

Reading: Why Did BC Join Canada?

As the Caribou Gold Rush in BC came to an end, new industries began to grow in its place. Former miners began farming in the fields and logging in the forests. These industries did not provide as much money as the gold rush. There wasn't enough money to build roads and create businesses. There were not enough people to buy land or pay taxes.

BC had to make a choice about what to do next.

Remain a British Colony

Great Britain was no longer interested in governing BC since it was costing them more and more money. The British government chose the leaders of the colony. BC no longer felt like their needs were being met by Great Britain.

Join the United States

The United States was interested in the land and resources of BC. To the south, the state of Washington was quickly filling up with settlers. To the north, the United States had bought Alaska. The United States wanted BC as a link between Alaska and the American states of the Pacific Northwest.

Join Canada

Canada was expanding across the prairies. The Canadian government wanted the country to go from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, so they wanted BC to join. Canada also wanted to prevent the US from taking over BC.

People in BC wanted:

- a country that would pay the colony's debts.
- a wagon road to connect BC to the rest of Canada.
- to be able to elect their own government and make their own decisions.

Canada agreed to:

- take on BC's debt and give them money every year
- build a railway across Canada to BC
- allow BC a provincial government as well as senators and members of Parliament in the federal government

BC decided to join Canada on July 20, 1871.