



MOUNT SIMA WILDLIFE POLICY

This policy statement is intended to address possible human/wildlife interactions and conflict at Mount Sima.

Wildlife is common at Mount Sima. We have many sightings of owls, hawks, grouse, ptarmigan and other birds as well as small and large mammals. While we share the mountain with these species, and must act responsibly and respectfully in order to preserve a safe and secure environment for all, on occasion we must address possible human/wildlife conflict.

The following species and matters are addressed below.

1. Wildlife on Mountain
 - 1.1. Bears
 - 1.1.1. Black Bears
 - 1.1.2. Grizzly Bears
 - 1.2. Moose
 - 1.3. Foxes
 - 1.4. Lynx
 - 1.5. Coyotes
 - 1.6. Porcupines
2. Dogs on mountain
3. Garbage, attractants and Recycle Management
4. Signage
5. Closure of Trails
6. Communication
7. Negative Conditioning of problem wildlife
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1. Wildlife on Mountain

1.1 Bears

1.1.1 Black Bears

Black Bears are commonly found in Yukon. They are often feeding on fresh greens that grow alongside roads and trails and in open cleared areas where vegetation is growing. At Mount Sima they feed on greens and flowers growing as a result of clearing of trees on the ski runs. There have been three separate black bears on the mountain this summer.

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Viewing should be conducted responsibly and respectfully. Be sure to follow bear safety practices and maintain your distance, especially if there are cubs present.

Description

- Generally black fur with a dark brown muzzle
- Colour can range from blonde, grey-white (bluish), cinnamon, brown to black
- Smaller and missing the distinctive shoulder hump of Grizzly Bears
- Side profile of face is a straight line between the nose and eyes
- Sometimes a white chest patch is present
- Weight: Males are 60 to 226 kg and females are 40 to 136 kg

1.1.2 Grizzly Bears

Grizzly bears are often seen on the roadsides in the spring feeding on fresh vegetation, along river corridors and in alpine habitat. While they are present in the Mount Sima area, they are not that common. Because Grizzly bears hunt moose, caribou, deer and small mammals, when these other species are present, there is increased likelihood of grizzly bear presence.

Viewing should be conducted responsibly and respectfully. Be sure to follow bear safety practices and maintain your distance, especially if there are cubs present. When cubs or food sources are present, avoid all interaction.

Description

- Generally brown coloured fur but can range from near black to silver-blonde.
- Lighter tips of the long guard hairs gives the bear a “grizzled” appearance.
- Side profile of the face has an upturned nose or “disk” shape.
- Characteristic hump on the shoulders.
- Weight: 139 kg (male), 95 kg (female)

1.2 Moose

It is not uncommon to see moose on the Mount Sima Ski Hill. This is for a number of reasons including access to food sources and refugia from predators. You may see fresh moose tracks on the trails and most years a female and calf can be seen on the mountain. Viewing should be conducted responsibly and respectfully. Be sure to follow the equivalent of bear safety practices and maintain your distance, especially if there are calves present. There is currently a female moose and calf on the mountain.

- **Description**

- Largest member of the deer family.
- Dark brown to black colouration. Males tend to be darker than females.
- Long legs, hump in between shoulders.
- Long, large nose and mule-like ears.
- Males have shovel-like antlers.
- Both sexes have a “bell” or beard hanging from the throat but it tends to be larger in males.
- Height: 1.87 m
- Weight: Males weigh around 505 kg and females weigh around 375 kg

1.3 Red Fox

Red fox are common in Yukon and around Mount Sima. Roadside clearings offer good hunting for small mammals. In winter, foxes often travel on windswept mountains to hunt ptarmigan and other small mammals. The best time for viewing foxes is in the spring, when south facing slopes of hill and knolls are bare of snow and foxes are concentrated near their dens.

Description

- Small, thin, canid shaped with an orange-red coat.
- Slender, tapering muzzle, very pointed ears, and long bushy tail.
- Black stockings and cheek patches, and white throat and chest parts contrast vividly with the red coat.
- Cross Fox: same as a Red Fox with a dark band of guard hairs which form a cross over the shoulders and back.
- Silver Fox: black with white tipped guard hairs, giving it a silver sheen.
- Weight: 3.6 to 6.8 kg

1.4 Lynx

There are resident Lynx on Mount Sima. Viewed often early in the morning in the winter before the mountain is open, these animals are rarely seen once there are people around. It is easier to find lynx when Snowshoe Hare populations are high. Look for large, round single file tracks in the snow. Lynx can sometimes be seen hunting at the edges of roadsides or clearings such as Mount Sima's ski runs.

Description

- Feline face with black ear tufts and under-chin facial ruffs.
- Buff-coloured under-fur and long grey guard hairs gives it a silvery look.
- Short compact body, long legs.
- Small bobbed, black-tipped tail.
- Disproportionally large, well-furred feet.
- Weight: 10 kg

1.5 Coyote

Coyotes are common near communities in Yukon. They are active at night and can often be spotted along back roads or in the suburbs by those who rise at first light. Coyotes are heard as often as they're seen, with a chorus of whines, barks, and howls drifting into the late evening or early morning. Coyotes can use any habitat, but prefer open habitats. In urban areas, Coyotes may prefer wooded areas that provide shelter to hide from people.

Description

- Dog-like delicate body with skinny legs.
- Tawny grey to tan in colour with a slight cinnamon tinge to their coats.
- Coyotes can be distinguished from wolves from their smaller size and different facial characteristics. Coyotes have a narrow snout and large ears relative to its head size, whereas wolves have a broad snout and smaller ears relative to its head size.
- Weight: 10 to 12 kg

1.6 Porcupine

Porcupines are easy to observe as they are slow to move away and are noticeable when climbing trees, which they frequently do. They are often spotted along Yukon roadsides, particularly in May and early June, because they move slowly, but frequently, making an encounter possible and easy to notice. They are present on Mount Sima and are often seen scurrying into the forest or nibbling on trees and wooden infrastructure! The most common "problem" encountered is the quilling of loose dogs (see dog section below).

Description

- Large rodent-shaped body covered in sharp quills and long hairs.
- Long, yellow-tipped hair hides the quills that are kept close to the body when not in the defensive position.
- Long, curved claws.
- Weight: 10 kg

2.0 Dogs on Mountain

Dogs belonging to staff and guests are frequently on the mountain. All staff dogs must be well trained and controllable or on leash. All guest's dogs with the exception of service dogs at work must be on a leash. With the exception of service dogs, no dogs are allowed to be loose on the mountain or be inside the facility when it is open to the public.

Loose dogs are a common cause of wildlife conflict. Loose dogs can be quilled by porcupines and can chase other wildlife such as bears and moose. This behavior can cause distress to wildlife and result in injury to the dog, wildlife and possibly humans.

3.0 Garbage, Recycle Management and attractant management

It is important to be vigilant about the presence of food, garbage, recycle and other types of attractants at Mount Sima as these are wildlife attractants. Attractants include fuel, fuel containers, sanitising cleaners, etc.

All outside garbage should be emptied every day and recycle should be stored securely in a locked container.

Garbage, recycle and other attractants at the top of the mountain should be security locked in top hut every day or moved to the bottom of the mountain.

The main garbage bin in the parking lot should be locked at the end of every day.

4.0 Signage

Signage on the mountain addressing wildlife and wildlife attractants should be placed in key locations and moved on occasion in order to prevent viewer fatigue.

5.0 Trail closures

If a trail is closed due to wildlife, a “wildlife in area” or “bear in area” sign will be added to the closed sign to emphasize the reason the trail is closed. Staff shall notify the public of this as they get on and off the lift and when possible the notification board at the bottom of the mountain shall be updated.

6.0 Communication

All wildlife sightings should be clearly communicated to the operations manager and patrol lead. Species of concern in terms of human safety or wildlife behaving oddly or aggressively must be reported in an “all station/all stations/all stations” radio call. This call shall provide the exact location of the animal and details as required. Example “All stations/all stations/all stations, there is a black bear feeding on vegetation beside the road on the S bend on Hayleys” or “All stations/all stations/all stations, there is a coyote behaving in a threatening manner near the garbage bin in the parking lot” etc.

7.0 Negative conditioning of problem wildlife

If a wildlife problem is encountered, such as the close proximity of wildlife (in particular bear) to staff or public, trained staff may apply some negative conditioning or “hazing” to the animal as needed. This may be done to contain an animal to a safe location on the mountain or to encourage it to leave the mountain.

The following conditions and types of tools may be used:

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- Before applying negative conditioning to an animal, the Yukon Government Conservation Officer Service or the TIP line shall be notified.
- Radio communication with all staff will be used to notify them of actions to be carried out.
- Authorised staff must be in a group of two or more and have access to a motorised vehicle (truck, kubota, side by side).
- Staff involved in the negative wildlife conditioning shall have a bear spray at the ready and have received bear spray training.
- Trained and authorised staff may use motor vehicles and noise makers (air horns, vehicle horns) to push an animal away from a public area or contain it to an area. Due to wildfire danger, flares and bear bangers are not authorised.
- If use of noise and other detractants fails, authorised staff may use a non lethal weapon to create a pain response in the animal. The currently authorised non lethal weapon is a paintball gun which can shoot both soft and hard pellets. A shotgun with rubber bullets or bean bag slugs is not currently authorized.

8.0 Defence of Property and Life

If defence of life or property is a concern, Mount Sima shall call the Conservation Officer Services and request intervention. There are no lethal weapons stored at Mount Sima

Reference: [Yukon wildlife by species](#)