

Singing Pass Trail Access and Parking Proposal

Updated February 2018

Introduction

A number of factors show that action on the Singing Pass access issue is urgently needed:

- The 1991 landslip (small landslide) that blocked the access road has increased the round-trip distance to Singing Pass to 24 km. This is farther than most people can easily hike in a day.
- There has been a huge increase in park visitation in the Sea-to-Sky region. There is inadequate parking and trailhead infrastructure to accommodate the increased use.
- The lack of public parking and overnight parking in Whistler is also an issue. Recent parking bylaws enacted by the Resort Municipality of Whistler in July 2017 have exacerbated the parking problem for park visitors.
- The construction of three Spearhead huts means increased overnight parking capacity is required. The first new hut at Russet Lake, above Singing Pass, is scheduled to open in late 2018 or early 2019. Construction began in the summer of 2017. Park users need a secure place to park overnight.
- Also, some hut users will want to walk in or walk out from Singing Pass. A closer parking lot would be a welcome addition.
- The existing old access road is geologically unstable and access is blocked at Whistler Village with a gate. Recreation Sites and Trails BC has improved the old road to facilitate hiking access but the trail is very long (12 km one way to Singing Pass).
- The long approach on a relatively boring logging road means many park users are unable to enjoy the natural beauty of Garibaldi Park.
- Some of the bridges across creeks have washed out and need replacement.
- The mountain bike trail in the Whistler Bike Park that crosses the existing trail on the old logging road causes safety concerns for hikers.

Our proposal includes:

- A new footbridge across Fitzsimmons Creek adjacent to the Innergex water intake, which would be built to connect with the existing Singing Pass trail on the south side.
- Working with BC Parks, the Mountain Resorts Branch, Whistler Sliding Centre, Whistler Blackcomb and Innergex to obtain permission for private vehicles to use an existing road on the north side of Fitzsimmons Creek.

- Some minor upgrades will be required on this road that provides access to the Sliding Centre, the Innergex IPP and Whistler-Blackcomb CRA on Blackcomb Mountain.
- Leveling, clearing and marking of public parking spaces would be needed at the IPP intake. This is 5 km up Fitzsimmons Creek from Whistler Village and close to the Garibaldi Park boundary and the old trail parking lot.
- Some trail work would be needed on the existing overgrown road between the proposed footbridge and the existing Singing Pass trail.
- Landscaping of the parking lot using native species to make it more attractive to visitors and to improve the view from the Peak-to-Peak gondola.
- Bike racks to allow for secure locking of bikes at the trailhead.
- Forest stand thinning adjacent to the road to reduce fire risk. There may be funds available from the Forest Enhancement Society of BC.

Benefits of the proposal

- An enormously improved hiking experience since more time could be spent in Garibaldi Park rather than hiking on logging roads
- It would allow seniors, families with children and the less physically fit to enjoy the beauty of Garibaldi Park instead of trudging up a boring logging road
- Improved public safety as the proposed new access route bypasses the unstable landslide on the south side of Fitzsimmons Creek
- No conflicts with ATV tours and the mountain bike park
- A mountain bike loop-trip could be done from the Village

