

## Muskwa-Kechika Expedition and Camps 2021

### 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. MK Adventures has been leading expeditions into the remotest regions of the MK as part of an effort to protect this magnificent area for decades. You have an opportunity to become one of five 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.



### MK Adventures 2021 Expedition Lineup - a year of changes

In 2021 we will set off from from the Alaska Highway on June 15 and return on Sept 4. Detailed info is below.

Wayne is turning 65 this fall, and while he feels as strong as ever, there comes a time when one has to dial back some of the more rigorous tasks. As a result he will be stepping back from the two week Expeditions, but will ride the Gatho Exploration Expedition, June 28 -July 12, and our Mayfield Experiences, July 26 - August 13. Alex and Michelle have been key members of the operation for a decade now, and in addition to leading the



Expeditions in 2021 are planning to take over the reins from MK Adventures permanently. We will see what the future holds!

Another change we have made for 2021 is to lower the number of guest riders from six or seven per trip down to five. This will make the operation more efficient, and much easier to get out of camp in the morning with less horses and tack.

In 2021 the price per Expedition will be \$4495.00 plus GST, an approximately 7% increase over last year.

We are also offering a food option in 2021, cost will be \$595.00 for the Full Meal Plan.



## Horseback Expeditions and Camps

This year we plan to travel with twenty head of horses, give or take, with 8 or so saddle horses, and ten or so packhorses, with two spares. This should make a tidy, smooth running string. We're looking forward to the following Expeditions. We hope you do too!

### Expedition I: Eastern Slopes Southbound

June 14-28, Stone Mountain to East Tuchodi via the North Tetsa, Twin Lakes, Tetsa, Henry Creek, and the Chisca

Spectacular ride along the Eastern Slopes of the Rockies, rigorous too with several big climbs and descents. Flower season will just be starting to peak.



### Expedition II, Gatho Exploration Expedition

June 28-July 12, East Tuchodi to Gatho via Dead Dog, and return

Less packing, more exploring! Wayne will be riding this Expedition, which will include exploring brand new trails and valleys. After a two day trip over the ancient High Trail from East Tuchodi (rigorous, with steep climbs and descents) we will be camping on the Gatho and exploring by dayride. Plenty of time for photography, hiking, or just enjoying the amazing wilderness and wildlife this area offers.



### Expedition III: Rocky Mountain Divide Westbound

July 12-26, East Tuchodi-Mayfield via Falls Creek, Misery Pass, Upper Gataga, Twin Glacier Pass, Churchill, Mayfield

This is a major wilderness ride on our wildest route, the farthest we get from roads. Other humans are rarely met once we leave the Tuchodi, and as a result the wildlife still live as they always have. A full-on work out as well, with several big climbs and descents.



### Mayfield Photography Basecamp

This camp will run from August 4-13. Stay tuned for details!

### Mayfield Horse and Wellness Camp

August 12-21. Mayfield sports a sauna, canoes, wall tents, teepee, and we will enjoy an alpine fly camp trip, if folks are keen. We also plan to incorporate Wellness programming details TBA!

### Expedition IV: Rocky Mountain Divide Northbound

August 13-27, Mayfield – Mile 442, Alaska Highway via North Gataga, Churchill, East Toad, and the Moose Lake Valley.

This ride's wildlife, glaciers, spectacular valleys, rivers, and waterfalls have made it favourite although we have only used it once in the past few decades. The route down the Toad River takes us through the traditional hunting grounds of the Moose Lake First Nations, an area rich in indigenous and settler history.



## **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! 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, food, foamies and personal gear. See our Gear List below for all of your gear and equipment needs.

## **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. Unscheduled floatplane service 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.

## **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.**

### **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.

### **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!

## Liability Insurance:

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

## 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 2021 we will be offering to supply your meals, cost will be \$595.00 plus GST. Let us know if you would like more info about 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.*

### **Expedition I:**

*Outbound:* Riders will travel north from Fort Nelson with us, the horses, and gear to the trailhead on the Tetsa River on the Alaska Highway. Riders should arrive Fort Nelson the day before the Expedition begins in order to allow time to purchase food, last minute supplies, etc.

*Inbound:* Riders will meet the jetboat at East Tuchodi Lake for the ride down the Tuchodi and Muskwa rivers to the Alaska Highway, and then to Fort Nelson. MK Adventures suggests that riders book their flight home for the day after arriving Fort Nelson, to allow for 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.

### **Expedition II:**

*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 a 3.5 hour jetboat trip you will meet your guides and packstring at East Tuchodi Lakes. Contact Jason at Riverjet a week or so before your Expedition 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.

### **Mayfield Horse and Wellness Experience,**

Guests will meet the floatplane at Muncho Lake for the one hour floatplane flight to Mayfield Lake. Plan to arrive in Muncho the evening before your flight.

### **Expedition IV:**

*Outbound:* Riders will be picked up by Liard Air floatplane at Muncho Lake for the one hour floatplane flight to Mayfield Lake. MK Adventures recommends booking a room at Northern Rockies Lodge, where the float plane lands for the night before your flight.

Riders can often catch a ride to Muncho Lake with another rider, be in touch and we can help arrange this..

*Inbound:* The pack string will arrive at the Alaska Highway near Mile 442 later in the day on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, where we will camp for the night. In the morning starting at about 6 am we will load the stock truck and be on our way south for the 2 hour ride back to Fort Nelson.

## Logistics Contacts:

Riverjet Adventures: Jason Palfy phone/text (250) 262-1290, email

[riverjetadventures@gmail.com](mailto:riverjetadventures@gmail.com)

Liard Air: Urs or Marianne Schildknecht, phone (250) 776-3482, email [info@nrlodge.com](mailto:info@nrlodge.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 take a pic and email to [wsawchuk@pris.ca](mailto: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](mailto: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

- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Fleece/pile/wool sweater or pullover
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Down Jacket or equivalent
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Long underwear top
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ T-shirts (2 or up to you)
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Short sleeved shirt
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 3 Long sleeved shirts (1 wool, 1 synthetic material like polyester or polypropylene, 1 cotton, is a good mix)

#### Bottoms

- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Long underwear bottom
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Durable wool or synthetic long pants suitable for use as an outer layer
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Jeans or equivalent
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Light pants
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Pair of Shorts (nylon or cotton)
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Underwear as required

#### Raingear

- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Fully waterproof rubber rain jacket and pants (not a poncho as these are inadequate for mountain riding)
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 Fully waterproof Rain hat (cowboy hat @ raincover works well)
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 pair waterproof gloves/mitts (Gander Brand makes good ones)
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 1 pair Rubber Boots eg Muck Boots (these are important.)

#### Footwear

- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Hiking boots, waterproofed and broken in, preferably without large lugs that could easily catch in a stirrup
- \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Camp shoes

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Lighter liner socks (min. 3 pairs)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Wool socks, thick (min. 3 pairs)

#### 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 (Therma-rest or closed-cell foam)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Headlamp (not needed on June/early July trips due to lack of darkness)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ ½ litre waterbottle (not a large one as it won't fit in the saddle bag) A mickey bottle works fine.

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ 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.

**And Finally- Enjoy!!**

