

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ROADS- Maine

MAINE - QUEBEC
HIGHWAY COMMITTEE

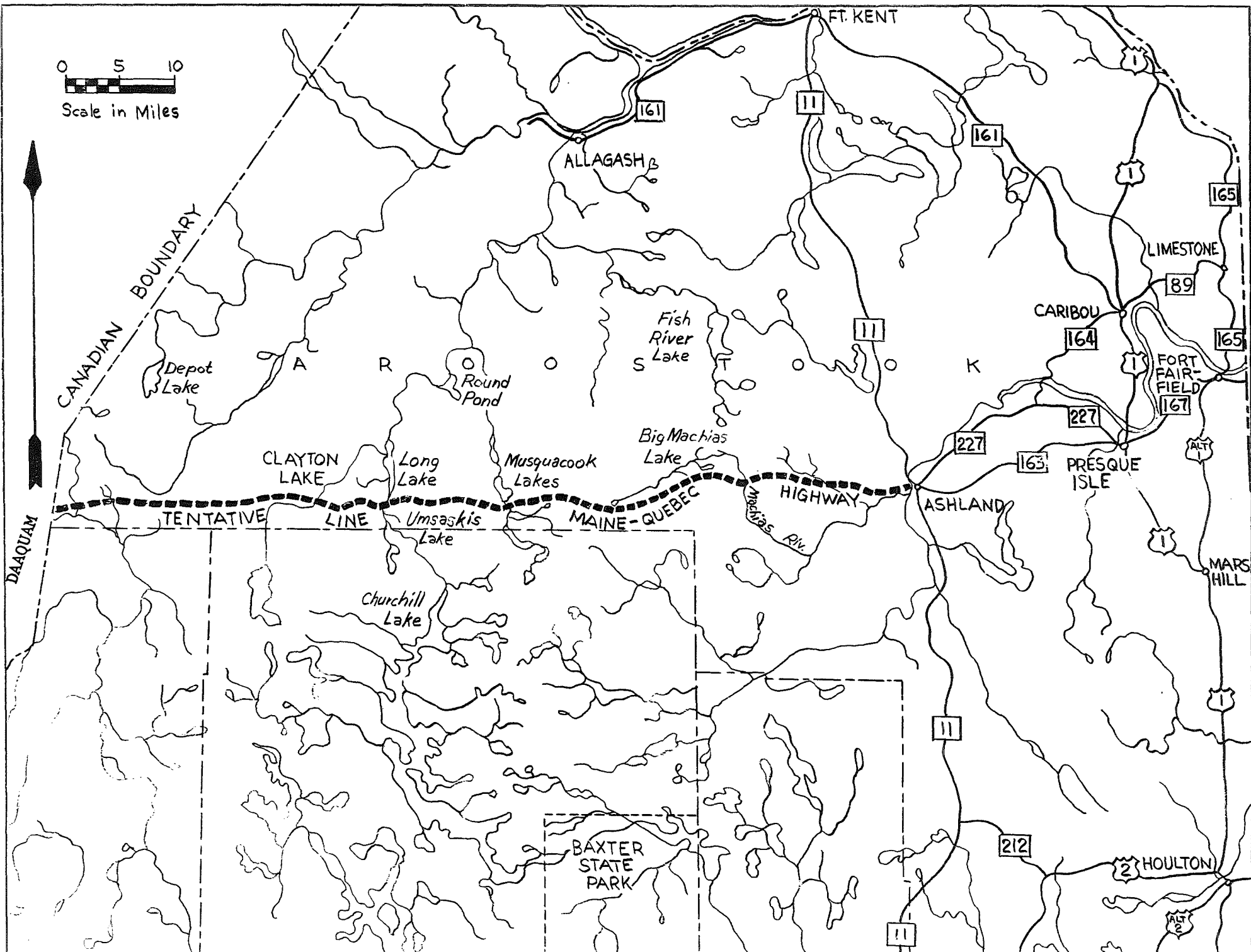


Resolutions and Facts



April 10, 1957

PROPOSED MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY



0 5 10
Scale in Miles

CANADIAN BOUNDARY

TENTATIVE LINE MAINE-QUEBEC

DAQUAM

BAXTER STATE PARK

FT. KENT

ALLAGASH

LIMESTONE

CARIBOU

FORT FAIRFIELD

PRÉSQUE ISLE

ASHLAND

MARS HILL

HOULTON

NEEDED — A MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY ACROSS THE WEST CENTRAL AREA OF AROOSTOOK COUNTY

Aroostook County, in Northern Maine, is one of the last frontiers of the United States. As such, it has unlimited room for expansion. Larger than Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut combined, the total population taken from the 1950 census was less than 100,000 compared to a total of 5,127,497 from the three states named.

History has shown that the development of any area does not really begin until the advent of modern highways and rail transportation. Since the coming of rail transportation North and South, freight movement from the east by rail, and the modernization of Highway No. 1 from downstate Maine, Aroostook County has grown considerably. Since 1900 the gain in population in the county has been considerably higher than the State with 58 percent as compared with an increase of 31 percent for the State as a whole. Aroostook County is approximately five times the size of Rhode Island in land area. With less than one-fifth of this area under cultivation, the county has the most extensive wild-land area east of the Mississippi River. So, even though, the county has grown somewhat more rapidly than the rest of the State as a whole, the fact that only one-fifth of the area is under cultivation would indicate that there is plenty of room for further expansion.

A look at any map of Maine will show that in Northern Maine only about a thirty-mile strip along the eastern border is populated. A strip more than eighty miles wide to the western border is virtual wilderness. This same wild country borders the Province of Quebec on the West and part of New Brunswick on the Northwest. Both these provinces have towns along the entire border on the Canadian side.

WHY THE GAP?

One of the reasons is the vast wooded lands. These provide a source of raw material for one of the major industries of Maine, namely, the Pulp and Paper Industry.

Another reason and a major one, is the lack of suitable or negotiable highways across this eighty-mile GAP. All principal highways in Aroostook run North and South except for those few short ones that branch off to the east for the most part. There is no west road leading from the County to connect with the Provincial Highways of Quebec except for one or two private roads, all gravel, on the extreme western side of the County near Lac Frontier and the new International Paper Road with an outlet at Daaquam, Quebec.

PROPOSAL

That a modern HIGHWAY be constructed across this west central area of Aroostook County from its western border to its Highway System in eastern Aroostook which would merge into the New Brunswick Highway System, thus opening up a shorter route for all of the Maritime Provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and for the people of Northern Maine to have this shorter distance to the Quebec areas, especially, Quebec City, Montreal and Ottawa as well as a savings of distance to the middle western cities of the United States.

STEP NUMBER ONE

A resolution was passed by the 97th Legislature that authorized and directed the State Highway Commission to make a study of the need and cost of a proposed Maine-Quebec Highway to determine a feasible route and report the results of such a study to the next Legislature. This resolution was passed in 1955 and

the study completed in 1956. The report of the Study was prepared and presented back to the 98th Legislature as outlined in the MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY REPORT of the Maine State Highway Commission under date of December 31, 1956.

Copies of this report were also given out to the members of the MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY COMMITTEE, sponsors of the project, at a meeting held in Presque Isle, Maine, on January 19, 1957, at which meeting there were nearly thirty persons in attendance.

After careful study of the report, it was voted to set up a resolutions Committee to prepare Resolutions setting forth the views of the whole committee and to send these Resolutions for presentation to each of the Legislators of the 98th Legislature, at the proper time, to point out that the report showed that the Highway Commission did not adequately recognize the overall significance of the proposed Highway as evidenced by its inadequate approach to the project delegated to them by the 97th Legislature. A copy of these Resolutions is found elsewhere in this booklet.

STEP NUMBER TWO

Following the action on Resolutions, the Committee voted to sponsor and have Senator John H. Reed prepare a Resolve to be presented to the 98th Legislature in which the State Highway Commission will be authorized and directed to make a thorough survey, develop construction plans and cost estimates for a MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY report to follow a line substantially the same as the one established in the MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY report of December 31, 1956 and to have the Commission report the results of their survey by January 1, 1959. The Resolve has now been introduced by Senator Reed. The line being shown on the inside page of this booklet.

The MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY Committee also voted to set-up a Fact-Finding Sub-Committee to gather, develop and present information, facts and figures at the hearing to be held before the Legislative Highway Committee. This Sub-Committee combines the Resolutions Sub-Committee and with other members of the General Committee, forms an eleven-man group.

ADVANTAGES OF A MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY

1. A shorter route from Northern Maine across the west central area of Aroostook County to connect with Quebec at Daaquam, making it possible to save mileage to Quebec City, Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and United States cities of the Middle West.
2. An increase flow of traffic through this part of Maine between the Maritime Provinces and to shorten the mileage distance to and from the major cities of these Provinces.
3. An increased flow of tourist traffic from Quebec via Daaquam and from points further West that would remain in Maine a longer time thereby helping in the economy of the area.
4. Usefulness of the MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY for defense by the military of the entire Northeast in relation to Presque Isle Airforce Base, Loring Airforce Base and other military installations, both in the United States and Northeastern Canada.
5. Would provide an added outlet to the West for more orderly and faster evacuation of all Civilians in the event of sudden enemy atomic attack which would require more than one escape route.
6. Would provide a shorter route to the St. Lawrence Seaway for commercial use, both to and from; also make it possible for potatoes to be shipped to middle western points by use of the Seaway facilities and shorter distances for trucking.

7. To provide easier access to the huge deposits of manganese and other minerals, which in the very near future might become so vital to the nation's defense, and the need for a shorter route to ship and transport the processed ore to the steel plants in the middle West.
8. Probable use of such a HIGHWAY by commercial trucking firms, farm owners and other commercial users who might haul products and freight both to and from the St. Lawrence Seaway.
9. Because Northwestern Maine is a vast wilderness, an additional year-round highway to the West is needed to further develop the pulpwood and lumber industries.
10. Such a HIGHWAY would ease the labor situation for the pulpwood and lumber operators by providing an easier access to the pulp and lumber camps for the laborers, both from the United States and Canada.
11. The wilderness would become easier accessible to the average sportsman who is unable to pay the expenses of flying to the areas now accessible only by air; thereby saving a great amount of time that otherwise would be spent travelling by boat or on foot.
12. By this Highway following along many lakes, a great new scenic territory would be opened up.
13. To allow easier access into this woods area for fire-fighting apparatus and equipment in times of threatened conflagrations.
14. Would be much easier for better and more rapid supervision of the area by Game and Fire Wardens in covering their respective Districts.
15. WOULD bring about a much greater expansion of Northern Maine, particularly Aroostook County, and by so expanding Aroostook County, then the whole State stands to benefit also.

SAMPLES OF MILEAGE SAVINGS

	Via Proposed route	Via Existing route
Andover, N. B. to Quebec City	204	264
Andover, N. B. to Montreal	371	431
Ashland, Maine to Quebec City	158	240
Ashland, Maine to Montreal	331	294
Caribou, Maine to Quebec City	190	252
Caribou, Maine to Montreal	365	390
Fort Fairfield, Maine to Quebec City	190	262
Fort Fairfield, Maine to Montreal	363	401
Fredericton, N. B. to Quebec City	308	358
Fredericton, N. B. to Montreal	475	525
Houlton, Maine to Quebec City	238	324
	398	via Fort Kent 459
		via Jackman 472
Woodstock, N. B. to Quebec City	245	319
Woodstock, N. B. to Montreal	412	486

OUR REQUEST

The MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY COMMITTEE, at this time, is making a request for only a survey as outlined in Legislative Document No. 635, presented by Senator Reed of Aroostook. Won't you help to make this survey become a reality by supporting this Resolve and by so doing will help in bringing the Road to a reality sometime within the immediate years ahead.

Our Committee has deep convictions that a highway across the area outlined has a great potential for the future economy of Northern Maine and by building the economy of this section will bring about more business for all the State of Maine.

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION OF THE MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY COMMITTEE
TO BE PRESENTED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE 98th LEGISLATURE**

WHEREAS, many citizens of Maine met in the city of Presque Isle, on May 6, 1954, to discuss plans for reviving consideration of building a highway from Eastern Aroostook westward to the Quebec border, and

WHEREAS, as a result of this meeting, the group voted to designate itself as the MAINE-QUEBEC HIGHWAY COMMITTEE, believing the construction of this proposed highway to be necessary to the continued progress and prosperity of all Maine and

WHEREAS, at later meetings, it was decided to request members of the Aroostook County Delegation to introduce legislation authorizing a study of the need and cost of the proposed highway, and

WHEREAS, the 97th Legislature through the efforts of Senator Charles Jamieson and and Representative John Reed did pass the following resolve:

“That the State Highway Commission be, and hereby is, authorized and directed to make a study of the need and cost of the proposed Maine-Quebec Highway; and be it further resolved: That the Commission shall report the results of their study at the regular session of the Legislature”,

WHEREAS, the Maine State Highway Commission has now issued its “Maine-Quebec Highway Report” under date of December 31, 1956, and

WHEREAS, at a meeting of the Maine-Quebec Highway Committee and other interested persons, held in the City of Presque Isle on January 19, 1957, this report was read, studied and given careful consideration and

WHEREAS, it was the desire and will, so voted, of the entire Committee assembled that this resolution be drawn, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the following comments and constructive criticisms on the above mentioned report be listed as the unanimous opinion of the Maine-Quebec Highway Committee.

1. That the Highway Commission did not adequately recognize the overall significance of the proposed highway, is evidenced by its inadequate approach to the project delegated to them by the 97th Legislature.
2. Incomplete origin and destination information, secured during a 24 hour period between Caribou and Presque Isle on Route 1, plus two brief traffic counts were the only study methods used to determine possible users.
3. No apparent attempt was made to ascertain possible travel across Maine merely as a cut-off mileage saver to and from the Province of Quebec to the west and the maritime Provinces to the East and no mention is made of the vast amount of Canadian traffic which might be induced to come into Maine.
4. No consideration was given to possible travel by out-of-State vehicles entering Maine from the south might continue their tour through northern Maine and then swing west to Quebec and Montreal; or traffic coming East via New York and the mid-west to Montreal and Quebec that would return through the State of Maine.
5. The usefulness and desirability of the proposed highway by the military for the defense of the entire Northeast, especially in relation to Presque Isle, Loring Air Base and other military installation in the Northeast are completely ignored.

6. No recognition is made of the accepted fact that Northern Maine is a No. 1 military target area, and of the probability of forced rapid evacuation of all civilians, in the event of sudden enemy atomic attack which would require more than one escape route.
7. Mention is made of the St. Lawrence Seaway, but the Commission envisions no possible beneficial effects from a road linking up with the Seaway, views of officials of the St. Lawrence Development Corporation to the contrary notwithstanding.
8. No awareness is evident in the Report of the existence of Aroostook's huge deposits of Manganese and other minerals, which in the very near future may become so vital to the nation's defense, and the need for a shorter route to ship the processed ore to the steel plants in the middle west.
9. Probable use of the highway by commercial trucking firms, and farm owners of trucks who might haul farm products west to the Seaway and return with supplies shipped in via the same Seaway route, is discounted as of no importance.
10. The Highway Report neglected to mention the fact that all of northwestern Maine is practically a wilderness, and undeveloped except for pulp and lumber; and will remain so unless new highways are built. The only existing roads are gravel and privately owned.
11. To summarize, the Report, except for the proposed route and estimate of cost of the road, does not take into prospective all of the factors necessary for such a report.
12. We urge the 98th Legislature, to support the resolve authorizing a survey to develop construction plans and costs estimates for a Maine-Quebec highway.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be distributed to every member of the 98th Legislature now convening, to the press, and to television and radio stations.

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

JERRY D. GLIDDEN, Chairman

EDWIN E. PARKHURST

CHARLES JAMIESON

BURTT BREWER

MAURICE KNOWLES

HARRY HEDRICH

SENATOR JOHN REED, General Chairman