



ATNARKO/HWY 20 CORRIDOR OF TWEEDSMUIR PROVINCIAL PARK

Belarko Wildlife Viewing Area

...reducing risks for both people and bears

LOCATION: On Highway 20, 13 km inside the west boundary of Tweedsmuir Provincial Park, adjacent to Belarko Boat Launch and 3 km past Fisheries Pool Campground. Look for highway signage.

FACILITY DESCRIPTION: Directly overlooking the Atnarko River, the viewing area is surrounded by an electric fence supported by a cedar-rail fence. Qualified staff are present both in the reception area and the viewing area to provide information on protocol and enhance safety of the viewing experience.

PERIOD AND PROTOCOLS OF OPERATION FOR 2020 SEASON:

September 1 - 21st: daily from 7:00am to 7:00pm **except September 7-13 when the viewing area will be closed from 1pm to 7pm for bear conservation monitoring.**

September 21 – 30th: daily from 8:00am to 6:00pm

There is no charge to visit the viewing area but, for the safety of staff and visitors, Covid-19 protocols will be strictly enforced, including physical distancing, collection of contact information and a maximum number of visitors in the viewing area at one time. (Viewing time limits may be established to ensure all visitors have fair access.) Hand sanitizing and the use of non-medical masks or face coverings will be mandatory for all visitors 5 years and older. (Masks will be available upon request by donation.)

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES: Operated collaboratively by BC Parks and Nuxalk Nation, the main objective of the Belarko Wildlife Viewing Area is to increase the predictability of human behaviour along this section of the Atnarko River. This will both reduce the risk of potential injury to Park visitors from bear encounters and leave sections along the river where bears can feed undisturbed by humans. Visitors who wish to view bears and who choose not to make use of commercial guides are therefore encouraged to use the Belarko Wildlife Viewing Area rather than other areas along the Atnarko/Highway 20 Corridor.

In collaboration with the University of Victoria, BC Parks and Nuxalk Nation are also currently engaged in a grizzly bear research program that involves deployment of wildlife trail cameras. Please be aware of and respect the cameras and other research equipment, the locations of which are identified with caution signs.

NOTE: Whether at Belarko Wildlife Viewing Area or other locations along the Atnarko Corridor, all Park visitors are reminded that bears have the right-of-way. If a bear is moving up or down the river, anglers must immediately reel in and boaters must move to the opposite shore. On land, people must move a safe distance back to allow bears to proceed unobstructed.

Keep pets on leash, make noise while walking trails and do not leave ANY food unattended.

“For many centuries, people and bears have coexisted in this special place. With the cooperation of First Nations, Park visitors, commercial operators and local residents, we can ensure continued protection of both bears and recreational opportunities along the Atnarko River Corridor”

