

Central Selkirk Caribou Maternity Pen: Kuskanax Creek Forest Service Road Access Plan & User Protocol

Introduction

ALCS aims to be cooperative with road users while limiting disturbance to caribou. Caribou are sensitive to unnatural and sudden noises, so efforts must be made to limit traffic and noise levels in the vicinity of the Central Selkirk Caribou Maternity Pen while caribou are present. A gate has been installed on the Kuskanax Forest Service Road, under an authorization with the Ministry of Forests.

Gating, signage, temporary closures, and increased public awareness are used to manage road traffic and noise. The gate is used to close the FSR temporarily during high-stress periods for the caribou (i.e. immediately after capture, during calving). The gate may be locked at any time while there are animals in the pen, in response to maternity pen operations and animal conditions. Full road closures will be used as a last resort.

Access Plan

A Controlled Access Area is established to cover approximately 1.0 km of road distance on either side of the maternity pen. Access for user groups and the public will be allowed in the Controlled Access Area when the gate is unlocked.

Protocol must be followed when using the Kuskanax FSR:

1. Upon arrival at the Kuskanax FSR gate: Stop, Read the Signage.
2. Ensure you are visiting during a period of time when the gate is unlocked and open to the public.
3. No dogs or other domestic animals are allowed in the Controlled Access Area.
4. Idle vehicle past pen as quietly as possible, keeping RPMs low, i.e. idle. The speed limit is 10 km/hour.
5. No stopping through the controlled access area.
6. No sudden noises, i.e. load rattling or scraping, dog barking, etc.
7. Load/unload motorized recreation vehicles (snowmobiles, ATVs, dirt bikes) at the advanced staging area only (Moon Creek).



Figure 1: Map showing the locations of points of interest related to the controlled access area around the Central Selkirk Caribou Maternity Pen on Kuskanax Forest Service Road.

Communication & Notices

ALCS will post information notices about gate closures on our website, www.arrowlakescaribousociety.com as needed. Notices will be posted to the "ALCS Blog" page. Members of the public, recreation clubs, and road user groups are welcome to check the posts page for updated notices.

User groups who either hold tenure or have an interest in access to the Kuskanax drainage will be emailed directly with these same notices. It is the responsibility of the user groups to notify their members of the closures. These groups include:

- Nakusp and Area Community Trails Society
- Arrow Lakes Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club
- Arrow Lakes ATV Club
- Canadian Mountain Holidays (CMH) Kootenay
- Nakusp Rod and Gun Club
- Arrow Lakes Caribou Society Board of Directors
- Trap Line Tenure Holder

Due to the nature of maternity penning, the gate may not be open at regular intervals in response to conditions at the maternity pen. It can not be guaranteed that the gate will be open at any time during the maternity pen season. ALCS will post a notice when the gate closes at the time of capture, and again when it opens after the animals are released in July. During the maternity pen season, notices will be posted as needed when the gate closes and opens.

ALCS will use the template below for website and email notices regarding gate closures.

"We are notifying you directly that the gate at 0.8 km on the Kuskanax FSR is now closed and locked to all traffic in response to the Central Selkirk Caribou Maternity Pen Operations. We will email groups and post a notice on our website when the gate opens again."