

Dawson Peaks Resort

Teslin

Started: 1988

Contact: David Hett and Carolyn Allen

Located on Teslin Lake, Dawson Peaks Resort has a restaurant, cabins, wall tents, campsites and gift shop. It also provides canoe and boat rentals and fishing charters. In addition to owners David and Caroline, the resort keeps four staff busy in the summer.



Getting started: David applied for a commercial lease on land next to his home base and began clearing the road and campsite in 1988. In 1990, with only a wall tent set up for cooking, the first guests came in campers and stayed for four weeks. Dawson Peaks Resort was able to grow steadily with the added help of Carolyn (who moved from Vernon in 1990 to be with David), financing from Dana Naye Ventures and a bank, and income from David's teaching job.

Key to success: David and Carolyn visit with their guests and this contact is important to continual word of mouth referrals. They also actively solicit business from bus tours by sending packages with attractive photos and making many phone calls. Joining the Tourism Industry Association allowed them to meet others who had good advice to offer. David sends letters to all travel books or magazines covering the Yukon or Alaska and Dawson Peaks has subsequently been noted in some of these publications.

Lessons learned: As staff use the facilities in their house and work closely with the owners, David and Carolyn work to be friends but have learned it is important to still be a boss.

Future of business: David and Carolyn are interested in keeping Dawson Peaks small enough so that they can continue to meet guests one on one as that is key to their enjoyment of the business.