

# GOLDEN EARS PROVINCIAL PARK

Trail Information as of  
October 10<sup>th</sup> 2015

Do not underestimate the mountainous wilderness of Golden Ears Provincial Park. The combination of rugged terrain and rapidly changing weather can make Golden Ears a difficult area to hike.

Take adequate clothing and the essential safety equipment as mountain weather is subject to sudden change. Plan ahead and be prepared. A turn in the weather, mistake in judgement, unexpected injury, equipment failure, or sudden nightfall can quickly change any recreational outing into a crisis.

Always leave a **TRIP PLAN** with a responsible party, family member or friend prior to an outdoor adventure. They can notify authorities if you don't return.

## PLEASE NOTE:

Golden Ears Park is a user maintained park. There is **NO** garbage removal service in the backcountry areas of the park. Please take along a garbage bag and carry out **ALL** trash that you generate.

Campfires are **PROHIBITED** in the backcountry of Golden Ears Provincial Park. Use a backpacking fuel stove for cooking!

Only camp in designated camping areas and use the pit toilets provided. Toilet paper is **NOT** supplied.

**CYCLING** is restricted to park roads, parking lots, the Alouette Mountain Fire Access Trail, the East Canyon Trail, the Menzies Trail, the Eric Dunning Trail and the North Beach Service Road.

Taking pets into the backcountry of Golden Ears Park, especially **DOGS** is not recommended, they can disturb other users, create wildlife issues and have the potential for problems with bears and cougars (for example, a bear can chase a dog back to the dog's owner). The popular backcountry areas of Alder Flats, Viewpoint Beach, Hikers Beach and Panorama Ridge are often not suitable for pets due to congestion on the trail and in camping areas.

## CAVEATS:

This trail information has been compiled from the best information found available. Safely entering the backcountry of Golden Ears Park requires appropriate skills, experience, level of fitness and preparation. This information is intended to assist with preparation rather than an aid to navigation

## WEST CANYON TRAIL

(5.7 km, estimated hiking time one-way 2hrs; estimated elevation change 250 m)

**CAUTION: Trail sections subject to flash floods during rain and storm events.**

The trail starts behind the West Canyon Parking Lot up to an old logging road that heads north. After three bridged creek crossings, the road makes a sharp left turn uphill at the Lower Falls Junction. It becomes a rough trail that swings into the Golden Ears Valley and ends at Alder Flats.

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
West Canyon Parking Lot to Lower Falls Junction	3.1 km	
Lower Falls Junction To Gold Creek Look – out	.5 km	
Lookout to Alder Flats & East Canyon Connector Junction	1.1 km	<b>CAUTION: Heavy rain &amp; storm events may make nearby creek crossing impassible. Use connector trail to East Canyon.</b>
Junction to Alder Flats & Golden Ears Trailhead	1 km	<b>CAUTION: Steep 100 m section up from junction muddy and slippery.</b>

## GOLDEN EARS TRAIL

(6.8 km, estimated hiking time one-way 5 hrs; estimated elevation change 1,200 m)

Follow the West Canyon Trail to Alder Flats. From Alder Flats, the Golden Ears Trail continues up a steep path to an old rail bed heading west. The rocky trail switchbacks north and then west again into a clearing and a set of rubble retaining wooden stairs. A rough single-track trail ascends dramatically to the crest of the east spur on Panorama Ridge; some parts requiring scrambling. Continue southwest along Panorama Ridge to the Emergency Shelter. After this point there is no marked trail to the summit of the North Ear.

**CAUTION:** The ascent of Golden Ears is a challenging two-day hike for all but the fittest and most experienced backcountry travellers. The route to the summit of the North Ear may involve crossing a permanent snowfield and requires proper mountaineering equipment due to the steep and icy terrain. Also due to the alpine environment, clouds can sweep in and obscure visibility. Use extreme caution and utilize navigation equipment. There is no permanent source of water past Alder Flats. Depending on the season, water can be melted from the snowfield that may remain in the northern shadow of the peak. Stay safe and treat or boil water backcountry water.

<b>TRAIL</b>	<b>Estimated Distance One-way (km)</b>	<b>Trail Safety Information</b>
Alder Flats to Lookout	.8 km	
Lookout to end of rocky rail bed and rubble retaining stairs	1.8 km	<b>CAUTION:</b> During ANY significant rainfall this section becomes a creekbed. Slippery rocks.
Rubble retaining Stairs to East Spur on Panorama Ridge	1.5 km	<b>CAUTION:</b> Very rugged and steep. Many exposed roots.
East Spur to Emergency Shelter	1.7 km	<b>CAUTION:</b> Exposed ridge sections.
Emergency Shelter To North Ear.	1 km	<b>CAUTION:</b> Exposed ridge. Route-finding skills required.

**NOTE: THE EMERGENCY SHELTER IS FOR EMERGENCY USE SITUATIONS ONLY. NO OVERNIGHT USE PERMITTED.**

## **LOWER FALLS TRAIL**

(2.8 km, estimated hiking time one-way 1 hr; elevation change minimal)

**CAUTION:** WATERFALLS ARE DANGEROUS! Each year, people fall or are swept to their deaths at waterfalls. Fast water, slippery rocks, unstable surfaces and the vertical heights are all hazards to be avoided.

For your safety, enjoy the falls from a safe viewing distance. Do not climb above or swim around the falls.

A very popular hike along the east bank of Gold Creek to the 10-metre high Lower Falls. The entrance to the trail can be seen immediately on the left after crossing the Bailey Bridge into the Gold Creek Parking Lot. Approximately halfway to the Falls, a spectacular view of the peaks up Evans Valley is revealed on the skyline above Gold Creek.

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
Trailhead to Lower Falls	2.8 km	<b>CAUTION:</b> High undercut bank between 1.5 km & 1.7 km. <b>STAY BACK</b> from edge as bank has potential for collapse.

## EAST CANYON TRAIL

(9.8 km, estimated hiking time one-way 4 hrs).

**CAUTION: Trail sections subject to flash floods during rain and storm events.**

The trail starts from the horse trailer parking area at the north-east end of the Gold Creek Parking Lot. Follow the trail to a logging road and head north. The rocky road runs parallel to Gold Creek. The trail leads to the Gold Creek Bridge, Viewpoint Beach and ends at Half Moon Beach. Shortly after passing Viewpoint Beach, the road ends and a rough, eroded single track trail continues through the floodplain.

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
East Canyon Parking Lot to Lower Falls Junction	2.8 km	
Junction to Gold Creek Bridge and West Canyon Connector	1.1 km	<b>CAUTION:</b> Prone to flooding during heavy storms. Creekbeds cut across road in several places.
Gold Creek Bridge to Viewpoint Beach	.6 km	

Viewpoint Beach to  
Half Moon Beach

5.3 km

**CLOSED** – Hazardous conditions, high water creek crossings & flooding trails may be damaged or impassible. Bridges over creeks at 6 km & 6.5 km are out.

## EAST / WEST CANYON CONNECTOR TRAIL

**'NEW'**

Follows the west bank of Gold Creek to a rebuilt trail (old railroad bed) that connects the west landing of Gold Creek Bridge to the 4.7 intersection of the West Canyon Trail.

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
West landing of Gold Creek Bridge to East/West Canyon junction at Alder Creek	.6 km	
Junction to West Canyon Trail @ 4.7 km	.4 km	

## HIKERS BEACH TRAIL

**'NEW'**

Trailhead is located at the junction of the East/West Canyon Connector at Alder Creek. Trail winds through second growth forest to Hikers Beach.

**CAUTION: NO bridge crossing at the swift flowing Alder Creek. Hazardous during rain and storm events that cause high water levels.**

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
East/West Canyon Connector junction at Alder Creek	0.0 km	

Junction to  
Hikers Beach

200 metres

## **ERIC DUNNING TRAIL**

(1.2 km, elevation change 200 m)

The trailhead is located approximately 200 m past the junction of Mike Lake Road and the Park Headquarters. Trail intersects with Incline and Switchback Trails.

<b>TRAIL</b>	<b>Estimated Distance One-way (km)</b>	<b>Trail Safety Information</b>
Trailhead to Junction of Switchback Trail & Incline Trail	1.2 km	

## **SWITCHBACK TRAIL**

Accessed by way of the Eric Dunning Trail and Incline Trail. Trail connects to the Alouette Mountain Fire Access Trail (AMFA)

<b>TRAIL</b>	<b>Estimated Distance One-way (km)</b>	<b>Trail Safety Information</b>
Intersects with Eric Dunning and Incline Trail	0.0 km	
Intersection to AMFA Trail	.5 km	

## **INCLINE TRAIL**

(1.2 km, elevation change 180 m)

The trailhead is located 150 m back along Mike Lake Road from the parking lot. This is a very steep trail climbing 180 m in just over 1 km. Used as a yarding route in the 1920's and 1930's by the Abernethy and Lougheed Logging Company to haul logs down to Mike Lake from the railhead above (Alouette Mountain Fire Access Road).

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
Trailhead to junction at end of Eric Dunning Trail.	.8 km	
Junction to Alouette Mountain Fire access road	.4 km	

## **ALOUETTE MOUNTAIN FIRE ACCESS (AMFA) TRAIL**

(7.9 km, elevation change 400 m)

The AMFA trail (fire access road) begins at the common upper junction of the Incline Trail and Switchback Trail. Once an old railroad bed, the AMFA Trail sweeps through recovering second growth forest on the lower south slope of Alouette Mountain. It ends at the emergency, helicopter, landing pad at the junction with the Alouette Mountain Trail.

**NOTE: When using the AMFA Trail to reach the Alouette Mountain Trail, the distance is reduced considerably by choosing the First Shortcut Trail to eliminate a wide sweeping road switchback. The Second Shortcut Trail does not reduce the distance but offers a pleasant winding path through a quiet forest.**

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
Intersection of AMFA With Incline Trail & Switchback Trail	0.0 km	
Intersection to Stephen Canning Memorial Lookout	5.7 km	
Lookout to Alouette Mountain Trailhead	2.2 km	

## ALOUETTE MOUNTAIN TRAIL

(4 km, elevation change 930 m)

The trailhead is accessed from the AMFA Trail (fire access road) at the emergency, helicopter landing pad. Turn left at the landing pad onto a rough, narrow trail. There is a short bit of awkward downhill travel before the trail turns north to wind up through majestic old growth forest to the subalpine of Alouette Mountain. There is a cairn and commemorative marker on the summit.

**CAUTION: Considerable lengthy sections of exposed roots that are slippery and difficult to manage.**

TRAIL	Estimated Distance One-way (km)	Trail Safety Information
Junction of AMFA Trail at emergency helicopter pad	0.0 km	
Summit of Alouette Mountain	4 km	