

## Mission Ridge Trail

### Site Identification

**Nearest Community:**

Lillooet, B.C.

**Geocache Location:**

N 50°45.787'

W 122°10.185'

**Altitude:**

2177m/7142ft

**Ownership:**

Crown Land

**Accuracy:**

4 meters

**Overall Difficulty: 5**

**Overall Terrain: 5**

**Access Information and**

**Restrictions:**

4x4 only. From Mile 0 Cairn drive north on Main Street and turn left onto Hwy 40. At the junction at the east end of Carpenter Reservoir (48 km from Cairn) turn left on to Mission Mountain Road, cross the dam and go through tunnel. At Mission Pass summit turn on to road marked 'No through Road/Dead End'. Go 5 km to junction of roads. Take road on the right. Approximately 3 km to trail head. Very challenging hike – long and steep. Wear appropriate footwear and hiking gear. Takes about 2 hours to reach cache.

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

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

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

For more site pages go to:  
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Photo: Wayne Robinson

Mission Ridge is named for an Oblate Mission that was founded in 1880 in the community of Shalath. Mission Mountain was the first 'official' name given in 1918 and the ridge was later described in a geological survey as overlooking Shalath and above Seton Lake. This vague description is thought to include three prominent peaks in the centre of the entire ridge. The name was then changed from 'Mountain' to 'Ridge' and now describes the approximately 13 km long ridge that begins with Mission Pass to the north and ends with Mount McLean to the south. The trail to the geocache on Mission Ridge is relatively short; it begins just below tree line and ends in the alpine. At the summit there are two geodesic domes. The domes are remnants of television and radio transmission units from the 1960's.

The drive to the trailhead is an adventure in itself. After navigating the narrow Bridge River Canyon, the driver must cross the Terzaghi dam, pass through a tunnel and ascend the steep, winding Mission pass road. The Terzaghi dam is the main diversion dam for the Bridge River Power Complex. The Bridge River has been dammed to create Carpenter Lake (Reservoir). Water enters two tunnels that have been bored through Mission Ridge. The water drops 410m into two power generating plants that empty into Seton Lake; this generates 480 megawatts of electrical power.

From the summit you can spot the communities of Seton Portage and Shalath. 'Shalath' is the St'at'imc name for Seton Lake which means, 'the lake'. You will notice that there are two lakes on either side, Seton to the south and Anderson to the north. Prior to the creation of the Bridge River power project, Seton Lake was said to be the clearer of the two lakes. Anderson is now the clearer of the two

due to the high concentration of glacial silt in the Bridge River water that now enters the lake. Both Seton and Anderson lakes are freshwater fjords and were once a singular body of water. Approximately 10,000 years ago a large landslide, originating from the Cayoosh Range, traveled down and separated the lake into two parts. It is thought that this slide created a large tsunami that breached the glacial moraine at the east end of Seton Lake, allowing the water of both lakes to flow into the Fraser river, via Cayoosh Creek.

During the gold rush, Seton and Anderson lakes were important steam boat routes used to transport people and goods. The section of land that separates the two bodies of water (the Portage) presented a barrier for boats and required people to portage from one lake to the other. This small 2 km section of land resulted in the creation of the first railway in British Columbia. Rail cars were pulled by mules along the tracks from Seton to Anderson lakes. The return trip from Anderson to Seton was powered by gravity.

### **Detailed Access Information:**

The geodesic domes are in poor repair and contain hazards including sharp metal, nails and broken glass – it is not advised to enter them.

The road from Mission Pass to the trailhead is extremely rough and steep. 4x4 and high clearance is absolutely necessary.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES**

“GeoBC: Mission Ridge” (Web) 2012. <http://apps.gov.bc.ca/pub/bcgnws/names/24303.html>

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“Wikipedia: Seton Portage, British Columbia” (Web) 2012. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seton\\_Portage,\\_British\\_Columbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seton_Portage,_British_Columbia)

“Wikipedia: Shalath, British Columbia” (Web) 2012. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shalath,\\_British\\_Columbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shalath,_British_Columbia)

“Wikipedia: Terzaghi Dam” (Web) 2012. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terzaghi\\_Dam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terzaghi_Dam)

### **Letterboxing Clues:**

From parking area walk up gravel ‘road’ due east 250m angle south east. Follow height of land to first geodome. Move to second geodome and travel 24 metres. Search the crevice.