

## Unit 23 Working Group Meeting May 6, 2010 – Kotzebue, Alaska Meeting Summary

<b>Contents</b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
1.0 Introduction .....	1
2.0 Next Steps & Assignments .....	2
3.0 Summary of Working Group Discussion .....	3
4.0 Future Meeting .....	9
5.0 Public Comments .....	10
<b>Attachments</b>	
1 Working Group Membership .....	11
2 Public & Agency Attendance List.....	12
3 May 6, 2010 Agenda .....	13

### **1.0 Introduction**

The Unit 23 Working Group held its fifth full meeting on May 6, 2010, in Kotzebue, Alaska, at the Northwest Arctic Borough (NWAB) Assembly Chambers. The Working Group was formed in 2008 to discuss fall hunting conflicts between local hunters, nonlocal hunters and commercial operators (guides, transporters) in Game Management Unit (GMU) 23, in northwest Alaska.<sup>1</sup> The group is working together by consensus, to develop solutions to fall hunting conflicts. The group's advisory recommendations are sent to regulatory boards, land and wildlife management agencies, and others to evaluate and consider for implementation. Working Group members are listed in Attachment 1. Jan Caulfield facilitated the meeting,<sup>2</sup> assisted by Mark Burch of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG).

The objectives of the May 6, 2010 meeting were to:

- Hear updates on progress being made on Working Group recommendations.
- Discuss the 2009 hunting season and preparation for the 2010 season.
- Hear public comment (in person and through toll-free call-in).
- Discuss the future of the Working Group.

Section 2.0 lists assignments, to continue progress on previous recommendations. Section 3.0 is a general summary of the group's discussion, including the status of recommendations from previous meetings; Section 4.0 gives notice of future meeting dates. Public comments are summarized in Section 5.0.

<sup>1</sup> See Unit 23 project web site for additional information and previous meeting summaries:  
[www.wildlife.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=planning.unit23](http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=planning.unit23)

<sup>2</sup> Jan Caulfield, Unit 23 Facilitator, 114 S. Franklin St., Ste. 203, Juneau, AK 99801, 907-523-4610,  
[janc@gci.net](mailto:janc@gci.net)

All Unit 23 Working Group meetings are open to the public. The May 6 meeting was broadcast on public radio station KOTZ (including web broadcast) from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attachment 2 lists members of the public and agency staff who attended and/or provided comments. The meeting agenda is in Attachment 3.

The Working Group plans to meet again in Kotzebue in spring 2011 (date to be determined).

## **2.0 Next Steps and Assignments**

The following tasks will be done to continue progress on recommendations made by the Working Group at past meetings.

### **2.1 Improve Data & Database Access – Transporter and Guide Reports**

#### Assignment:

- Jan Caulfield will draft a letter from the Working Group to the Commissioners of the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED) and ADFG, with the following points: (1) thank the agencies for their coordination on improving the Division of Occupational Licensing's database regarding guide and transporter activity, (2) urge DCCED to complete data entry by March 31 each year for the prior hunting season, and (3) urge DCCED to move to online reporting for guides and transporters (for their convenience and to reduce data input by state employees).

### **2.2 Orientation for Pilots Flying in Unit 23 for Hunting**

#### Assignment:

- Meghan Nedwick, ADFG, will distribute the draft pilot orientation materials to the Working Group for comment. Comments are due back to Meghan at [meghan.nedwick@alaska.gov](mailto:meghan.nedwick@alaska.gov) or 907-442-1714 by Monday, May 17. ADFG's goal is to post the orientation materials and test online by July 1, 2010.

### **2.3 2010 Pre-Season Meeting**

#### Assignment:

- Jan Caulfield will contact the NWAB to request that they host a pre-season meeting/teleconference between villages and the agencies that permit guide and transporter operations in Unit 23. This provides an opportunity for the agencies to share information about which commercial services providers they expect to be operating in 2010 and to hear from the villages about any concerns. (The meeting held in mid-August 2009, prior to the hunting season, was valuable.)

### 3.0 Summary of Working Group Discussion

This section provides a brief summary of presentations and Working Group discussion at the May 6, 2010 meeting. (See Agenda in Attachment 3).

#### 3.1 Review 2009 Herd Census Data and Update on 2009 Hunting Season

Jim Dau, ADFG, presented the following information to the Working Group:

- Herd census: The July 2009 census of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) counted 401,000 caribou. This is up from the 2007 census of 377,000. ADFG considers this a stable population. The decline from 490,000 caribou in 2003 to 377,000 in 2007 was likely not due to range limitations, but to icing events that made it difficult for the herd to find winter food.
- Numbers of nonlocal hunters: There were fewer nonlocal hunters in Unit 23 in 2009 than in any year since data collection began in 1998. About 450 nonlocals hunted in Unit 23 in 2009, compared with a high of nearly 800 in 2006. The primary decline was in non-Alaska residents. Ninety percent of nonlocal hunters sought caribou, moose, or both. Other species harvested include bear, sheep, and muskox.
- Hunting dates: The average peak time period for nonlocal hunting in Unit 23 has shifted to later dates, over the years.
- Areas hunted: The Guide Use Areas (GUA) most heavily used by nonlocal hunters are GUA 005 (Selawik, Lower Kobuk) with an average nonlocal hunter density of 2.24 hunters/100 mi<sup>2</sup>, and GUA 006 (Squirrel, Aggie, Eli Rivers) with an average nonlocal hunter density of 3.48 hunters/100 mi<sup>2</sup>.
- Commercial service use: More than 50% of the nonlocal hunters used transporter services in 2009; about 15% used guide services, while about 35% used no commercial services.
- Camp locations: ADFG has maps showing hunting camp locations for 2009, based on aerial observations made by the Alaska Wildlife Troopers, National Park Service (NPS), ADFG and US Fish and Wildlife Service. However, the data is incomplete and is biased by where overflights occur (for enforcement or other management purposes). Guides and transporters are now being asked to voluntarily report the locations (lat./long.) of camps, drop-off and pick-up points to the Division of Occupational Licensing. This should provide more complete information about where nonlocal hunters are accessing Unit 23 and where they are camping. (See notes in Section 3.1, below).

In discussion, it was noted that ADFG does not have similar data for local hunters. Local hunting is very concentrated along the river corridors. There is not data on the number of local hunters in the region, although community assessment harvest data indicate that there are from one to several hunters per household.

The Working Group also discussed the concern that in 2009 the villages were not successful in harvesting large bulls, which are preferred due to their size and fat. Caribou

seemed to come off of the North Slope later in 2009 and didn't cross rivers in usual locations. Caribou have been migrating further to the east in the past several years. When local hunters cannot get large, fat bulls early in the season, they will eventually harvest smaller bulls or cows without young. When larger bulls arrive too late in the migration, their meat is not as good quality. Jim Dau noted that while it is not unusual for the large bulls to be farther back in the migration, they were much later than usual in 2009 and this caused problems for local hunters.

### **3.2 Guide & Transporter Databases – Coordination between ADFG and Division of Occupational Licensing**

Mark Burch, ADFG, reported on coordination between ADFG and the Division of Occupational Licensing (in DCCED). They are working together to make data on guide and transporter activity more complete and available. Progress is being made; it will be easier for management agencies to access data on the numbers of guides, transporters, trips, clients, and harvested animals; as well as locations of camps, drop-off and pick-up points.<sup>3</sup> There is typically a delay in data entry, due to limited staff in the Division of Occupational Licensing.

As a follow-up, the Working Group asked that a letter be sent on their behalf to the Commissioners of ADFG and DCCED, recommending that staffing or a contractor be provided to enter the data more quickly each year (e.g., by end of March), so it can be used for management purposes. The group also recommended that DCCED move toward online reporting for guide and transporters, to make it easier for them to report and to reduce the amount of data entry required. Finally, they asked that the Working Group, Board of Game, and BGCSB be kept informed if more help is needed to make this data accessible (e.g., is more staff or a contractor needed to enter a data backlog?) See Section 2.1, above.

### **3.3 Update on House Bill 249 – Legislation to expand authority of BGCSB to regulate transporters**

Pete Schaeffer reported, on behalf of Representative Reggie Joule, that House Bill 249 had not been scheduled for hearing or action during the 2010 legislative session. It will need to be reintroduced next session. However, state funding was allocated for a part-time investigator to review transporter activity in 2010 and report back to the Legislature and the BGCSB.

### **3.4 Update on DNR Guide Concession Program**

Dianna Leinberger reported that DNR is evaluating the more than 250 public comments received about the proposed guide concession program. DNR will propose a preliminary decision regarding the program in summer/fall 2010, and provide a public comment period in fall 2010. The program will set up guide concession areas (generally matching the boundaries of the existing Guide Use Areas) on state land (and possibly BLM land); the state will enter in to contracts with guides in each concession area. DNR has

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<sup>3</sup> Guides and transporters are not *required* to provide location data, but have been asked by the Big Game Commercial Services Board to provide it voluntarily, and are doing so.

tentatively planned to adopt regulations and implement the guide concession program in 2012.<sup>4</sup> The following points were made in discussion:

- DNR began this process largely because guides in Alaska requested that it be done, noting that in some areas the number of guided parties had escalated sharply. There may not be support among transporters for a similar program.
- DNR is discussing limiting the number of assistant guides, but no decision has been reached on that point.
- The Unit 23 Working Group, Board of Game and BGCSB all wrote letters supporting the program.
- At the request of the Unit 23 Working Group, DNR held a public comment meeting in Kotzebue in December 2009.
- DNR is working to ensure that the program does not bar new entrants to the guiding industry. This is a difficult issue to resolve and the department is open to ideas.

### **3.5 Board of Game – Adoption of Regulations**

In November 2009, the Board of Game approved the two regulatory proposals submitted by the Unit 23 Working Group:

1. Noatak Controlled Use Area (CUA) – Extended the duration of the Noatak CUA; area is closed from August 15 – September 30 to use of aircraft for big game hunting.
2. Pilot Orientation – A pilot may not transport parts of big game with an aircraft without having, in actual possession, a certificate of successful completion of a department-approved education course regarding big game hunting and meat transportation in Unit 23. However, this provision does not apply to the transportation of parts of big game between state-maintained airports.

Meghan Nedwick, ADFG, presented draft pilot orientation materials to the Working Group. She will email or FAX the draft to members and welcome their comments through Monday, May 17. The goal is to have the orientation and test on-line by July 1, 2010. Meghan noted the following:

- The purposes of the orientation are to help visitors to the region to understand customary practices, avoid unnecessary noise and garbage pollution, and avoid conflicts with other hunters. Only pilots transporting big game in the field are required to obtain certification, but ADFG will encourage all visitors to the region to become familiar with this material and other information about Unit 23 posted on the ADFG website.
- The orientation includes background information about hunting in Unit 23, ways to avoid conflict, and detailed land status maps prepared and regularly updated by BLM. Pilots must pass a 20-question test. The wallet-size certificate can be

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, see the program website at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/gcp/> or contact Clark Cox, DNR, Division of Mining, Land and Water, at [clark.cox@alaska.gov](mailto:clark.cox@alaska.gov), 907-269-8565.

downloaded to a computer desktop, printed on personal computer, and laminated to be carried in the field.

- ADFG consulted with the local Fish and Game Advisory Committees (AC), the Borough, and state and federal management agencies in drafting the orientation. ADFG invited AC's to map sensitive areas to highlight in the orientation, but do not expect such maps to be included in the final packet.
- The penalty for not carrying the certificate has not yet been determined by the Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

The following comments were made in Working Group discussion:

- Add a clear, firm introduction emphasizing the importance of this orientation material. It is imperative that people flying in Unit 23 for the purposes of big game hunting and transport respect local needs and practices and avoid conflict. If this type of education is not successful, there may be need for regulations that are more restrictive on nonlocal hunters.
- Try to reach all pilots with the information (not just those in Unit 23 for hunting).
- Consider contacting aviation associations (provide website link).

### **3.6 Pre-Season Coordination**

In August 2009, the NWAB hosted a pre-season meeting/teleconference between villages and the state and federal agencies that permit guide and transporter operations in Unit 23. This provided an opportunity for the agencies to share information about which commercial services providers they expected to be operating and to hear from the villages about any concerns. The Working Group recommended that a similar pre-season meeting/teleconference be held in 2010. (See Section 2.1, above).

### **3.7 Enforcement Coordination**

Raymond Woods, NANA Trespass Program, and Abraham Snyder, NANA Lands, provided information about the NANA enforcement program and described their coordination with other enforcement efforts. There are five NANA village trespass officers in the region. The officers contact hunters during the caribou and moose hunting season (primarily providing information) and monitoring aircraft activity in the region. Suspected violations are reported to the Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT). NANA Trespass is also partnering with other enforcement agencies. Local residents are encouraged to get to know the village trespass officer for their area and report concerns to them.

Raymond Woods recommended that aircraft be required to have 12" identification numbers (so they can be seen in the field.) (Note that the federal agencies' "core conditions" for special use permits for air taxi/big game transporter services requires this.)

Lee Anne Ayres, USFWS, commended the NANA program, noting that it has helped improve communication between state and federal agencies and the villages, led to

coordinated training of enforcement staff, and improved education of guides and transporters. Charlie Gregg, NWAB, also expressed thanks and noted that the Borough has contracted with NANA Purcell to observe activity on Borough lands.

### **3.8 Federal Agency Planning & Management**

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Shelly Jacobson mentioned the following points:

- Land status maps – BLM is keeping updated land status maps for Unit 23, which include topographic information. The maps are available on BLM and ADFG web sites and are also available on DVD for distribution to permittees.
- Permitting – BLM expects to issue 20 special recreation permits in Unit 23 in 2010 (five for transporter permits in the Squirrel River area; 15 for guides, eight in Squirrel River area, seven dispersed in the unit.) Transporters must have a permit to operate on BLM lands, but not on State lands.
- Planning – BLM is preparing a special management plan and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Squirrel River area. Public scoping meetings will be held in fall 2010. The NWAB is a cooperating agency (via Memorandum of Understanding); DNR is an unofficial cooperating agency; Kiana and Noorvik will be informal cooperators; Noatak will be involved. BLM expects the final plan to be done February 2012. BLM will not issue any new special recreation permits in the Squirrel River area (or replace businesses who are no longer operating) until the plan is done.
- Guide Concession Areas – BLM is trying to get the DNR Guide Concession Area program to apply to BLM lands, but is not sure this can be done. A separate program for guide concessions on BLM may eventually be needed. (See Section 3.4, above).

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – Lee Anne Ayres mentioned the following points:

- Planning – The Selawik Refuge completed scoping in fall 2008 and is writing the draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). The core planning team includes representatives of USFWS, NWAB, NANA, ADFG, and ADNDR. The final draft plan will be available for public review and comment in fall 2010. Issues addressed include marking winter trails, maintaining shelter cabins, role of the USFWS in communities (e.g., sharing buildings), all-terrain vehicle use, snow machine races, commercial guiding and transporting. The Refuge will likely continue its current approach of separating big game guiding and transporting services from local hunting use around villages and native allotments. (Note: Guide and transporter use is now generally limited to areas more than six miles upriver of Selawik, and the upper Tag River).
- Permitting and Management – The Refuge’s objectives for management of guides and transporters are to continue its permit program, coordinate to continue improving enforcement, consider recommendations of the Unit 23 Working Group, and provide user friendly land status maps (in coordination with BLM).

National Park Service (NPS) – George Helfrich addressed the following:

- Permitting – In 2008-2009, the NPS has limited the number of big game transporter permits in the Noatak Preserve to eight and the number of transported clients to 357. This cap on permits and clients will expire December 31, 2009.  
The NPS used a competitive process to award transporter permits for the 2010 and 2011 hunting seasons. One criterion was “How will you, as a company, address and minimize impacts to subsistence uses?” The NPS received five applications and issued five transporter permits for 2010-11, with the most responsive company receiving the highest allocation of clients. This is down from a high of 10 permittees in the past. Four of the five permittees have had permits in the Noatak Preserve in the past.
- Enforcement – NPS enforcement staff is in the field each season, using boats, airplanes, and helicopters, checking for clean camps, meat care and other issues. The NPS also distributes educational material to hunters and commercial service providers, such as the ADFG publication “Hunting Legal, Hunting Smart.”
- Planning – The NPS is drafting its Big Game Commercial Services management plan for the Noatak Preserve. The NWAB is a cooperating agency. The draft plan will have four alternatives related to management of transporter services, such as (1) not opening some areas to commercial services, (2) not opening some areas to commercial services until after local residents have started taking caribou, and (3) analyzing a change in types of permits for transportation use, such as changing from a commercial use authorization to a concession contract (as the NPS uses with guides.)

The following questions/comments were raised by the Working Group in response to the NPS presentation:

- The State may raise concerns over the NPS permit system as a restriction of public access (as has been a concern in Denali and Gates of the Arctic.)
- Q: Is there a process where a transporter could improve its prospectus to increase its allocation of clients? A: For 2010-2011, all 357 clients have been allocated, so a business’ allocation could not increase unless another operator declined to use all of its allocation.
- Q: Would lack of availability of caribou bulls for harvest by local hunters be considered a biological concern that would allow NPS to manage the resource by emergency order? A: This issue would require more thought and consultation.
- In 2009, the primary user conflict complaints were about airplanes disturbing hunters or changing caribou behavior / route of travel.

### **3.9 Other Topics – Meat Quality and Care & Disturbance of Caribou Migration**

Meat quality and care – In response to a Working Group member’s question and concern, Eric Lorrington (AWT) noted that ensuring meat is properly harvested and cared for is a high priority for enforcement in Unit 23. There is enforcement

presence at the Kotzebue airport ramp. A “transfer of possession form” must accompany meat donated to another person.

- Diversion of caribou migration – The Working Group discussed concerns raised by some members of the public and some Working Group members that activity in the caribou migration route (e.g., camping, aircraft, hunters) could be disturbing caribou and causing them to change their route. There is concern about localized displacement – for example, hunting on the north side of the river diverting animals from the river crossing (where local hunters are waiting). There is also concern about possible displacement “farther up” the migration – for example, camping or other activity that might be causing the migration to change route. When caribou are diverted from their expected routes, it can cause local hunters to be unsuccessful or to have to travel farther to hunt – which is a major concern when food and fuel prices are so high.

However, other perspectives were also shared. Some Working Group members noted that, while there are several general routes that the fall migrating caribou follow in Unit 23, the timing and route can change dramatically from year to year – and the reasons for change are known only to the caribou. There are many variables involved and it would be difficult to determine what causes the migration timing route to change from year to year.

There was not time to discuss this issue in depth at the May 6 meeting. However, comments raised by the Working Group included:

- Could a research project be designed to test whether activity (camping, aircraft, hunters) might be disturbing migrating caribou and causing them to change their route? However, there was concern about whether such a research project could be designed and the time involved.
- Traditional knowledge already maintains that activity in the migration route can disrupt the caribou migration; traditional hunting practice is to let the early caribou pass without disturbance.
- Would it be possible to identify some key areas, higher up in the migration routes, where camping or other activity should be avoided, or at least delayed until the migration has started in that area? However, it may not be possible to identify localized geographic areas that would be justifiable and approvable as controlled use areas.
- Would it be productive to look at existing data on camp locations (include Division of Occupational Licensing data from 2008 and 2009) and existing information on caribou migration paths? Are there areas where there are particularly high numbers of camps in important routes?

The Working Group did not have time to fully discuss this issue at the May 6 meeting and did not reach any recommendations on this topic at this time.

#### 4.0 Future Meeting Schedule

The Working Group decided it would like to meet again in the spring of 2011 in Kotzebue. ADFG will review the budget for the meeting and facilitation. Working group value coming together to exchange information, to continue to push for progress on the recommendations it has made to date, to take on specific projects between meetings with smaller groups, and to be ready to respond if there is an increase in conflict in the future.

#### 5.0 Public Comments

Public comments were welcomed from people attending the meeting in Kotzebue, as well as through a toll-free telephone line. The following points were during the public comment period.

##### Attamuk Shiedt, Kotzebue –

- Concerned that aircraft and nonlocal hunting activity is causing diversion of caribou, particularly on tributaries to the Aggie River. In 2009, campers and hunting on these tributaries early in the migration caused caribou to divert away from their usual route and crossing of the Noatak River.
- Recommendation that all agencies/entities combine their enforcement efforts to share resources and be able to enforce on all land ownerships (e.g., NANA, Borough, Maniilaq, state and federal agencies).

##### Lance Kramer, Kotzebue – (notes submitted at meeting to Pete Shaeffer to share with Working Group)

- Re: Caribou migration routes – It seems the herd has moved east more and more. Very few caribou on the western route these days.
- It would be nice to see a study done as to WHY caribou are choosing the eastern route. Food quality/quantity? Insect problems? Early transporter issues way up north? Or just a pattern (E, W, E, W...)?
- It would be nice to collar and track western route caribou and Nakuliq route caribou to see if there are patterns.
- Waste of meat by outside hunters is a major conflict issue. There must be a regional checkpoint that every non-local hunter has to go through if he wants his antlers to fly. Perhaps there can be a subcommittee that can address this issue. Hunting in GMU 23 is a privilege. To hunt here, non-local hunters must abide by whatever system we put in place. Currently there is very little accountability. It's hit and miss and hundreds of pounds of valuable meat get wasted each year.
- This Working Group is a great thing and shouldn't stop.
- Let's study why caribou choose eastern, middle or western route.
- Let's work on setting up a meat/harvest checkpoint.

##### Marlene Moto, Deering –

- There should be more involvement by tribal organizations at all levels of regulation and management.

Concern regarding hunting of muskoxen on NPS-managed land. Would like to see a ban on nonlocal hunting of muskox.

Unit 23 Working Group Membership  
& Attendance at May 6, 2010 Meeting

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliations</b>
Lee Anne Ayres	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Jim Dau	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Phil Driver (unable to attend)	Alaska Professional Hunting Association Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group
Mike Fleagle (unable to attend)	Federal Subsistence Board
Charlie Gregg	Northwest Arctic Borough
Cyrus Harris	Maniilaq Association
George Helfrich	National Park Service
Shelly Jacobson	Bureau of Land Management
Cliff Judkins	Board of Game
Victor Karmun	Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council Kotzebue Sound Advisory Committee
Melvin Lee	Upper Kobuk Advisory Committee
Dianna Leinberger	Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Enoch Mitchell	Noatak/Kivalina Advisory Committee
Ron Moto, Sr.	North Seward Peninsula Advisory Committee
Walter Sampson (unable to attend)	NANA Regional Corporation
Pete Schaeffer	Kotzebue Sound Advisory Council
Joe Schuster	Alaska Professional Hunting Association Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group
Ted Spraker	Board of Game Big Game Commercial Services Board
Zazell Staheli	Big Game Commercial Services Board
Raymond Stoney (unable to attend)	Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council Lower Kobuk Advisory Committee Big Game Commercial Services Board Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group
Alex Whiting	Kotzebue IRA

Public & Agency Attendance List  
Unit 23 Working Group Meeting

May 6, 2010 – Kotzebue, Alaska

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Chuck Ardizzone	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management
Michael Baffrey	Office of the Secretary, Department of the Interior
Colleen Brown	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management
Susan Bucknell	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
John Erlich	Bureau of Land Management
Willie Goodwin	National Park Service
Marci Johnson	National Park Service
Lance Kramer	Boys & Girls Club
Eric Lorring	Alaska Wildlife Trooper
Steve Machida	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Tracy McDonell	USFWS
Meghan Nedwick	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Attamuk Shiedt, Sr.	Maniilaq Association
Abraham Snyder	NANA Regional Corporation
Charlotte Westing	Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Raymond Woods	NANA Trespass

Public comments presented by:

Attamuk Shiedt, Sr., Kotzebue  
Lance Kramer, Kotzebue  
Marlene Moto, Deering

## Unit 23 Working Group May 6, 2010

Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly Chambers  
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

*Public radio station KOTZ will broadcast the meeting. Tune to 89.9 FM or AM 720, or listen via the web at [www.kotz.org](http://www.kotz.org)*

### AGENDA

#### **Meeting Objectives**

- Update on progress being made on Unit 23 Working Group recommendations
- Discuss 2009 hunting season & preparation for 2010 season
- Public comment session – Thursday, May 6, 1:15-2:15 pm  
(in person or via toll-free teleconference; dial 1-800-315-6338, enter code 2323#)
- Discuss future of Unit 23 Working Group

### **Thursday, May 6**

Coffee/Refreshments

#### **9:00 a.m. Welcome, Introductions, Working Group Roundtable**

- Member & audience introductions
- Working Group roundtable comments – comments on agenda and what you want the group to talk about or accomplish at this meeting; revise agenda if necessary; opportunity to mention other topics

#### **9:30 a.m. Review 2009 Hunting Season & Herd Census Data**

- 2009 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Census Data – Jim Dau, ADF&G
- Information about harvest, guide and transporter activity – Jim Dau, ADF&G
- Update on efforts to coordinate ADF&G and Division of Occupational Licensing databases – Mark Burch, ADF&G
- Other topics / Working Group discussion

#### **10:15 a.m. Break**

#### **10:30 a.m. Update on House Bill 249 – Legislation to expand authority of Big Game Commercial Services Board to regulate transporters** Representative Reggie Joule

**10:50 a.m. 2010 Hunting Season**

- Review changes to Alaska Hunting Regulations for 2010-2011
  - Noatak Controlled Use Area (CUA) – extend duration of CUA; area is closed from August 15 - Sept. 30 to the use of aircraft for big game hunting (proposed by Unit 23 Working Group)
  - Pilot orientation – A pilot may not transport parts of big game with an aircraft without having, in actual possession, a certificate of successful completion of a department-approved education course regarding big game hunting and meat transportation in Unit 23; however, this provision does not apply to the transportation of parts of big game between state maintained airports (proposed by Unit 23 Working Group)
    - Discuss draft pilot orientation materials (*Attachment #1*) – Meghan Nedwick, ADF&G
  - Increase nonresident bag limit from one to two caribou
- Pre-season coordination
  - Pre-season teleconference with communities and permitting agencies / NWAB host
  - Consistent information to guides, transporters, clients
- Enforcement coordination
  - Coordination with village officers – Raymond Woods, NANA Trespass Program and Lee Anne Ayres, USFWS

**12:00 p.m. Lunch****1:15 p.m. Public Comments – Telephone Call-In & In-person**

To provide comments by phone, dial 1-800-315-6338, enter code 2323#.  
Time per comment will be limited, to ensure opportunity for those who want to speak.

**2:15 p.m. Update on Federal Agency Planning Processes**

- Squirrel River Plan – Shelly Jacobson, BLM & Dianna Leinberger, DNR
- Noatak National Preserve Big Game Transportation Services Plan – Adrienne Lindholm, NPS
- Selawik Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan – Lee Anne Ayres, USFWS

**3:00 p.m. Other Topics – raised for discussion by Working Group members**

- Potential research project – effects of human activities (e.g., aircraft, camps) on caribou migration routes and patterns
- Other topics

**3:45 p.m. Future of Unit 23 Working Group** – Consideration of whether the group should meet periodically in the future, to keep apprised of future issues and any conflicts that arise

**5:00 p.m. Adjourn**