

## Merritt Subdivision



Photo: GCCS

### Site Identification

**Nearest Community:**  
Merritt, B.C.

**Geocache Location:**  
N 49°53.383'  
W 120°54.171'

**Altitude:**  
849m

**Ownership:**  
Crown Land

**Accuracy:**  
3 meters

**Overall Difficulty:** 2.5

**Overall Terrain:** 3

### Access Information and Restrictions:

From Merritt take Hwy 5 to Coldwater Road approximately 31 km from the British Columbia Visitor Centre. Take Exit 256 onto Coldwater Road and follow for approx. 500m. At pullout walk across the road to the ATV trail.

### Parking Advice:

Pull off the Coldwater Road at  
N 49° 53.373' W 120°54.228'

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:

Gold Country Communities Society  
PO. Box 933  
Cache Creek, BC.,  
V0K 1H0

Tel: 1-877-453-9467  
email: [info@exploregoldcountry.com](mailto:info@exploregoldcountry.com)

For more site pages go to:  
[www.goldtrail.com](http://www.goldtrail.com)

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Although the Trans Canada Trail follows the Kettle Valley Railway (KVR) line from Princeton to Hope, a connecting railbed also connects Merritt to this trail network. The section of the KVR between Merritt and Brookmere was called the Merritt Subdivision and was a branch connector to the CPR. Work on the KVR began in 1910, with the goal of connecting Midway to Hope through the interior mountains. The entire line, including the Merritt Branch line was completed in 1915.

The Coquihalla line was frequently closed in winter and the Merritt Subdivision was sometimes utilized to allow trains to reroute through the CPR. This was a minor branch line for the overall business of the KVR until the Coquihalla Subdivision was closed by the CPR in 1959. Eighty percent of the rail traffic was rerouted to the main CPR line by 1961. By 1973 all trains west of Beavercreek had stopped running and by 1978 most of the rail lines were removed. The last train left Merritt in 1989 and in 1990 the tracks were being removed.

The 600 km of the KVR has become a destination for backcountry cycling. The rail-to-trail conversion has become a project of many groups, including the Trans Canada Trail Corporation, the B.C. Ministry of Forests, the Kettle Valley Corridor Project, the Canadian Rails to Greenways Network, the Rails to Trails Council of B.C., the Myra Canyon Trails Restoration Society, the B.C. Ministry of Parks, the Kettle Valley Heritage Society, and the communities, cycling clubs, and not-for-profit support groups along the route.

Although the Merritt Branch is less used, it is nevertheless a pleasant day of cycling, a journey of 47.3 km from Brookmere to Merritt. Most cyclists start at Brookmere (962m) to enjoy the net elevation loss heading north to

Merritt (562m). Brookmere was once a busy railway town, the junction of 3 lines. Now it is a quiet community with a few KVR building and some equipment. From Brookmere the track crosses three bridges on its way down to Brodie, sometimes known as the Loop. Brodie Station sat at the junction of the two lines. Visitors can visit Brodie by taking the Larson Hill exit. The track switches back and forth across the Coldwater River 7 times before going under the Coquihalla Highway avoiding the steep and narrow canyon walls. Beyond, the valley opens up.

At 18.6 km, the track arrives at Kingsvale Station. The old station is now a private residence, but there are still a few reminders of railway days to be seen. Beyond Kingsvale, the rail line sometimes crosses private property and gates and fences may be an issue, but cyclists can exit at road crossings to the Coldwater Road at numerous points. At 28.4 km, a station called Pine was the intersection of a small logging spur line to serve the Nicola Pine Mill, starting in the 1920's. At 32.2 km, the Glenwalker Station is now in the middle of farm land. At 32.6km the track enters the Coldwater Indian Reserve and exits at km 39.2. Cyclists can detour to the Coldwater Road. The last few kilometres cross on two more trusses, and then emerges onto Douglas Road at km 45.8. Another spur line connecting the Middlesboro Collieries came in at km 46.3.

The Merritt Subdivision line ends at Merritt Station. This was an important station connecting the coal supplies of the Nicola Valley to the KVR and the CPR through Kamloops.

Geocaching visitors can visit the train station display downtown or drive the Coldwater Road to see sections of the line. Dedicated geocachers may even wish to cycle the Merritt Subdivision from Brookmere to Merritt for a full day of history, exercise, and geocaching.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Langford, Dan and Sandra. *Cycling the Kettle Valley Railway*, Rocky Mountain Books, Calgary, 1994  
Obee, Bruce. *Trans Canada Trail – British Columbia*, Whitecap Books, North Vancouver, 2008  
Shewchuk, Murphy. *Coquihalla Country*, Sonotek, Merritt, 1990

#### **Coordinates**

Brookmere at 0.0 km: N 49°49.05' W 120°52.30'

Merritt Station at 47.3 km: N 50°06.506' W 120°47.363'