

This is Sam – the Canadian puppy that smells a bit like maple syrup – the newest member of our pack.



*King Salmon ('Sam' for short).*

Sam and Wini are fast becoming best buddies.



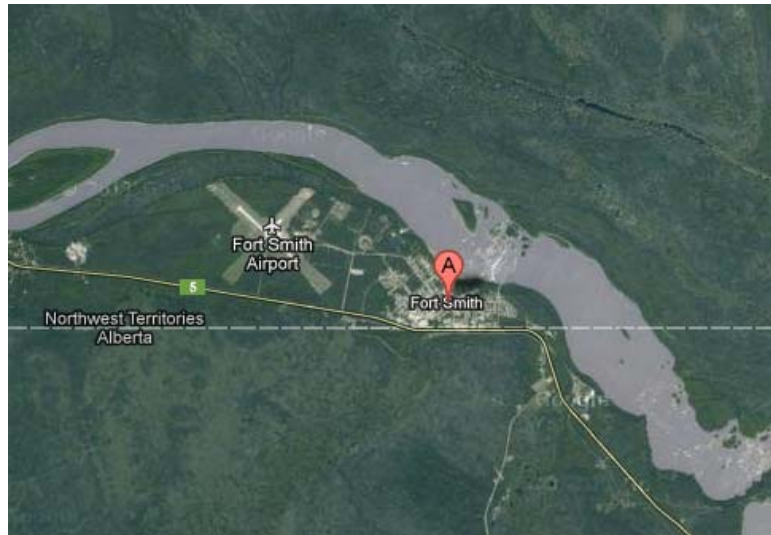
*Wini and Sam.*

Sam showed up on Petfinder when I was looking through the site one night searching for adoptable dogs. These are the first pictures I saw:



*Pictures of Sam posted on Petfinder.com by Fort Smith Animal Society.*

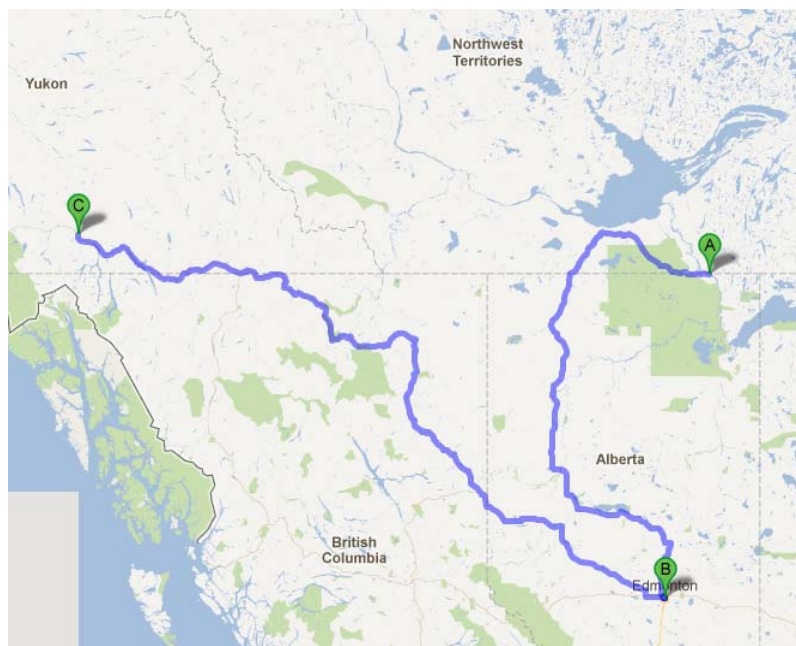
Not sure why Petfinder returned the results it did that night (my search criteria centered on Anchorage), but when I saw him, I couldn't get his sweet face out of my mind. Sam just happened to be at the Fort Smith Animal Society in Fort Smith, Northwest Territory, Canada, a small town with a population of 2,500 only 2,194 miles away from us!



*Sam's birthplace (he was actually born at a house in 'the bush' outside of town).*

We knew it was crazy, but we got our hearts set on adopting Sam. As we learned more about him, we knew he was the right dog for our family. So, after exploring what felt like a million different options over a period of two to three weeks and talking with a dozen different people about rideshares, flights, costs, etc., our journey to get Sam went like this:

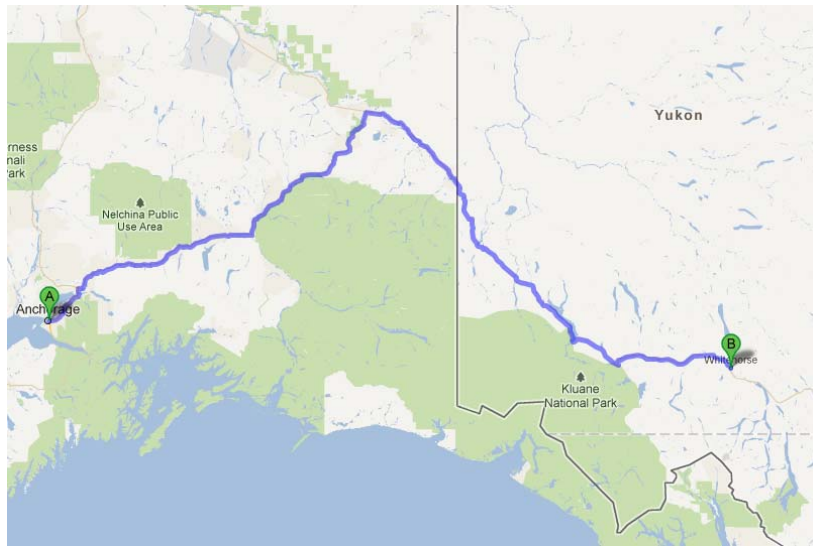
On Friday, June 8, Sam flew from Fort Smith, NT to Edmonton, Alberta, and then from Edmonton, Alberta to Whitehorse, Yukon.



*Sam's flight path (Friday 6/8).*

The Fort Smith Animal Society adoption coordinator's mother lives in Whitehorse. She picked him up at the airport and he spent the night with her. In the meantime, Guy is driving from Anchorage (he left on Thursday night after work) to make the 700-mile one-way trip to Whitehorse with the goal of picking Sam up on Saturday morning.





*Guy's 1400+-mile round trip drive to rescue Sam (Thursday 6/7 – Sunday 6/10).*

On the way, Guy ended up rescuing *another* dog that he found wandering cold, wet, and alone along the highway. She was the sweetest female Newfoundland/Lab mix who was so relieved to have been rescued and in a safe, dry, warm place. She jumped right in the truck with Guy and promptly went to sleep.



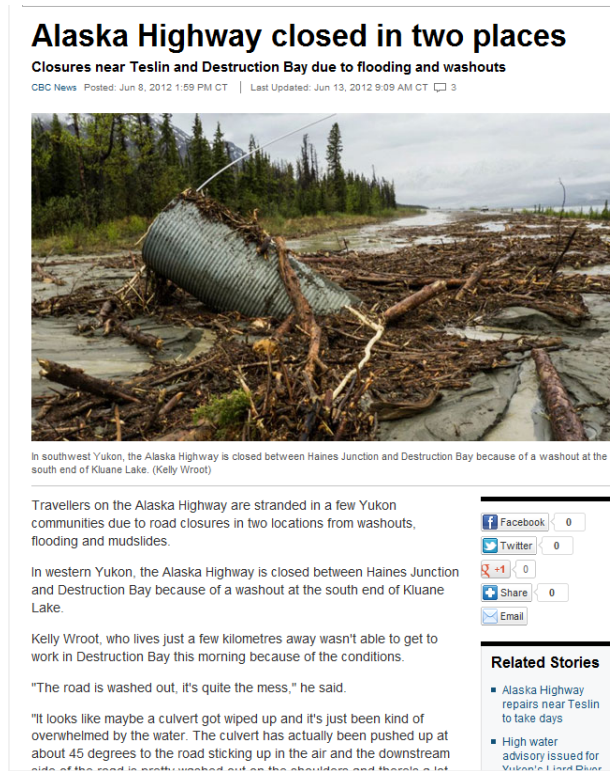
*Our sweet friend (whose name we later learned is Shadow) after Guy rescued her on the Glenn Highway.*

She spent that night with Guy in our camper truck (another adoption we've made since being in Alaska).



*Our 1987 Isuzu Pup Spacecab truck with a Roamin' Chariot over-the-cab camper!*

But Guy would be unable to take Shadow across the border into Canada with him (no paperwork for her). Fortunately, we found a woman in Tok, Alaska who was willing to board her until Guy could get across to Whitehorse, pick up Sam, and swing back by to pick her up. Guy crossed the border into Canada on Friday afternoon, only to find that the Alaska Highway had washed out between Destruction Bay and Haines Junction.

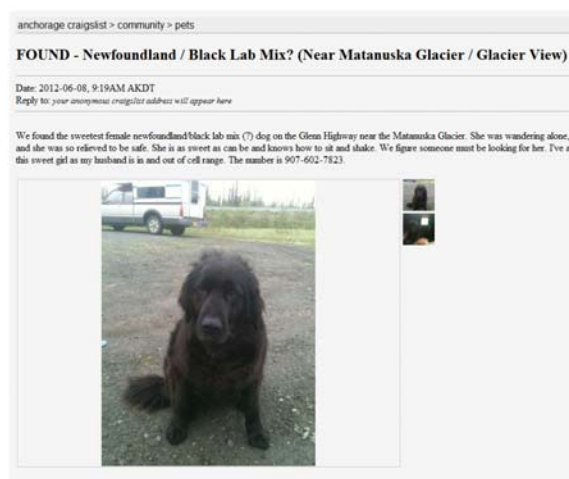


*Article about Alaska Highway road closures the weekend we planned to pick up Sam.*

He was forced to wait until the road was repaired enough to be passable, which luckily happened the next day. He made the rest of the trip to Whitehorse, picked up Sam, and began the 700-mile trek back to Anchorage, stopping to pick up Shadow in Tok on the way back.

All three of them made it home safely on late Sunday night, June 10. Coincidentally, June 10 is the date of our one-year anniversary of arriving in Alaska last year. What a way to celebrate that day!

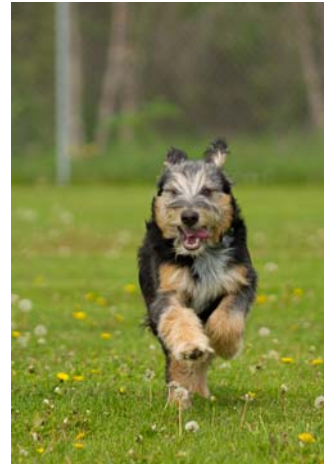
We posted flyers, an ad on Craigslist, and even solicited the help of a local blogger in Tok and as a result, we found and reunited 'Shadow' with her owner a little over a week later.



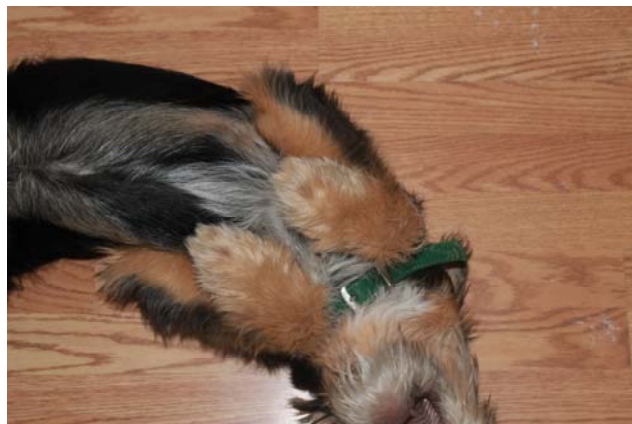
*Our Craigslist ad and the 'Living in Tok' blog post about Shadow.*



Sam is a German Shepherd/Terrier mix (a good, all-around mutt), about 5 months old now, and already weighs 41 pounds. We expect him to grow to be a pretty big boy. He has the most soulful eyes, a great personality, and for a young pup who is also teething, he behaves himself quite well. He's smart, loving, and likes to play, but he is also somewhat cautious and, as the Fort Smith Animal Society adoption coordinator said, "he really seems to think things through." He and Wini are already bonded and he doesn't mind her bossy, hen-pecking personality one bit.



It was a journey of epic proportions, but we are thrilled to have Sam in our lives.



*Silly Salmon.*

p.s. As seems to be the case with all rescue organizations, the folks at the Fort Smith Animal Society were so incredible through all of this. They believed in us and did everything in their power to help us adopt Sam. While they readily agreed that we were crazy, they still worked with us to make it happen. If you ever find yourself with a little spare change in your pocket, Dixie Penner and the small, but dedicated crew of volunteers and foster parents at FSAS would make deserving recipients. Despite the size of their community, like all who work in rescue, they are doing the most profound work.