

DENALI HIGHWAY

	Cantwell	Delta Junction	Denali Park	Paxson
Cantwell		214	27	134
Delta Junction	214		241	80
Denali Park	27	241		161
Paxson	134	80	161	

Connects: Paxson to Cantwell, AK **Length:** 134 miles
Road Surface: 85% gravel, 15% paved **Season:** Closed in winter
Highest Summit: Maclaren Summit 4,086 feet
Major Attraction: Tangle Lakes–Delta River Canoe Trail
(See map, page 482)

8

The 134-mile-long Denali Highway links Paxson at **Milepost V 185.5** on the Richardson Highway to Cantwell at **Milepost A 210** on the Parks Highway. When the Denali Highway opened in 1957, it was the only road link to Denali National Park and Preserve (then Mount McKinley National Park) until the completion of the Parks Highway in 1972. (Prior to 1957, the national park had been accessible only by railroad.)

A highly scenic route, the Denali Highway has been a favorite destination for many Alaskans over the years. Long-standing businesses along the highway attest to this road's enduring popularity. Tangle River Inn at **Milepost P 20** has provided 30 years of friendly service. So much so that in 2003, the BLM honored owner Naidine Johnson by naming a mountain after her. Gracious House, at **Milepost P 82**, has been a familiar stop for Denali Highway travelers for 47 years. Tangle Lakes Lodge, at **Milepost P 22**, is a favorite summer and winter destination.

The first 21 miles of the Denali Highway from Paxson and the first 3 miles from Cantwell are paved. The remaining 110 miles are gravel, although there is ongoing debate as to the merits of paving the entire route.

Summer road conditions on the gravel portion of the Denali Highway vary, depending on highway maintenance, weather and the opinion of the driver. Maintenance in summer 2003 included grading of the gravel portion of the highway and culvert replacements near Cantwell, where flooding had damaged the road.

Road surfacing normally ranges from good gravel to rough and rocky. Washboard and potholes can develop quickly. This can be a dusty drive for motorists—and a very dusty ride for bicyclists—in dry weather.

The highway becomes narrower and more winding west of Maclaren Summit (elev. 4,086 feet). This is the second highest highway pass in the state, and represents the only significant grade on the highway.

The Denali Highway is closed to through traffic in winter. Motorists are cautioned to check on road conditions before attempting to drive the highway between October and mid-May.

The Denali Highway provides access to the Delta River canoe trail at Tangle Lakes, headwaters of the Delta National Wild and Scenic River. For detailed information on



View of the Alaska Range from the Denali Highway. (© Rich Reid/Colors of Nature)

ORV use on public lands or canoeing the Delta River, contact the Bureau of Land Management office in Glennallen, phone (907) 822-3217.

Birders will find Smith's Longspur, harlequin ducks, gyrfalcons, arctic warblers and more than 100 other species along the Denali Highway. Birders might want to stop in at Denali Highway Cabins (www.denalihwy.com) at **Milepost P 0.2** to talk to Dr. Audubon L. Bakewell IV and view his resident nesting merlins. Dr. Bakewell is co-author of the *ABA Bird Finding Guide to Alaska*.

Emergency medical services: Between Paxson and **Milepost P 77.5** (Susitna Lodge), phone 911 or the state troopers at (907) 822-3263. Between **Milepost P 77.5** and Cantwell, phone the state troopers at (907) 768-2202. *NOTE: We did not get cell phone service between Paxson and Cantwell when we traveled this road in summer 2003.*

Denali Highway Log

Distance from Paxson (P) is followed by distance from junction with the Parks Highway at Cantwell (C).

NOTE: There were many missing mileposts along the Denali Highway in summer 2003.

ALASKA ROUTE 8

P 0 C 133.8 PAXSON (pop. 30; elev. 2,650 feet), at **Milepost V 185.5** on the Richardson Highway, began in 1906 when Alvin Paxson established a roadhouse at Mile 192. He later

built a larger roadhouse at Old Mile 191. The structure burned in the early 1970s; the ruins can be seen on the east side of the highway at **Milepost V 185.7** Richardson Highway. Today, businesses here include Paxson Inn and Lodge and Denali Highway Cabins.

Junction of the Richardson Highway (Alaska Route 4) with the Denali Highway (Alaska Route 8). Turn to **Milepost V 185.5** on page 464 in the RICHARDSON HIGHWAY section for log.

Private Aircraft: Paxson airstrip, adjacent south; elev. 2,653 feet; length 2,800 feet; gravel; emergency fuel; attended.

P 0.1 C 133.7 Side road north to **Denali Highway Cabins**; lodging. Naturalist-led river trips on the Gulkana River are available here.

P 0.2 C 133.6 Gulkana River bridge.

P 0.3 C 133.5 Gravel parking area at west end of bridge; informal camping. Spawning sockeye salmon in season. (This portion of the Gulkana River is closed to salmon fishing.) Look for "harleys" (harlequin ducks). Trail to Mud Lake; grayling fishing. 🐟

P 0.4 C 133.4 Entering Paxson Closed Area (sign) westbound. The area south of the Denali Highway and east of the Richardson Highway is closed to the taking of all big game.

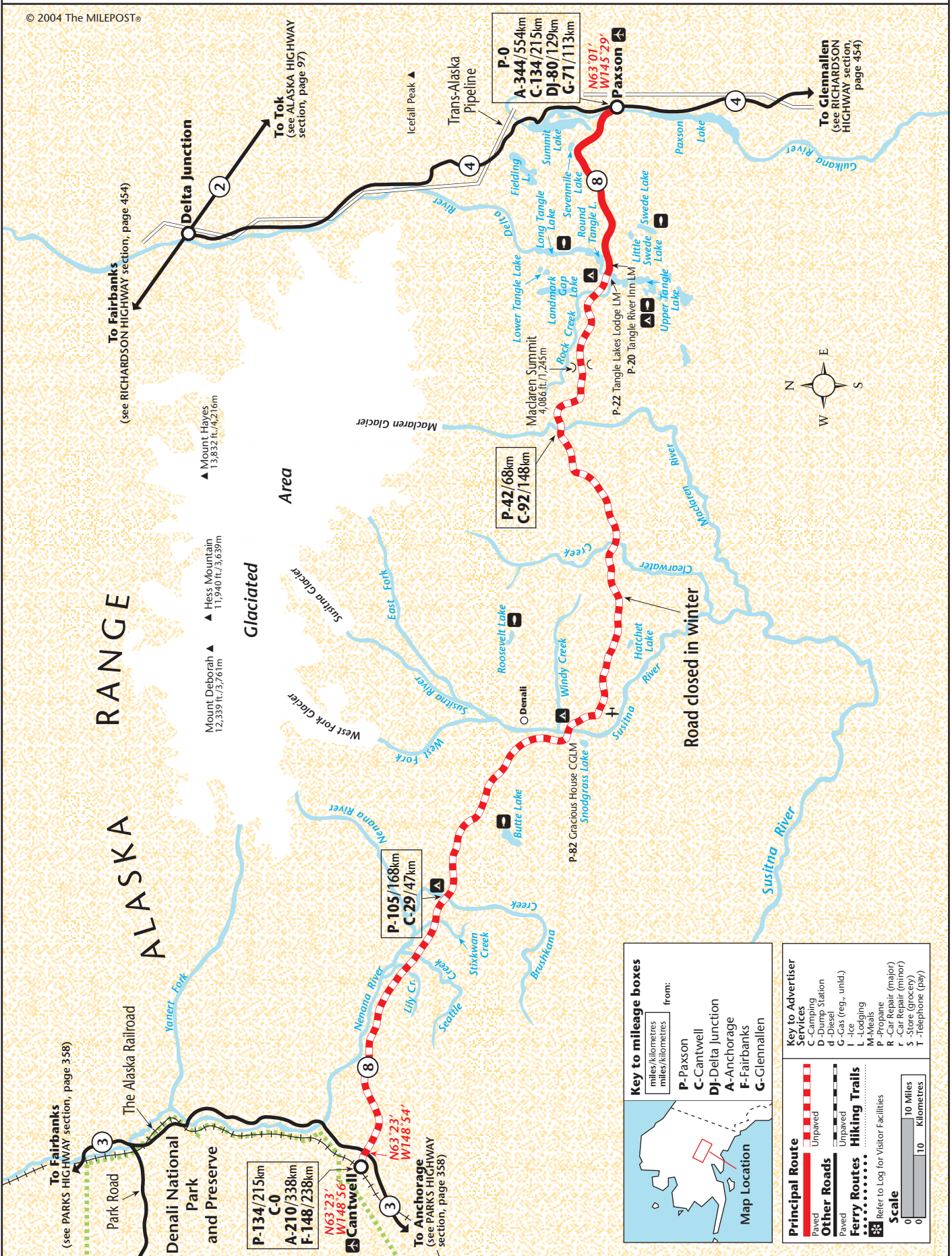
There are several long upgrades and many turnouts the next 21 miles westbound. Wildflowers carpet the tundra in the spring and summer. Watch for nesting swans.

P 0.7 C 133.1 Large paved turnout to south.

P 1.5 C 132.3 Large paved turnout to

DENALI HIGHWAY Paxson, AK, to Cantwell, AK

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ALASKA RANGE

Glaciated Area

Road closed in winter

Key to mileage boxes

miles/kilometres from:

- P - Paxson
- C - Cantwell
- DJ - Delta Junction
- A - Anchorage
- F - Fairbanks
- G - Glennallen

Principal Route

- Paved
- Unpaved

Other Roads

- Paved
- Unpaved

Ferry Routes

- Diesel
- Gas (reg., unid.)
- Ice
- Lodging
- Meals
- Propane
- Car Repair (major)
- Car Repair (minor)
- Store (grocery)
- Telephone (pay)

Hiking Trails

- Refer to Log for Visitor Facilities

Scale

0 10 Miles
0 10 Kilometres

south.

P 2 C 131.8 Westbound travelers may note the change in vegetation from spruce forest to alpine tundra.

P 2.3 C 131.5 Large paved turnout on hilltop to south.

P 3.6 C 130.2 Paved turnout to south. Several more turnouts next 3 miles westbound with views of Summit Lake to the north, Gakona Glacier to the northeast, Icefall Peak and Gulkana Glacier west of Icefall Peak, all in the **Alaska Range**. The 650-mile-long range, which extends across south-central Alaska from the Canadian border southwest to Iliamna Lake, also contains Mount McKinley (Denali), the highest peak in North America.

Good views of trans-Alaska pipeline for Paxson-bound travelers.

P 4 C 129.8 Views to east next 3 miles westbound of Mounts Sanford, Wrangell and Drum in the Wrangell Mountains; see viewpoint at **Milepost P 13.1**.

P 4.1 C 129.7 Large paved turnout to north.

P 5.1 C 128.7 Larve paved turnout to north.

P 5.4 C 128.4 *NOTE: Slow for potholes.*

P 5.9 C 127.9 Turnout.

P 6.5 C 127.3 Turnout.

P 6.8 C 127 Trail access (not signed) to **Sevenmile Lake** 0.8 mile north; excellent fishing for lake trout in summer. ➔

P 7.1 C 126.7 Paved turnout to south.

Highway climbs westbound.

P 7.4 C 126.4 Large gravel turnout overlooking **Sevenmile Lake**. Two Bit Lake is the large lake to the north; Summit Lake is to the northeast.

P 7.6 C 126.2 Paved turnout to north overlooking **Sevenmile Lake**. Summit Lake visible to east.

P 8.7 C 125.1 Paved turnout to north.

P 9 C 124.8 Gravel turnout. Entering BLM public lands westbound.

P 10.1 C 123.7 Paved turnout to south overlooking **Ten Mile Lake**. Short hike downhill to outlet. Fishing for lake trout, grayling and burbot in summer. ➔

P 10.5 C 123.3 Paved turnout overlooking **Teardrop Lake** to south. Short hike down steep hill to lake; lake trout, grayling and burbot in summer. ➔

Views westbound of extensive glacial outwash plain dotted with kettle ponds; known locally as Hungry Hollow.

P 11.2 C 122.6 Paved turnout. Look for blueberries in season. Rough, narrow, gravel road down leads 0.3 mile south to **Octopus Lake**; limited parking, fishing for lake trout, grayling, whitefish. ➔

NOTE: Watch for frost heaves and potholes next mile westbound.

P 11.7 C 122.1 Paved turnout to south.

Views of Hungry Hollow continue westbound. Federal Substantance area boundary.

P 12 C 121.8 Paved turnout to south.

P 12.6 C 121.2 Paved turnout to south.

P 13.1 C 120.7 Paved turnout to south is Wrangell Mountain viewpoint. BLM information sign on Denali Highway campgrounds, trailheads, points of interest and services.

The Wrangell Mountains are about 78 air miles southeast of here. The prominent peak on the left is Mount Sanford (16,237 feet); Mount Drum (12,010 feet) is on the right; and Mount Wrangell (14,163 feet) is in the center. Mount Wrangell is the northernmost active volcano on the Pacific Rim.

P 14.6 C 119.2 Paved turnout; small

lakes to north.

Highway begins descent westbound to Tangle Lakes area.

P 14.9 C 118.9 Turnout to south.

P 15.7 C 118.1 Paved turnout to south.

P 16.4 C 117.4 Swede Lake trail, 3 miles long, to south; **Little Swede Lake**, 2 miles. This trail connects with the Middle Fork Gulkana River branch trail (access to Dickey Lake and Meier Lake trail) and the Alphabet Hills trail. **Big Swede Lake** has excellent fishing for lake trout, grayling, whitefish and burbot. Little Swede Lake is excellent for lake trout. Inquire at Tangle River Inn for directions. ➔

P 16.5 C 117.3 Entering BLM **Tangle Lakes Archaeological District** westbound. Within this 226,000-acre area, more than 400 archaeological sites chronicle man's seasonal exploitation of the local natural resources. For more than 10,000 years, hunter-gatherers have dug roots, picked berries, fished and hunted big game (primarily caribou) in this area. You may hike along the same high, gravel ridges once used by prehistoric people and used today by modern hunters, anglers and berry pickers.

P 16.8 C 117 Paved turnout to south by gravel pit; plenty of flat gravel parking space. **16.8 Mile Lake** to north (walk up creek 200 yards); lake trout and grayling. **Rusty Lake**, 0.5 mile northwest of 16.8 Mile Lake; lake trout and grayling. ➔

P 17 C 116.8 *Driving distance between physical Mileposts 16 and 17 is 1.2 miles.*

P 17.2 C 116.6 Paved turnout to north by **17 Mile Lake**; lake trout and grayling fishing. ➔

P 17.8 C 116 Paved turnouts both sides of highway.

P 18.1 C 115.7 Paved turnouts by small lakes both sides of highway.

P 18.9 C 114.9 Paved turnout to north.

P 19.6 C 114.2 Paved turnout to south. Federal subsistence area boundary.

P 20 C 113.8 Tangle River Inn to south; food, gas, lodging. Stop in and see the plaque honoring owner Naidine Johnson and the map showing the location of Mount Naidine.

Tangle River Inn, known for our cleanliness and warm atmosphere. Restaurant with full menu featuring delicious home-style cooking. Liquor store, cozy cabins. Great fishing, hunting, hiking, berry picking and bird watching. Original owners for over 30

years. Come, meet our friendly crew that's been here for years—a memorable experience. See display ad this section. [ADVERTISEMENT]

P 20.1 C 113.7 Large paved turnout to north overlooking **Round Tangle Lake**, one of a series of long, narrow lakes connected by the Tangle River and forming the headwaters of the Delta River. The name Tangle is a descriptive term for the maze of lakes and feeder streams contained in this drainage system. Canoe rentals available at Tangle River Inn and Tangle Lakes Lodge.

P 20.6 C 113.2 Paved parking area with toilet to north.

P 21 C 112.8 The Nelchina caribou herd travels through this area, usually during the end of August or early in September.

P 21.3 C 112.5 *NOTE: Pavement ends, gravel begins westbound. Watch for potholes, washboard and washouts westbound and frost heaves eastbound.*

P 21.4 C 112.4 One-lane bridge over Tangle River.

P 21.5 C 112.3 Turnoff to north for access to **Tangle Lakes BLM Campground**, 0.7 mile north from highway on Round Tangle Lake; 25 campsites on gravel loop road, toilets, tables, water pump, garbage cans, boat launch. A favorite place to camp for many Alaskans. Berry picking in season. Watch for ptarmigan and eagles and a resident cow moose along the Tangle River. ▲



© Sharon Nault

Easy access to boat launch for **Delta River Canoe Trail**, which goes north through Tangle Lakes to the Delta River. Self-register for river trips. The 2- to 3-day float to the takeout point on the Richardson Highway requires 1 portage. The Delta National Wild and Scenic River is managed by the BLM. For details on this river trail or the Gulkana River trail, contact the BLM, Box 147, Glennallen, AK 99588; phone (907) 822-3217.

We're on the pavement - See log ad at Mile 20 Denali Highway

TANGLE RIVER INN

SUMMER:

(907) 822-3970

(907) 822-7304

CELL PHONE:

(907) 259-3970

WINTER:

(907) 895-4022

WRITE:

Mile 20, Denali Highway, Paxson, AK 99737



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Watershed divide. The Gulkana River joins the Copper River, which flows into Prince William Sound. The Delta River joins the Tanana River, which flows into the Yukon River. The Yukon flows into the Bering Sea.

P 21.7 C 113.8 Delta National Wild and Scenic River BLM Wayside and Boat Launch to south, day-use only; picnic tables, firepits, garbage cans, toilets, water pump, boat launch. Launch point for Upper Tangle Lakes canoe trail, which goes south through Tangle Lakes (portages required) to Dickey Lake, then follows the Middle Fork to the main Gulkana River.

The Tangle Lakes system north and south of the highway (**Long Tangle, Round Tangle, Upper Tangle and Lower Tangle Lake**) offers good grayling and lake trout fishing. Fishing begins as soon as the ice goes out, usually in early June, and continues into September. Troll shelf edges for lake trout. ➤



P 22 C 111.8 Tangle Lakes Lodge. Located on the banks of a nationally designated "Wild and Scenic Waterway," Tangle Lakes Lodge lives up to this designation and offers the traveler a wonderful spot for an overnight stay and more. Log cabin rentals, canoe rentals, fine dining, cocktails and gift shop. Birding—arctic warblers on the property and Smith's longspur just down the road! World-class arctic grayling and trout fishing. Hiking trails and abundant photo opportunities. Snowmachining, cross-country skiing and dog mushing trails make Tangle Lakes Lodge your year-round destination. Phone or fax (907) 822-4202. Email tanglelakes@starband.net. P.O. Box 3006, Paxson, AK 99737. See display ad this section. [ADVERTISEMENT]

P 24.7 C 109.1 Double-ended turnout to south. **Landmark Gap**, the cut in the mountains to the north, is visible from the highway. It is used by caribou during migration.

The trailhead for Landmark Gap North ORV trail is between this turnout and Rock Creek bridge (trail sign may be obscured by brush). The trail leads 4 miles north to the south end of **Landmark Gap Lake**; grayling and lake trout fishing. According to the

BLM, this trail is suitable for mountain bikes and hiking. ➤

P 24.8 C 109 Rock Creek 1-lane bridge; turnout and informal camping to north at west end of bridge. Grayling fishing. ➤

P 24.9 C 108.9 Landmark Gap South ORV trailhead to south just to west of Rock Creek bridge. This trail provides access to Oscar Lake area (11 miles) and to Tangle Lakes area (4 miles).

P 25 C 108.8 Gravel parking to south.

P 25.4 C 108.4 Informal campsite to south.

P 25.6 C 108.2 Informal campsite to south.

P 27.8 C 106 Rough turnout to north.

P 28.1 C 105.7 Very rough turnout and Downwind Lake north side of road.

P 28.9 C 104.9 Rough turnout to north.

P 29.3 C 104.5 Informal campsite beside small lake to south.

P 30.6 C 103.2 Turnout to north on high, sometimes windy, overlook for Glacier Lake ORV trail, which leads north 3 miles to **Glacier Lake**; lake trout and grayling fishing. According to the BLM, this trail is not recommended for mountain bikes, and hikers should be prepared for extremely wet trail conditions. ➤

P 30.8 C 103 Rough turnout to north.

P 31 C 102.8 Physical Milepost 31 read "3" in summer 2003.

P 32.1 C 101.7 Rough exit to turnout to north with dramatic view of Amphitheater Mountains above High Valley. Glacier Lake is visible in the gap in these mountains.

P 34.7 C 99.1 CAUTION: Slow for potholes.

P 35.2 C 98.6 Turnout. Wildflowers here include: various heaths, frigid shooting star, dwarf fireweed.

P 35.7 C 98.1 Small turnout to north.

P 36 C 97.8 36 Mile Lake 0.5-mile hike north; lake trout and grayling. ➤

Driving distance between Mileposts 35 and 36 is 1.2 miles.

P 36.2 C 97.6 Entering ADF&G controlled-use area westbound. Closed to motorized hunting. Small turnouts to north and south.

P 36.8 C 97 ORV trailhead parking. **Oscar Lake ORV trail** to south leads 8 miles to Oscar Lake. The BLM also recommends this trail for mountain biking and hiking. Black currant berries in season. **Maclaren Summit ORV trail** to north leads 3 miles to views of the Alaska Range; mountain biking.

P 36.9 C 96.9 Maclaren Summit (elev. 4,086 feet). Second highest highway pass in Alaska (after 4,800-foot Atigun Pass on the Dalton Highway). Turnout with view of Susitna River valley, Mount Hayes (13,382 feet) and the Alaska Range. (There are several good view turnouts just below Maclaren Summit.)

P 37.7 C 96.1 Leaving Tangle Lakes Archaeological District westbound (sign); see description at **Milepost P 16.5**.

P 39.8 C 94 Sevenmile Lake ORV trail to north; 6.5 miles long, parallels Boulder Creek, crosses peat bog.

P 41.3 C 92.5 Double-ended turnout to south.

P 41.4 C 92.4 Turnout to north.

P 42 C 91.8 Maclaren River Bridge, a 364-foot multiple span crossing this tributary of the Susitna River. Parking and litter barrels. Maclaren River Lodge to south on west side of bridge; boat launch (pay fee at lodge). Look for cliff swallows nesting under bridge.

P 43.3 C 90.5 Maclaren River Road to north leads 12 miles to Maclaren Glacier;

mountain biking. **NOTE: This side road may not be driveable beyond the river crossing at Mile 4.5.**

The Maclaren River rises in the glaciers surrounding Mount Hayes. For the next 60 miles westbound, the highest peaks of this portion of the mighty Alaska Range are visible, weather permitting, to the north. From east to west: Mount Hayes, Hess Mountain (11,940 feet) and Mount Deborah (12,339 feet). Mount Hayes, first climbed in August 1941, is named after Charles Hayes, an early member of the U.S. Geological Survey. Mount Deborah, first climbed in August 1954, was named in 1907 by Judge Wickersham after his wife.

P 44.1 C 89.7 Look for beaver lodge in pond to south.

P 44.6 C 89.2 Highway crosses **Crazy Notch**, a gap in the glacial moraine cut by a glacial stream.

P 45 C 88.8 Physical Milepost 45 read "5" in summer 2003.

P 46.7 C 87.1 Road north to **46.9 Mile Lake**. (It may say 46.9 Mile, but this turnout is at Mile 46.7!) Fishing for grayling in lake and outlet stream. ➤

P 48 C 85.8 Excellent grayling fishing in **Crooked Creek**, which parallels the highway. ➤

P 48.6 C 85.2 Informal campsite by small lake to south.

P 49 C 84.8 The road follows an esker between 4 lakes. Parts of the highway are built on eskers. Watch for ducks, geese, grebes and shorebirds in lakes, as well as bald eagles, moose, caribou, beaver and fox in the vicinity. Look for a pingo (earth-covered ice hill) at lakeshore.

P 49.6 C 84.2 Turnout to north.

P 49.7 C 84.1 Turnout to north overlooks **50 Mile Lake**. Interpretive plaque on glacial topography and wildlife. "Pools of Life: Hundreds of small lakes and ponds along the Denali Highway are reminders of ancient glaciers passing. As these glaciers receded they left behind blocks of slower melting ice that formed depressions called kettle holes or kettle lakes." The kettle lakes are home to beaver, loons, lesser yellowlegs, arctic terns and migrating trumpeter swans.

P 49.9 C 83.9 Road access north to 50 Mile Lake.

P 51.8 C 82 Private hunting camp to south. Trail to north.

P 55.6 C 78.2 Dirt track south to informal campsite.

P 56 C 77.8 Clearwater Creek 1-lane bridge. Rest area with toilet west side of bridge; informal camping, grayling fishing. ➤

P 57.8 C 76 Clearwater Creek walk-in (no motorized vehicles) hunting area north of highway.

P 58.8 C 75 Road winds atop an esker flanked by kames and kettle lakes. Watch for moose.

P 59 C 74.8 Narrow turnout to north.

P 59.1 C 74.7 Long turnout to north.

P 60 C 73.8 Road south to large, informal campsite.

P 63.1 C 70.7 Turnout to north by small lake.

P 63.8 C 70 Rough double-ended turnout to south.

P 64 C 69.8 Road descends westbound into Susitna River valley. Highest elevation of mountains seen to north is 5,670 feet.

P 70 C 63.8 Great view of Susitna River valley as highway descends westbound.

P 73 C 60.8 Road widens westbound. Road narrows eastbound.

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Mile 22 Denali Highway

P 73.5 C 60.3 Access via dirt road north to informal campsite near lake.

P 74 C 59.8 Clearwater Mountains to north; watch for bears on slopes. View of Susitna River in valley below.

P 78.3 C 55.5 Narrow dirt track south to scenic viewpoint overlooking Susitna River.

P 78.8 C 55 Valdez Creek Road (open to public). Former mining camp of Denali, about 6 miles north of the highway, was first established in 1907 after the 1903 discovery of gold in the Clearwater Mountains. The Valdez Creek Mine operated at this site from 1990 to 1995, producing 495,000 ozs. of gold. Area mining equipment was donated to the Museum of Transportation and Industry (see **Milepost A 47** in the PARKS HIGHWAY section). *Do not trespass on private mining claims.*

Fair fishing reported in **Roosevelt Lake** and area creeks. Watch for bears. ●

P 79.3 C 54.5 **Susitna River Bridge** (1-lane), a combination multiple span and deck truss, 1,036 feet long. Butte Creek trailhead.

CAUTION: Bridge is slippery when wet. Rough road west of bridge.

The Susitna River heads at Susitna Glacier in the Alaska Range (between Mounts Hess and Hayes) and flows southwest 260 miles to Cook Inlet. Downstream through Devil's Canyon it is considered unfloatable. The river's Tanaina Indian name, said to mean "sandy river," first appeared in 1847 on a Russian chart.

Entering Game Management Unit 13E westbound, leaving unit 13B eastbound.

P 80 C 53.8 Gravel pit; parking.

P 80.3 C 53.5 Turnouts both sides of highway (used by hunters in season; watch for ATVs on road).

P 80.4 C 53.4 Double-ended turnout to south.

P 81 C 52.8 Gracious House campground on lake to north.

P 82 C 52.8 **Gracious House** to south. Centrally located on the shortest, most scenic route to Denali National Park. 27 modern units including a large den with adjoining rooms for groups, most with private baths. Bed and breakfast atmosphere. Bar and cafe featuring ice cream and home-baked pies. Tent sites, parking for self-contained RVs overlooking lake. Water, restrooms and showers available at lodge. Gas, towing, welding, mechanical repairs, tire service. Air taxi, for the most beautiful scenic flights in Alaska. Guide service available for hiking, biking, fishing, hunting and photography tours. Northern Lights viewing and winter snowmobiling. Same owners/operators for 47 years. Reasonable rates. For brochure on hunting and fishing trips, write to the Gracious Family. Summer address: P.O. Box 88, Cantwell, AK 99729. Winter address: P.O. Box 212549, Anchorage, AK 99521. Message phone/fax (907) 333-3148 or lodge phone/fax (907) 259-1111. Email: crhoa36683@aol.com. Internet: www.alaskaone.com/gracious. See display ad this section. [ADVERTISEMENT] ▲

P 84 C 49.8 **Stevenson's Lake** 0.5 mile south; grayling fishing. ●

P 85.1 C 48.7 There are numerous informal campsites used by hunters the next 10 miles westbound.

P 90.5 C 43.3 Beaver lodge in pond to south. A major water drainage divide occurs near here. East of the divide, the tributary river system of the Susitna flows south to Cook Inlet. West of the divide, the Nenana River system flows north to the Yukon River,

which empties into the Bering Sea.

P 93.8 C 40 **Butte Lake** ORV trail leads 5 miles south to lake. Best fishing June through September. Lake trout, troll with red-and-white spoons or grayling remains; grayling, small flies or spinners. ●

P 94.3 C 39.5 Short road north leads to parking area above pond identified by a homemade sign tacked to a tree as "Jaiden Lake." View of Monahan Flat and Alaska Range to the north. Interpretive plaque on earthquakes.

P 94.8 C 39 Bridge over Canyon Creek. Turnout to north at west end of bridge.

P 96.3 C 37.5 Rough access north leads to viewpoint of the West Fork Glacier. Looking north up the face of this glacier, Mount Deborah is to the left and Hess Mountain is in the center.

P 97 C 36.8 Looking at the Alaska Range to the north, Mount Deborah, Hess Mountain and Mount Hayes are the highest peaks to your right; to the left are the lower peaks of the Alaska Range and Nenana Mountain.

P 103.2 C 30.6 Turnout to north.

Highway is built on an esker between kettle lakes.

P 104.6 C 29.2 **Brushkana River Bridge**. Well-maintained BLM campground to north at west end of bridge; 20 sites beside river, tables, firepits, toilets, litter barrels and water. Camping fee \$6/night. Campground hosts (Keith and Betty Kottwitz in 2003). Very good fishing for grayling. BLM Brushkana Creek trail (2 miles). ●▲

P 106.5 C 27.3 **Canyon Creek**, grayling fishing. ●

P 107.2 C 26.6 Turnout. **Stixkwan Creek** flows under highway in culvert. **CAUTION: Watch for washout to north.** Grayling fishing in creek. ●

P 109 C 24.8 Roads lead off into brush on both sides of highway.

P 110.3 C 23.5 **CAUTION: Steep downgrade westbound; trucks use low gear.**

P 111.2 C 22.6 **Seattle Creek** 1-lane bridge. Fishing for grayling and Dolly Varden. ●

P 111.5 C 22.3 Turnout to north with vista.

P 112 C 21.8 Matanuska-Susitna Borough boundary. Lily Creek.

P 113.2 C 20.6 View to east of the Alaska Range and extensive rolling hills grazed by caribou.

P 115.5 C 18.3 Informal turnout to north with beautiful view of the Nenana River area (when brush has been cut). Just west is a formal turnout to north with BLM interpretive sign about the Denali Highway. The Denali Highway parallels the Nenana River westbound. The Nenana River heads in Nenana Glacier and flows into the Tanana River, a tributary of the Yukon River, which empties into the Bering Sea. The Nenana is popular with professional river rafters—particularly the stretch of river along the Parks Highway near the Denali Park entrance—but it is not good for fishing, due to heavy glacial silt.

Steep downgrade westbound.

P 117.1 C 16.7 Informal campsite in a small hollow to the north of the highway.

Westbound motorists are leaving BLM public lands.

P 117.8 C 16 Turnout to north on Nenana River at **Mile 16 Put-In** for Nenana River Users. (NOTE: In summer 2003, the boat launch access was in poor shape due to flooding along this stretch of highway. Current status unknown.) Sign reads: "The Upper Nenana River float

runs approximately 18 river miles from Mile 16 of the Denali Highway to takeout at Nenana River One Bridge at Parks Highway Mile 215.7. The river along this stretch is rated Class I to II. Warning: Below the Nenana River One Bridge the river rating changes to Class II, III and IV white-water. The Nenana River is about 45°F; an unprotected person will survive 6–10 minutes."

P 121 C 12.8 Turnout at gravel pit to north.

P 122.3 C 11.5 Views westbound of Mount McKinley/Denali (weather permitting).

P 125.7 C 8.1 Turnout. **Joe Lake**, about 0.5 mile long (large enough for floatplane), is south of highway. **Jerry Lake** is about 0.2 mile north of the highway; grayling. ●

P 126 C 7.8 Turnout to south on Joe Lake.

P 128.2 C 5.6 Fish Creek. Access to creek and turnout to south at east end of bridge.

Beautiful view (weather permitting) of Talkeetna Mountains to the south.

P 131.2 C 2.6 **Gravel ends, pavement begins, westbound. Pavement ends, gravel begins, eastbound. Watch for potholes, washboard and washouts on highway east from here.**

P 133.3 C 0.5 Cantwell Station DOT highway maintenance camp.

P 133.4 C 0.4 Alaska State Troopers to north.

P 133.8 C 0 **Cantwell** at intersection of Denali Highway (Alaska Route 8) and Parks Highway (Alaska Route 3); food, gas and lodging. Turn north on Parks Highway for Denali Park and Fairbanks. Turn south for Anchorage. See description of Cantwell on page 387 in the PARKS HIGHWAY section.

Junction of Denali Highway and Parks Highway at Cantwell. Turn to **Milepost A 210** on page 388 in the PARKS HIGHWAY section for log.

Travelers eastbound on the Denali Highway, read this log back to front.

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