



## GETTING HERE VIA WATSON LAKE

### Detail description of the 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 travelled, paved highway which allows driving at around 100 km/h. At regular intervals there are gas stations and places offering board and lodging. Recommended stops in **Teslin** are the *George Johnston Museum*, the *Tlingit Heritage Centre* and the *Wildlife Museum* (at the gas station/motel/campground, just before the big bridge). The *Rancheria Falls*, 120 km east of Teslin, offer a short walk to a waterfall and picnic area. **Watson Lake** is a medium-sized town by Yukon standards and offers full services. There is an interesting *Visitor Information Centre* with an exhibit on the construction of the Alaska Highway, the famous *Sign Post Forest* and the *Northern Lights Centre*, which features displays and a multimedia show about the fascinating phenomenon of the aurora borealis.

Should you wish to spend a night along the way, your best options are in Teslin or Watson Lake. In Watson Lake, we recommend the historic *Air Force Lodge*. For campers, there are many nice campgrounds available, for example at *Squanga Lake* or at *Teslin Lake*. Campgrounds outside of towns are very simply equipped (no power and no running water), but very scenic and generously sized.

The **Campbell Highway**, north of Watson Lake, is mostly paved for the first 114 km (except Km 73 – 88 with a long road construction section) and then turns into a gravel road which allows driving at about 50 – 70 km/h. The road leads through remote backcountry and has only light traffic. It can be easily travelled in conventional vehicles and is allowed with rental cars and campervans. Four-wheel drive is not necessary, but a full-size spare wheel is advisable. Roadside service is often far away and hard to organize, as cell phone coverage is only available near towns and communities. In dry weather conditions, dust from oncoming vehicles may reduce visibility and in wet weather, slippery passages may be encountered. Drive carefully and always consider the possibility of oncoming traffic (i.e. big trucks) around blind bends. Sometimes road works (i.e. Km 73 – 88) can cause delays and difficult driving conditions. Allow plenty of time and be aware 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 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, just 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 doesn't lead directly to the lake, but offers access to a short road that will connect you to it. At **Km 172 from Watson Lake**, just before the **bridge across Money Creek**, on your right-hand side, you'll see a **signpost for „Frances Lake Campground“**. Turn right (in the 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 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 take you by motorboat to the lodge (a 30 min. ride). Unless otherwise 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. We may also 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 (1-406-206-4396, leave a voice mail message) or by e-mail (info@franceslake.ca).

Make sure to **get up-to-date road information** before heading out in a Yukon Visitor Information Centre or online at [www.511yukon.ca](http://www.511yukon.ca). Especially backcountry roads can be closed for one or several days due to storm damage or forest fires.