

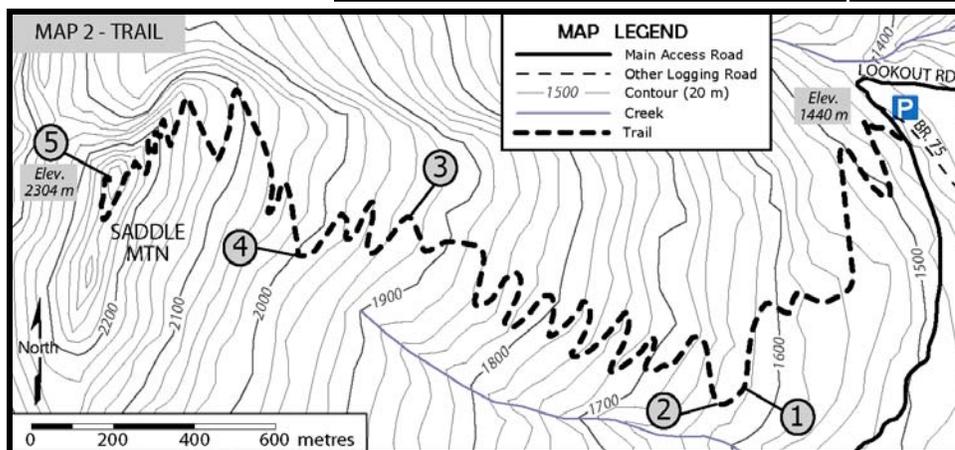
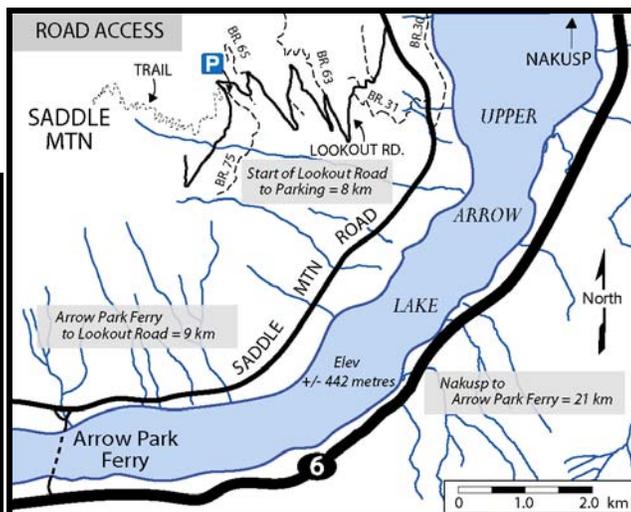
# Saddle Mountain Lookout Trail

**Rating:** moderate  
**Distance:** 5.3 km  
 one way  
**Time:** 5 hrs return  
**Surface:** dirt, rock  
**Modes:** hiking

Nakusp and Arrow Lake  
from the bluffs



© F. Swan



| Point | GPS                            | Description             |
|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| P     | 50° 9' 24" N<br>117° 52' 4" W  | Br 75 & Lookout Rd.     |
| ①     | 50° 9' 3" N<br>117° 52' 23" W  | Old helicopter pad      |
| ②     | 50° 9' 2" N<br>117° 52' 26" W  | Subalpine forest begins |
| ③     | 50° 9' 17" N<br>117° 53' 5" W  | Rock bluffs viewpoint   |
| ④     | 50° 9' 14" N<br>117° 53' 19" W | Old hunter's cabin      |
| ⑤     | 50° 9' 19" N<br>117° 53' 42" W | Saddle Mtn. Lookout     |

## Trail Description

The trail ascends Saddle Mountain to a rocky knob above the tree line. The knob was chosen as a Forest Service fire lookout because of the panoramic view of the surrounding peaks and valleys, also making it a fantastic alpine hike. The first part of the trail winds through moist, mature cedar/hemlock forests, typical of the area, which, with its substantial rainfall and fertile soils, is often called BC's interior rain forest. Under the tall trees' dense canopy, shade-loving plants flourish: mosses, Devil's club, thimbleberry, lady fern, foamflower, and ginger.

On approaching the old helicopter landing pad (GPS Point 1 on the map), more spruce and balsam trees indicate a transition to the subalpine zone (GPS Point 2). The underbrush also changes, with an abundance of wild rhododendron and huckleberry. The trail climbs to large rock bluffs (GPS Point 3) from which views of the valley far below and the destination Lookout high above are seen. From here, trees become smaller and more sparse until they cease growing completely below the Lookout.

Just over half-way to the top, there is an old cabin (GPS Point 4). From there, the final ascent criss-crosses the open meadows below the knob. Patches of stunted trees grow here and there; evidence of marmot, deer, grizzly and black bear abounds in the burrows, tree rubs, and digs in the ground. Near the knob at the top, the trail heads up the right-hand side of the slope. It becomes obscured by some large rocks near the top, leaving hikers to climb amongst the boulders to reach the bottom of the knob, where the trail again becomes obvious as it crosses in front of the knob.

From the bottom, left-hand side of the knob, a short path leads up a steep slope to the Lookout. The views are spectacular here in all directions and scrambling the last few feet to the top is well worth it. The Monashee Mountains stretch out on the west side of Arrow Lake and the Selkirks on the east. Mosquito Lake is nestled in the hills to the northwest, while Whatshan Lake peaks from its valley to the south west.

Check out the features of the Lookout, including the giant compass inside and the names of past fire lookout scouts carved into the stone, dating back to the 1930's (see if you can find the backwards N). Enjoy the vista and feel the history before beginning your descent.

## Access:

From Nakusp, travel southwest on Highway 6 toward Burton for 21 kms. Take the Arrow Park cable ferry across the lake, making note of return crossing times. Turn right and follow the good 2wd Saddle Mountain Road for 9 km. Turn left onto Lookout Road, marked with a brown, wooden signpost, and follow the rough 2wd road for 8 km to the Branch 75 fork (GPS P). Park to the side, as the road is well used. The trailhead is 20m further up the road.

## Modes of Use

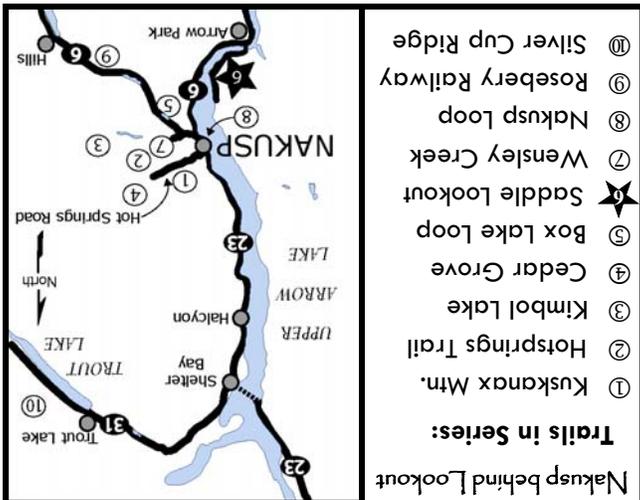
Saddle Mountain Lookout is an alpine hiking trail suitable for summer travel when the snowpack is diminished. Although adventurers have trekked up with snow touring gear, this requires extensive knowledge of back country travel.

## Past and Future

Beginning in 1923, fire scouts periodically manned Saddle Mtn. Lookout tower, keeping a lonely summer watch for forest fires. Once satellites usurped the task, the Forest Service established hiking trails to some historic Lookouts.

## If You Liked This Hike

Summer alpine ascents include Silver Cup Ridge, near Trout Lake, and Idaho Peak Lookout, near Sandon. Lower elevation day hikes, accessible in spring, summer and fall, include Nakusp Hotsprings, Rosebery Railbed and Kimbol Lake Trails.



- Trails in Series:**
- ① Kuskana Mtn.
  - ② Hotsprings Trail
  - ③ Kimbol Lake
  - ④ Cedar Grove
  - ⑤ Box Lake Loop
  - ⑥ Saddle Lookout
  - ⑦ Wensley Creek
  - ⑧ Nakusp Loop
  - ⑨ Rosebery Railway
  - ⑩ Silver Cup Ridge



**General Information**  
 Be prepared for hiking. Even if your journey is a short one, you should have:

- solid walking shoes or boots
- water and nutritious food
- first aid supplies
- comfortable clothing – loose layers with rain gear

**In the backcountry, prepare for the unexpected:**

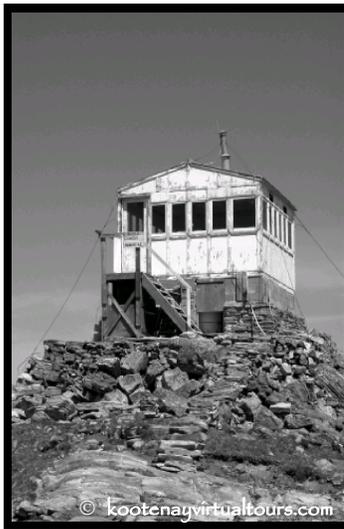
- tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return
- bring emergency supplies eg. warm clothes, extra food & water, matches, knife, compass, map
- make noise to alert wildlife to your presence eg. sing, whistle, clap

Trails are shared by many and maintained by few, so follow trail etiquette:

- keep to the designated trails
- take only pictures; leave only footprints
- foot traffic yields to horses, bikes and motorized traffic (only use on trails allowing motors)
- travel in pairs or groups, and keep kids in sight at all times
- keep pets under control; be aware they may pose a hazard with backcountry wildlife

~Detailed information on the inside ~

*This brochure is informational only. Trail users assume all responsibility for personal injury or damage to equipment.*



Saddle Mtn. Lookout

\* All brochures in the Trails of Nakusp series are available online at : [www.nakusparrowlakes.com](http://www.nakusparrowlakes.com)

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**Credits:**

The Trails of Nakusp brochure series was produced for the Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce, by

Hailstorm Ridge Environmental Services & Kootenay Virtual Tours, who jointly retain copyright. Project funding came from a 2003 Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives Grant.

Many thanks to True North Forestry Consulting Ltd., Pope & Talbot Ltd., Slocan Forest Products and the Ministry of Forests for their various contributions to the project.

Nakusp & District Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Centre, 92 - 6th Ave NW  
 Box 387, Nakusp, BC V0G 1R0  
[nakusp@telus.net](mailto:nakusp@telus.net)

Trails of Nakusp  
 Day Hikes  
 Summer  
**Saddle Mountain  
 Lookout Trail**



Hikers pause outside an old cabin en route to the Lookout.