



Maternal Penning to Enhance Survival of Caribou within the Klinse-Za Herd

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We were off to a slow start this calving season, late to begin with compared to other years; and in particular compared to 2016 when two calves were born the first week of May. Then we suffered a setback when the first attempted birthing May 15th was stillborn. The cow of the stillborn was in the pen during the first pen year of 2014 and then again in 2016, successfully raising a calf both years.



Figure 1. C317S, from the Scott East herd area, eight days before delivering a stillborn male calf in the Rochfort pen, 2018.

However, for the past eight days the calves have been arriving at a fast pace, two on the 18th, two on the 20th, three on the 22nd, and one late last night for a total of eight so far. We put 12 cows in the pen this



year but two were not pregnant on arrival. The two that were not pregnant have each been in the pen twice, the last time in 2016 when they each raised a healthy female calf through to juvenile status.



Figure 2. C312K (left) and C332K (right foreground), both not pregnant in 2018, each raised healthy female calves to juvenile status in 2016-17. The juvenile (right background) is C372K, her mom is C319K who is also in the pen this year and who has given birth to a healthy male calf (see Figure 6 – Super producer).

Accounting for the stillborn and non-pregnant cows, just one of the remaining nine cows, who was pregnant at capture, has yet to deliver her calf. One cow that gave birth to a male calf on the 22nd has been in the pen all five years. She was our last capture this year and is the only cow we have had that never grows antlers. She had a calf the first year but lost it to wolves after release. She had a stillborn in 2015, aborted her fetus in 2016, and successfully raised a male calf last year.



Figure 3. C315S, far right, has been in the pen all five years and raised a calf to juvenile status last year and has given birth to another male calf this year.



The first cow to give birth this year, to a male calf, is our only cow that has never been in the pen before. We have now successfully captured and marked seven calves; five males and two females, so we are hoping the remaining two calves are females. Maybe there is hope as the cow that just gave birth late last night, successfully raised a female two years ago in the pen. The one cow that has not yet given birth also successfully raised a female calf two years ago in the pen.



Figure 4. Calf C378K being collared and ear-tagged.

A few baby pics:

We have many more, but we thought we'd show some of the more interesting photographs from the 2018 calving season.



Figure 5. C347K successfully raised a female calf to juvenile status in 2016-17 and now delivered this male calf in the Rochfort pen on May 20th.



Figure 6. This is the super producer C319K of the penned animals. In four years of penning, she has successfully raised two females and a male to juvenile status and now has this young male calf to nurture along.



Figure 7. This is C335K meeting up with her new-born calf after capture and tagging, one of only two female calves in the pen at this point. This cow was in the pen in 2015 and successfully raised a male calf to juvenile status.

A few baby pics:

Apparently conditions at the pen are super – constant easy breezes to keep the bugs down, lots of free-flowing water, and coolish temperatures (daytime highs of 15-19C).





The teams:

- Nîkanêse Wah tzee Stewardship Society
 - West Moberly First Nations (Chief Roland Willson/Tamara Dokkie)
 - Saulteau First Nations (Estelle Lavis/Naomi Owens)
- Caribou Mat Pen Working Group¹
 - West Moberly First Nations (Bruce Muir/Jason Lee)
 - Saulteau First Nations (Naomi Owens/Carmen Marshall)
 - Wildlife Infometrics (Scott McNay/Line Giguere)
- Mat Pen Technical Advisory Team²
 - Revelstoke penning trial (Rob Serrouya/Corey Legebokow)
 - FLNRO (Chris Addison/Chris Ritchie/Helen Schwantje/Bryan Macbeth/John Surgenor)
 - MOE (Dale Seip)
- Support teams – capture specialists, veterinarian team, shepherds, lichen collectors

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¹ The Caribou Mat Pen Working Group is a committee appointed by the Nîkanêse Wah tzee Stewardship Society.

² The Mat Pen Technical Advisory Team is an ad hoc committee chosen by the Working Group to obtain technical advice.

³ Current and historic