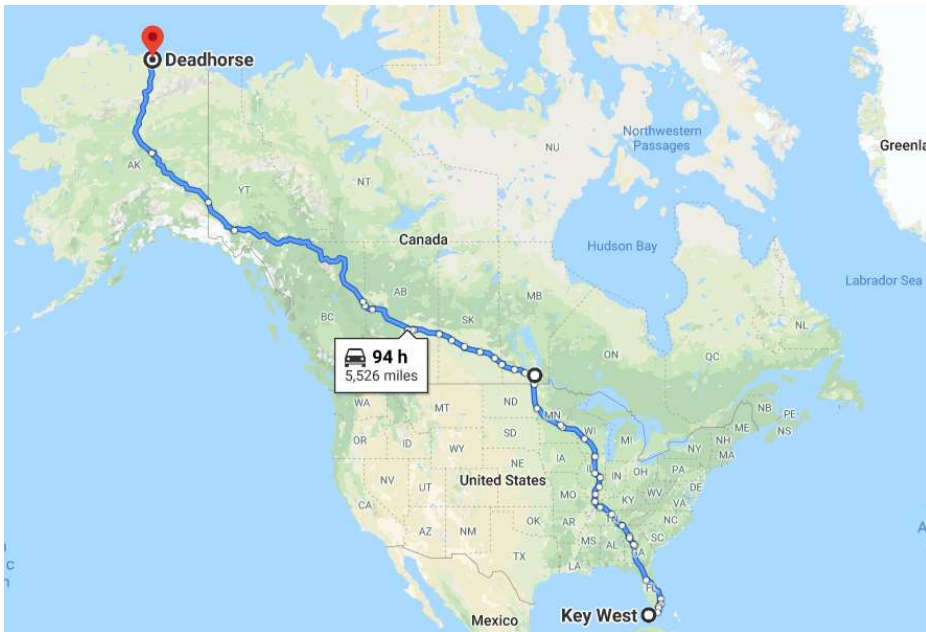


# Ultimate Coast-to-Coast Reboot



## UCC 5,500 Miles One-Way in Less than 30 Days

The Ultimate Coast to Coast (UCC) is an Iron Butt Association (IBA) coast-to-coast ride from the most southern coast of the USA, Key West, Florida (Atlantic Ocean) to the most northern coast, Prudhoe Bay, Alaska (Arctic Ocean). Due to the extreme nature of this ride, you are allowed 30 days to complete it according to IBA requirements.

The real challenge of this ride is the 414-mile (666 km) leg between Fairbanks and Prudhoe Bay, Alaska on the Dalton Highway (aka, The Haul Road). You may have heard of this road if you've ever watched the TV show "Ice Road Truckers". Here is a description of the Dalton Highway from Wikipedia:

*"The highway, which directly parallels the pipeline, is one of the most isolated roads in the United States. There are only three towns*

*along the route: Coldfoot (pop 10) at Mile 175, Wiseman (pop 22) at Mile 188, and Deadhorse (25 permanent residents, 3,500-5,000 or more seasonal residents depending on oil production) at the end of the highway at Mile 414. Fuel is available at the E. L. Patton Yukon River Bridge (Mile 56), as well as Coldfoot and Deadhorse.*

*The road itself is mostly gravel, very primitive in places, and small vehicle and motorcycle traffic carries significant risk. The nearest medical facilities are in Fairbanks and Deadhorse. Anyone embarking on a journey on the Dalton is encouraged to bring survival gear.*

*Despite its remoteness, the Dalton Highway carries a good amount of truck traffic through to Prudhoe Bay: about 160 trucks daily in the summer months and 250 trucks*

*daily in the winter. The highway comes to within a few miles of the Arctic Ocean. Beyond the highway's terminus at Deadhorse are private roads owned by oil companies, which are restricted to authorized vehicles only. There are, however, commercial tours that take people to the Arctic Ocean. All vehicles must take extreme precaution when driving on the road, and drive with headlights on at all times. There are quite a few steep grades (up to 12%) along the route, as well."*

It can snow at any time during the year in this part of Alaska. Snow, ice, rain or wet conditions can turn the Dalton Highway into a real mess very quickly. Although it may sound treacherous, with today's technology and services, I feel very safe attempting this ride.

Deadhorse is the name of the Alaskan town in Prudhoe Bay.

*Deadhorse is an unincorporated community located within Prudhoe Bay in North Slope Borough, Alaska, United States, along the North Slope near the Arctic Ocean. The town consists mainly of facilities for the workers and companies that operate at the nearby Prudhoe Bay Oil Field. Deadhorse is accessible via the Dalton Highway from Fairbanks, 495 mi south, or Deadhorse Airport. Limited accommodation is also available for tourists.*

The permanent population is variously listed as being between 25 and 50 residents. Temporary residents (employed by various firms with local interests) can range as high as 3,000.

Companies with facilities in Deadhorse service Prudhoe Bay, nearby oil fields, and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS), which brings oil from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez on the south-central Alaska coast. Facilities in Deadhorse are built entirely on man-made gravel pads and usually consist of prefabricated modules shipped to Deadhorse via barge or air cargo.

The area often features large herds of caribou and over 200 bird and waterfowl species, including geese, swans, gulls and eagles. Other indigenous wildlife include Arctic foxes, Arctic ground squirrels, grizzly bears, polar bears, musk oxen, and Arctic hares. Wikipedia



**2011 Attempt**

I did attempt this ride in 2011 on a Suzuki V-Strom 1000. During that trip, FedEx hired me! I was in the

Yukon, 1,000 miles from my destination, Prudhoe Bay, when I accepted the job! At that time, our new future became the priority, so I did a U-turn and headed back to Atlanta to finalize my retirement with Delta Air Lines and get ready to move to Memphis!

Thirteen years later, this will be my retirement ride! The redemption ride—I started my FedEx career with this ride, I might as well end it with this ride too!



**2019 BMW R1250GSA**

The BMW R1250GSA is the bike of choice this time! Why? In the mid 2000's, BMW GS models were having issues with their final drives. Plus, they were air-cooled machines. Since then, the final drive issues have improved, and the engines are water-cooled. At that time, the Suzuki V-Strom was a highly reliable bike that worked well. No issues on my trip in 2011.

Here are some other comparisons between the 2019 BMW GSA and the 2009 Suzuki V-Strom:

1. Shaft Drive vs Chain Drive
2. Cruise Control vs Friction Lock

3. Better Suspension
4. More lockable storage
5. 7.9 gal. gas tank vs 5.8 gal.

On the V-Strom, I added a 5 gal. aux tank for a total of 10.8 gallons: On the GSA, I've added a 4.2 gal aux tank for a total of 12.1 gallons—Specifically for the Dalton Highway.

Technology has also improved greatly with Bluetooth headsets and GPS devices. Not only are they wireless, but they offer quality audio for GPS commands, music and phone calls. The GPS is the interface between the headset and my cell phone. The GPS touchscreen allows me to access my phonebook to make and receive calls. I also have control of music within my cellphone Spotify app. All good stuff for a more enjoyable ride with access to family, friends and entertainment!

Of course, cell service may be an issue in remote parts of Canada and Alaska. No problem! A satellite tracking system (SPOT) can provide real-time location information (within 5 minutes) of my location on a webpage.

SPOT also allows me to send text messages in the event of a problem or emergency. I have 3 different pre-programmed messages that I can send with the push of a button:

1. 911 – Sends an emergency message to 911 with my current GPS coordinates in the event I have a serious accident.

2. A text message stating that I'm OK but need roadside assistance. This includes my current GPS coordinates and roadside assistance member number.
3. A text message stating that I'm OK, no issues.

These messages are sent to pre-programmed family/friends emergency contacts that have agreed to help should an issue arise.

Tentative schedule:

Memorial Weekend - Ride from Hernando, MS to Key West, FL to start the UCC by acquiring all the proper documentation, pictures, sand/water samples, etc. and then return home to Hernando, MS.

Work my final week at FedEx and repack /regroup.

June 1, ride from Hernando, MS to Prudhoe Bay, AK to acquire the proper documentation, pictures, sand/water samples, etc. and then return home to Hernando, MS.

Take a break, repack/regroup and prepare for the final leg to make this a UCCC (Ultimate Coast-to-Coast-to-Coast).

A few days later - Ride from Hernando, MS to Key West to acquire the official end

documentation, pictures, sand/water samples, etc. and then back home to Hernando, MS.

My route up to Prudhoe Bay will be a little different than my previous route. I plan to ride through Winnipeg, Manitoba. This will allow me to ride through Manitoba, the only Canadian province that I have yet to visit. This will only add an extra 50 miles to my route. That will only leave 2 Canadian Territories unvisited: The Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Initially, I plan to ride hard up to get up there. After that, I would like to relax a little and slow the pace to enjoy some time visiting sites on the way home. This will allow me to spend time in Deadhorse to ride the shuttle bus to the Artic Ocean for a sand/water sample. All dependent on the weather and other factors of course.

My route home will be to Hyder, Alaska where I ended my 49-state ride in 2007. Hyder is a small village in a remote area of south Alaska. It is a popular end location for riders that complete the 49/10 ride (49 states in less than 10 days) since it's the most southern Alaskan town accessible by road. According to the 2020 census, the population in Hyder is only 48. The local scenery there is breathtaking!

From there, I'll ride down through the Canadian Rockies on the Icefields Parkway.

*The Icefields Parkway is a 230 km (140 mi) long scenic road that parallels the Continental Divide, traversing the rugged landscape of the Canadian Rockies, travelling through Banff National Park and Jasper National Park. It is named for features such as the Columbia Icefield, visible from the parkway. Wikipedia.*

I'll continue south to visit the IBA Circle of Honor/Memorial near Gerlach, Nevada before heading home on US 50.

*U.S. Route 50 across Nevada was named "The Loneliest Road in America" by Life magazine in July 1986. The name originates from large desolate areas traversed by the route, with few or no signs of civilization. The highway crosses several large desert valleys separated by numerous mountain ranges towering over the valley floors, in what is known as the Basin and Range province of the Great Basin. Wikipedia*

All in all, the trip should cover approximately 13,400 miles within a 5-week period.