

Article

B.C. builds its first concrete underpass for skiers

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Forget about taking off those skis to cross a road. B.C. Ministry of Transportation has you covered.



Photo: B.C. Ministry of Transportation

Creating concrete structures for motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and even animals to flow over, under or around roads is old hat for the province.

Recently, they added skiers to that list with the province's first ski underpass.

The underpass is below Hudson Bay Mountain Road, near Smithers B.C. and it provides safe passage for cross-country skiers.

The tunnel links the Bulkley Valley Nordic Centre lodge and parking lot with dog trails and a big network of ski trails on the other side of Hudson Bay Mountain Road.

Previously, families with children and animals had to cross over the road, which is driven by downhill skiers headed to and from Hudson Bay Mountain, and numerous logging trucks delivering lumber to local saw mills.

Now skiers and motorists can all travel to their destinations more safely.

According to the ministry, the Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club approached it with concerns about pedestrians traversing a busy road, and wanted to work with the ministry to make an improvement.

The club members told the ministry how an underpass would put skiers and motorists on separate paths, could make their recreational experience much safer and more fun.

This summer, the 22.5-metre-long precast concrete box culvert underpass was designed and installed, and now it's in service for the ski season.

The Bulkley Valley Cross Country Ski Club says it will experiment with lighting and placing snow in the underpass.

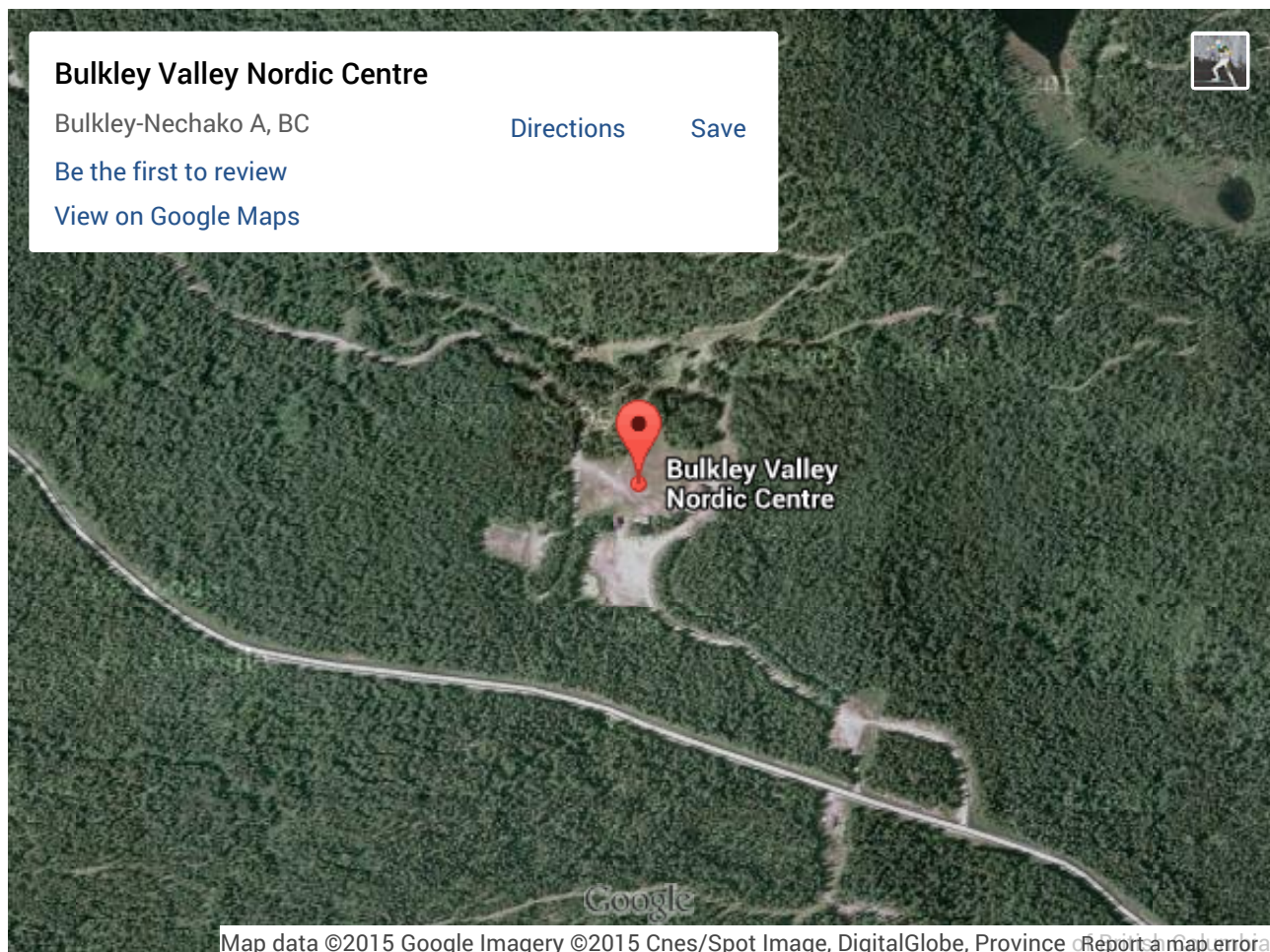
The club will also consider including the trails on the other side of the road in races and events.

The volunteer-run club hosts local, provincial and national Nordic races, provincial-level biathlon races, fun days for kids, elementary school races, a ski marathon and a team relay to fund raise for charities.

The new ski underpass at Hudson Bay Mountain Road is among almost 30 community safety enhancement projects completed last year. Other enhancements include intersection improvements, inlaid pavement marking, street lighting, acceleration and deceleration lanes, pedestrian lights, bus pullouts and speed-reader boards.

The projects were chosen in consultation with local governments and law enforcement, to benefit recreational and commercial traffic, local residents, commuters, cyclists and skiers.

The Langley Concrete Group, Barb's Trucking, Rob Bredow Contracting and Pidherny Contracting were involved with the project.



Photo



A new underpass was built in the Bulkley Valley so that pedestrians and skiers don't have to cross a busy road.

Photo: B.C. Ministry of Transportation



The underpass is the first of its kind built by the Ministry of Transportation.

Photo: B.C. Ministry of Transportation

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