

Rainbow Rambler Group Description & Purpose

Rainbow Ramblers – A 2SLGBTQIA+¹ Affinity Group of the BC Mountaineering Club

Welcome to *Rainbow Ramblers* — a fun, supportive space for 2SLGBTQIA+ members of the BC Mountaineering Club and the allies who love and uplift us. Whether you're a seasoned climber, an occasional hiker, or someone who just wants to connect over a shared love of the outdoors, this group is for you!

Rainbow Ramblers is more than just a group — it's a community where everyone can show up as their full, fabulous self. In these critical times, we believe that sharing nature and community with one another is a powerful act of care and solidarity. We're here to laugh, hike, climb, snowshoe, ski, and stargaze together — all while building lasting friendships and having each other's backs.

We'll plan several outdoor adventures each year and host relaxed social events to stay connected (and share stories of mountain misadventures and trail snacks gone wrong).

This group is also a **pilot for more affinity groups within the BCMC**, helping us build a more inclusive and welcoming club culture for all. We recognize and uplift **intersecting experiences** — including 2SLGBTQIA+ people of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ people with disabilities, and others whose identities shape how they move through outdoor spaces.

Why Rainbow Ramblers Exists:

1. **Build Connection Through Shared Experience**

This group brings together people who may have faced unique or invisible challenges being themselves in outdoor spaces. Connecting over shared experiences helps foster a sense of belonging — something everyone deserves.

2. **Make the Outdoors More Welcoming for Everyone**

Not everyone walks into a group and immediately feels safe or included. Rainbow Ramblers offers a space where people can participate comfortably, which ultimately makes the whole club stronger, more diverse, and more vibrant.

3. **Give Allies a Chance to Learn and Support**

Allies are welcome and valued. By joining Rainbow Ramblers, allies gain deeper insight into what 2SLGBTQIA+ members may go through — which helps humanize issues that

¹ **2SLGBTQIA+*** = Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, agender, asexual. Plus (+) represents other gender and sexual identities not listed in the acronym.

are often overlooked and builds empathy across the club.

4. **Grow the Club Through Connection and Inclusion**

By creating a welcoming entry point, Rainbow Ramblers can attract new 2SLGBTQIA+ members from other outdoor communities who may not have previously considered joining. That's a win for everyone who wants to see the club thrive.

5. **Create an On-Ramp for New Members**

For many, joining a club can feel daunting. Affinity groups offer a softer landing — a place where new members can immediately feel connected. From there, they can choose to branch out to other club activities when and if they're ready.

6. **Be a Source of Insight and Positive Change**

Rainbow Ramblers also helps identify challenges that 2SLGBTQIA+ folks may experience within the broader club. Because it's a space where people know they'll be heard, members can raise concerns and ideas that can then be shared with the wider club to help it grow and improve for everyone.

Accessibility & Inclusion Are Core to Who We Are:

- We **avoid assumptions** about anyone's identity, pronouns, or relationships based on appearance or companions. For example, just because someone looks feminine, does not mean this person necessarily uses "she/her" pronouns or just because someone is in a same-gender relationship, does not mean the person is gay. Instead, wait for them to share or check their name tag if provided.
- We **respect boundaries** — be thoughtful when asking personal questions, and check in to ensure others are comfortable. Instead of asking someone what their gender identity or relationship status is, stick to general conversation unless they offer to share or it comes up naturally.
- **It's okay to make mistakes.** A quick apology and correction is all that's needed. For example, if you accidentally use the wrong pronoun, say, "Sorry, I meant they," and move on without making it a big deal. If you notice you keep making the same mistake, ask a friend or practice at home.
- Our socials will provide access to an **all-gender washroom option**.
- At social, we'll offer **optional name tags with space for pronouns** — because being seen matters.

Come as you are. Whether you're out on the trail or just coming out, you belong here.

