



2024

**Information Package for
Visitors & Volunteers**

YQ450, YQ250 & YQ100

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Welcome to the Yukon Quest Sled Dog Race



We are very excited and looking forward to seeing you in Whitehorse for the Official Start on Saturday, February 3rd, along the trail, or at the Official Finish & Awards Evenings in Whitehorse February 6th and 9th, 2024.

This package provides an overview of the Yukon Quest, as well as important volunteer information for the 2024 Race. In this package you will find maps, checkpoint descriptions,

tips on clothing and weather, hotels and transportation etc. If you still have questions or concerns after reading this document, please contact the Yukon Quest office in Whitehorse.

Distance between Yukon Quest trail locations								
Miles	Whitehorse	Braeburn	Carmacks	McCabe Creek	Pelly Crossing	Stepping Stone	Scroggie Creek	Dawson City
Dawson City	451	351	274	235	201	169	99	
Scroggie Creek	352	252	175	136	102	70		159
Stepping Stone	282	182	105	66	32		113	272
Pelly Crossing	250	150	73	34		51	164	323
McCabe Creek	216	116	39		55	106	219	378
Carmacks	177	77		63	118	169	282	441
Braeburn	100		124	187	242	293	406	565
Whitehorse		161	285	348	403	454	567	726
Distances between locations may vary from year to year depending on trail and river conditions.								
Types of trail locations:				Checkpoint	Dog Drop	Hospitality Stop		

Traveling the Yukon Quest

In the Yukon

Getting to Whitehorse

From Canadian Locations

Book your flight to the Yukon with **Air North, Yukon's Airline - Official Yukon Airline Sponsor**. Air North has direct flights to Whitehorse from Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton. All volunteers and fans can get a 10% discount off their flights to Whitehorse! (Some restrictions apply.)



Valid for travel between January 25th, 2024 - February 12th, 2024.

Please contact the Yukon Quest Office for the discount code.

Getting around Whitehorse

Whitehorse has a relatively small downtown core. If your accommodations are downtown, you may not need transportation to get to other downtown venues such as the Start Line, Yukon Quest events, and more. Taxis and a local transit system are also available.

Getting to and from checkpoints in the Yukon

By public transportation

The following outfits may be able to assist you in traveling between checkpoints during the 2023 Yukon Quest:

Black Bear Wilderness Adventures: (867) 633-3993 or 867-335-0461, www.wildernessyukon.com

Nature Tours of Yukon: (867) 660-5050, www.naturetoursyukon.com

Northern Tales: (867) 667-6054, www.northerntales.ca

Driving your own car/rental vehicle

If you are bringing your own vehicle or renting a car, access to the checkpoints is relatively simple, but distances can be long and road conditions difficult. Please use caution on the roads. Please note: vehicle rental agencies are only available in Whitehorse. Please make sure the vehicle is equipped for severe winter conditions: winter tires, ice scraper, and extension cord. Also make sure to inform the rental agency where you plan on driving so they can alert you to vehicle limitations. We recommend **Budget:** (867) 667-6200, www.budget.com

Need a place to stay?

Northern Vision Development (NVD) Hotels – the Official Hotels for the Yukon Quest – offer fans and volunteers coming to town for the Yukon Quest a special rate!

Whitehorse:

All NVD hotels below include airport shuttle and free internet access to all Yukon Quest volunteers and fans.

Best Western Gold Rush Inn

<http://www.goldrushinn.com>

Toll-Free Reservations: 1-800-661-0539 (Canada & U.S.)

411 Main Street

Email: frontdesk@goldrushinn.ca



Edgewater

<http://www.edgewaterhotelwhitehorse.com>

Toll-free Reservations: 1-877-484-3334 (Canada & U.S.)

101 Main Street

Email: info@edgewaterukon.com



Dawson City:

All NVD hotels below include airport shuttle and free internet access to all Yukon Quest volunteers and fans.

The Downtown, a Coast Hotel

<https://www.coasthotels.com/the-downtown-a-coast-hotel>

Toll-Free Reservations: 1-800-716-6199 (Canada & U.S.)

1026 Second Avenue

Email: info@downtownhotel.ca



Travel Resources

YUKON

- Yukon Visitors Guide www.travelyukon.com/
- Whitehorse Visitors Guide www.whitehorse.ca/visiting-whitehorse/
- Klondike Visitors Association www.dawsoncity.ca

Packing List/What To Bring

Whitehorse has many services including large stores (see below), as well as lots of options for food, groceries, house wares, pharmacy items and clothing.

Clothing

Be prepared for extremely cold and windy conditions. This is essential for your safety and enjoyment of the Yukon Quest - watching dog team arrivals, outdoor volunteer shifts (if any), general travel, and other outdoor activities you might choose to participate in. Even if you are coming from a cold climate, please be aware that your ski jacket and winter boots from home may not be sufficient for standing outside in temperature of -20° C/ -30° F **and colder**.

The best way to pack and/or purchase is to have many layers of clothing with breathable fabrics (wool where possible). Pay close attention to your hands and feet – bring warm socks (possibly layers) as well as warm gloves/mittens with an outer wind-blocking layer and lots of hand warmer packets.

Rentals / Purchase of Gear

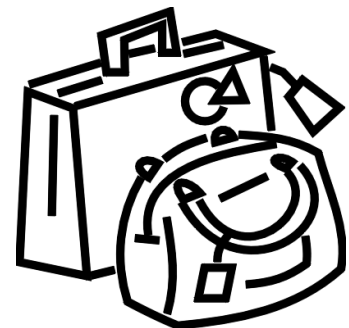
It is possible to rent parkas and good winter boots for 1 or 2 weeks in Whitehorse only. It can be expensive, but worthwhile, saving you from having to purchase new gear (the good quality ones can be very expensive – as much as \$600 for parkas and \$200 for boots). It also saves you from packing them as they can be bulky, and you are sure to get the right type of boots/parka for the right conditions.

Whitehorse- Arctic Range – Book early! Best is two months in advance.
Phone: (867) 667-2209
Email: info@arcticrange.com
Offering a variety of winter rental packages of varying rates

Aurora Outfitters
Phone: (867) 667-2817
E-mail: info@auroraoutfitters.ca

List of items to consider bringing with you

- ✓ Warm sleeping bag and sleeping mattress to -20°C/ -30°F
- ✓ Warm comfortable pants and long sleeve shirts (lots of layers, breathable fabrics, polar fleece or micro fleece or wool) both under and outer layers
- ✓ Warm mittens/gloves, toque/hat, scarf and lots of warm socks
- ✓ Insulated windproof pants (ski pants)
- ✓ A few packages of chemical feet and hand warmers
- ✓ Boots and parka (if not being rented or borrowed)
- ✓ Sun protection (sunglasses, sunscreen, lip balm)
- ✓ Any special food or medications you may require
- ✓ Water bottle and thermos so you can always have liquids handy
- ✓ Phone card, memory card and spare batteries
- ✓ Moisturizers and hand sanitizer
- ✓ A headlamp and lithium batteries



**Don't forget to leave room in your suitcase for Yukon Quest souvenirs!
Merchandise can be purchased in our Whitehorse gift shop!**

Other Considerations

Water

The Yukon has a dry, cold climate in winter. You will want to watch your level of hydration, and ensure that you drink a lot of liquids, particularly water.



Weather

Be prepared! The temperatures in the Yukon in February have reached some extremes:

According to the Government of Canada weather office, the average temperature in Whitehorse in February is $-14^{\circ}\text{C}/7^{\circ}\text{F}$ with an extreme maximum of $12^{\circ}\text{C}/53^{\circ}\text{F}$, and an **extreme minimum of $-51^{\circ}\text{C}/-60^{\circ}\text{F}$** .

Average wind speed is 13.5 km/h or 8.38 m/h.

It is not unusual for Dawson City and the surrounding area to see temperatures as low as $-60^{\circ}\text{F}/-51^{\circ}\text{C}$ with normal temperatures of -20°F to $-30^{\circ}\text{F}/-28^{\circ}\text{C}$ to -34°C .

Ways of Supporting the Yukon Quest

From coming to our events, buying merchandise, becoming a member, sponsoring or directly volunteering for us, there are many ways you can help the Yukon Quest remain the renowned international sporting event that brought you North!

Become a Yukon Quest Member

The Yukon Quest has a Membership program that offers a variety of options for those looking to stay connected to the Quest year round. Supporters have the option of purchasing individual, family or corporate memberships. The Yukon Quest also offers our popular 1,000 Mile Club membership option, through which purchasers are given the opportunity to "own" a mile of the historic Yukon Quest trail! Custom-embroidered articles of clothing can be ordered in relation to this membership. Please contact the Yukon Quest office for further details.

Yukon Quest Merchandise

Buy your 2024 merchandise at both of our Yukon Quest Stores and Events, or shop online at our website: www.yukonquest.com/shop.

Sponsor the Yukon Quest

The success of the Yukon Quest relies, in part, on generous sponsorship from companies who can provide anything, from in-kind donations of materials, resources and equipment, to large monetary donations.

To find out more about becoming a sponsor please email yukondirector@yukonquest.co

Volunteering with the Yukon Quest

Volunteer Registration: You will find a Registration Form on our website. If you intend to volunteer, please fill out this form and submit it on the website. The following information should give you everything you need to know before making a decision to register. Please feel free to call or email the Yukon office directly if you still have any questions.

The spirit of the Yukon Quest is true to its northern soul. The trail runs across frozen rivers, climbs mountain ranges, and passes through isolated northern communities. With temperatures often dropping to 40 below, 50 mph winds, open water and jumble ice all working against the teams; the Yukon Quest is a true test of the capacity of both man and animal. The Yukon Quest serves as a tribute to the strength of the ancient bond that unites them.

The Yukon Quest is a volunteer effort from beginning to end. We have a very diverse volunteer community that varies from retired travelers in their 70's to local youth giving some of their time through school. We have people from all over the globe, spending from two days to three months in the area, helping with the race. Some are first-timers, some have been coming back for the past decades. There are vets, doctors, artists, construction workers, teachers, engineers, and stay-at-home moms... You name it! This is one of the best things about the Yukon Quest - we attract people from all backgrounds, and everyone shares this amazing experience.

You can volunteer anywhere from a few hours, to weeks or more, whatever suits your travels. There is a great diversity of tasks and duties all through the race and we are sure we can find something for everyone who shows up and offers their time. Whether it's in the office answering requests, manning our communications centre, or helping at the start line, there's a job for everyone!

Volunteers traveling long distances to help us usually stay in the Whitehorse area and volunteer for one or two shifts a day, for as many days as they want. Some go on to volunteer at checkpoints, depending on their interests/skills, and we then ask for a longer commitment. Volunteers working at checkpoints also have to be ready to work overnight on shifts lasting between 8-12 hours. This is much more demanding physically but a very exciting job!

Volunteer Benefits

The Yukon Quest is an event with hundreds of volunteers. We recognize how crucial our volunteers are to the success of the race. What we offer is the experience of a lifetime and a chance to get connected with this great race.

Benefits

- * An experience you will never forget!
- * Volunteer patch and sticker
- * 25% off Yukon Quest merchandise (one time purchase at our shop)
- * Snacks or meals at checkpoints - where possible

Due to limited capacity, the Yukon Quest cannot provide transportation for volunteers traveling to checkpoints or traveling between Whitehorse and Dawson City. However, for the volunteers signing up for extended stay shifts at Pelly Crossing and Carmacks checkpoints in the Yukon, we will make every effort to assist you in finding transportation.

Please note that the Yukon Quest cannot offer free accommodation, transportation or meals. However, we will make attempts to reduce volunteer out-of-pocket expenses where possible.

Notes on Volunteer Recruitment and Procedures

- * **Checkpoints:** There are some volunteers who are able to assist at each checkpoint. Numbers are determined by the location and infrastructure of each checkpoint. If you are interested in volunteering on the trail at a particular checkpoint, please let us know. We ask that you understand that not everyone can go based on specific needs at each checkpoint.
- * **Code of Conduct:** The Yukon Quest has a very strict expectation and code of conduct for its volunteers, staff, mushers and dog handlers. **This is the essence of the whole race, and we demand that everyone involved in the Yukon Quest be courteous, polite, and helpful towards mushers, officials, veterinarians and fellow volunteers.** This also applies to each volunteer working with the Yukon Quest. Please remember everyone is doing their best, working long hours (in the extreme cold and dead of night), and that we have to be patient and understanding of other people's situations.
- * **Engagement with dog teams:** **No volunteers or visitors are allowed near camping dog teams, nor are they allowed to pet and touch the dogs. The same restrictions also apply to handlers, who are there to help their designated musher, and not the dogs. *Only mushers and veterinarians are allowed near the dogs.*** These dogs are athletes, and therefore they need their rest at each checkpoint. The only time volunteers are permitted near the dogs during the race is to assist with parking dogs at checkpoints and at the start and finish lines.
- * **Working with Dogs:** Some positions are restricted to those with experience handling or working with sled dogs (for their own safety and yours). Examples include Vet Checks and dog handlers at the start line. Please outline your experience working with dogs in detail.
- * **Expenses:** Volunteers have to remember they will need to personally cover all their expenses during their participation with the race. If we can provide transportation, or a meal, this will be unexpected and at the last minute. Until you are here and working with us, please arrange your own accommodation and plan your budget to include all your food, accommodation and transportation. Some checkpoints will have floor space available for sleeping, flexibility and adaptability are essential.
- * **Meals:** The Yukon Quest does not provide food for volunteers because of the large number of volunteers we welcome. We may, in some circumstances, have meals available. However, volunteers should not expect it or count on it in their expenses calculation.
- * **Media:** In every case where you are approached by the media, please direct them back to Yukon Quest Officials on site. If not possible, we ask that you tell them you are not in a position to comment on the race.
- * **Report to your manager to get your assigned duties:** The logistics managers, checkpoint managers or members of YQ staff are the people to talk to on site when you are wondering what you should be doing, what shifts need to be covered, where should you go and when. These crucial team members will be introduced to you on-site upon your arrival.
- * **WHAT WE DON'T DO:** Handling for mushers is not something that we can assist you with. These positions are established well before the race during the summer and fall months. Mushers do not generally bring in new handlers at race time.

Volunteer Expectations

Each year the Yukon Quest is a success, due in no small part to our volunteers. For some, it is a year round behind-the-scenes commitment. For others, it is a way to contribute to the race while experiencing it in person. Every minute, every dollar, every skill contributed makes the race what it is. However, we want to make sure volunteers know what they are signing up for, to ensure that it is a good fit for everyone.

Here are some helpful tips and reminders from a veteran Yukon Quest volunteer!

- * Not all volunteer jobs are exciting, but all of them are important for the race to run smoothly. Remain flexible.
- * Conditions can be harsh if you are working outside, and can require physical labor - be realistic about what you can contribute, it's OK to step back to avoid injury!
- * Come prepared! Ask questions if you are not sure about what you need to bring.
- * There are often things going on that you are not aware of, it's a big race over many miles and can be complicated, so you may be asked to do something that does not make sense to you... trust that it fits in to the big picture!
- * People are often under stress, operating on little sleep, so they may be in a rush and not have time to visit or answer questions fully - don't take it personally!
- * You probably aren't going to get close to a single dog, which seems weird, because there are hundreds around, but being a volunteer does not guarantee special access to the dogs or dog areas.
- * Sometimes it might seem like there are too many volunteers or not enough to do. This is a good thing for organizers! Do not walk away or think you being there is not helpful. IT IS! If you find yourself in this situation, it may be most helpful to wait until it's busy again. Use your initiative to identify tasks and either do it, or check with an organizer when they have a minute. It can be distracting and more work for organizers if you are constantly asking what you can do to help, so take the initiative.
- * There are many, many individual volunteers along the trail. Yukon Quest tries to accommodate people's schedules, wants and needs, but appreciate that that Yukon Quest cannot accommodate all of them. Be realistic about what Yukon Quest needs and what you need.
- * If you don't understand something, find and ask someone who does.
- * While you're waiting for something to happen, get to know your fellow volunteers or chat with other people who are waiting around or check out the tracker or find out more about the race.
- * Be prepared for the cold!

Examples of Volunteer Positions

If there is something specific you are interested in or a special skill that you would like to share with us, please let us know!

Finish Events ~ (Various) We require a hand for all events. This can include setting up the tables, merchandise tables, coat checks at the event, and sales during the event (memberships, raffle tickets, merchandise, etc.). If you would rather attend than work, make sure to get your tickets well in advance as events sell out quickly!

Sponsor Night ~ (Various) Set up, help during the event, bartending, clean up

Meet the Musers ~ (Various) Set up, help during the event, bartending, clean up

Quest Fest in Whitehorse~ (Various) Welcome visitors, answer inquiries, sell merchandise and raffle tickets, serve food and drinks, run activities, set up, clean up, etc.

Start and Finish Chute Setup ~ (Physical/Outdoors) Work in the snow, setting up banners, crowd control barriers, safety, dog handlers, etc.

Start Line ~ (Physical/Outdoors) The Start Line Manager will need a large number of volunteers to assist in making the start of the race go smoothly. Tasks could include: crowd control, timer, dog handler, runner, etc.

Security ~ (Outdoors) Control the crowds and the public around the start and finish lines

Checkpoint Volunteers ~ (Various/Outdoors) Checkpoint managers need help around the clock with a wide variety of tasks. A few examples include: setting up the checkpoint, checking in/out teams, organizing food drop/straw for mushers, providing wake-up calls to the mushers, road crossings, cooking food, making coffee, cleaning up, etc.

Finish Line Checkers ~ (Outdoors) Day/night outdoor shifts to check in teams

Chute Take-Down ~ (Physical/Outdoors) Clean-up of both start and finish line chutes and any materials left on site



Volunteering in Whitehorse during Start Week

- * You need to book your own accommodations in hotels, B&Bs, and hostels in town. (See our tourism websites mentioned above in the Tourist Information section and don't forget about the Yukon Quest discount at Northern Vision Hotels in Whitehorse.)
- * Hours worked will generally be during the day getting ready for the big start or running Quest Fest. Some evenings might be required for last minute details and the running of events (Meet the Musers, Finish & Award Evening etc.).
- * Be ready to do physical work (preparing the chute and start line, managing the public, etc) and/or office work (counting tickets, selling merchandise, welcoming visitors, running activities etc.). Please let the office know beforehand if you have physical or medical restrictions.
- * You may want to rent a car or book a cab.

Volunteering at Checkpoints during the Race

- * The Yukon Quest does not provide transportation for volunteers between checkpoints and you are required to make your own way up the trail.
**Please note: There may be exceptions for checkpoints in Braeburn, Carmacks and Pelly Crossing. Please contact the Yukon office to make arrangements if you want to volunteer in those three communities. Carpooling with other volunteers is highly encouraged.*
- * **Accommodations are "rugged" (You will often sleep on a floor surrounded by other people and their snores and/or feet.)**
- * **You must be prepared to work a minimum of 8-12 hours shift, often at night.**
- * Be willing to do anything- serving food, moving straw, checking in/out mushers, organizing/moving food drop bags, cleaning up the dog yard, etc. (Capacity to lift 40lbs is preferable).
- * A "go with the flow" approach and ability to adapt are best suited for these positions.
- * **Important** - If you wish to support us in a checkpoint, a member of our staff will contact you and ask a few more questions to make sure this suits our needs and your expectations. Your contact info will be passed along to our checkpoint managers who will then organize volunteer shifts.

Volunteering in Dawson City during Finish Week

- * You need to book your own accommodations in hotels, B&Bs, and hostels in town. (See our tourism websites mentioned above in the Tourist Information section and don't forget about the Yukon Quest discount at Northern Vision Hotels in Dawson City.)
- * Be ready to do physical work (preparing the chute and finish line, managing the public, etc) and/or office work (counting tickets, selling merchandise, welcoming visitors, running activities etc.). Please let the office know beforehand if you have physical or medical restrictions.
- * The Yukon Quest does not provide transportation for volunteers between checkpoints and you are required to make your own way up the trail.

Volunteer Testimonials

Here are a few testimonials from past volunteers, some of whom keep coming back to give their time and energy year after year!

“I shall always be very grateful to the exceptionally friendly Yukon Quest organizers for offering their volunteers so many diverse opportunities to support this event and experience truly amazing dogs racing through a breathtakingly beautiful wilderness.” - **Frithjof Praetsch, Hannover, Germany**

“Volunteering for the Quest has given me unbelievable, once in a lifetime experiences that could only possibly be surpassed by actually running in the Quest. By becoming a volunteer you are welcomed with open arms into the Quest family.” - **Fintan Morrissey, Kilkenny, Ireland**

“The beauty of Yukon/Alaska, the wonderful people you work with in supporting this fantastic adventure, the communities that you interact with, the mushers and their dogs, this is human beings at their best working in one of the last great wildernesses. To stand and watch the northern lights, to glimpse the wildlife, to experience the flora and fauna... this is living!! Hope this helps! Regards to all, have a great race! Hugs, G.” - **Gordon Thompson, an Englishman presently living in the Italian Dolomites.**

“Out of this entire experience – I want to relay to new people who want to come and volunteer at this event...you will not be sorry. This will be one of the most incredible life-changing experiences of your life. I not only fell in love with the landscape and beauty of the Yukon, but I also experienced the kindness, the sheer generosity and love of the people.” -

Cara Bissonnette, White Rock, BC, Canada

Come and celebrate with us!

