

Project Provides Many Opportunities for Women

At one time, road construction was a workplace dominated by men, but that has changed in recent years, as can easily be seen by looking at the crews on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project where about 25 percent of them are women.

Many of those women are operating heavy equipment like rock trucks, excavators, bobcats and backhoes, while others work in surveying, first aid, safety and traffic control.

Ryan Tones, construction manager for Peter Kiewit Sons responsible for building the highway improvements from Horseshoe Bay to Lions Bay, says that there are many opportunities on the project for women interested in joining a non-traditional work environment.

"I'm interested in finding individuals of either sex who are motivated, prompt, respect others and the workplace and are willing to try their best to do a good job," he says. "Those are the most important qualifications I'm looking for. We are looking for people of any skill level or experience."

Ashley Mugford, surveyor foreman, was a kinesiology student planning on a career in medicine when she took a summer job working in traffic control in Golden several years ago. Now she's not so sure of her career plans. "I like seeing the highway change as we build it, and the way my job changes as well," says Ashley. "Working in road construction has really got me thinking about alternative types of work."

Chloe Seaborne has been working in construction for four years, starting out in traffic control, moving into a labourer's position and is now working as a rock truck and loader operator. "I didn't stay long as a labourer because I prefer machines to a shovel, of course," she laughs. She says she has remained in construction because she enjoys the independence the job offers.

Raising a family and working on the improvement project presents some challenges, but it's worth it, according to construction safety officer Sherry Hall and traffic control supervisor Theresa Fernandez. Both manage households with children in them and work full time on the project.

"I commute over an hour to work and have different baby sitters for each shift," says Theresa, "but I would rather work outdoors than be stuck in an office. This work can give women, single mothers especially, an independent lifestyle and financial freedom not so easily found in other careers."

The construction crews work long hours (a standard shift is 10 hours), and that means that "you often have to rely on other people to fill the gap's in your child's day," says Sherry. Sherry started working as a first aid attendant at a sawmill in Golden, and stayed for 10 years, moving up to Level 3 certification. With this experience, she was hired by Peter Kiewit Sons on a highway project in Golden and, when it was ending, was invited to work on the Sea-to-Sky Highway.

When asked if she worried about encountering a discriminatory atmosphere at work, Sherry said no. "There is no gender here," she said. "We are all treated the same."

"There is lots of room to move up on this job," Ashley added. "The atmosphere is very positive and versatility is encouraged and appreciated here." The other women interviewed for this article agreed.

They offered some words of advice for other women who may be thinking about a career in road construction:

"Just get out there and do it" is Chloe's advice. Sherry agrees with her, noting that "I have seen women who have never driven before doing fine now. The great thing about this company is that they will give you a chance to try something new, and pay for your training."

"My advice is don't be intimidated," Theresa adds. "The site, workers and machines may look big and scary, but everybody was once a rookie."

To apply for work on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project, mail your resume to Peter Kiewit Sons at 1410-1111 West Georgia St., Vancouver, BC V6E 4M3, fax to 604-629-0310, or send by email to resumes@kiewit.ca.



Chloe Seaborne and the front-end loader she operates on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project.

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***— Ryan Tones,
Construction Manager,
Peter Kiewit Sons***

New Traffic Schedule Introduced

With the fall ramp up of construction, the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project has introduced some changes in its traffic management schedule. This revised schedule remains in effect through to November 30, 2005.

Between Whistler and Squamish

From 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. and from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. Mondays through Fridays, traffic will be stopped about 300 metres south of the Pinecrest entrance to allow for rock drilling, blasting and removal north of the Cheakamus Canyon. Although there are no closures on weekends, they are implemented again at 12:01 a.m. Mondays.

Drivers may also encounter delays of up to 30 minutes between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 9 a.m. to noon Friday in this section of the highway.

Between Horseshoe Bay and Squamish

A small number of afternoon and night closures will be needed this fall between Squamish and Horseshoe Bay. Dates for these will be confirmed and publicized on the project website two weeks in advance. Early

afternoon closures will be scheduled in order to disrupt the least amount of traffic possible, while evening closures will be two hours in duration, from midnight to 2 a.m. and from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. There will be no closures in this section on weekends.

Drivers may also encounter delays of up to 15 minutes between Horseshoe Bay and Lions Bay and between Lions Bay and Squamish from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 9 a.m. to noon Fridays. From 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Mondays to Thursdays, there may be delays of up to 30 minutes between Horseshoe Bay and Lions Bay.

Delays will be coordinated between the Horseshoe Bay to Squamish section and the Squamish to Whistler section so that total construction-related delays experienced by someone driving between Horseshoe Bay and Whistler do not exceed 45 minutes.



Traffic snakes through the construction zone, where crews are completing the grading of two newly built lanes south of Lions Bay

Ansell Place to Lions Bay Section More Than 80 Percent Complete

Widening of the seven kilometres of the Sea-to-Sky Highway between Ansell Place and the south end of Lions Bay from two to four lanes is now more than 80 percent complete and preliminary work is continuing in the rest of the corridor between Horseshoe Bay and Whistler.

Retaining wall structures are being built at Cosmo Creek, a few kilometres south of Lions Bay, to accommodate the highway widening. Also between Ansell Place and Lions Bay, crews are preparing the road base and paving new lanes, when weather allows. This section is expected to be completed in August, 2006.

Elsewhere, rock excavation has started between Cheakamus Canyon and the Daisy Lake Dam. This has meant the return of overnight closures between Whistler and Squamish, which will continue until November 30. Construction of a new two-lane bridge at Furry Creek to accommodate two additional lanes is underway but should have little impact on highway traffic. The other two lanes in this four-lane section will be carried by the existing bridge over Furry Creek.

Community Consultation on Preliminary Design Gets Underway

In order to ensure that community and stakeholder objectives and concerns are considered in the highway design, the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project has undertaken a comprehensive consultation program with communities in the corridor.

Preparations for consultation on preliminary design features are underway, with the project seeking feedback from Furry Creek residents in early October.

Consultations will be held in Whistler, with small group meetings in late October and an open house in early November. Preliminary design consultation in West Vancouver is expected to get underway in late 2005 or early 2006. The project expects preliminary design consultation with Pinecrest/Black Tusk, Britannia Beach, Lions Bay, and Squamish to be undertaken in 2006.

Dates and locations for the preliminary design consultations in the various communities will be posted on the project website at seatoskyimprovements.ca and will be advertised in community newspapers. Input from the preliminary consultations is considered, with financial and technical input, as the project proceeds to the detailed design phase. Construction of the improvements will start following preliminary design consultation in each community. Prior to completion of the improvements, consultation will take place on detailed design.

sea-TO-SKY

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If you have any questions or comments about the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project, we want to hear from you. You can:

- email your comments to info@seatoskyimprovements.ca,
- fax us at (604) 775-1144 or
- write to us at Suite 1420, 1111 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 4M3

Be sure to include your name and address so that we can answer your questions.

You can also contact a member of the project's community relations team:

Manager - Rick Hyde
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Community Relations Officer, Squamish – Pam Tattersfield
(604) 898-2117 pam.tattersfield@gov.bc.ca

Community Relations Officer, Whistler – Scott Roberts
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