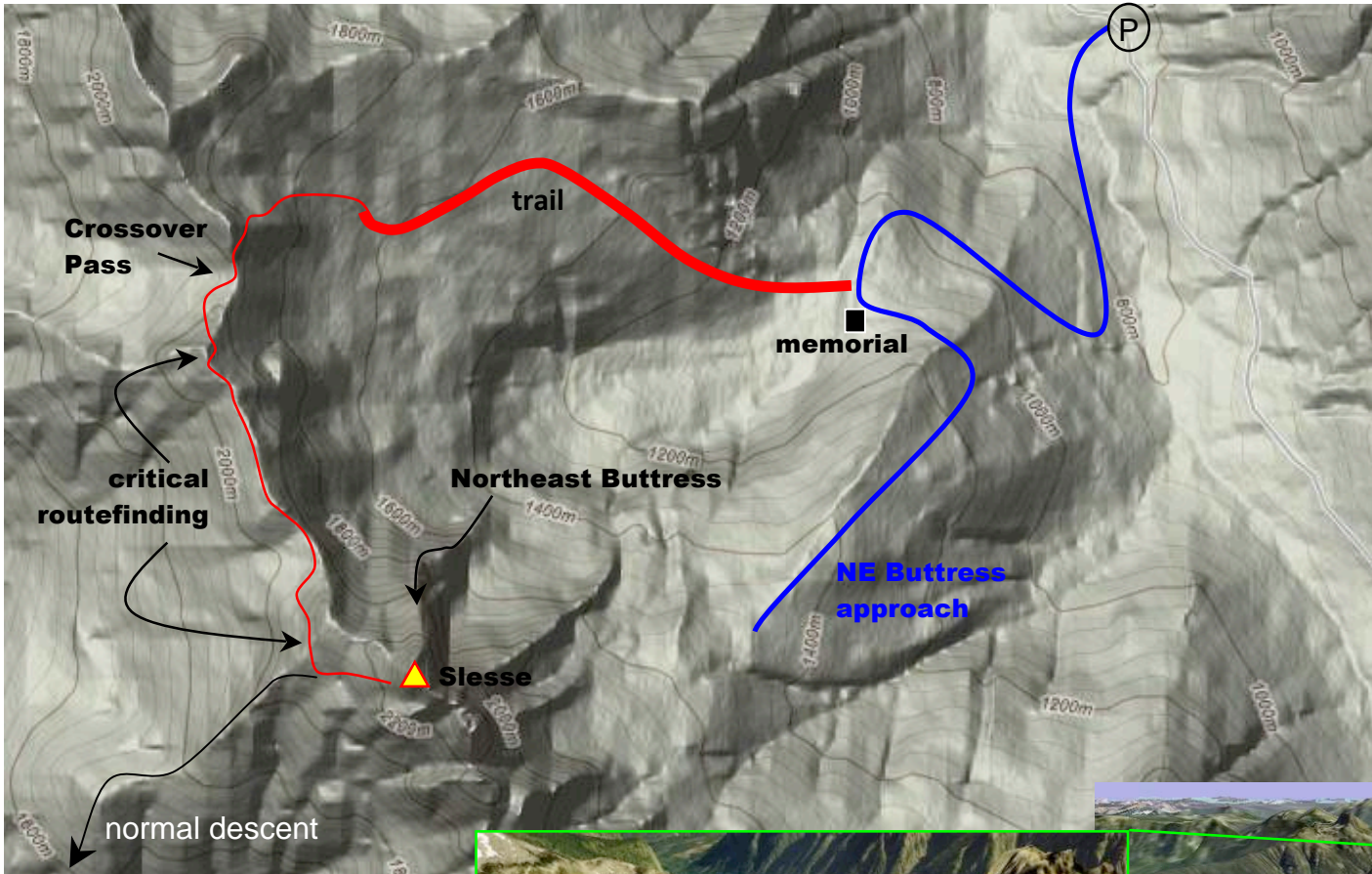


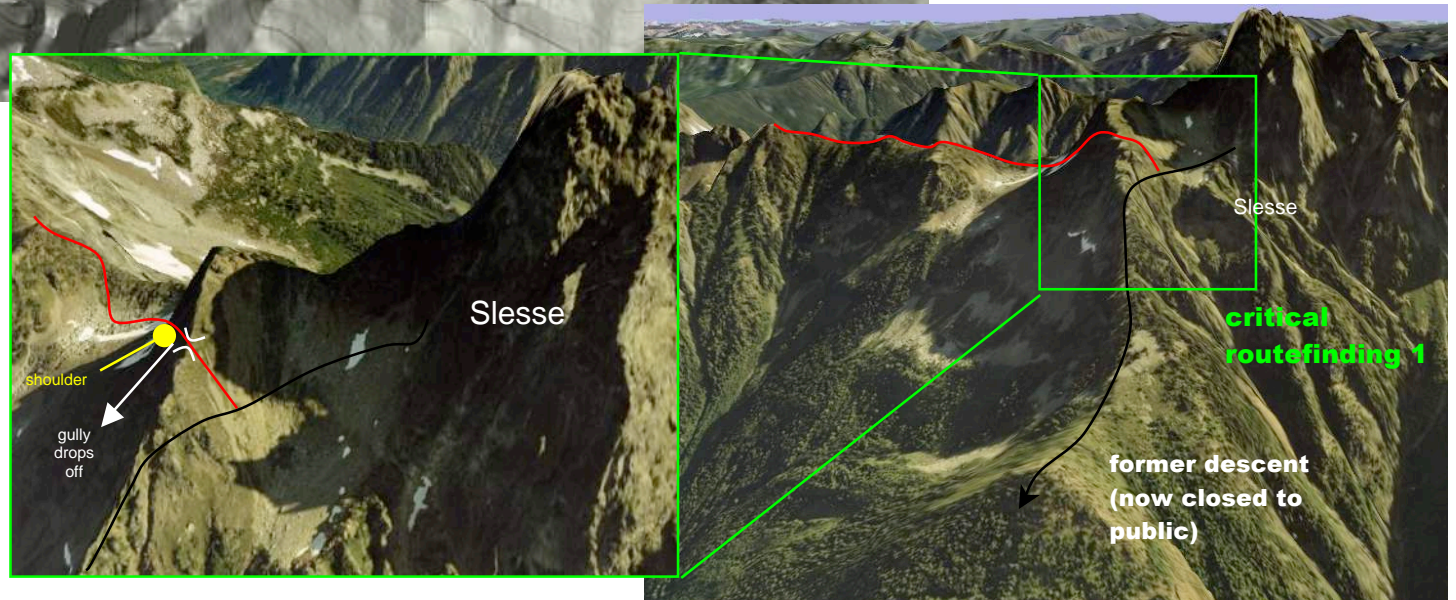
SLESSE
Crossover Pass Descent
 by Jeremy Frimer
 based on descent in Sept 08;
updated July 2010

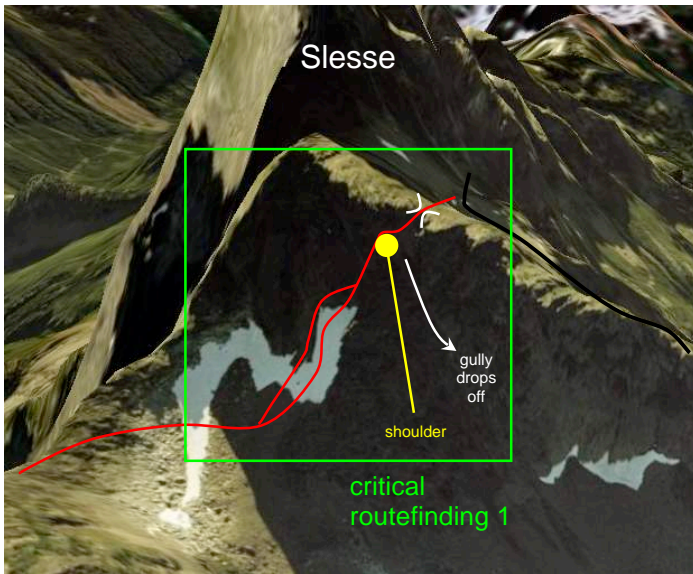
The Crossover Pass Descent gets you from the top of Slesse straight back to your car, thus avoiding 25km of roads. The Crossover descent has a reputation of being complex and sketchy. From my experience, the route is somewhat complex in 2 critical spots, but no sketchiness is involved. Aside from one rap (30m) at the second critical spot, the entire route is easy going, with only one or two 4th class spots. That said, good visibility (>500m) is recommended if you choose to give it a go. As of July 2010, a new trail leads from the Alpine back to the main trail.

Here is a detailed schematic of the descent (red line), along with descriptions of the critical spots.



After descending from Slesse's summit tower, follow the trail across a scree/meadow slope until nearly all the way across the slope, where the trail begins to turn almost straight downhill. Here begins *Critical Routefinding 1* (see green boxes). Leave the trail, hike 75m up to a small **col**. Cross the col, then cross the gully on the other side (it **drops off** below), over a **shoulder** on the gully's north side. Descend a gully (scree on the right, snow on the left) to level ground. And hike up to Crossover Ridge.





← Here's a look at *Critical Routefinding 1* from the north.

Next, walk easily and occasionally scramble along Crossover Ridge to near its end, at which point the difficulty and confusion crescendos. Here begins *Critical Routefinding 2*.

Check out the schematic at bottom left to see how to handle the end of the ridge.

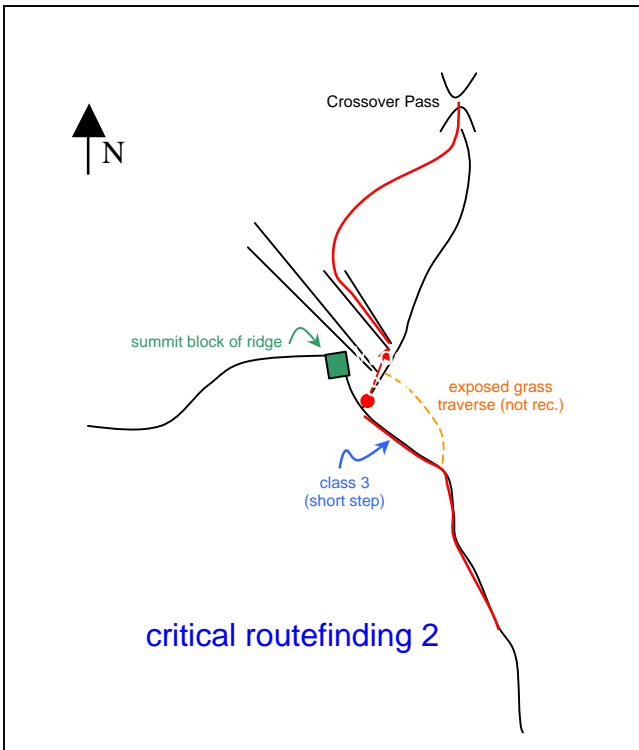
One option is to do a very **exposed sloping grass traverse**, which would negate the need for a rappel but (from what I hear and what I saw) is super sketchy.

Instead, scramble up or around a few short steps until you are just below the final summit block of the ridge (30m before the end). We downclimbed easy blocks (4th class) down along a shoulder for 5m where we rappelled (30m) off a solid block (black rappel sling), over the opposite side (toward the north). Aside from rappelling over some loose rock, the rap was easy and quick. The rap will leave you at the flat top of a gully directly below. Don't stop there. Continue rappelling into the next gully to the north. It's just a short bit more from the first gully but allows you to avoid some exposed and loose downclimbing. The second gully seems to be well-used by mountain goat and went without a hitch. By descending it, you will be leaving the Crossover Ridge crest, and entering the drainage on the opposite side as the car park. Never fret. Once down, it's an easy scree traverse to Crossover Pass.

From here, it's more or less a long walk all the way back to the car.

From Crossover Pass, stay on the ridge and ascend a little to below the Wooded Stump. Cross grass slopes to reach the very base of the summit headwall of the Wooded Stump, and follow the bench at its base for ~200m, descend a humpback ridge briefly (80m), then cross scree to a huge orange scree slope that leads to subalpine. Stay skier's left as you descend to find the Crossover Trail (big "F-off" cairns) →

Thanks to the efforts of volunteers with the Climbers' Access Society of BC (CASBC), the trail down to the memorial was improved dramatically in 2010. The trail is now easygoing and well marked (easy to follow in the dark).



It takes about 1 hour to get from the Alpine to the Slesse Memorial.
Estimated time required for entire descent from top of Slesse to the car: 4-5 hours.

