

PROPOSAL 114

5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

Establish a winter registration hunt for antlerless caribou in Units 19D and 21A and remove the winter harvest ticket hunt in Unit 19D Remainder as follows:

Current winter caribou season:

Unit 19D Remainder: November 1 – January 31

Bag limit: One caribou by harvest ticket

(Unit 21A currently has no open winter season)

Proposed winter caribou seasons:

Units 19D and 21A: November 1 – February 28 (29 during leap year)

One antlerless caribou by registration permit

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Winter caribou hunts for Beaver Mountains and Sunshine Mountains caribou herds have not been held for decades. Recent surveys suggest that caribou numbers have increased (perhaps in response to wolf reductions) but fall harvest is light. There is also a question whether adequate opportunity is being provided for subsistence solely with a fall season. This question can be laid to rest with the proposed registration permit caribou hunt. It also simplifies Unit 19D winter regulations and provides opportunity to tap into an underutilized harvestable surplus.

The Department of Fish and Game will need to limit harvest especially during the early years of this hunt. The proposed bag limit of one antlerless caribou should reduce the risk of taking cows, a quota will prevent overharvest, and a restriction on aircraft will help keep harvest within the quota. Additional discretionary permit hunt conditions are available if the department needs them.

PROPOSED BY: McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-048)
