

Discover British Columbia's

Road  
Tour  
Guide

# Stewart Cassiar

TRAVEL THE GREAT NORTHERN CIRCLE TOUR!

Hwy 37



landscape • history



culture • wildlife



[www.StewartCassiarHighway.com](http://www.StewartCassiarHighway.com)

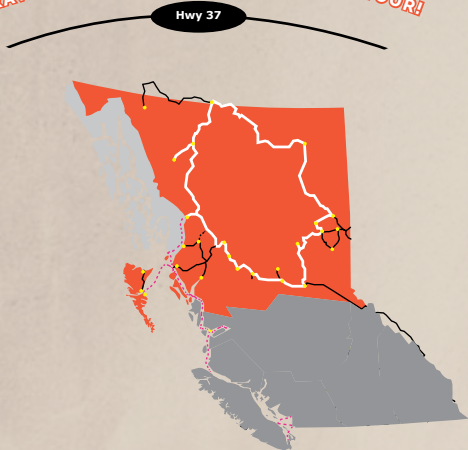
Northern  
British Columbia  
REGION





# Stewart Cassiar

TRAVEL THE GREAT NORTHERN CIRCLE TOUR!



Mileage Chart kilometres miles	Kitwanga Hwy 37N & 16	Meziadin Junction	Stewart/Hyder	Iskut/Tatogga	Dease Lake	Telegraph Creek	Alaska Hwy Junction	Alaska Hwy Watson Lake east	Alaska Hwy Whitehorse west
<b>Kitwanga Hwy 37N &amp; 16</b>		156 97	220 137	406 252	488 303	508 318	724 450	746 474	1155 718
<b>Meziadin Junction</b>	156 97		64 40	249 155	333 207	453 282	568 353	590 367	999 621
<b>Stewart/Hyder</b>	220 137	64 40		314 195	398 247	518 322	632 393	654 407	1063 660
<b>Iskut/Tatogga</b>	406 252	249 155	314 195		84 52	204 127	319 198	341 212	750 466
<b>Dease Lake</b>	488 303	333 207	398 247	84 52		120 75	235 146	257 160	667 414
<b>Telegraph Creek</b>	508 318	453 282	518 322	204 127	120 75		355 221	377 235	787 489
<b>Alaska Hwy Junction</b>	724 450	568 353	632 393	319 198	235 146	355 221		22 14	431 268
<b>Alaska Hwy Watson Lake east</b>	746 474	590 367	654 407	341 212	257 160	377 235	22 14		453 282
<b>Alaska Hwy Whitehorse west</b>	1155 718	999 621	1063 660	750 466	667 414	787 489	431 268	453 282	

## Legend & Features

not to scale



- Paved or hard surface
- Gravel
- Ferry Route (approximate)
- Provincial Campground

## Sites

- Kitwanga Totem Poles
- Kitwancool-Gitanyow Totem Poles
- Nisga'a Highway
- Meziadin River Fish Ladder
- Highway 37A
- Bell II, Tatogga, Iskut
- Iskut Lakes & Iskut River Valley
- Kinaskan Lake Provincial Park / Natadesleen Trail
- Stikine River
- Gnat Pass / Klappan Road / Rail Grade
- Telegraph Road / Stikine Canyon
- Sawmill Point
- Cassiar / Jade City
- Boya Lake



MILE / KM 0  
if your driving tour starts here

## Discover camping

reservation site for bc parks  
<https://secure.camis.com/Discovercamping/>

1

### Kitwanga Totem Poles



Kitwanga, at the southern end of Highway 37, is one of the best places in BC to see authentic totem poles. Now a National Historic Site, some 50 amazing totems are within an hour's drive from here. The Seven Sisters Mountain Range lends a spectacular scenic backdrop to the area. Visit Battle Hill, a fortified village occupied during the late 1700s by the Gitwankak First Nation. Strategically located, it was encircled by spiked logs designed to roll onto approaching enemies. Watch for black bears with cubs on the roadsides in spring, and feeding on salmon in late summer and early fall.

[see page 1](#)

2

### Kitwancool-Gitanyow Totem Poles



A significant collection of totem poles can be found at the village of Gitanyow (formerly Kitwancool), 15 kms north of Kitwanga. This site is rich in First Nations culture, history and archaeology. Old carving sheds and a graveyard contribute to the magical feeling here, famously captured in paintings by Emily Carr. Gas, phone and a small store are available on-site; other services including RV camping can be found at Kitwanga. Besides viewing salmon and eagles at the Kitwanga river, watch for the legendary Kermode (white spirit bears) found in this area.

[see page 1](#)

3

### Nisga'a Highway



Take the Nisga'a Highway north from Terrace or west from Highway 37 to discover the lands of the Nisga'a First Nation. Walk through the lava beds that were deposited here over 250 years ago during a volcanic eruption that killed thousands. Stop at the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Beds Provincial Park to get a guided tour of the volcanic crater, and learn more at the park's Visitor Info Centre, built as a traditional longhouse. And be sure to check out the new Nisga'a Museum in Laxgalt'sap (Greenville). Take a scenic side-trip downstream along the shore of the mighty Nass River to Kincolith, a First Nation village located where the river flows into the Pacific Ocean.

[see pages 2-3](#)

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### Meziadin Area



Located just downstream from Meziadin Lake, the Meziadin River Fish Ladder is a popular stop for fish and wildlife viewing. Large chinook and sockeye salmon can be seen leaping into the air as they navigate the ladder in late summer. Grizzly and black bears, eagles and moose may often be spotted here. Access: 100m north of the Nass River Bridge turn west on the logging road. At 1km, follow the gravel trail south about 0.5 km on the east side of the Meziadin River. This road may not be suitable for large RVs—walking is recommended. Camping (with Internet) is available 15 km north at Meziadin Lake Provincial Park. Fishing and boating are excellent here. Bear watching and salmon viewing opportunities abound at Hanna Creek 2 km south of the Park.

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### Highway 37A: Meziadin to Stewart



For a dramatic and rewarding side-trip, take the 65-km drive on Highway 37A to Stewart. This well-built road is fun and exciting, with fantastic scenery unfolding around every bend. Along the way you pass below overhanging glaciers on the nearby mountains, and beside the Bear Glacier as it ends in a lake at road level. Set at sea level at the northern end of the Portland Canal, Stewart offers full facilities and charm including restaurants, motels, gas stations, bakeries, and museums. Follow the road through town into Hyder, Alaska, where you can watch grizzly and black bears catching and eating salmon at the Fish Creek bear-viewing platform. Further along, the road climbs steadily into the subalpine above the Granduc Mine. You can hike from here onto the rolling ridges above.

[see pages 6-9](#)

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### Bell II, Tatogga, Iskut



Bell II is located where Highway 37 crosses the Bell Irving River. Most services are available here including food, fuel and accommodation. Bell II is a gateway to incredible lakes, streams, rivers and mountain ranges with spectacular wildlife viewing. Heading north, you will drive through the small, unincorporated community of Tatogga. Charter a float plane, hire a wilderness guide and rent boating and fishing gear from Tatogga to explore the lakes and mountains that surround the region. Even further north is the community of Iskut, home of the Tahltan First Nation. Iskut is situated between Mount Edziza and the Spatzizi Plateau Wilderness Park. Iskut also has basic services for visitors either travelling through or enjoying the region.

[see pages 10-11](#)

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### Iskut Lakes & Iskut River Valley



The Iskut Lakes and Iskut River Valley is one of the world's last wild frontiers. This scenic corridor boasts multiple provincial parks with camping, hiking, fishing and boating along a chain of over 50km of lakes and rivers. This area is home to the world's largest population of Stone Sheep, with Mountain Goat, Grizzly and Black Bear, Moose and Caribou frequenting the area. Hike to Mount Edziza, North America's youngest volcanic cone and experience the world famous Stikine River in all its might and power. If outdoor adventure is what you seek, make sure to give yourself some time to explore this incredible region of the north west.

[see pages 12-15](#)

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### Kinaskan Lake Provincial Park/ Natadesleen Lake Trail



This popular and relaxing spot, with its well-maintained 50-site campground, offers spectacular panoramic views, great trout fishing and excellent wildlife viewing. Kinaskan Lake is part of Tahltan traditional territory and is the starting point for a historical 20 km trail that leads to the volcanic cinder-cones of the Mt. Edziza area. Another trail leaves Highway 37 about 10 km south of Kinaskan Lake and leads 1 km to the shore of Natadesleen Lake. Portage your canoe here and fish, or paddle across the Lake to the outlet where a rough trail follows the fast-moving Iskut River to Cascade Falls 300m below the lake.

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### Stikine River



After the steep descent into the Stikine River valley, stop at the bridge to take in the landscape and history of the area. It was not until 1973 that a bridge existed at this location; previous to that time there was a small ferry here. A popular week-long wilderness canoe route from the upper Stikine ends here, and just downstream the river enters the formidable Grand Canyon of the Stikine, considered unnavigable except by the most extreme kayakers. Jet-boat tours of the river are available. For thousands of years the Stikine was a main First Nations' transportation route, and in the late 1800s became the principal route to the Yukon's Klondike goldfields.

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### Gnat Pass/BC Rail grade



Gnat Pass, at over 4,000 ft, provides the best view of the old BC Rail grade, a railroad through the wilderness that was never completed. It now provides rough road access into some of BC's remote interior. Both Upper and Lower Gnat Lakes offer scenic and serene canoeing and fishing. Trumpeter swans can be seen on the lakes during their migration in spring and fall. Several rough tracks from the vicinity provide hiking access to alpine areas. Northern Mountain caribou abound in fall, winter and spring. Other wildlife includes wolves, bears, lynx, wolverine and eagles.

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### Telegraph Rd/Dease Lake /Stikine Canyon



For a journey back into history and geologic time, take the road from Dease Lake to Telegraph Creek. Following a First Nations' trading route and the path of early gold-seekers, the road follows the ledges of the lower Stikine Canyon, with dramatic views of the sheer walls created by the river cutting its way through layers of volcanic lava. Mountain goats find protection among the ledges and rock outcrops of the canyon. The breathtaking road finally descends to the community of Telegraph Creek, which was the limit of navigation on the river for boats travelling upstream from the coast. The Stikine has been inhabited for centuries by the Tahltan First Nation, who still live in the area and harvest the Stikine's prolific salmon run. Scenic floatplane flights and rafting trips are available, as well as a heart-stopping helicopter tour into the Stikine's Grand Canyon. Services such as fuel, accommodation and groceries are available in Dease Lake.

[see pages 18-21](#)

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### Sawmill Point



The Sawmill Point Recreation Site, 41 km north of the community of Dease Lake, gives access to Dease Lake itself. Once the site of a very short-lived Hudson's Bay Company post established in 1838 and abandoned in 1839, it is today a popular camping and fishing spot for locals and travellers alike. Try your hand at catching the good-sized lake trout here, and look for the remains of the foundation of the old fort. The lake has historically been an important First Nations' transportation corridor. Camping is available here and motel accommodations can be found in the nearby town of Dease Lake.

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### Cassiar/Jade City



Jade City, named for the rich jade deposits found in the area, offers overnight RV parking, washrooms, coffee, a jade picture gallery and an interactive mining museum. Just north of here, a short 10-km drive from the highway leads to the asbestos-mining ghost town of Cassiar. Closed in 1992, flowers now bloom where houses once stood, and an abandoned tramline still stands. Note: there are no public facilities in the old town-site, and it is closed to visitors. The Cassiar gold rush left a rich history of mining claims for nature to reclaim. Abandoned cabins and equipment let you imagine the life of early miners and settlers. At the old Cassiar graveyard you will recognise many names now found on the map as mountains, rivers and other place-names.

[see page 23](#)

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### Boya Lake



With islands and shorelines that inspire tranquility and wonder, Boya Lake may be the best lake in Northern BC for canoeing and kayaking. Look into its depths to see fish, ducks and beavers swimming below you, visible against the white marl bottom. Its unique aqua-green hue and relatively warm and swimmable water makes Boya lake a must-visit place on your journey to the north. Camping along with canoe and kayak rentals are available from the park operator. Two interpretive trails lead from the campground around the shores of the lake where you will find a wide variety of wildflowers, and a chance to see beavers hard at work, moose rearing their calves, and roaming caribou. Boya Lake lies within the traditional territory of the Kaska Dene First Nation who continue to hunt and trap in the area.

[see page 23](#)

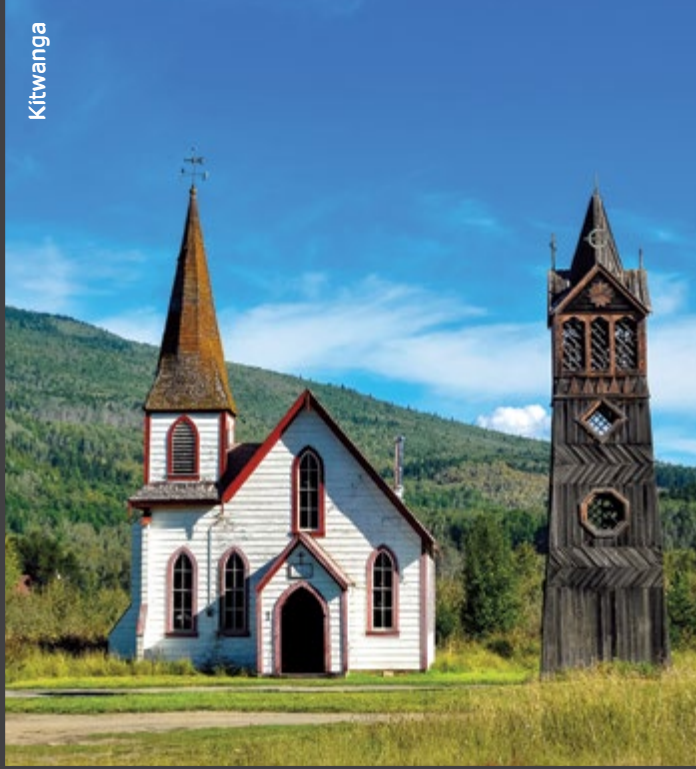




Kitwanga



Kitwanga



Kitwanga



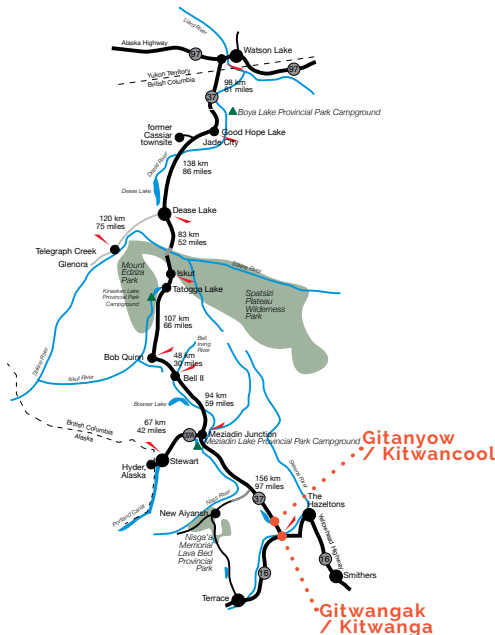
Kitwancool



Kitwanga



# Highway 37 heading north to



## Kitwanga - Kitwancool

### Community of Kitwanga

Kitwanga, or Gitwangak ("place of rabbits"), the starting point of the Stewart Cassiar Highway, is at the junction of Highways 16 and 37 and the confluence of the Kitwanga and Skeena Rivers. Outstanding carved cedar poles - some more than a century old - are found here, as well as St. Paul's Anglican Church, built in 1893. There are more than 50 incredible totem poles within an hour's drive. Kitwanga is also adjacent to the Upper Skeena "Grease Trail", named after the eulachon oil trading route that connected the inland and coastal First Nations. The Grease Trails are believed to have extended as far north as the Bering Sea.

This is also the site of the Gitwangak Battle Hill National Historic Site of Canada. This site commemorates the struggle of Battle Hill, a fortified village occupied by the Gitwangak

First Nation in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The fort was strategically located atop a hill with views of the valley and river. Gitwangak warriors would roll logs down the hill to stop attackers. The historic site includes a self-guided tour and ample parking for RV's.

### Community of Gitanyow

Gitanyow, or Kitwancool, is 15 kilometers (nine miles) north of Kitwanga and was designated a National Historic Site in 1972. Gitanyow, at one point, had the one of the largest number of original totem poles of any Coastal First Nations village, many dating from the mid 19th century. Now, less than twenty original poles remain. Some were sent to the Provincial Museum in Victoria, in about 1960, in exchange for replicas by noted Kwakiutl carver, Henry Hunt. The copies were re-erected in 1970, and the remaining poles were restored and re-erected by the Skeena River Totem Pole Preservation Society in 1968. Famous Canadian artist Emily Carr visited in 1928, and painted many of the village's poles. Magnificent poles, carving sheds and a graveyard contribute to the magical feeling of the site.

- ◆ Totem Poles
- ◆ Battle Hill
- ◆ Highway 16/37 Junction







Lava Lake



Nisga'a Lava Bed Rock Flowers



New Aiyansh



Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park



Nisga'a Museum



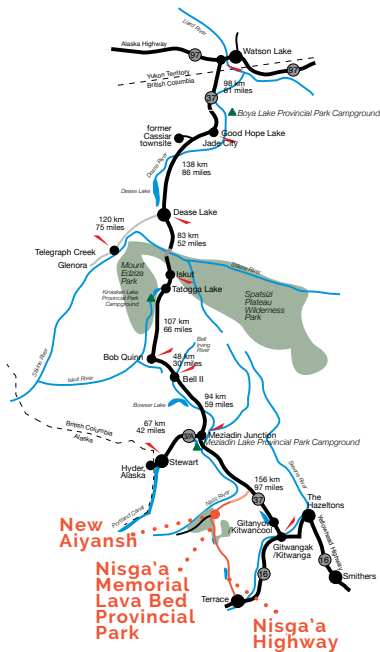
Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park



Lava Lake



# Nass Valley {side trip}



The Nass Valley – home of the self-governed Nisga'a First Nation– is a side trip worth taking. The main access is via the Nisga'a Highway, north from Terrace off of Highway 16. The Nass Valley is also accessible from Highway 37, albeit a rougher road. From Highway 37, turn west at km 76 onto the Nass Forest Service Road, a narrow, winding, 61 km gravel road to New Aiyansh. (Note- This is a Forest Service Road with limited maintenance and drivers are asked to take additional care when driving this route.)

The Nass River travels through a valley formed by molten lava on its way to the Pacific Ocean. The Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Provincial Park is the site of Canada's most recent volcanic eruption. The lava beds were created in 1750, about the time the Spanish explorers arrived in the area. Starting from a small cinder cone, lava flowed into the Nass River

Valley and travelled downstream, creating a lake with red sand beaches.

The Nass Valley is comprised of the four Nisga'a villages of Gitlaxt'aamiks (New Aiyansh)-Capital of the Nisga'a Nation, Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City), Laxgalts'ap (Greenville) and Gingolx (Kincolith)-Seafood Capital of the Nass.

## Nisga'a Museum

The Nisga'a Museum and its collection are directly related to the historic Nisga'a Final Agreement (treaty). The Ancestor's Collection is made up of 330 artifacts and art objects that through the treaty process, were returned from the Royal British Columbia Museum and Canadian Museum of Civilization to the Nisga'a people. This unique collection includes carved masks, bentwood boxes, headdresses, soul catchers, and other works of art known as Anhooya'ahl Ga'angigatgum' – the Ancestors' Collection. The museum is open seasonally from mid-May through to late October. For more information visit [www.nisgaamuseum.ca](http://www.nisgaamuseum.ca)

## Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park

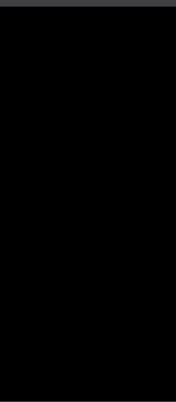
Anhluut'ukwsim Laxmihl Angwinga'asanskwhl Nisga'a (Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park) features a dramatic volcanic landscape, and was the first British Columbia provincial park to combine interpretation of natural features and native culture. Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park is also the first provincial park to be jointly managed by a First Nation and BC Parks. Lava features visible include tree casts, lava tubes, and blocky lava. Please stay on designed paths. Download a map of the Nisga'a Memorial Lava Bed Park from BC Parks.

- ◆ Museum
- ◆ Lava Bed Park
- ◆ Nisga'a





Meziadin Lake



Fox



Meziadin Lake

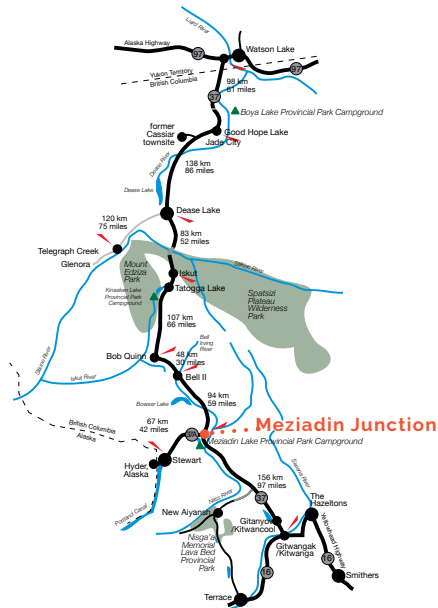


Meziadin Lake





# Highway 37 heading north to



## Meziadin

### Meziadin Fish Ladder

Located just downstream from Meziadin Lake, the Meziadin River Fish Ladder is a popular stop for fish and wildlife viewing. Large Chinook and Sockeye salmon can be seen leaping into the air as they navigate the ladder in late summer to return to their spawning grounds. Grizzly and black bears, eagles, moose and wolves are often spotted here. Roughly 100 meters past (north) of the Nass River Bridge, turn off to the left (west). After 1km, follow the gravel trail south about 0.5 km along the side of the Meziadin River. Large RV's should park at the top of the hill and walk down, as the road may not be suitable for them.

Built for salmon to navigate past Victoria Falls, the original fish ladder was built in 1914 and replaced in 1966. Today, 70 to 80 percent of the Nass River Sockeye Salmon run return to the Meziadin system, accounting for over 200,000 fish counted each season.

Historically, this place represents one of the main fishing sites of both the Nisga'a and Gitanyow people. Today, this significance is still seen in seasonal fishing camps and smokehouses along the north bank of the Meziadin River, and the use of traditional dipnet fishing methods by the Gitanyow.

### Meziadin Lake (Grizzly Viewing)

Meziadin Lake Provincial Park is a popular summer campsite and fishing spot. The park has recently been updated with 66 vehicle sites, most directly on the lake. The lake boasts excellent fishing for Rainbow Trout, Mountain Whitefish and Dolly Varden. The salmon spawning creeks, which feed Meziadin Lake, are favourite feeding grounds for grizzlies. The lake is one of only three places in the province where salmon spawn in the bays and inlets of a lake, rather than a river. Four species of salmon return yearly. Internet (wifi) access available.

### Meziadin Junction

Meziadin Junction is located at the intersection of Highway 37 (north) and Highway 37A, which leads west to Stewart, BC and Hyder, Alaska.

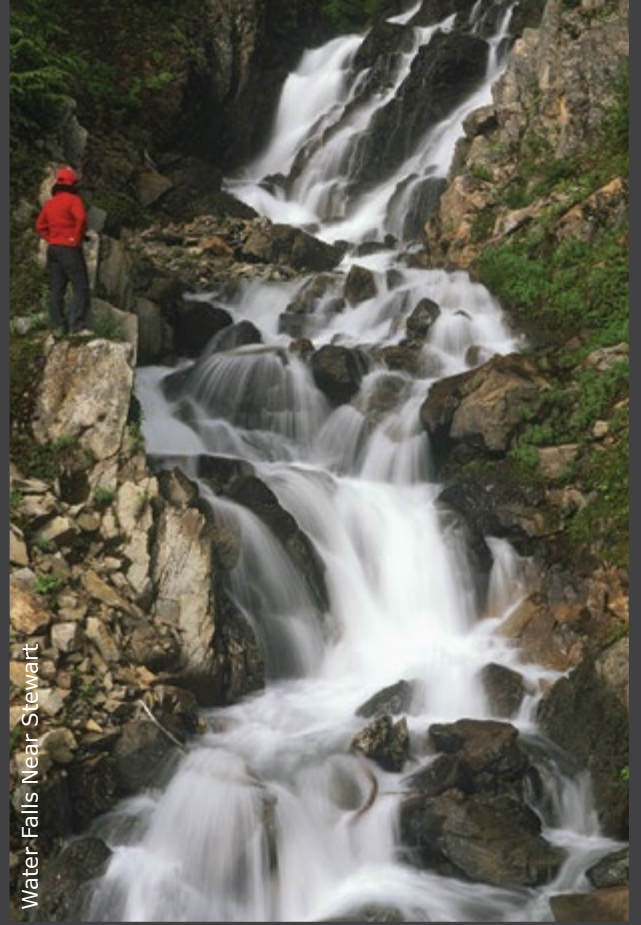
There is a small general store at Meziadin Lake Provincial Park selling basic groceries as well as fishing licenses, tackle and guided tours of the lake and area. Fuel is available at either Stewart (64km west) or Bell 2 (94km north).

- ◆ Fish Ladder
- ◆ Camping
- ◆ Salmon





Bear Glacier



Water Falls Near Stewart



Bear Glacier



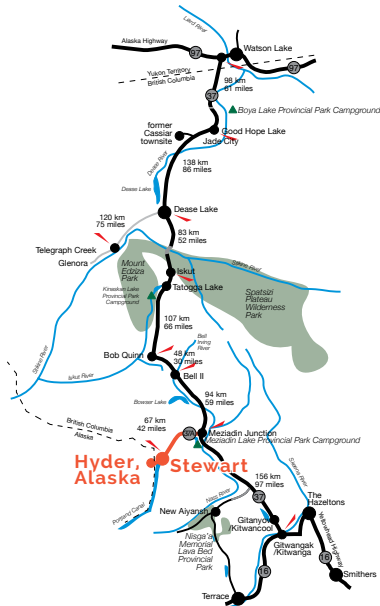
Stewart



Salmon Glacier



# Meziadin to Stewart {side trip}



For a dramatic and rewarding side-trip, take the 65-km drive on Highway 37A to Stewart. This well-built road is as exciting as it is scenic with overhanging glaciers, mountains and wildlife around every bend.

## Stewart

The town of Stewart sits at the head of the Portland Canal, a steep, narrow ocean fjord that forms a natural boundary between British Columbia and Alaska. With a population of approximately 500, Stewart has all the amenities of a larger town, including restaurants, motels, gas stations, bakeries, and museums.

Before the stock market crash of 1929, Stewart was a boomtown of more than ten thousand people. It was the base for people working in the enormous and fabulously rich Premier gold and silver mine, the Big Missouri Mine and the Riverside Mine. The town's colourful history is now chronicled in the Stewart Historical Museum, as well as a number of restored heritage buildings that are marked by historic signage.

The Stewart/Hyder area offers an excellent range of outdoor recreational opportunities. Charter boats and guides will take you out on the waters of the Portland Canal to fish for salmon or halibut, or show you an eco-paradise filled with bears, porpoise, mountain goats and eagles.

**OTHER ATTRACTIONS INCLUDE:** An Estuary Boardwalk with a spectacular view of the Portland Canal, a golf facility with a mountain backdrop and Bear Glacier, visible from the road into Stewart. For more information on Stewart and the surrounding area visit [www.districtofstewart.com](http://www.districtofstewart.com)

## Salmon Glacier

Another spectacular sight is the Salmon Glacier, which is a 37km (23 mile) drive from Stewart, via Hyder. The Salmon Glacier, the fifth largest in Canada, is a remnant of that last great age of glaciers. The self-guided sightseeing tour along Salmon Glacier Road, built to connect Stewart to mining interests, is a must when visiting the area! Summit viewpoint provides a perfect view of the area and has facilities making it a great place for a picnic.

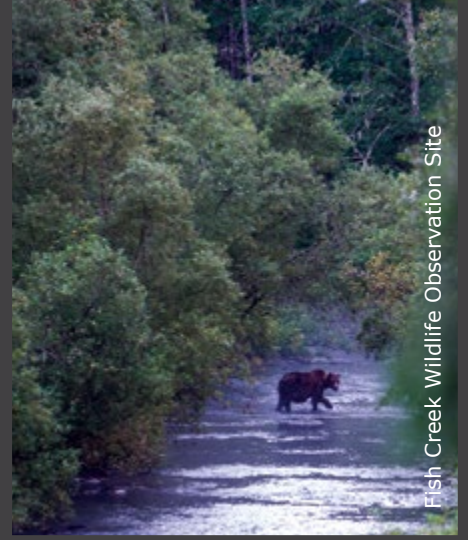
Pick up your new Salmon Glacier Auto Tour Guide throughout the Northern BC region and along the Stewart Cassiar Highway.

- ◆ Bear Glacier
- ◆ Salmon Glacier
- ◆ Highway 37A





Near Stewart / Hyder



Fish Creek Wildlife Observation Site



Hyder



Black Bear



Salmon Glacier



## Sluice Box/Barneys Gulch Trail

This is a short moderate hike that follows the original railway bed leading out of Stewart and then turns right, climbing up along the historic sluice box, to a viewpoint overlooking the town of Stewart and the Portland Canal. **ACCESS:** When leaving Stewart on Highway 37A cross the Bear River and take the first right towards the Stewart landfill. Park before the bridge leading to the landfill and follow signs to the trailhead.

## United Empire Trail

This is a steep trail that follows the Bear River and then climbs to a viewpoint (1 km) overlooking the Bear River Valley and Stewart. The steep, rough trail continues beyond the viewpoint, climbing to the site of the old United Empire mine at 4.3 km, then onto the Bear River ridge and alpine (7.3 km). The trail beyond the viewpoint is recommended for experienced hikers only and should not be attempted until at least late June. **ACCESS:** The trailhead begins off of Highway 37A, across from the B.C. Ministry of Highways service yard, in the town of Stewart.

## Hyder

Three kilometres from Stewart is Hyder, Alaska. Hyder bills itself as the “friendliest ghost town in Alaska.” With a year round population of perhaps 60, Hyder explodes with activity in the summer months. Hyder is a world-class destination for Grizzly and Black Bear viewing during the salmon spawning at the Fish Creek Wildlife Observation Site. Plan your visit to coincide with the annual Bear Festival in August.

## Fish Creek Wildlife Observation Site

The Fish Creek Wildlife Observation Site provides excellent opportunities to view Black and Grizzly bears during the months of July and August, as they feed on salmon in the creek below the platform.

The Fish Creek site is open from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm daily. Forest Service employees are at the site during these hours to provide information about the bears and salmon, enforce site rules, and answer questions from visitors. There is a small admission charge to access the viewing facility. No camping is permitted on site but available in Hyder. **ACCESS:** Drive north of Hyder 6.4 km (4 miles) along the Salmon River Road. Parking for the Observation Site is located immediately after crossing the Fish Creek bridge.

## Feeling adventurous? Try the Titan Trail

This is a difficult 7.7 km (4.8 mile) climb that follows a mule trail, leading to the historic Titan Mine site. The trail, built in 1922, also provided access to several other mineral claims in the area. **ACCESS:** Drive north of Hyder 6.8 (4.25 miles) along the Salmon River Road where the trailhead is located on the right hand side.

◆ Fish Creek  
◆ Grizzly  
Viewing  
◆ Alaska





Near Iskut



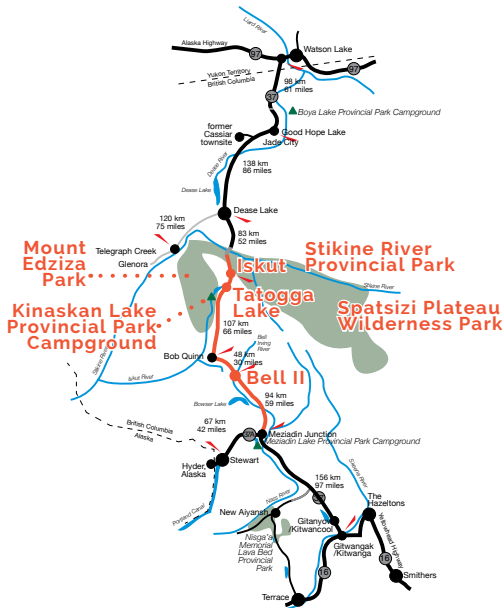
Bell II



Iskut



# Highway 37 heading north to



## Bell II

North of Meziadin Junction, beyond the Hodder Lake rest stop, is Bell II, where Highway 37 crosses the Bell-Irving River. Bell II offers fuel services including gas, propane and diesel. Other services include a full restaurant, general store, showers and laundry services. Offering deluxe cabin rentals, lodge and a full service RV park, Bell II is also a gateway to spectacular lakes and streams and awesome wildlife viewing. In the winter months, Bell II Lodge serves as a base for a world-renowned heli-skiing operation.

## Tatogga

Tatogga is a tiny, unincorporated community situated at Tatogga Lake, just south of Iskut. Tatogga means "small lake between two big lakes" in the Tahltan language. Gas and diesel, groceries and restaurant, cabin rentals and RV sites

are available here, as well as guide outfitters, floatplane and fishing charters and canoe rentals. Wifi is available on site.

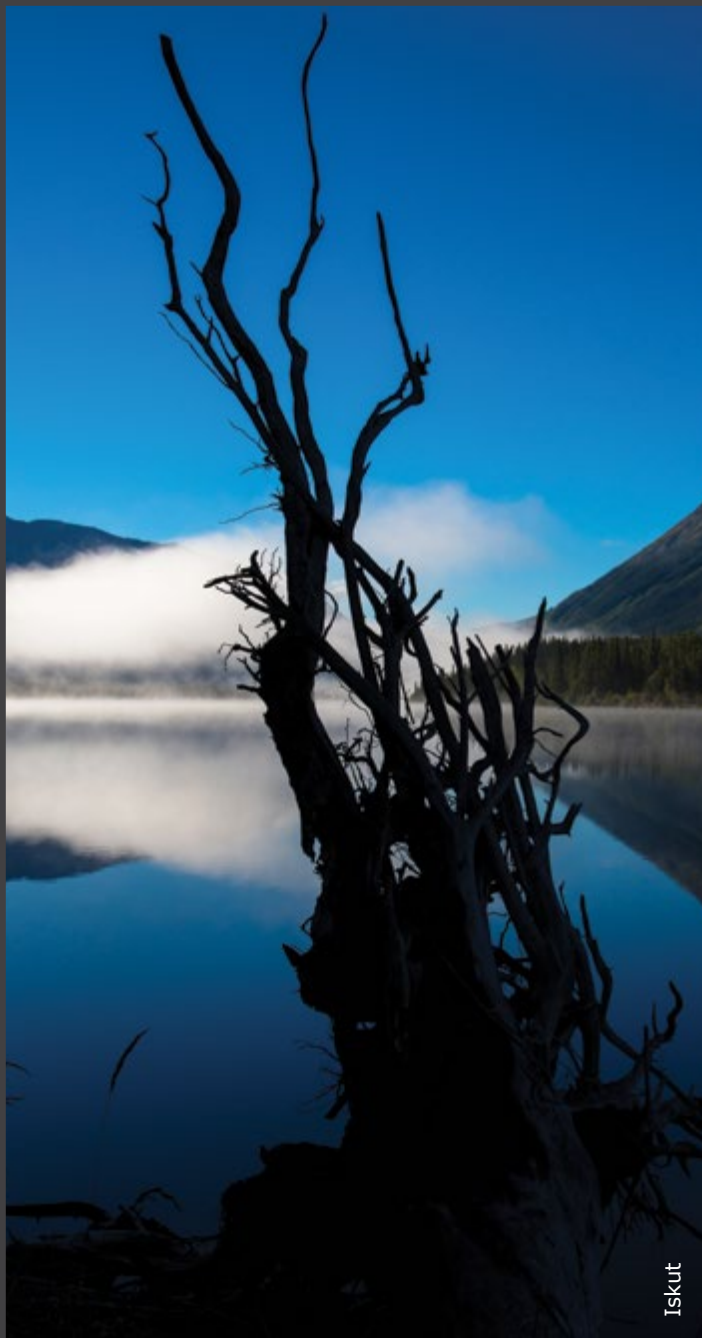
## Iskut

The community of Iskut is located 86 Km south of Dease Lake and is the home of the Iskut First Nation in the Tahltan territory. Situated between Mount Edziza and Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park, its 670 residents enjoy access to vast areas of pristine wilderness. Rafting, canoeing, kayaking, hiking and camping are just some of the activities enjoyed by visitors. Services in Iskut include: Gas and diesel, groceries, phone, wifi and general shopping needs. There are also private accommodations ranging from bed and breakfasts, to high-end lodges to RV parks with services.

- ◆ Bell Irving River
- ◆ Cabin Rentals
- ◆ RV Sites







Iskut



Edziza



Spatzizi



Iskut



Iskut



# Iskut Lakes & Iskut River Valley

The Iskut Lakes region is truly one of North America's last wild frontiers. The Iskut/Tatogga area is a scenic corridor and the gateway to the Stikine area, Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Park, Mount Edziza Park, the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, and the Upper Stikine River. The area is the traditional home of the Tahltan First Nation. The Tahltan make up over half the population of Iskut, Dease Lake and Telegraph Creek.

This area is known for the Barrage Burn of 1958, when fire destroyed 78,000 hectares. Now, this area is the largest huckleberry patch in British Columbia. The Iskut Lakes area is also home to the world's largest population of Stone Sheep and one of the largest populations of moose in North America.

The Iskut Lakes area, a chain of over 50 km of lakes along Highway 37, boasts multiple Provincial parks with rafting, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, fishing, hunting and camping for visitors. Many of the parks in the area are day use and tent camping only with the exception of Kinaskan Lake Provincial Park, which has 50 RV sites. Some of these parks include:

## Todagin South Slope Provincial Park

The world's largest population of nursing Stone Sheep. The park protects habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including mountain goats, grizzly bears, moose and caribou. Recreation opportunities include wildlife viewing and bow hunting in a backcountry wilderness.

## Mount Edziza Provincial Park

The youngest volcanic cone in North America encompasses over 230,000 hectares of the Tahltan Highlands in northwestern British Columbia. This remote park showcases a spectacular volcanic landscape that includes lava flows, basalt plateaus, cinder fields and cinder cones. In the years since Mount Edziza became dormant, numerous small eruptions have taken place around it, creating more than 30 cinder cones. Perfectly symmetrical, Eve Cone rises 150 meters above the plateau. Mount Edziza, the park's most outstanding feature, reaches 2,787 meters (9,144 ft).

## Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Provincial Park

Spatsizi Wilderness Park: Spatsizi is a Tahltan word for "Land of the Red Goat". This extraordinary wilderness park was named after its mountain goats that roll in the park's iron oxide soil and colour their white coats red. This is one of Canada's largest and most significant parks, with a true wilderness atmosphere, outstanding scenery and varied terrain; Excellent for quality hiking, photography, and nature study. Lands within the park have an excellent capability for supporting large populations of wildlife.

◆ Parks  
◆ Sheep  
◆ Volcano





Kinaskin Lake



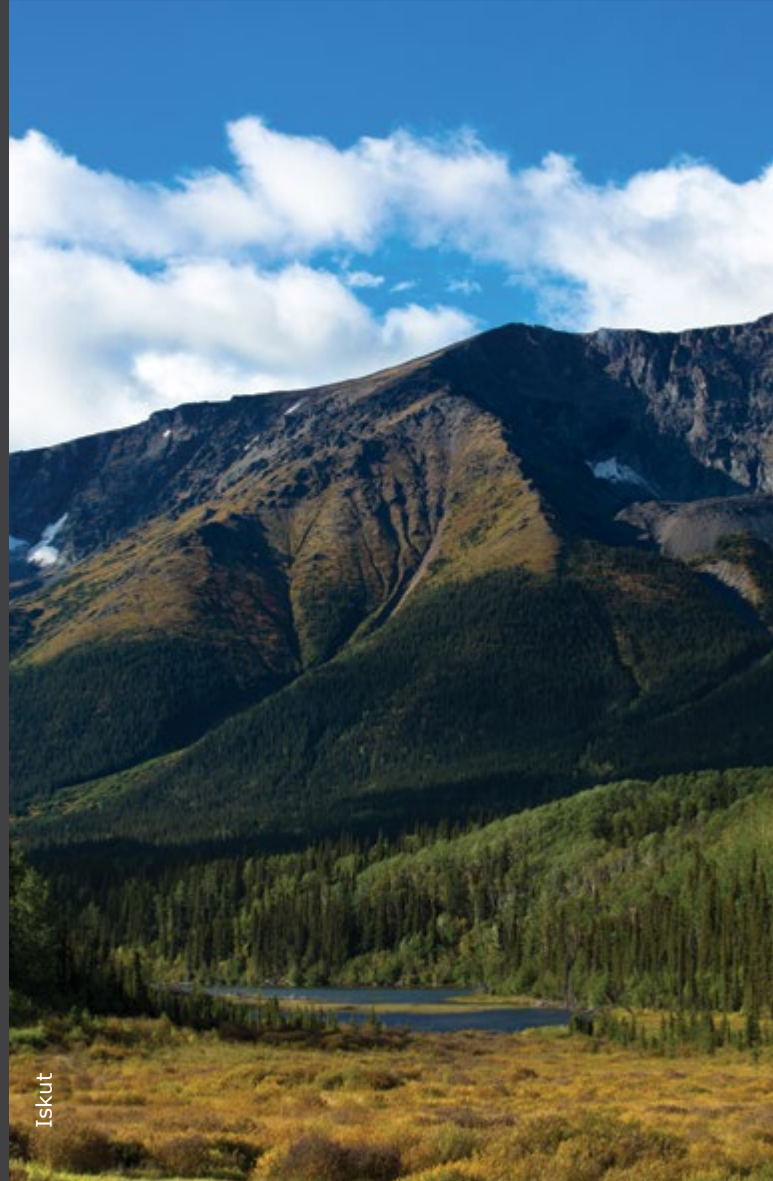
Kinaskin Lake



Grizzly



Stikine



Iskut



## Stikine River & Stikine River Provincial Park

The Stikine River, originating in the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Provincial Park, connects that park with the Stikine River Provincial Park and Mt. Edziza Provincial Park

For thousands of years before European contact, the Stikine River was a vital transportation route, and in the late 1800s was a principal route to the Yukon's Klondike goldfields. The river offers many opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts to "experience the wild". Experienced canoeists, kayakers or rafters can run sections of the Stikine River through the Coast Mountains to the Pacific Ocean at Wrangell, Alaska. John Muir, in *Travels to Alaska*, described the river as "a Yosemite that was a hundred miles long".

Stikine River Provincial Park is a geological feature unparalleled in Canada. Eighty kilometers of steep-walled canyon, composed of sedimentary and volcanic rock, has been carved through eons of river erosion. In the bottom of this sometimes 300 meter deep chasm flows the wild and unnavigable Stikine River, which varies in width from 200 meters to as little as 2 meters at a point near the Tanzilla and Stikine confluence.

◆ Stikine  
◆ Mountain Goats  
◆ Camping

## Kinaskan Lake Provincial Park

Overnight campers and avid fishers will find Kinaskan Lake to be the perfect spot to stop and relax. The campsites provide a spectacular introduction to northern scenery. From the lakefront campground, visitors are afforded sweeping views up the length of the lake with Todagin Mountains to the east and the Klastline Plateau to the west.

Located at the south end of Kinaskan Lake between the Skeena and Coast Mountain Ranges, this park offers spectacular scenery and good rainbow trout fishing. The Iskut River runs through the park to the south, where it enters a smaller lake called Natadesleen. The Little Iskut River branches off to the west into Mt. Edziza Provincial Park and Recreation Area.

## Iskut River Valley (Mountain Goat Viewing)

The Iskut River Valley is characterized by a collection of headwater lakes, adjacent plateaus, and is sharply divided by spectacular falls and unnavigable canyons. Traditional trails and excellent wildlife viewing opportunities, including Stone Sheep and mountain goat are possible when accompanied by a knowledgeable guide.



Iskut





Dease Lake



Dease Lake



Morchuea Lake





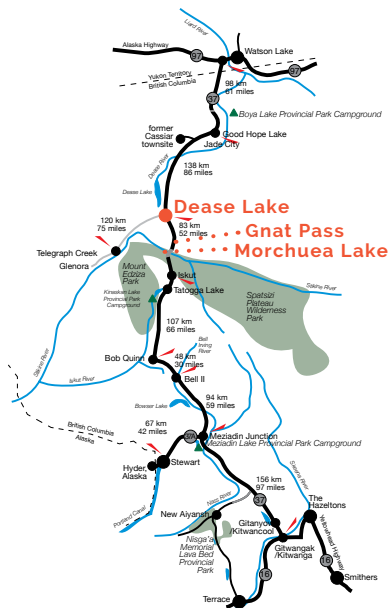
# Highway 37 heading north to

## Morchuea Lake Recreation Site

Morchuea Lake is located approximately 50 kilometers south of the village of Dease Lake. The access road to the lake is indicated by a Recreation Site sign on the west side of the highway. There is an 8-unit rustic campground on the northeast shore. Mount Edziza is the prominent backdrop when looking over the lake from this site. This site has a small boat launch.

## Gnat Pass/ BC Rail grade

Gnat Pass, the highest point of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway at 4,071 ft, provides views of the old BC Rail grade. The unfinished rail bed through the wilderness now provides rough road access into some of BC's remote interior. Note that the road is unmaintained. Both Upper and Lower Gnat Lakes offer scenic and serene canoeing and fishing. Trumpeter swans visit the



lakes during their spring and fall migrations. Several trails from the vicinity provide hiking and ski touring access to alpine areas. Northern Mountain caribou, wolves, bears, lynx, wolverine and eagles all inhabit the area.

## The Arctic/Pacific Divide

The Tanzilla River, to the south of Dease Lake, is a main tributary of the Stikine River, which runs west into the Pacific Ocean. Dease Lake, north of town, empties into the Dease and Liard Rivers, which eventually spill into the Arctic Ocean. This unique point is called the Arctic/Pacific Divide.

## Dease Lake

Dease Lake was originally a Hudson's Bay Company trading post, established in 1837 by Robert Campbell. Remains of the old Hudson Bay post still stand at the south end of the lake.

Today, Dease Lake (population 400) offers full services for travelers, as well as guide/outfitting, boat, canoe and ATV rentals, and helicopter tours. Dease Lake is known for its massive Lake Trout and Arctic Grayling. Northern Pike and Rainbow Trout can also be caught in abundance here. Known as Tat'l'ah or "Head of the Lake" by the Tahltan First Nation, the community is primarily of Tahltan descent and thrives on a rich history and culture. Dease Lake is a leading source for jewellery-grade jade, also known as nephrite. The mining season here is short and seasonal, and as jade is one of the world's hardest stone, special equipment is required. Much of this jade is exported to China, but you can find it in gift shops along the highway.

◆ Gnat Pass  
◆ Arctic Pacific Divide





Driving to Telegraph Creek



Telegraph Creek



Driving to Telegraph Creek



Driving to Telegraph Creek



Stikine River



# Dease Lake to Telegraph Creek {side trip}



For an adventurous journey back in time, take the 112-kilometer (70 mile) gravel road from Dease Lake to Telegraph Creek along the Grand Canyon of the Stikine. Following a First Nations' trading route and the path of early gold prospectors, the road winds along the Stikine Canyon, with dramatic views of the sheer walls cut by the river through layers of volcanic lava. Mountain goats can be spotted among the ledges and rock outcrops of the canyon. The breathtaking road descends to the community of Telegraph Creek, which was once the limit of navigation for riverboats bringing passengers and goods inland.

The Tahltan First Nation has lived in this area for generations, and still harvest the Stikine's prolific salmon run. Scenic floatplane flights are available, as well as a heart-stopping helicopter tour into the Grand Canyon of the Stikine.

All visitors are asked to respect traditional Tahltan sites. Permission to fish in Tahltan waters can be acquired from the Band Office.

## Grand Canyon of the Stikine

The Stikine Grand Canyon has prevented all but the most skillful kayakers from paddling the entire length of the river. More people have walked on the moon than have paddled through the Grand Canyon.

◆ Grand Canyon  
◆ Tahltan

Driving to Telegraph Creek





Telegraph Creek



Telegraph Creek



Telegraph Creek



Telegraph Creek



Grand Canyon of the Stikine



Paddling South from Telegraph



Telegraph Creek



## Points of interest from Dease Lake to Telegraph Creek

### Tahltan

**92 KM FROM DEASE LAKE:** Tahltan is a First Nations historic fishing site at the confluence of the Stikine and Tahltan Rivers. On the canyon wall across the river is Home of the Crow- or Sesk'iyé cho kime (pronounced Sis Kia Cho Kima). Naturally occurring in the basalt rock face of the canyon is the shape of the massive outstretched wings and head of a bird. In Tahltan culture, the crow is the Trickster, the creator of light, who helped bring humans into the world. Some describe this location as the birthplace of the Tahltan.

### Waterfall Viewpoint Trail

**101KM FROM DEASE LAKE:** A pullout at the road's side leads to this short and very steep trail, but the view of the waterfall freefalling from the canyon's edge is worth the stop. Use caution!

### Telegraph Creek

**112 KM FROM DEASE LAKE:** A community of roughly 250 permanent residents, Telegraph Creek has very basic services so ensure you have all supplies in case services are closed. Built on terraces overlooking the Stikine River, Telegraph Creek is rich with history. First a Tahltan settlement, it became an important transportation and communication centre during the exciting times of the gold rushes of the 1860s and 1870s, and a trailhead for Yukon gold seekers of the 1890s. Prospectors once enlivened this quiet riverside community, which provides glimpses of a bygone era with a former Hudson Bay Trading Post and other turn of the century buildings.

Telegraph Creek's name hails from the 1860s, when the Collins Overland Telegraph was racing to complete the first telegraph line between North America and Europe, across the Bering Strait. Beat out in August 1866 by a trans-Atlantic connection, Collins abandoned the line, but not before it had crossed the Stikine River at Telegraph Creek. Built later, the Yukon Telegraph followed a similar route and linked Dawson City to southern Canada. Remains of the telegraph line and its network of service cabins can still be found.



- ◆ Waterfall
- ◆ Fishing
- ◆ Telegraph Creek

### Sawmill Lake

**114KM FROM DEASE LAKE:** Sawmill Lake has great trout fishing, a picnic site and serves as a landing location for float planes.

### Glenora

**131 KM FROM DEASE LAKE:** Upstream from Telegraph Creek, Glenora was the original Hudson Bay Fort location. Because Telegraph Creek was head of navigation for sternwheelers carrying prospectors up the Stikine en route to the Klondike, it was a better location. The fort was actually dismantled and moved to its current location in Telegraph Creek.





Jade City



Jade City



Jade City



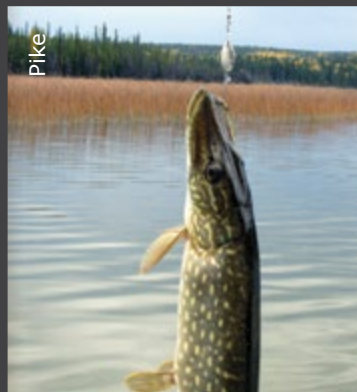
Jade City



Boya Lake



Boya Lake



pike



# Highway 37 heading north to



## Sawmill Point Recreation Site

Sawmill Point Recreation Site, 41 km north of the community of Dease Lake, gives direct access to the lake. Once the site of a short-lived Hudson's Bay Company post established in 1838 and abandoned in 1839, now it is a popular camping and fishing spot. Try your hand at catching the good-sized lake trout here, and look for the remains of the foundation of the old fort. Dease Lake has historically been an important First Nations' transportation corridor.

## Jade City/Cassiar

Jade City, named for the extensive jade deposits found nearby, offers a glimpse into mining this lovely stone. With a population of approximately 20 people, the family-run jade mining operation is a stop of particular interest on the Stewart Cassiar Highway. With 40 years of history mining in the area, the owners of the Cassiar Mountain Jade

Store are experts in everything from prospecting to carving it. In Jade City you will find FREE overnight RV parking, accommodation, a restaurant, native art shop, jade gallery and mining exhibits.

A 10-km drive west off the highway leads to the ghost town of Cassiar. An asbestos mining town, the mine operations ended in 1992. Flowers now bloom where houses stood and an abandoned tramline still stands idle. Abandoned cabins and equipment let you imagine the life of early miners and settlers. Old mining trails into the mountains can be travelled on foot or with 4x4 vehicles or ATVs, with chances to see Thinhorn mountain sheep, mountain goat, caribou and moose. **NOTE:** There are no public facilities in the old Cassiar town-site, and it is closed to visitors.

## Boya Lake Provincial Park

With many islands and lovely bays, Boya Lake Provincial Park is an excellent place for canoeing or kayaking. Look into its depths to see fish swimming below, visible against the white marl bottom. Its unique aqua-green hue and relatively warm and swimmable water makes Boya Lake a must-visit place on the route. There are 44 campsites with ample parking. Canoe and kayak rentals are available from the park operator. Two interpretive trails lead from the campground around the shores of the lake, where you will find a wide variety of wildflowers, and the chance to see beavers, moose, and caribou. Boya Lake lies within the traditional territory of the Kaska Dene First Nation who still hunt and trap in the area.

## North to the Yukon

Northbound from Boya Lake lies the Yukon Territory with the British Columbia/ Yukon border 81km (50 miles) north of the park. The Alaska Highway junction is 86km (53 miles), Watson Lake 109km (68 miles) and Whitehorse is 509km (367 miles) from Boya Lake. All services and amenities are available in Watson Lake. For more information pick up the new Watson Lake/ Yukon guide or visit [www.yukoninfo.com](http://www.yukoninfo.com)

- ◆ Jewelry
- ◆ Cassiar
- ◆ Yukon



# The road trip of a lifetime!

*The Stewart Cassiar Visitor Guide is a joint publication of Northern BC Tourism and the Regional District of Kitimat Stikine, with contributions from:*

**Destination BC**  
Stewart Cassiar Tourism Council  
BC Parks

**Photos:** Simon Ratcliffe, Rob Seaton, Tim Swanky, JF Bergeron, Sue Chief Gary Fiegehen Photography, Sandra Smith, Paul Glover

**Design:** Sandra Smith at Spark Design

These maps are not to scale and are meant as a visual illustration only.

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