

Durrell Road Project Update

Summer 2026



Ministry of
Transportation
and Transit

Cariboo Road
Recovery Projects

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Durrell Road is a low-volume rural road approximately 14 kilometres south of Quesnel, BC. Slope instability in the area has been recorded as far back as the 1950s. Over the years, slide activity led to temporary road closures, followed by Ministry stabilization and drainage work to reopen the road and maintain service. Examples include the installation of subsurface drainage in 2005 and roadside ditch lining with rip-rap in 2007.

Following exceptional rainfall in 2020, a major landslide occurred in spring 2021. This slide was significantly larger and more destructive than previous events affecting the road; the road moved approximately three to four metres vertically and 10 to 12 metres horizontally, rendering 400 metres of the road impassable. In the interest of public safety and given the evidence from previous decades of work that partial mitigations have been unable to address slide movement, the affected section of Durrell Road was closed to all traffic – vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. Alternate access remained available through Dale Lake Road.

DEVELOPING A SAFE, LONG-TERM SOLUTION

Following the 2021 slide, the Ministry undertook extensive investigation, planning and analysis of the following options to determine the safest and most appropriate long-term solution:

- **Stabilization and reinstatement of Durrell Road**
 - Install piles along the entire length of the slide and reconstruct Durrell Road
 - Flatten the upslope area to unload the slide, install a series of deep vertical drains to lower the water table and reinstate Durrell Road about 5 metres upslope
 - Excavate a substantial portion of the slide, construct a stability berm along the toe of the slide and reinstate Durrell Road
- **Relocation of traffic to Brotherhood Road**
- **Permanent alternative access via Dale Lake Road**

A multidisciplinary team of engineers, geotechnical specialists, environmental professionals and other technical experts assessed the slide area, investigated the potential options noted above and evaluated the long-term risks associated with each approach.

This work included:

- Geotechnical assessments and ongoing monitoring
- Engineering design
- Environmental and archaeological assessments
- Drainage assessments
- Climate change resilience design
- Indigenous consultation
- Detailed design and constructability reviews

Following this work, the decision was made to permanently close Durrell Road through the slide area. This was determined to be the safest and most suitable long-term option, as reopening the road would require significant engineered reconstruction to meet current safety and design standards and would not eliminate the risk of future slope movement or additional repairs.

In April 2025, the Ministry announced the permanent closure of the 400-metre segment of Durrell Road. Dale Lake Road now provides safe and reliable permanent access to Highway 97 east of the slide area and to Dragon Mountain Provincial Park.



Crews assess damage along Durrell Road following the slide, July 2021.



Durrell Road following decommissioning work, April 2026.

COMPLETED WORK

Decommissioning of the permanently closed road segment was completed in December 2025. This work:

- Removed the asphalt
- Placed a compacted gravel surface
- Narrowed the roadway
- Graded the slope
- Restored the area with soil and vegetation

CURRENT CONSTRUCTION

Additional construction totalling \$8 million is underway and expected to continue through September 2026. Current activities include:

- Tree clearing
- Drainage improvements and culvert replacements
- Construction of two turnarounds
- Resurfacing sections of Durrell Road and Dale Lake Road

Residents can expect typical construction-related activity, including increased construction vehicle traffic, noise and dust from heavy equipment and machinery.

Project Information

The Ministry will continue to keep the community informed as construction progresses. For project updates and advance notice of construction activities, visit the project webpage or DriveBC.



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