

Safety Tips

The following suggestions are made for "northern" driving:



- Carry a good spare tire (or two), first aid kit, tow rope, flare, axe, knife, matches, candles and a jerry-can of fuel.
- Be sure your vehicle is in good mechanical condition.
- Fit your headlights with wire mesh or plastic protectors.
- Reduce speed when passing approaching vehicles, to minimize dust and flying stones.
- Minimize interior dust by closing all windows and using the vent fan.
- Carry some extra food such as chocolate bars, fruit and water.
- In summer, carry windshield cleaning supplies and insect repellent, and in winter, extra warm clothes and a sleeping bag for each person.
- Travel with your seatbelts fastened and your headlights on at all times – it's the law in the NWT!
- In the NWT you will be driving on one of Canada's largest regions of continuous permafrost that is constantly shifting and settling. Please use caution and drive to road conditions.

Ferry Schedule

Travellers are strongly advised to check service status in advance of travel.

For current Ferry information and operation schedules please call:

Toll Free: 1-800-661-0750
or **www.dot.gov.nt.ca**

To comment on anything related to transportation in the Northwest Territories please call 1-888-711-0321.

Note: Travellers should be aware that at the beginning and end of the ferry operating season, ice conditions and fluctuating water levels may shut down ferry service with little or no notice.

Highways and Winter Roads

Our highways are continuously maintained and are normally passable in all weather conditions.



Winter access roads are just that – open only in winter, usually from about mid-December to late March, but may vary with weather conditions and locations. Some of them are privately operated and maintained, and offer no services, emergency or otherwise. You use them at your own risk.

Unleaded gas, diesel and propane are available in most communities on the highway system, with repair facilities in larger towns. Distances between these services may be significant, however, and hours of operation limited. It's best to check ahead if you can.

In the summer, free ferry services are provided at these river crossings:

- Fort Providence (Mackenzie River), Hwy 3
- Fort Simpson (Liard River), Hwy 1
- Ndulee (Mackenzie River), Hwy 1
- Tsiigehtchic (Mackenzie River), Hwy 8
- Peel River, Hwy 8

Ice bridges provide safe crossings in the winter. In the spring, when the river ice breaks up, and in the fall, at freeze-up, crossing service may be interrupted for several weeks at a time.

Contact Numbers

For highway emergency assistance please call the RCMP at (867) – (3-digit local exchange) -1111

Example: Yellowknife (867) 873-1111
Hay River (867) 874-1111
Inuvik (867) 777-1111

Cellular telephone coverage in the NWT is limited to Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Inuvik.

Road and Ferry Information Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0750

For additional information visit www.dot.gov.nt.ca

To comment on anything related to transportation in the Northwest Territories please call 1-888-711-0321.

Northwest Territories

Highway, Ferry and Ice Crossings Information



Hwy 1 – Mackenzie Highway

(Waterfalls Route)



This highway, the longest in the Northwest Territories, starts at the NWT/Alberta border and continues, for approximately 690 kilometres, to the community of Wrigley. The first 188 kilometres are paved, as well as 60 kilometres from the junction of the Liard Highway to Fort Simpson. The remainder is gravel, with portions treated for dust control.

There are two ferry crossings on the highway en route to Wrigley.



MV "Lafferty"

Km 457 – Liard River near Fort Simpson (South Mackenzie)

Service begins mid- to late May and ends late October. Operates daily 8 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. on a demand schedule.

The ice crossing normally opens to small vehicles in late November, to larger vehicles in early January, and closes in mid-April.



MV "Johnny Berens"

Km 548 – Mackenzie River N'Dulee Crossing (South Mackenzie)

Service begins late May and ends late October. Operates daily from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. on a demand schedule.

This crossing is subject to extreme high and low water level fluctuations which may cause delays at any time.

The ice crossing normally opens to small vehicles in mid-December, to larger vehicles in mid-January, and closes in mid-April.

Hwy 2 – Hay River Highway

(Great Slave Route)



This highway, the NWT's shortest, connects the town of Hay River to Highway 1 at the community of Enterprise. The highway runs through Hay River, terminating on the southern shore of Great Slave Lake. Its total length is 48.6 kilometres, all of which are paved.



Hwy 3 – Yellowknife Highway

(Frontier Trail)



This paved highway connects to Highway 1 just south of the Mackenzie River crossing located at kilometre 25 near Fort Providence. From Fort Providence it continues north, around Great Slave Lake, to Yellowknife.

Travellers are very likely to encounter wood bison along this route. Drive with caution.



MV "Merv Hardie"

Km 24 – Mackenzie River near Fort Providence (South Mackenzie)

Service begins mid- to late May and ends mid-January. Operates daily 6 a.m. to midnight on a demand schedule.

The ice crossing normally opens to small vehicles in late December, to larger vehicles in mid-January, and closes in mid-April.

Hwy 4 – Ingraham Trail



This highway extends 70 kilometres east from Yellowknife and travels through numerous parks and day use areas. The first 29 kilometres are paved. The remaining 41 kilometres are gravel, treated for dust control. Beyond that point, it becomes a privately constructed and operated winter re-supply road to a number of mine sites.

Hwy 5 – Fort Smith Highway

(Great Slave – Wood Buffalo Routes)



This highway travels through Wood Buffalo National Park as you drive to Fort Smith from Hay River. The first 106 kilometres are paved, as are the last 51 kilometres before reaching Fort Smith.

Travellers are very likely to encounter wood bison along this route. Drive with caution.

Hwy 6 – Fort Resolution Highway

(Great Slave Route)



This highway begins at kilometre 60 of Highway 5, at the Buffalo River junction. The route generally follows the shore of Great Slave Lake past the old Pine Point mining site to the community of Fort Resolution. The first 38 kilometres are paved with the remaining 52 kilometres being gravel, treated for dust control.

Hwy 7 – Liard Highway

(Liard Trail)



This highway begins at the BC border and continues north for 257 kilometres, generally following the Liard River to the junction of Highway 1. The first 38 kilometres are paved with the remaining 219 kilometres being gravel, treated for dust control. The community of Fort Liard is located 5 kilometres off the highway, 38 kilometres north of the BC border.

Travellers are very likely to encounter wood bison along this route, so drive cautiously.

Hwy 8 – Dempster Highway



This gravel highway starts at the Yukon/NWT border and continues 272 kilometres to Inuvik. The highway passes Fort McPherson at kilometre 85 and Tsiigehtchic at kilometre 142.6. The last 10 kilometres into Inuvik are paved.

When travelling this highway, be sure to check at the visitor centres in Dawson or Inuvik for the latest road conditions as it is a long way between service centres.

There are two river crossings en route to Inuvik.



CF "Abraham Francis"

Km 74 – Peel River near Fort McPherson (Inuvik region)

Service begins early June and ends late October. Operates daily 9:15 a.m. to 12:45 a.m. on a demand schedule.

This crossing is subject to extreme high and low water level fluctuations which may cause delays at any time.

The ice crossing normally opens to small vehicles in mid-November, to larger vehicles in mid-December, and closes in early May.



MV "Louis Cardinal"

Km 143 – Mackenzie River near Tsiigehtchic (Inuvik region)

This ferry serves the Dempster Highway and the community of Tsiigehtchic.

Service begins early June and ends late October. Operates daily 9:30 a.m. to 12:45 a.m. on a demand schedule.

The ice crossing normally opens to small vehicles in mid-November, to larger vehicles in late December, and closes in early May.