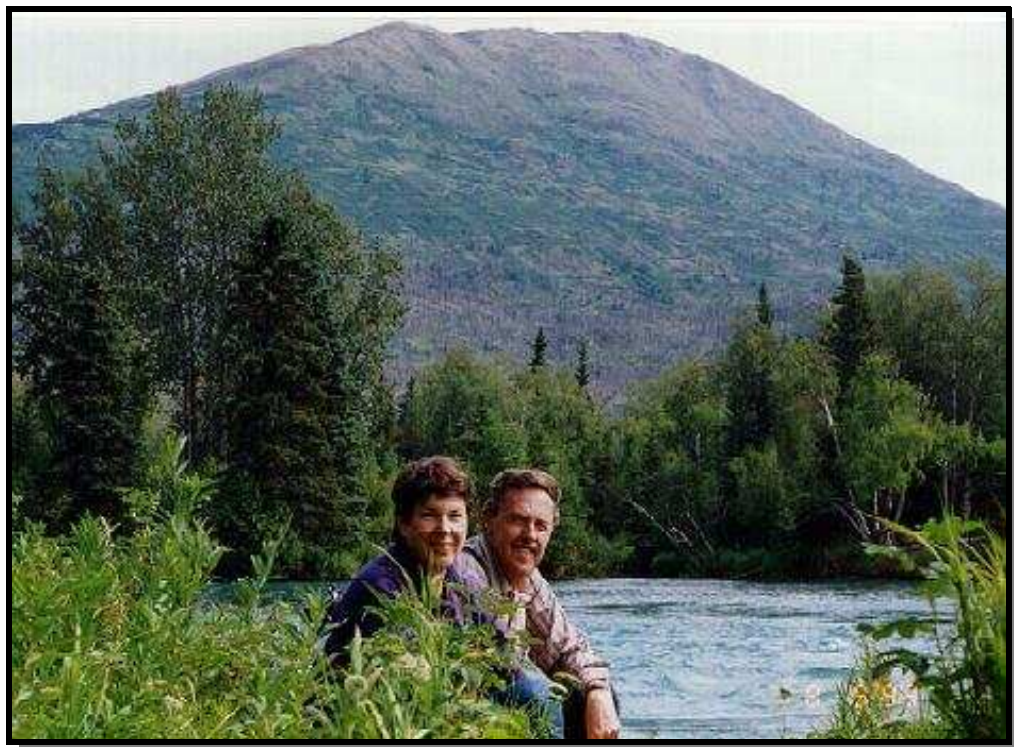


Annie and Chuck's

Travel Journal



Alaska
1993

JOURNAL OF TRIP TO ALASKA - SUMMER AND FALL OF 1993

July 6. Early start from Fremont Lake on what seems to be first clear day in many which have snowed, sleeted and hailed upon us. Coldest season water.



At Fremont Lake on a rare clear day

July 7. Long (7 hr.) day, much on Interstate 90, heading for NAT'L BISON RANGE near Moiese, MT. More precip, but now mostly rain as we lost altitude. Folks say this is the worst summer they can remember. (Same in WY.) Saw Visitor's Center, took short loop, then drove N 8 miles to (free) camping by Sr. Citizens Ctr. in CHARLO, MT, next to small park with many trees and picnic tables. After dinner drove back to NBR and savored 22 mi. drive in glorious sunshine - seeing deer, longhorn sheep, mountain goats, huge elk (one Royal with 7 prongs) and many bison in a dramatic setting of grassy, rolling hills. Nature walk took us around swamp area to see sapsuckers feeding young, kestrels, woodpeckers, Eastern kingbirds and others - and muskrats chomping on water plants.

many can remember. Took Rt. 22 west of Jackson over Teton Pass, thru NE corner of Idaho (Driggs, Ashton), then N on Rts 87 and 287 in MT to N. MADISON BLM CAMPGROUND near Ennis. (\$5.00) Between Ashton and Henry's lake there is much new ticky-tacky development along what used to be highway through a wild and tree lined landscape some 20 years ago. More hail en route, views of unseasonably green landscapes, plus new snow on the mountains. Walked thru fields of pink and purple wildflowers near river, watched swallows (cliff, violet green and tree) dive and buzz the river for insects. Numerous fishermen drifting down rapid



July 8. Got 7:30 start, took road on E side of Flathead Lake. Stop in Kalispell for cash machine and groceries. Leaving the grocery store we failed to insert the key properly in the car and the steering wheel remained locked. We proceeded to drag the thing sideways around several 90 degree corners and up the main highway before catching on! Happy to find that no damage was done. Crossed into Canada at Roosville, losing only a few sour plums to the border guards. Also had to register the Winchester - not with the Canadians - but rather had to walk back to the U.S. Customs office. It was a pleasure to again enter a "civilized" country - one with abundant turn offs along the highway, nice rest areas, trash containers, good signs, firewood provided in Provincial Parks. So good, also, to hear CBC once again with its in-depth and informative interviews (toxic waste, poet David White, other writers, musicians, etc.) and its assortment of varied music in between. Changed money at bank in Cranbrook then proceeded to WASA PROVINCIAL PARK (\$9.50/#4), above Wasa. Watched the goings-on of a large colony of ground squirrels; a dramatic lightning storm chased us off an exposed ridge on our evening walk. A park ranger said it has been the wettest and coldest summer since the '40's.

July 9. Started off fairly early in a rain which continued most of the morning. Proceeded northward on 93 with the Purcell range on our left and the Rockies on the right - when they could be seen through the clouds. Entered Kootenay National Park and stopped for lunch along the river in the beautiful Kootenay valley. A level forested valley with meadows and vistas of snow covered mountains. Over yet another pass into Banff National Park where we joined the Trans-Canada and its heavy, hurried

following many horrid drivers and finding endless cars and buses in the parking lot. Retreated, anticipating stops at two other scenic spots - Maligne Canyon and Athabasca Falls - but with same result: inundation with tourists - they are on the bus tour route. Treats for the day included seeing several large elk, mountain goats licking earth right beside the road, deer and moose. Got home on 93A - road deteriorating but nice alternative to main highway. Campfire and marshmallows, threat of more rain.



Camping on the Road

traffic for a while, finally exiting on the Ice Fields Highway and climbing up to our campground - WATERFOUL LAKE (\$8.50/#60) - by early afternoon. There's now a new and deep ridge across the road just above our site where our hang-down car hitch dug in deep and became mired in asphalt as Charlie made a turn into a site with too steep an angle! Still cloudy and cold - good afternoon for reading, with an evening walk disturbing only a fat porcupine. Good ranger program on bears at enclosed shelter at 8 pm.

July 10. An easier day since we've come unexpectedly far in short order. Proceeded northward on Ice Fields Hwy. to HONEYMOON LAKE CAMPGROUND (\$5.25/#15), stopping only at Visitors Center overlooking Athabasca Glacier, near Jasper border. Sun shined brightly for first time in days and we strolled around peaceful nearby lake after lunch. Drove N to Jasper, strolled around town, ate ice cream, watched a long and just washed passenger train get ready to roll. Took route N of Jasper eastward around 45 k to Maligne Lake,

July 11. After a reasonably early start, another stop at Athabasca Falls. This time it was a good visit; only a few tourists out and about. By the time we left though, the park was filling fast - three busloads full. At Jasper we left 93 and joined the "Yellowhead Highway" toward Prince George. A good drive through the mountains and valleys with light traffic. Found a big black bear and more unafraid elk along the way. Finally left the "mountain parks" after a long and beautiful ride that began all the way back in Radium Hot Springs - 250 miles or more of contiguous protected ecosystem. We began in the Kootenay-Columbia drainage, crossed through the Athabaskan-MacKenzie drainage and are now in the Fraser drainage - truly the rooftop of Canada. Stopped midafternoon in PURDEN LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK (#29, \$7.50) 36 miles east of Prince George. A walk through the woods disclosed a true paradox - it's dry here! After squishing through the mud, rain, snow, wind and cold since leaving Arizona in late June, some 10 weeks ago, we now are way up north and it is DRY!

July 12. We're attached to The Milepost, a book which denotes just about everything one might see at each turn of the road, be it bridge, turn-off or a Prov. Pk. Drove up highway next to Crooked River which looked like a series of small lakes, crooked indeed. Fueled up at Prince George which looked like a pulp mill town, tried to shop but large Overwaita store (grocery) was not yet open at 8:45 AM. Found poorly signed 97 out of town and followed spruce lined highway to Tudyah Lk. Prov. Pk. for lunch and got 14 mi. past Chetwynd to MOBERLY LAKE PROV. PK. (\$9.50/#46) for the night. The truck has been making noise like the engine is racing but Charlie, despite investigating several times, can't yet determine what is happening-too many variables. Finally found some birds at this park--nuthatches,

warblers and the like. So far, not enough birds visible to even mention.

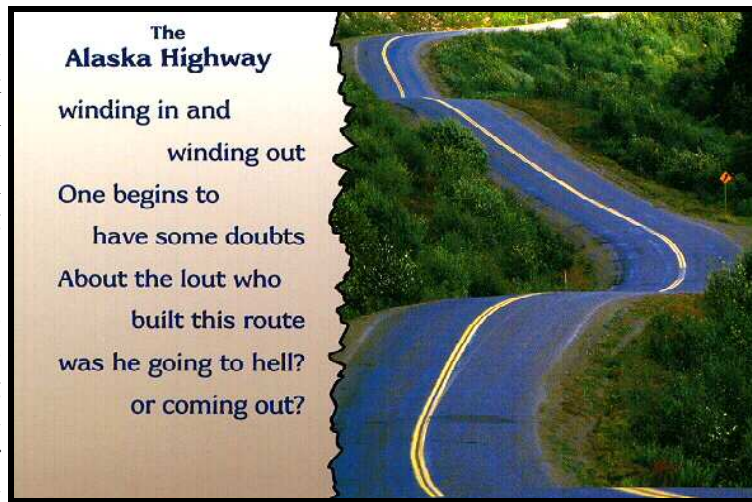
July 13. On toward Ft. St. John where we picked up the Alaska Hwy., still Rt. 97. Passed over the Peace River a number of times and looked out over its beautiful valley. Headed for Prophet River for our overnight but tensely kept on going to WESTEND CAMPGROUND (Good Sam, \$12.00) in FT. NELSON because of the engine acting up---first with yesterday's problem and then having near zero power going up steeper hills.

Found an auto parts store and Charlie purchased new spark plugs, gas filter, and diversion valve assembly, all of which he installed. Nothing Without Labor. Funny, in front of the parts store sat a Jamboree - same model and year - with its owner fixing the exact problem we were having. After dinner we used the campground's "free car

wash" (a hose: one redeeming feature of this ugly commercial campground, along with laundry available and our having an end site near bushes, not neighbors) to take the worst off both vehicles, just before it began to rain seriously.

July 14. Car wash for naught: just up the road was miles of construction and we had betonite mud hanging in generous globs over both vehicles. (Later we discovered that they were using chemicals - probably calcium chloride - in the water trucks that they were using to turn the area into one giant mudpie. The caustic mud corroded everything including wiring connections which had to be replaced.) It also became immediately obvious that RVs prob was not fixed and it continued to cough and sputter uphill. Separated the car to reduce drag and to use as spotter for hills ahead, then proceeded to crawl most of 153 miles to Muncho Lake where there was a combined mini-eating place and "car repair." Didn't look hopeful so C. crawled under the RV to make certain there was no other fuel filter he had missed--and lo! he discovered one no one had written about in any manual we'd seen on Ford engines. Repairman found a replacement cartridge and that ended the trauma of creeping up hills at 5

mph. Passed through gorgeous river valleys during the day, noticing how exceptionally green everything was for this time of year. Annie and car drove ahead to find spot at LIARD HOT SPRINGS PROV. PK, (#6, \$12.00) and tho arriving later than planned there were good sites left. Area is a tropical oasis in the tundra, so to speak, and one can walk down a long boardwalk through bogs to get to either of two sulphur pools, each surrounded by lush vegetation, for bathers to enjoy. We partook after dinner--enormously soothing. A "hanging garden" is nearby, with varied little wildflowers and lush mosses growing out of the tuff ("toof") down a steep hillside.



July 15. Cool, clear morning - off early to the hot pools for a good bone-soak to start the day. Via a thermometer on my watch I determined that the temperature at end of the pool was about 70 degrees, heating up to over 125 as one approaches the source. It was

possible to get even hotter, but 125 was my personal scald-out point. Continuing northwestward it was up hill and down dale - twisting this way and that - most of the day along the beautiful Liard River - air clear and visibility a hundred miles or more. Lunch was at Whirlpool Rapids, sunny and warm with the big, wild river rushing through the rocks. A short stop in Watson Lake for a few groceries, and a visit to the Yukon Visitors Center with it's "forest" of over 7000 signs from various parts of the globe, then onward to a forest camp at RANCHERIA RIVER (#17, \$6.00). Warm and dry here, lodgepole pine the dominant tree. Ringneck ducks, yellowlegs, and spotted sandpipers seen on the evening walk along the marsh and pond lined river. Camper running fine now, incipient transmission problem recurred only briefly, and no more engine cutting out.

July 16. One more brief walk along the river, hoping to find an early morning moose, but no moose, not even ravens. Went thru miles and miles of construction, coating vehicles once again with gooey mud and stones. Notice that on newer Canadian roads there are few turn-offs, as in US. Drove thru many miles of expansive countryside--green trees and

mountains forever. Wonder why tree line is much higher here than in upper B.C. and lower Yukon, where it was around 2500'. Got petrol at Teslin, next to lake 80 mi. long, 2 mi. wide, one of scores of pristine, deep green lakes along the roadside. Find that petrol costs more in settled areas. Stopped for night at Marsh Lk. Prov. Pk. arnd. 25 mi. S. of Whitehorse (capitol city), drove to town to get mail and en route found a smaller and nicer park, WOLF CREEK (\$8.00/#5) and

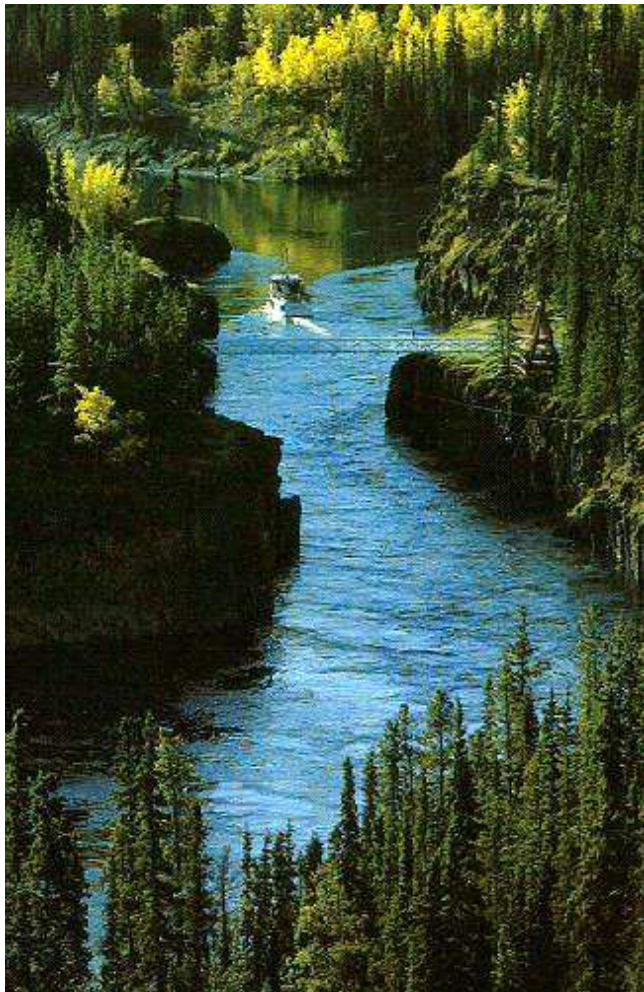
relocated in site near the creek. There's a trail here to Yukon River overlook; North America's 3rd largest river starts in marshland near here. Groceries in Whitehorse, where C. learned (with help) how one pays .25 for grocery carts which are chained up like luggage carts at airports! Post office(s) difficult to find: in basements of bldgs., and one in back section of Coffee, Tea and Spice shop in a mall!



Whitehorse—Yukon Territory



Miles Canyon Excursion Boat



Miles Canyon Narrows



View from the Excursion Boat Bridge



Miles Canyon Narrows from the Excursion Boat

July 17. A day of rest, more or less. Went into Whitehorse via Miles Canyon road where we viewed the deep and clear blue-green Yukon river as it flowed powerfully past the narrow basaltic walls of the canyon. Then into town where we toured the Klondike II, a huge paddlewheeler boat of days gone by. Well presented and an excellent work of restoration. The boat tour was free, supported as a national historic treasure. (I recall flying over the city several years ago and seeing 3 or 4 of these magnificent old boats hauled out of the icy grips of the river, but alas, only one remains. The others have been burned - evidently by vandals.) Next, a visit to a turn of the century historic log church. The church was not free - \$5.00 -and presented history from a rather myopic, Anglican point of view, with only a handful of artifacts. Amazing amount of traffic about this rapidly growing and bustling little city.



Kulane Lake

July 18. Drove about 100 miles west to Haines Jct. then NW toward Beaver Creek, near Alaska border. Stayed at LAKE CREEK CAMPGROUND (\$8.00/#27), in site along stream, thick with vibrant



Near the Yukon-Alaska Border

fireweed, forcefully in bloom everywhere in Yukon at this season. High point of day was driving 39 miles along Kulane Lk. and viewing various peaks of Kluane Mts., a number of them snowcapped. Lunch along road with good mt. view and stream alongside. Trails, but no rds. within Kluane Natl. Pk., a wildlife refuge. Stopped at Sheep Mt. Visitors Ctr. next to

park, good place for spotting Dall sheep later in season. None in view today. After Haines Jct. the road began to deteriorate, and even moreso around Destruction Bay where the pace slowed dramatically as we bucked uncomfortably along frost-heaved bumps. Permafrost country does not make highway building or maintenance simple; it cost 3 times as much to build a road and 10 times as much to maintain one than in more southerly climes. Mosquitoes are definitely with us but not in numbers I had anticipated...yet... (Later heard that early July was worst mosquito time.)

July 19. Continuing our journey in the morning we found that the frost heaves in the highway continued all the way to the border. They are just the correct size to be resonant with our large and ponderous rig causing it to leap and buck wildly - 30 mph is top speed for much of the last 200 miles or so. All in all, the Alaska highway is

quite good however - paved all the way except for a few short patches and a few really muddy construction zones. For the past couple of days the visibility has been dropping due to smoke from distant forest fires in the Northwest Territories and northern Yukon. No more brilliantly clear vistas of distant mountains. By noon today it was getting thick enough to make one's eyes smart and throat to feel raw. In a conversation with a state tourist man at the Alaska border we learned that there are 15 or 20 fires burning in the Alaska interior as well and the smoke goes all the way to Fairbanks at the least. In contrast with the extremely wet and cold weather in most of the western U.S., southwestern Canada, (and the serious flooding in the midwest), it has been very dry in the north and fires are breaking out all over. Crossed into Alaska and took a campsite early in the day at DEADMAN'S LAKE in TETLIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (Free, no numbers). There are 16 major NWR's in Alaska, only two of which have road access - Tetlin and Kenai; the remainder are true wilderness refuges. Even here the road traverses the border of the refuge; the only access to the interior is by foot or canoe.

July 20. Did a second walk to the nearby lake early in the AM and saw four loons which we confirmed as Pacific loons. Also, arctic terns, lesser yellowlegs and mew gulls. By gravel walk to lake are wild blueberry bushes, but (tasty) berries few and far between. Mama black bear and two cubs sighted near campground yesterday. Glad to see clear day, enjoyed better road, except for separate areas with extremely roughness with no warnings. Alaska Range spectacular. Stopped in Tok for dump, petrol and Visitors Ctr. Purchased an annual st. camping permit, recently raised from \$50 to \$75. Further on, in Delta Junction, stopped at car wash to strip vehicles of thick mud. Cost \$1.50 for 2 1/2 mins., spent \$7.50! Dude polishing motorcycle inch by inch refused to move his operation out of washer bay, A's rhetoric failing to impress him. Overnight at QUARTZ LAKE ST. PK. (\$6.00/#15), 1 mi. past Delta. Lost Lake, closer in on 2 1/2 mi. harsh gravel road, is nicer, quieter spot. Helicopters rumble over fairly constantly, dangling gear for (pipeline??) Evening's bonus was finding large area of raspberries during eve. walk, and consuming quantities!

June 21-22. It continues dry and warm, almost hot - just an occasional brief shower. The smoke continues, but a bit lighter. The salmon runs are failing completely, particularly in South East Alaska, normally one of the wettest on earth, because the

streams are all drying up. All this as the floods continue in the Midwest. We headed on down the road to Fairbanks, only 80 miles or so away, where we found a campsite at CHENA RIVER STATE RECREATION AREA (\$12.00, #29). Off to the museum at the University of Alaska where I particularly enjoyed a photo essay on the Eskimo peoples of SW Alaska. Later splurged on a highly recommended salmon bake at Alaskaland, (sort of a city sponsored theme park). The food, served on paper plates and eaten on converted wire spool tables was indeed abundant (all you can eat) and good. Sat with folks older than we - all on different tour buses - but all doing essentially the same itinerary. They seemed to like having decisions made for them but honestly did not seem to hold visible enthusiasm for all they were doing - especially museums. A few seemed genuinely confused as to where they were and what they would be seeing, not even knowing the name Denali Park. They knew we were doing our trip differently but no one showed an iota of curiosity. I finally snagged one couple with a challenging statement and realized that there was indeed some awareness of some matters of importance in the US.

Thursday a day for paperwork, laundry, groceries, errands, etc.

July 23: Fairbanks represents both the end of the Alaska Highway (3000 miles from Pinedale) and as far north as we go, so we made a turn to the south. Left early in the morning down the George Parks Highway for Denali; having been forewarned of crowds of RVs and full campgrounds, we knew not where we would roost or what we would find. The road south out of Fairbanks was more mountainous than I remembered, and less settled with the typical Alaska clapboard homesteads one sees in the Tanana valley to the southeast. Sure enough, beginning 15 miles or so north of the Denali entrance, we began to encounter herds of motorhomes parked cheek to jowl at every conceivable place they could park along the highway - hundreds of 'em. Arriving fairly early at the "Visitor Access Center", we found the soonest we could get a campsite would be Sunday (several days away), but we were able to get two tickets for the shuttle bus for the afternoon of the next day. (Private vehicles are allowed only a short distance into the park - thus the bus tickets.) 10 miles on down the highway we found a large open gravel pit which serves just fine as a campsite for us along with 10 other rigs or so, as well. We returned to the park for a



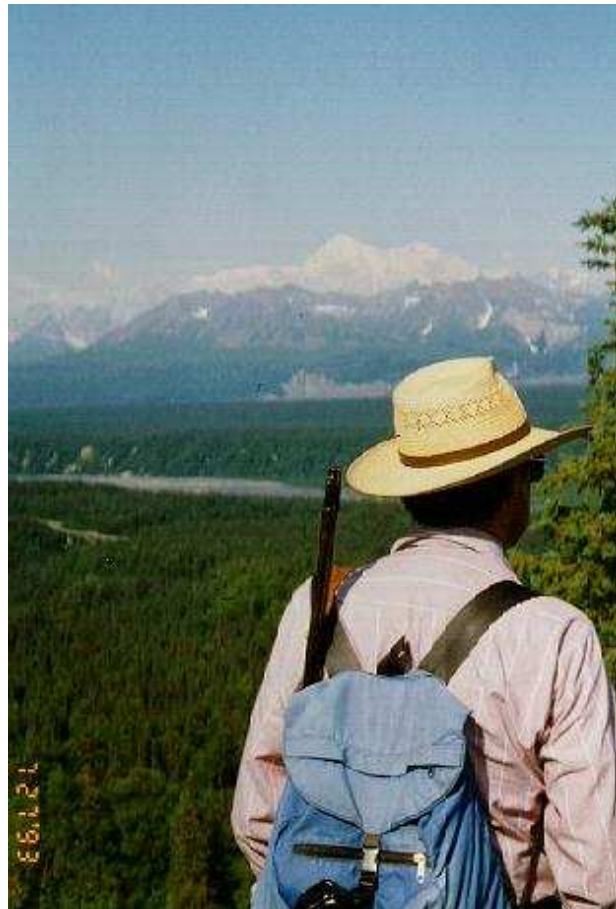
Not Clouds, but Denali (Mt. McKinley) in the distance



In Denali—north side



Who's this coming down the road??



Setting off on a hike—note bear repellent (rifle)

drive in as far as we could go, then back to the camper since it rained the remainder of the afternoon. Although a month beyond the longest day of the year, it is still light all night long - the sun not setting until 11:30 PM or so, and back up again by 3:30am.

July 24. Day for touring Denali, looking very stormy indeed. Hung around home till late AM, did a minor hike in the park, finally found parking spot at Visitors Ctr. (not easy, and it's enormous.) Weather looking increasingly better. Got spot right behind driver, Joyce, in one of park school buses and we were off toward Eielson Visitors Ctr. 60 plus miles and 4 hours one way into the park. Word was to yell "Stop!" when anyone saw any wildlife. For most of 30 miles to end of public traffic access we were satisfied in simply viewing taiga (mainly white and black spruce, according to whether dry or wet soil) and tundra ecotones, surrounding mts., assortment of wildflowers. Crossed Sanctuary River, and later moved through Teklanika (meaning glacial creek) River Valley, the East Fork, Toklat and Thorofare, with various mts. and passes in between. A vast area for searching for a variety of animals and no one was disappointed. During this trip we had two separate grizzly sightings: a sow with two cubs in river willows and another sow with one cub on a hillside; saw also two red foxes (one in gray phase, one with two kits, romping like kids); one bull moose, a porcupine, many Dall sheep (one ram above Eielson in full curl); many caribou, one of



whom literally trotted into the group at Eielson and then down a hill!) Birds included a long tailed jaeger and Willow Ptarmigan, the AK state bird. Spotting was sporadic on the way home but to everyone's surprise, Denali Peak (Mt. McKinley) gradually shed its thick cloud cover and at about 9:30 PM this 20 thousand-plus foot legend shone in the sun. We were

about 70 miles away and still it loomed large. Hard to retire when it was still so light and after such a fulfilling day. Were met at gravel pit by a friendly German lady who enthusiastically complimented us on having a solar panel, similar to one on their small camper which they had shipped from Germany (\$2000) for their year's tour of the US. Unusual, she said, for an American. Yes, unfortunately.

July 25. Weather good this morning so went back into park as far as we could with the car: to the Savage River. Walked down the river a way, then upstream onto the tundra along a clearwater tributary stream. (Most streams along the north slope of the Alaska Range are glacial--wide braided gravel courses flowing with muddy waters born of the glaciers not far upstream. A family of Willow Ptarmigan (ma, pa, and 6 chicks), Arctic Grayling in the stream, an large falcon-like raptor (Gyr Falcon?), and a pair of juvenile Mew Gulls begging their daily bread from their parents were our companions. Went to the Kennels and watched sled dogs being hitched and dragging a sled with wild speed over a gravel pathway. The Park Service is attempting to keep the traditional northern



means of transportation in use for thousands of years alive. They actually use dog teams to patrol the park boundaries in winter; today's demo is partly for tourist's benefit, and partly for the dog's. (Training.) An evening walk resulted in an encounter with 4

immature Goshawks. Unafraid, they flew from tree to tree overhead watching in curiosity, occasionally



swooping low and close to my head - perhaps tempted by my rabbit colored hat with a large grouse feather sticking out - all the while screeching their excitement for all the forest to hear.

July 26. Continued south from "gravel pit campground" towards DENALI ST. PK. (BYERS LAKE CAMPGROUND 4th loop #13/\$8.00), stopping for lunch beside beautiful lake--greenery and fireweed in foreground of scenery. Decreased our altitude to arnd. 1000' - 1500' and it's quite noticeable that trees and plants are larger and much more varied. Took 5 mi. walk around Byers Lake - first part a "tree root city"; crossed bouncy hanging bridge over stream at upper end, stopped at walk-in campground to gaze at mts. (Denali partially clouded) and lake. Found a new bird - a water thrush, which is actually a warbler - then happily spotted two common loons out on the lake. Coming across another bridge we saw a couple haggard salmon coming upstream to spawn.

July 27. Backtracked about 20 miles to the north and parked at Little Coal Creek Trailhead. Shoved some shells in the trusty old .32 Winchester for bear medicine and set off up the trail. We climbed up through heavy forest of spruce and birch, past beaver ponds, and up ..and up...it was a beautiful clear day and a warm climb. Gradually the forest thinned as we broke out above timberline (under 3000 feet here) and into the open alpine tundra and alder brush. Spread before us was a fantastic view of the broad valley below, with the wide and braided Chulitna River glinting in the sun; the very core of the Alaska Range with permanently snow covered Denali dominating all of the surrounding peaks. We could see the valley of the Ruth Glacier off to our left, and a number of other

glaciers directly in front and to our right as well. Lakes, meadows, beaver ponds, and tributary streams were spread at our feet. In the evening, we set off to the south and walked a short ways along Troublesome Creek to where it joined the Chulitna River. The Chulitna is a wild and muddy glacier fed river, a mile or so wide, across gravel bars and multiple stream beds. On its banks grow huge old cottonwoods, along with a mixed spruce and birch forest with a backdrop of the jagged and snowy peaks of the nearby Alaska range to frame the scene. Huge salmon in their spawning colors are resting in the clear waters of Troublesome reek after a long journey from salt water up the muddy and convoluted rapids of the river. Soon their life-work will be completed and they will be recycled into the fat that will sustain the bears through the coming arctic winter, and into food-fuel that powers the eagles on their migration journey southward.

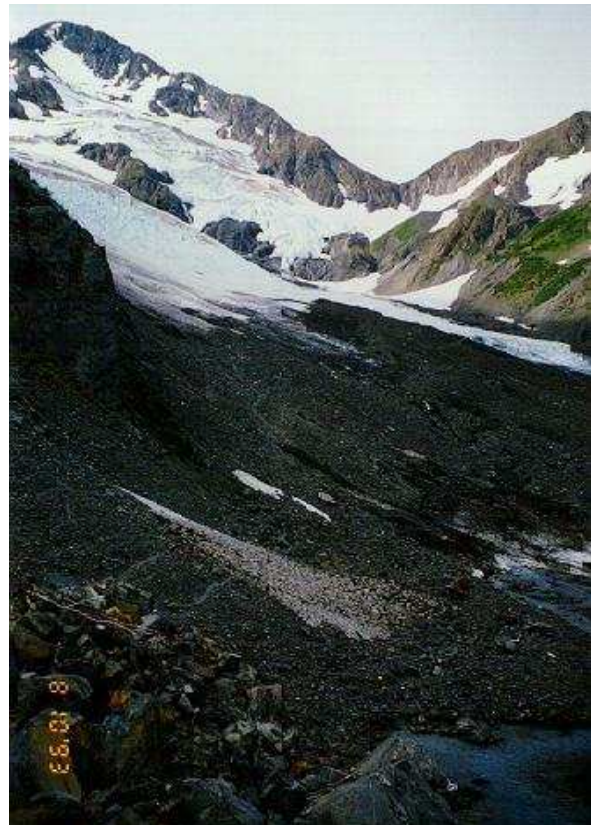
July 28. Difficult to leave the Alaska Range. Longed to try another trail but some were closed because of abundant bear traffic feeding on the salmon. For the next several days we played leapfrog with 13 guys (and their supporters and TV crew) who were participating in a world champion wheelchair Olympics from Fairbanks to Anchorage - 10 days worth of ups and downs, each with "protection" car behind him. Instead of wheelchairs they had carts with large wheels in the back and a small one up front. Stopped at FINGER LAKES ST. PK. (\$6.00/no #) near Wasilla, a park several miles off the main rd. and not heralded by any signs until just before the entrance. Lake is pleasant and ringed with some of the more elite homes (many with float planes) we've seen in these parts. Red neck grebes hold court here. Found a tire store in Wasilla (back tires of Nissan had worn in just 19,000 miles) then drove thru the Matanuska Valley. Here I had expected to see miles and miles of crops (I've seen pics of enormous cabbages) but there was relatively little agriculture in evidence and many fields lay empty. Wonder if agribusiness has clobbered small farmers here, too... Chugach Mts. surrounding area stood in haze on this day. Drove down busy Glenn Hwy. to Eklutna, then 10 more washboardy miles to Eklutna Lake which looked quite large and where there is a St. Pk. Return by more placid old Glenn Hwy. along Knik Arm and silty Matansuka River. More traffic now, more strips, more litter in campground. Read today that WalMart is coming to AK in a big way and one giant store will be in Wasilla--population only 3000. Already we envision the abandonment of nearly a dozen of

Wasilla's smaller malls. Progress comes to AK.

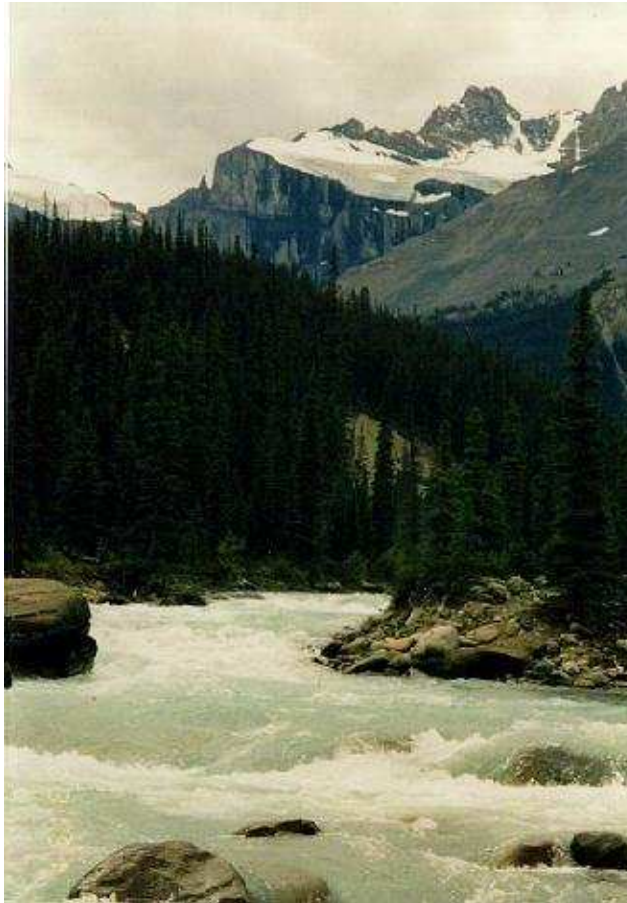
July 29. Got new tire for the car and had to have realignment. After that, we took off for Anchorage about 45 miles south. On the way a cow moose trotted nonchalantly across the heavy traffic of the 4 lane highway about 10 miles out of the city -- only in AK! Visited the various information centers, purchased a state atlas, and booked a wildlife cruise for next week out of Seward. In the evening, as a result of purchasing the detailed topography atlas by DeLorme, we took a ride up a dusty gravel road to Hatcher Pass - 4000' or so and 25 miles into the rugged Talkeetna Mountains to the northeast. Any journey into the mountains at this latitude that exceeds 2500' to 3000' is above timberline, so one experiences a rapid succession of vegetation. From the summit of the pass we looked northward to the confusion of peaks and ridges of the Talkeetnas, and across the broad Anchorage bowl to the glaciers and snow covered peaks of the Chugatch Range. The flowers are at their peak, and it was a beautiful summer day - albeit a bit hazy due to distant fires.

July 30. Got early enough start to arrive at BIRD CREEK ST. PK. (\$8.00/#8) before it filled for weekend. Sign said FULL but there were several vacant spots and ours is private enough, yet no site here is away from steady, harsh highway noise. Lucky we started when we did: soon thereafter Geo. Parks Hwy. out of Wasilla closed for over a day when a large crane fell over and blocked a bridge completely. Returned to Anchorage to take in Art Museum, especially the Alaska history exhibit which had particularly good diaramas and artifacts from beginning to pipeline days. Went to native Aleut (group from Kodiak) dance program--group reviving knowledge, dress and music lost to their unique community. Took in Potter's Marsh (13 mi. S. of Anchorage) en route home, a saltwater marshland recommended for its variety of birdlife. Amazed to find its boardwalk right alongside the same busy hwy. where we could hardly hear each other talk! Saw only a few rather generic ducks, tho watched from small bridge a number of tired salmon heading inland to spawn--kings and coho, mostly. Along river near campground we watched in amazement dozens of eager fishermen lined up almost elbow to elbow for large catches, not one having any luck.

July 31. Headed up the Turnagain Arm to Portage Lake and Glacier - a most interesting place.



There is a fairly large lake at the foot of the glacier and large hunks of ice break off and float about in the deep lake. These are sometimes huge, and most are a deep blue color. There is a new visitor center with thousands of visitors per day - tour bus after tour bus. They have a really great movie telling of the glaciers within the Chugach National Forest - it ends with a huge curtain going up, revealing a real life diorama of the scene outside through a huge observation window. Blue icebergs and bergie bits floating in the lake with glaciers and mountains in the background. It was less than ten years ago I was last here; then the parking lot was muddy and the road rough. Only a couple of other cars that day; what enormous changes a few years can bring. We explored a number of other side roads in the area - most not going very far. One road, however, went several miles into the mountains, very rough and narrow toward the end. Up we the road we bounced, only to find perhaps 40 cars (and a motor home!) there at the end - it was a trail head leading across the Chugach Mountains into Eagle River. Alaskans do love to hike. In the late afternoon we waited quite some time on a bluff behind the campground overlooking the exposed mud flats of the Turnagain Arm; we were watching for the infamous tidal bore to come up the inlet, but conditions evidently weren't right - it never materialized.



August 1. Nearly out of petrol, we headed across rd. to Texaco, to find it closed. Casual hrs, I guess. Found a credit card gizmo on side of bldg., tho, and learned how to charge gas onto Amex. Continued down Turnagain Arm then down toward Seward, which sits on Resurrection Bay in the Gulf of AK. Found site a Natl. Forest Campgrounds about 25 mi. N. of Seward, TRAIL RIVER (\$6.00/#5). Whole trip was thru greenery of mts., many lakes and streams. Could hardly believe, however, how many vehicles on rd., most coming in opposite direction. Later, in Seward, found large part of town's long waterfront given over to RV parking. Explored Kenai Fjords Natl. Pk. Visitors Ctr., saw good slide show on various glaciers and also a movie on damage and clean up after Exxon Valdez oil spill. KF Park was estab. in '80 and little had been done to assess the population and growth dynamics of birds and wildlife and plant life there before the spill. Twenty miles of park coastline was deeply affected and damage is still being assessed.

August 2. Went back toward Seward this morning and turned off a few miles short of town and went some 12 miles or so up a gravel road to Exit Glacier - which is really the only road accessible area in Kenai Fjords National Park. We hiked

the short trail to the glacier and viewed it from close

up.

Exit Glacier is a short glacier, perhaps three miles in length coming down a valley from the huge Harding Ice Field. Deep blue in its crevasses and crannies, with a very substantial boisterous and silty stream issuing forth from its face. An icy breeze was blowing off the ice making it very cold. The glacier is surrounded by high peaks - very green this time of year. A big chunk fell somewhere as evidenced by a loud booming crash - didn't see anything though. In the afternoon, Annie had the blahs so we returned to the camper. I decided to do the shade tree mechanic act and replaced all 5 of the belts in the camper - an exercise in frustration with a van motor. Obviously they started with the motor and built everything around it - nothing is accessible.



August 3. A day we'd looked forward to - a 8 1/2 hour cruise around Kenai Fjords area. Started early from campsite to arrive in Seward around 7:30 am for 8:00 am departure. Boarded Greatland, along with about 100 other folks, went to upper deck for good views. Travelled around 100 sea miles on waters with craggy bottoms, often 1000 feet deep, carved out by glaciers thousands of years ago. Surrounding mts. very green, many still with snow. Cruised in and out of coves - past Cheval Is., around Aialik Cape, up to end of Aialik Bay at Holgate Glacier. Boat took quite a time approaching two-armed glacier, eventually nudging into much floating ice. We watched and listened for



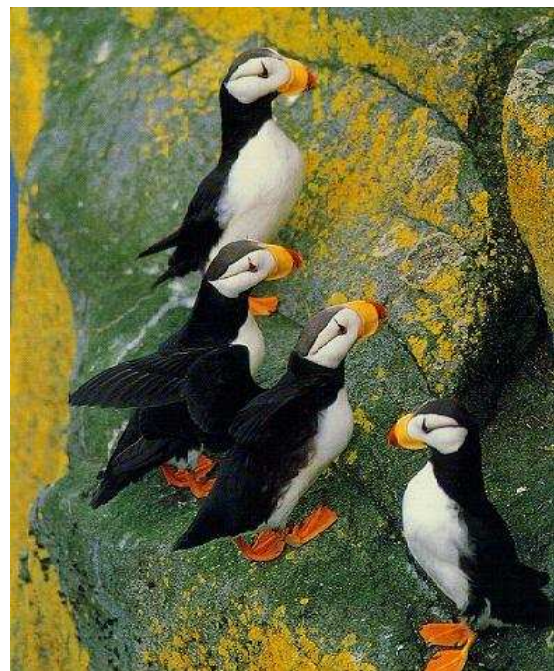
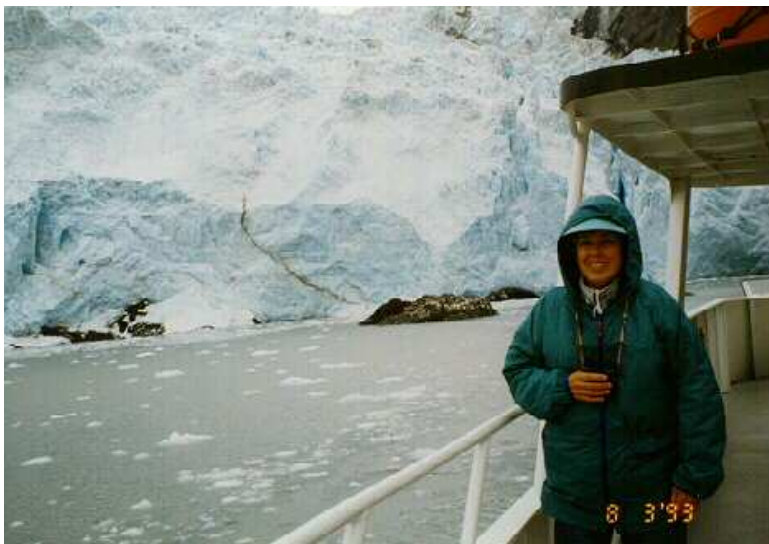
quite a time for ice to loudly crack and fall before us. A large hunk threatened to rip off and we waited in anticipation - but it held and then fell for the next boat load. We were close enough to see well into deep blue crevasses, to feel its enormity, and especially to feel the numbing cold. Incredible! (There were numerous other glaciers visible along the way but none were as close as tidewater Holgate.) Then South again past Harbor Is. toward Chiswell Is., around Beehive Rocks which were honeycombed with all kinds of birds and which held several rookeries of Stellar sea lions,

(endangered - 70 % depletion in recent years.) Then North, stopping delightedly for quite a length to watch a pod of residential orcas feeding and porpoising, and finally back into Resurrection Bay and Seward. Along the way we were able to see a number of sea otters up close, mt. goats at a distance, meinke whales, Dall porpoises, and

harbor seals. The birds we saw were: northern fulmar, short-tailed shearwater, cormorants (dbl. crested, pelagic, red-faced), harlequin ducks, pomarine jaeger (??), glaucous gulls, black-legged

kittiwakes, murrelets (common, thick-billed), pigeon guillemots, murrelets (marbled, Kittlitz, ancient), rhinoceros auklets, puffins (horned, tufted), bald eagles, and crows! Twelve new birds for us - quite a day! The capt. gave a good running commentary on what we were seeing and what he was looking for, and he did not seem pushed to adhere to a schedule;

in fact, we arrived in Seward over 1/2 hour later than



scheduled. The day had started out clear (unusual) but it gradually clouded and even sprinkled a bit, then cleared again toward the end. Perhaps the ability to view some incredible mountain scenery was somewhat jeopardized, but I was so engrossed in finding and identifying the many birds in the water, in rock crevasses, on ledges and in the air, that I felt little disappointment.

August 4. Moved from Trail Lake campsite, actually on Kenai Lake, further down the peninsula to Kenai Nation Wildlife Refuge HIDDEN LAKE CAMPSITE. (#9 AND #25, \$6.00). Then it was off to Soldotna and Kenai City for mail and groceries after considerable delay at a repaving project. Annie counted over 200 cars backed up - the amount of traffic on Alaska's few highways continues to amaze me. However, it is nice to consider that most of Alaska remains unroaded - the rivers, forests and mountains run onward with little development. We could not find any sort of "city center" at either city - evidently they are growing in typical American car-oriented fashion: strip malls spread widely out along the main highways with little sense of order or planning. In the evening we walked to the lake outlet where we watched sockeye salmon working their way up the shallow outlet stream to the lake. A loon was searching for his evening fish dinner on the big clear lake. He surfaced close in with the low evening sun backlighting his beautiful patterns; the water beaded on his waterproof feathers sparkled like jewels.



August 5. A day of several special treats - first, it was sparkling clear. C. spent time "mechanic-ing" and stemmed the leak of power steering fluid in the truck. We took a hike along the Kenai River--trailhead a mile or so down the road. Made numerous stops along the way for tasting wild raspberries and trying to find the usual flitty birds high in trees. Viewed one bird I didn't expect to see in a tree: a spruce grouse with the usual large red eyebrow. Easier the trail thru conifers and quakies which closely hugged the fast flowing

river. Aside from finding gaucous-winged gulls and mergansers in the river, spent much time watching the unending procession of sockeyes - most red, many discolored - swimming steadily upstream, sometimes swirling or slapping the water. Changed our site to #25 where there's more sun to charge solar panel. After dinner walked down camp road to where a smallish stream ran over rocks and thru a culvert and downed trees toward Kenai Lake, where again we viewed salmon, this time having a more difficult time making it up to spawning grounds. Later watched groups of these fish at spot we had visited eve before. Wonder why they swim alone over the hard parts yet tend to travel in groups later on. On way home spotted another elegant spruce grouse - again, in tree.

August 6. South down the Kenai Peninsula to the end of the Road - Homer. Along the way we passed the most westerly point reachable by road in the western hemisphere. A great ride despite threatening weather, the fireweed was particularly in evidence the further south we went. Homer is in a most beautiful setting indeed - the snow capped mountains and glaciers reflected in the waters of Kachemak Bay with the volcanic summits of Mount Iliama and Mt Redoubt visible across the stormy Cook Straits. Homer spit seems to be turning into a tourist ghetto of t i c k y - t a c k y restaurants, tour operators, motor home parks and the like, but the town itself seems to retain a bit of it's small town character. We visited Pratt Museum - a fine small museum for such a little town (3000). Especially good info there on the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and of its lasting consequences.

August 7. Took hike along Seven Lakes Trail, starting out at Engineer Lk. CG. Walked along Hidden Lake, into woodlands, then tramped our way off trail to have lunch along Hiker's Lake, about 5 mi. round trip. Saw a no. of spruce grouse and loons. Met a couple backpacker natives who said that we had picked the greatest summer to come: best weather in

many a year.

August 8. Hiked down Hidden Creek trail to Skilak Lake and the mouth of the creek intending to look for salmon. The creek turned out to be quite marshy and impossible to approach without hip boots to wade through the reeds. Bear crap city around here, including an enormous steaming pile in the middle of the road in front of the campground this morning (that one had to be at least a bear-and-a-half), but haven't actually seen any nearby. Both Brown (Grizzly) and black bear here

in considerable numbers. Evidently there has not been much people-bear conflict on the Kenai Wildlife Refuge, a huge area - only two incidents in the last 20 years, and both of those were more or less provoked. Lots of red-necked oldtimers like to tell their bear horror stories and undoubtedly there is a grain of truth in most of them - but I am beginning to suspect the danger, although always present, is not great. In the afternoon we took the car to Sterling then north and east along a gravel road giving access to an area of many lakes. Several canoe trails in the area and a couple fine camping areas--small, quiet, waterfront. Loons on most every lake. Spotted a couple of Sandhill Cranes; the first we've seen hereabouts.

August 9. Started to retrace our steps off the Kenai. Parked the RV by the road as we explored the road to Hope, an old mining community. The day is sparkling clear and the scenery was greenery with not a building until the outskirts of the tiny village. Near

Hope one can see a grand view of Turnagain Arm but this side has little traffic and is quiet. Investigated a Forest Pk, Porcupine, at the end of the road and found it to be about the nicest park we had visited: private sites, some fine views, quiet. Talked for a length with the host, folks from WA, about



various aspects of their job and that particular area. Then drove on toward Portage Glacier, only about 25 miles after the Junction, stopping at WILLIWAU CG (\$6.00/#38) where we have a panoramic view of mts.

and Byron and Portage Glaciers. Ran back to Visitors Ctr. after dinner for book on berries, after discovering and munching on nagoonberries, plentiful in nearby woods. Did nature walk behind campground, ending at a busy glacial river and view of waterfall (one of so many rushing off nearby mts.)



August 10. The weather remains clear and warm so we decided to stay over a day as it could change for the worse at any time. Hiked up to Byron Glacier in the morning - never made it all the way to the face of

the glacier. The closer we got, the rougher and rockier the terminal moraine became. Walking on the ice - even this small one and even on the very edge - is too dangerous because of hidden holes and crevasses. Glaciers nearly worldwide, with a few exceptions, are now retreating at a very rapid clip because of global warming, and Byron Glacier is no exception. In the afternoon we walked several miles up the trail toward Johnson Pass (not far from Granite Creek CG) -- the terrain is a river valley which is pretty much open with patches of timber and brushland surrounded by high green mountains with patches of snow and a few small glaciers. A meandering stream wanders below. At one point we sat atop a hill and simply breathed in this incredible landscape.

August 11. Regretfully left wonderful site at Portage, fueled up and propaned near Bird Creek (fishermen still lining the river) and drove thru Anchorage up to Wasilla. Got same site at FINGER LAKES (\$6.00), did laundry and shopping. Met nice lady in store who told me about changes in this area since her arrival in '55: Wasilla then was barely a crossroads, with only a small convenience store. Now, at pop. 3600, it "sports" a huge Carrs (grocery) and a Safeway and many other strip businesses.

August 12. Today we set off up the Glenn Hiway. As we gained altitude up the Matanuska Valley, we could see that the trees were changing already. In places 30% to 40% of the trees were in fall foliage - and this is only early August. (The early change is probably related to drought stress.) For the first 100 miles or so the highway climbed up and down the hills with view after view of the muddy and braided Matanuska River valley with the rugged Chugach Range to the southeast - all framed in early fall colors. Near the top of the valley the massive Matanuska Glacier came into view across the valley. Five miles wide and over 30 miles in length this is one of the few glaciers that is



not receding - it has been relatively stable for the past 400 years. Soon after passing the glacier, the character of the country changed completely; soon we were in rather flat permafrost country with bogs and shallow lakes with forests that consist mostly of small stunted looking black spruce - sometimes leaning at all angles because of unstable soil. We roosted at DRY CREEK ST. REC. AREA (\$6.00) a couple of miles NE of Glennallen as we plan to day-trip to Valdez tomorrow.

August 13. Drove about 120 mi. S. to Valdez, terminal for AK pipeline and apparently the snow capital of tis area (record 46 feet one month in '89!) Saw segments of pipeline along the way: most seems to be underground (not sure how this is accomplished in such rugged mt. country) but above ground thru permafrost areas. Stopped along the way for a view of Worthington Glacier (over 6100') but the top of the blue ice field was pretty much encased in mist. Lunch along inlet of Valdez, hoping for occasional glimpses of magnificent and tall mts. surrounding this sea town. Watched "veils" of mist offer unique showing. After stop at museum (\$2), saw Visitors Ctr. showing of film "The Earth Shall Be Moved" on devastating AK '64 earthquake - (shown on hr., \$2.50). Then drove N from town up dirt rd. of Miner Cr. Canyon which is a true "V" canyon with many waterfalls cascading down

mt. walls into rapid glacial river. En route home stopped at townsite of Old Valdez, which had been wiped out by "64 quake. (New Valdez was established 4 mi. S.) Also viewed an area along a creek where salmon (reds?) were spawning. Many fish moving about or swirling in rocky area; many also dead, some obviously

munched on by bears. One tourist lady's remark: "Oh. It looks like a number of them didn't make it." I was certainly amazed by the no. of glaciers and waterfalls and rivers along today's drive; hope to see it one day with clearer skies!

August 14. Today's plan was to head into Wrangell-St Elias National Park via the McCarthy Road. We left the pavement at the little village of Chitina and crossed the broad Copper River and then bounced along a rough road that was at one time a rail line to the mines (now closed) at McCarthy-Kennecott - some 60 miles distant. About 12 miles along we elected to turn around, mostly because the stormy weather was obscuring the view of the mountains - our main reason for the trip. Wrangell-St Elias (including its associated preserves) along with Kluane National Park in Canada (and its interconnected preserves) form one of the world's largest mountain wilderness. (Wrangell-St Elias alone is the size of 6 Yellowstones!) These newer National Parks such as this one and others like Gates of the Arctic, Kenai Fjords, Lake Clark, Katmai, Glacier Bay, are all larger than Yellowstone and are almost completely undeveloped with little or no road access, few trails, and almost no visitor facilities. Denali is the only National Park in Alaska with any real visitor facilities such as roads and trails.

However, it must be mentioned that much of our federal public land is under a serious challenge by many in Alaska who want that federal management to end and these lands turned over to the state for management. The stated eventual goal is to end public ownership entirely and conversion to private and corporate ownership for lumbering and other "development" schemes. Governor Hickle and the State of Alaska has (within the last few weeks) filed a 45 billion dollar lawsuit to gain state title to much of these lands. Another example: The National Park Service has had a long-standing policy of restricting private automobile access (in favor of busses) to protect sensitive wildlife. On the July 4th holiday a supposedly "grass roots" group of people challenged that management plan by forcefully running through the traffic control gate with jeeps and the like. Several people were eventually issued citations thereby bringing the issue into the courts - the real purpose of their action. (Please do not confuse this with native land issues which for the most part have already been adjudicated.) The folks mounting these new actions are mostly "Sagebrush Revolutionaries" types who frequently express their disdain and ridicule of those who appreciate wilderness values. They feel their rights to hunt, fish, drive upon, build upon, develop, mine, harvest timber, etc., on "their" land has been appropriated by the federal government and they are now filing hundreds of these types of lawsuits

throughout the west. With 25 years of Republican appointees on the federal bench - most who passed a pro "private rights" ideological litmus test as a qualification for the job - the "sage brush revolutionaries" believe their time to move is now. I fear the future looks dim for federal wildlife refuges, national parks, and national forests here in Alaska - and in the rest of the west as well - if a significant number of these court challenges indeed succeed.

August 15. Day's journey planned to Tok, but at beginning of Nebesna Rd., about 70 miles from Glenallen, we unhooked and left RV near ranger station and drove nearly 30 miles in. From Nebesna one should have fine views of the Mentasta Mts. (N) and the Wrangells and St. Elias Mts., but this day clouds hovered atop the peaks and good views were scant. Drove till the first river crossed the road then drove back (smoothest gravel road we'd encountered up here) and on to Tok. Highlight of the day was watching a pair of yearling moose on the highway; followed them for quite a while. Dumped and fueled in Tok and passed up lettuce for \$1.86/lb. TOK RIVER CG (\$6.00) was disappointing: crowded and near hwy.

August 16. Picked up the mail this morning in Tok and headed on down the Alaska Highway. The air was incredibly clear and the Wrangell-St Elias mountains were in sight most of the day. The fall colors are beginning to show - the heath and dwarf willows of the tundra, and the birch and aspen of the higher ground. Lakes and streams everywhere. We bounced and bounded over frost heaves and construction all day, this being the worst 200 miles of the whole journey. We roosted early in the afternoon at LAKE CREEK GOVERNMENT CG (#27 - \$6.25)

August 17. Day cloudy, storm brewing in Gulf of AK. Left bucking rd. a bit after Sheep Mt. Visitors Ctr; lunch at attractive Congdon Creek CG on Lake Kluane. Arrived at WOLF CREEK CG (\$6.25) mid afternoon. After supper we drove to lookout over Yukon River and walked along the deep, twisting, turquoise river in direction of Whitehorse. Near parking lot the clear-water Yukon rushes and swirls forcefully thru steep volcanic rock walls; many boats and lives lost in this area in yrs. gone by (then, of course, no dam upstream and river was 50 feet lower). Farther on, the river opens wide and strong current is not so evident. A beaver jumped into the water and

swam away in zigzags, seemingly surprised at our presence. I rinsed my hands in the cold Yukon waters.

August 18. Had to replace another tire on the car - it took a bit of running around to locate one. Then laundry, a bit of shopping, and we were free of chores. We booked a tour on the MV Schwatka, a

two hour tour that goes up the Miles Canyon Rapids described above. It takes nearly full power on the twin diesels to slowly plow up the powerful and turbulent current of the narrows, and later a wild and swift ride back down with the engines barely



above an idle. Later we stopped by the power dam and watched Chinook salmon making their way up the fish ladder. I was surprised to find only 450 salmon per season going into the huge area of big lakes and many streams upstream of the dam - it is the peak of the run right now with 50 or so per day.

August 19. Around 8:30 drove down Alaska Hwy. about 40 miles and then a bit farther on Atlin Rd. to a spot we intend to put RV tomorrow. Then



down Rt. 8 thru Carcross into B.C. and on to Skagway, another 95 miles. Another beautiful setting within mts., and with attractive, restored buildings throughout. Window-shopped and took narrow gauge RR for three hr. ride up into mts. and back. Old RR

cars well restored, each named for a lake (ours was Nares Lk.) Saw old circular blade snow plow for tracks and No. 73 steam engine (last one left, built in Phila. by Baldwin in '46) which pulled us out of town (then was replaced with two diesels.) From mts. got good views of valley, waterfalls, section of old toll rd. never completed, parts of narrow and steep trail used by gold seekers before RR was built, gold diggers' cemetery, RR

trestles incredibly built on steep mt. slopes, etc. Decided to splurge on dinner in town since ride back was long (100 mi.) Salmon and halibut were fresh and tasty. Ride back pleasant with sun at our backs.

August 20. We parked the camper about 4 miles from the Alaska Highway on the Atlin Road and down it we went - gravel most of the way. Lunch outside on shore of pretty Como Lk; stop to take picture of beauty of Randolph Lk. The town of Atlin is a neat little village on the shores of huge Atlin Lake with mountains and glaciers in view every direction. We explored two side roads out of Atlin - one to the south along the lake, and the other to the east - into a gold mining district.

Placer mining has torn up much of the stream valley - most operations have been abandoned, but several are still operating. Spent night parked in same parking spot along Little Atlin Lk.

August 21. Feeling of heading "home" now. Gassed up in Teslin, appreciated beauty of long Lk. Teslin, now with some autumn foliage showing nearby. Drove to within short distance of Watson Lake, and then turned Son Rt. 37, the Cassiar Hwy. Much discussion amongst travellers about the 455 miles of this road, once quite rough, now better but still seemingly a smasher of windshields and doer-in of tires. Stopped at BOYA LAKE PROV. PARK (\$7.25/#6). Site on lake. Walk near lake after supper.



fewer trucks. But when we first spotted logging trucks, there were many more to come, crawling up long hills and then barreling downward. Started seeing clear cuts and then so many more. At this latitude, trees only a few feet high are 20 years old, yet they are on the docket to be harvested at 50 years or so. Funny feeling--from feeling so open and free up north to being enveloped in rain and

fog and traffic, and then having to witness depressing clear cuts. The rain built up, we hit a long stretch of dirt road and both RV and car were once again inundated with betonite mud. Some leaked into the car, more mud coated windows and other mud fouled

August 22. The days are getting shorter - fast. We are heading south in addition to the change in the season; no more light at midnight. This morning we twisted along a rather narrow and crooked highway with several extensive gravel sections through the northern Cassiar district. Along Dease river to Dease Lake, re-crossing the subcontinental divide from Arctic drainage into Pacific drainage. Crossed the Stikine river then climbed up to 4000' or so for a long drive through the open mountain country stopping at Kinaskan Lake PP for the day. (#16, \$7.25).



up fuse boxes, etc. C. spent a wet and un-fun time under the truck fixing rattling parts, grumbling audibly about the quality of US engineering. Found SEELY LAKE CG (\$7.25/#) around 3 pm. Scooped numerous buckets of water from lake to wash windows, but seemed to get as much duckweed as

water! The lake is sort of an attractive, marshy area but the campground is right on the noisy hwy. Too far to drive to next one.

August 22. Extra early start; light rain. Sort of anxiously awaited this part of Cassiar Hwy: each traveller has different story to relate about smooth journey or losing five tires or three windshields, or whatever. We actually encountered many miles' less gravel road than expected, and in the beginning, a lot

August 24. Eastward on the Yellowhead Highway - spent \$5.00 or more on carwash to attempt to blast mud off vehicles. Got rid of most of it - not all. Cloudy and drizzly all day. We're back in civilization for sure; traffic, powerlines, farms, houses and towns, et al. Stopped for the day at BEAUMONT PP (#11, \$7.25). In the evening, as I walked around a short trail, I encountered a bear in the bush -- he didn't

see, hear or smell me, so I watched for a while as he fossicked around for berries and other bear groceries about 100 feet away. I then pussyfooted off to find Annie to see if she wanted to go a bear-ing, but she wasn't in the camper. Twenty minutes later I finally found her poking around an old building and was amazed to see another rather large bear up a nearby aspen tree rather nonchalantly watching Annie! The bear seemed bored by the whole scene - he was setting on a branch with his arms draped lazily over more branches; he yawned several times. I finally managed to get Annie's attention and directed it upward toward her rather lackadaisical admirer up the tree.

August 25. Ended long day of up-hill-and-down-dale driving at LAC LA HACHE PROV.PK. (\$7.25/#47), about 20 mi. S of Williams Lake. Sun finally appeared at end of day, as we watched a pair of loons with young one on lake across busy Hwy.16. We're now back in area where there are a few more birds--mostly in mixed flocks and probably ready for their long flights. Identified an American redstart last eve.

August 26. Continued on southward down the Thompson and Fraser canyons. Stopped for the day at Emery Creek Prov Park - a pleasant wooded campground on the Fraser. Noisy though - BC Rail tracks run along the edge of the campground, and Canadian Pacific just across the river. BC rail has been on strike until yesterday - now they are making up for lost time. Talked long with an interesting older Canadian man who has been traveling full time for 25 years or so.

August 27. Crossed the U.S.border with no hassle and made our way through increasing congestion to Mark and Karin's doorstep.

