



# Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project Community Update

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## Driver visibility in construction zones a priority

**Maximizing a driver's ability to see where they are going** in construction zones is an ongoing effort for traffic management crews on the Sea-to-Sky Highway, and as a driver you have a role to play too.

During construction every effort is made to ensure drivers are aware of their lane position. Months before winter brings its earlier nights, an independent visibility audit is done looking at conditions along the entire highway. New lines are painted where needed and reflectors are replaced.

In construction zones that are subject to blasting or in areas where the traffic is about to be shifted onto a temporary lane, surface-mounted reflectors and cones or pylons are used to indicate driving lanes and shoulders.

At the end of every work shift, time is taken to ensure the markers are in the proper position and are wiped clean to maximize reflectivity. In active construction areas and after heavy rainstorms, cones and pylons are replaced so the dirty markers can be power washed.

Before heading out, drivers should clean their headlights and check their windshield washer fluid. It's also good to remember that regular speed limits and posted construction speeds are the maximum allowed in optimal conditions. You may need to go slower if visibility is compromised by things like snow, heavy rain or fog.

Improving visibility for drivers at night (especially on rainy nights) is one of the key goals of the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project. When completed visibility improvements such as highly reflective pavement markings, which are five times more reflective than painted lines, will make the drive safer.

### **Photo Captions:**

1. Reflective tubular markers are used to indicate edge of driving lanes in an active construction zone.

2. 50 km is the maximum speed in construction zones when conditions affecting the highway require caution.

3. Highly reflective pavement markers, surface and barrier mounted reflectors drivers.



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## Doodson's Corner – An infamous curve made safer

Doodson's Corner, the notoriously sharp curve 18 km north of Horseshoe Bay, is being completely transformed. The rendering of the final design shown on the right-hand page, illustrates the three-lane highway from the south, widening to four lanes with a median barrier. It curves gently north through the rock outcropping above the old highway.

"Working on the Sea-to-Sky Improvement Project," says segment manager Ryan Tones, "we really do move mountains." Approximately 250,000 cubic metres of rock, equivalent to a 30km long line of luxury coach buses, will be removed and used as back fill for mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) walls. "This rock," says Tones "can be challenging. It is poor quality on the south side of the cut and very hard in the middle." They are, however, nearly there, with almost 200,000 "cubes" removed to date.

How do they move so much so quickly? "We have three rock drills, four excavators, eight 37-ton capacity Volvo trucks and a stationary crusher served by two loaders," Tones answers. "The excavation crews work two shifts, and the crusher works 24/7, stopping only for Christmas Day, as we all need that one off."

Traffic will be moved into the cut in the summer of 2008 to allow for MSE wall construction on both ends of the excavation. Wall construction will continue through the following winter.

Photos:

1. The Doodson's Corner curve as work begins.
2. Clearing begins March 2007 at the top of the bluff.
3. & 4. Material blasted from the site is used as backfill below the highway to create mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) walls.
5. & 6. Approximately 250,000 cubic metres of rock, equivalent to a 30 km line of luxury coach buses will be removed when the cut is complete.



## Doodson's Corner before and after.



Before



After



### The machines of the highway improvement project

The Cat 365C hydraulic excavator and the Volvo A40D articulated hauler working together at Doodson's Corner. The Volvo hauler has excellent manoeuvrability through many different terrains due to its flexible, articulated design. Payload is rated for 37 tons, the truck has a gross weight of 68.2 tons and can achieve a maximum speed of 55 km/h. The Cat hydraulic excavator features an electronic control system that manages the engine and hydraulics for maximum performance. The excavator weighs in at 121,000 pounds, has a reach boom of 25' 7" and a mass boom of 21' 7".



"We really do move mountains."

– Segment manager Ryan Tones

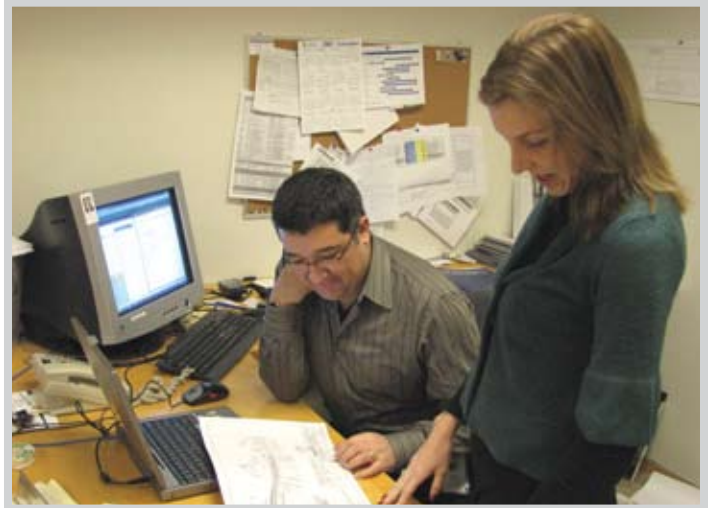
## Traffic management and communications work to keep traffic flowing

If one looks behind the hundreds of construction workers and machines improving the Sea-to-Sky Highway, you will find a core of people responsible for keeping highway traffic moving. These dedicated people are the project's traffic management and traffic communications team. Communicating schedule information to the public, responding to questions or complaints is the job of Karen Schroder, the project's manager of traffic communications.

Schroder is at the centre of a complex network of people working to maintain the published traffic schedule. Along with the project's senior traffic manager, they work to resolve construction scheduling problems and other construction related issues to keep traffic moving. She is in constant contact with the contractor's traffic manager, the project call centre (1-877-4SAFE 99) available 24/7, which fields calls from the public, and with first responders, such as fire and ambulance.

With no alternative route to detour traffic to, one of the challenges faced by planners and engineers long before construction began on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project was the need to create a construction schedule that kept closures and delays to a minimum, while maintaining traffic flows.

The Ministry of Transportation consulted extensively over three years with Sea-to-Sky corridor communities, employers, emergency response providers, schools and others. The public's daily, weekly and seasonal traffic patterns were identified,



*Traffic communications manager Karen Schroder reviews engineering drawings of up-coming highway construction with traffic manager Felipe Rodriguez.*

allowing planners to create the least disruptive closure and delay schedule possible.

Schroder says, "In spite of the significant planning that went into the schedule, unscheduled events happen. Storms bring heavy snow or rain, flooding may happen or rock falls occur. Construction crews may require extra minutes to clear blasted rock, or a traffic accident may block the roadway. The traffic management and communications team work quickly to determine the facts and develop solutions."



### For further information:

#### Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project Community Relations

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### Construction Delay or Closure Information:

[www.seatoskyimprovements.ca](http://www.seatoskyimprovements.ca) 1-877- 4SAFE 99 (1-877- 472-3399)