

Juan de Fuca Cable – Directional Drilling

Directional Drilling and the Juan de Fuca Cable Project

The Juan de Fuca Cable Project would use a technique called directional drilling to minimize impact to sensitive nearshore habitat. The directional drill would bore a hole deep underneath the nearshore and intertidal zones, drilling through soil and/or bedrock. The drill exit could be up to 1 km offshore from the drilling site.

The use of directional drilling can also minimize impacts to archaeological or cultural resources. Geological and archaeological studies will be conducted to determine where any resources may be in relation to the directional drill. These studies are essential in order to design the drill path.

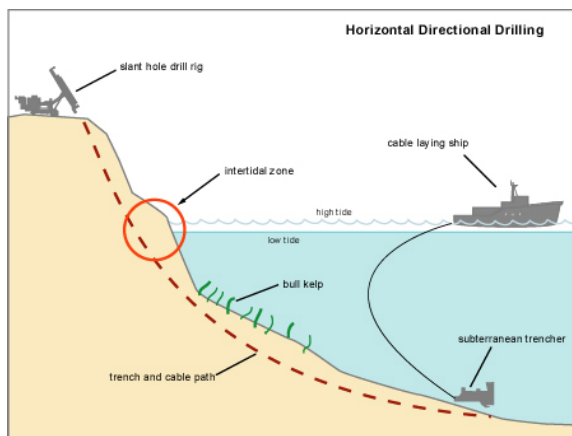


Diagram of Horizontal Directional Drilling

Background

Directional drilling uses a precision-guided directional system to bore a hole through soil or rock. Many underground utilities, such as water and sewer pipelines, and telecommunication lines are installed using directional drilling to avoid expensive or unacceptable impacts on surface resources, water, or infrastructure.

The technology and environmental management used in directional drilling have been designed to reduce environmental impact.

How is it performed?

The drill bit is steered along a pre-determined path using internal hydraulics and a computerized guidance system. The drilling equipment is mounted on a platform that can be located on a relatively small area of land.

The diameter of the hole made by the drill typically ranges from 20 to 50 cm. The cable can then be pulled up through the hole from the drill exit on the ocean floor.



Photo courtesy of the Crossing Company

The entire process can have a very small environmental footprint, limited only to the drill platform site, the borehole, and the drill exit area. This is largely a temporary footprint related to construction.

Noise suppressors have been used in the construction of similar projects, with positive results.

During construction, a qualified environmental monitor would be present to ensure environmental commitments made by Sea Breeze are met.

For more information, contact:

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