

# Case Study

## Maintaining Cliffwalk at Capilano Suspension Bridge Park

When Cap Bridge needed specialized help, Peak Access delivered a solution.



### Summary

Peak Access provided specialized maintenance services on one of the key attractions at the Capilano Suspension Bridge Park. Their rope technicians performed their work on schedule and on budget, as well as in a safe manner that caused no disruption to the visitor experience. The work included inspections, washing, and coating application, and the outcome was a visibly transformed and well-protected steel structure that met the Park's critical maintenance needs.

- IRATA Rope Access Technicians
- Conducted corrosion survey and applied corrosion protective coating
- Completed on time and on budget
- No disruption to daily operations



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## ►► The Client

Capilano Suspension Bridge Park is one of Vancouver's most popular tourist attractions, known for its natural beauty, famous bridge, and family-friendly activities. The Park receives about 1.2 million visitors annually. In addition to featuring one of the most spectacular suspension bridges in the world, originally built in 1889, the Park has added new attractions in recent years, including Treetops Adventures, a series of footbridges between old-growth fir trees, which opened in 2004; and finally, the Cliffwalk, a cantilevered walkway clinging to the granite cliff, hovering as high as thirty storeys above the canyon floor.

With tourist attractions like this that rely on daily visitors, servicing and maintaining the facilities needs to be done at the most opportune times and in the lowest impact way possible. As well, with facilities like this that feature such thrilling heights, safety for visitors and workers alike must be the highest priority. That's why, when Cap Bridge Park needed specialized help, they called Peak Access.

## ►► The Problem

Cliffwalk needed maintenance. During winter months, the platforms receive heavy salting to melt snow and ice in order to provide the utmost safety for visitors. However, the steel needed new corrosion protection.

Since it is a high priority for the Park not to disrupt the visitor's experience in any way, it is therefore important to schedule maintenance outside of the Park's daily hours of operation. As well, due to the unique placement of the structure on the side of a cliff, access is not possible via scaffolding or by any other traditional means like a lift from below.



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Challenges like this are not met without special knowledge and understanding, nor without special equipment, skills, and planning.

## ►► The Solution

Cap Bridge Park trusted Peak Access with the task and asked them to provide the necessary maintenance on Cliffwalk. In response, Peak Access proposed a work schedule that had no impact on the Park's bottom line: both in revenue and in visitor experience. In addition, Peak Access assured the Park that their team of technicians would operate as ghosts, going virtually unnoticed by Park staff and leveling as low of an impact as possible on site operations.

When the time came to do the work, the certified rope technicians from Peak Access came on site during off hours and set up their rigging and lighting equipment. First, they provided a thorough inspection and assessment of the steel structure, including a detailed corrosion survey. Second, they performed the necessary pressure washing and salt testing. Third, they prepared the steel to remove any corrosion and to ensure acceptable levels of salt content. Fourth, they applied the primer and topcoat of the specialized industrial coating. All work with coatings was performed under the watchful eye of a coatings inspector certified by the AMPP (Association for Materials Protection and Performance). These procedures were all carried out in such a manner as to ensure minimal noise levels, so that no one in the vicinity would not be disturbed during night hours.



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“The Cliffwalk project highlights our full scope of inspection, cleaning, environmental testing, steel preparation, and coating application,” said Ian Watson, Director of Peak Access. “Every aspect of the job was completed without any effect on the Park’s regular operations.”

## ► The Outcome

When Peak Access finished their work at Cliffwalk, the steel structure was visibly transformed—it looked brand new—and, more importantly, it was well protected and ready for many more years of safe use.

For the owners of Cap Bridge Park, Peak Access had provided a cost-effective solution to a critical maintenance need in a manner that incurred the lowest impact possible on operations.

*“The Cliffwalk looks amazing now,” said the Park’s Client Operations Manager. “Our ops team didn’t even know that Peak Access was here, until they saw what they had done! That’s a big deal for us, because our visitors don’t want to feel like they are on a construction site while maintenance is being completed.”*

For the team at Peak Access, it is well worth the effort to see another job well done, and another customer satisfied. “When we left the job at Cliffwalk, we not only felt good about finishing it on time and on budget,” said Watson, “but we left the structure well protected and looking sharp, and we left the sensitive rainforest environment unaffected—all of that matters to us.”



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