

PROPOSAL 79

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

In Unit 26B Remainder, modify the resident season and bag limit for caribou and open a registration permit hunt as follows:

Increase resident opportunity in Unit 26B Remainder: Allow a higher (four) bull-only bag limit; lengthen season from **July 1** [AUGUST 1] – April 30; consider some limited (registration) cow harvests after August 15.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? During the last Interior/NE Alaska Region cycle, due to a sudden decline of the Central Arctic caribou herd (CAH) from ~50,000 animals to ~22,000 animals, ADF&G recommended reducing seasons and bag limits to allow the herd to recover the CAH is an identified big game prey population under our Intensive Management statutes and was now well below the low end of the population objectives of 28,000 – 32,000 animals.

The Board of Game drastically reduced seasons and bag limits for all hunters, and since that time the resident take has gone from 403 in 2016 to 71 in 2018. This is the last general season caribou hunt along the road system in the state, and participation is severely dropping. The CAH is designated as important for high levels of consumption by Alaskans, but the onerous regulations have reduced resident participation far below what was needed. In fact, for two years now, nonresidents have taken more Central Arctic caribou than Alaskans.

This area, even with the low herd numbers, has an allowable harvest of 680 bulls. Allowable harvest is NOT being met. There were 230 total bulls taken in 2017 and only 149 in 2018. This is leaving much opportunity of the tables of Alaskans.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-106)
