Muskwa-Kechika Expedition and Camps 2020

General Information

The Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA) encompasses a vast wilderness in BC’s northern Rocky Mountains. Teeming with wildlife, it is a vestige of the continental wilderness that once existed. Wayne Sawchuk has been leading expeditions into the remotest regions of the MK for decades as part of an effort to protect this magnificent area. You have an opportunity to become one of six participants on each expedition, where you will experience the ride of your life- a rewarding and full-on challenge for both the mind and body.

Trip Options:

This year we will be offering the following options for exploring the Northern Rockies.

1) **Horseback Expeditions** Life on the trail is rigorous, and a high level of fitness is required. Experience with horses is a great asset as well! Usually, the packstring will be on the trail for two or three days, followed by a camp day. Folks will bring their own tents, sleeping bags, foamies and personal gear.

2) **Prophet Headwaters Sojourn**- one of the most spectacular and wildlife rich wilderness areas in the MK. Riders will fly into the headwaters and spend the next week enjoying a relaxed 3-day packtrip, dayrides, hiking, photography, and whatever else they dream of in this amazing space.

3) The **Mayfield Base Camp** has been booked by a movie crew this year- stay tuned for the film!
**Dates:**

**Prophet River and the Eastern Slopes - Expedition I**

*June 15 – June 29*

*Mile 172 of the Alaska Highway to Prophet River*

This expedition pack-trip features a traverse of the historic Caribou Range and a visit to the wildlife rich Zoo Valley. Folks will travel north up the Alaska Highway to the Sikanni Chief River and then fly back from the headwaters of the Prophet River by bushplane to Fort Nelson.

**Cost:** *$4195 CAD plus 5% GST*

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**Prophet Headwaters Sojourn -**

*June 29 - July 6*

**Prophet River Head Camp**

The head of the Prophet River is one of the most wildlife rich wilderness areas in the world. Guests will fly into this area from Fort Nelson, and enjoy a 3 day pack trip, hiking, photography and whatever they dream of over the next week.

**Cost:** *$2495 CAD plus 5% GST*
Zoo Valley - Expedition II

July 6 - July 20

_Prophet River Head Camp to Tuchodi Lake_

Spectacular passes, rugged rivers, elk, caribou, grizzly bears and peak flower season will satisfy the most hardcore wilderness and wildlife lover. Folks will fly to the head of the Prophet River by bushplane and return to Fort Nelson by jetboat via the Tuchodi and Muskwa Rivers.

Cost: $4195 CAD plus 5% GST

Rocky Mountain Divide West- Expedition III

July 20 – August 3

_Tuchodi Lakes to Mayfield Lake_

This remote and rugged route will take us over the Rocky Mountain Divide past rock glaciers, alpine flower meadows, and the Big Slide, with time for unforgettable day hikes. We’ll reach the Tuchodi Lakes by jet boat, and a floatplane will take us back to Muncho Lake.

Cost: $4195 CAD plus 5% GST
Rocky Mountain Divide
East - Expedition IV
August 24 - September 7
Mayfield Lake to East Tuchodi Lake

We’ll cross the Rocky Mountain Divide heading east to the spectacular Tuchodi Lakes. Fall colours will be coming on strong, and there’s always a chance to spot grizzly bear, mountain goats, or a bull moose in rut. We’ll fly to Mayfield Lake by floatplane and take the jet boat back to Kledo Creek and Fort Nelson.

Cost: $4195.00 CAD plus 5% GST

Eastern Slopes - Expedition V
September 7 - September 21
East Tuchodi Lake to Alaska Highway

This rugged trip explores the wildlife-rich Eastern Slopes of the Rockies. We’ll traverse the broad alpine slopes of the Northern Caribou Range and the spectacular valleys and passes of the Chisca, Tetsa, and Henry Creeks, among others. Folks will travel to East Tuchodi by jet boat and back to Fort Nelson by vehicle.

Cost: $4195.00 CAD plus 5% GST
A note about the Expeditions

Muskwa-Kechika Adventures specializes in unique, experiential and full-on wilderness horseback experiences. This is the real deal! Do not expect a typical “tourist” trip. Instead, you will become an expedition member. Participants share in all camp and trail activities such as cooking, fire-lighting, and saddling. Horse travel in the wilderness is rigorous, and folks must be able to hike up and down steep trails, mount and dismount repeatedly, and assist with camp and horse activities according to their abilities. Experience with horses is a huge asset! Fitness however is mandatory.

Mayfield Lake Base Camp Experience

(No dates available in 2020 due to a movie crew, stay tuned for 2021!)

Greet the sunrise from the dock on beautiful Mayfield Lake, sipping on a steaming cup of fresh coffee while moose graze in the shallows across the inlet or where a group of caribou might travel by. When the mood strikes you, spend a few hours canoeing, fishing or hiking. Take a day ride into the alpine meadows or down along the Gataga River. At day’s end, treat your body to a steam in the log sauna. Then, if you’re brave, cool off with a moonlight dip in the lake. This experience is a perfect choice for singles, couples, or families.
**Flights:**

The cost of your scheduled flights in and out of the mountains are included in the fee and are arranged by MK Adventures. All floatplane flights depart/return from Liard Air’s facilities located at Northern Rockies Lodge at Muncho Lake. The wheeled bushplane flight to and from the head of the Prophet River leaves from the Villers hanger at the Fort Nelson Airport. Unscheduled floatplane service and/or wheel plane flights out of the M-K can also be made available, dependent on conditions (an extra charge will apply for this service).

**Communication:**

Muskwa-Kechika Adventures carries a satellite phone and satellite email system for use in emergencies.

**Liability Insurance:**

Muskwa-Kechika Adventures carries liability insurance, as required by the conditions of the Park Use Permit.
Travel Costs:

Travel costs to reach the take-off points are the responsibility of the participant. Air service to Fort Nelson is provided by Central Mountain Air. We have found that the most economical airfare include flights from Vancouver to Prince George with a major carrier like Air Canada or Westjet, and then a flight from Prince George to Fort Nelson with Central Mountain Air. You can, of course, travel by personal vehicle etc. MK Adventures can often help with travel to Muncho Lake etc, just be in touch.

Accommodation at Muncho Lake:

The night before the floatplane departures, participants can stay at Muncho Lake either in Northern Rockies Lodge or in a tent in the provincial campsite. Hosts at Northern Rockies Lodge are Urs and Marianne Schildknecht, who also operate Liard Air service. For rates and booking at Northern Rockies Lodge, phone 1-800-663-5269.

Staff and Tips

The success of each Expedition depends on our excellent staff. Michelle and Alex are farriers and First Aiders, while Wayne has been leading Expeditions for over 30 years. If you feel you received great service on your trip, we hope you consider leaving a tip. This makes us feel appreciated and valued - it’s the gas in the tank that keeps us going! (A suggestion would be $100 per staff or of course whatever you feel is appropriate.)

What to Bring:

First rule – be light. For details, see our Gear List below.

MK Adventures will supply all cooking equipment, dishes and dish soap etc, camp shelter, horses and horse gear. Don’t bring extra dishes as you won’t need them. If you are a coffee drinker, bring 1 pound per week, ground for coffee press (supplied). Clothing and other gear can be packed in light stuff sacks. Be sure to bring binoculars and camera if you have them. Bugs aren’t usually too bad in the Northern Rockies, but do bring some bug dope if you normally use it.

A note about weather - it can do anything in the Northern Rockies! Come prepared for hot or cold conditions. Don’t forget those rubber boots!

Food:

Expedition participants will bring and prepare their own lunches and breakfasts, as well as two suppers for the group on a normal two-week trip. Watch for email updates to find out if your trip is “normal!” Rice, pasta, potatoes, and dried foods that keep are...
good for meals later in the trip, while some fresh food (ie meat or fresh veggies) is OK for your first meal or two. Best to pack your food in cardboard boxes as it will be transferred to horse panniers when you get to camp. In general, go light, as you would with heavy backpacking or canoe trekking.

Please inform us if you have any food allergies or sensitivities, or prefer a vegetarian option etc.

**Full Meal Plan:**

In 2020 we will be offering to supply your meals, cost will be $750 plus GST. Let us know if you would like to explore this option.

**Logistics in Detail:**

**Where do we meet the plane or jet boat, our guides, and the pack string?**

First of all, MK Adventures arranges all of the necessary bush plane, float plane, and jet boat trips, and the cost is included in our fee. Riders are responsible for getting themselves and their gear to and from the trailheads or jump-off points. Now, here are the logistical details you will need.

Note: “**Outbound**” means you are heading out into the mountains at the beginning of your ride, and “**Inbound**” means you are heading back into so-called civilization at the end:)

**Expedition I:**

**Outbound:** Riders will travel north from Fort St. John with us, the horses, and gear to the trailhead on the Sikanni Chief, Mile 172 Alaska Highway. Riders should arrive FSJ the day before the Expedition begins in order to allow time to purchase food, last minute supplies, etc. MK Adventures recommends the Quality Inn Northern Grand Hotel.
**Inbound:** Riders will meet the bush plane at the Prophet River Head Camp strip for the flight into Fort Nelson. MK Adventures suggests that riders should book their flight home for the day after arriving Fort Nelson, to allow for weather related delays, and recommends the Woodlands Inn in Fort Nelson. Tell them you are with MK Adventures and they will give you their “Friends and Family” rate - a considerable saving.

![Crew change at Upper Prophet Strip](image1.jpg)

**Crew change at Upper Prophet Strip**

![Jetboat packing at East Tuchodi Lake](image2.jpg)

**Jetboat packing at East Tuchodi Lake**
Expedition II:

**Outbound:** Riders will meet the bush plane at the Villers Air hanger located just east of the Fort Nelson Airport terminal, usually at 7am, for the one hour flight into the Northern Rockies where you will meet your guides and pack string. Contact Peter or Dan at Villers Air a week or so ahead of your flight to confirm meeting time and location.

**Inbound:** Riders will meet the jet boat at East Tuchodi Lake for the 3 hour trip down the Tuchodi and Muskwa Rivers to the Kledo Creek boat launch. There, riders will catch a one hour ride with Riverjet Adventures back to Fort Nelson via the Alaska Highway. MK Adventures suggests that riders should book their flight home for the day after arriving Fort Nelson, and recommends the Woodlands Inn in Fort Nelson. Tell them you are with MK Adventures and they will give you their “Friends and Family” rate- a considerable saving.

Expedition III:

**Outbound:** Riders will meet a Riverjet Adventures rep at the Woodlands Inn in Fort Nelson, usually at 7am, for the one hour drive to the jet boat landing at Kledo Creek. After the 3.5 hour jet boat run up the Muskwa and Tuchodi Rivers riders will meet their guides and pack string at East Tuchodi Lake. Contact Jason at Riverjet a week or so before your Expedition to confirm meeting time and location.

**Inbound:** Riders will be picked up by Liard Air floatplane at Mayfield Lake, for the one hour floatplane flight to Muncho Lake. To allow for weather related delays MK Adventures recommends booking a room at Northern Rockies Lodge, where the float planes land, for the night after your flight, or at the Woodlands Inn in Fort Nelson. Wayne usually travels south at this time and riders can often catch a ride south to Fort Nelson with him, or another rider etc. If no ride is available there is a Shuttle service out of Fort Nelson provided by Rob Neville of RNN. His shuttle service offers roughly a 6-7 hour return trip between Fort Nelson and Muncho Lake, his rate is $100 CAD/hr and can take 7 folks plus gear. Costs are normally shared amongst the riders using the service.

_Crew change with Liard Air floatplane_

Muskwa-Kechika Adventures
PO Box 27, Rolla BC, V0C 2G0
(250) 261-1513
email wsawchuk@pris.ca, Hit www.go2mk.ca
Expedition IV:

**Outbound:** Riders will be picked up by Liard Air floatplane at Mayfield Lake for the one hour floatplane flight to Muncho Lake. MK Adventures recommends booking a room at Northern Rockies Lodge, where the float plane lands for the night before your flight. Wayne usually travels north at this time, and riders can often catch a ride to Muncho Lake with him or another rider. If no ride is available there is a Shuttle service out of Fort Nelson provided by Rob Neville of RNN. His shuttle service offers roughly a 6-7 hour return trip between Fort Nelson and Muncho Lake, his rate is $100 CAD/hr and can take 7 folks and gear. Costs are normally shared amongst the riders using the service.

**Inbound:** Riders will meet the jet boat at East Tuchodi Lake for the 3 hour trip down the Tuchodi and Muskwa Rivers to the Kledo Creek boat launch. There, riders will catch a one hour ride with Riverjet Adventures back to Fort Nelson via the Alaska Highway. MK Adventures suggests that riders should book their flight home for the day after arriving Fort Nelson, and recommends the Woodlands Inn in Fort Nelson. Tell them you are with MK Adventures and they will give you their “Friends and Family” rate- a considerable saving.

Expedition V:

**Outbound:** Riders will meet a Riverjet Adventures rep at the Woodlands Inn in Fort Nelson, usually at 7am, for the one hour drive to the jet boat landing at Kledo Creek. After the 3.5 hour jet boat run up the Muskwa and Tuchodi Rivers riders will meet their guides and pack string at East Tuchodi Lake. Contact Riverjet a week or so ahead of your trip to confirm meeting times and location.

**Inbound:** The pack string will arrive at the Alaska Highway near Mile 400 later in the day, and folks usually camp at the Highway where we will meet the stock truck, and then starting at 6 am in the morning load up and be on our way south for the 2 hour ride back to Fort Nelson . Riders will catch a ride back to Fort Nelson with MK Adventures or the stock truck etc. Flights can be booked south after 3 pm say on that day or later.
Logistics Contacts:

**Villers Air**: Peter Villers, c/o Villers Air Services Ltd. phone/text (250) 500-2072, email fly@villersair.com.

**Riverjet Adventures**: Jason Palfy phone/text (250) 262-1290, email riverjetadventures@gmail.com.

**RNN shuttle**: Rob Neville, 250-775-1700, email rnn@northewestel.net

**Liard Air**: Urs or Marianne Schildknecht, phone (250) 776-3482, email info@nrloge.com.

**Woodlands Inn**, Fort Nelson: (250) 774-6669

**Northern Grand Hotel**, Fort St. John: (250) 787-0521

**MK Adventures**, for Wayne Sawchuk, phone/text (250) 261-1513 (Mid September- mid June) and for Donna Kane, phone/text (250) 719-9225 (Mid June- mid September)
Keen to ride along? Here’s the Reservations and Booking form.
Just fill out the following and mail to the address below, or email to wsawchuk@pris.ca.

Name: ___________________________ Address: ___________________________

Phone: ___________________________

Emergency contact number: ___________________________

Email: ___________________________

Physical condition (1 is low, 10 is super-athlete:) ___________________________

Dietary restrictions (i.e. vegetarian): ___________________________

Allergies: ___________________________

Medical or other conditions that may affect your mobility or ability to undertake rigorous physical activity: ___________________________ Age ___________________________

Anything else we should know: ___________________________

Dates of trip requested: ___________________________

Method of Payment ___________________________

(The most convenient methods of payment are E-transfer to wsawchuk@pris.ca, or cheques made payable to Muskwa-Kechika Adventures sent to the address below.)

☐ I understand that horse travel in the wilderness carries inherent risk, and I accept that risk. Please check this box if you agree.

Deposit and Cancellation Policy

We require a 50% deposit to confirm a booking. The balance is due on May 1. Prior to that date, reservations can be cancelled and your deposit refunded, minus a $250 deposit to cover costs. After May 1, monies paid or due are not refundable. If for any reason we must cancel a trip, a full refund will be given.

Unforeseen Costs

If we encounter unexpected logistical arrangements such as additional lodging or flights due to weather or accidents, the cost shall be divided equitably among the participants.
**Recommended Clothing and Gear List**

**CLOTHING**

**Tops**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fleece/pile/wool sweater or pullover</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down Jacket or equivalent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long underwear top</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-shirts (2 or up to you)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Short sleeved shirt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Long sleeved shirts (1 wool, 1 synthetic material like polyester or polypropylene, 1 cotton, is a good mix)</td>
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**Bottoms**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Long underwear bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Durable wool or synthetic long pants suitable for use as an outer layer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Jeans or equivalent</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Light pants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pair of Shorts (nylon or cotton)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underwear as required</td>
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**Raingear**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Fully waterproof rubber rain jacket and pants (not a poncho as these are inadequate for mountain riding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Fully waterproof Rain hat (cowboy hat @ raincover works well)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair waterproof gloves/mitts (Gander Brand makes good ones)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pair Rubber Boots eg Muck Boots (these are important.)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Footwear**

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hiking boots, waterproofed and broken in, preferably without large lugs that could easily catch in a stirrup</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Camp shoes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lighter liner socks (min. 3 pairs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wool socks, thick (min. 3 pairs)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Head and Hands

_____/____ Sun hat or baseball cap
_____/____ Wool/fleece stocking hat
_____/____ Neckerchief or neckwarmer
_____/____ Wool/fleece mittens or warm wool/fleece gloves
_____/____ Leather riding gloves

EQUIPMENT

_____/____ Light backpack for day hikes
_____/____ Tent
_____/____ Sleeping bag (rated to -10 to -15 C for June-July and -20C for fall trips, remember the official rating temperature is that point at which you become a victim of hypothermia. Zip-together bags are a cozy option for couples!)
_____/____ Sleeping bag liner
_____/____ Insulating pad (Thera-rest or closed-cell foam)
_____/____ Headlamp (not needed on June/early July trips due to lack of darkness)
_____/____ ½ litre water bottle (not a large one as it won’t fit in the saddle bag)
_____/____ Small thermos for those coffee or tea lovers out there
_____/____ Binoculars
_____/____ Camera and additional batteries.
_____/____ A leatherman or pliers multi-tool is not essential, but can be Very handy
_____/____ Lighter for starting fire

PERSONAL

_____/____ Glasses or contacts as needed
_____/____ Personal hygiene products
_____/____ Lip balm with sunscreen
_____/____ Emergency whistle
_____/____ Insect repellent if you use it
_____/____ Snacks/Munchies you can’t do without
_____/____ Toothbrush and toothpaste
_____/____ Any necessary medication
_____/____ Toilet paper, 1 roll per week
_____/____ Wet-naps

MK Adventures will supply all cooking equipment, mugs, dishes, camp shelter, first aid supplies, horses and horse gear. No need to bring extra dishes or silverware.