

Pikes Peak River Runners

The Weakest Link Tatshenshini



By Irene Cooke

Explanation of Game: The game is played using the TV concept, but we did not bother with voting people off. We had one person calling on everyone in the group equally. I explained that each person was competing by answering the most correct answers and winning a "semi-valuable" prize. The entire group voted several people winners for answering the most correct answers at the end of the game.

It helps to read up on Alaska and the area before and during your travel up north. Many of the answers were in **Complete Guide to the Tatshenshini River** book. It really gives the group a more in-depth appreciation for the area they travel through.

State of Alaska information:

- What is the capitol of Alaska? Juneau, population ~32,000
- Who was Juneau named after? Joe Juneau's 1880 discovery of gold ushered in the gold rush era.
- State Motto? North to the Future
- State Nickname? The Last Frontier
- State Holidays

Seward's Day	March 31	Seward's Day commemorates the signing of the treaty by which the United States bought Alaska from Russia, signed on March 30, 1867.
Alaska Day	October 18	Alaska Day is the anniversary of the formal transfer of the territory and the raising of the US. flag at Sitka on October 18, 1867.

- What is the population of Alaska? 731,000, The state boasts the lowest population density in the nation.
- Name one item on the Alaska State Flag and what it stands for? The blue field is for the sky and the forget-me-not, the state flower. The North Star is for the future of the state of Alaska, the most northerly of the Union. The dipper is for the Great Bear, symbolizing strength.
- Highest Elevation: Mt. McKinley; 20,320 feet
- Lowest elevation? Sea Level
- State Flower? Forget Me Not
- State Bird? Willow Ptarmigan
- State Gem? Jade
- State Mineral? Gold
- State Tree? Sitka Spruce
- State Sport? Dog mushing
- State Fish? Giant King Salmon
- State Fossil? Woolly Mammoth

- State Mammal? Moose
- State Marine Mammal? Bowhead whale
- State Insect? Four Spot Skimmer Dragonfly (do not know why it is not a "no see um" or the mosquito?)
- When was the state purchased, by whom and from which country and for how much? Secretary of State William H. Seward arranged for the United States to purchase Alaska from Russia in 1867 for 7.2 million dollars, or 2 cents per acre."
- Largest employer? The fishing and seafood industry is the state's largest private industry employer.
- What percentage does Alaska account for oil production in the US? 20% of the oil produced in the United States.
- Why was the Alaska Highway originally built? As a military supply road during World War II.
- How big is Alaska when superimposed on a map of the 48 lower states? 100%, 50% or 25% as larger? Alaska is a geographical marvel. When a scale map of Alaska is superimposed on a map of the 48 lower states, Alaska extends from coast to coast. 100%
- How far does the state's coastline extend? over 6,600 miles
- Which forest is the largest national forest in the United States? The Tongass National Forest
- Record high and low temps? In 1915 the record high temperature in Alaska was 100 degrees Fahrenheit at Fort Yukon; the record low temperature was -80 degrees Fahrenheit at Prospect Creek Camp in 1971.
- What was Alaska's name from? Alaska's name is based on the Eskimo word Alakshak meaning great lands or peninsula.
- How much of Alaska lies within the Arctic Circle? 100%, $\frac{2}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$? Nearly one-third of Alaska lies within the Arctic Circle.

Name one famous Alaskan? See list below.

Aleksandr Baranov trader, public official, *Russia*
Margaret Elizabeth Bell author
Benny Benson designed state flag at age 13, *Chignik*
Vitus Bering explorer, *Denmark*
Charles E. Bunnell educator
William A. Egan first state governor
Carl Ben Eielson pioneer pilot
Henry E. Gruennig political leader
B. Frank Heintzleman territorial governor
Walter J. Hickel former governor
Sheldon Jackson educator and missionary, *Minaville, NY*
Joe Juneau prospector
Austin Lathrop industrialist
Sydney Lawrence painter
John Griffith (Jack) London author, *San Francisco, CA*
Ray Mala actor
John Muir naturalist, explorer, *Scotland*
Virgil F. Partch cartoonist
Joe Redington, Sr. sled-dog musher and promoter
Jewel Kilcher, singer songwriter
Wyatt Earp lawman

Bob Ross oil painter

- Where is the world's largest wooden fish ladder? (Whitehorse, YK)
- What is an "Alaska Tan?" (Hands & face)
- Name one of the 3 consequences of the 1899 earthquake at Yakutat. (30 tsunamis; 45" lift of the Fairweather Range; Hubbard Glacier moved ½ mile in 5 minutes)
- How many toes on the feet of a member of the weasel family? (5)
- Name 3 members of the weasel family. (otter, mink, weasel)
- What is the plant that helps form organic soil and consolidate the sand and gravel bars on the Tat? (yellow dryas)
- How is the yellow dryas like fireweed? (both produce "cotton" with seeds)
- Complete this saying: "When fireweed blows its cotton, Summer's soon....?" (Forgotten)
- Name the member of the grouse family found in arctic willows. (ptarmigan)
- What was the primary native trading culture pre-1900 in SE Alaska? (Tlingit)
- What is the highest peak in Canada? (Mt. Logan)
- What member of the deer family is found on the Tat? (moose)
- When interacting with a bear what is the most important thing to do? (stand your ground)
- When a glacier recedes, what is the first thing that starts to grow in the silt? (moss and lichen)
- What is the most common evergreen tree above the Alsek/Tat confluence? (white spruce)
- What deciduous shrub has small pinecone-like seeds? (alder)
- What do the following plants have in common: cinquefoil, yellow dryas, raspberry?(all are members of the Rose family)
- What is the other name for dwarf fireweed? (river beauty)
- Why is the raven significant to the Tlingit people? (Raven opened box of daylight/brought salmon from the ocean)

River:

- How many days does it take to drive from Colorado to the Tat put-in? ~ 3 to 4 long days.
- What canyon is considered unrunnable on the Alsek? Turnback Canyon
- What is the park called that the Tat flows through? Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial park
- What three boundaries converge in this park? British Columbia, Alaska, and the Yukon Territory. Tatshenshini-Alsek Park is in the far northwest corner of British Columbia, and borders both the American State of Alaska and the Canadian Yukon Territory. Visitors to the park usually fly or drive to Whitehorse, in the Yukon Territory.
- How wide is the Tat? 1 mile
- How high are the surrounding mountains? nearly 3 miles high (just above 15,000 ft), Mount Fairweather
- Who were the parks earliest residents? The Tlingit moved into the area from the coast and the Tutchone arrived from the interior to fish the area's abundant salmon runs.
- What two companies started running the Tat and when? In the mid-1970s two companies, Sobek and Canadian River Expeditions, began rafting the Tatshenshini and Alsek Rivers for the first time.
- What proposal threatened the Tat? In the mid-1980s a proposal surfaced to develop Windy Craggy peak into a huge open pit mine. Associated with this proposed mine was an access road which would go right down the Tatshenshini River.
- Name the proposed open pit copper mine that led to the creation of the Tat-Alsek Park? (Windy Craggy)

- What organization named this a World Heritage site? UNESCO
- Name at least one national park area the Tat flows through? Surrounded by national parks, the Tatshenshini-Alsek headwaters run through the subarctic tundra of the Yukon's Kluane National Park, the middle reaches flow past the towering peaks of the St. Elias range, and the lower river traverses Alaska's Glacier Bay National Park to finally arrive at the Pacific Ocean.
- What river is a major tributary to the Tat? The Alsek
- What is the [typical flow](#) for the Tat? 3,500 to 9,000 cfs, mean is about 6,250 cfs (cubic meters per second; to convert to cfs multiply by 35.7)
- What is the [typical flow](#) for the Alsek? 30,000 cfs
- Where does the river trip typically begin? In Canada near Dalton post in the Yukon territory near Haines.
- Where does the river trip end? In Dry Bay
- Does this river [require a permit](#)? Yes
- Who were the first gringos on the Tatshenshini—name one? (Jack Dalton or Ed Glade)
- How far is it to the ocean from the takeout at Dry Bay? (5 miles)
- What is the 15,000-foot peak that can be seen from Alsek Lake in good weather? (Mt. Fairweather)
- What caused the disastrous 1852 flood from Alsek Lake? (Lowell Glacier dammed 200 mi. of river, then dam broke, drowned people at confluence)
- When walking on a glacier, what is the first safety rule? (Do not walk on snow—ice only)

(Extra credit if you know the name of the author who wrote the "Monkey Wrench Gang" for which the rapid is named: Ed Abbey)