



ALASKA HIGHWAY
HERITAGE

A Project of the Alaska Highway Community





Are We There Yet? Building the Case for the Alaska Highway Corridor

April Moi | Northern British
Columbia Tourism Association

Julie Harris | Contentworks Inc.



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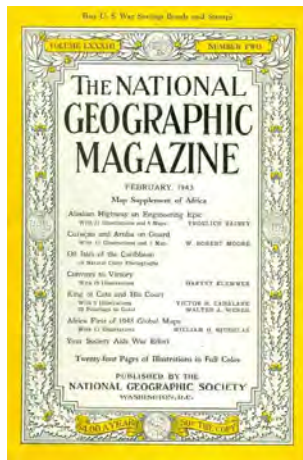
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World's 10 ultimate drives
The most exhilarating, hair-raising and scenic short (mostly) routes on the planet
By **Jade Bremner** 23 April, 2012

5. The Alcan Highway, Canada to Alaska



The New York Times
Science

WORLD U.S. N.Y. / REGION BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY SCIENCE HEALTH SPORTS OPINION
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Many Wonders (but Few Amenities) on a Legendary Highway



ROAD TRIP It pays to plan ahead if you're driving the Alaska Highway. When the road opened in 1942, even military trucks did not always survive it.

by **CORNELIA DEAN**
Published: July 23, 2012

WHITEHORSE, Yukon Territory — As a tourism destination, the Alaska (or Alcan) Highway does not have a lot to recommend it —

FACEBOOK
TWITTER

The Destination

- ▶ **Vision (Untested Working Draft)**
 - ▶ The Alaska Highway Corridor is a valued and dynamic legacy that contributes to our sense of identity and our relationship with the natural world, creates an understanding of our past, is used to build communities in the present, and informs our choices for the future.

- ▶ **Components**
 - ▶ Stories
 - ▶ A sense of place
 - ▶ Involving people
 - ▶ Making heritage relevant
 - ▶ Sustaining links between heritage and other parts of regional life – tourism, nature, learning, and recreation



Orientation



Situating the Alaska Highway Corridor

Passes through prairies, rivers, mountains and muskeg

2,232 km from Dawson Creek to Fairbanks

1,1916 km in BC and Yukon





Regional History

Thousands of years of use
and occupancy

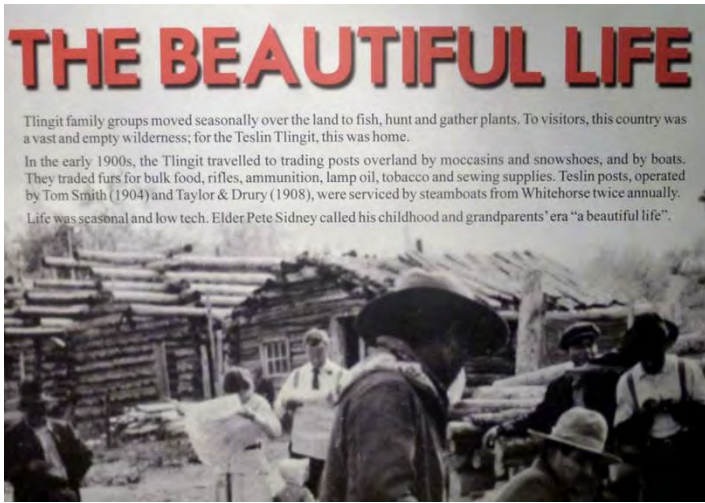
Long fur-trade history

Klondike Gold Rush, 1897 –
1899

Treaty Eight, 1899-1921

Treaty Eleven, 1921





Regional History

First Nation traders and community builders

Northern air services

World War II

Wage economy

Oil and gas development

Kluane National Park

Yukon Umbrella Final Agreement (with FNs)



Alaska Highway Chronology



**PLANNING
ROADS AND AIR
ROUTES: 1897-
1940**



**“FRIENDLY” INVASION:
MARCH 1942**



**PUBLIC ROADS
ADMINISTRATION:
1942-1943**



**DEVELOPING THE
ALASKA HIGHWAY:
ONGOING**

**AGREEMENT:
FEBRUARY
1942**



**PIONEER ROAD:
MARCH TO OCTOBER
1942**



**CANADA TAKES
CONTROL: APRIL
1942**





On View

Nature

Vistas

Historic buildings

Archaeological sites

Spiritual places

Gathering places

Bridges

Camp sites

Old roads and new roads

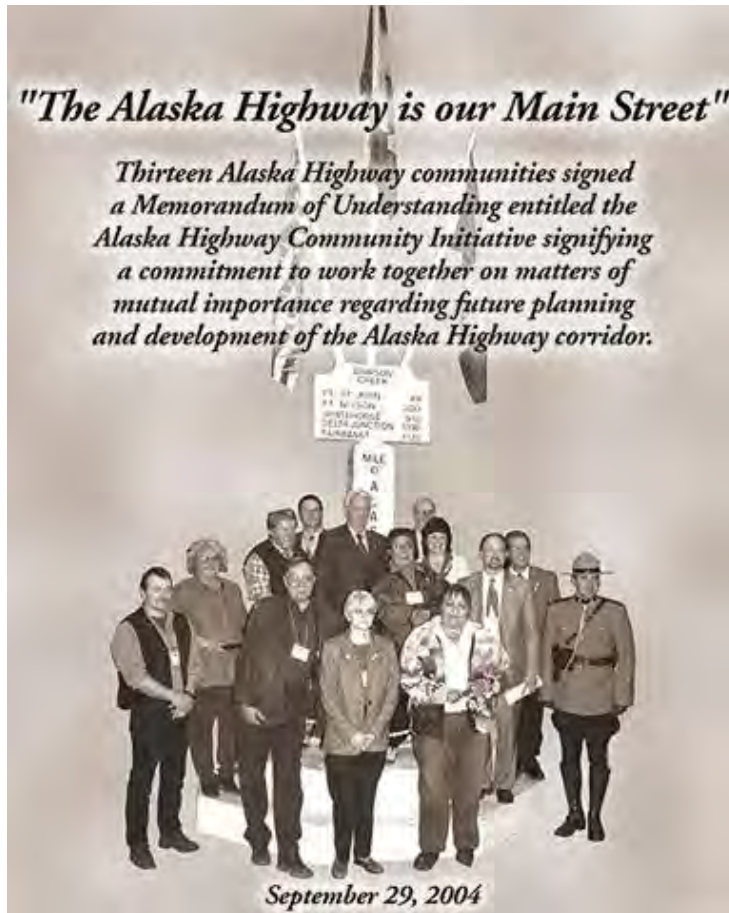
Extraction sites





Starting the Journey

Studying the Map



ALASKA HIGHWAY INTERNATIONAL FORUM

"preserving a lasting legacy and planning for tomorrow"

September 29, 2004 - Dawson Creek, BC • Canada

Hosted by the City of Dawson Creek

You are invited!

Yes
Join us!

Vision

+ to ensure that the Alaska Highway corridor is recognized as the most important international historic and wilderness highway in North America.

Yes
Join us!

Mission

+ to create a forum for political leaders, administrative officials and tourism stakeholders, to jointly explore and collaborate on issues relating to maintenance, infrastructure for tourism development, preservation of history, and marketing and promotion of the Alaska Highway corridor.



Building Relationships



Detour

The screenshot shows the homepage of the National Science Foundation's National System of Byways Program (NSBP). At the top, there are links for "Sign In" and "Your Profile", and a search bar with a "Go" button. Below this is a navigation menu with "HOME", "EXPLORE BYWAYS", "SHARE EXPERIENCES", "ABOUT BYWAYS", and "PRESS ROOM". A large banner features the text "come CLOSER." and a collage of images including a historic building, a person on a horse, a person in a carriage, and a group in historical dress. A central graphic asks "...where do you want to go?" with the "AMERICA'S BYWAYS" logo and a link to "Browse America's Byways". To the left, there is a promotion for a "FREE" brochure with maps and photos, and a "NEW! America's Byways Podcast" section with a speaker icon and a link to listen. Below that is a "Traveler's Tale" section for "Top of the Rockies (CO)" with a quote from "WALanky09" and a "Share Your Story" link. In the center, a video player displays "Trail of the Ancients (CO,UT)" with a landscape image and playback controls showing "115/126". To the right, a map of the United States shows various byway routes, with a note "AK, HI, PR NOT TO SCALE". Below the map is a "Gourmet Roadtrips" section with a plate of food and text describing classic fare and a link to "Read".



Crossing a Bridge



Fueling Up

- ▶ Seek formal recognition of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site of Canada
 - ▶ Create a common language among partners and across jurisdictions (Yukon, BC, local governments and First Nations)
 - ▶ Join a respected national brand
 - ▶ Link cultural and natural heritage
 - ▶ Gain access to Parks Canada expertise and experience



Getting There



Year I – Taking Stock

Communicated intentions

Identified knowledge-keepers, themes and resources

Shared perspectives and encouraged participation

Updated information base





Year 2 – Listen and Understand

Consult

Understand concerns and expectations

Map stories and places of cultural and heritage value

Describe values

Propose governance model





Year 3 – Negotiate and Commit

Consult some more

Set out a strategic multi-year plan with integrated goals for heritage, tourism and development

Work with land holders and governments on conservation frameworks

Confirm funding model

Submit the NHSC nomination





Thoughts, Sites and Sounds
from Year 1

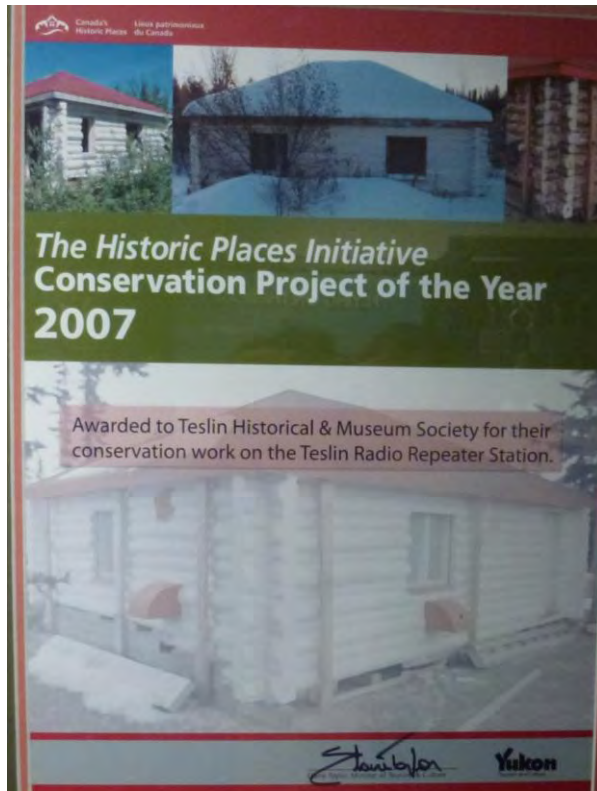
Intersecting and Overlapping Cultural Landscapes

- ▶ Aboriginal
- ▶ Living, evolved
- ▶ Associative

- ▶ Resources exist at various scales and forms
- ▶ Ideas, experiences and beliefs matter



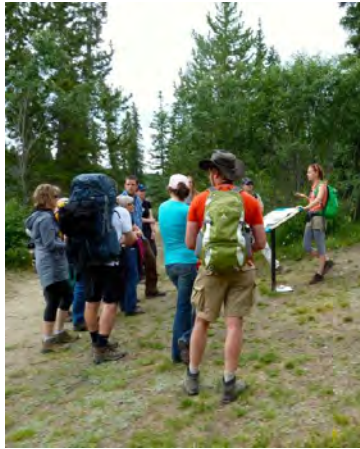
Intersecting and Overlapping Cultural Landscapes



Intersecting and Overlapping Cultural Landscapes



Positives



Canyon Creek Bridge

In 1903 a gold strike in the Alsek River drainage brought a multitude of miners to the area, some of whom stayed to mine in several creeks around Klane Lake. A wagon trail was built from Whitehorse in the next year and Sam McGee and Gilbert Skelly constructed a substantial bridge over Canyon Creek. This bridge survived heavy traffic and high spring floods until the 1920s when the government contracted the Jacquet brothers from Barrow Landing to rebuild it.

In 1942, during construction of the Alaska Highway, the old bridge was dismantled and a new one built in 18 days. It has been described as the most ambitious and important bridge to be built by the US Army Corps of Engineers (19th Battalion). The little pioneer bridge was left in place when the Public Road Administration built a permanent bridge just down river.

Work on the Canyon Creek Bridge in 1966/67 preserved about 10% of the superstructure and decking and 85% of the cribbing. Further restoration in 2005 resulted in an almost new bridge.

This bridge does not meet current highway code

The Alaska Highway Commission and the Klane Lake Historical Society are pleased to present this exhibit. The Klane Lake Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the Klane Lake area. The Klane Lake Historical Society is located at 100 Klane Lake Road, Klane Lake, BC V0N 1A0. For more information, please contact the Klane Lake Historical Society at (250) 426-1111 or visit our website at www.klane-lake-historical-society.com.





Negatives



Threats

Historic Alaska Hotel destroyed by fire in Dawson Creek

THE CANADIAN PRESS  Saturday, September 15, 2012 11:15 AM

 Recommend  11 people recommend this. Sign Up to see what your friends recommend.



A historic hotel in the northern community of Dawson Creek has been destroyed by fire.

The blaze broke out around 5 p.m. Friday evening at the Alaska Hotel and quickly blanketed the downtown in black smoke.

Fire crews and RCMP shut down the city's core to traffic as firefighters battled the blaze.

By 7 p.m., the building's roof had collapsed but crews continued to battle the blaze into the night.

A large fire on the same block burned a video store to the ground last year.



Top Heritage Issues

- ▶ History (knowledge, places and understanding) is being lost
- ▶ Heritage and culture are tightly linked
- ▶ All groups – including elders, youth and First Nations – need to be engaged in:
 - ▶ Telling stories
 - ▶ Identifying places of value
 - ▶ Setting priorities for conservation and interpretation
- ▶ More commitment is needed from owners to protect and interpret the corridor's highway history

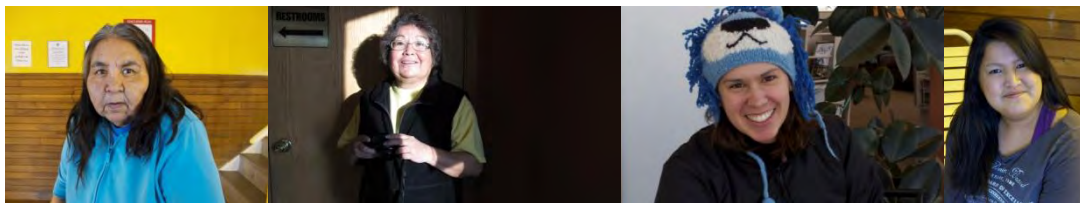
Top Regional Issues

- ▶ The Alaska Highway helps sustain the regional economy
- ▶ Heritage should be leveraged to encourage visitors to stay longer
- ▶ More heritage and cultural opportunities are needed for residents
- ▶ Heritage can diversity employment opportunities
- ▶ Don't interference in the operation of the highway



Good News

▶ NENAS Storytelling Project



Good News

▶ Taylor Memory Project



facebook

Sign Up Connect and share with the people in your life.

April Mei District of Taylor Community Events Page
August 12, 2011 at 1:58pm

Taylor Memory Project Open House
Wednesday, August 17, 2011, District of Taylor Council Chambers
2:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Come share your Taylor with us!

We are collecting stories from anyone in the Taylor area. You can stop in to meet Interpretative Specialist, Harry Parsons and to learn more about the project. You are also invited to arrange an appointment to meet with Taylor's story collector, Mary Rose Murphy. We are also looking for other Taylor residents who are interested in joining our team as a paid story collector.

Building on previous historical work and new collections, this project will provide a broad view of Taylor's rich history, current community and exciting future to be used for education, attractions, advertising and tourism exhibits.

For more info please call: Harry or April at 250-785-2544



Looking Ahead

Can we get there?

- ▶ Assessment categories from “Community-Based Heritage Management: A Case Study and Agenda for Research” by Andrew Hodges and Steve Watson (2000)

- Critical mass
- Existing organizations
- Socio-demographic profile
- Ownership
- The site
- Threat and cause
- Leadership
- Managerial competence and organizational skill
- Consensus
- Expresses interest in heritage
- Network management
- Inclusiveness

Bottom Line

▶ **Yes, because**

- ▶ The cultural landscape is authentic and meaningful
- ▶ The entire region is seeking options to diversify employment, create a stronger identity, strengthen the tourism sector, and enhance cultural offerings
- ▶ Higher-level governments have offered support and want the project to succeed

Bottom Line

▶ **But**

- ▶ Local governments need more exposure to the benefits of heritage activities
- ▶ Public needs more opportunities to understand the value of heritage resources
- ▶ Stronger links with cultural activities must be developed
- ▶ Governance needs a hybrid approach:
 - ▶ Strong leadership and Shared responsibilities
- ▶ Property owners (Fed, BC, Yukon, FNs, local govts, private, museums) must be onside

Thank you



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