

The St. Lawrence has many tributaries of importance, the most notable being the Ottawa River, which itself has more than twenty major tributaries. These rivers were the early highways into the interior and along them in a later period moved the great timber trade. The largest tributary to the St. Lawrence below the Ottawa River is the St. Maurice, which serves both as a source of electric power and as a transport route for millions of logs destined for the large pulp and paper mills downstream. Eastward, the Saguenay River, although short, is also the source of great power development and, below Chicoutimi, is a picturesque fiord-like canal navigable by large ships.

The entire drainage area to the north of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes is occupied by the southern fringe of the Canadian Shield—a forested, rugged, rocky plateau region from which tributary rivers tumble over the edge of the Shield. These rivers are ideally suited to the development of electric power and for many generations have been used for transporting logs to mills downstream. The spring log runs, coinciding with the high water from melting snows, culminate winter activity in the forests for many thousands of loggers.

Several other rivers in the Atlantic drainage basin are important locally. The St. John is the principal river of New Brunswick. It flows through a fertile agricultural district and is the source of most of the province's hydro-electric power. The Hamilton River, the largest in Labrador, flows through areas containing good timber and important mineral deposits and offers the possibility of very great power development.

PACIFIC DRAINAGE BASIN

The Pacific drainage basin is the smallest in area of the oceanic drainage basins and contains three major rivers—the Fraser, the Columbia and the Yukon. The rivers of the Pacific basin rise in the mountains of the Cordilleran Region and flow to the Pacific Ocean over tortuous, precipitous courses, rushing through steep canyons and tumbling over innumerable falls and rapids. They provide power for great hydro-electric developments and during spawning season swarm with salmon returning inland to their spawning grounds.

The Fraser River, the chief river of British Columbia, rises in the Rocky Mountains in the neighbourhood of Yellowhead Pass. Its total length is 850 miles and it has several large tributaries including the North Thompson and South Thompson Rivers. The lower Fraser valley, including the delta islands, is a rich agricultural area.

The Columbia River is, with the exception of the Yukon, the largest river on the Pacific slope of North America. It is an international river, only 459 of its 1,150-mile length being in Canada. Its great volume, coupled with a total fall of 2,650 feet during its course, gives it an enormous power potential. Recently, Canada and the United States signed agreements for the joint development of the Columbia River, a project equalling in magnitude the St. Lawrence Seaway project but having the objectives of power development, flood control and irrigation rather than primarily of transportation and then power.

The Yukon River, like the Columbia, is an international river; 714 of its 1,979 miles are in British Columbia. Although the fifth largest river in North America and the largest on the Pacific slope, the Yukon is relatively unimportant economically. The river system is navigable for river steamers, without interruption by large rapids, from Whitehorse, Y.T., to its mouth, a distance of 1,777 miles, about 510 of which are in Canada. Power development has been modest, affected by considerable differences in seasonal flow and low market potential for power in the area.

Rivers and Lakes.—Table 2 lists the principal rivers of Canada and their tributaries. The tributaries and sub-tributaries are indicated by indentation of names; thus the Ottawa and other rivers are shown as tributary to the St. Lawrence, and the Gatineau and other rivers as tributary to the Ottawa.