

Knowledge exchange is essential for caribou recovery

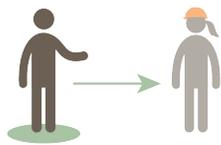
Caribou recovery is a complex challenge requiring collaboration across individuals, organizations and sectors. Many people have dedicated their time, effort and resources to fill critical knowledge gaps, but that knowledge won't make an impact living in a dusty binder or buried in someone's "to read" folder.

Knowledge exchange is the critical process that connects the people researching caribou and forests with the people making decisions about forest management. Impactful knowledge exchange is built on effective **relationships** (which foster a shared understanding between knowledge producers and users) and **tools** (which package and deliver information to meet users' needs). Recognizing the importance of knowledge exchange, the ARCKP has outlined the following goals in its knowledge exchange strategy:

- Foster a culture of knowledge exchange and open communication.
- Help research findings make their way into on-the-ground practice and decision-making through effective knowledge exchange products and tools.
- Help research teams funded by the ARCKP promote knowledge exchange activities, both as part of their work with ARCKP and in their broader work.

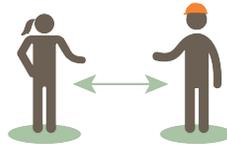
Knowledge exchange is a spectrum

Knowledge exchange (KE) is a process to promote knowledge-sharing between its producers and users. Knowledge exchange comes in many forms, from straightforward dissemination to long-term co-creation.



One-way

Producer shares knowledge with users



Two-way

Producers and users share knowledge with one another



Participatory, co-produced and anticipatory

Users involved in ongoing production and development of knowledge

For many research projects, KE is seen as the final step, with findings communicated to users only after the study is complete. However, viewing knowledge exchange as an ongoing process rather than an endpoint enhances the applicability and uptake of findings, and helps build an empowered community of practice. Engaging in KE from the very start of the project enables both researchers and practitioners to more easily:

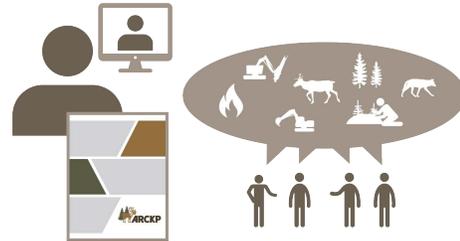
- Identify gaps in existing knowledge.
- Leverage complementary knowledge, skills and resources (e.g., datasets, equipment, personnel).
- Ensure study design aligns with on-the-ground realities.
- Iterate and adapt approaches based on emerging knowledge and opportunities.

For an excellent breakdown of knowledge exchange systems and examples of their application in forestry, check out the following paper:

Hoffman et al. (2025) How extension enhances the knowledge and practice of innovative silviculture in British Columbia, Canada. Canadian Journal of Forest Research. 55: 1-11. [DOI:10.1139/cjfr-2025-0036](https://doi.org/10.1139/cjfr-2025-0036)

How the ARCKP is supporting knowledge exchange

Given the complementary benefits of different forms of knowledge exchange, the ARCKP has adopted a wide range of tools and techniques:



- **The Exchange:** Quarterly publication highlighting new and emerging research on caribou and forestry.
- **Research briefs:** Short summaries of ARCKP-funded project findings, highlighting applied outcomes for partners and practitioners.
- **Webinars:** Presentations by ARCKP project leads, providing the opportunity for Q&A.
- **Workshops:** In-person workshops to build connections, identify knowledge gaps, and shape future knowledge production.

Starting this year, the ARCKP will also assign a **dedicated KE Advisor to each of its funded projects**. The KE Advisor will foster the development of applied outcomes by supporting researchers and consultants leading ARCKP projects. Meeting regularly with the project team, the KE Advisor will:

- Help the project team identify and refine their knowledge exchange objectives.
- Help identify opportunities for knowledge exchange throughout the life of the project.
- Facilitate connections between project teams and partners/practitioners.

By ensuring applied outcomes remain a focus throughout a project's life, the ARCKP will foster more participatory knowledge exchange with greater on-the-ground impact.

KE case study: Effects of temporary forestry roads

In 2025, the ARCKP released a four-part series of briefing notes synthesizing the results of an ARCKP-funded project examining the effects of temporary roads on caribou habitat and population drivers. This series has seen considerable uptake by practitioners, including examples where key learnings were quickly folded into practice. The success of this product can be linked to several factors:

- The lead contractor had extensive real-world experience and included practitioner interviews in their approach.
- The KE team that produced the briefs focused on highlighting and illustrating the findings in an accessible way, with a focus on applications.
- ARCKP Partners engaged with the notes, identifying linkages to their own work, and they shared them with colleagues, increasing awareness and engagement on a larger scale.

What is an applied outcome?

For the purposes of the ARCKP, an applied outcome is knowledge that can inform forestry practice and decision-making. For a research outcome to be applied, it needs to speak to the kinds of decisions forest managers, planners and operators make in their work. A credible research finding may not always qualify as an applied outcome, despite having scientific value.

For example, a recommendation cannot be applied in practice if it:

- Requires information or tools that are inaccessible to practitioners
- Ignores regulatory context
- Ignores other critical values (e.g., operator safety)

