

Victoria to Esquimalt Cable Replacement Project – Community Construction Report #16

August 2026

Prepared by Stephen Watson

Email: steve.watson@bchydro.com

Phone: 1-250-616-9888

Project website: www.bchydro.com/victoriatoesquimalt



Project status

- Esquimalt Substation: Ongoing substation work. Planning to have new bike path open at Hereward Road and E&N Trail by early fall.
- Banfield Park: Ongoing cable work. Reeling in new cable thru the conduits under the Gorge Waterway to Viaduct Park in September. Banfield Park restoration work to begin in October.
- Gorge Waterway marine work: Major project milestone of the successful sinking of the conduits in the Gorge Waterway on August 21. Completion of trench filling in September, and restoration of foreshore areas into the fall. Planting of vegetation in the foreshore areas in spring 2027.
- Viaduct Park: Ongoing cable work. Viaduct Park restoration work to begin in late October. Plan to have improved bike trail from the Galloping Goose Regional Trail up to Gorge Road in place in December 2026. All vegetation plantings by spring 2027.
- Horsey Substation: Planning to reel in cable from the concrete vault off Topaz Avenue into the substation in September. Ongoing substation work.

Target is to bring the new cable into service in November 2026.



August 21: Evening view of the successful sinking of the conduits into the marine trench. Only five days of the possible ten-day marine navigation closure was required.

Construction photos: Esquimalt Substation

August 19: Equipment (three potheads) transitioning the underground cables to overhead and into the wider BC Hydro power grid.



New bike path: Hereward Road to E&N Trail

August 26: Work on a new 2-metre-wide bike path that will connect the E&N Trail to Hereward Road. The pathway will be paved with asphalt. Inset diagram shows the draft pathway connecting to Hereward Road with that work being done in September or October. BC Hydro and the City of Victoria will develop a use agreement as the trail is almost all on BC Hydro substation lands, including the land where the trail turns to connect to Hereward Road.

The new bike trail, at BC Hydro's cost, was put in place as a community benefit to replace a now closed informal and narrow dirt trail that connected the E&N Trail to Hereward Road.



Construction photos: Banfield Park

August 5: Sediment and rock removal work for the marine trench in preparation of the conduit placement on August 17.



Construction photos: Banfield Park

August 11: Breaking out the last section of rock for the concrete anchor block placement to hold the cables in place. The two boats are environmental monitors.



Construction photos: Viaduct Park

August 5: Trench excavation and measurement.



Construction photos: Viaduct Park

August 5: Removing material for the trench in the upper slope area and under Galloping Goose Regional Trail.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 6: Moving in a 440-metre-long section under the Selkirk Trestle from the docks off Harbour Road. Two sections were moved in advance of the marine closure that started August 17. The third and final section was moved in on August 11. This was done to increase efficiencies at the site and remove potential marine closure delay risk.



Construction photos: Viaduct Park

August 11: Completed trench shown at a lower tide and the cable conduit getting prepared to be placed into the trench.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 17: The third 220-metre-long section of conduit is moved into place on the Banfield Park side and attached to the 440-metre-long section, and combined, the conduits floated above the water surface from foreshore to foreshore and blocked marine navigation.



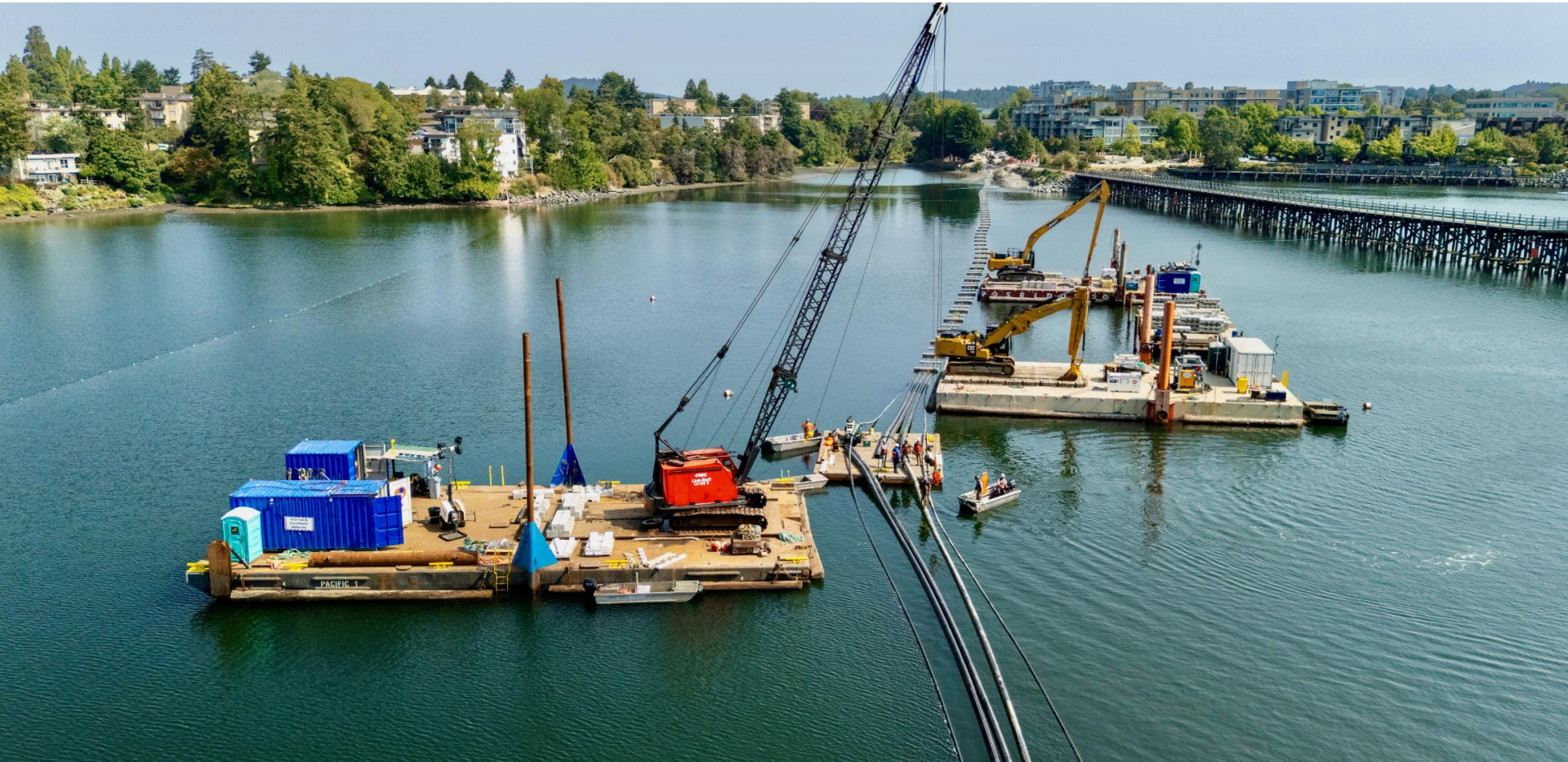
Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 17: Floating conduits by Viaduct Park. Plastic spacers alternative with concrete anchor blocks.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 17: Cranes and equipment connect the five conduits together – three for the power cables and two for fibre-optic communication cables.



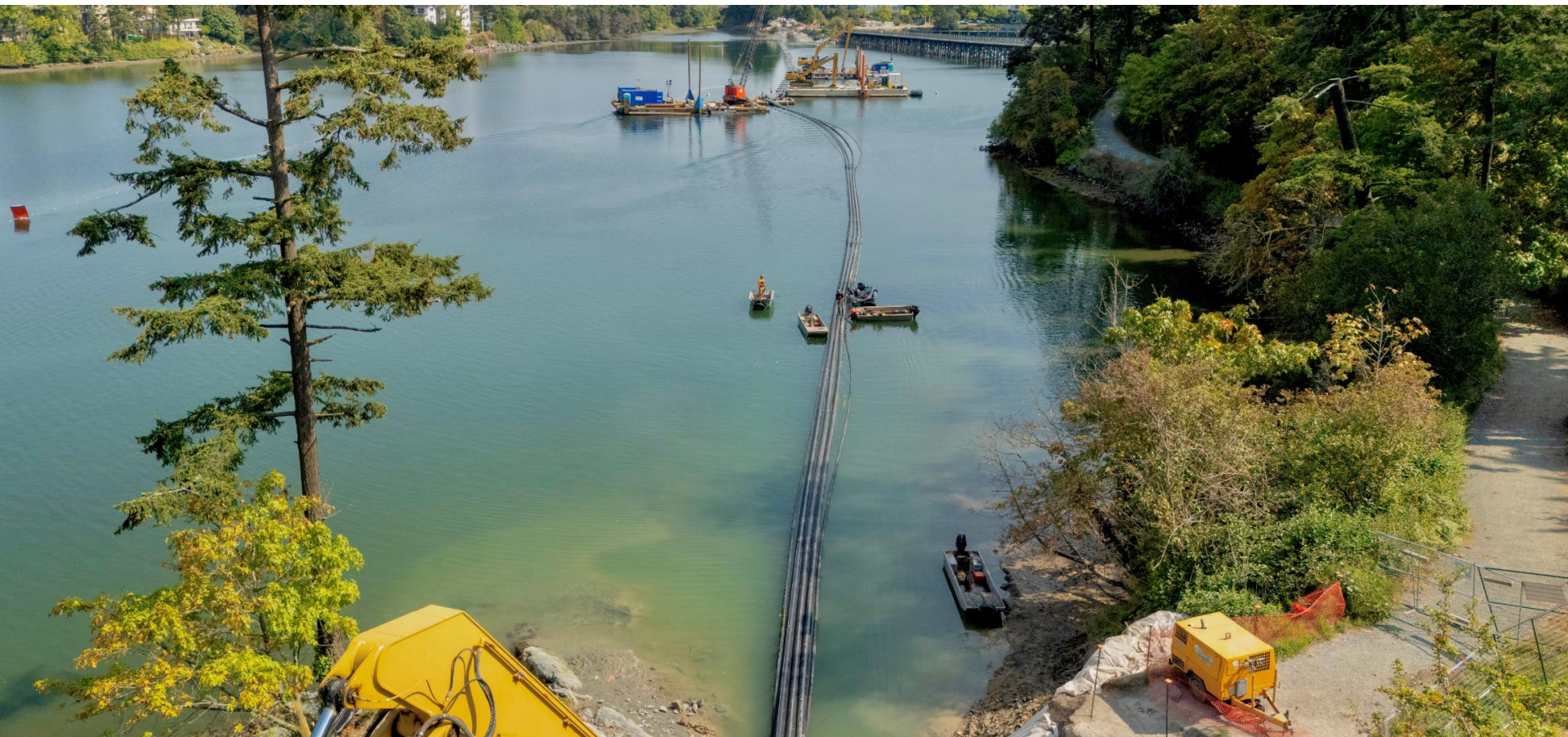
Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 17: Closer view of the fusing work.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 17: Floating conduits by Banfield Park. Signs and floating buoys/ropes/barriers were placed on both sides of the work area, including a pilot boat, to warn marine users of the navigation closure. Numerous project updates were issued to water recreation users.



Construction photos: Banfield Park

August 19: Installed plastic spacers and concrete anchor blocks attached to the last conduit section via a moving barge.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Conduit sinking began in the morning. Water was slowly added while air was released from the conduits thru valves to maintain equilibrium and allow the conduits to slowly sink from Viaduct Park towards Banfield Park.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Surveyors, divers, excavators, boats, and other people and equipment worked in tandem, in combination with crews adjusting the water filling and air releases, to ensure the conduits landed exactly within the middle of the trench. Near the bottom, each concrete anchor block was shifted 5-10 cm in either direction as needed and then placed in the trench. This provided for a straight alignment from foreshore to foreshore.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Looking over Viaduct Park towards the conduit sinking work. Galloping Goose Regional Trail and Selkirk Trestle on the left.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Progress in the conduit sinking.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Diligently placing the conduits under the Gorge Waterway.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Good coordination with crews to carefully lower the conduits into the trench.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: From left to right, diver boat with an air line to a diver near the small boat. The diver coordinates with crews with a survey stick to ensure conduit placement is accurate while three boats and an excavator arm push the conduits left or right to ensure proper alignment after sinking.



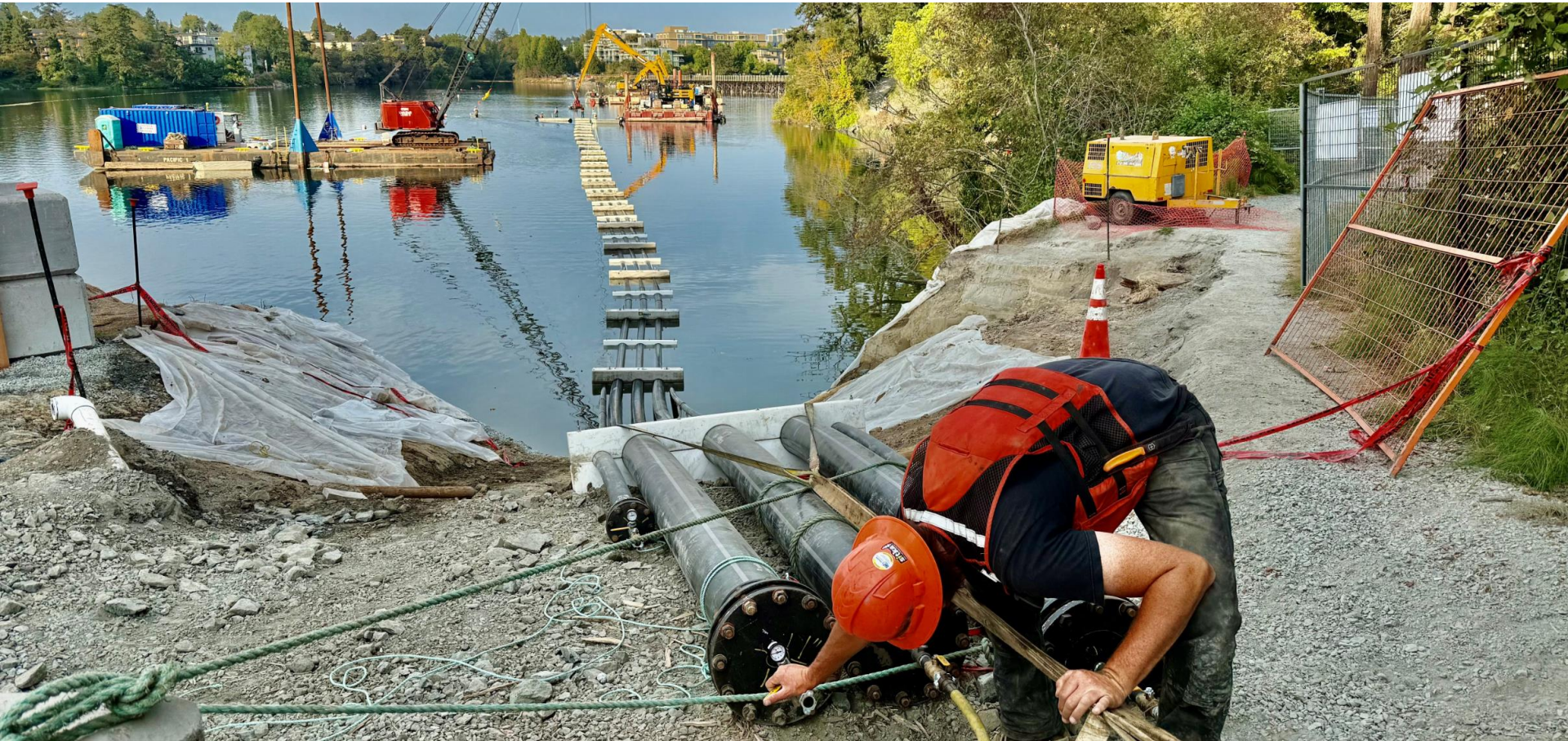
Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Another view of the same bird's-eye view from the previous page. Banfield Park in the background.



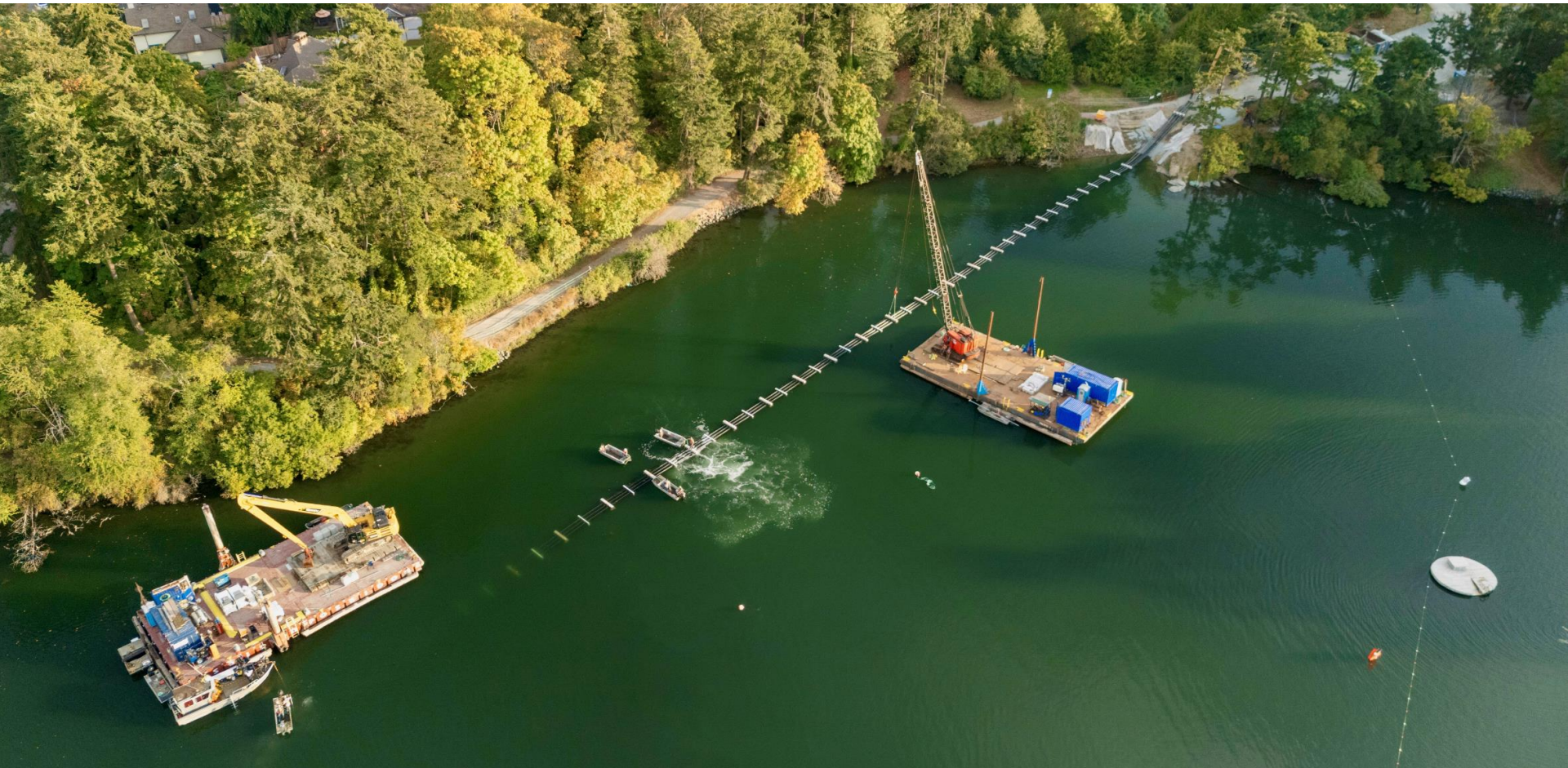
Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Adjusting the conduit air pressure on the Banfield Park side. It was an ongoing effort to adjust and ensure the conduits were balanced.



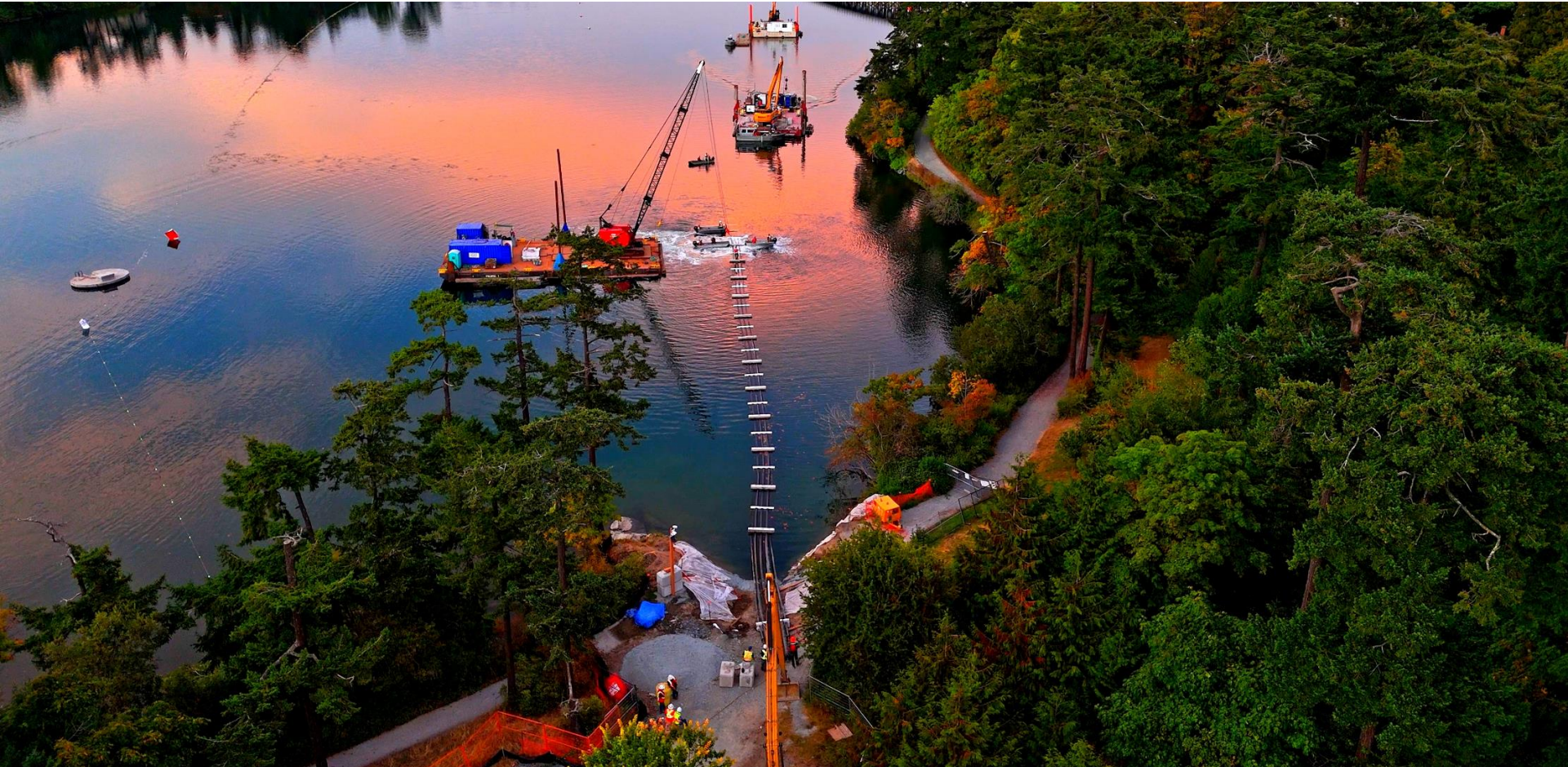
Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Progression in the conduit sinking as crews work towards Banfield Park.



Construction photos: Gorge Waterway

August 21: Work going into the evening. Incredible dusk coloured reflection off the water. The work was completed around 10:00 pm.



Construction photos: Banfield Park

August 26: Conduits within the Gorge Waterway. Testing of conduits were completed, with good results, and crews began to place material over the conduits and fill in the trench on August 27. The placement of material within the trench may take up to three weeks.



This is the approximate schedule of work for the marine trenching filling work:

- August 31-September 5 (off Friday-Saturday): start around 10:00 am and finish around 6:30 pm.
- September 7-13 (off Monday): start around 12:00 pm and finish around 9:30 pm.

Construction photos: Banfield Park

August 26: Crews preparing the concrete vault for the cable pulling, from Banfield Park to Viaduct Park, in September.

