

Kicking Horse Canyon Highway Improvement Project:

The Kicking Horse Pass extends 80 kilometres through the Rocky Mountains between Golden, British Columbia and Lake Louise, Alberta, and is among the most breathtakingly scenic stretches on the Trans-Canada Highway (Highway 1).

Both the Trans-Canada Highway and the Canadian Pacific Railway run through the Canyon, supporting the movement of national road and rail based goods and tourism. This stretch of highway is part of British Columbia's primary highway system, and while this mountain route is the major east-west connection between BC and Alberta, it has seen little improvement over the past few decades.

The Kicking Horse Canyon section of the Trans-Canada Highway – between Golden and Yoho National Park – was originally constructed in the mid-1950s with the Yoho (5-mile) and Park (10-Mile) bridges completed in 1956. Commercial carriers make up a large proportion of traffic along this section of the Trans-Canada Highway, and it is also a favoured route for tourists.

Average daily traffic ranges from 5,000 vehicles in the off peak season to 10,000 vehicles in the peak season, of which approximately 15 to 20 per cent are heavy trucks. A significant transportation corridor historically, this part of Highway 1 is also a critical link to ports and southern routes. The economy of the region and the Province is directly affected by the operational effectiveness of this Highway. Revitalizing this portion of the national highway system is critical to strengthening the province as Canada's gateway to the world.



The Kicking Horse Canyon section of the Highway also has one of the highest accident rates in BC. From 1994 to 2005, there were 454 accidents, with 9 of these accidents involving fatalities and 183 resulting in injuries. Its high accident severity and frequency, diminishing pavement conditions, unsatisfactory bridge conditions and poor reliability have made the Kicking Horse Canyon Highway Improvement Project one of the top provincial priorities for transportation improvement.

The overall Kicking Horse Canyon Highway Improvement Project involves upgrading approximately 26 kilometres of the Trans-Canada Highway to a modern four lane standard, including bridge replacements. The portion of the highway to be upgraded runs from the junction of Highway 95 in Golden to the western boundary of Yoho National Park. With steep rock faces, deep canyons and winding roads, this is one of the most technically challenging transportation projects in the province.