

Bering Strait



The **Bering Strait** (Russian: Берингов пролив, *Beringov proliv*, Yupik: *Imakpik*) is a strait 82 kilometres (51 mi; 44 nmi) wide between Cape Dezhnev, Chukchi Peninsula, Russia, the easternmost point (169° 43' E) of the Asian continent and Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska, USA, the westernmost point (168° 05' E) of the North American continent. Named after Vitus Bering, a Russian explorer born in Denmark, it lies slightly south of the polar circle at approximately 65° 40' N latitude, with the present US-Russia east-west boundary, agreed to only by the USA, ^[*citation needed*] at 168° 58' 37" W.



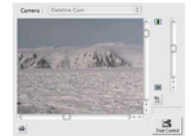
Smart Links

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The Strait has been the subject of scientific speculation that humans migrated from Asia to North America across a land bridge known as Beringia when lower ocean levels—perhaps a result of glaciers locking up vast amounts of water—exposed a ridge beneath the ocean.

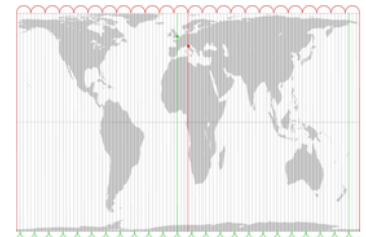
The name of the sea containing the strait is sometimes spelled Behring in older books.

As of 2012, the Russian coast of the Bering Strait was a closed military zone. Unauthorized travelers who arrive on shore after crossing the strait, even those with visas, may be arrested, imprisoned briefly, and deported.



Timeline BETA

- 1648 ○ Semyon Dezhnyov probably passed through the strait, but his report did not reach Europe.
- 1728 ○ Danish-born Russian navigator Vitus Bering entered it in 1728.
- 1732 ○ Mikhail Gvozdev crossed it for the first time, from Asia to America.
- 1864 ○ A physical link between Asia and North America via the Bering Strait nearly became a reality in 1864 when a Russian-American telegraph company began preparations for an overland telegraph line connecting Europe and America via the west. It was abandoned when the undersea Atlantic Cable proved successful.^[*citation needed*]
- 1878 ○ Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld in 1878/79 sailed along the complete northern coast of Siberia, thereby proving that there was no northern land bridge from Asia to North America.
- 1913 ○ **March**: Captain Max Gottschalk (German) crossed from the east cape of Siberia to Shishmaref, Alaska on dogsled via Little and Big Diomed islands. He was the first documented modern voyager to cross from Russia to North America without the use of boat.
- 1956 ○ Russia purposed a joint project to warm the Arctic Ocean and melt some of the ice cap.
- 1987 ○ Swimmer Lynne Cox swam the two miles (3 km) between the Diomed Islands from Alaska to the Soviet Union in 40 °F (4 °C) water during the last years of the Cold War.
- 1989 ○ **July**: In June and July 1989, a British expedition, Kayaks Across The Bering Strait, completed the first sea kayak crossing of the Bering Strait from Wales (Kinjgin), Alaska, to Cape Dezhnev, Siberia.
- 1990 ○ Since 1990, tourist air and boat traffic exists, but is hampered by the need for visas and special military visit permits in this part of Russia. ^[*citation needed*]
- 1998 ○ Russian adventurer Dmitry Shparo and his son Matvey made the modern crossing of the frozen Bering Strait on skis.
- 2006 ○ **March**: Briton Karl Bushby and French-American adventurer Dimitri Kieffer crossed the strait on foot, walking across a frozen 90 km (56 mi) section in 15 days. They were soon arrested for not entering Russia through a border control.
- 2008 ○ **August**: Marked the first crossing of the Bering Strait using an amphibious road-going vehicle.
- 2011 ○ **August**: Despite the unprecedented engineering, political, and financial challenges, Russia green-lighted the US \$65 billion TKM-World Link tunnel project in August 2011.
- 2012 ○ As of 2012, the Russian coast of the Bering Strait was a closed military zone.
- 2013 ○ **July 28**: 40 swimmers from 14 countries will attempt a relay swim across the Bering Strait.



Videos



North Pacific Council: Bering Sea Canyons are not unique habitat 134 views
 Chris Oliver, Executive Director of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, describes the council's actions and findings on Bering Sea Canyons. There has been a vocal campaign by Greenpeace and other NGO's to impose a fishery closure here, but...

- North Pacific Council: Bering Sea Canyons...**
134 views
- DREAM OF THE BERING SEA**
172 views
- Bering Sea King Crab 2012 II**
190 views

Geography and science

Geography and science

The Bering Strait is approximately 82 kilometres (51 mi; 44 nmi) wide at its narrowest point, with depth varying between 98 feet (30 m) and 160 feet (49 m). It connects the *Chukchi Sea* (part of the *Arctic Ocean*) to the north with the *Bering Sea* (part of the *Pacific Ocean*) to the south.

The *International Date Line* runs equidistant between the Strait's *Diomede Islands* at a distance of 1 mi (1.6 km), leaving the Russian and American sides usually on different calendar days, with *Cape Dezhnev* 21 hours ahead of the American side (20 hours during *daylight saving time*).

Population

The area is sparsely populated.

The area in the immediate neighborhood on the Alaskan side belongs to the *Nome Census Area*, home to a population of 9,000. No roads exist from the Strait to the main cities of Alaska, with only a few around *Nome*.

The Russian coast belongs to *Chukotka Autonomous Okrug*. *Roadless Provideniya* (4,500 people) and *Chukotsky* (5,200 people) lie along the Strait.

The *Diomede Islands* lie midway in the Strait. The village in *Little Diomede* has a school which belongs to Alaska's *Bering Strait School District*.

Expeditions

From at least 1562 European geographers thought that there was a *Strait of Anián* between Asia and North America. In 1648 *Semyon Dezhnyov* probably passed through the strait, but his report did not reach Europe. Danish-born Russian navigator *Vitus Bering* entered it in 1728. In 1732, *Mikhail Gvozdev* crossed it for the first time, from Asia to America. *Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld* in 1878/79 sailed along the complete northern coast of *Siberia*, thereby proving that there was no northern land bridge from Asia to North America.

In March 1913, Captain Max Gottschalk (German) crossed from the east cape of *Siberia* to *Shishmaref, Alaska* on dogsled via *Little* and *Big Diomede islands*. He was the first documented modern voyager to cross from *Russia* to *North America* without the use of boat.

In 1987, swimmer *Lynne Cox* swam the two miles (3 km) between the *Diomede Islands* from *Alaska* to the *Soviet Union* in 40 °F (4 °C) water during the last years of the *Cold War*.

In June and July 1989, a British expedition, *Kayaks Across The Bering Strait*, completed the first *sea kayak* crossing of the Bering Strait from *Wales* (*Kinjigin*), *Alaska*, to *Cape Dezhnev, Siberia*. The team of *Robert Egelstaff*, *Trevor Potts*, *Greg Barton* and *Pete Clark* landed on *Little Diomede Island* rested a few days and completed the journey to *Uelen*. They were escorted to *Moscow* from where they flew back to *London* at the end of July.

During the first part of the crossing they were accompanied by two other groups, *Paddling into Tomorrow* led by *Doug Van Etten*. There was also small party led by *Jim Noyes* in a 3 man *Bladarka* who were accompanied by a film crew. The film "*Curtain of Ice*" was produced by *Aggi Orse*.

In 1998, Russian adventurer *Dmitry Shparo* and his son *Matvey* made the modern crossing of the frozen Bering Strait on skis.

In March 2006, Briton *Karl Bushby* and French-American adventurer *Dimitri Kieffer* crossed the strait on foot, walking across a frozen 90 km (56 mi) section in 15 days. They were soon arrested for not entering *Russia* through a border control.

August 2008 marked the first crossing of the Bering Strait using an amphibious road-going vehicle. The specially modified *Land Rover Defender 110* was driven by *Steve Burgess* and *Dan Evans* across the straits on its second attempt following the interruption of the first by bad weather.

In July, 2012, six adventurers associated with "Dangerous Waters", a reality adventure show under production, made the crossing on *Sea-Doos* but were arrested and permitted to return to *Alaska* on their *Sea-Doos* after being briefly detained in *Lavrentiya*, administrative center of the *Chukotsky District*. They were treated well and given a tour of the village's museum, but not permitted to continue south along the *Pacific coast*. The men had visas but the western coast of the Bering Strait is a closed military zone.

On July 28, 2013, 40 swimmers from 14 countries will attempt a relay swim across the Bering Strait. They will swim from *Cape Dezhnev, Russia* to *Cape Prince of Wales, USA* (roughly 110 km, due to the current). The swimmers will swim in 20-minute legs with a 10-hour rest in between. Each swimmer will complete three to four legs and the whole swim is estimated to take 40-50 hours to complete, meaning each athlete will swim 3-4 times. If they succeed, they will earn a place in the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Proposed tunnel

Main article: TKM-World Link

A physical link between *Asia* and *North America* via the Bering Strait nearly became a reality in 1864 when a *Russian-American telegraph* company began preparations for an overland telegraph line connecting *Europe* and *America* via the west. It was abandoned when the undersea *Atlantic Cable* proved successful.^[*citation needed*]

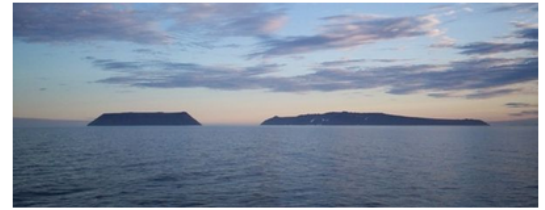
Suggestions have been made to construct a *Bering Strait bridge* between *Alaska* and *Siberia*. However, despite the unprecedented engineering, political, and financial challenges, *Russia* green-lighted the US \$65 billion *TKM-World Link* tunnel project in August 2011. If completed, the 103 km (64 mile) project would be the world's longest.

Proposed dam

In 1956, *Russia* purposed a joint project to warm the *Arctic Ocean* and melt some of the ice cap. The project called for a 55 mile wide dam across the Bering Straits. Ice flows and the cold currents would be trapped north of the dam and the warm currents would bring warm water further north with the dam blocking the cold water. The warmer water would be pumped over the dam into the *Arctic Ocean*. US experts stated that while the plan was feasible, the 55 mile dam could only be built at immense cost.

The "Ice Curtain" border

During the **Cold War**, the Bering Strait marked the border between the **Soviet Union** and the **United States**. The island of **Big Diomedede** in Russia is only 2.4 mi (3.9 km) from the island of Little Diomedede in the USA. Traditionally, the indigenous peoples in the area had frequently crossed the border back and forth for "routine visits, seasonal festivals and subsistence trade", but were prevented from doing so during the Cold War. The border became known as the "Ice Curtain". It was completely closed, and there was no regular passenger air or boat traffic. In 1987, American swimmer **Lynne Cox** symbolically helped ease tensions between the two countries by swimming across the border and was congratulated jointly by **Ronald Reagan** and **Mikhail Gorbachev**. Since 1990, tourist air and boat traffic exists, but is hampered by the need for visas and special military visit permits in this part of Russia.^[*citation needed*]



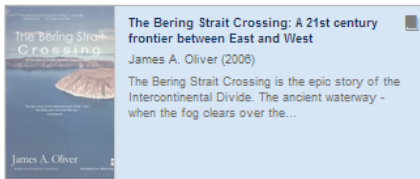
See also

- List of Russian explorers

References

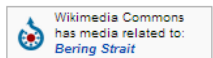
- ↑ Forbes, Jack D. 2007. *The American Discovery of Europe*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, pp. 84 ff., 198.
- ↑ Stuckey, M., & J. Murphy. 2001. By Any Other Name: Rhetorical Colonialism in North America. *American Indian Culture, Research Journal* 25(4): 73–98, p. 80.
- ↑ Beck, Roger B.; Linda Black, Larry S. Krieger, Phillip C. Naylor, Dahia Ibo Shabaka. (1989). *World History: Patterns of Interaction*. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell. ISBN 0-395-87274-X.
- ↑ Andrew Roth (July 11, 2012). "Journey by Sea Takes Awkward Turn in Russia". *The New York Times*. Retrieved July 12, 2012.
- ↑ It is only 53 miles (85 km) wide, and at its deepest point is only 300 feet (91 m) in depth. ^[1]
- ↑ The Victoria Advocate February 1 1938, additional text.
- ↑ "Epic explorer crosses frozen sea". *BBC News*. 3 April 2008. Retrieved 13 January 2012.
- ↑ "Epic explorer detained in Russia". *BBC News*. 4 April 2008. Retrieved 13 January 2012.
- ↑ "Cape to Cape Expedition". Retrieved 13 January 2012.
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- ↑ Halpin, Tony (2011-08-20). "Russia plans \$65bn tunnel to America". *The Sunday Times*.
- ↑ "Ocean Dams Would Thaw North" *Popular Mechanics*, June 1956, p. 135.
- ↑ State of Alaska website
- ↑ "Lifting the Ice Curtain", Peter A. Iseman, *New York Times*, October 23, 1988
- ↑ "Swimming To Antarctica", CBS News, September 17, 2003

Further reading



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Smart links ^{BETA} ?



Earth's oceans and seas	
Arctic Ocean	Amundsen Gulf · Barents Sea · Beaufort Sea · Bering Strait · Chukchi Sea · East Siberian Sea · Fram Strait · Greenland Sea · Gulf of Boothia · Kara Sea · Kara Strait · Laptev Sea · Lincoln Sea · Prince Gustav Adolf Sea · Pechora Sea · Wandel Sea · White Sea
Atlantic Ocean	Adriatic Sea · Aegean Sea · Alboran Sea · Archipelago Sea · Argentine Sea · Baffin Bay · Balearic Sea · Baltic Sea · Bay of Biscay · Bay of Bothnia · Bay of Campeche · Bay of Fundy · Black Sea · Bothnian Sea · Caribbean Sea · Celtic Sea · Davis Strait · Denmark Strait · English Channel · Foxe Basin · Greenland Sea · Gulf of Bothnia · Gulf of Finland · Gulf of Lion · Gulf of Guinea · Gulf of Maine · Gulf of Mexico · Gulf of St. Lawrence · Gulf of Sidra · Gulf of Venezuela · Hudson Bay · James Bay · Ionian Sea · Irish Sea · Irminger Sea · Labrador Sea · Levantine Sea · Libyan Sea · Ligurian Sea · Marmara Sea · Mediterranean Sea · Myrtoan Sea · North Sea · Norwegian Sea · Sargasso Sea · Sea of Åland · Sea of Azov · Sea of Crete · Sea of the Hebrides · Thracian Sea · Tyrrhenian Sea · Wadden Sea
Indian Ocean	Andaman Sea · Arabian Sea · Bay of Bengal · Gulf of Aden · Gulf of Aqaba · Gulf of Khambhat · Gulf of Kutch · Gulf of Oman · Gulf of Suez · Laccadive Sea · Mozambique Channel · Persian Gulf · Red Sea · Strait of Malacca · Timor Sea
Pacific Ocean	Arafura Sea · Bali Sea · Banda Sea · Bering Sea · Bismarck Sea · Bohol Sea · Bohol Sea · Camotes Sea · Celebes Sea · Ceram Sea · Chilean Sea · Coral Sea · East China Sea · Flores Sea · Gulf of Alaska · Gulf of California · Gulf of Carpentaria · Gulf of Fonseca · Gulf of Thailand · Gulf of Tonkin · Halmahera Sea · Java Sea · Koro Sea · Mar de Grau · Makassar Strait · Molucca Sea · Moro Gulf · Philippine Sea · Salish Sea · Savu Sea · Sea of Japan · Sea of Okhotsk · Seto Inland Sea · Sibuyan Sea · Solomon Sea · South China Sea · Sulu Sea · Tasman Sea · Visayan Sea · Yellow Sea
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