



Government of British Columbia: Kinsol Trestle Opens to Families and Visitors

SHAWNIGAN LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA--(Marketwire - July 28, 2011) -

NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNIQUÉ

For Immediate Release

2011TRAN0058-000935

July 28, 2011

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Western Economic Diversification Canada

Kinsol Trestle opens to families and visitors

SHAWNIGAN LAKE - The historic Kinsol Trestle, Canada's tallest timber trestle, has reopened to provide families a spectacular recreational route in the Cowichan Valley.

High above the Koksilah River, the restored trestle includes a 187-metre (614-foot) walkway along the top for hikers, cyclists and horseback riders. The trestle completes an important section along the Trans-Canada Trail, connecting the Village of Shawnigan Lake to the District of North Cowichan.

"Our Government is proud to help restore this historic and spectacular structure," said the Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification. "I look forward to Cowichan Valley residents and visitors from around the world taking full advantage of the safer Kinsol Trestle for years to come."

The work included replacing unsound timbers and reinforcing the structure to ensure that the historic characteristics, including the span, height and timbered design qualities of the original structure, were preserved. As many as 60 jobs were created through the entire 13-month process.

"This project provided close to 60 jobs for Cowichan families," said Parksville-Qualicum MLA Ron Cantelon on behalf of the B.C. government. "By adding a multi-purpose walkway to the structure, this 90-year-old former railway has been transformed into a safe and visually stunning connection along the Trans Canada Trail. This world-renowned trestle is an important part of our local and provincial heritage, and it will encourage family recreation, healthy living and tourism in the Cowichan Valley."

The Kinsol Trestle was built in 1920, is one of the largest timber bridges in the world and the highest timber trestle remaining in the Commonwealth. It is 44 metres high and 188 metres long.

Construction of the \$7.2 million project began in 2010.

Construction was funded by:

- \$1.9 million in federal funding through the Building Canada Fund - Communities Component.
- \$1.9 million in provincial funding through the Building Canada Fund - Communities Component.
- \$1.6 million in provincial LocalMotion funding.
- \$1 million from the Island Coastal Economic Trust.
- \$600,000 from the Cowichan Valley Regional District.
- \$250,000 from the Trans Canada Trail Foundation

"We're excited to be able to share this day with so many people and visitors alike," said Gerry Giles, Cowichan Valley Regional District board chair. "We know this truly will become the 'jewel in the crown' for attracting tourism to the Cowichan Valley region and are honoured to have supported the community fundraising campaign and done our part as project managers to save this magnificent structure for all to appreciate and experience."

The Canada-British Columbia Building Canada Fund - Communities Component is a federal-provincial program that addresses the unique infrastructure needs of both rural and urban communities with populations of less than 100,000.

Through this unprecedented Building Canada infrastructure plan, the federal government is providing long-term, stable and predictable funding to help meet infrastructure needs across Canada. Building Canada supports a stronger, safer and better country.

Since October 2008, over \$5.6 billion has been committed by the Province to over 900 infrastructure projects in British Columbia, which are estimated to create more than 36,000 jobs over the life of the projects.

The Province's \$40-million LocalMotion program has funded 122 projects such as this one, promoting healthier, greener and more accessible communities.

Quick Facts:

- More than 679 cubic metres (288,000 board feet) of new timber was used on the trestle, the majority of it second growth B.C.-grown Douglas-fir and cypress.
- The last train crossed the trestle in 1979.
- The trestle was built in 1929 to link Victoria to Nootka Sound to transport timber.

Learn More:

- A time-lapse video of the restoration on the Kinsol Trestle can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxG57doOmW4>
- For more information about the Kinsol Trestle project, visit: http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/highwayprojects/kinsol_trestle/index.htm
- For more information on the LocalMotion program, visit: www.localmotion.gov.bc.ca
- For more information on the Island Coastal Economic Trust, visit: <http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/>
- For more information on the Building Canada Fund, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ysmm5b>

A factsheet follows.

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect

FACTSHEET

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Western Economic Diversification Canada
Kinsol Trestle

The \$7.2-million Kinsol Trestle restoration was funded by:

- \$1.6 million in provincial LocalMotion funding (announced April 13, 2007).
- \$1.885 million in federal funding through the Building Canada fund - Communities Component, including top-up funding.
- \$1.885 million in provincial funding (announced Sept. 24, 2009).
- \$1 million from the Island Coastal Economic Trust.
- \$600,000 from the Cowichan Valley Regional District.
- \$250,000 from Trans Canada Trail Foundation.

Direct benefit:

- Almost 60 jobs were created during the rehabilitation of the trestle.
- The trestle is a key link in the Trans-Canada Trail and will draw visitors to the Cowichan Valley and Vancouver Island. Many of the 18,000+ hits on Google for the Kinsol Trestle are related to tourism and travel.

History:

The Kinsol Trestle, which crosses the Koksilah River, was completed in 1920 as part of a rail line built by the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway. Designed by engineers, it was built by farmers and loggers with investment funds from the Canadian Western Lumber Company, which was the largest lumber company in the world at that time.

It was part of a planned link between Victoria and Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island to move timber to markets by steam train. It was named after nearby Kinsol Station, which was itself named after a mining venture called "King Solomon Mines".

Completed in 1920, at 44 metres (144 feet) high and 188 metres (617 feet) long, it is the largest wooden trestle in the Commonwealth and one of the highest railway trestles in the world. The trestle fell into disrepair, and the last train crossed it in 1979. It was abandoned a year later.

Key dates:

- 1911 - Canadian Northern Pacific Railway (CNPR) begins 400-kilometre (250-mile) line through southern interior of Vancouver Island linking Victoria to Port Alberni.
- 1918 - Construction resumed by federal government, which took control of Canadian Northern Railway (and subsidiary, CNPR) in 1917. Downgraded to logging railway with wood trestles, rather than steel bridges.
- 1920 - Construction of trestle completed by Canadian National Railways (CNR), successor to CNPR. Featured high-level Howe Truss. Officially named Koksilah River Trestle; popular name Kinsol Trestle refers to nearby King Solomon copper mine.
- 1921 - CNR ceases work, ending at south end of Cowichan Lake, half its intended length.
- 1922 - Daily passenger and freight service begin on main line.
- 1925 - CNR builds Tidewater Subdivision to Cowichan Bay and main line extended north to Youbou and Kissinger at head of Lake Cowichan (completed 1928). Freight mainly logs and sawn lumber.
- 1931 - Koksilah River floods cause extensive damage to Trestle, which is repaired by CNR.

- 1934-36 - CNR repairs/rebuilds trestle with low-level Howe Truss.
 - 1950s - Trucks begin to supplant railways for hauling logs on Vancouver Island.
 - 1958 - Major repairs to trestle.
 - 1973-74 - CNR repairs trestle for last time.
 - 1979 - Last train passes over Kinsol Trestle on May 30. Trestle abandoned one year later.
 - 1984 - Province of B.C. acquires CNR right-of-way, including Kinsol Trestle. Structural assessment and feasibility study for preservation and/or reuse undertaken.
 - 1988 - Fire burns portion of trestle.
 - 1999-08 - CVRD conducts several studies to see if Kinsol Trestle can be saved and to measure the economic impact of the investment.
 - 2008 - CVRD receives final report and decides to rehabilitate Kinsol Trestle.
- Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect

Contact Information

- Jeff Knight
Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE)
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Victoria
250 356-7707

Jeff Rud
Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE)
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
Victoria
250 953-3677

Jaime Burke
Regional Communications Manager
Western Economic Diversification Canada
Vancouver
604 666-1318
www.gov.bc.ca/connect