



# BC Parks

## TATSHENSHINI-ALSEK PARK

[BCPARKS.CA](http://BCPARKS.CA)

Let us introduce you to Tatshenshini-Alsek Park located in the extreme northwest corner of British Columbia. Tatshenshini-Alsek Park is nestled between Yukon's Kluane National Park and Reserve, as well as Alaska's Glacier Bay and Wrangell St. Elias National Parks and Preserves. Combined, these four protected areas cover approximately 9.8 hectares and form the largest international UNESCO World Heritage Site. Mountains, rivers, and glaciers - the landscape is spectacular.

A jewel in the BC Parks system, Tatshenshini-Alsek is cooperatively managed by BC Parks and the traditional stewards of these lands, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN).

As you enjoy what the park has to offer, you are asked to remember that you are visiting Champagne and Aishihik First Nations traditional territory. Gunalchîsh. Thank you.



# TATSHENSHINI-ALSEK PARK

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## DÁKEYI (OUR COUNTRY)

Tatshenshini-Alsek Park is primarily accessed via the Haines Highway, which connects Haines, Alaska with Haines Junction, Yukon. The highway, which essentially follows an indigenous trail, passes through coastal, sub-alpine and tundra environments. From here, visitors can enjoy spectacular scenery and get a glimpse of the area's unique flora and fauna.

## KWÄNDÜR (STORIES) & HISTORY

Elders' stories recount how several Southern Tutchone and Tlingit fishing villages and trading centres once existed along the Tatshenshini and Alsek Rivers. The area was a crossroads with trails connecting these settlements to the coastal villages of Klukwan, Haines, Dry Bay and Yakutat Alaska, and with Shäwshe (also known as Dalton Post), and other settlements to the north. The region's original peoples were greatly affected by the changes of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Today, their descendants live primarily in Yukon and Alaska and are returning to the park and area to rebuild their ancestral connections to this land.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Tatshenshini-Alsek Park is managed co-operatively by the British Columbia Government and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN). Visiting the park, you may encounter CAFN Guardians, the ears and eyes of the land.

CAFN citizens have indigenous harvesting rights in the Park; these rights are constitutionally protected. Harvesting according to traditional cultural protocols and practices also helps to maintain the overall health of the environment. Historically, salmon were the key subsistence resource for the region's indigenous peoples. Today, you may encounter a CAFN citizen picking berries, trapping gophers (ground squirrels) or hunting moose, goat or sheep. Note that CAFN citizens are allowed to carry out such activities with the aid of modern technology that includes all terrain vehicles.

## NENA, TSŪA, ŁU (ANIMALS, BIRDS, FISH)

It is estimated that up to 53 species of mammals and 125 species of birds inhabit Tatshenshini-Alsek Park. Roughly half of British Columbia's Dall sheep population lives here. This protected area, along with the other surrounding parks, may be the only area in North America large enough to ensure the long-term survival of Grizzly bears. Tatshenshini-Alsek Park is also the only place the rare blueish-coloured Glacier bear (black bear family), is found in Canada.

## RECREATION ACTIVITIES

The Tatshenshini and Alsek Rivers started to become recognized as world-class rafting rivers in the 1970s. This started to generate interest in having the area protected. In 1993, Tatshenshini-Alsek Park was created. River rafting trips continue to be a premium recreational opportunity in the park. Other visitors explore the park on foot, or by mountain bike. The park is also a favoured destination for snowmobiling, skiing, and snow-boarding. Note that snow-machine use is limited to within the designated snowmobile zone. Maps are posted along the highway corridor at major pull-outs.

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO AND STAY SAFE

Visitors to Tatshenshini-Alsek Park should be aware that this is a rugged wilderness area; appropriate clothing and gear are vital. Summer weather can be highly variable.

Both Grizzly and Black bears inhabit this area. Avoiding an encounter is the best way to protect both yourself and bears. Familiarize yourself with bear safety - watch the "How to stay safe in bear country" video, available YouTube or at local Visitor Centres. To report a problem bear, call:

**BC Parks: 250-651-7634  
or 867-689-5755**

**CONSERVATION OFFICER SERVICE:  
1-877-952-7277**

**CAFN: 867-634-4200 ext. 251**

## CHUCK CREEK TRAIL

This trail is currently the only designated and maintained trail in the park. It is located roughly 141 kilometres south of Haines Junction on the Haines Highway. There is a pull out at the trail head with an outhouse and information kiosk. This trail is suitable for both hiking and mountain biking. It is recommended that visitors obtain the correct 1:50,000 scale map for this trip (# 114 P/10 - Nadahini Creek).

The trail is 9km long one way and moderate in difficulty. If you intend to leave the maintained trail, it is recommended to take a way point on a GPS. The trail can be difficult to relocate otherwise when visibility is poor.

Chuck Creek trail starts in a wide, open sub-alpine valley, with mountainous vistas in all directions. There are several large ditches where road culverts use to be. If you are enjoying this trail by mountain bike, please stay on the main trail to avoid damaging the surrounding vegetation.

Several shallow water crossings are required along this trail. You may wish to bring additional footwear such as a pair of old runners - the rocks at the bottom of the creeks are slippery and sharp.

At approximately seven kilometres into this trip, the trail drops down to Clear Creek where a shallow water crossing is required. At this location the Samuel Glacier will be greeting you with its spectacular scenery. After another 2kms the trail ends in an open meadow.