



▶ After our fill-up, and grabbing a few bottles of water and soda, we headed out. Well, some of us did. My 110 began to act up again (gel), just as I was about to descend the bank onto the ice road. I stopped short, pulled the fuel filter (again), loaded it with anti-gel and re-started the truck. I also dumped the remaining anti-gel in the tank, as it seemed to be the fuel lines that were gelling and not the filter or injector pump this time. This is not entirely surprising, as it dropped to a low of minus 44F for the overnight, the coldest temperature recorded for the entire trip. I realized later on that I lost the fuel cap at this point as well; nothing like putting salt on an open wound.

Once that bit of indigestion was worked out of the 110's fuel system, the group made their way delicately onto the ice. I say 'delicately' because there is something a bit unnatural about driving a two ton plus truck onto a sheet of ice,

*Above: Miles of spectacular Ice Road (traffic was light...)*

*Below: GPS shows our 2 ft elevation in the middle of the river...*



and driving it out over open water. What may be even more unbelievable is the fact that large tractor-trailers (fully laden, mind you, up to 55,000kgs) use this route as a super-highway to Tuk every day in the winter months. Many of the people in Tuk spend the entire summer stranded as the only other way out is via air or water, which is well beyond the means of most of these modest and friendly people.

The next episode of the day was with Mike and his 101, as has come to be expected at this point of the trip, when he tried a bit of figure skating with his truck. I suppose he was consumed by the moment; acres of ice and no goals, so it must be figure skating (he was moving way too fast for curling). He was forced off course by a surprisingly small mound of drifted snow in the 'road' which sent him into a fish-tail. While trying to recover (this is on glare ice remember) he ended up nose first in the bank on

the side of the road. Fortunately, no one was hurt after his impersonation of Tanya Harding, and there was no damage to the vehicle either. And if there was, who would we call; CAA or the Coast Guard? We were technically driving on a river after all...

As we got out into the deeper water, the color of the ice turned the most amazing shade of blue you have ever seen. Imagine a creamy sapphire color, this is one case where pictures just can't tell the whole story; the color is amazing. If you stop and look into the brightest areas, you can see down into the ice several feet; following the white cracks down as far as you can see. If Jade came in blue, it might look like this.

The importance of being awake and aware cannot be stressed enough when driving in arctic conditions in general; the ice roads have danger in spades.

We arrived at the end of the road