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Whistler-Blackcomb's Record Breaking Peak-to-Peak Gondola Well Underway: *First Three Months of Construction Focus on Preparation for Major Milestones Later This Summer*

WHISTLER, British Columbia: August 14, 2007 - Whistler Blackcomb has been making significant progress on construction of the Peak to Peak Gondola since ground-breaking 14 weeks ago. Major excavation of drive terminals, tower sites, form work and concrete pouring has been achieved. The ground work has been laid for major milestones such as the erections of tower's two and three this fall.

With the Peak to Peak construction underway there is a lot of excitement among the crew, says Rick Temple, Whistler Blackcomb's Peak to Peak project manager. From the people at Doppelmayr/Garaventa Group in Austria to the Whistler Blackcomb team on the ground, it takes a lot of people to make a project of this magnitude come together. It's been great to get in and get this project off the ground.

Deep snow presented a significant challenge at the onset; crews spent seven to ten days on each mountain clearing snow, up to six meters deep in sections, from the drive terminal and tower sites. Access roads to the drive terminals and tower sites were also cleared to accommodate material delivery. With the snow cleared, services such as electrical power, sewer, water and communication lines on both mountains needed to be rerouted before construction could begin.

Excavation at the drive terminals and tower sites on Whistler and Blackcomb has been the preliminary construction focus. Whistler's drive terminal, just outside the Roundhouse lodge has been excavated; form work has been completed and concrete has been poured. Detailed excavation around tower two on Whistler has occurred in preparation for footing installation.

On Blackcomb Mountain, 21,000 cubic metres of earth has been excavated from the drive terminal site. Earth and rock removed at the drive terminal site has been crushed and stored on-mountain for future use. Utilizing on-site crushing techniques eliminates the need to haul crushed gravel from the valley. Form work and concrete pouring has also taking place at the drive terminal site, and the concrete footing at tower three on Blackcomb Mountain will be complete today. Site preparation involving bulk and detailed excavation has also been accomplished at tower four on Blackcomb.

Behind the scenes, significant planning has focused on overcoming challenges that will be faced in the second phase of construction next summer. Coordinating the delivery of five, 100 tonne spools of track ropes (cable) and haul ropes has been a major focus. Transportation of the spools will be by boat from Europe to Squamish via the Panama Canal. From Squamish, the cable spools will travel by train to Whistler on special, heavy weight bearing cars. Once in Whistler, the cable spools will be moved one by one, up the mountain by specially designed transport trucks.

With on-mountain and behind-the-scene preparation well underway, tower two and three erection will be commencing in the fall of 2007. Delivery of the steel for the towers is scheduled for August 24. Taking four to five weeks each, the tubular lattice structures will be erected before phase one construction wraps in time for the winter season.

Being involved in a project of this magnitude is a once in a lifetime experience, say Temple. We've made some great headway this summer during phase one of construction. By the end of October we'll have progressed significantly, setting us up nicely to tackle phase two next spring.

Check out construction progress at <http://ww1.whistlerblackcomb.com/p2pg/webcam.html> and zoom in on your points of interest. Construction during phase one will continue through to the end of October. Phase two will begin spring 2008, with the opening slated for December 2008.

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