

The BC Snowmobile Federation, in collaboration with the Revelstoke Snowmobile Club and the B.C. Ministry of Forests, has decided to repeal the Frisby Ridge Caribou closure, which stood for the last 14 years.

According to the ministry of forests, the caribou herd at Frisby Ridge has 'functionally extirpated', and there is no need for the Revelstoke Snowmobile Club to maintain the closure as it is no longer contributing to recovery efforts.

As of 2020, the estimated population of the Frisby-Boulder caribou herd here was just six. Many herds in the south of B.C. have been declared extirpated in recent years, including the Monashee herd who were functionally extirpated in 2016.

The Revelstoke Snowmobile Club, which was established in 1968, has worked to preserve the wildlife in the Frisby Ridge area through mountain caribou recovery since the mid-1980s.

The closure, which was in effect between Jan. 1 to April 15 each year, had previously restricted snowmobiling in the Frisby Ridge area to protect the mountain caribou population.

According to the provincial government, winter motorized recreation is not a primary threat to caribou recovery, but operating snowmobiles in caribou habitat can disturb and displace the animals, put unnecessary stress on them and make them more vulnerable to predators such as **wolves** and cougars.

The ministry of forests commended the Revelstoke Snowmobile Club for maintaining the closure over the past 14 years and their commitment to caribou recovery efforts overall.

They also determined that herds in this location had responded well to measures that were used to reduce declines in population, such as aggressive predator control, alternate prey removal, habitat protection from industry, and maternity penning.

"The RSC would like to thank the many volunteers that worked for the last 14 years to patrol and maintain the closure areas on Frisby Ridge," said Revelstoke Snowmobile Club president Todd Dumais in a press release.

According to the BC Snowmobile Federation, they continue to work with the provincial government to support recovery in areas north of Revelstoke.

Revelstoke Review Staff