

Management of Moose and Caribou in the Copper Basin Community Subsistence Harvest Area



Heidi Hatcher
Division of Wildlife
Conservation
Glennallen Area Office


Alaska Board of Game
Wasilla Alaska

January 2022


Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



Copper Basin Community Subsistence Harvest (CSH) Hunt Area



Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022




Current Unit 13 Caribou Hunt Structure

Nelchina Caribou (ANS 600–1,000)

- **Youth Draw Permit** (200 permits; 1 caribou; Aug. 1–5)
- **Resident Draw Permit** (up to 5,000 permits; 1 caribou; Aug. 20–Sept. 20, Oct. 21–Mar. 31)
- **Non-Resident Draw Permit** (up to 200 permits when herd is within or above objectives; 1 bull; Aug. 20–Sept. 20)
- **Tier I Registration** (1 bag limit per household; up to 2 caribou)
 - Aug. 10–30, Oct. 21–Mar. 31
 - Sept. 1–20, Oct. 21– Mar. 31
- **CSH Caribou Hunt** (1 bag limit per household; up to 2 caribou)
 - Aug. 10–Sept. 20, Oct. 21–Mar. 31
- **Federal Subsistence** for federally qualified hunters (2 caribou per person)

*Findings #2019-223-BOG

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



3

3

Current CSH Caribou Hunt Conditions

Since RY2011:


- Up to 300 caribou allocated for CSH harvest
- Must hunt moose and caribou only in Copper Basin CSH hunt area
- An eligible group consists of 25+ members
- Household bag limit (1 caribou)
- Designated Hunter option
- Annual group report required
- Additional Salvage requirements:
 - Heart, liver, kidneys, fat
- Standard meat-on-bone salvage requirements

Beginning in RY2016: 2-year commitment to the hunt

Changes implemented in RY2018

- Up to 400 caribou allocated for CSH harvest
- Up to 2 caribou bag limit
- Meat of quarters, ribs, brisket, neck, and backbone must remain naturally attached to bone

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



4

4

CSH Caribou Hunt Data

Regulatory Year	CSH Caribou Groups	CC001 households	Permits Hunted	Harvest	Success Rate
2009	1	477	288	127	44%
2010 ^a	-	-	-	-	-
2011	6	322	176	150	85%
2012	17	402	238	114	48%
2013	28	689	308	144	47%
2014	25	569	266	191	72%
2015	26	659	330	191	58%
2016 ^b	45	1,006	558 ^c	370 ^c	66%
2017	51	1,004	484	262	54%
2018 ^d	38	838	382	168	44%
2019	44	811	407	256	63%
2020	40	818	476	294	62%
2021	47	909	378	178	47%

^a The CSH hunt was not offered in 2010 due to litigation.

^b Implementation of 2-year commitment

^c Includes 208 additional permits and 36 additional harvest after emergency regulation in March 2017 allowed a bag limit of up to 2 caribou.

^d Additional meat-on-bone salvage requirements, up to 2 caribou bag limit, CSH cap increased from 300 to 400; 2-yr commitments renewed

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



5

5

CSH Caribou Hunt in Context: Nelchina Harvest

RY	Tier I ^a		CSH ^b		Draw ^c		Federal ^d		Total Harvest
	Permits	Harvest	Permits	Harvest	Permits	Harvest	Permits	Harvest	
2009	500	277	479	127	-	-	2,687	369	
2010	1,151	615	-	-	-	-	2,973	505	
2011	3,148	1,626	323	87	1,127	319	3,083	444	
2012	5,045	2,543	403	150	3,001	1,024	3,105	608	
2013	6,878	1,573	689	114	5,008	609	2,896	319	
2014	5,595	2,268	569	144	1,000	299	3,069	274	
2015	7,235	2,911	659	191	1,001	296	3,209	644	
2016	8,470	3,518 ^f	1,006	370 ^g	4,999	1,898	3,265	497	
2017	8,444	2,733	1,004	262	4,998	1,534	3,199	363	
2018	8,767	1,060	838	168	5,000	260	3,170	381	
2019	5,673	2,172	811	256	599	285	2,947	156	
2020	6,886	2,514	818	294	2,250	943	3,064	362	
2021	7,100	975	903	178	2,250	346	TBD	TBD	

^a RC566 (RY2009–2017); RC561 & RC562 (RY2018–2020)

^b CC001 was not offered in 2010.

^c DC480–DC483 (RY2011–2015); DC485 (RY2016–2020); YC495 (RY2019–2020); DC475 (RY2020)

^d FC1302 and FC1202

^e Includes 1,290 caribou harvested under 3,604 TC566 winter hunt permits.

^f Includes 299 caribou harvested under 2,441 households that chose to receive a second permit in March 2017.

^g Includes 36 caribou harvested under 208 households that chose to receive a second permit in March 2017.

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



6


6

Current Unit 13 Moose Hunt Structure

Unit 13 Moose (ANS 300–600)

- Resident General Season (Sept. 1–20)
 - Spike/Fork/50+/4BT
- Resident Draw Permits
 - Antlerless 13A (up to 200 permits; Oct. 1 – Oct. 31, Mar. 1 – Mar. 31)
 - Antlered Bull (up to 5 permits; Sept. 1 – Sept. 20)
- CSH Moose Hunt (Aug. 20 – Sept. 20)
 - Spike/Fork/50+/4BT
 - 100 any-bulls from entire CSH hunt area
- Non-Resident Draw Permits (up to 150 permits; Sept. 1 – Sept. 20)
 - 50+/4BT
- Federal hunt opportunity (Any bull; Aug. 1 – Sept. 20)

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



7

7

Current CSH Moose Hunt Conditions

Since RY2011:


- Must hunt moose and caribou only in Copper Basin CSH hunt area
- An eligible group consists of 25+ members
- 1 bag limit per eligible hunter
 - Up to 100 any-bulls in CSH hunt area (locking tags distributed since RY14)
- 24hr reporting requirement (since RY14)
- Designated Hunter option
- Annual group report required
- Additional Salvage requirements:
 - Head, heart, liver, kidneys, stomach, and hide
- Standard meat-on-bone salvage requirements

Beginning in RY2016: 2-year commitment to the hunt

Changes implemented in RY2018

- 350 any-bull locking tags distributed via existing regulatory scoring criteria
- Meat of quarters, ribs, brisket, neck, and backbone must remain naturally attached to bone

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



8

8

CSH Moose Hunt Data						
Regulatory Year	Number of Groups	Number of Permits	Hunters Reported Hunting	Number of Locking Tags	Total CSH Moose Harvest	CSH Any Bull Harvest ^a
2009	1	378	293	-	100	70
2010 ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-
2011	9	753	312	-	86	64
2012	19	961	358	-	98	76
2013	45	2,066	842	-	156	85
2014 ^c	43	1,771	607	281	150	76
2015	43	1,984	621	344	171	92
2016 ^d	73	3,023	941	485	201	114
2017	83	3,136	879	521	188	102
2018 ^e	57	2,331	664	354	154	92
2019	61	2,143	589	350	160	94
2020	49	1,702	649	352	138	80
2021	54	1,841	594	350	131	84

^a Federally qualified subsistence users and DM324 permit holders harvest additional any-bulls in Unit 13.


^b The CSH hunt was not offered in 2010 due to litigation.

^c Any-bull locking tags and 24hr reporting requirement implemented.

^d CM300 season start date in Unit 13 moved from August 10 to August 20; implementation of 2-year commitment

^e Additional meat-on-bone salvage requirements, any-bull locking tags distributed under Tier II-like scoring; groups signed up for new 2-year commitments

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



9

9


CSH Moose Hunt in Context: Unit 13								
RY	CSH Harvest	Percent of CSH Harvest taken in August	General Season Harvest	Resident Draw Harvest	Nonresident Draw Harvest	Federal Harvest	Total Harvest	CSH Any Bulls Percent of Total Harvest
2016 ^a	201	70%	757	10	21	100	1,089	10%
2017	188	63%	689	11	28	90	1,006	10%
2018 ^b	154	47%	557	9	20	61	801	12%
2019	160	60%	649	14	18	71	914 ^c	10%
2020	138	62%	629	21	23	67	880 ^c	9%

^a CM300 season start date in Unit 13 moved from August 10 to August 20; implementation of 2-year commitment

^b Additional meat-on-bone salvage requirements, any-bull locking tags distributed under Tier II-like scoring; 2-year commitments renewed

^c Includes ceremonial harvest reported in Unit 13

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



10


10

CSH Moose Hunt in Context: Unit 13

Moose Abundance, Composition, and Productivity:

- Moose abundance in three out of five subunits is plateauing within or above objectives.
- Productivity is dropping, as expected when a moose population is near carrying capacity.
- Yearling bull ratios dropping; spike/fork allowance may not be sustainable under current hunting pressure
- Bull-to-cow ratios are dropping under current harvest pressure.
 - CSH Any-bull quotas are evaluated annually and lowered or raised according to fall composition surveys.
 - As subunits near the objective of 25 bulls:100 cows, CSH any-bull quotas are adjusted to stabilize the composition ratio.
 - Over time, excess bulls in 13A, 13C, and 13E have been removed, and quotas are therefore limited.
 - 100 any-bulls no longer sustainable for CSH hunt; ~65 available outside of Unit 13D and Unit 11 currently under current hunt structure
 - Additional any-bulls available in 13D and Unit 11 but these are not being utilized.

Alaska Board of Game
Heidi Hatcher January 2022



11