

Fortymile Wild and Scenic River / Taylor Highway

Taylor Highway
From its start near the Tanana River to its end at the Yukon River, the Taylor is a highway built around, next to, over, and because of rivers. It provides travelers with unparalleled access not only to the mighty Yukon but also the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River, a watercourse that has shaped this region in ways as deep as the valleys it has carved through the Yukon-Tanana Uplands. Travel the Taylor Highway's twisty path, and you'll pass through some of the state's most interesting history while enjoying gorgeous scenery along the way.

Some travelers follow the Taylor Highway to its end in the historic village of Eagle, home of historic Fort Egbert. Others turn off at its junction with the Top of the World Highway, which continues into Yukon Territory and the Klondike Gold Rush town of Dawson City. Either way, be prepared for an unforgettable trip through the Fortymile country.

Fortymile Wild and Scenic River
Gold Rush prospectors gave the Fortymile River its name because it joins the Yukon River about 40 miles below Fort Reliance, an old Canadian trading post. In 1980, 392 miles of the river in east-central Alaska were designated as a Wild and Scenic River by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. The BLM manages the wild and scenic river corridor as well as three campgrounds and Fort Egbert in the Eagle Historic District National Historic Landmark.

Today's visitors can find relaxation, adventure or a touch of the past in the Fortymile region, which provided Interior Alaska's first gold rush in 1898. Foot trips on the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River offer scenic beauty, solitude and glimpses of gold miners working their claims. Turn-of-the-century trapper cabins and abandoned townsites. Threading through this rugged landscape, the twisty and picturesque Taylor Highway leads motorists into the heart of the Fortymile and over American Summit to the historic town of Eagle on the Yukon River. The Top of the World Highway forks off the Taylor Highway, allowing access to Dawson City in Canada's Yukon Territory.



Know Before You Go!

The Taylor Highway is open seasonally from April to mid-October.

Beyond milepost 64 the Taylor Highway is a gravel road. Conditions range from good to poor depending upon maintenance and weather conditions. The road becomes narrow and winding, particularly north of Jack Wade Junction. Use caution and travel slowly, especially on hairpin curves. Remember that you are sharing the road with recreational vehicles, tour buses, fuel trucks, bicyclists, and possibly moose or caribou!

Be prepared for limited facilities for gas and tire repair, drinking water, and trash disposal. BLM campgrounds offer minimal facilities, and travelers are advised to carry their own water supply and be prepared to pack out their own trash. RV travelers should fill their gas tanks and use dump stations before traveling the Taylor Highway.

Campgrounds

West Fork Campground (MP 49)
This campground has seven pull-through spaces, 10 back-in spaces, and 4 outposts. A nearby small lake is often home to moose and trumpeter swans. Approximately one-quarter mile from the campground is the West Fork bridge, an access point for the Fortymile National Wild, Scenic and Recreational River.

Walker Fork Campground (MP 82)
Eighteen sites, outhouses, and a picnic area occupy the site of what was once the Lassen airstrip. Year-round air service to this site eventually replaced the sleds that delivered equipment and fuel to mining camps on nearby Jack Wade Creek during the winter.



Eagle Campground (MP 160)
This campground has 18 sites and several outhouses within walking distance of historic Fort Egbert and the village of Eagle.

Points of Interest



The Chute
The Chute rapids are about a half-mile below the confluence of the Middle and North forks, where the river straightens from a turn to the right as you face downstream. Canoeists generally should portage this class III water using either bank.



The Kink
The Kink is big water, with several drops over three feet and recirculating hydraulics. It is rarely runnable and should be portaged on the right bank.



The Kink was formed in 1898 by Danish prospectors who blasted a gap through a 100-foot high rock ridge, draining a river bend they wanted to mine.



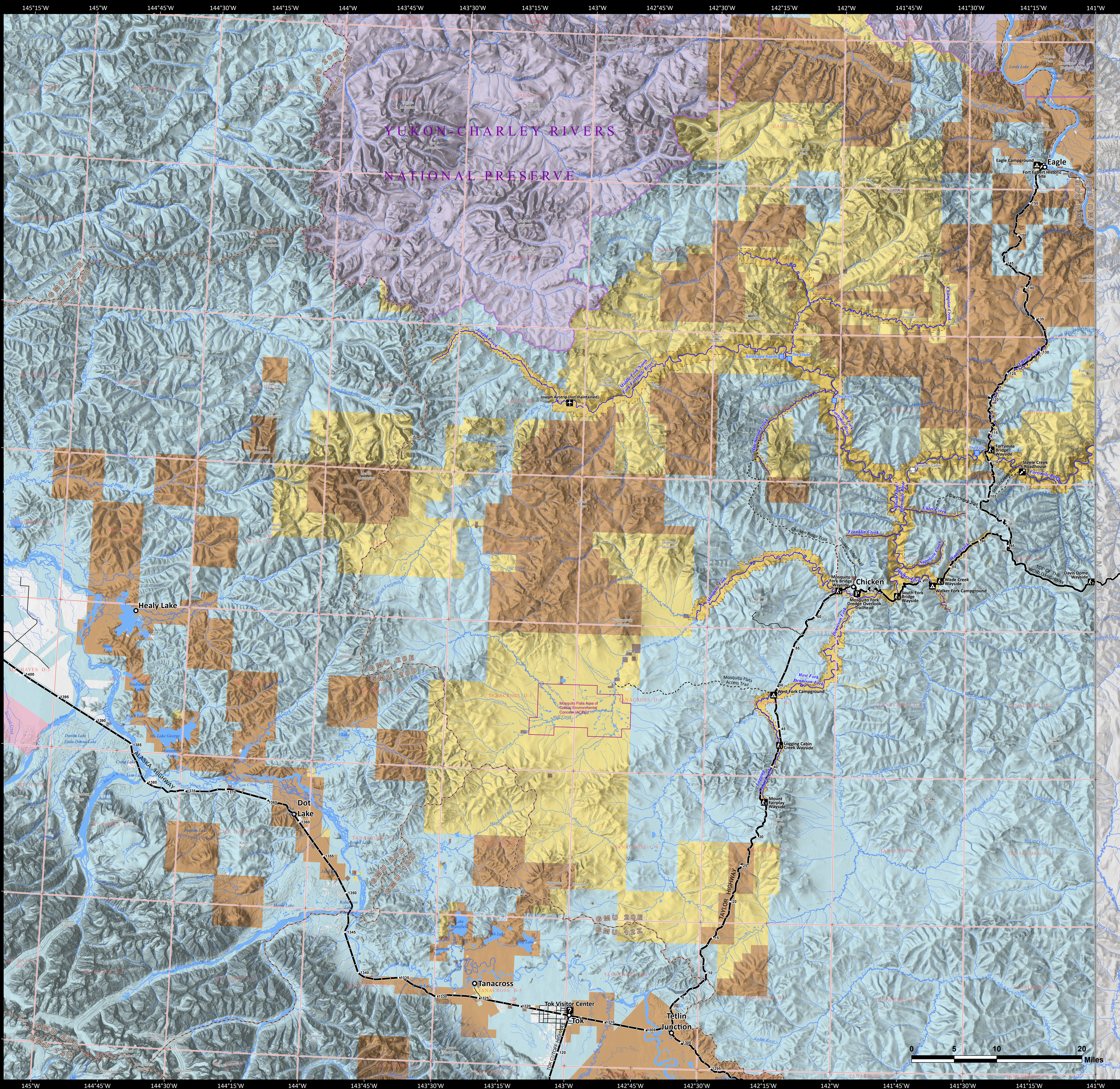
Fort Egbert
In 1899 the Fortymile region and upper Yukon valley were awash with gold miners and settlers lured in by the Klondike Gold Rush. Reports of lawlessness among the newcomers eventually reached Washington D.C. through the fortuitously slow communications available at the time. The Army's response, the establishment of Fort Egbert on the Yukon River a few miles from Canada, was to bring profound changes to the region and reshape Alaska's ties to the rest of the nation. Although the fort was largely abandoned in 1911, an Army Signal Corps contingent remained there to operate a telegraph and

wireless station until 1925. Today the BLM, in cooperation with the local Eagle Historical Society and Museums, manages five restored structures at Fort Egbert, which is part of the Eagle Historic District National Historic Landmark. Exhibits, an interpretive trail, and a campground are available for visitors.

You can explore the area on your own or take advantage of the Eagle Historical Society and Museums' daily walking tour of the city, museum, and fort. The two-hour guided tour starts at the Courthouse once daily at 9 a.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day. For more information call the Eagle Historical Society and Museums at 907-547-2325.

now serves as a strawberry patch and grass airstrip. Yet much of the Fort's fascinating history remains preserved in the five restored structures that have survived more than a century of Interior Alaska's harsh winters.

Did you know that the famous Alaska Highway, also known as the "Alcan", is not the only way to drive to and from Alaska? The Taylor Highway also links Alaska with Canada via the Top of the World Highway.



Company L, 7th Infantry, musters in front of the barracks at Fort Egbert in March 1900.

Fort Egbert Buildings

Fort Egbert Buildings

Fort Egbert Buildings

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Administered Lands	
	Bureau of Land Management
	Department of Defense
	Fish and Wildlife Service
	Local Government
	Native Allotment
	Native Lands

National Park Service
Other Federal
Private
State

Contact Information
Bureau of Land Management
Fairbanks District Office
222 University Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
Phone: 907-474-2200
<https://www.blm.gov/alaska>

Alaska Public Lands Information Centers
Tok Visitor Center (May 15 - Sept. 15)
Open Monday to Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Mile 121.4 on the Alaska Highway
Tok, AK 99780-0339
Phone: 907-883-5775
<https://www.nps.gov/anch/playourvisit/hours.htm>

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Map not to be used to determine federal subsistence hunting areas.
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