Alaska's Historic Steese and Elliott Highways

Follow the historic mining trails that once guided Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race as the trail weaves back and forth across the Steese Highway.

This brochure introduces you to the outdoor recreation opportunities on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) along the Steese and Elliott highways. It also highlights sites of interest, including the visible remnants of gold rush days, to make your journey a memorable one.

Bureau of Land Management
Fairbanks District Office
1150 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-3944
Local: 907-474-2260
Toll Free: 1-800-473-7201
www.blm.gov/ak

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Follow us on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/BlMAlaska

Cleary Summit
at the junction of the Richardson Highway and Airport Way. In the following list, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gold Dredge #3
Mile 28.6 (46 km)
Visible remnants of mining on the left side of the highway are the remains of the privately owned Gold Dredge #3, built on Cleary Creek in the winter of 1927-28. This dredge produced 68 million.

Gold Dredge #5
Mile 5.9 (9.5 km)
Constructed in 1927, Gold Dredge #5 displaced millions of tons of gravel during 32 years of operation, creating symmetrical rows of gravel tailings that are still visible. Privately owned, it is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gold Dredge #8
Mile 9.5 (15.3 km)
In 1902 Felix Pedro became the first prospector to discover gold in this area. He made his way to E.T. Bates' cabin, from where the word of his gold strike spread, and the ensuing gold rush led to the founding of Fairbanks. Well over 7 million tons of gold were eventually dredged from the Tanana Valley.

Felix Pedro Monument
Mile 9.5 (15.3 km)
Named for Felix Pedro, this community was founded as a mining camp in 1905. Turn right just before the Trans-Alaska Pipeline weigh station to continue up the Steese Highway.

Gold Dredge #8
Mile 16.2 (26 km)
Displaced millions of tons of gravel during 32 years of operation, creating symmetrical rows of gravel tailings that are still visible. Privately owned, it is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gold Dredge #8
U.S. Creek Road continues 7 miles (11 km) to the Circle-Fairbanks Historic Trail. Beware of high winds and rapidly changing weather conditions. Blowing snow sometimes closes this portion of the highway. For trail details see BLM's Pinell Mountain National Recreation Trail brochure.

Gold Dredge #8
Brochures.

Gold Dredge #8
A parking area on the right provides access to the Pinell Mountain National Recreation Trail and to the Circle-Fairbanks Historic Trail. Beware of high winds and rapidly changing weather conditions. Blowing snow sometimes closes this portion of the highway. For trail details see BLM's Pinell Mountain National Recreation Trail brochure.

Gold Dredge #8
Lake 162 (260.7 km)
The discovery of gold on Birch Creek led to the founding of Circle in 1893. Early residents thought the town was within the Arctic Circle, hence its name, but it is actually 50 miles south. It is also a Yukon Quest checkpoint.

Gold Dredge #8
A river access area is located on the right side of the road just past the bridge. In 2013 the State of Alaska completed a new boat ramp on the left side of the road before the bridge. Hunters can travel the 200 miles to the Yukon River through private land and the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge.

Gold Dredge #8
Cripple Creek Campground
Mile 50 (80.6 km)
Overnight camping, a river access area, and fishing areas are available, including universal design campsites. A class I-II float trip to the Upper Cripple Creek State Recreation Site at endplug 39 is approximately 25 miles (40 km) long. Occasional low water may require some boat dragging. For site.

Gold Dredge #8
A parking area for the start of the 27-mile (43 km) Pinell Mountain National Recreation Trail.

Gold Dredge #8
Eagle Summit is one of Alaska's very few road-accessible locations below the Arctic Circle, where you can view the midnight sun. Enjoy the quarter-mile. A parking area is located on the right side of the road just past the bridge.

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Agency Information

Bureau of Land Management
Trail Conditions Update
Website: www.blm.gov/ak/white_mUNS

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Road Conditions
Phone: 911
Website: 511.aska.gov

Alaska Public Lands Information Center (APLC)
Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center
101 D Street, Suite 300, Fairbanks, AK 99701
Office: 907-459-3789
Toll Free: 1-888-367-6672
Website: alots.blm.gov/fairbanks

Alaska Department of Fish & Game
1300 College Road, Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: 907-451-2705
Website: www.adfg.alaska.gov

Alaska State Parks
Northern Area Office
1700 Airport Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709
Phone: 907-451-2705
TDD: 907-451-2770
Website: www.aot.state.ak.us/parks

Statewide Information

Alaska Department of Transportation
Alaska Route 2
Mile 10.6 (17.1 km)
Left turn onto the gravel road one-mile (1.6 km) to the Olnes Pond.

Elliott Highway
Alaska Route 2

Mile 6 of the Elliott Highway begins at the junction with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities weigh station in Fox, at Mile 11 (km 17.7) Steese Highway, in the following list, BLM-managed facilities are highlighted in blue.

Olnes
Mile 5.2 (14.8 km)
Little remains of this early mining town reportedly named after "Joe Olnes," a prospector who arrived during the winter of 1907-1908. Olnes was once home to 250-500 miners and had general stores, lodging house, livery stables, and telegraph and telephone service. It was also a station on the Tanana Valley Railroad.

Olnes Pond
Mile 10.5 (17.1 km)
This is a parking area for the White Mountains National Recreation Area. The Summit Trail leads up Wickersham Dome, a scenic summer hiking and biker-picking area, before continuing 39 miles (62.2 km) to Beaver Creek. The Summit Trail Shelter, located 3 miles from the trailhead, is available on a first-come, first-served basis. From the same trailhead the Wickersham Creek Trail leads 10 miles (16 km) to Lost 'n' Cabins, a year-round public recreational site. Canoe access is available by reservation through the BLM.

Grapefruit Rocks
Mile 39 (62.6 km)
The large rock outcrops visible from the highway are a popular site for technical rock climbers. A short hike will bring you to the rocks. Tumors are available for parking.

Whitefish Campground/Chatanika River
Mile 50
Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River.

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Wickersham Dome Trailhead
Mile 27.7 (44.6 km)
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