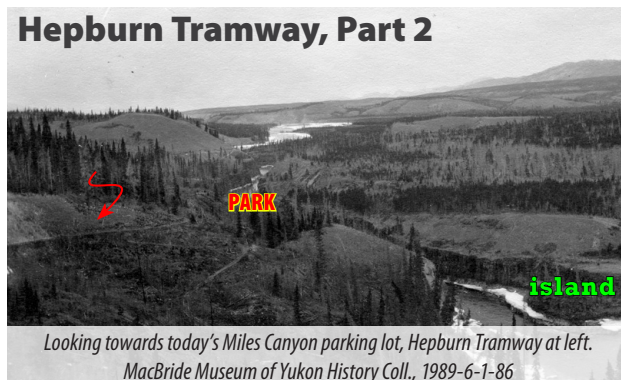


Hepburn Tramway, Part 2



Coming into the canyon, 4.2 km

This loop walk continues along the 1898 Hepburn Tramway. From high above the river, this walk descends along a wide, mossy, gradual trail, that gets very narrow.

You'll walk a pristine section of the goldrush-era Hepburn Tramway; follow a route possibly used by First Nations; pass stretches of 1899 telegraph line; have neat views overlooking the start of Miles Canyon with Flat and Pilot mountains behind; look across at Canyon City and the Macauley Tramway; pass artifacts from when American Laundry was the largest camp on the wartime Alaska Highway project. You even cross the 135° meridian a few times.

Trailhead: Access the Miles Canyon Road either by driving south on the Alaska Highway or by the LNG plant. Take the side road to the Miles Canyon parking lot.

1: The trail starts just before the big rocks on the bend going down to the parking lot (by summer outhouses!) Take the trail going immediately uphill on your right. The overgrown Hepburn Tramway is just below. Follow the trail up the slope and through the woods.

2: Turn left when the trail intersects the original 1899 railway bed. Shortly, you will be looking out over the canyon, Schwatka Lake and Grey Mountain. Earlier industrial activity here caused dirt to overflow the tramway on the slope below (see middle photo and lower inset map). There's a proposal to create a quarry in the area on your right!!

3: Follow the trail branching off to the left for about 500 m along the edge of the escarpment. Ignore side trails until you come to a trail that crossing and goes down the escarpment.

Much more on the tramway: http://www.whitehorsewalks.com/_walkingIdeas/HepburnTramway.html

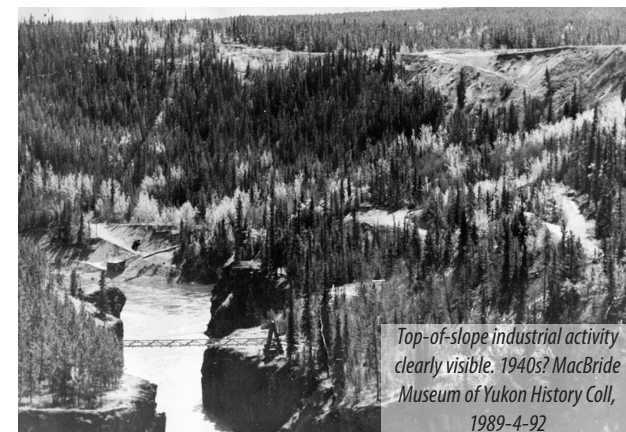
4: Follow the tramway downhill. The trail descends to a level spot with a trail coming in here.

5: *Option: (dashed yellow line)* After 300 m, take the trail on the right. Follow the left fork which goes down to the river, then downstream back to the trailhead. Part of this was a second landing for the tramway.

Continue downhill. After about 150 m, the tramway starts to narrow and then disappear. **Trail reconstruction is clearly needed!** Damage is from industrial activity at the top of the slope: first the railway, later a pumphouse for a wartime building complex on highway. Walking poles are nice on this part of the tramway!

6: Fallen trees will block the very narrow tramway but the route down off the tramway is flagged and obvious. Follow the trail through the woods to a dirt track.

7: Turn left and follow the flagging along the cat track which parallels the covered-over tramway. After 125 m, flagging leads you back onto the tramway on your left.



(The cat trail continues ahead and downhill.) Follow the flagged tramway around to the canyon. Near the end you'll pass a few large trees that have grown up in the middle of the long-abandoned and forgotten tramway. Post-dam construction slumping land you see along here caused the railway to move its tracks.



Inset: Hepburn Tramway (red arrow) descending from escarpment ~1900 (looking at area around #4, #5 on the map). Yukon Archives, Eric Hegg fonds, #2582