

9000 ft., 48 Inch Snow Fence to Test Caribou

PRUDHOE BAY—Caribou visiting the North Slope this summer are in for a surprise. Blocking their path will be 9,000 feet of 48 inch snow fence raised 20 inches off the ground. It's designed to look like the oil pipeline planned by Alyeska Pipeline Service Company.

The Environmental Engineering Department of Alyeska has teamed with the University of Alaska Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit to see if caribou will take a pipeline in stride.

D. S. Barden, environmental engineering supervisor for the pipeline company, said underpass and overpass ramps of various sizes have been provided for the animals and an observation tower is set up to study them.

The site is 3.5 miles from the Atlantic Richfield camp at Prudhoe. The animals are expected to arrive there within two or three weeks. The project will continue through this summer and possibly next summer.

Barden said the Environmental Engineering Department is also sponsoring fisheries research on the Sagavanirktok River on the North Slope and providing logistics and support for research in the area by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Other projects by the unit include archaeological field surveys and two extensive digs plus physical, chemical and biological oceanographic studies already underway in Valdez Arm under contract to the University's Institute of Marine Sciences.