

Bell's Travel Guides

Sterling Highway Road Log



**Mile by Mile Description of the Sterling Highway so you
always know what lies ahead.**

Seward Highway Junction to Homer, Alaska



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The Sterling Highway runs along the western edge of the Kenai Peninsula and features extraordinary mountain scenery, sparkling lakes, glacier-fed streams, and beautiful coastal inlets. Wildlife abounds along this scenic route and you'll probably even encounter a giant Kenai moose.

Many good private, state and federal camp sites are found along the way, the highway passes through a number of intriguing villages and towns, each worth a visit. The Kenai Peninsula is recognized as a sportsman's paradise.

Mileage markers along this route read from Seward (mile 0) to Homer (mile 173). Details for the first 38 miles of this highway will be found in the highway description of the Seward Highway (mile 38 to mile 0, Seward).

mile 37 Sterling Junction. You are 89 miles from Anchorage, 135 miles from Homer. The Seward Highway continues north. There is an interpretive observation platform overlooking Tern Lake with great views of the surrounding mountains.

mile 37.1 Parking beside Tern Lake. Bird viewing.

mile 37.4 USFS Tern Lake day-use picnic area tables, water, toilets, firepits. Trout fishing in Daves Creek. King salmon spawning area, informative viewing trail.

mile 39.7 Dave's Creek, good fishing for Dolly Varden and rainbow.

mile 40.1 Parking. Emergency phone.

mile 40.5 Parking. There are several small parking areas between mile 40 and mile 55.

mile 41 Quartz Creek Bridge.

mile 42.5 Parking.

mile 43 Parking.

mile 43.5 Parking.

mile 44.9 Quartz Creek Forest Service Campgrounds. Fee area. Quartz Creek campground borders Kenai Lake. Access via 1/2-mile road. 45 camp sites, boat ramp, good sandy swimming beach, flush toilets, handicap accessible. Dall sheep can often be spotted on mountain sides. Trail leads along nearby Quartz Creek. Fishing for Dolly Varden and rainbow.

Crescent Creek campground, access via 3 mile road, 9 camp sites, no water, tables and toilets, at confluence of Crescent and Quartz Creeks. Camping fee. Crescent Creek trail is 1/2-mile past campground near end of road-watch for sign. Good trail leads to Crescent Lake and Forest Service cabin (make reservation through USFS in Anchorage or Seward) round trip, 12.4 miles hiking time, 5-8 hours. Viewing decks just outside the campground offers a good place to watch for salmon and Dolly Varden. The best place to observe spawning is along the creek at the Crescent Creek campground.

mile 45 The highway parallels Kenai Lake, good fishing for Dolly Varden and trout, it is closed to salmon fishing.

mile 45.5 Parking, Dall Sheep can often be seen on the surrounding mountains.



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mile 47.3 Bean Creek Road. Access to Kenai Princess Wilderness Lodge and RV Park - 2 miles.

Kenai Princess Wilderness Lodge. This true Alaskan lodge overlooking the Kenai River is just two hours from Anchorage in the geographic heart of the Kenai Peninsula. Enjoy excursions along the Peninsula then return to the comfort of this wilderness lodge. Private hillside bungalow-style rooms with wood-stoves, seating areas, porches, telephones and televisions. Lodge amenities include a restaurant, lounge, espresso bar, outdoor deck, and gift shop. A tour desk can arrange river rafting, horseback riding, fishing, hiking, flightseeing and day trips to Kenai Fjords National Park and Resurrection Bay. Reservations suggested. Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club accepted. In keeping with the Princess tradition, this lodge offers the utmost in warm comfort and quality. Open mid-May thru mid-September. 17245 Frontier Circle. Call 800-426-0500 for reservations.

Kenai Princess RV Park. 29 sites with water, power and septic. General store, 24-hour, coin-operated shower and laundry facilities. Guests enjoy full privileges at the adjacent Kenai Princess Wilderness Lodge. Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners Club accepted. \$25 per night. Open mid-May through mid-September. 907-595-1425 for reservations and information.

mile 47.4 Kenai River Bridge, boat launch, day-use parking, toilets, viewing decks and informative signs. The river empties into Kenai Lake and flows across the Kenai Peninsula 80 miles to Cook Inlet. King, pink and silver salmon, rainbow and Dolly Varden, which are usually present even when the salmon are not running. Salmon eggs and brightly colored lures are most commonly used, although fly fishing is also very productive. It's best to inquire locally.

mile 47.5 Cooper Landing, visitor facilities.

mile 47.6 Snug Harbor Road. 12 mile access road to Cooper Lake and trailhead. Dolly Varden spring and fall. Boat suggested. Beginning of Russian Lakes trail off Snug Harbor Road.

mile 48.6 Cooper Landing Chamber of Commerce visitor center cabin.

mile 49.7 Parking.

mile 50.5 Cooper Creek Forest Service Campground. 28 camp sites, water, toilets, tables, dumpsters. Dumpstation. Fishing for red salmon.

mile 52.5 K Beq (Footprints). In 1984 Archaeologists discovered Indian and Eskimo graves along with prehistoric artifacts near Mile 55 of the Sterling Highway. Most recently the investigative focus has been on an area near present day Cooper Landing known as Sqilantnu, which means "the grocery store." The Chugach National Forest has partnered with the Kenaitze Indian Tribe to preserve, protect and provide interpretation for the K'Beq' "footprints" interpretive site. You can experience the traditions and culture by participating in interpretive walks with tribal members.

mile 52.5 Russian River Campground . Camping and day-use sites. 84 Sites with toilets, water, firepits. Fee area. There are a number of hiking trails in the area. Reserve campsites by calling 877-444-NRRS or visit www.recreation.gov.

mile 53.1 Kenai River Bridge. Parking, Resurrection Pass trailhead.

mile 54.5 Parking.

mile 55 Kenai and Russian River Access. Russian River Ferry. Large parking lot, with fee charged. Picnic tables, boat launch. The Russian River Ferry takes fishermen acrosses the Kenai River to the opposite bank and the mouth of the Russian River.



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mile 55.6 Parking.

mile 56.4 Parking.

mile 56.9 Parking.

mile 57.3 Parking. Fuller Lakes trailhead.

mile 57.9 Kenai Wildlife Refuge. Westbound travelers are now entering the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

mile 58 Skilak Loop Road. Once a part of the main highway, this well-maintained, 20-mile gravel road rejoins the Sterling Highway at mile 76. There are 8 Fish and Wildlife Service campgrounds, all on good fishing lakes, as well as a number of maintained hiking trails. The Hidden Lake Campground, is one of the nicest on the peninsula.

mile 59.9 Parking.

mile 60.5 Jean Lake, 3 camp sites, picnic area, boat launch. Fishing for rainbow. Berry picking.

mile 61.3 Skyline Trail, parking.

mile 62.7 Parking.

mile 68.3 Access to Peterson Lake (.5 mile) and Kelly Lake (1 mile) small public campgrounds .5 mile side road, camp sites, tables, fireplaces, toilets, handicap accessible, boat ramp, fishing for rainbow, swimming, and hiking along Seven Lakes Trail-7 miles over level ground.

mile 70.4 Egumen Lake trailhead with large parking area. Short trail (.5 mile) to Egumen Lake fishing for rainbow.

mile 71.3 Watson Lake, parking at entrance to Watson Lake campground. 3 camp sites, tables, toilet, handicap accessible, drinking water, steep boat ramp. Rainbow. East Fork Moose River.

mile 72.9 Parking.

mile 75.3 Skilak Lake Loop Road leaves the Sterling Highway here and rejoins it at mile 58.

mile 80 Bings Landing State Recreation Area. 36 sites for tents and RVs of all sizes. Tables, firepits, toilets, picnic area and boat launch. Handicap accessible. Fee area.

mile 81 Sterling, visitor facilities.

mile 83.3 Swanson River Road. Leads to four campgrounds and two canoe systems: Sunken Island Lake Campground (7 miles), Dolly Varden Lake Campground (15 miles), Rainbow Lake Campground (16 miles), Swanson River Campground (18 miles).

Sunken Island Lake is good for (stocked) silver salmon, and there are rainbow in Forest Lakes at mile 9.5 on Swanson River Road. All 4 campgrounds on this road have camping, tent and trailer sites, picnic tables, fireplaces, drinking water, toilets, boat ramps. Scout Lake Loop Road rejoins the highway at mile 85. Two canoe systems traverse well-marked lakes connected by streams or short portages. Swanson Lake route is 60 miles and Swanson River route is 80 miles.



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mile 85 Scout Lake Loop Road extends 7 miles and rejoins the Sterling highway at Mile 83.3. Scout Lake State Recreation Site, toilets, water, picnic shelters, hiking trails, and fishing. Follow Scout Lake Loop Road 1.5 miles to Morgan's Landing State Recreation Area, 41 camp sites, toilets, water and fishing.

mile 87.5 Robinson Loop Road.

mile 92 Birch Ridge Golf Course.

mile 92.7 Mackey Lake Road.

mile 94.2 Swiftwater Campground 40 camp sites, tables, toilets dump station, boat launch. Handicap accessible. Hiking and fishing.

mile 94.4 Soldotna and Junction to Kenai (12 miles on the Kenai Spur Road).

mile 95.8 Kenai River Bridge

mile 95.8 Soldotna Visitor Information Center. Open 7 days a week in the summer. They have an exhibit on the world record king salmon - 97 pound, 4 ounces! Stop in for a Soldotna Visitors Guide.

mile 95.9 Junction. Kalifornsky Beach Road to west, Funny River Road to east. Turn east on Funny River Road and continue for 2 miles for Soldotna Airport or west on Kalifornsky Beach Road to Centennial Park Campground, 176 sites in heavily wooded area on the banks of the Kenai River, water, tables, firepits, toilets, dump station. handicap accessible. Good salmon fishing area borders river near small boat ramp at end of campground. Fee area.

mile 98 Ski Hill Road (turn off to the east). Follow 1 mile to **Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center.** The center has wildlife films, exhibits and Rangers who can offer information on hiking, canoeing and camping in the Refuge.

Tsalteshi Trail System. Parking at the hockey Rink near Skyview High School. 9 miles of trails. The trailhead is behind the Hockey Rink.

mile 105.5 Large parking area.

mile 108.8 South junction with Kalifornsky Beach Road via Kasilof - this road rejoins Sterling highway at mile 96.3.

mile 109.3 Kasilof River bridge.

mile 109.5 Kasilof River State Recreation Site. 10 camp sites, water, tables, toilets, hiking trails, boat launch and fishing, access to Tustemena Lake. Fee area.

mile 110 Access to Johnson and Tustemena Lakes. Johnson Lake state campground is reached by short sideroad. 50 camp sites, toilets, water, shelters, boat ramp and fishing for rainbow. Tustemana Lake is 6.5 miles. 10 camp sites, toilets, boat launch, fishing for lake trout. Refuse deposit site.

mile 110.5 Parking.



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mile 111 North junction of Coho Loop Road leads 7 miles past homesteads and ocean beaches, and returns to highway at mile 114.6. **Crooked Creek State Recreation Site**, 79 camp sites (parking lot style), water, toilets, trails and fishing. 1 3/4 miles on Coho Loop Rd. When salmon are spawning, you can see them in the pools just east of the highway.

mile 114.3 Coho Loop Road rejoins highway at mile 111.

mile 117.4 Clam Gulch State Recreation Area and Clam Gulch Beach Road. 1/2 mile to beach-good razor clam digging during minus tides, April-August. There is no closed season on clams. Sport fishing license is needed and limit is first 60 clams taken. **Clam Gulch State Recreation Area** provides picnic sites, shelters, campsites, water and toilets. Excellent view of Aleutian Range across inlet. The steep hill leading to the beach should not be attempted unless you have a 4-wheel drive vehicle.

mile 118.2 Clam Gulch, post office.

mile 122.9 Parking.

mile 124.8 Parking with view.

mile 127.1 Scenic View.

mile 134.5 Ninilchik River Campground. 39 camp sites, picnic shelters, toilets, water, fishing and hiking trails.

mile 134.8 Road toward inlet leads to Old Russian Church. Magnificent view of inlet, volcanos, beach and village. **Ninilchik Scenic Overlook**, this site offers both day use and overnight camping. 9 camp sites, water, toilets, tables, trails provide access to fishing along the Ninilchik River. Fishing.

mile 134.9 Parking.

mile 135 Ninilchik River bridge.

mile 135.1 Side road leads to Old Ninilchik. This fishing village was colonized in 1820 by Russian fur traders. Steeped in the history of early Russian America, it affords an unexcelled old-world setting with its Russian Orthodox Church atop a nearby hill, quaint fishermen's cottages and log homes. Information signs tell the history of Ninilchik. Walking tour maps are available at local businesses. A trail leads to the church and cemetery on the hill. The road continues to the beach where there is camping, and toilets.

mile 135.7 Ninilchik View Campground on a bluff above Ninilchik Beach; 12 camp sites, water, dump station. The Ninilchik, as well as nearby Deep Creek, also has Dolly Varden, Arctic char, and rainbow. The Alaska Peninsula and Cook Inlet may be seen to the west, as well as the snowy volcanic peaks of Mt. Iliamna and Mt. Redoubt.

mile 135.5 Ninilchik . Population: 883.

mile 135.9 Intersection of Oil Well Road, turn here to reach public air strip, fishing charters, B&B's and other businesses.. This is a gravel road, and may not be suitable for larger RV's.

mile 136.1 Kenai Peninsula Fairgrounds.



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mile 136.4 Deep Creek North located on the north side of Deep Creek. 29 camp sites, for vehicles up to 50 feet. Water, toilets, fireplaces, interpretive information and viewing areas are provided at this scenic location.

mile 136.6 Deep Creek South located on the south side of Deep Creek. Day use only. Water, toilets, interpretive kiosks are available.

mile 137.3 Deep Creek State Recreation Area, 100 camp sites in the park, water, toilets, boat ramp, fresh & salt water fishing for halibut, Dolly Varden, steelhead, king and silver salmon.

mile 142.6 Large parking area with an excellent view of Mount Iliamna.

mile 145 Happy Valley.

mile 148 Scenic viewpoint and historical marker. Across the inlet you can see Mt. Iliamna and Redoubt.

mile 150.9 Bridge over Stariski Creek. Parking on both sides of highway. Not recommended for large vehicles. Fish walk and fishing .

mile 151.8 Stariski State Recreation Site is situated on a high bluff overlooking Cook Inlet, offering spectacular views of Mount Augustine, Mount Iliamna and Mount Redoubt. 13 camp sites, toilets, water, shelters. These mountains are the beginning of a chain of mountains and islands known as the Aleutian Chain which extends westward over 1,700 miles to Attu, beyond the international date line, to the Bering Sea. No fishing available.

mile 157 Anchor Point . Anchor Point Chamber of Commerce. **Anchor River State Recreation Site.** 30 camp sites with tables, water, toilets. Fishing.

mile 157.3 Anchor River bridge.

mile 161 Anchor River bridge. Small Parking area.

mile 161.4 Parking

mile 164.8 Old Sterling Highway leads 8 miles to Anchor River Road and Anchor River State Recreation Area. This is a fee area with camping, accessible to RV's. Anchor River Beach Road leads back to Anchor River Inn and the town of Anchor Point on the Sterling Highway.

mile 169.6 Large rest area with panoramic view over the city of Homer, Homer Spit and Kachemak Bay. Easy on and off access to highway.

mile 173 Homer. Population: 5400