

***During the 11/18/2020 Board of Game meeting, the board clarified their intent to address Unit 9, 17, 18 and 19 at the Central and Southwest Region meeting.***

*Note: The range of the Mulchatna caribou herd is Units 9 and 17 in the Central & Southwest Region; Unit 18 for the Western Arctic/Western Region; and Unit 19 for the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region. The Board of Game is scheduled to address only the Central/Southwest Region units at this meeting.*

**PROPOSAL 19**

**5 AAC 92.108. Identified big game prey populations and objectives.**

Establish new population and harvest objectives for the Mulchatna caribou herd in Units 9, 17, 18, and 19 as follows:

We recommend establishing new population and harvest objectives after a habitat assessment has been performed to determine the current ecological potential of the range to support caribou and additional analysis of causes of mortality including harvest.

<b>Population Caribou Herds</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Harvest</b>
Adak	Negative		
Beaver Mountain	Negative		
Central Arctic	Positive	28,000 - 32,000	1,400 - 1,600
Chisana	Negative		
Delta	Negative		
Denali	Negative		
Farewell/Big River	Negative		
Fortymile	Positive	50,000 - 100,000	1,000 - 15,000
Galena Mountain	Negative		
Kenai Lowlands	Negative		
Kenai Mountains	Negative		
Killey River, Fox River, And Twin Lakes	Negative		
Macomb	Positive	600 - 800	30 - 50
Mentasta	Negative		
Mulchatna	Positive	<b><u>To be determined</u></b> [30,000 – 80,000	2,400 – 8,000]
Nelchina	Positive	35,000 - 40,000	3,000- 6,000
Northern Alaska Peninsula	Positive	6,000 - 15,000	600 - 1,500
Nushagak Peninsula	Negative		
Porcupine	Positive	100,000 - 150,000	1,500 - 2,000
Rainy Pass	Negative		
Ray Mountain	Negative		
Southern Alaska Peninsula	Positive	1,500 - 4,000	150 - 200
Sunshine Mountain	Negative		
Teshekpuk	Positive	15,000 - 28,000	900 - 2,800
Tonzona	Negative		
Unimak Island Western Arctic	Positive	at least 200,000	12,000-20,000
White Mountain	Negative		
Wolf Mountain	Negative		

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**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Mulchatna caribou herd has changed continuously from the time monitoring began, increasing from an estimated 14,000 in 1974 to 200,000 in 1996, then decreasing to 13,500 in 2019. A population objective of 25,000 was initially established in 1987, and since then revised multiple times. The current population objective (30,000-80,000) was established in 2008 at which point the population was estimated to be 30,000. This objective has been achieved only once since then. The 2019 population estimate was 13,500, less than half of the minimum of the objective range.

The multiple revisions in objectives over time have been a sensible approach to management of a changing resource. We are requesting that the Board of Game review the Intensive Management population and harvest objectives with the goal of adjusting objectives to an ecologically sustainable level. We recommend this review include careful consideration of habitat quality, which almost certainly has changed in response to caribou grazing, reducing population potential.

**PROPOSED BY:** Togiak National Wildlife Refuge (HQ-F20-030)  
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