



Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project Community Update

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Newly completed highway sections to be ready for fall commute

"Travellers can look forward to about 39 km of new and previously improved highway by this fall," says executive project director Peter Milburn. Major construction work is underway at many locations along the route, and Milburn is satisfied that progress on the \$600-million project is on schedule for substantial completion in the fall of 2009.

"For example, the 6.5-km four-lane divided highway from Ansell Place north to Lions Bay actually opened ahead of schedule and is all ready in use. Construction is proceeding exceptionally well in all sections and we foresee no changes to our timetable."

Milburn says the 5.3-km section between Furry Creek and Minaty Bay will be open this fall as a four-lane divided highway with the addition of the new bridge at Furry Creek carrying northbound traffic. "Travellers can also look forward to driving the 2.5-km section from Murrin Park to south of Gonzales Creek, which reopens as a four-lane divided highway with a new bridge at Gonzales Creek carrying the two southbound lanes."

In the Cheakamus-to-Rubble Creek section, he says that the addition of the new two-lane bridge at Rubble Creek for northbound traffic and the improved three-lane design with alternating lane passing opportunities will ease congestion. "In fact, when this is opened, everything from Depot Road north to Rubble Creek will be substantially complete."

Milburn notes, "The fall traffic management regime begins September 16th. This is when highway traffic volumes are the lowest



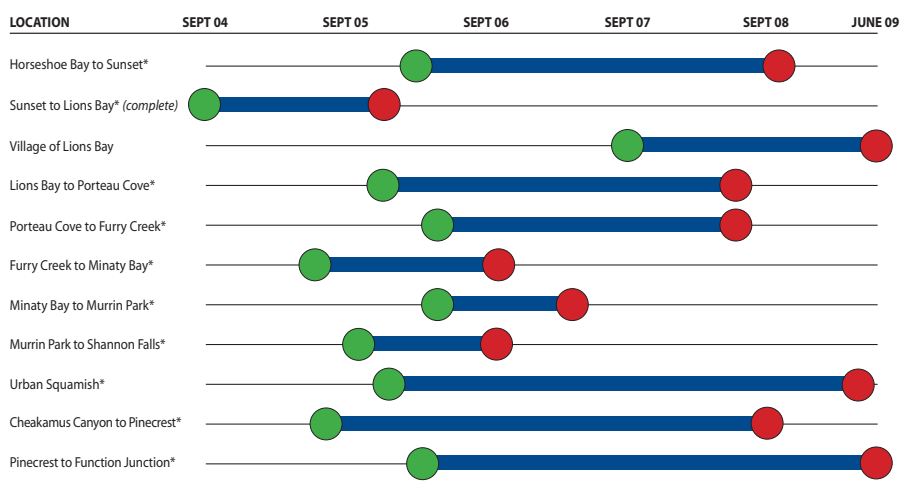
New northbound lanes at Furry Creek include a new bridge

and there is the potential for day-time or night-time closures; however, these are generally infrequent and advertised on the website in advance. A general rule of thumb, during the week, in non-commuting hours, drivers should still expect delays using the 30-30-45 rule." Drivers could encounter delays that total 30 minutes between West Vancouver and Squamish or between Squamish and Whistler, or up to 45 minutes' delay for those going all the way from West Vancouver to Whistler.

Full delay and closure information is available on the project website (www.seatoskyimprovements.ca) and travellers may also call the toll-free information line, 1-877-4-SAFE 99.

Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project Schedule

PROJECT SCHEDULE



* Started

● Construction Start

● Substantial Completion Construction schedule is subject to change.

Environmental monitor important resource for construction crews

Brenda Andres, of Cascade Environmental Resource Group, is one of four Environmental Monitors for the S2S Transportation Group, the contractor on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project. Andres specializes in fisheries and wildlife management in Segment 4 (Depot Road to Function Junction). Her role is to verify that construction follows best management practices for protecting the environment. "Though I am there primarily to verify compliance with the environmental commitments and provide guidance to the contractor when required, I do have the authority to stop work if there is the potential for harm," she says.

The project is committed to designing and building the highway improvements in a way that minimizes environmental impacts. During the Environmental Assessment application process, over two hundred commitments were made to address potential adverse effects, as a condition of the project's environmental approval granted in 2004. This "Table of Commitments" is on the project website, www.seatoskyimprovements.ca.

The commitments are carried out in a system of review, monitoring and verification of the construction practices by the contractor's consultants and sub-consultants, with Ministry of Transportation staff auditing construction and environmental work, and each phase of construction subject to review and acceptance by federal and provincial environmental agencies.

"Over the past year working in Segment 4, I have developed good working relationships with Construction Manager Felix Cirelli, the operators and crew on the highway, and with others on our environmental team," says Andres. What is key to my effectiveness is free and easy access to the work sites, honest

communication from the workers and a willingness to include my input to construction planning and worker training."

"Environmental monitoring is 90 per cent about communication, though my background in biology allows a true interpretation of impacts. Conditions that look bad at first glance may, in fact, cause no harm. However, there are other situations, say, a water pump not set up properly, which can have immediate effects on juvenile fish at the wrong time of the year." Andres documents everything she does in the field, which includes taking photos and preparing numerous reports.

For Andres, there is no such thing as a typical day. "If I am doing songbird surveys, then I need to be out by six a.m., but if they are installing a culvert, then I will be working at night, the only time the contractor is allowed to close the road in summer."

"I have to be there if they are pouring concrete or pumping in wet conditions close to a watercourse, constantly sampling to verify that the receiving water quality isn't impacted. I need to sample the creeks weekly for cleanliness, and other types of field analysis depends on what the workers are doing out there."

When asked what she likes most about this work, Andres is enthusiastic. "I like the interaction with people, training the workers and the satisfaction that comes from knowing that in some way what I do may have a positive effect on the environment."

Project wins global recognition

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project won a prestigious international award at the Public-Private Finance Awards in London, England. Sponsored by the UK magazine, Public Private Finance, the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project won "Best Global Project to Reach Financial Close", highlighting British Columbia's leadership in implementing public-private partnerships.

Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon said, "The award recognizes how our public and private sector, have combined their expertise to deliver an innovative highway project that will provide tremendous benefits for motorists and taxpayers. As a result of our partnership, taxpayers will see an additional \$131 million in economic and safety benefits. That's good for taxpayers and motorists."

This is the second major award for the project in the last six months. Last November the project won the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships' Gold Award for Innovation and Excellence.



Inspecting flagging on a 20-metre exclusion zone around a songbird nest near Daisy Lake

Why are reduced speed limits in effect when there's no work underway in a construction zone?

Construction director Rob Ahola says reduced speed limits in construction zones are not just for the benefit of workers' safety. "Construction speed zones are put in place whenever conditions affecting the highway have been changed so that the regular speed limit is no longer appropriate for the road," he says. "For example, if the road alignment is altered for detours or if the lane and shoulder widths are reduced, a lower speed zone is put in place."

Speed zones are also often implemented when changes are made beside the highway by preliminary work such as tree removal, drilling of holes for utility pole relocation, excavation for geotechnical investigations and so on. "Anything that results in a reduced clear zone (the distance from the edge of a lane to an obstruction) requires a reduced speed limit to lessen the risk of collisions with the obstruction," says Ahola. "Traffic experts are regularly monitoring construction speed zones to ensure that they are only in effect when needed to protect workers or the travelling public."

If a construction speed zone sign is covered up, Ahola says it means the regularly posted speed is in effect. He cautions drivers to remember that there may be a need for a reduced speed zone just ahead, so keep an eye out and drive safely.

Photos:

Top: Traffic Pattern Changed sign warns drivers that the roadway has been changed to allow for construction. Often a road alignment change will be accompanied by a lower speed limit to ensure the safety of highway users.

Middle: Rock in this picture has reduced the clearance between the driving lane and an off-road object. Reduced clear zones can increase the risk of collisions. When clear zones or shoulders are reduced, the speed limit is adjusted for an increased margin of safety.

Bottom: When a speed sign is covered it means the regularly posted speed limit is in effect. In this case the the traffic pattern, road alignment, clear zones and shoulders are to normal standards, so the reduced speed zone is only required for worker safety when construction is underway.



Lions Bay Preliminary Design Consultation in September

Two Open Houses are scheduled in Lions Bay for September. The purpose of the Open Houses is to provide Lions Bay residents, community organizations and businesses with an opportunity to provide feedback and input on preliminary design options, including mini-changes, noise mitigation measures, village atmosphere, community gateway locations and features, pedestrian options and transit stop locations

- Saturday September 23 11:00 am to 2:00 pm
Lions Bay Community School
- Thursday September 28 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Lions Bay Village Hall

Miller-Capilano community spirit cleans up Anderson Beach

When Jamie DeCook and Steve Foreman, employees of Miller-Capilano, saw the story of a garbage-littered local beach in the Squamish Chief newspaper, they felt it was a great opportunity to demonstrate community leadership by providing resources and volunteers to clean it up. Subsequently the Miller Capilano Team called Mountain FM, advising they would welcome volunteers to join them cleaning the beach.

Anderson Beach is a popular recreation area 28 km from Squamish on the banks of the Squamish River that attracts users and tourists. When the May long weekend was over and the party-goers left, they left a long-weekend-sized mess. Burnt automobiles, broken glass and beer cans littered the river-front beach area.

Neighbours of all ages joined the eight-person crew, which included Miller-Capilano spouses. With three pickup trucks, a one-ton dump truck and a two-ton dump truck, the group picked up roughly 2090 pounds of garbage, plus a similar amount of scrap steel. The District of Squamish waived the disposal fee at the municipal dump. To wrap up the day, the Miller-Capilano Team threw a barbeque for all who pitched in to help.

Miller-Capilano provides highway maintenance and rehabilitation services to the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project. A partnership between Miller Paving Ltd. and Capilano Highway Services, Miller-Capilano is part of the S2S Transportation Group.



Anderson Beach cleanup barbeque



Miller-Capilano Fleet at Anderson Beach

For further information:

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Construction Delay or Closure Information

Current information that includes locations and times of highway construction delays or closures is available through the toll-free information line or the project website. Up-to-date information is available on the website with our travel planning tools which include a weekly schedule, seasonal travel planner and closure and delay projections to 2009.

www.seatoskyimprovements.ca
1-877- 4SAFE 99 (1-877- 472-3399)

Text message Road Alert service is also available with details on how to subscribe on the website, <http://www.seatoskyimprovements.ca> or visit, www.theweather-network.com/roadalerts.

Please take a moment to give us your feedback:

You may fax this page back to us at 604-775-1144 or email us at info@seatoskyimprovements.ca

You found the articles to be:

Easy to read Too technical

On a scale of 1-10 (10=terrific) please rate

photos information

Other suggestions for future issues:
