greater than 15%. This was a huge opportunity lost to the Kootenay Rockies Region as it had created a venue to reach out to many new visitors in a positive way to build on the brand. Instead, survey respondents pointed out that many cancelled their trips before leaving home.

### 5.2 Recommendations

#### 5.2.1 Activities Focused on Rebuilding Tourism Reputation

Recommendations here are focused on the short to mid-term and are targeted at helping tourism businesses in the Kootenay Rockies Region re-establish their business activity to levels prior to the 2017 wildfire season. Overall, respondents identified that wildfire related economic impacts in 2018 would decline noticeably from 2017; however, several were still not sure that they would not be experiencing economic impacts in 2019 from the 2017 wildfire event.

Overall, these recommendations have been grouped into three key categories including: regional marketing effort; targeted marketing and education; and, new events and activities.

#### Undertake Regional Marketing

Many of the survey respondents outlined the importance of marketing efforts in supporting the rebuilding of the tourism brand in the Kootenay Rockies Region. In general, a strong and sustained effort needs to be undertaken with specific suggestions by respondents including:

- Communicating that the area was not the centre of the major fires in 2017 and that the vast majority of the region was not changed by the fires (put it in context);
- Making an effort to better inform visitors of where the Kootenay Rockies is compared to the Thompson-Okanagan and Cariboo;

- Increasing advertising and promotion of the area focusing on scenery, clean air and wilderness areas as they are today;
- Working with the Destination Marketing Organizations to remind the local population of the many positives of the area;
- Providing additional support for keystone events as advertising dollars are constrained within many organizations following the fires season; and,
- Communicating that all facilities are open for business in the Kootenay Rockies should include videos and photos on social media of what the area looks like after the fires.

### Focus on Target Marketing and Education

Targeted marketing initiatives were suggested to focus on specific tourism sub-sectors and communities that are experiencing incremental challenges as a result of the wildfire season and include:

- Engaging adventure businesses that are particularly dependent on pristine landscapes and wilderness areas and partner with them on specific marketing activities that would re-enforce the continued access to pristine natural areas within the Kootenay Rockies Region; and,
- In areas that did have fires in the Kootenay Rockies Region create a narrative that highlights that the local area is open for business and work with those tourism operators to demonstrate that their tourism product and experience remains intact.

Furthermore, several survey respondents identified on-going media stories about additional wildfires occurring this year (2018) was impairing tourism activity in the Kootenay Rockies Region.

On a broader scale it is felt that on-going education on the role of fire upon Kootenay Rockies landscapes would help set the proper context of what was experienced in 2017. In addition, it would be helpful to provide a history of wildfires in the KRT region to demonstrate that 2017 was an anomaly but it does happen from time to time. To this end, making available wildfire education literature to tourists visiting in the region would increase the understanding of what has happened and will continue to happen in the future. Overall, by explaining information on total area burned, descriptions of how many wildfires start and how fires have started in the past will help put the 2017 fire season in context.

### Establish New Events and Activities

Investigate new events or festivals such as cheese roll, Tough Mudder or other activities to draw people back into the area. This can also be linked to exploring ways to continue to broaden shoulder seasons which is another approach to support the tourism sector in the Region.

## 5.2.2 Activities to Consider in the Event of Future Major Wildfires

### Develop a Fire Rating Scale for the Public

For some tourism operators the only tool that was available to satisfy their guests understanding of the wildfire impacts on a specific community was to direct them to local webcam footage. For example, the camera in downtown Radium was used as an effective tool to inform incoming visitors of the actual on-the-ground conditions in the local area.

It would be useful if the province could take this one-step further and develop a better fire rating scale that would be easily understood and perhaps connected to area cameras to effectively communicate with the travelling public what conditions actually mean and look like. It might be useful to link to real time local air monitors in the region as it was smoke impacts that caused adverse impacts for many tourism operators and any tool to demonstrate actual real-time air quality might help mitigate visitors avoiding an area.

### Development of Comprehensive Wildfire Communication Plan

Numerous tourism businesses suffered losses in the Kootenay Rockies region because tourists were concerned that the area was burning. Media made this worse as they gave the impression that the region was burning and because of the smoke people assumed the local area was on fire. A key to ensuring that visitors are well informed and provided with good information is to ensure better coordination and sharing of information with specific agencies during fire events.

For future events a comprehensive communications plan needs to be developed and set in place prior to the next major wildfire event and would include aspects associated with:

- Ensuring Drive BC reflects accurate and up-to-date information. In the Kootenays there were examples of delays on Park road closures reported on to DriveBC when roads were not closed;
- Better communications of where the fires are, including fires in neighbouring States and Alberta. A lot of the impact was from smoke giving the impression that fires were close but in fact may have been in the United States;
- Media releases with a focus specifically targeting tourists and communicate on more of a sub-regional basis the extent of the fires and smoke;
- Media communications that includes what is happening with tourism activities in the regions and what the local options are for visitors;
- Ensuring that the Visitor Centres (VCs) become a clearinghouse of current and critical information. A lot of searching for information was done by the travelling public and it was not always available at places visitors checked in with like the VCs;
- A comprehensive portal for clearing information from BC Wildfire, Parks Canada, other senior levels of government, regional districts, and municipalities. Also connect to sources in Alberta and in the United States that may be influencing smoke condition and connect all information to social media and website and provide as much real time data and photos as possible; and,
- Work with media organizations so that there is a clear understanding of the economic impact of how sensational headlines like “BC ON FIRE” can hurt the tourism economy.

### Undertake Incremental Marketing Investments

The 2017 wildfires have created a negative image of much of British Columbia. The visuals of the burned forests have likely lingered in the minds of many tourists from outside the province. Further, media headlines that stated that “BC ON FIRE” did not help the situation in the Kootenay Rockies region where the fire damage was relatively contained. To foster re-establishment of the Kootenay Rockies brand that relies on a pristine wilderness a proactive marketing campaign needs to be initiated. While the province has contributed one-time funding of \$200,000 to start the marketing effort, additional work is required and should consider:

- Targeted advertising in surrounding provinces, especially Alberta, that specific areas are open for business and only a small area was impacted in the Kootenay Rockies Region; and,
- Engaging media organizations to do positive stories on the region and its tourism sector.

### Study and Understand the Cumulative Affect of Natural Disasters

Work with the local, provincial and federal government on developing a better understanding of the cumulative effects of the increasing number of natural disasters (i.e., floods, fires, etc.). A single natural disaster can have a significant adverse impact on a tourism business that may take a long time to recover from; however, if these events follow year after year then the potential of weakening a business to the point that it can no longer continue is increased. In addition, it is critical how tourism businesses behave as they emerge from a natural disaster event - are they more likely to curtail future investment or exit the sector?



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### 6.1 Literature Cited

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Peak Solutions. 2018. Survey Data Collected from Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association Membership between April 23 to May 21, 2018.

### 6.2 Key Informant Interviews

Cooper, Kathy. CEO and Travel Trade. Kootenay Rockies Tourism. Telephone and email communications, April to July, 2018.

Harrison, Brad. Executive Director, Backcountry Lodge Association of British Columbia. In-person interview and email communication in June 2018.

Hetherington, Nancy. Director, Sales and Marketing. Fairmont Hot Springs. Telephone conversations and email communications April 9 to May 5, 2018.

Tubbs, Andrea. Marketing and Public Relations. Big Horn Meadows. Telephone and email conversations April 9 to 15, 2018.

# Appendix A – Survey Findings

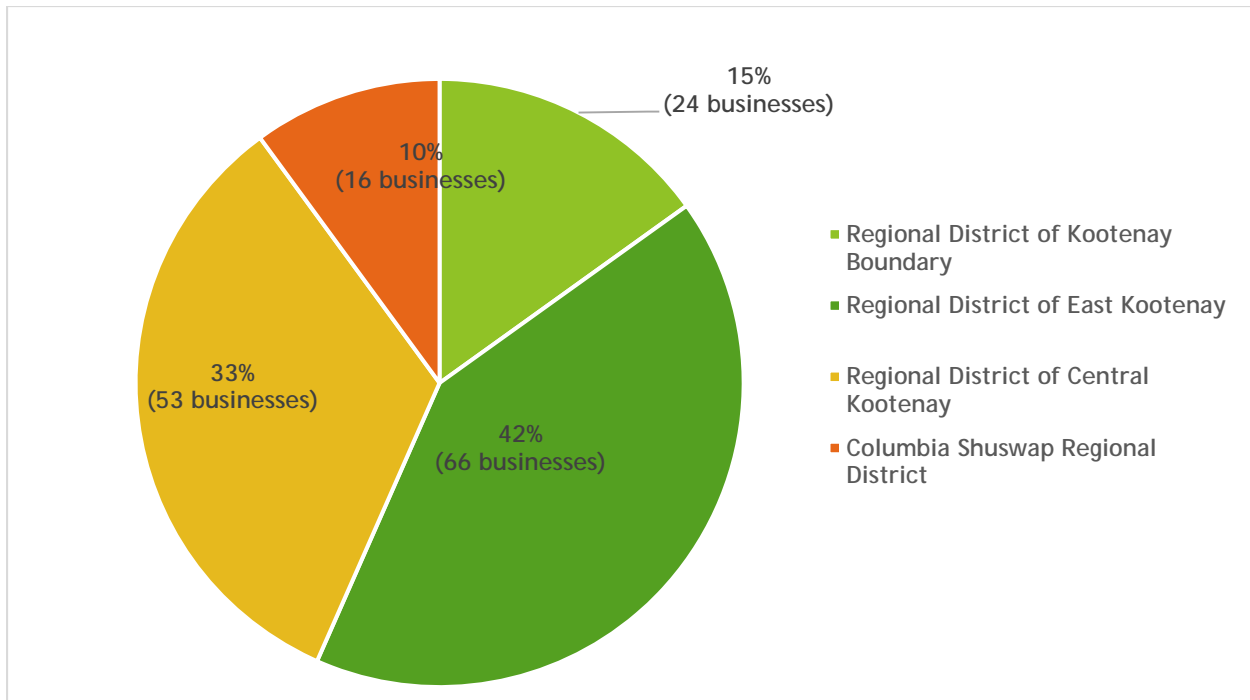
## A.1 Survey Respondent Profile

The following provides a brief overview of some of the questions asked in the survey and is provided here as a profile of the survey participants.

### Please check what regional district your business is located in.

Figure 5 outlines the tourism establishments from the KTR region that participated in the survey. In total, 159 tourism establishments participated in the survey and as illustrated, the largest number of participants were from the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, followed by 53 participants from Regional District of Central Kootenay, 24 participants from the Regional District of East Kootenay and 16 participants from the Columbia Shuswap Regional District.

FIGURE 5: TOURISM PARTICIPANTS BY REGIONAL DISTRICT



### In what operating category does your business belong (If more than one, please select the additional categories as well)?

The survey participants were asked to identify to which tourism category they identified with and all 159 participants provided answers. Table 12 outlines the survey responses and identifies the results from highest participation category to the lowest. Survey participants were provided with the option to identify with more than one category.

TABLE 12: TOURISM CATEGORY THAT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED WITH

	Responses	
	Number	Rate
<b>Accommodation (Hotels, Motels and Resorts)</b>	57	35.8%
<b>Retail and Services (please specify)</b>	34	21.4%
<b>Attractions (adventure activities, Spa and Wellness)</b>	22	13.8%
<b>Tour operators</b>	20	12.6%
<b>RV and Campgrounds</b>	18	11.3%
<b>Restaurants</b>	18	11.3%
<b>Activities (horseback riding, hiking, sightseeing)</b>	17	10.7%
<b>Bed and Breakfasts and Hostels</b>	14	8.8%
<b>Vacation Rentals</b>	14	8.8%
<b>Rentals (i.e., boats, bikes, and other recreation equipment)</b>	11	6.9%
<b>Heritage institutions (Cultural venues and Museums)</b>	11	6.9%
<b>Skiing facilities</b>	10	6.3%
<b>Golf Course and Country Clubs</b>	9	5.7%
<b>Drinking Establishments (pubs, bars, etc.)</b>	8	5.0%
<b>Arts, Writers and Performers</b>	6	3.8%
<b>Marinas</b>	5	3.1%
<b>Breweries, Wineries and Distilleries</b>	5	3.1%
<b>Hunting and Fishing Camps</b>	4	2.5%
<b>Promoters</b>	3	1.9%
<b>Scenic and sightseeing transportation</b>	3	1.9%
<b>Travel agencies</b>	2	1.3%
<b>Amusement Parks and Arcades</b>	2	1.3%
<b>Wineries</b>	0	0.0%
<b>Gambling Industries</b>	0	0.0%
<b>Communities (Chamber of Commerce, DMO, and Visitor Information Centres)</b>	0	0.0%

### What is the size of your paid work force during your peak operating season?

Table 13 outlines the survey respondents by the number of employees they have at peak season during a typical season. Overall, the median survey response was that businesses typically had between 5 to 9 employees.

TABLE 13: SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY EMPLOYEE NUMBER

	Response	
	Number	Share
<b>no employees (just self)</b>	23	14.5%
<b>1 to 2 employees</b>	21	13.2%
<b>3 to 4 employees</b>	21	13.2%
<b>5 to 9 employees</b>	31	19.5%
<b>10 to 19 employees</b>	27	17.0%
<b>20 to 49 employees</b>	24	15.1%
<b>50 to 99 employees</b>	5	3.1%
<b>100 to 149 employees</b>	0	0.0%
<b>150 or more employees</b>	7	4.4%
<b>Total</b>	159	100.0%

### Approximately what was your total sales in 2016 (the year prior to the wildfires)?

Respondents were asked to identify their sales in 2016, the year prior to the fires. As illustrated in Table 14, 107 responses were provided for this question and identified a total of \$125 million in sales in 2016.

TABLE 14: SURVEY RESPONDENTS TOTAL SALES IN 2016

<b>Total Sales in 2016</b>	\$125,054,689
<b>Total Completed Survey Responses</b>	107
<b>Average</b>	\$1,168,735
<b>Median</b>	\$265,000
<b>Respondents Reporting Over \$1,000,000</b>	20
<b>Respondents Reporting Under \$100,000</b>	31

### What was your expectation for total revenue in 2017 business season prior to the 2017 wildfire season?

For many tourism operators, 2017 was anticipated to be significantly above 2016. This was tied to many factors, including the Canada 150-year celebration and Parks Canada's promotion of free park entry.

As outlined in Table 15, 61.3% of survey respondents were anticipating increases of 6% or greater increases while only 6.9% anticipated declines of more than 6%. The remaining respondents (31.9%) anticipated changes in a range similar to 2016.

TABLE 15: SURVEY RESPONDENTS ANTICIPATED CHANGE IN REVENUE FOR 2017 OVER 2016

	Responses	
	Number	Share
Markedly above 2016 operating year (16% increase or greater)	17	14.7%
Above 2016 operating year (6 to 15% increase)	54	46.6%
About the same as 2016 (in the +/- 5% range from previous year)	37	31.9%
Below 2016 operating year (6 to 15% less)	6	5.2%
Markedly below 2016 operating year (16% less or greater)	2	1.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## A.2 Survey Respondent Wildfire Impacts

### Was your business adversely impacted by the 2017 wildfires?

Table 16 outlines those survey respondents that were impacted by the wildfires (Yes) and those that observed no impact (No). The data is presented by regional district with the Central Kootenay businesses experiencing the highest response rate while the Columbia Shuswap had the lowest share of businesses adversely impacted by the wildfires.

TABLE 16: SHARE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS IMPACTED OR NOT IMPACTED BY 2017 WILDFIRES

	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes
	Respondent Number			Percentage	
<b>Kootenay Boundary</b>	7	12	19	36.8%	63.2%
<b>Central Kootenay</b>	10	38	48	20.8%	79.2%
<b>Columbia Shuswap</b>	7	4	11	63.6%	36.4%
<b>East Kootenay</b>	13	33	46	28.3%	71.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>70.2%</b>

From a list provided, rank the top three fire impacts that caused you the greatest financial loss.

Table 17 outlines how the survey respondents ranked various impacts associated with the wildfires. By far the greatest contributing factor that survey respondents identified was that guests chose to stay away and the smoky conditions. Restricted access also received a noticeable number of votes in the top three. Finally, only one respondent experienced direct physical damage from the fires in 2017.

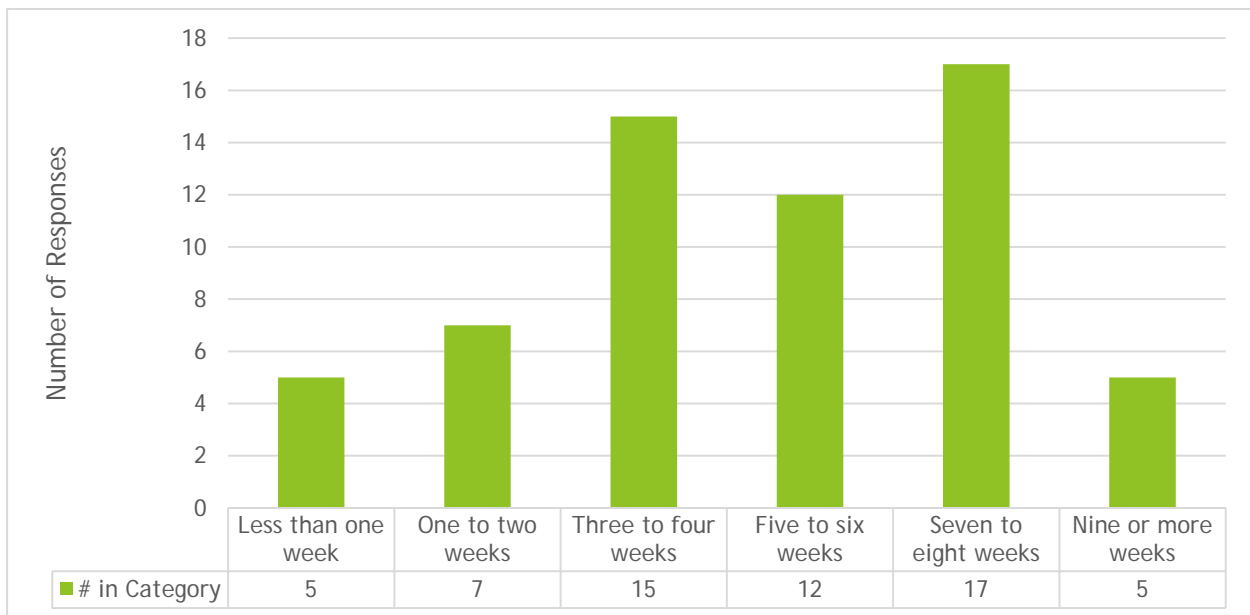
TABLE 17: SURVEY RESPONSES ON ACTIVITY THAT CREATED GREATEST FINANCIAL LOSS

	Ranked # 1	Ranked # 1 to 3
<b>Business decline because guests stayed away.</b>	21	45
<b>Impacted by smoky conditions</b>	17	51
<b>Business impacted by restricted access</b>	9	35
<b>Evacuation Order and required to suspend activity but suffered no physical damage to business</b>	4	5
<b>Evacuation alert but continued to operate business</b>	1	8
<b>Physical fire damage to your business</b>	1	1
<b>Voluntary Closure/Cancellation</b>	0	6

### Duration of business disruption as a result of the 2017 wildfires.

Figure 6 outlines the number of weeks that survey respondents who identified adverse impacts experienced disruption from the 2017 wildfires. As illustrated there were a range of choices based on weeks impacted. The largest number of respondents identified between three and four weeks and up to seven and eight weeks as the period of their disruption. In total 72% identified this period while the remainder identified shorter or longer periods.

FIGURE 6: SURVEY RESPONDENTS NUMBER OF WEEKS OF BUSINESS DISRUPTION



## What was your approximate total sales for all of 2017?

Table 18 outlines the total sales for survey respondents for all of 2017. As illustrated, the respondents are divided into those that said they did not have adverse impacts to the fires (No) and those that responded that they were adversely impacted (Yes). In total 76 survey respondents answered this question and represented average sales of \$1.1 million or median impact of \$150,000.

TABLE 18: TOTAL SALES BY NO RESPONDENTS AND YES RESPONDENTS FOR 2017

	Yes	No	Total
<b>Total Sales in 2017</b>	\$70,950,670	\$18,338,979	\$89,289,649
<b>Total Respondents</b>	58	24	76
<b>Average</b>	\$1,223,287	\$764,124	\$1,174,864
<b>Median</b>	\$143,700	\$300,000	\$150,000
<b>Respondents Reporting Over \$1,000,000</b>	10	3	13
<b>Respondents Reporting Under \$100,000</b>	18	6	24

## Survey Respondents who Experienced Adverse Impacts in 2017

Table 19 outlines the total revenue for those respondents who said they were adversely impacted by the 2017 wildfires. In addition, it identifies the total loss they experienced. For the 58 businesses who had adverse impacts, they reported almost \$71.0 million in total sales in 2017. While 53 of the respondents reported actual loss in sales of \$3.7 million.

TABLE 19: TOTAL SALES IN 2017 AND THE WILDFIRE RELATED LOSS IN TOTAL SALES

	Approximate Loss in Total Sales in 2017 associated with the wildfires	What was your approximate total sales for all of 2017?
<b>Total \$ value:</b>	\$3,707,011	\$70,950,670
<b>Responses:</b>	53	58
<b>Average</b>	\$69,944	\$1,223,287
<b>Median</b>	\$25,000	\$143,700

Table 20 outlines the total employees laid off, person-days of employment lost, and the total payroll lost as a result of the 2017 wildfires. Here the 61 respondents collectively laid off 54 workers representing close to 1,050 in person-days of employment, and total payroll of \$304,369.

TABLE 20: TOTAL EMPLOYEES LAID OFF, PERSON-DAYS LOST, AND PAYROLL LOST TO 2017 WILDFIRES

	Number of Employees Laid off (#)	Worker Days Lost (Workers X Days of Work lost in 2017)	Payroll Lost (reduced payroll paid in 2017)
<b>Total Responses:</b>	53.75 workers	-1,050 person-days	\$304,369
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	61	61	61
<b>Average</b>	0.88 workers	-17.2 person-days lost	\$4,990
<b>Median</b>	0	0	0
<b>Number of firms with impacts</b>	16	21	21
<b>Number that reported zero</b>	45	40	40

Table 21 outlines the anticipated sales impact in 2018 for those respondents who said they were adversely impacted by the 2017 wildfires.

TABLE 21: EXPECTED LOST TOTAL SALES IN 2018

	Approximate sales lost in 2018
<b>Total \$ value:</b>	\$575,000
<b>Responses:</b>	48
<b>Average</b>	\$11,980
<b>Median</b>	\$0

### Survey Respondents who Experienced No Adverse Impacts or had Positive Impacts in 2017

Table 22 outlines the total revenue for those respondents who said they were not adversely impacted or had a benefit from the 2017 wildfires. In addition, it identifies the total benefit they experienced. For the 24 businesses who had no adverse impacts or a benefit, they reported \$18.3 million, while 6 of the respondents reported actual increase in sales totalling \$855,312.



TABLE 22: TOTAL SALES IN 2017 AND THE WILDFIRE RELATED INCREASE IN TOTAL SALES

	Approximate Increase in Total Sales in 2017 associated with the wildfires	What was your approximate total sales for all of 2017?
<b>Total \$ value:</b>	\$855,312	\$18,338,979
<b>Responses:</b>	23	24
<b>Average</b>	\$37,187	\$764,124
<b>Median</b>	\$0	\$300,000
<b>Number of firms with impacts</b>	6	n/a
<b>Number that reported zero</b>	17	n/a

Table 23 outlines the total employees hired, person-days of employment created and the total payroll added as a result of the 2017 wildfires. Here 19 of the 23 respondents who responded reported that they experienced no adverse impacts or benefits. However, 4 identified they had benefits and collectively hired 9.5 workers, created 1,166 days and generated an increase in payroll of \$191,500 as a result of the 2017 wildfire events.

TABLE 23: TOTAL EMPLOYEES HIRED, PERSON-DAYS CREATED, AND INCREASED PAYROLL IN 2017 AS RESULT OF THE WILDFIRES

	Number of Employees Hired (#)	Worker Days Created	Payroll Increase (Increase payroll paid in 2017)
<b>Total Responses:</b>	<b>9.50 workers</b>	<b>+1,166 person-days</b>	<b>\$191,500</b>
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>+50.7 person-days</b>	<b>\$8,326</b>
<b>Median</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of firms with impacts</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Number that reported zero</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>

## Appendix B – Survey Questions

The following outlines the questions as they appeared in the survey and identifies how many answered the question and how many skipped each question.

**Q1 Please check what regional district your business is located in (Answer required for this question).**

Answered: 159 Skipped: 0

**Q2 What community are you located in?**

Answered: 152 Skipped: 7

**Q3 In what operating category does your business belong (If more than one, please select the additional categories as well).**

Answered: 159 Skipped: 0

**Q4 Please briefly describe your tourism activity.**

Answered: 136 Skipped: 23

**Q5 What is the size of your paid work force during your peak operating season?**

Answered: 159 Skipped: 0

**Q6 Approximately what was your total sales in 2016 (the year prior to the wildfires)? If your business includes multiple divisions, please include the total of all divisions (Please enter the \$ amount)**

Answered: 124 Skipped: 35

**Q7 What was your expectation for total revenue in 2017 business season prior to the 2017 wildfire season?**

Answered: 116 Skipped: 43

**Q8 Was your business adversely impacted by the 2017 wildfires?**

Answered: 124 Skipped: 35

**Q9 Given you have been negatively impacted by the 2017 wildfires, please select from the list below and rank the top three fire impacts that caused you the greatest financial loss. (One (1) reflects greatest impact on business while three (3) represents lowest)**

Answered: 62 Skipped: 97

**Q10 What was the duration of business disruption as a result of the 2017 wildfires (i.e., evacuation order, road closure, restricted access, etc.)**

Answered: 61 Skipped: 98

**Q11 What was your approximate total sales for all of 2017? If your business includes multiple divisions please include the amount for all divisions. (Please enter the \$ amount)**

Answered: 61 Skipped: 98

Q12 As a result of the 2017 fire season, please identify the adverse impact that occurred to your business in 2017. Please be sure to identify the impact associated with each category below. (please enter 0 if there was no impact.)

Answered: 63 Skipped: 96

Q13 If you had one-time losses of building(s) and equipment, or other assets in the 2017 wildfires, please estimate this amount. If you did not lose any infrastructure please enter 0. (Please enter total \$ amount)

Answered: 49 Skipped: 110

Q14 Were there any benefits that you experienced from the 2017 wildfires? Please describe.

Answered: 36 Skipped: 123

Q15 Please record the anticipated economic impact in 2018 related to the 2017 wildfires. Please be sure to answer the impact in each of the following categories for this period only. (If no impact anticipated please enter 0.)

Answered: 56 Skipped: 103

Q16 Do you anticipate adverse economic impacts because of the 2017 wildfires in 2019?

Answered: 62 Skipped: 97

Q17 Please describe the nature of the activity that resulted in the benefit to your business during the 2017 wildfire season (i.e., firefighters used your accommodation, etc.)

Answered: 28 Skipped: 131

Q18 What was your approximate total sales for all of 2017? (Please enter total \$ amount)

Answered: 29 Skipped: 130

Q19 Your Business experienced no change or an overall economic benefit during the wildfire season in 2017. Please fill in each of the following categories identifying the incremental amount you experienced for 2017. (If no impact observed please enter 0.)

Answered: 32 Skipped: 127

Q20 Do you anticipate positive economic impacts because of the 2017 wildfires to continue for 2018?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 129

Q21 For future disasters, please identify the optimal period to collect statistical business data after the event.

Answered: 87 Skipped: 72

Q22 Please suggest activities that you feel could help rebuild any impact to the tourism brand reputation in your area and your business specifically, moving forward.

Answered: 51 Skipped: 108

Q23 For future disasters, please describe any specific actions that should be undertaken to support the tourism industry and/or individual businesses after a natural disaster?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 105

Q24 We are offering a \$200 VISA card to all survey participants who complete the survey. Would you like to enter for the draw prize for participating in the survey?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 70

Q25 If you are interested in providing your information for a prize for completing the survey please answer below.

Answered: 62 Skipped: 97