

# Welcome

*We respectfully acknowledge that the Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Project is taking place on the territories of Lhtako Dene Nation, Nazko First Nation and the Tsilhqot'in National Government.*

## Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Public Information Session

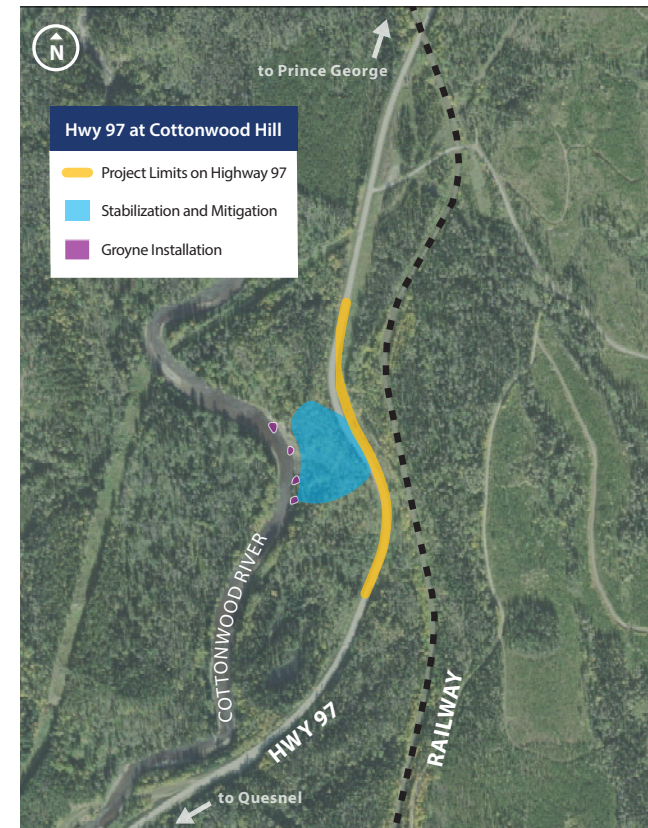
This Public Information Session is being held to provide you with information regarding the Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Project and the opportunity to ask questions to project team members.

To provide your feedback or submit enquiries to the project team, contact Bill Leitch, Project Manager, at:

 Email: [Cottonwood.Hill@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cottonwood.Hill@gov.bc.ca)

 Phone: **250-575-6474**

 Website: [gov.bc.ca/cariboo](http://gov.bc.ca/cariboo)



# About the Cariboo Road Recovery Projects

Changing weather patterns have hit the Cariboo particularly hard in recent years, contributing to hundreds of slides and road washouts in 2020 and 2021.

The Cariboo Road Recovery Projects are restoring access where feasible, benefiting tens of thousands of people who use these affected roads and highways.



An aerial view of the Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Project, where weight was removed from the top of the slide adjacent to the highway.



# Project Overview

Construction of the Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Project will begin in 2024 to address issues resulting from slides.

The project, located along a stretch of the Cottonwood River approximately 15 kilometres north of Quesnel, is being designed with a focus on resilience to changing weather patterns to improve the safety, stability and reliability of the road for the long term.



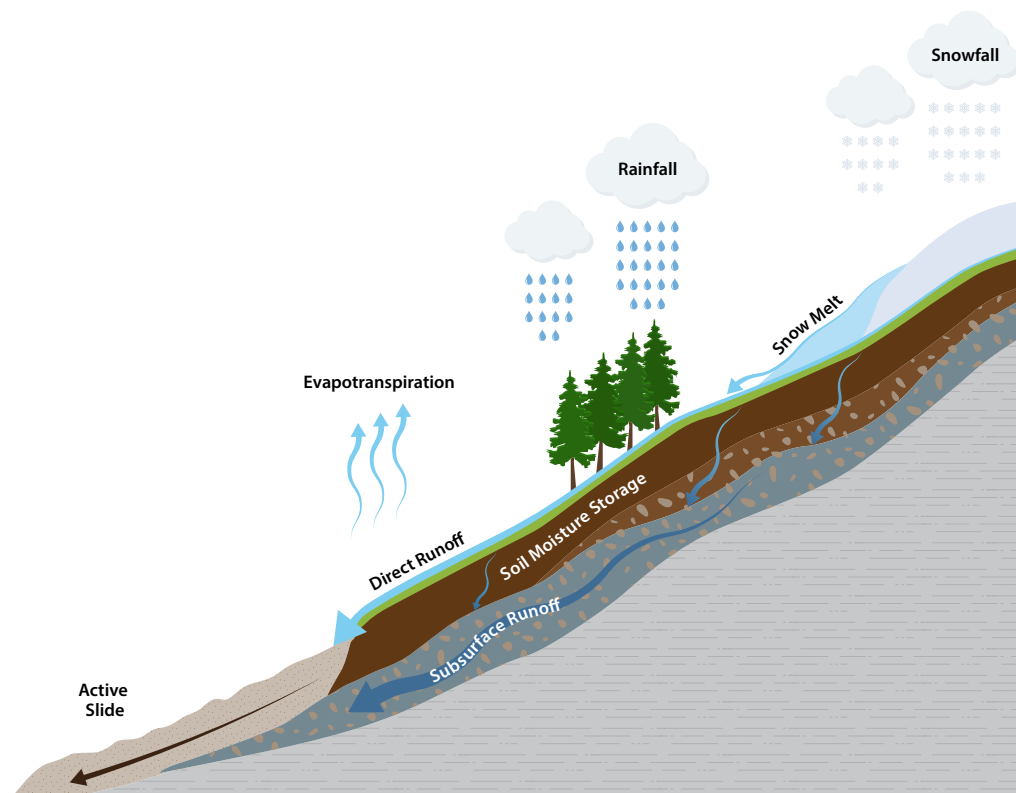
Photo of crest unloading work along Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill adjacent to the Cottonwood River.

# Project Process

Through a comprehensive and technically driven process which began in late 2020, the Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Project team is designing and building transportation infrastructure that is resilient and can withstand the effects of changing weather patterns over the long term.

Work to determine a solution to address issues associated with slides in the area included:

- Engineering design and options development
- Onsite investigations
- Environmental reviews and inspections
- First Nations consultation
- Public engagement
- Ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the road



Each slide is complicated due to its unique geotechnical characteristics. Above is a graphic of how water typically impacts movement.

# Onsite Work to Date



### **December 2020 – Present**

Four phases of drilling (geotechnical work) have been undertaken to investigate the slide.

### **May 2021**

Weight was removed from the top of the slide.

### **Summer 2021**

Above and below ground monitoring equipment was installed.



### **Fall 2021**

The road was resurfaced on Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill.

### **August/September 2023**

An access road to construct the groynes was built.

### **September/October 2023**

As shown above, ministry contractors installed groynes along the Cottonwood River adjacent to the highway.



# River Erosion Protection

Continued erosion at the bottom of the slide has been addressed to protect Highway 97.

Interim works reduced the force of the river on the toe (bottom) of the slide. The first phase of work included:

- Construction and installation of groynes, as seen in blue in the image to the right
- Installation of monitoring equipment to alert the ministry of potential movement within the slide area

Built with large rock material, groynes redirect river flows away from the slide area.



The location of the four groynes installed in the river this fall.

# Highway 97 Realignment

The ministry will reconstruct Highway 97 through the slide area, as shown on the map below.



Moving the highway away from the slide allows the ministry to improve stability.



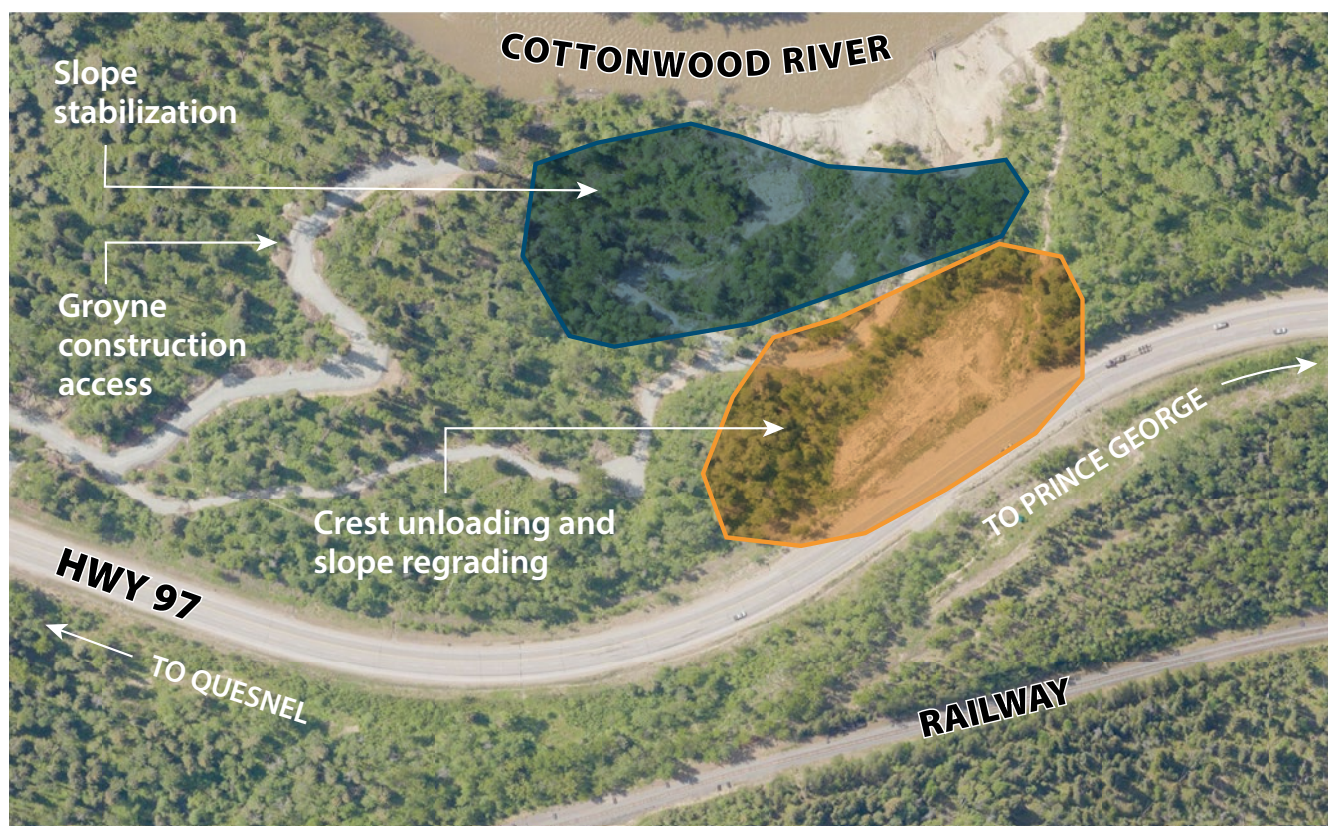
# Highway 97 Stabilization

The ministry will be stabilizing the road through the slide area. This work is expected to take one of two forms: a rock berm or vertical piles.

Stabilization work includes:

- Removing weight from the top of the slide
- Improving slope stability

The final details of this project are being confirmed and construction is scheduled to start in spring 2024.





# Environmental Management

The project team is working with partners to ensure the protection of aquatic habitat while working on this project. Other elements intended to preserve the environment include:

- Measures to protect wildlife and wildlife habitats
- Practices to protect migratory birds and species at risk
- Limiting the spread or growth of invasive species
- Protecting the river bank
- Controlling sediment and erosion

Environmental assessments are underway for fish species, bird nesting and endangered species and species at risk in the area.



Photo of the embankment to be stabilized along the Cottonwood River.

# First Nations Consultation

The ministry is consulting with the following communities on the Highway 97 at Cottonwood Hill Project.

- ▶ Nazko First Nation
- ▶ Lhtako Dene Nation

We are continuing to work with the Nations to better understand if there are any cultural, archeological or environmental aspects related to the proposed project work.

Consultation and engagement will continue to be ongoing as we proceed forward.



# Project Timeline

The following summary schedule outlines anticipated timelines for project works. Timing is subject to change.



# Thank You for Attending

Thank you for attending this Public Information Session. If you have feedback or would like to submit a question to the project team, contact Bill Leitch, Project Manager, at:



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Project details continue to be refined and confirmed. For the latest information or to learn more about the project, scan the QR code.

