



Tourism Tofino Visitor FAQ – Highway 4 Road Work

Updated July 12, 2023

What is the Cameron Lake Bluff Road work Schedule?

Closed Monday-Friday: 9 AM-11:30 AM and again 1:30 PM-5 PM.
No traffic will be let through at these times.

Open Monday-Friday to single lane alternating traffic:
Westbound 11:30 AM-12:30 PM, **Eastbound** 12:30PM-1:30PM

Open daily 5 PM-9 AM to single lane alternating traffic (SLAT).

Open Saturday-Sunday & Long Weekends to single lane alternating traffic (SLAT)

Please check [Drive BC](#) before you depart for updates

What time do I need to leave Tofino to avoid the closures?

When driving Eastbound from Tofino, travel time is approx. 2-2.5hrs to the construction area.

We suggest leaving Tofino no later than 6:30 AM to make the 9am closure. Leave no later than 10 AM to make the 12:30 PM opening. Leave after 3 PM for the 5 PM opening.

What time do I need to leave Nanaimo to avoid the closures?

When driving Westbound from Nanaimo, travel time is approx. 1hr to road work area.

We suggest leaving Nanaimo no later than 7:45 AM to make the 9 AM closure. Leave no later than 10:15 AM to make the 11:30 AM opening. Leave at 4 PM for the 5 PM opening.

What is the distance from...

Tofino to the road work: 141 km from Tofino (2-2.5 hr drive)

Port Alberni to the road work: 19km (25 min drive)

Nanaimo to the road work: 60 km (1 hr drive)

Qualicum to the road work: 31 km (35 min drive)

Parksville to the road work: 24 km (25 min drive)

Courtney/Comox to the road work: 82 km (1 hr drive)



What should I expect during single lane alternating traffic (SLAT)?

The single lane route is approximately 2km long. The affected section is located 55 km from Nanaimo (45 min drive), 19km east of Port Alberni (20 min drive) and 141 km from Tofino (2hr drive).

What travellers can expect:

- Single-lane-alternating traffic (SLAT) will be in force around the clock along the Cameron Lake Bluffs section of Highway 4.
- Speed limited to 30 KMH and traffic will follow a pilot car.
- Traffic queueing to be managed without preset schedules.
- SLAT is open to all types of commercial and passenger vehicles, except oversized loads.
- There is no essential travel recommendation for either route (Highway 4 or the detour).
- Vehicles will not be permitted to stop at parks or along roadsides in the area.
- Cyclists will be accommodated through the single-lane-alternating traffic zone, assuming the entire lane and travelling within the group of piloted vehicles.
- To limit disruptions to traffic flow, tow trucks will be staged at either end of the closure to assist motorists in the event of breakdowns.

For updates, check [DriveBC](#).

How much extra time should I plan for travel due to the single lane alternating traffic (SLAT)?

Delays have been 10 min-45min. We expect longer delays when the road work reopens at 5pm. We will update the following page <https://tinyurl.com/2p8zmhb> with new information including projected travel times. In the meantime, continue to check [DriveBC](#).


How long will there be single lane alternating traffic? When will the highway fully reopen?

The tentative estimate for Highway 4 to fully reopen in mid-August 2023 to two-lane traffic.

Is Highway 4 open to essential travel only?

Highway 4 and the detour route are open to all travellers including visitors to the region who have vacations planned on the West Coast of Vancouver Island.

Why does The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) need to close the Highway?

- The work is critical in ensuring the long-term safety of the corridor.
 - The highway must be closed to allow scalers to access the slope and remove rocks
 - The cranes must be removed to enable scaling
 - Additional rock scaling and rock bolting are required at Angel Rock
 - Work must take place during favourable summer weather window to avoid more delays
 - Rock scaling work must take place during daylight hours for worker safety
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Where can I eat if I arrive late to Tofino?

The Tofino Co-op is open until 10pm. You can find a list of restaurant hours here:
<https://tourismtofino.com/news/2021/06/01/business-modifications-closures/>

Are there air quality advisories (smoky skies) in Tofino?

The Cameron Lake Bluffs fire was located 150km from Tofino. There have been no air quality issues.

You can find a list of areas in BC experiencing air quality issues here:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/air/air-quality/air-advisories#IssuedAdvisories>

Was the Cameron Bluffs wildfire close to Tofino? Is there a fire close to Tofino?

The Cameron Lake Bluffs fire was located 150km from Tofino. There are currently no fires burning close to Tofino. You can find up to date BC Wildfire information here:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status>

Is there a campfire ban in Tofino?

The fire danger in Tofino and the surrounding area is high. Vancouver Island, including Tofino is under a category 1 open fire ban. This includes:

- Campfires;
- Beach fires;
- Fireworks;
- Sky Lanterns;
- Burn Barrels or Burn Cages of any size or description;
- Binary Exploding Targets;
- Air curtain burners;
- Tiki and similar kind of torches; and,
- Chimineas.

This prohibition does not include the use of outdoor stoves. An outdoor stove is a CSA-rated or ULC-rated device used outdoors for cooking, heat or ambiance that burns charcoal briquettes, liquid fuel or gaseous fuel, and has a flame height that is less than 15 cm tall.

You can find more information on the open fire ban here:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/prevention/fire-bans-and-restrictions/coastal-fire-centre-bans#current>

Is there fuel + food in Tofino?

Supply chains have remained intact via the detour route. There is no shortage of fuel & food in Tofino. Visitors are encouraged to support local and shop in Tofino.





What Provincial Parks are closed due to the single lane alternating traffic?

MacMillan Provincial Park — the location of ancient trees in Cathedral Grove — and the picnic areas of Cameron Lake and Beaufort in Little Qualicum Falls will be closed to the public until the highway fully reopens.

What airlines Fly to Tofino?

Airlines have increased the frequency of flights to and from Tofino. These include:

[Pacific Coastal Airlines](#) (YVR South – YAZ Long Beach)

[Harbour Air Seaplanes](#) (between Vancouver Harbour and Richmond and Tofino)

[Tofino Air.](#)

[Atleo River Air Service](#)

Will the detour route remain open?

An alternate detour will remain in place. Find up to date detour information here: <https://www.tranbc.ca/current-travel-advisories>.

If you choose to travel the detour route, be sure to have a full tank of gas, extra water, food, a spare tire and sleeping supplies in your vehicle. There are no gas stations or washroom facilities (save for 1-2 temporary, portable toilets) along the detour. Ensure your headlights are on for the entirety of the detour as it can get very dusty, reducing visibility. This route extends travel by up to four hours and includes difficult driving conditions. <https://www.tranbc.ca/current-travel-advisories>

Convoys for commercial vehicles on the detour route leave Westbound from Lake Cowichan at 5am and 3pm and Eastbound from Port Alberni at 10 am and 8pm. Other drivers will be placed behind the convoys.

For those with rental cars – it is up to the individual rental car franchisee to make the decision as to whether cars can be driven on the detour route. Those with rental vehicles should be in touch with their rental agency.

Is there a detour around Horne Lake as seen on Google?

There is no detour route around Horne Lake. This road is not appropriate for general traffic. It is a narrow, winding road with grades steeper than the designated detour route. The Horne Lake Road gates are closed with security posted. The current detour route was identified as the safest and most appropriate link for people who require essential travel in this area.

I have a rental car – can I still drive on the detour forestry road?





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