

Information Sheet - Mountain Highway Interchange Tree clearing

Why are trees being cleared?

Tree clearing is required along Highway 1 ("the cut") in order to construct the new interchange's westbound on-ramp and east bound off-ramp. 95% of the tree clearing that is occurring along the cut is on ministry Right of Way. It has been approximately 60 years since major construction last occurred in this area therefore much of the road allowance had grown in.

Why is tree clearing occurring at night?

To safely clear trees next to the highway a lane closure is required, and because the traffic volumes are so high during the day, the lane closures must occur between 11pm and 5am to avoid severe traffic congestion.

How have you minimised impacts to trees?

One reason a tight diamond interchange design was selected for the Mountain Highway Interchange was that the ramps could be constructed close to the highway to reduce the project footprint. Also a large retaining wall is being constructed on the south side of the highway to avoid impacting the Salop trail and additional trees. Because of the steep terrain the cut-line includes the reconstruction of embankments and adequate working space to construct the interchange safely; once construction is complete the remaining areas will be revegetated.

What preparations have been done prior to tree clearing?

An environmental assessment of the project was performed in 2016 which identified sensitive habitat and wildlife species within the project area. The project Design and Landscape Plan was reviewed by environmental agencies; further changes were made to the design based on the recommendations and feedback received. Prior to tree clearing, wildlife salvage, nesting surveys and arborist assessments were conducted.

How are you addressing impacts to local residents?

The Project Team understands the impact tree clearing can have on residents, which is why much time and effort was spent on avoiding or mitigating impacts to the habitat. A project noise assessment in 2016 projected noise levels changes resulting from the project and recommended various mitigation strategies. To re-establish habitat and vegetation a Landscaping Plan was developed which includes the planting of over 5,000 trees and 20,000 shrubs. The Project Team is working with residents who are most impacted to ensure the mitigation and revegetation measures taken provide optimal short and long-term benefits.

Below is an image of the eastbound off-ramp taken from the Flyover video presented at February 2017 Open Houses. The smooth light green areas illustrate the extent of clearing and landscaping.



A recent redesign has avoided tree clearing at this location.

For more project information please visit the project website

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/transportation-infrastructure/projects/highway-1-lower-lynn-improvements>