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WILD RIVERS SURVEY 1971 - YUKON : CHIL-
KOOT TRAIL; BENNETT LAKE, NARES LAKE,
etc. Ian Donaldson



National and Historic Parks Branch
Direction des parcs nationaux et
des lieux historiques



1971

CANADA

CHILKOOT TRAIL, BENNETT LAKE
NARES LAKE, TAGISH LAKE, ATLIN LAKE
AND MARSH LAKE REPORTS

WILD RIVERS SURVEY - 1971

YUKON TERRITORY

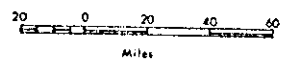
A . Report:
on the
Chilkoot Trail, Bennett Lake
Nares Lake, Tagish Lake, Atlin Lake
and Marsh Lakes
Yukon Territory
(unedited)

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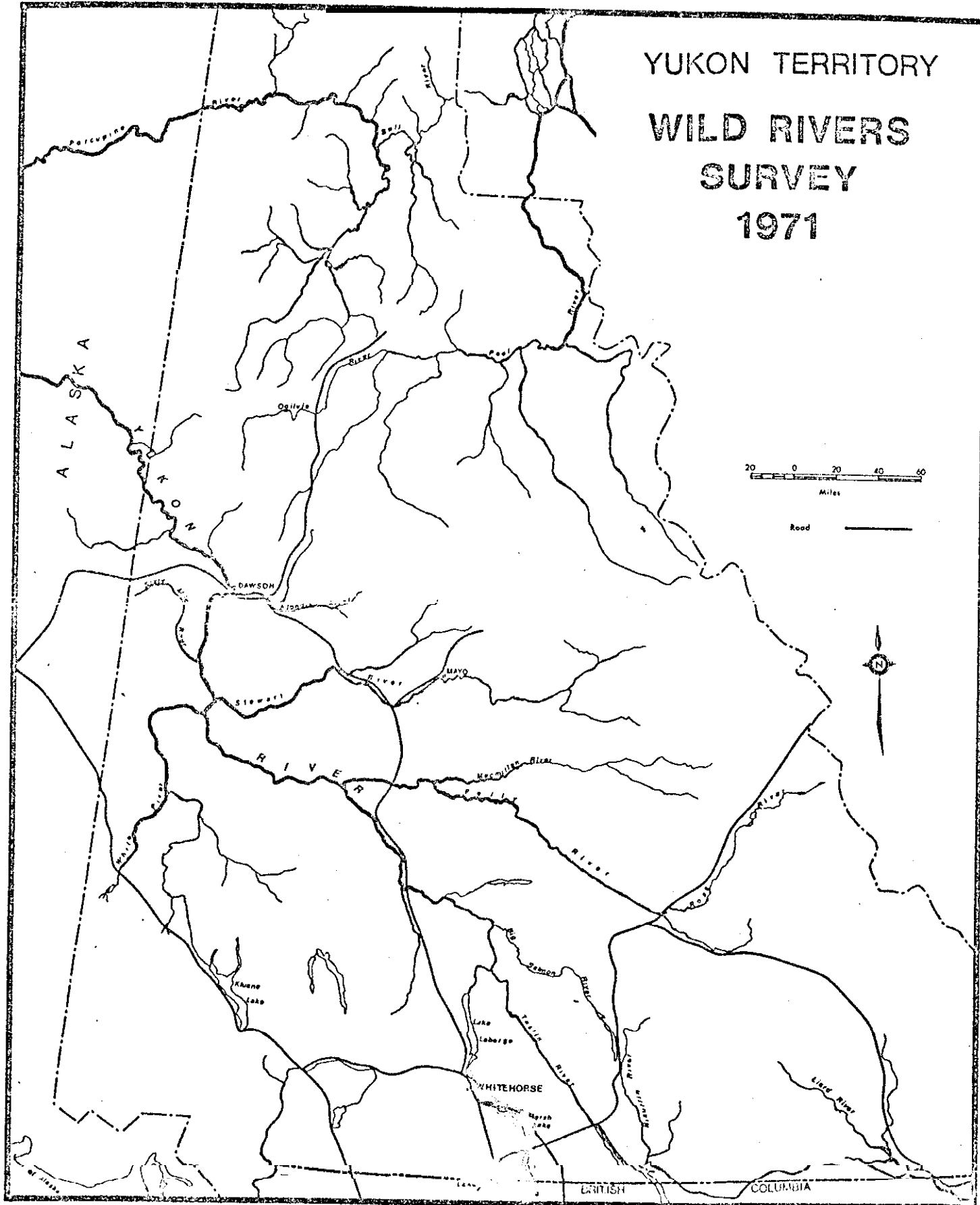
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YUKON TERRITORY
WILD RIVERS
SURVEY
1971



Road ———



THE CHILKOOT TRAIL

In 1897-98 thousands of people stampeded towards Dawson City and the Klondike gold fields. Seventy per cent of these stampedeers reached the gold bearing streams of the Yukon via the Chilkoot Pass and Yukon River system.

The Chilkoot Trail Pass has been maintained in excellent condition. With the present building program in Canada, and with the work done in the past on the American side, the Trail has become recognized as an enjoyable hike for people of all age groups. For those people who wish to experience some of the hardships of the stampedeers, and to gain a wilderness experience, the Chilkoot Trail is well **worth** the, trip.

The Chilkoot Trail starts at Dyea, Alaska, at the head of the Lynn Canal. **Here** begins the long trek over thirty-five miles of trail to the navigable waters of the Yukon River.

A road approximately 12 miles long connects **Dyea** to Skagway where rail, water and air transportation are available. On the Canadian **side, the** trail ends at Bennett where the White Pass and Yukon Route railway may be taken to Whitehorse.

After leaving **Dyea**, Alaska, the Trail has two starting points. A tram which crosses the Taiya River requires strong arms since it must be pulled across. Another starting point is along the

east side of the river over a rock bluff and down to the junction of the trails.

From **Dyea**, the Trail parallels the east bank of the Taiya River and one of its tributaries to Sheep Camp, a distance of thirteen miles. This portion of the trail lies within the confines of the Coastal Forest Region. The views of the river, mountains and glaciers that are eventually to be seen, are obscured at this point by large Western Hemlock (**Thuga heterophylla**) and Sitka Spruce (**Picea sitchensis**). Shelters at Mile 3 in the ruins of an old sawmill and at Canyon City (Mile 7.6) provide the hiker with intermediary stops prior to reaching Sheep Camp Shelter at **Mile 13**.

In the three miles from Sheep Camp to the Scales (Mile 16), the climb towards the Pass begins. The trail runs along a mountain stream that originates in the Pass and is bordered by alder, willow, brush and large boulders as the Coastal Forest is left behind. Mt. Hoffman and its glacial cap is to the west, while the view to the southwest is dominated by the Irene Glacier. Upon reaching the Scales the hiker appears to be in a cul-de-sac since only a boulder strewn scree marks the cul.

The most difficult portion of the hike is the 0.8 mile climb from the Scales to the summit of the Pass, up the **45°** slope of scree. Looking south to the Taiya River Valley and its surroundings, the hiker beholds a panoramic scene of lush green vegetation, blue

water and a hanging glacier, mingled with the sand and the rock of the mountains. The Pass to the north is barren rock with snow patches becoming more frequent as it stretches up and into Canada. The actual pass from the Scales to Crater Lake is two miles in length. Along this two mile hike, various articles left behind from the Days of '98 are still to be seen. One of the most spectacular views along the Trail is that of alpine scenery, moss, rock, and mountain lakes stretching endlessly ahead as the Pass is left at Crater Lake.

Alpine meadows run from Crater Lake, past Long Lake to Deep Lake, a distance of seven miles, before the decent into the Interior Forest begins on the Canadian side of the Pass. The trail from Crater Lake to Deep Lake is not well marked in many places but by walking parallel to the chain of lakes the hiker will not become lost.' Walking in this alpine area is not difficult.

At the south end of Deep Lake the trail crosses to the west side of the drainage system and follows along Moose Creek gorge for three miles to Lindenman Lake (Mile 28). At Lindeman, there is a shelter for the hiker, the first one since Mile 13 (Sheep Camp) on the American side of the Pass. There is also an excellent campsite at the south end of Deep Lake where the footbridge crosses the creek between Long and Deep Lakes. At Lindeman, the presently marked trail swings to the east away from the Lake and the original Trail of '98 along the Lake.

From Lindeman to Bennett (Mile 35), is a distance of seven miles. The new trail between these points has been very well used. The next four miles are through Interior Lodgepole Pine (Pinus contorta var. latifolia) flats on the well travelled trail while the last three miles into Bennett are along the White Pass and Yukon Route (W.P. and Y.R.) railway line. At Bennett there is a cabin which provides shelter if one must stay overnight although most hikers plan their arrival in Bennett so as to catch either the north or south bound trains at noon.

The direction in which one goes over the Trail will depend on preference and/or physical condition. The "down hill" route is from Bennett to Skaqway.

The Trail is usually in best condition from late July to early September when the ground is drier. This is especially true in the section of the trail through the Coastal Forest between Sheep Camp and Dyea. Foggy weather is common to the Pass, clear sunny weather occurring infrequently during this time of the year.

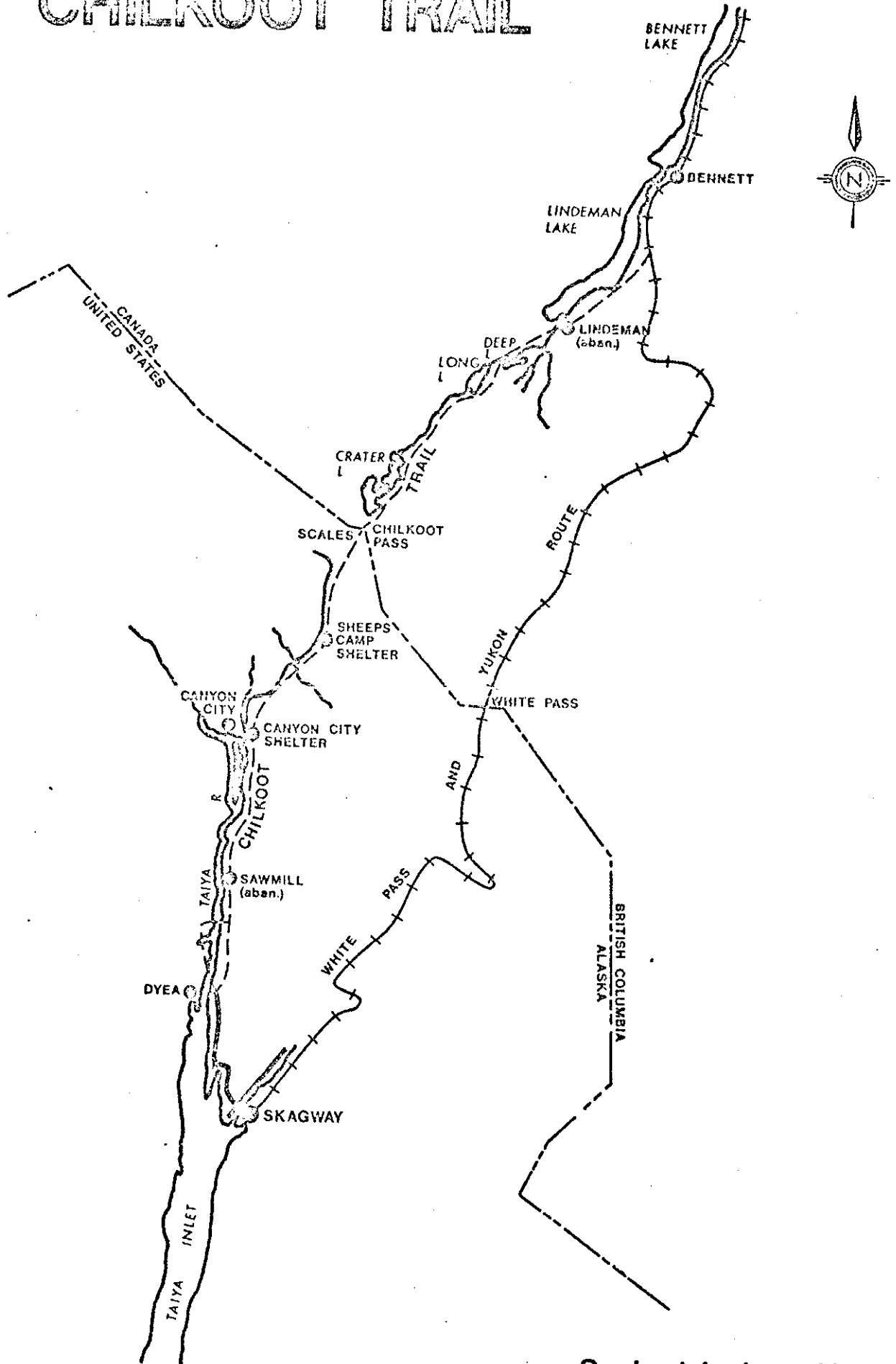
The area of northern British Columbia and southern Yukon Territory between 135° and $17'$ and $133^{\circ}50'$ W. Long. and $59^{\circ}29'$ and $60^{\circ}32'N$. Lat. constitutes an area of lakes which together can be considered as the headwaters of the Lewes River section of the Yukon River. Bennett, Tagish and Marsh Lakes, along with their associated Arms, have their main source of water ultimately from the snowfields of the Boucher-y Mountain Ranges of the Coastal Mountains and flow in

a general northerly direction. These lakes are joined by the small Lake Nares, between Bennett and Tagish Lakes, and a five, **mile** river section, between Tagish Lake and Marsh Lake. The Lewes River flows northwest out of Marsh Lake, through Whitehorse, the capital city of the Yukon Territory, and into Lake Laberge.

Access to the area can be gained by a variety of means at a number of locations, which are fairly evenly distributed along the length of the route from Lake Bennett to Lake Laberge. Bennett, at the southern extremity of Bennett Lake, is accessible by rail, while Carcross, at the northern end of the lake, is accessible both by rail and by road. Both are access points to Bennett Lake while Carcross is also an entry point to Tagish Lake through Lake Nares. Tagish Lake can also be reached from Aclin on Atlin Lake via the Atlin River flowing into Graham Inlet off Taku Arm. Tagish, which is situated at the southern end of Marsh Lake, can be considered an access point for both Tagish and Marsh Lakes. Whitehorse, on the Lewes River, is the next and last major point of entry before reaching Lake Leberge. Besides these established locations, access can **also** be gained in a few **areas where** the road parallels or crosses this lake and river system. All the lakes are accessible by float plane which can use sheltered bays along the shore.

For the purposes of description and of simplicity, these lakes and the **Lewes** River will be dealtwith separately.

CHILKOOT TRAIL



Scale: 1 Inch = 4 Miles

BENNETT LAKE

Bennett Lake is fed at its head by the **Homan** River and the larger Lindeman River. At the mouth of the Lindeman River is the small centre of Bennett, established by the gold seekers of **1897-98**. Here they camped while building boats to take them north to Lawson City. In **1900**, the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway was pushed over the White Pass and Bennett became a major stop **enroute** to Whitehorse. Today, the only people there are those who are employed by the railway. Of historical interest, there is a **semi-**completed church as well as many dug out areas in the hillside which were at one time the location of cabins or shack tents. Behind the church is an old graveyard with headstones dating back to the gold rush days.

Bennett Lake has a length of twenty-six miles and is situated in a depression that lies in a north-northeasterly direction. **F**rom the settlement of Bennett, at the head of Bennett Lake, to the Boundary, the Lake never exceeds a width of one mile and is generally only a quarter to one half mile wide. This upper portion of the Lake together with its West Arm is a narrow mountain walled inlet with fiord'characteristics. The West Arm which was not surveyed, terminates in a mass of rugged bare mountains. The mountain walls **i**n this southern section rise in places almost vertically to heights of three thousand to four thousand feet above the water level which is two thousand one hundred fifty-two feet above mean sea level. These mountains hold vast quantities of snow which result in spectacular views of melt waters cascading into the Lake.

In the Yukon Territory, Bennett Lake widens considerably. The rugged mountains **become** more subdued and fall further away from the shores. The shorelines become wider with a more gradual rise and have a lush vegetation when compared to the sparse alpine vegetation of the upper lake. North of the junction of the West Arm, where the Lake is at its widest point of two miles, the low wide valleys of the **Wheaton** and Watson Rivers can be seen. The mass of jagged peaks to the south are replaced by a view of individual peaks rising gradually to approximately three thousand six hundred feet above the Lake level.

The water has an emerald green tint and the cobble and boulder lake floor can be seen to depths of thirty to forty feet. **Due** to cold temperature of the lake water, swimming or bathing is limited.

Northeast along Lake Bennett at the point where the lake flows into Nares Lake, lies Carcross, a town known in the gold rush days as Caribou Crossing. Although it is believed that some sort of Indian community existed at this location prior to the advent of the railway in 1900, it is the railway that has given **Carcross** permanence. The narrows where the community lies forms a natural crossing place of the lakes and for this reason a station was established. Besides being serviced by rail, **Carcross** is located on the old section of the Alaska Highway between Taqish and Whitehorse. Its community services include a small hotel with a **café** and tavern/cocktail lounge, a general store, gas station, post office (open occasionally during the week), two schools

(one private), a customs office, and an R.C.M.P. detachment of one man. In the narrows, there is a fairly extensive docking area where several motor boats and small yachts are harboured. The rail bridge across the narrows prevents large boats from passing between the lakes. Of historical interest at Carcross, is the old sternwheeler **Tutshi** which is drydocked for display. Also of interest is an old narrow gauge locomotive, "**The Duchess**", which used to run on the railway between Taku on Graham Inlet of Taku Arm and Atlin Lake. This was one of the shortest railways in Canadian history.

In the upper portion of Bennett Lake, campsites are difficult to find because of the steep mountains on the east and west shores ~~and the railway~~ tracks that border the east bank of the lake. There are a few good spots, however, on the leeward sides of some of the-points that jut out into the lake from the east shore. These areas are cut off by the tracks and, although they are not the quietest spots on the lake, they are at least sheltered from the almost constant south wind that funnels down the valley from the Coastal Mountains. Travelling north, there are a few islands near the border which also have potential camping areas. Once north of the boundary to **Carcross** there are many potential and established campsites on the east shore. Again these are on areas that have been cut off by the tracks. There is one good campsite at **Carcross** which is on the north shore about three quarters of a mile west of the community. It is in a small depression behind a sand beach shoreline which offers excellent protection from the wind.

Migratory birds, bear, goats and sheep inhabit the area. There is also excellent lake trout fishing in the Lake.

This lake is not recommended for recreational canoeing. Due to the fiord characteristics of the lake, the almost constant south wind is funnelled through this depression, resulting in four to five foot waves that have been known to reach eight feet in height. Only the canoeist very experienced in lake paddling, with time to spare, should attempt this lake in a canoe. The use of a motorized freighter canoe with a minimum length of twenty-two feet or any larger craft with good stability is required if travel on the lake is attempted. The east shoreline is recommended as the one to follow due to the number of **sheltered** bays and inlets that are available. The mouth of West Arm which may be treacherous due to cross waves, can be **avoided** by **following** the east shore. In any case, **travellers** should stay close to shore in anticipation of sudden strong winds and high waves.

NARES LAKE

Nares Lake is a small, three mile long lake occupying an **east-**west valley between Bennett Lake and **Tagish** Lake. It is located between the gradually rising slopes of Montana Mountain to the south and the steeper Nares Mountain to the north. The water is more turbid and seems warmer than Bennett Lake, which is probably due to the shallower depth. The north shore of **Nares** Lake from **Carcross** begins as a fairly marshy, flat area inundated with many sloughs and then gradually rising eastward to Nares Mountain.

The slope of **Nares** Mountain is relatively open with large expanses of grass while the shore is lined with willow, spruce and poplar. The south shore is heavily vegetated with a mixture of spruce and pine, which continues along the length of the lake into Tagish Lake.. Set back about three quarters to one mile from the lake on its south shore is a rolling, wooded ridge which obscures the view of **Montana Mountain**, six miles to the south.

The opportunity for camping along the south shore of Lake Nares is good and gradually improves towards the east end of the lake. Sections of the north shore also seem good but the steep slopes of **Nares** Mountain on the eastern end of the lake limit the camping possibilities.

Recreationally, the lake has little to offer except to the residents of **Carcross** or Whitehorse who can spend a day on the lake with little fear **of the** water becoming rough. Few summer cottages occupy the shores of Nares Lake. To the traveller, the lake is little more than a short connecting strip between two very scenic and spectacular lakes.

--- TAGISII LAKE, WINDY ARM, TAKU ARM AND GRAHAM INLET

Tagish Lake is approximately seventeen miles long extending first in an easterly direction for ten miles then turning northward for the remaining seven miles. Stretching south from this bow-shaped lake are two Arms. At the west end of the lake is Windy Arm, which is twelve miles long and at the extreme east is **Taku** Arm, about sixty-one miles long, extending far into the Coastal

Mountains. Forty-three miles down Taku Arm, is Graham Inlet, a major arm reaching eastward for sixteen miles at which location it is fed by the Atlin River, the major outlet of Atlin Lake. Atlin Lake is very long and is situated in a valley running parallel to Taku Arm, two and a half miles to the east of the head of Graham Inlet.

WINDY ARM

Windy Arm is a narrow-walled mountain inlet similar to Bennett Lake. It is very scenic with steep rock walled mountains on the east shore and fairly steep, high, wooded hills on the west shore. The slope of the west shore is more gradual than the east but the eventual height is higher with Montana Mountain attaining an elevation of seven thousand two hundred and eighty feet. Unfortunately this peak, although the highest in the area, is not visible from the lake because of the steep shoreline.

Due to the steep shoreline there are very few camping locations on the Arm. One location is on the east side of Bove's Island, the very large island at the mouth of the Arm, while another is on the east side of the Arm about one and a half miles south from the mouth.

The road is presently being pushed south into British Columbia, to terminate at Skagway, Alaska. Approximately four miles along this road from the mouth of the Arm, is the abandoned settlement of Conrad, the one time headquarters of Conrad Consolidated Limited. In the first decade of the twentieth century, Conrad

City boomed and in 1906 was **describ** ed as boasting several hotels, stores, restaurants and churches among other buildings. **Carcross** acted as the distribution centre for the mining area with merchandise being conveyed by railway over the White Pass and then being placed on steamers at **Carcross** for transportation to Conrad. The mine and town were abandoned in 1912 for financial reasons. Today, all that is left are old buildings, most of which are in poor condition, and artifacts. The site is very interesting and well worth the time spent in visiting.

While travelling Windy Arm, caution must be exercised at **all** times because of the unpredictable nature of the winds. Winds can blow up in a matter of minutes resulting in large swells and white caps. **his characteristic has resulted in a considerable loss of life at the mouth of the Arm since the turn of the century.**

Windy Arm terminates at its upper end in low, hilly land from which enter a few small streams. At this location there is a portage trail, about three miles long, leading to Tutshi Lake, a narrow mountain lake approximately two hundred feet above the water level of Tagish and Bennett Lakes. The lake is surrounded by mountains but no glaciers or prominent peaks are apparent. The water is exceptionally clear and cold.

The physical characteristics and scenery of Tagish Lake between Windy Arm and Taku Arm are greatly different from that of Bennett Lake and Windy Arm. The northern shore of the lake consists of low terraced flats that are sparsely vegetated with spruce, poplar,

pine and large open grassy areas. The south shore has steep wooded slopes with rock outcroppings and jagged peaks, such as the grey rough peaks of Lime Mountain (elevation 5225').

Campsites along this seven mile section are restricted to the lower north shore by the steep banks of the south shore. It is advisable however to travel along the south shore which affords protection from the prevailing south winds and then cross Tagish Lake just prior to reaching the mouth of Taku Arm.

TAKU ARM

Taku Arm extends deep into the Coastal Mountains, maintaining an average width of about one and a half to two miles. The upper six mile stretch of the Arm leading westward to Ben-My-Chree is quite narrow, rarely exceeding a width of one mile. The Lake narrows at two points. Both locations (the stream that flows from Tutshi Lake and the mouth of Graham Inlet), have historical backgrounds related to the Atlin Gold Rush of 1898. Trails lead from Log Cabin south of Bennett to Tutshi and to Hale and Kirtland located on the west shore of Taku Arm, at the mouth of the Fantail River. The Tutshi trail was the more northerly and was 85 miles --long, but was safer than the shorter "Fantail Trail" when the ice on the lakes was treacherous.

At Tutshi, there is presently one trapper's cabin with only scattered evidence left behind from 1898. There is a road leading from Tutshi to Tutshi Lake which makes an excellent portage trail between the lakes. The stream flowing out of Tutshi Lake to

Taku Arm is not navigable.

At Hale and Kirtland, which are located opposite each other at the mouth of the Fantail **River**, very little remains of the gold rush days, except for a few very old cabins and debris scattered around the area.

Ten miles south of Graham Inlet on the east shore, is the abandoned Engineer Mine which is also of historical interest. In **1899** at this location, some engineers working for the White Pass Railway located a promising quartz proposition and as a result formed the Engineer Mining Company and started work. In 1907, a group headed by Captain **James** Alexander took over the Engineer Mine. For a few years thereafter, the mine was idle, hampered by inheritance litigation, but in 1924 the mine resumed operation under the management of New York interests. In 1930, shortly before the mine closed, a power dam was completed at Wann River, a very scenic site a few **miles** south. There are now a few buildings and an old broken dam on Wann River which are very interesting. Although the Engineer **Mine** seemed like a good prospect and thousands of dollars were spent in preparation, more money was always needed before the mine could really start producing. It lies idle now with rumors still circulating in some geological circles that the mine could still be a rich gold-producing mine.

Physically, except for the upper 17 miles of the Arm, the shoreline is generally flat with poplar being the main species on the east shore while spruce dominates the western border of the Arm. Behind these shores, the topography is steep with a general relief of about

forty-five hundred feet above **m.s.l.**, with many peaks rising fifty-five hundred to sixty-five hundred feet or more above **m.s.l.** Southward, past Graham Inlet for the last 17 miles, the shore becomes very steep with areas of vertical rock face lining the shore.' The peaks are more numerous with large areas of snow trapped in the higher altitudes. Peaks of over 7000' are now plainly visible to the east, west and south. In the six mile westward stretch of the Arm, the large, white, flat expanse of the Juneau Icecap at the end of the Arm behind **Ben-My-Chree** is a fantastic scene.

The abandoned settlement of Ben-My-Chree (meaning "girl of my heart" in Manx, named by the Partridges from the Isle of Man who once lived here! , began as a mine promotion in the early 1800 's. Many buildings were constructed but the mine, located about thirty-five hundred feet above the water, near the summit of White Moose Mountain, apparently never became fully operational. The location was subsequently converted into a resort area with financial support from the **White** Pass and Yukon Route Transportation Company. This company used to run the steamer Tutshi, now on blocks at Carcross, down to Ben-My-Chree bringing tourists and supplies until about 1950 when the old sternwheelers were phased out of operation. Presently, after being idle for many years, the settlement has been purchased from White Pass by a private individual who plans again to make Ben-My-Chree into a tourist establishment. The site of Ben-My-Chree has unique and diverse vegetation and is exceptionally scenic. It is a place all should visit if the opportunity arises.

The diversity of the mountain scenery along **Taku** Arm is a sight to behold by the traveller. The Arm is lined on either side by various shapes, **colours** and sizes of mountains throughout its length, with the mountains becoming more concentrated and more beautiful southward. There are sawtoothed peaks, rounded knobs, ridges and pyramid peaks with assorted colours as white, grey, red, yellow and black. The scenery of the upper reaches of the Arm is superb. Very rugged peaks reaching upward with large cirques **filled** with melting snow and **ice make** a beautiful sight under the light shroud of mist that usually hangs over their summits. The sheer rock faces on either side of this fiord-like inlet provide an excellent frame to the fantastic view of the flat, cold glacier behind Ben-My-Chree. The combination of **all** these sights provides an inspiring experience for the traveller.

Campsites along **Taku** Arm are not difficult to find because of the relatively lower shoreline than that found on Bennett **Lake** and Windy Arm. Both shores north of Graham Inlet seem to have excellent camping possibilities with perhaps the east shore being slightly preferable because of the more open areas of poplar vegetation. A few noteworthy locations in this section include Tutshi and Potter Point, both locations of trappers' cabins on the west shore. Less than a **mile** north of Potter Point is the very scenic location of **Racine** Falls. South of Graham Inlet, the shores are steeper and as a result camping is made more difficult **except** at the established camping sites. These are at Hale, at the mouth of the Fantail River, Engineer and Wann River, on the east shore, and Ben-My-Chree, at the end of the Arm.

The water of Taku Arm is clear at the mouth but it becomes progressively cloudier towards the south because of the glacial streams feeding it at its southern extremity. At Ben-My-Chree the water is a very yellowish brown **colour** and not potable. Fortunately there is a small stream of very clear cold water, that is of excellent quality. The water elsewhere in the **Arm** is of good quality for drinking. Because of the cloudy nature of the water in the southern region of the Arm, fishing is poor but improves towards the northern end of the Arm around **Tutshi**.

Graham Inlet is a major arm approximately sixteen miles in length occupying a wide valley due east from **Taku** Arm. It varies in width from one half mile to a mile and a half and in most areas **is well protected from the winds and the exceptionally rough** waters found on Taku Arm. The relief on both the east and west shores is one of subdued, rolling, wooded hills with rock **out-**croppings and mountainous country becoming more prominent towards the east. The upper nine miles of the south shore of Graham Inlet is quite low and marshy with black spruce lining the shore behind low water bushes.

The water in Graham Inlet is crystal clear and is excellent for lake trout fishing. One family makes its livelihood from the natural resources of the area. Redge Brooks, together with his **wife** and son, live on the Inlet year-round, trapping during the winter and running a small fishing guide service during the summer. Vegetables and flowers are grown in a greenhouse and garden. Their cabin which was **Mr.** Brook's father's, is located on the south shore

about **one** mile from the mouth of the Inlet. A visitor is always welcomed at their home in this lonely part of the country.

At the eastern head of the Inlet is the abandoned site of Taku. In 1899, a narrow gauge railway was constructed from this location near the mouth of the Atlin River to Scotia Day on the west shore of Atlin Lake, a distance of two and a quarter miles. Wharves were also constructed at each end of the railway. This construction was carried out in answer to the demand caused by the Atlin Gold Rush. What is left today are a few bunk houses, a passenger waiting room, a garage and a bare track bed leading to Atlin Lake.

A **relatively** recent abandoned sawmill about a mile from **Taku** is **located** on the south shore. The buildings at this site are made of unfinished sawn lumber and are in excellent condition. The mill was used to supply ties to the White Pass and Yukon Route Railway.

The Atlin **River** enters Graham Inlet from Atlin Lake at Taku. It is a wild fast flowing river which can be ascended by power boats at high water levels without too much difficulty or fear of hitting bottom. The average velocity is 10 m.p.h. and it has **a fall** of forty-two feet over its two mile length. A few standing waves of four to five feet can be **expected**. Only the experienced river canoeist should attempt this river and it should be attempted at high water. Large boulders are present just under the surface of the water and are very dangerous if the river is not run in the proper channel.

From the mouth of Taku Arm on Tayish Lake, it is a distance of seven miles north before Tagish Lake abruptly narrows to a river. This river is five miles long and flows north into Marsh Lake. **The** community of Tagish is located at the lower end of this river or the head of **Marsh** Lake. The average width of this northerly section of **Tagish** Lake is a mile and three **quarters**. On the west the lake is bordered by flat densely vegetated land while the east shore gradually rises thirty-eight hundred feet to Jubilee Mountain at an elevation of fifty-nine hundred and fifty feet.

Camping possibilities are much better on the east shore as opposed to the low areas on the western edge. A few excellent areas occur on the west shore in the last few miles before the **Lake ends**. An excellent campsite is located on the east shore, behind a narrow beach in a clearing, a few hundred yards before the Lake narrows at its northerly end.

Due to the long reach from Taku Arm and the prevailing south winds, this section is inclined to have very rough waters. This **Lake** and its arms should not be travelled unless using a stable **powered** craft of twenty to twenty-two feet in length.

Summer cottages line the west side of the north end of the Lake and a considerable portion of the west bank of the five **mile** connecting river. These cottages are backed by the old portion of the **Alaska** Highway going from Tagish through **Carcross** to Whitehorse.

The east shore, having no access other than by boat, is free of development all the way to Tagish. The river section runs through fairly low land with scrub water brush growing in the water along both banks. The river flows at 2 m.p.h. over a weed covered bed. It is relatively cloudy with a deep green **colour** and a depth of fifteen to twenty feet. Good fishing is available in this river.

The small community of Tagish is located at the northern end of this river section on the old Alaska Highway, about thirteen miles from **Jake's** Corner at Mile 868 on the Alaska Highway. It occupies an **area** which was occupied **by** the Tagish Indians prior to the Gold Rush years. The first Whites were those who made **temporary camps** on their way north. The **first permanent** establishment was a **N.W.M.** Police Post located near the Indian graveyard on the east bank of the river. This post was to serve as a customs post and check point for transients bound for the Klondilce area and at one time housed two hundred men. Since 1945 the growth or maintenance of Tagish has been dictated by the growth of Whitehorse and the manner in which improved road **communications** have **made** the community accessible to the populace of Whitehorse as a recreation area. Today, the service base of the settlement, which is completely tourist oriented, consists of a trading post, a cafe, a boat rental office, a cabin rental area and a public campground. The population consists of only five **or** six permanent families.

ATLIN LAKE

Atlin Lake, fed by glacial streams, is the largest lake in British Columbia, and is surrounded by the snow capped peaks of the Coastal Mountains. This lake and its surrounding country is known as "The Switzerland of North America". The town of Atlin (an Indian word for "big waters") is located on the east shore of the lake and faces the beautiful purple slopes of Atlin Mountain (elevation 6711') where a spectacular rock glacier grinds its way down the mountain.

Atlin was founded during the Atlin Gold Rush of 1898 and after once having a population of thousands it now has about two hundred people. It is serviced with a gas station, general store, post office, B.C. Government Liquor Store, a school and chartered plane service. A large barren campground is located near the lake shore at the north end of town.

MARSH LAKE

Marsh Lake is one half mile below the settlement of Tagish. The Lake is twenty miles long with an average uniform width of two miles. It occupies a wide valley and the country adjacent to the Lake is low, consisting of terraced flats or low, rounded, wooded hills or ridges. The shorelines are vegetated with grasses, shrub willow and alder. Mountain peaks are visible in the distance on the east and west extremities of the valley. Michie Mountain (elev. 5830') is the highest peak to the east. Eight miles to the west there is an irregular and broken mass of mountains, the

highest points of this range being Mount Lorne and Mount Lansdown, 6,500 feet and 5875 above mean sea level respectively. The diversified forms of the distant mountains visible from the Lake, make this area quite picturesque.

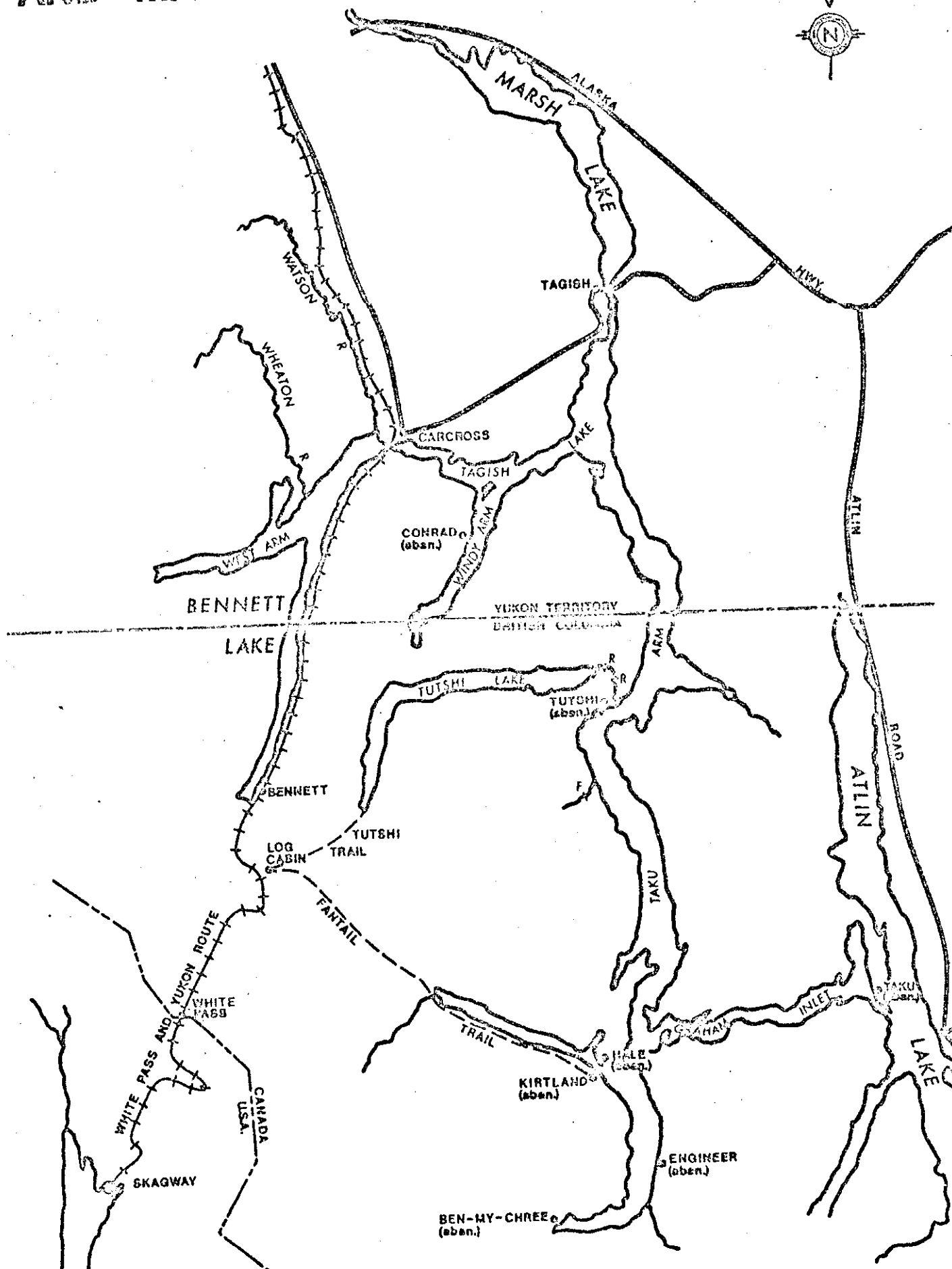
Marsh Lake is shallow relative to the other major lakes of the areas. The water is a cloudy green colour and is potable.

The Alaska Highway follows the east shore of the northern half of the lake. Noise and clouds of dust result from heavy transport trucks travelling this highway.

Due to the ease of access to Marsh Lake from Tagish and the Alaska Highway and due to the short distance of the Lake from Whitehorse, it is an important recreation area for the residents of Whitehorse. There are thirty to forty cottages concentrated largely at the north end of the Lake near the mouth of the McClintock River. The Lake is slightly warmer than the previous lakes surveyed, thus swimming and water skiing are a few of the water sports enjoyed during the short summer season.

McClintock River is a major stream entering Marsh Lake at its northern extremity and drains approximately five hundred square miles of land north and east of Marsh Lake. It meanders a great deal and is navigable by power boat for about seven miles at low water and sixteen miles at high water. The river affords good fishing.

BENNETT, TAGISH, ATLIN, AND MARSH LAKES



Scale: 1 inch = 30 Miles

APPENDIX

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP COVERAGE:

1:250,000 MAP SERIES, N.T.S.

NAME	<u>SHEET NUMBER</u>	
ATLIN	104	N
SKAGWAY	104	M
WHITEHORSE	105	D