

# Utqiagvik Area Proposals – Unit 26A

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## PROPOSAL 26

### **5 AAC 85.045(a)(24). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in the western portion of Unit 26A as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
<p>(24)</p> <p>...</p> <p>Unit 26(A), that portion west of 156° 00' W. longitude and excluding the Colville River drainage.</p> <p>1 moose; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf</p> <p>...</p>	<p>July 1—Sept. 14</p>	<p>No open season.</p>

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** To be retained, the antlerless moose season in the portion of Unit 26A west of 156° 00' West longitude and excluding the Colville drainage must be reauthorized annually.

The moose population in the western portion of Unit 26A north of the Colville drainage is somewhat unique compared to the unit-wide population, and the distribution is very sparse because there is very little moose habitat in the coastal plain. However, each year a small number of bulls and cows migrate into the area from the major river drainages in the central and southern parts of the unit. So far, the marginal habitat in this portion of Unit 26A has not allowed moose to establish a population, but these moose provide the only opportunity to harvest a moose in the northwestern portion of Unit 26A.

Unit 26A moose population estimates have historically fluctuated between 294 and 609 moose between 2011 and 2014. More recently, moose counts have observed 145 moose and 218 moose in 2015 and 2018, respectively. The overall trend appears to be slow growth after a decline that started about 2007. The number of moose in the antlerless hunt area is difficult to estimate but is approximately 10 moose per year. Harvest reports indicate four antlerless moose have been harvested since 2005, and the annual harvest rate of antlerless moose is less than 1% of the total population. Due to the low harvest rate the department recommends reauthorization of the antlerless moose season in this area to provide additional hunting opportunity for the small number of hunters to opportunistically harvest antlerless moose in this remote portion of Unit 26A.

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*Note: This proposal is also scheduled for the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting as Proposal 81.*

**PROPOSAL 27**

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

Increase the nonresident bag limit for caribou in Unit 26 as follows:

I propose reinstating the caribou harvest limit for nonresident hunters in the Game Management Unit 26A, B, and C of the North Slope, from the current harvest limit of one bull to two bulls, as it was prior to 2016.

**WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?**

As one of the predominant Air-Taxi operators conducting in these units consistently for over ten years. Flying an average of 150 flight hours during the month of August. We have not observed a substantial fluctuation in the caribou numbers, Arrowhead Outfitters LLC (AOLLC) has observed a drastic decline in the general hunter participation on the Dalton Highway Corridor. Along with a dramatic drop in hunter inquiries and bookings after the harvest limit was decreased to one bull caribou in 2016.

By using the data from ADF&G area biologist provided in the table below, the harvest numbers are WELL BELOW ALLOWABLE HARVEST and the current Caribou population is stable.

CAH (Central Arctic herd) HARVEST Reported harvest from the general harvest ticket:

	males	females	Total harvest	Total hunters
2010	978	234	1238	1622
2011	814	346	1172	1401
2012	726	275	1007	1430
2013	729	135	868	1462
2014	720	196	916	1433
2015	530	225	756	1256
2016	316	268	585	1063
2017	223	7	230	619
2018Prelim	146	3	149	317

	Resident hunters	<b>Resident harvest</b>	Nonresident hunters	<b>Nonresident harvest</b>
2010	1201	953	371	280
2011	1045	935	264	228
2012	1126	773	295	235

2013	1014	530	441	331
2014	987	555	442	358
2015	807	414	449	342
2016	705	403	358	183
2017	348	109	268	118
2018Prelim	181	71	136	78

Prior to 2016; when nonresident hunters were allowed to purchase the second caribou tag, according to ADF&G only 17 percent used the tag, All the nonresident hunters AOLLC has had contact with, would prefer to at LEAST have the option to PURCHASE a second caribou tag. Using ADF&G estimated 17 percent additional harvest, THE TOTAL ESTIMATED HARVEST WOULD ONLY BE APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST OF 680 CARIBOU.

In conclusion the total harvest by resident and nonresident hunters was 149 caribou for 317 hunters. With a native local harvest estimated at 100 animals for a total harvest of 249 caribou. This is far below the ADFG allowable harvest of 680 caribou, set by the 2016 population estimate of 22,630 caribou. Please refer to data above, I see no biological data to keep the nonresident hunters in Unit 26 to the one caribou limit, and respectfully request that the ADF&G to reinstate the possibility of nonresident hunters to purchase two bull caribou licenses in the 2020 hunting season.

Thank you for your consideration to this important matter.

**PROPOSED BY:** Howard Tieden (HQ-F19-145)

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*Note: This proposal is also scheduled for the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting as Proposal 78.*

**PROPOSAL 28**

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

Eliminate the registration caribou permit RC907 and general season caribou harvest ticket requirement for North Slope resident hunters as follows:

We would like the Board of Game to rescind RC907 and harvest ticket requirements for North Slope resident hunters because residents of Unit 23 (Point Hope), Unit 24B (Anaktuvuk Pass), and Unit 26A, B, and C currently already report their caribou harvest to the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management. Most people on the North Slope are very hesitant to report their harvest to agencies that are outside of their region. Because of this, the data that the department receives is poor and of little use for management purposes.

Possible language could include a sentence similar to one in the 2016-2017 Hunting Regulations on page 14. This language would read something like: “If you reside in the North Slope Borough and hunt caribou in Unit 23 north of including Singoalik River drainage or in Unit 24B including Contact Creek south to the confluence of the Ekokpuk drainage with the John River, or in Unit 26 A, B, or C, neither a harvest ticket nor registration permit is required.”

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** RC907 and harvest ticket requirements for residents of portions of Unit 23 (Point Hope) and Unit 24B (Anaktuvuk Pass) and Unit 26 A, B, and C are not resulting in the collection of good caribou harvest data. The North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management (DWM) already successfully collects that information. The DWM traveled to all of the communities on the North Slope and held public meetings during which the residents overwhelmingly supported the DWM to continue to collect harvest data rather than using state harvest tickets or registration permits.

**PROPOSED BY:** North Slope Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-060)  
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**PROPOSAL 29**

**5 AAC 85.020 Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**  
**5 AAC 92.132. Bag limit for brown bears.**

Increase the resident bag limit for brown bears in Unit 26A as follows:

Resident hunters in Anaktuvuk Pass and Unit 26A feel the brown bear population is continuing to grow. The harvest of brown bears in Unit 26A is far below sustained yield. Resident hunters that do take brown bears are low in number, and should be afforded additional harvest opportunity with a two brown bear limit. (Companion proposal submitted for 24B)

Suggested: Brown/Grizzly Bear Unit 26A Resident, two bears every regulatory year, no closed season.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Increase the resident bag limit from one brown bear per regulatory year to two brown bears per regulatory year in Unit 26A.

**PROPOSED BY:** Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission (EG-F19-089)  
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