

# The Ultimate Guide to Traveling the Alaska Highway



## Visitor Centers:

**DAWSON CREEK:** 900 Alaska Ave., phone 1-866-645-3022

**DELTA JUNCTION:** 2885 Alaska Hwy., phone 907-895-5068

**FORT NELSON:** 5500 Alaska Hwy., phone 250-774-6400

**FORT ST. JOHN:** 9324 96 St., phone 1-877-785-6037

**HAINES JUNCTION:** 280 Alaska Hwy., phone 867-634-7207

**TOK:** 1314 Alaska Hwy., phone 907-883-5775

**WATSON LAKE:** 104 Robert Campbell Hwy., phone 867-536-7469

**WHITEHORSE:** 100 Hanson St., phone 1-800-661-0494

**DRY CREEK, AK (pop. 94)**  
Mile 1345, MP 1380, elev. 566 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -8°F, July 60°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 57 in.

**Visitor Center at 2885 Alaska Hwy.**

**BEAVER CREEK, YT (pop. 93)**  
Mile 1167, MP 1202, elev. 650 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -13°F, July 57°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 46 in.

**Visitor Center at 1314 Alaska Hwy.**

**ALCAN BORDER, AK (pop. 33)**  
Mile 1187, MP 1222, elev. 555 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -14°F, July 59°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 31 in.

**BURWASH LANDING, YT (pop. 72)**  
Mile 1061, MP 1093, elev. 806 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -5°F, July 56°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 42 in.

**HAINES JUNCTION, YT (pop. 824)**  
Mile 985, MP 1016, elev. 623 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -5°F, July 55°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 65 in.

**Visitor Center located at 280 Alaska Hwy.**

**WHITEHORSE, YT (pop. 26,418)**  
Mile 887, MP 918, elev. 706 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -14°F, July 57°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 57 in.

**Visitor Center at 100 Hanson St.**  
**Home of S.S. Klondike!**

**JOHNSTONS CROSSING, YT (pop. 15)**  
Mile 809, MP 836, elev. 735 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. 3°F, July 57°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 58 in.

**TESLIN, YT (pop. 122)**  
Mile 777, MP 804, elev. 682 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -7°F, July 57°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 66 in.

**WATSON LAKE, YT (pop. 790)**  
Mile 613, MP 635, elev. 687 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -11°F, July 59°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 91 in.

**Visitor Center located at 104 Robert Campbell Hwy.**  
**Home of the Northern Lights Centre, the only planetarium in North America featuring the myth and science of the Northern Lights!**  
**Home of Watson Lake Signpost Forest!**

**Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park is 130 miles SE!**



## Elevation Profile of the Alaska Highway From Dawson Creek to Delta Junction

↑ 14,848 m · ↓ 15,162 m

1,299 m

305 m

Map Designed by Aaron Jing

Width of the highway is varied based on elevation, which ranges from 305 to 1299 meters.

Basemap Courtesy of Natural Earth

Elevation Data Courtesy of plotaroute.com

Elevation Profile Courtesy of Google Maps

Projection: North America Equidistant Conic

Scale: 1:4,500,000

MP = milepost, which represents the original driving distance in 1947. Avg. temp. in Jan. 0°F, July 60°F

Tourism info, travel tips, and images courtesy of The Milepost.

See back for the history of the highway, courtesy of Wikipedia.

**DAWSON CREEK, BC (pop. 11,583)**

Mile 0, MP 0, elev. 666 m.

Avg. temp. in Jan. 0°F, July 60°F

Avg. annual snowfall 72 in.

**Visitor Center at 900 Alaska Ave.**

## DELTA JUNCTION, AK (pop. 984)

Mile 1387, MP 1422, elev. 360 m.  
Avg. temp. in Jan. -15°F, July 58°F  
Avg. annual snowfall 55 in.

**Visitor Center at 2885 Alaska Hwy.**

## TOP 5 TOURIST ATTRACTIONS:

**Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park:**

75100 Alaska Hwy., phone 250-776-7000

**Muncho Lake Provincial Park:**

Alaska Hwy. km. 681, phone 250-776-7000

**Northern Lights Centre (Watson Lake, YT):**

PO Box 590, phone 867-536-7827

**S.S. Klondike (Whitehorse, YT):**

10 Robert Service Way, phone 867-667-3910

**Watson Lake Signpost Forest:**

Alaska Hwy. Milepost 635, phone 867-536-8000

# YUKON



## Travel Tips and Information:

Today, the Alaska Highway is a 2-lane paved road that winds and rolls across the Northern wilderness. It runs through British Columbia, the Yukon Territory, and Alaska. The best advice is to take your time, always drive with headlights on (it's the law in Canada), use turnouts, watch for wildlife on the road, keep to the right on hills and corners, and drive defensively. Be alert for bumps, dips, potholes, and abrupt changes in highway surfacing. Watch for construction crews and pay attention to speed limits, particularly through small communities along the highway. It's always a good idea to fill up the gas tank whenever it's less than half full, as the next open station may be 100-200 miles away. Additionally, be mindful of the fact that there are long stretches of highway without cell phone service. Also note that Canada and the US use 2 different currencies, and that you will be traveling across 3 time zones. The British Columbia portion of the highway uses Mountain Standard Time, and does not observe daylight saving time. The Yukon Territory uses Pacific time, and Alaska uses Alaska time, with both observing daylight saving time.

## MUNCHO LAKE, BC (pop. 29)

Mile 442, MP 462, elev. 830 m.

Avg. temp. in Jan. 7°F, July 57°F

Avg. annual snowfall 70 in.

**Home of Muncho Lake Provincial Park!**

**Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park is 41 miles NW!**

## FORT NELSON, BC (pop. 3,902)

Mile 283, MP 300, elev. 422 m.

Avg. temp. in Jan. -5°F, July 63°F

Avg. annual snowfall 75 in.

**Visitor Center located at 5500 Alaska Hwy.**

## WONOWON, BC (pop. 150)

Mile 101, MP 101, elev. 928 m.

Avg. temp. in Jan. 12°F, July 58°F

Avg. annual snowfall 74 in.

## FORT ST. JOHN, BC (pop. 18,609)

Mile 47, MP 47, elev. 693 m.

Avg. temp. in Jan. 9°F, July 61°F

Avg. annual snowfall 75 in.

**Visitor Center located at 9324 96 St.**

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## History of the Alaska Highway

Proposal for a highway connecting Alaska to the contiguous USA dates back to the 1920s when Thomas MacDonald, director of the US Bureau of Public Roads, expressed interest in the idea. In an effort to promote the highway, the proposed route was first traveled by dogsled. Support from the Canadian government was crucial since most of the route would pass through Canada. However, they were reluctant in putting up the required funds to construct the road since it would benefit only a few thousand people in northern Canada. Nevertheless, the British Columbia (BC) government supported the idea so as to encourage economic development and tourism. In 1933, it was proposed that the US government contribute \$2 million of the cost, with the remaining \$12 million coming from the Canadian and BC governments. Due to the Great Depression and the Canadian government's lack of support, the project didn't begin immediately.

Things changed with the attack on Pearl Harbor and beginning of the Pacific Theater in World War II, coupled with Japanese threats to the west coast of North America and the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, and both nations began seeing such a highway as an asset. In 1942, the construction of the ALCAN was approved by the US Army and the project received the authorization from the US Congress and Roosevelt to proceed five days later. Canada agreed to allow construction as long as the US bore the full cost and that the road and other facilities in Canada would be turned over to Canadian authority after the war concluded. In the end, it proved unimportant for the military since 99% of the supplies to Alaska were sent by sea. However, the project still proceeded and officially began on March 8, 1942. It was completed on October 28, 1942, but was not usable by general vehicles until 1943.

It should be noted that the Alaska Highway was primarily built for military purposes and its route was not ideal for postwar development of northern Canada. The highway is constantly being rerouted and since 1947, it has been shortened by about 35 miles, mostly by eliminating winding sections. As a result, the historic milepost markings are no longer accurate but are still important as local location references. The BC and Yukon governments and Public Works Canada do recalibrate kilometer posts and the Canadian section of the highway is currently about 1,187 miles, compared to 1,222 miles originally. However, kilometer post or milepost recalibration is not done in Alaska and therefore, the actual length of the Alaskan portion of the Alaska Highway is no longer clear due to rerouting and shortening.

Today, some people still refer to the Alaska Highway as the Alcan Highway. ALCAN was the military's name for the pioneer road at its completion in 1942, with the acronym standing for Alaska-Canada military highway. It wasn't a popular name with many Alaskans, who were unhappy with restrictions placed on civilian traffic during the war years. The pioneer road was officially renamed the Alaska Highway in March 1943, and opened to the public in 1948. It is designated as Highway 97 in BC, Highway 1 in Yukon, and Alaska Route 2 in Alaska. The highway is now completely paved (since the mid-1980s), and open year-round to the public.