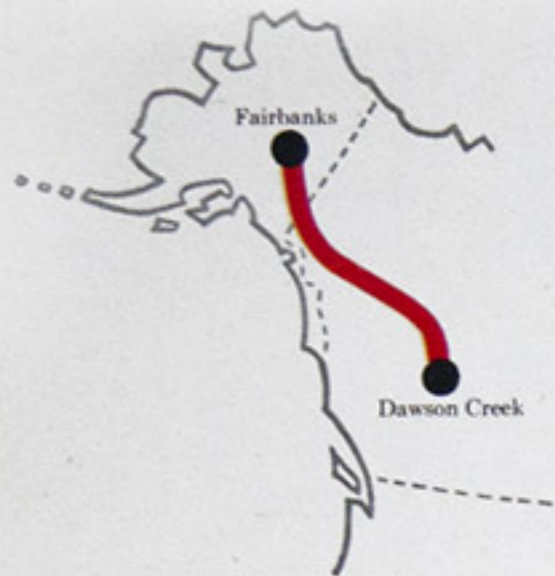




The 1,527-mile-long Alcan Highway reaches its highest point, 4,156 feet, in the frozen wilderness of the Canadian Rockies.

TO ALASKA THROUGH A RUGGED FRONTIER



The only land route to Alaska snakes and roller-coasters its way through three time zones and some of the roughest and most enchanting terrain found anywhere—gorges, forests, mountains, racing glacial streams, ponds in colors from nut brown to milky blue, and what one traveler calls “a sense of the unknown around the next corner.” In summer, dust brings danger of head-on collision; in winter the road is never closed, but blinding snows and 60-below temperatures could kill a stranded tourist in half an hour.

The safest time of year for traveling the Alcan (now officially called the Alaska Highway) is from June through September, when temperatures range from 35° to 75°, daylight lasts up to twenty hours, and the major hazards are flying gravel from the roadbed and swarms of mosquitoes. (Only 350 miles of the road are paved.) Fishermen stop for pike, trout, and arctic grayling; along the road roam black bear, moose, wolves, and fox. The chilled sightseer can stop at Lake Laberge and pay his respects to the memory of “Sam McGee from Tennessee.”

Built by the U.S. during World War II at a cost of \$115 million, 1,221 miles of the road were taken over by Canada in 1946. Maintenance and rebuilding cost \$10 million a year and need a force of 1,500 men and 600 vehicles. Thirty thousand cars and 3,000 trucks use the highway each year.



Tourists do not need to carry extra gasoline, but should be ready for three tire changes per trip.



Truck convoys stop at half-hour intervals so drivers can clear their windshields; headlights burn through short, dim winter days.



Too tough for some wolves

These relics predate the highway, which begins at Dawson Creek, B.C.



Dawson Creek had 300 people before the highway opened; tourist business has upped it to 10,000.



A minus sign in Fairbanks



At Milepost 635 in the Yukon, an outpost—with bath

This converted railroad trestle over the Peace River stands in for a highway bridge that collapsed in 1957.

