

Klondike SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The digital route

Take command of your ride with new electronic maps

This has been about the strangest winter I can recall: wild swings in temperature from -40 to +10 have made for some challenging snowmobile conditions. Just when we finally get some snow the bottom drops out of the thermometer. We sit around feeding the wood stove for a week, then the mercury rockets into positive territory and that bit of snow we had disappears. There's nothing we at the KSA can do about the weather but we can help you figure out where to go sledding when the weather does co-operate.

With all the trail projects we accomplished in the past few years, it became apparent that we couldn't keep our paper-based maps up to date. Besides, paper maps are expensive to produce and they wear quickly in winter conditions. We made the decision to migrate to electronic mapping a couple years ago and started looking for a product that would fit our needs—that is: cheap or free.

There are some real benefits to electronic



Mark Daniels
KSA President

maps over paper maps. The first is portability. One device that fits in your pocket can hold a world atlas worth of maps. Electronic maps are scalable so you can zoom in when you're looking for more detail. You can also pan around so you never have that experience of needing to

see what's just off the edge of the map. Electronic mapping allows for easy addition or deletion of points of interest and services. And there's the potential for near-real time updates on trail conditions, closures and other important information.

We decided to go with the Ride Command mapping product from Polaris Industries (<https://ridecommand.polaris.com/en-us/home>). This was not a reflection of brand affinity; just that Polaris had the first usable mapping product we found that caters to motorized recreation. Ride Command allows you to plan trips with separate maps for summer and winter recreation. It also allows you to track, record and share your rides

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The Klondike "Cold Rush"

by CHRISTINE AIKENS

It is hard to travel the Chilkoot Trail National Historic Site (NHS) without experiencing some element of its wild past. Whether it is the story of Tlingit and Athapaskan First Nation traders and travellers, or the stampede of prospectors making their way to the Klondike goldfields, the living history and natural beauty of the Chilkoot has entranced visitors for decades.

Share the site

World famous as a summer trail, the Chilkoot Trail NHS has also become a popular winter destination. The Log Cabin parking lot and adjacent lands are shared by backcountry skiers and snowboarders, snowshoers, dog walkers, cross-country skiers, bike riders, dog mushers, campers and snowmobilers. Parks Canada regulations exist to reduce user conflicts and ensure that the area is protected for all to enjoy.

Winter safety

This is remote wilderness. Winter users need to be self-sufficient and responsible for their own safety. In the event of an emergency, you should be prepared for lengthy delays in Search and Rescue re-

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Caribou share their home with you. Be a respectful guest.

At the end of a great day of sledding in the backcountry, you get to return home. Caribou don't—the wilderness is their home. As a guest, you should be on your best behaviour. Stay on designated trails when travelling through caribou country.

Give caribou a wide berth—at least 500 metres. When you see caribou on the trail, stop and turn off your machine. Take the opportunity to view the caribou and wait until they move on.



SNORIDERS

SPECIAL KLONDIKE SNOWMOBILE ASSOCIATION REPORT

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with others. There are versions for desktop and mobile devices.

For our first phase of mapping, we partnered with the City of Whitehorse to publish the motorized multi-use (MMU) trail system **within** city limits. MMU trails are the only legal routes for summer and the main routes in winter. We'll eventually expand the mapping to include more trails and riding areas. Check out Ride Command and let us know what you think.

► **THE KLONDIKE "COLD RUSH"** *Continued from page 1*

sponse times. Significant avalanche terrain and other natural hazards exist. There is no cellphone coverage in the area. Parks Canada recommends all users carry a satellite phone.

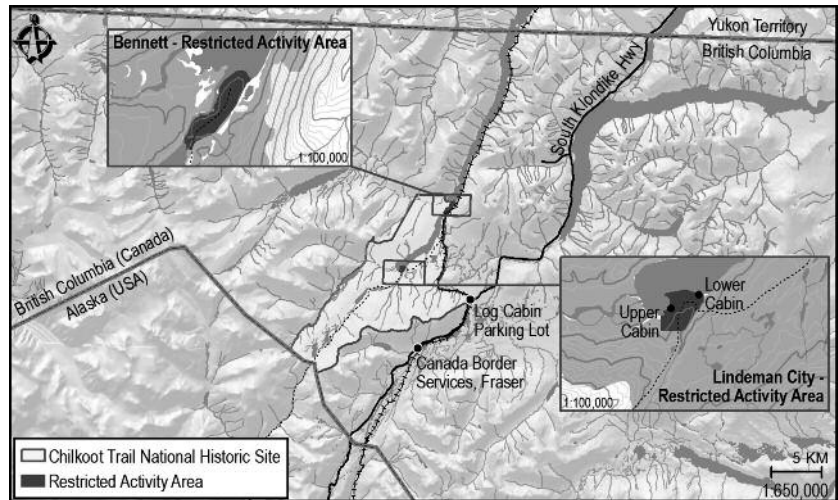
Non-motorized weekends

Snowmobiling is permitted in much of the Chilkoot Trail NHS for most of the winter. However, every third weekend, from Friday through Sunday, is set aside exclusively for non-motorized activities. Use of over-snow vehicles anywhere in the Chilkoot Trail NHS, including staging, loading and unloading machines in the Log Cabin parking lot, is prohibited on the following weekends in 2018:

- March 2-4 and 23-25 (Buckwheat Ski Classic Race)
- April 13-15

Lindeman and Bennett restricted activity areas (see map)

The Lindeman and Bennett townsites have special protections in place to prevent damage to fragile artifacts and historic features. Snowmobiling and random



camping are not permitted in these areas at any time. Camping is allowed in the immediate vicinity of the cabins at Lindeman, and near the shelter (closed for the winter) at Bennett.

Lindeman day-use cabins

There are two user-maintained, day-use cabins at the south end of Lindeman Lake that remain open throughout the winter. Each cabin has a wood stove, and you may find firewood inside or buried beside the cabins. Best bet is to bring your own. It is illegal to cut or gather wood from the Chilkoot Trail NHS. Please respect the Restricted Activity Area—snowmobile access to the cabins is via Lake Lindeman only. If you decide to spend the night, pitch your tent near one of the cabins.

Log Cabin parking lot

The Log Cabin parking lot is part of the Chilkoot Trail NHS and is a hub for winter activity in the area. The parking lot can be busy with kids, dogs, vehicles, snowmobiles, trailers, campers and tents. Be cautious and

slow down when driving through. Camping is permitted at Log Cabin between December 1st and May 15th. Open fires are allowed in the parking lot, but only within a fire pan. Bring your own wood. It is illegal to cut or gather firewood within the site. Dogs must be kept on a leash at all times.

Winter camping

Winter camping is allowed in most of the Chilkoot Trail NHS. Unlike the summer, camping permits are not required and you do not have to stay in designated campgrounds. In the Lindeman and Bennett restricted activity areas, tent camping is limited to the immediate vicinity of the day-use cabins. Campfires are only allowed in the Log Cabin parking lot, contained within a fire pan.

Log Cabin cross-country ski trails

Volunteers maintain approximately 25 kilometres of cross-country ski trails, just outside the Chilkoot Trail NHS adjacent to the Log Cabin parking lot. These trails, home to the annual Buckwheat Classic Ski ►



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► Race, are enjoyed by thousands of skiers every year. Please, respect the signs and do not drive your snowmobile on the ski trails. For up-to-date trail conditions call The Mountain Shop in Skagway at 907-983-2544.

First Nation trapline and residence

There is an unbroken connection between the modern Indigenous peoples in this area, and their ancestors who trapped and travelled here thousands of years ago.

A Carcross Tagish First Nation family maintains a trapline north of Log Cabin and along the railroad tracks, and they have a seasonal residence at Bennett. Respect their privacy and do not interfere with their traps or property. Dogs can disturb traps and may be injured. Please keep your dogs on leash at all times.

Do your part

- Leave no trace. Pack out your garbage, including dog waste.
- Protect cultural and natural resources. Do not remove, disturb or damage archeological or historical objects, plants, animals or other natural objects.
- Winter users are our eyes and ears on the land. Contact Parks Canada at 1-780-852-3100 to report damage to facilities, and unusual or illegal activity.
- Fishing, hunting and possession of firearms is prohibited.
- Do not approach, disturb or feed wildlife.
- For more information call 1-800-661-0486 or go to www.pc.gc.ca/chilkoot.
- The Parks Canada 24-hour emergency dispatch line is 1-780-852-3100.

A little respect goes a long way

by LARS JESSUP, ENVIRONMENT YUKON

Recreational snowmobiling is growing in popularity and provides fun for extremists and families alike. Snowmobiles also provide a winter livelihood for those who use them as tools for transportation, trapping, fishing, subsistence, exploration and winter tourism, among other activities. The technology of the machines themselves has greatly improved. The machines we use today bear little resemblance to those our parents or grandparents used. They provide an ease of access to wilderness, which used to be much more remote. While they play an important role for many and contribute to a healthy, outdoor lifestyle, it is equally important to recognize the potential impacts on the wilderness they allow us to enjoy.

A growing collection of scientific literature focuses on the interactions between both motorized and non-motorized winter activities and the environment. A variety of wildlife have been observed reacting negatively to snowmobiles in particular, with animals fleeing or increasing their movements, showing increased stress and wariness, and in some cases abandoning traditionally used areas entirely. Some animals are more affected than others; for example, ungulates like caribou, moose or elk have been the focus of many studies because the impacts on these species tend to be obvious. But many species have the potential to be dis-

Membership Form

Time to renew your KSA membership. Do you know someone who should become a member?

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- Membership dues for the 2017/2018 season:
- Single \$20 Family \$30 Corporate \$105
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Membership Benefits

- KSA membership card
- KSA newsletters (four per year)
- KSA licence plate and decals
- Input into the development of KSA policy
- Assistance with problems, projects and trail development initiatives in your area
- A strong, unified voice with government and other agencies
- A guarantee that a team of volunteers are working year-round to enhance and promote multi-use trails throughout the Yukon Territory
- Four free issues of *SnoRiders* magazine
- 6% off gas at Tags 4th Ave. Whitehorse (not valid during gas wars)
- 10% off food at Trails North (excluding alcohol)
- 10% discount at McDonald's Restaurants Whitehorse (not valid with other offers)
- Access to Last Run Lounge at Mount Sima (please, no drinking and sledding)
- 10% off at Klondike RV Rentals - www.klondikerv.com
- 10% off at Mark's on regularly priced merchandise (separate card required, which is issued with membership)
- 20% off at Sandor's (Chilkoot Mall) on regularly priced goggles, gloves, toques, snowpants, jackets and snowboards
- Special prices on Haber Vision sunglasses and goggles - see www.habervision.com for details. Member code is "CCSO"
- 10% off at Mt. Lorne Bed and Breakfast - www.klondikerv.com
- Special rates at Choice Hotels - see www.choicehotels.ca/ccso for details. Only available for online bookings.
- Special snowmobiler rates at the Atlin Inn
- Corporate Members get a link on our website
- Gold Corporate Members - 2 free ads in KSA newsletters
- 10% off snowmobile rentals at Yukon Wide Adventures



If you have comments, photos or story ideas for the Klondike Report, send them to:
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4061 - 4th Ave., Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4H1
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► turbed, such as sheep on their winter range, bears in their dens, and rodents under the snow.

Winter is the hungry season for many species. For large ungulates like caribou and moose, bulls often enter the winter in poor condition after the fall rut while pregnant cows devote significant energy to their developing calves. Deep snow makes travel much more difficult and food harder to find. Many animals are chronically short of energy in winter and are unable to take in enough food to balance the increased cost of travelling and staying warm. This means they burn their fat reserves to make up the difference. Disturbing animals during this time forces them to expend more energy, putting them further into energy debt.

The more we learn about our impacts on wildlife, the more we realize that our impacts are a shared responsibility; snowmobiles are by no means the only culprit. For example, we might anticipate a relatively high impact from non-motorized users, simply because they tend to travel more slowly, prolonging the duration of disturbance. One could add that non-motorized enthusiasts often have a dog or two tagging along, or entire dog teams, which carry their own impacts. However, because trails broken by snowmobiles are often used by skiers, dog mushers, hikers, fat-tire bikers and other non-motorized users, snowmobilers have a lead stewardship role in this issue.

So what can we do to make sure our activity does not occur at the expense of wildlife? One of the best ways is to stay on established trails. This makes you more predictable and less threatening to wildlife. Creating new trails allows other backcountry travellers easier access and increases the chances of wildlife being disturbed. The trails we create

are also often used by predators to move more quickly and hunt more efficiently. If backcountry play, like powder riding or high marking, is your thing, keep it to established backcountry play areas, as these activities are particularly disturbing to wildlife. Try to avoid travelling regularly or spending a lot of time in areas with noted concentrations of wildlife, such as sub-alpine meadows that can be important areas for moose and caribou. If you see wildlife on your travels, the best thing is to stop and turn off your machine. Try and remain 500 metres away from them as giving them space reduces their stress. Animals will typically move off on their own after a time.

As a biologist, I look at scientific literature and understand the evidence it provides. I work closely with communities and First Nations, and try to learn from their long-time connections to the land, and let their values and knowledge influence my own. I am also a snowmobiler, snowboarder, fisher and hunter and like to take any opportunity I can to enjoy the land around me. I believe there is room in the wilderness for everybody, but the key is to respect the land and the animals that live there. We must recognize and try to understand the impacts of our actions, and do our best to reduce them. We are temporary visitors, and can return to our warm homes at the end of each day, but wildlife has nowhere else to go.

Stay on the trail unless you are in an established play area, stay away from areas with high concentrations of wildlife, keep your distance from wildlife that you do see, and leave some wilderness to be wild. This is a shared responsibility for motorized and non-motorized users alike. If we all work together, we can maintain the wilderness value that draws us outdoors. ■

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