

On this day in Alaska history

May 31, 1977

The final weld is completed on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline

The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System, completed in 1977 to carry North Slope oil to the port of Valdez, has been recognized as a landmark of engineering.

With the laying of the first section of pipe on March 27, 1975, construction began on what at the time was the largest private construction project in American history.

A deciding vote in the U.S. Senate by Vice President Spiro Agnew had passed the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Authorization Act on July 17, 1973.

Years of debate about the project's environmental impact escalated. Concerns were raised about earthquakes and elk migrations.

The 800-mile Trans-Alaska Pipeline system, including pumping stations, connecting pipelines, and the ice-free Valdez Marine Terminal, ended up costing billions. The last pipeline weld was completed on May 31, 1977.

Read more: <https://aoghs.org/transportation/trans-alaska-pipeline/>