

## **SQUAMISH HIKING – Updates posted June 18th, 2020**

### **Hike 3 – Howe Sound Crest Trail**

From the BC Parks website: Access to the Northern end of the Howe Sound Crest Trail has changed. From the Porteau Road Parking Lot (Deeks Lake Access), follow the posted signage leading downhill to the trailhead immediately next to the highway exit. Be advised that this route transits private land, and park visitors may pass through at their own risk. Note that if you do this hike from south to north, a **free day pass** is required to start. This pass may be obtained at 6:00 am on the day of the hike from the BC Parks website. This requirement is in place during peak season (summer), likely ending after the Thanksgiving weekend. If you hike the trail from north to south, no pass is required.

### **Hike 6 – Unnecessary Mountain**

There is a new trailhead sign on the road that is very obvious. You no longer have to worry about an “inconspicuous” entrance. Also, there is a well-traveled trail that breaks right off *Unnecessary Mountain Trail* at about 360 m elevation. This is *Erin Moore Trail/Lone Tree Creek Trail*. Stay left at this junction to ascend toward Unnecessary Mountain.

### **Hike 10 – Tunnel Bluff Lookout**

A new restriction is in place that limits parking in the viewpoint lot on Highway 99 to 30 minutes. So, if you want to Hike the Tunnel Bluff trail, you’ll need to find place to park in Lion’s Bay and walk (or bike) to the trailhead along the highway, which is a lengthy approach.

### **Hike 13 – Deeks Lake**

From the BC Parks website: Access to the Northern end of the Howe Sound Crest Trail has changed. From the Porteau Road Parking Lot (Deeks Lake Access), follow the posted signage leading downhill to the trailhead immediately next to the highway exit. Be advised that this route transits private land, and park visitors may pass through at their own risk.

### **Hike 17 – Capilano Mountain**

The map for this hike, as seen on page 92–93 of the guidebook, is somewhat misleading. It shows a road crossing Furry Creek, roughly between kilometre number 6 on the north side and kilometre number 7 on the south side. There is indeed a road on the north side of the creek that leads down to a small dam on the water, but there is no way to cross the creek. And if there was ever a road on the south side of the creek leading up to kilometre number 7, it’s long overgrown. Rest assured, the best way to do this hike is exactly as it’s described in the guidebook. Don’t experiment by trying to approach from the north side of Furry Creek.

Also, the small spur roads shown at 2.3 and 3.4 km that drop off the Furry Creek FSR are completely blocked now. There’s no way down from the Furry Creek FSR to cross Furry Creek.

### **Hike 20 – Petgill Lake**

The map on page 107 shows a “brushy spur” coming off Skyline Ridge hike on Sea to Sky Gondola. This goes all the way to Petgill Lake and saw a bit of love by members of the Squamish Trails Society in 2016. The trail is now easy to follow, but remains somewhat brushy since it follows an alder-choked logging road. It is, however, an interesting way to reach Petgill

Lake that requires little to no ascending. If you choose this option, it's best to leave a vehicle at Murrin Park and descend via *Petgill Lake Trail*.

### **Hike 22 – The Papoose**

Some have commented that the trail is steeper than described. It may not be appropriate for young children.

### **Hike 24 – Sea to Summit Trail**

The language around dog use on the gondola trails is inaccurate in the guidebook. The following text is taken directly from Sea to Sky Gondola's website: "Dog owners can hike to the summit via the Sea to Summit Trail network and then download with their dog on the gondola. Dogs are required to be on a leash at all times. Dogs are not allowed on any other Sea to Sky Gondola trails, bridges or viewing platforms. However, they can visit the backcountry trails." Also, since the Sea to Summit Trail is accessed off the Chief Peaks Trail, a **free day pass** is required to do this hike. This pass may be obtained at 6:00 am on the day of the hike from the BC Parks website. This requirement is in place during peak season (summer), likely ending after the Thanksgiving weekend.

### **Hike 25 – Evac Trail (new version)**

The line of this hike has changed since the publication of the guidebook, a result of the vandalism that has occurred on the gondola line. Although the new route is a work in progress, here's a rough outline: Start as before, at the wooden fence blockade on the connector trail that leads to the Shannon Falls parking lot. Head up the old Evac trail (unmarked) until a "closed" sign directs you right. Continue up to a fixed rope on a rock face, which is a rather dangerous feature but possible to bypass via a steep, slippery trail in the bushes on the right. Once above, continue up to intersect the Sea to Summit Trail. Follow this trail uphill for about 3-5 minutes until it snakes beneath a couple of giant old-growth logs (blowdown). Where a series of prominent arrows direct you right on the Sea to Summit Trail, turn left on a faint, poorly marked trail. Intermittent blue, orange and yellow flags now mark a route that weaves uphill, eventually sharing a significant portion of the old Evac Trail. Avoid heading up any sections marked with a closed sign; use the alternatives instead. Currently, the variations are new and rough, but should become easier to follow as time goes by. The new route makes a final merge with the old Evac Trail a couple minutes downhill of Wrinkle Rock. From this point forward, the route to the top is the same as before.

### **Hike 28 – Sky Pilot to Mt Habrich Loop**

When following the route described in the guidebook, I've been told that some hikers are missing the handline descent into the gully just prior to reaching the "Brain". Instead, they are following a well-defined trail which leads directly to the base of the Brain and a very steep rock wall with a rope fixed in place. Ascending this fixed rope leads to very dangerous and exposed fifth-class rock climbing terrain, which gains the top of the Brain. This is *not* the route described in the book. Look for the descent into the wide gully right (east) of the base of the Brain to stay on route.

### **Hikes 33–35, Chief Peak Trails**

These three trails as approached from the provincial park campground currently require a **free day pass**. This pass may be obtained at 6:00 am on the day of the hike from the BC Parks website. This requirement is in place during peak season (summer), likely ending after the Thanksgiving weekend.). Check the BC Parks website for updates.

### **Hike 39 – Watersprite Lake**

Dogs are being discouraged on this hike. Please keep in mind that the lake and streams are everyone's drinking water. Also, the BCMC cabin is locked and is for the exclusive use of paying guests only. Bookings may be made at the BCMC Web site.

### **Hike 40 – Seed Peak**

An update as of November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019: Recent logging and road building activity around the Seed Peak trailhead has resulted in the entire road approach being improved significantly. The road has been widened (no alder) and all the washouts have been repaired. It's currently possible to drive all the way to the trailhead in most types of 4WD/AWD vehicles. Also, the new logging activity has **altered the hiking route**. Although it's still possible to start the hike in the same location as before, the trail now crosses the new logging road twice, which may create confusion and difficulty in route finding. So, the best option is to use this new road to approach. Upon arriving at the original Seed Peak parking/trailhead (visible as a brushy spur on the right at about 1280 m), keep left on the new road and continue driving uphill. After two major switchbacks, you should be able to park at around 1410 m. From here, simply walk uphill into the forest left of the road and you'll quickly intersect the old trail just below 1420 m (the trail is faint so watch carefully). Turn right and follow it on toward Seed Peak. Bear in mind, this area was an active logging zone at the time of this writing. Access will likely be denied mid-week and the extent of the cut blocks or accuracy of this description may change in the coming months. If you have updates, please get in touch.

### **Hike 45 – Estuary Trails**

The final sentences in paragraph one for *Swan Walk* indicate the trail reaches a road and a “No Trespassing” sign. This road has been decommissioned and is now trail-like, and the sign is gone. To find *Forest Loop Trail*, watch carefully for a trail that goes into the trees on the left once on the decommissioned road.

### **Hike 46 – Echo Lake**

A debris slide during the winter of 2018–2019 changed the landscape at the start of this hike significantly and some recent trail work has impacted the accuracy of the original guidebook description. The following updates are worth noting before embarking on this hike:

The **put-in** location described in the book is no longer the best option. Instead, look for a well-defined trail that leads down to the river about 475 m along the spit road. The trail is just right of a small channel that flows beneath the road and is easy to spot. The **take-out** for the Echo Lake trail is only 175 m downstream on the far bank, so start crossing the river as soon as possible to avoid paddling back upstream. The “forested island” mentioned in the guidebook description still exists, but no longer has a water channel on the far (west) side, so it's no longer an island. Instead, simply look for a forest of alder trees set out from the west side of the river. Also, the “log pilings” no longer exist, either. However, the take-out is in the same location (N49.71390°

W123.17355°), just south of the tip of the “forested island”. Land just south of the “island” and just upstream of a small creek flowing into the Squamish River and you’ll easily find it.

Once in the trees on the far side of the river, walk a short distance upstream (10–20 m) and then head straight back toward the mountains following an obvious, open gravel debris fan that flowed through the forest. The walking is easy and after 50 m or so, watch for dull orange blazes on a couple of trees that mark the start of the defined hiking trail. The most popular way to reach Echo Lake is to follow the waterfall (Monmouth Creek) trail, so keep left at any junctions (all are well signed). This waterfall trail leads to some amazing viewpoints, but is rugged, steep and exposed in places. It’s very strenuous and not to be taken lightly. Dogs would be inappropriate and parents with very capable children should still keep them very close since real dangers, such as falling into the creek, exist in numerous locations.

A **new descent trail** has been constructed from Echo Lake all the way to the Squamish River and is highly recommended. Descending the waterfall trail is not only dangerous but increases erosion on an already highly-impacted trail. The new descent trail takes a wonderful traversing and switch-backing line through a beautiful, open forest and is very easy on the knees. There is a short, well-signed connector trail just above the top of the waterfalls if you don’t plan on going all the way to the lake. So, either way, you can hike a loop by ascending the waterfall-creek trail and then descending the new trail back to the river.

Finally, try to time your hike so you are crossing the river at **high tide** when you return. A high tide reduces the strength of the downstream current and helps cover the numerous gravel bars. Although it’s possible to cross at low tide, high tide is far easier.

### **Hike 58 – Cheakamus Canyon**

The trailhead at the Cheakamus River is now properly signed and the walking surface all the way up to Highway 99 is now mostly packed gravel. So, the condition of the first half of this hike is better than described in the guidebook.

### **Hike 59 – Lake Lovely Water**

The most recent attempts to contact Patrick Lewis for a river crossing have failed. However, **Jay Bickwell** is offering a similar service: park on his property, get a shuttle to the trailhead and a ferry across the river for something like \$20 per person. Jay can be reached at 604-815-9647. Squamish River Jet is also an option for reaching the trailhead, but many opt to get a group together and fly in to the lake by helicopter, skipping the hike up altogether. A few companies offer this service. To book a night in the hut, go to [accvancouver.ca](http://accvancouver.ca) and click on Huts. Then click on bookings, scroll down to bottom and click on make a reservation. For questions, contact the new custodian, Anna Milino, at [mountainhutsbc@gmail.com](mailto:mountainhutsbc@gmail.com). Ron Royston is no longer the hut custodian and calling him won’t get you a reservation. The Tantalus Hut and adjacent campground is often full on weekends and holidays so it’s best to plan ahead. This has become a busy summer destination. Some **covid-19 restrictions** currently apply.

### **Hike 62 – Pokosha Creek**

The bridge over Pokosha Creek has washed out and is completely impassable by any kind of vehicle. The road to here is rocky, but not overly steep, so most vehicles with decent clearance

and traction should be able to drive to this point. From here, it's a 2 km hike and a 140 m elevation gain along the road and rough, left-hand spur to reach the four-wheel-drive parking spot described in the book.

### **Hike 63 – High Falls Creek**

There is a new trail that breaks left off the original trail around 140 m elevation. This branch rejoins the main trail around 290 m at the upper viewpoint of the falls. This trail bypasses the section of trail that traverses along the rim of the canyon and misses the best falls viewpoint, the one shown on the map. It's a safer hike and might be better if you need to descend this way for some reason, but it lacks the ambiance of the original route. Whatever you choose, make sure to stay vigilant for the unmarked junction on the way up, which is easy to miss.

There is another new trail that breaks left off the original trail around 500 m elevation. This leads up to a cut block before rejoining the original trail in the old growth forest below. If you take this new trail, you'll miss the final viewpoint off the slabs above High Falls Creek, which is a real pity. Keep your eyes peeled for this junction, since it's easy to stray left onto the new cut block trail. The two trails diverge on a small, mossy bench just after the final steep climb through the forest that leads to the rock slab viewpoint about the creek.

### **Hike 64 – Tricouni Meadows**

The road access for this hike has deteriorated since the publication of the book with a rather significant washout just past km 8.0 (1.0 km from the Branch 200 turn-off). For now, a serious, high-clearance 4x4 truck can get through, but all others will have to stop at km 8.0 and walk the remainder of the road. If you do make it through the washout, the last 0.5 km to the upper parking landing is even rockier than described in the book. Make sure you've got a spare tire and good jack if you attempt this section, but I recommend parking on one of the lower corners and walking. The only good news for road access to this hike is Branch 200 is in excellent shape as of summer 2018, so you'll have no problem making it to km 8.0.

For hiking, the alternate route shown on the map has received some chainsaw work recently and it is now easier to follow through the blowdown section. It's a viable option over the normal, muddy trail, but the initial bridge is gone so you'll have to wade the creek to start, which isn't bad if water levels are low. A nice loop hike can be created by hiking in this way and out via the normal, muddy trail.

### **Hikes 65–71 – Garibaldi Park**

The hikes in this park outlined in the guidebook currently require a **free day pass**. This pass may be obtained at 6:00 am on the day of the hike from the BC Parks website. This requirement is in place during peak season (summer), likely ending after the Thanksgiving weekend.). Those who book a campsite do not require a day pass – the campground reservation is sufficient. Check the BC Parks website for updates.

### **Hike 72 – Tricouni East**

A recent report came in (June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021) that **active road building** and logging is occurring near the 2WD parking area detailed in the guidebook. Be careful driving the roads since logging trucks are active and expect to park off the main FSR in order to keep it clear. I've also been

informed that the 4x4 road beyond the 2WD parking spot has become increasingly difficult to drive and overgrown with alder. It's best to come prepared to walk this section. Finally, I've been advised that a nice loop can be hiked by following a winter cat track off the final switchback on the approach road (around 1,380 m elevation) and into alpine meadows above, which can be followed to the lake and the trail described in the guidebook. I've not hiked this route so take this description with a grain of salt.

### **Hike 74 – Brew Lake – Mount Brew**

The bridge over Roe Creek (at km 5.9 in the guidebook directions) was **decommissioned** near the end of October, 2020. At this time, it is no longer possible to access Brew Lake from this side since Roe Creek isn't crossable without a bridge. The only way to access Brew Lake now is via the old route along the railroad, which isn't endorsed by CN Rail, or by the alternate Brew Creek approach outlined in the guidebook. This is the recommended approach, but is steeper and longer than the Roe Creek approach and is not nearly as friendly for winter conditions.

### **Hike 79 – Metal Dome**

The snowmobile cabin that's shown on the map on page 294 burned down. It's no longer there so don't use it as a reference point.

### **Hikes 80-82 – Callaghan Area**

I've been informed that the dirt road that accesses these hikes from the paved Callaghan Road gets gated at some point in October. If you plan to do a late season hike, it would be best to check with Callaghan Country ([www.callaghancountry.com](http://www.callaghancountry.com)) to see if it's open.

### **Hikes 81 – Conflict Lake – Ring Lake**

I've been informed that this area is within the Callaghan Conservancy, which means no camping is allowed. The wooden walkway over the creek that's mentioned in the final paragraph of the hiking text has been washed away. The creek is still crossable in low water by jumping from rock to rock, but expect difficulties in medium water, which could occur late on a summer day as the snow above melts. Early in the season the creek will likely be too high for a straightforward crossing due to run-off. Also, the ladder on the far side of the creek is falling into disrepair. It may not be usable much longer...

### **Hikes 82 – Hanging Lake**

The forest service road that accesses Madley Lake and the Hanging Lake trailhead has been **blocked** a few hundred metres after it leaves the Callaghan FSR by a local tour company. If you choose to continue, budget about 4 km of road travel to reach the trailhead described in the book.