VENTURES INTO SUSTAINABLE RECREATION:
A campaign to get students outside, safely and sustainably
Who is the UVSP?

The University of Victoria Sustainability Project (UVSP) is a student-run organization and UVSS Affiliate group working on the unceded territories of the Lekwungen speaking peoples and WSÁNEĆ Nations. We strive to re-conceptualize sustainability by uniting environmental initiatives, promoting environmental choices, and formulating and implementing sustainable systems on campus. We believe in pursuing ecological and social health on both local and global scales for the benefit of all organisms and future generations. Our vision as an organization is a socially, ecologically, and economically viable campus community at the University of Victoria.

The UVSP is governed by our Board of Directors, led by our Board Chair and Communications Officer. The UVSP Board leads and participates in sustainable events and initiatives such as Earthfest, Ripples, Good Food Box, Pacific Mobile Depot, and Food Revolution Everybody Eats.
UVSP’s Ventures into Sustainable Recreation Campaign is a month-long initiative focused on getting students to try out new forms of outdoor recreation, become sustainability-conscious users of outdoor spaces and proponents of their sports and activities, learn about environmental issues, and build positive recreational habits for their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Throughout the month of September, the UVSP will be running four week-long focuses on particular recreational outdoor activities and sports, featuring events, social media posts, and interorganizational collaborations. These activities and sports are: Hiking, Cycling, Climbing, and Whitewater Paddling.
Who is this campaign for?

The short answer is... everyone! This campaign has been created with UVic undergraduate students in mind, but graduate students are also welcome to participate in events and follow along with the campaign on social media.

With this campaign, the UVSP wants to provide an opportunity for students who are:

- Passionate about sustainability, environmental issues and stewardship
- Interested in being active outdoors, trying new sports and activities, and building skills through recreation
- Curious about joining recreation-loving communities
- Committed to recreating safely with proper tools and training
- Interested in pursuing outdoor recreation as a means to improve their mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual health and wellbeing.

This campaign has been created to benefit students who may not have experience with outdoor recreation, providing a safe, accepting, and inclusive space to learn, and try new things.

Our campaign celebrates diversity in recreational spaces and the outdoors, and strives to break down barriers and create safe spaces for students who belong to marginalized communities. If any students interested in participating in the campaign have any special mental or physical health requirements, or are in need of adaptive equipment to participate in the campaign, contact UVSP's Communications Officer, Katia Bannister by email (sustainability@uvic.ca) or by DM on UVSP's Instagram (@uvic_sp). The UVSP is committed to creating safe, inclusive, empowering, and accessible programming for all students.
The UVSP's Ventures into Sustainable Recreation Campaign provides opportunities for students to engage with new recreational sports and communities, and to become sustainability-conscious and safety-oriented stewards of the places in which they recreate. We seek to:

1. Empower students through outdoor recreation.
2. Promote recreational sports and activities, exercise, and time spent in nature as ways to positively influence mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual health.
3. Support the creation of a culture of recreational stewardship and sustainable recreation.
4. Create a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and accessible space for beginners to try out new sports and activities in a positive, learning- and fun-oriented, and no-judgement setting.
5. Break down barriers to participation in recreational sports and activities, particularly those in relation to marginalized communities.
6. Give students a basic understanding of the tools, training, understandings, and gear required to recreate both safely and sustainably.
Hiking

Hiking going on long, semi-vigorous walks, usually on trails or footpaths through natural spaces. It is a popular recreational activity and an effective means for outdoor connection. Hiking is an activity for everyone: families with young kids, seniors or other individuals with limited mobility, people who use canes or wheelchairs, folks looking to exercise, people looking to spend time in nature and many more kinds of peeps!

During UVSP’s focus week on hiking, we will explore why hiking is a healthful and accessible recreation activity, conservation concerns related to hiking, how to hike sustainably, and how to source affordable and sustainable gear. During the week, campaign participants will have two opportunities to hike with the UVSP. On Wednesday, we will be leading a fun sunrise hike up Mount Wells — with enough time to get back to campus for any morning classes you might have! On Saturday, the UVSP will be organizing a group hike to Mystic Beach in Port Renfrew introduce students to the wonderful hikes that exist along the west coast of Vancouver Island!
Just about everybody knows what a bicycle is, and most people have ridden one. But why do people cycle? And why should you? There are lots of reasons! First of all, cycling is a great mode of active transport. Active transport modes play a key role in developing sustainable transport systems by making cities accessible, safe, inclusive, and green. Active transport is also an easy way to integrate regular exercise into anyone's daily schedule and reduce personal transport emissions. Some people also like to participate in cycling races such as road bicycle racing, cyclo-cross, mountain bike racing, and BMX racing. Other folks enjoy planning cycling trips, some day-long, some multi-day and involving bike camping. But many cyclists just cycle for fun — whether as spending time outside, exercise, excursions, or all of the above!

In UVSP's focus-week on cycling, we will highlight cycling as an effective mode of active transport and an easy way to incorporate sustainability and exercise into your day-to-day lives. We will emphasize the importance of being a careful and confident cyclist, as well as how essential it is to have basic bike safety knowledge and to always wear proper safety gear. During this week, campaign participants will have a chance to join us for a Bike Literacy and Maintenance Workshop with UVic student and avid cyclist, Ben Pierce, on Wednesday evening. On Saturday, there will be an opportunity to join the UVSP for a group ride along the Galloping Goose Regional Trail so that students can learn more about cycling infrastructure in Victoria — and also just because it's a great ride and tons of fun!
Climbing

Climbing is the activity of creatively using one's hands and feet to ascend a steep object. It is done both for recreation and professionally, and encompasses a variety of subdisciplines denoted by the angle of the climb and whether or not ropes are used. Climbing can be done indoors at climbing gyms, or outdoors on boulder or cliff faces.

During UVSP's focus week on climbing, we will explore the kinds of climbing a person can do, as well as where they can be done, and how they can be done safely. We will also explore how climbers can source sustainable and affordable gear and be ‘keepers of the crags’ or stewards of the places in which they climb. Conservation concerns in the world of climbing will also be a hot topic during this week, and we will discuss the importance of braiding together conservation and recreation values when designing outdoor climbing infrastructure.

During this week, campaign participants will be invited to join UVSP for a causal group climb at Boulderhouse Victoria to work on skills and build community through climbing. This get-together will also serve as an opportunity to get more involved in the climbing community in Victoria — which Boulderhouse is at the heart of!
Whitewater paddling simply means paddling turbulent water. When water becomes turbulent it churns and mixes with air, producing white wave crests, hence its namesake. The intensity of the experience is really up to the paddler. The whitewater community is not just rapid-riding, danger-seeking adrenaline junkies. It is made up of people who enjoy paddling many different kinds of rivers with different intensities.

Whitewater sports are challenging and rewarding, and test an individual’s strength and dedication. Whitewater is a sport for paddlers of all ages and backgrounds. And while the wild and wonderful world of whitewater can be an intimidating place for beginners to wade into, the whitewater community is warm and welcoming. It is a community of thrill-seekers and water-lovers who care about recreation and the conservation of our riversheds.

In the UVSP’s focus week on whitewater, we will highlight the Vancouver Island Whitewater community — including the University of Victoria’s own UVic Whitewater Club! We will also share resources on paddling safety, environmental concerns in the world of whitewater, how paddlers can be river stewards, and where to buy affordable and sustainable gear if you choose to take up the sport. During the week, campaign participants will be invited to join the UVic Whitewater Club at their weekly Friday night pool session, and then spend Saturday and Sunday in a clinic with whitewater canoe Master Instructor Rick Bryan to learn whitewater canoe basics in the Cowichan Valley.
Event Schedule

**Week 1: Hiking**
Wednesday September 14: Sunrise hike up Mount Wells
Saturday September 17: Mystic Beach hike

**Week 2: Cycling**
Wednesday September 21: Beginner bike maintainence workshop
Saturday September 24: Galloping Goose trail ride

**Week 3: Climbing**
Thursday September 29: Evening climb at Boulderhouse

**Week 4: Whitewater paddling**
Friday October 7: UVic Whitewater Club evening pool session drop-in
Saturday October 8: Whitewater Canoe Clinic Day 1
Sunday October 9: Whitewater Canoe Clinic Day 2
Are a student who is excited to get outside and get recreating? We're excited to have you join us!

Visit our Ventures into Sustainable Recreation webpage for additional information and to view our events calendar and detailed event descriptions.

If you have questions about the campaign, contact our Communications Officer, Katia Bannister, via email at sustainability@uvic.ca. Alternatively, DM us on Instagram, @uvic_sp, and send your questions there!