



GETTING HERE VIA WATSON LAKE

Detail description for journey from Whitehorse to Frances Lake

The fastest and easiest way: On the Alaska Highway (Hwy 1) 450 km east via Teslin to Watson Lake (4.5 – 5 h driving time). Afterwards 170 km on the Campbell Highway (Hwy 4) north to Frances Lake (2.5 – 3 h driving time). **All in all 620 km or 7 – 8 h driving time.** Allow one full day for this drive.

The **Alaska Highway** between Whitehorse and Watson Lake is a well maintained, frequently traveled, paved highway and allows driving speeds of around 100 km/h. At regular intervals there are gas stations and places with board and lodging. Recommended stops are the *Wildlife Museum in Teslin* (at the gas station/motel/campground, just before the big bridge) and the *Rancheria Falls* about 120 km east of Teslin (short walk to waterfall, nice picnic area). **Watson Lake** is a medium-sized town for Yukon measures and offers all necessary services. There is an interesting *Visitor Center* with an exhibit on the construction of the Alaska Highway, the famous *Signpost Forest* and the *Northern Lights Center* with displays and a multimedia show about the fascinating phenomenon of the aurora borealis.

Should you wish to spend a night along the way, we recommend for example the luxurious *Inn on the Lake* (on Marsh Lake, about 50 km east of Whitehorse), the rustic *Dawson Peaks Resort* (11 km east of Teslin) or the historic *Air Force Lodge* in Watson Lake. If required, we gladly make a reservation for you. For campers there are many nice campgrounds available, for example at *Squanga Lake* or at *Teslin Lake*. All these campgrounds outside of town sites are very simple equipped (no power and no running water), but very scenic and offering generous sites.

The **Campbell Highway** north of Watson Lake is initially paved as well, but soon changes to a well-developed and wide gravel road. Depending on actual weather conditions it allows driving speeds of 60 – 80 km/h. The road leads through the remote backcountry and has only light traffic. It can be well traveled in conventional vehicles and is allowed for rental cars and campervans. A four-wheel drive vehicle is not necessary, but a full-size spare wheel is advisable. Break-down service is far and time-consuming to organize (cell phones have only reception within a few kilometres of towns and communities). In dry weather conditions dust formation from oncoming vehicles may reduce the visibility and in wet weather slippery passages may be encountered. Drive carefully. At times, road works can cause delays. Allow plenty of time. Finally, pay attention to the fact that there is no gas station between Watson Lake and Frances Lake. It is essential to fill up completely in Watson Lake in order to have sufficient gas for the way back.

A scenic stop and an ideal picnic area is *Simpson Lake Campground* (Km 81 from Watson Lake). At Km 108 there is a turn off to the *Nahanni Range Road (Tungsten Road)*, which leads to a big tungsten mine in the Northwest Territories. Continue to drive on straight ahead towards Ross River. At Km 172 you'll get to **Frances Lake**. There is neither a town site nor a road house or telephone here, but only an unmanned campground and a few wooden sheds. Don't expect to meet any other people here – except us!

Access to the boat ramp at Frances Lake

The Campbell Highway nowhere leads entirely to the lake, but at one place goes close past it. At **Km 172 from Watson Lake**, at the *signpost „Frances Lake Campground”*, turn off in direction of the lake and drive **1 km STRAIGHT AHEAD** through dense forest to the concrete boat ramp (the access road to the campground proper turns off left again shortly before you get to the boat ramp; do NOT take this turn off). At the boat ramp you can park your car safely and we will bring you by motor boat to the lodge (30 min. ride). If nothing else was arranged, 5:00 pm is our pick-up time at the boat ramp.

Normally we are on time. In case we are delayed, please wait on site. Should you be behind schedule, we normally wait for one hour before we return to the lodge and will come back later in the evening. Maybe we will leave a note on the back side of the boat ramp sign. If you have the opportunity, please announce a big delay as early as possible by phone (1-780-628-5322, leave a voice mail message) or by e-mail (info@franceslake.ca).