

CANADA'S TALLEST BRIDGE

Similkameen Ore Conveyor Bridge Canada's tallest bridge

The highest bridge ever built in Canada, the Similkameen Ore Conveyor bridge is actually the second of two high suspension bridges that were constructed to facilitate the massive Similco copper mining complex 10 miles (16 km) south of Princeton, British Columbia, Canada. The first crossing - a pipeline bridge for tailings, slurry and water - opened in 1972. The second bridge - with a large conveyor across it - opened in 1980 to carry copper ore over to the west side of the river. As much as 1600 tons of ore per hour can cross the main span of 1,325 feet (404 mtr). The ore is then processed inside of a huge building before it is loaded onto trucks headed out to nearby highway 3. The taller, west bridge tower has two unusually large wind stay truss supports that jut out from its base. The long conveyor is partially covered by a series of odd-looking corrugated enclosures - each with two "windows" punched into the sides. Buckland & Taylor Ltd. designed the bridge in a joint venture with Robert McLellan & Co. Ltd. The original pipeline bridge is located about half a mile (.8 km) north of the conveyor bridge and is of a similar design with a main span of 950 feet (290 mtrs). At 420 feet (128 meters), the Pipeline crossing is the second highest bridge in Canada. Costing just a million dollars, it was designed by Canadian Bechtel and constructed by the Dominion Bridge Company of Vancouver.

