

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

...The...

# ALASKA RAILROAD

“Mt. McKinley Park Route”



## *TRAVELOGUE*

Containing worth-while information  
concerning the Curry Resort, Mount  
McKinley National Park, and  
points of interest along  
the line



# Along The Alaska Railroad



## TRAVELOGUE

Being an outline of conditions and places of interest along the "Mt. McKinley Park Route," beginning at Seward and proceeding northward.



**SEWARD.**—Altitude 20 feet. Seward, located on Resurrection Bay, is the ocean terminus of The Alaska Railroad, and distributing center for points to the westward on Kodiak Island, the Alaska Peninsula, and Aleutian Islands. Seward is named in honor of William H. Seward, who, as Secretary of State, negotiated for the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867. Ships enter the waters of Resurrection Bay through "Harding Entrance," named for the first President of the United States to visit the Territory during his term of office. A splendid road leads from Seward to Lake Kenai.



Seward on Resurrection Bay

Seward is the terminus of the cable lines from the United States to Alaska, and a high-powered radio station is maintained at Seward by the United States Army. The Jessie Lee Home, a mission for Indians, is located on the outskirts of Seward. A large cold storage and fish packing plant is one of the local industries.

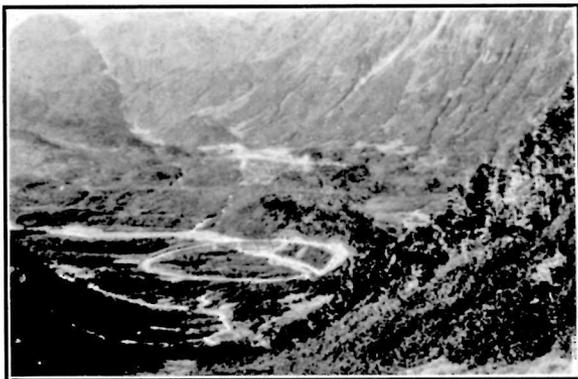
**DIVIDE.**—Altitude, 694 feet. From Seward, 12 miles. Summit of the first crossing of the Kenai Mountains; water flowing into Resurrection Bay on the south and into Kenai Lake on the north. Shortly after leaving Divide, Snow River is crossed and followed to the head of Kenai Lake.

**PRIMROSE.**—Altitude, 457 feet. From Seward, 18 miles. The beginning of Kenai Lake.

**LAWING.**—Altitude, 452 feet. From Seward, 23 miles. Lawing is situated on Kenai Lake. Splendid resort accommodations are provided here, and at the lodge visitors may inspect the finest collection of pelts, mounted specimens of wild game and birds, as well as numerous other trophies, to be found in the Northland. Launch service is provided on the lake to Russian River—the “Angler’s Paradise”—and to other scenic points. There are excellent trails for hiking, and good fishing may be had in the streams near by. After leaving Lawing the railroad follows Kenai Lake and crosses a narrow neck of water 3 miles north of Lawing. On the right side of the track travelers will see a tramway leading up to the mountain side to a fine gold quartz mining property. From this point Lower and Middle Trail Lake is followed to Moose Pass.

**MOOSE PASS.**—Altitude, 486 feet. From Seward, 29 miles. A road leads from this point to the Sunrise and Hope Mining districts on to the south side of Turnagain Arm. From Moose Pass the railroad follows the shore of Upper Trail Lake to Mile 33, where a crossing is made, then along Trail River to Grandview.

**GRANDVIEW.**—Altitude, 1,063 feet. From Seward, 45 miles. This is the summit of the second crossing of the Kenai Mountains. Water flows into Kenai Lake on the south and Turnagain Arm on the north. Just before reaching Grandview a splendid view of Trail Glacier, Trail River, and Trail Canyon may be had. On the left side of the track near the north end of the siding a beaver dam is clearly visible. Another beaver dam may be seen on the right side a mile and a half north of Grandview.



“Loop District” The Alaska Railroad

Three miles north of Grandview the “Loop District” is reached and here is a sight which travelers will never forget—a marvelous engineering feat and a most interesting sight. For 4 miles the track twists and turns on the mountain sides; over high bridges, trestle spirals, and through snowsheds and tunnels, until it forms a complete loop over Placer River. The winding track is visible at one point

in four places. There are two spirals in the loop—two complete circles. In making this loop Bartlett Glacier, which lies nestled in the high mountains, is passed and a closeup view is obtained.

To the left and above Bartlett Glacier is Deadman’s Glacier.

Beyond question this piece of railroad engineering, together with the mountain scenery, offers one of the most inspiring sights to be seen on the entire Alaskan trip. Tunnel station may also be seen from this point, a distance of 1 mile by air line and 3½ miles by railroad, the difference in elevation between these two points being 300 feet.

**TUNNEL.**—Altitude, 491 feet. From Seward, 51 miles. Shortly after leaving Tunnel station the train in following Placer River Canyon passes through six tunnels and two snowsheds within a distance of 1½ miles, and several close-ups and distant views of Spencer Glacier may be had.



Trail River and Kenai Mountains

**SPENCER GLACIER.**—From Seward, 53 miles. At this point the foot of Spencer Glacier is within 100 yards of the track, and an excellent view may be had of the glacier. A trail leads from this point to Placer River opposite the glacier. Between Spencer Glacier and Portage several glacier streams are crossed.

**PORTAGE.**—Altitude, 33 feet. From Seward, 64 miles. Head of Turnagain Arm, the tide of which is the second greatest in the world. Turnagain Arm was named by Captain Cook, that intrepid explorer, who, in his search for the northwest passage, having entered this body of water, was forced to “turn again”. The Alaska Railroad follows the shore of this twisting neck of water for many miles, practically the remainder of the distance to Anchorage. From this point Portage Glacier may be seen. The distance from this point to Prince William Sound is 12 miles. A little farther on Twenty-Mile River is crossed and Twenty-Mile Glacier may be seen in the distance.

**GIRDWOOD.**—Altitude, 40 feet. From Seward, 75 miles. Girdwood is an old construction and mining settlement and starting point for the Crow Creek gold district.

**RAINBOW.**—Altitude, 63 feet. From Seward, 94 miles. This is the starting point in the summer months for the Sunrise and Hope gold mining districts across Turnagain Arm. Hope is one of the oldest gold mining districts in Alaska. After leaving Rainbow the train still follows the shore of Turnagain Arm, and a good view may be had of the Alaska Range to the west across Cook Inlet and on a clear day Mount Iliamna, 130 miles distant, may be seen.



Along the shore of "Turnagain Arm"

**POTTER.**—Altitude, 32 feet. From Seward, 101 miles. The end of Turnagain Arm which empties into Cook Inlet.

**ANCHORAGE.**—Altitude, 38 feet. From Seward 114 miles. Anchorage is situated on Knik Arm of Cook Inlet and is headquarters of The Alaska Railroad, where railroad yards and shops are located. It is one of the most beautiful and most modern cities in Alaska, and visitors invariably find enough of interest here to make their stay an enjoyable one. A radio broadcast station located in the city operates on regular schedule and is heard all over Alaska and many points in the United States. Excellent tennis courts are available; and at the edge of the city is a nine-hole golf course. Four miles from Anchorage, at the end of a beautiful motor highway, is Lake Spenard, where fine bathing facilities and other forms of resort entertainment are provided, and on the road to Lake Spenard there are several attractive road houses. A 20 mile motor ride over the Eagle River Road offers visitors an excellent opportunity to observe additional scenic and other attractions that are the pride of the Northland. At one point on this motor trip a magnificent view of Mount McKinley, Mount Hunter, and Mount Foraker can be obtained.

A road is being extended to the Matanuska Valley, where it will reach a system of 125 miles already built, connecting farms, settlements and the Willow Creek mining region.

Airplanes operate from Anchorage to various points in Alaska. Two salmon canneries are located at Anchorage and regular boat service is provided to various points on Cook Inlet. There are glorious sunsets on Cook Inlet, and many tourists have considered it well worth while to make a trip from Seward to Anchorage to see one of these wonderful sunsets.

Anchorage is rapidly becoming the outfitting point for hunting parties going to Tustumena Lake district, Kasilof River district on the famous Kenai Peninsula, Rainy Pass



Anchorage on Knik Arm

and Chickaloon hunting districts. These districts are known throughout the world as perhaps the finest big game regions left in North America, where the limit of moose, sheep, goats, brown, black and grizzly bear may be obtained. The train stops at Anchorage one hour for lunch.

**WHITNEY.**—Altitude, 222 feet. From Seward, 119.1 miles. Power transmission and cable lines may be seen to the left which run due west two miles to a new powerful commercial radio station maintained by the U.S. Army. This station is operated by remote control from Anchorage.

**EAGLE RIVER.**—Altitude, 197 feet. From Seward 127 miles. Here the railroad crosses the Eagle River and Eagle River Canyon.

**EKLUTNA.**—Altitude, 50 feet. From Seward, 141 miles. A large Indian school maintained by the United States Government is situated at the right of the railroad. After leaving Eklutna, Knik and Matanuska Rivers, both glacier streams, are crossed.

**REED.**—Altitude, 35 feet. From Seward, 142 miles. At this point is located the Farthest North Hydro-Electric Plant in the world. This plant supplies the City of Anchorage with all of the electric energy used,

also supplies electric energy to the headquarters and shops of The Alaska Railroad at Anchorage.

**MATANUSKA.**—Altitude, 36 feet. From Seward, 151 miles. Matanuska is the center of a large agricultural district and near Matanuska the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines maintains an agricultural experimental station. From this point 27 miles of branch line of The Alaska Railroad reaches out to Moose Creek, Premier, Jonesville and Eska anthracite coal-producing regions.



A Matanuska Valley grain field

**WASILLA.**—Altitude, 339 feet. From Seward, 160 miles. Wasilla is situated on Wasilla Lake, and in this lake excellent fishing is to be had. One hundred twenty miles of good roads in and around Wasilla reach from the head of Knik Arm through the Agricultural district, where the finest strawberries in Alaska are grown, and to the gold mines of Willow Creek district and the coal mines of Moose Creek.

From Wasilla many of the fishing spots may be quickly reached either by boat upon the lakes or by automobile along the highway.

One quarter mile north of Wasilla there is a large Mink ranch on the left side.

**HUSTON.**—Altitude, 246 feet. From Seward, 175 miles. Shortly after passing Huston there is a fox ranch on the right, and a mile and a half north of Huston a large beaver dam may be seen on the left.

**NANCY.**—Altitude, 236 feet. From Seward, 181 miles. Lake Nancy is passed on the left, another beautiful spot, and another beaver dam is also situated here. From Nancy the Rainy Pass trail leads off to Iditarod and Kuskokwim gold mining districts. A mile north of Nancy a beaver dam is passed on the right.

**WILLOW.**—Altitude, 232 feet. From Seward, 186 miles. A road leads from this point to the Willow Creek Mining District. A Mink ranch is located here. After leaving Willow several excellent fishing streams are passed, and a beaver dam may be seen about 75 feet from track on the right side at Mile 196.

**MONTANA.**—Altitude, 282 feet. From Seward, 209 miles. A silver fox ranch is located at this point and can be seen from the train.

**FISH LAKE.**—Altitude, 310 feet. From Seward, 221 miles. Three miles north of Fish Lake a wonderful view of Mount McKinley, Mount Foraker, and Mount Hunter may be had, and Mount Russel and Mount Dall can also be seen farther to the west.



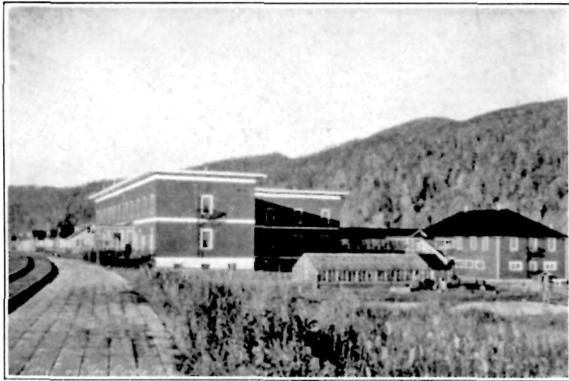
One of many trout streams

**TALKEETNA.**—Altitude, 354 feet. From Seward, 227 miles. Talkeetna is the meeting place of three rivers, Talkeetna, Susitna, and Chulitna Rivers, which are fed by glacier streams. Talkeetna is also the starting point for gold-mining operations in the Cache Creek country. Another magnificent view of Mount McKinley may also be obtained from Talkeetna. Just north of Talkeetna the railroad crosses the Talkeetna River and follows the Susitna River to Curry.

**CURRY.**—Altitude, 546 feet. From Seward, 249 miles. This interesting place situated on The Alaska Railroad is "half way" point between the coast and interior Alaska—where visitors for a time are part of a great and glorious wilderness. Passengers spend the night here, giving them the benefit of daylight travel so all points of interest on the railroad may be seen. Travelers who arrange a stop-over at Curry during their Alaskan trip are fortunate, indeed, for it is situated in a delightful, attractive region, and many forms of outdoor recreations are provided.

At Curry is situated the Curry Hotel—a genuine “palace in the wilderness”, where accommodations are modern inviting and comfortable, and the cuisine is of the highest order. The things to see and do in this vicinity are many and varied. Near-by trails and mountains offer unequalled opportunity for hiking, mountain climbing, and kodaking.

A 5-mile hike over the “Meadow Lake” Trail takes the visitor to Camp Regalvista situated at the very top of the great mountain range and overlooking a yawning and green-carpeted valley, at the base of which flows a silvery mountain stream filled with grayling and scrappy trout. Twenty-five miles distant can be seen majestic Mount McKinley as it towers for miles above the countless peaks, ridges, and valleys that surround it. Reaching down from its sides and carving great canyons as they come are numerous glaciers, large and small. Beyond question the mountain scenery in the vicinity of Camp Regalvista is without equal in all the world; and the view of Mount McKinley from this point is one of the finest to be had in the Northland.



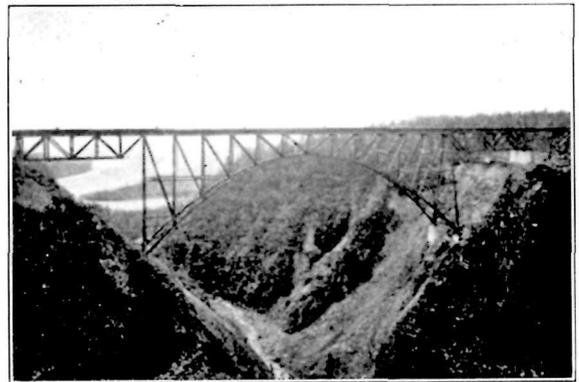
Curry Hotel “A Northland Palace”

Briefly, a stay in this region is one of the chief attractions between the coast and interior Alaska—and it invariably pleases all visitors. The opportunities for kodaking, hiking, fishing, mountain climbing, and other forms of outdoor recreation are unlimited, and splendid facilities for dancing are provided at the Curry hotel. The “call of the Northland” is felt by all who spend a few days in this locality.

**GOLD CREEK.**—Altitude, 731 feet. From Seward, 263 miles. Just north of Gold Creek the railroad crosses the Susitna River, then Indian Creek Canyon is followed to Chulitna, the railroad crossing Indian Creek at four different points.

**CHULITNA.**—Altitude, 1280 feet. From Seward, 274 miles. A ruby silver mine is located 10 miles east of the railroad. One mile north of Chulitna a beaver dam and house is passed on the left. From this point to Mile 279 a splendid view may be had of Mount McKinley. There are higher mountains in the Himalayas and Andes, but they do not seem near so high because they do not loom up so abruptly and to such great height from a low base as does Mount McKinley. The height, the majesty, the beauty of this glorious mountain emphasize the charm, the stillness, the lure of this land.

**HURRICANE.**—Altitude, 1,688 feet. From Seward, 281 miles. Here the summit of the first Alaska Range is crossed.



Bridge over Hurricane Gulch

**HURRICANE GULCH.**—From Seward, 284 miles. Hurricane Gulch is crossed by the railroad on a steel structure 918 feet long and 296 feet above the creek.

**HONOLULU.**—Altitude, 1,456 feet. From Seward, 289 miles. Trails lead from this point into the Broad Pass mining district. Shortly after leaving Honolulu the East Fork of the Chulitna River is crossed.

**BROAD PASS.**—Altitude, 2,127 feet. From Seward, 304 miles. Trails also lead from this point to the Broad Pass mining district. Six miles north of Broad Pass the summit of the Continental Divide is reached; elevation 2,363 feet; the lowest railroad pass in the Rocky Mountain chain. Summit Lake, draining to both the Bering Sea and Pacific watersheds, showing a wonderful reflection from the mountain range, is situated near this point.

**CANTWELL.**—Altitude, 2,212 feet. From Seward, 320 miles. Cantwell is the starting point for the Valdez Creek country. Cantwell River is crossed just before reaching Cantwell. Windy River is crossed 4 miles north both flowing into the Jack River. Just after crossing

Windy River mineral springs are passed. These springs are situated on the left side of the track just a short distance away. Jack River is then followed to Windy, where the Nenana River is reached.

**WINDY.**—Altitude, 2,056 feet. From Seward, 327 miles. Here Panorama Mountain is passed on the right. After leaving Windy the Nenana River is followed to McKinley Park. Along this route the Nenana River makes many horseshoe bends.

**McKINLEY PARK.**—Altitude, 1,732 feet. From Seward, 348 miles. Entrance to Mount McKinley Park. This great mountain-crowned region is situated in the very heart of Alaska, on The Alaska Railroad, and is the second largest of our National Parks, having a total area of 3,030 square miles, or 1,939,200 acres. It derives its name from that monarch of all peaks, Mount McKinley (elevation 20,300 feet), which stands practically in the center of the vast park area.

Visitors are handled by motor car to Savage River Camp, 12 miles within the park, and from this point all side trips are initiated. Here are good tent houses, good meals, and other conditions that go to make visitors stay entirely comfortable and enjoyable. A community house is also maintained where visitors may spend the evenings dancing or in other forms of recreation.



Mt. McKinley as seen from The Alaska Railroad

From Savage River Camp automobile trips are made to Sable Pass, Polychrome Pass and Mt. Eielson, a 132 miles round trip through a district of wild game and inspiring scenery. A shorter trip that may be made by saddle horse, stage-coach, or automobile, is that to the head of Savage River, 12 miles each way. Other saddle and pack horse trips may be made from Mt. Eielson to McGonogall Pass, Wonder Lake, Mt. Foraker, and to many other interesting points in the Park. Trips by airplane may also be made from Savage River Camp to Mt. Eielson and Muldrow Glacier near the base of Mt. McKinley.

In addition to being a wonderful playground, Mount McKinley National Park is also a great game preserve, for here the visitor may see caribou, moose, white mountain sheep wolves, grizzly and black bear. Of the smaller fur-bearing animals, the mink, martin, fox, wolverine, and beaver predominate. Many of these the park visitor is likely to see in a day's hike or ride.

After leaving McKinley Park the railroad passes through the narrow and twisting Nenana Canyon, close to the swift flowing waters of the Nenana River. Several tunnels are passed through before the train reaches Healy.

**HEALY.**—Altitude, 1,368 feet. From Seward, 358 miles. A 4-mile branch line reaches from here to the Healy River lignite coal mines on the opposite side of the valley. The large black coal seams are clearly visible from Healy. A half-hour stop is made here for lunch. After leaving Healy the railroad follows the Nenana River to Nenana.



Sub Bituminous Coal Mine near Healy

**FERRY.**—Altitude, 1,006 feet. From Seward, 372 miles. Just before reaching Ferry the Nenana River is crossed. From this point a road leads to the Bonfield placer and gold quartz region.

**KOBE.**—Altitude, 705 feet. From Seward, 387 miles. Kobe is the starting point for the Kantishna silver-lead ore district, and the terminus of a winter mail trail extending to Goodnews Bay in the extreme southwestern part of Alaska.

**NENANA.**—Altitude, 362 feet. From Seward, 412 miles. Nenana was founded in 1916 as a base for railroad construction activities in the Northern Division. It is situated on the south bank of the Tanana River at the confluence of that stream with the Nenana River. Nenana is the distributing point for a considerable portion of central Alaska bordering the Tanana and Yukon Rivers. From Nenana The Alaska Railroad operates passenger and freight service to Holy Cross and Marshall.

Connections are made at Marshall with boats for St. Michael and Nome. Boat service is also operated between Nenana and Dawson and other upper Yukon River points. Soon after leaving Nenana the railroad crosses the Tanana River on a 700-foot steel structure—one of the largest of its kind in the world—at the north end of which on July 15, 1923, the late President Harding drove the Golden Spike that marked the completion of The Alaska Railroad. Just before crossing the Nenana River bridge an Indian mission school may be seen on the right.

On the north bank of the Tanana River, just below the Tanana River bridge, may be seen an Indian "fish wheel," operated solely by the force of the river current.

**DUNBAR.**—Altitude, 368 feet. From Seward, 432 miles. From this point there are trails to the Livengood and Tolovana gold-mining districts, 65 miles north.

**HAPPY.**—Altitude, 609 feet. From Seward, 463 miles. From this point there formerly extended a 39 mile narrow gauge line which served the Fox, Gilmore, Olnes, Eldorado and Chatanika gold districts. This line was abandoned by The Alaska Railroad on the completion of modern roads into these districts.

It was the discovery of gold in these districts that caused the great Fairbanks gold stampede in 1903 and 1904. From Happy the Ester Dome gold quartz district may be seen to the right.



Fairbanks, Alaska's "Golden Heart"

**COLLEGE.**—Altitude, 436 feet. From Seward, 467 miles. At this point is located the Alaska Agricultural College and School of mines, the northernmost institution of higher education in the world. Close to the college is the agricultural experimental station, operated by the college.

**FAIRBANKS.**—Altitude, 448 feet. From Seward, 470 miles. No trip to Alaska is complete until one has visited this historic old mining camp—interior terminus of The Alaska Railroad and Richardson Highway. While many are the evidences here of early-day mining camp activities, the many modern structures and other improvements are messengers of present-day progress. Fairbanks is situated in the center of the fertile Tanana Valley agricultural district, and is the distributing point for interior Alaska. Fairbanks is the headquarters from which large gold-dredging operations are being directed. A 30-mile ride by auto from Fairbanks takes the visitor to Gilmore, Fox, Cleary City, Chatanika, and other communities which in days ago were humming frontier mining camps that are still active. A 60-mile motor ride on the Richardson Highway takes the visitor to Birch Lake an attractive summer resort—and to other points of interest. At Fairbanks, as at other points along the line the visitor will find very comfortable hotel accommodations and a hospitality that is genuine and typical of Alaska.

NOTE:—There are a great many fishing localities along The Alaska Railroad, and special gas-car service to these various localities, and to other points of interest, is maintained from Anchorage, and Fairbanks. For detailed information regarding this service, confer with the tourist agent, any station agent, or members of the train service.



This Booklet Issued by  
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**THE ALASKA RAILROAD**  
(Mt. McKinley Park Route)

Harold L. Ickes, Secretary  
U. S. Department of the Interior.

O. F. Ohlson, General Manager  
The Alaska Railroad

For Further Information, Write  
General Offices, Anchorage, Alaska  
Seattle Office, 441 Federal Office Bldg.

H. W. Snell, General Freight, Passenger and Immigration Agent, Suite 321-22—333 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

