

GASH AC Teleconference

October 4, 2010 at 1 pm

Members Present:

Kathy Chase
Cliff Hickson
Arnold Hamilton
Ken Chase
Harry Maillelle

Guests Present:

Roger Seavoy (ADFG)
Caroline Brown (ADFG)
Nissa Pilcher (ADFG)
Bo Sloan (FWS)
Jerry Hill (FWS)

Meeting called to order 1:12- role called

Introductions given,

Proposal 36 was then discussed-

Roger Seavoy (ADFG) gave a synopsis of the recommendations given by the Department of Fish & Game located on page 50-51 of The Alaska Board of Game Nelchina Caribou and Black Bear Trapping Regulations; October 8-12, 2010 book (see below for text).

Roger Seavoy (ADF&G) was asked to provide history of the black bear management in GMU 19, and how it has effected moose calf survival. Roger Seavoy noted several points about the current bucket snaring project near McGrath, such as the individual take varied- it was mostly dependent on time. He also noted that there was a cost involved it this, such as the amount of fuel it took to check traps every other day.

The AC questioned about how many incidental brown bears had been taken during the McGrath area project, and Roger noted that none had- with bait selectivity and the size of holes you could cut into the bucket, it can help reduce the incidental catch of brown bears.

The proposed rules involving same day shooting of bears in these traps and family group interactions was also discussed.

Proposal 36

All members present expressed interest in the proposal, and noted that even if it wasn't implemented right away, it would be good to have on the books to have to option of using later. The Chairman did make sure from ADF&G staff present that amending this proposal to include 21E and D would fit in with the Innoko Moose Management Plan, which was confirmed.

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An Amendment was made to include the lower part of GMU 21D, & all of GMU 21E in Proposal 36- all in favor of amendment

A vote was then taken to support the proposal as amended-
All in favor

-Le Roy Peters was contacted after the conclusion of the AC teleconference, and he agreed with the ideas presented by the AC

It was noted that Cliff Hickson would be a good person to represent the GASH AC at this meeting since he is already present in Anchorage, but Ken Chase would be good to, if he was indeed flying into Anchorage that weekend.

Caroline Brown (ADF&G) then went over that the Division of Subsistence might be doing Baseline subsistence surveys in the GASH area. She went over what this survey covered, that the last one was performed in 1990, and that there was potential need in the area due to the chance of the Donlin Mine being created in the area.

It was discussed that the next face to face meeting would probably be the last part of March, first part of April, and potentially in Anvik.

RC 5

Larry Williams
Yukon Flats Advisory Committee Chairman
PO Box 93
Venetie, AK 99781

October 1, 2010

Members of the Board of Game,

The Yukon Flats Advisory Committee met last February to discuss many issues, including commenting on proposals that were to go before your interior meeting this last spring. The Yukon Flats AC had put in Proposal 97, which would allow black bear snaring in unit 25D. Since we authored this proposal, we are obviously in support of snaring bears- but by the traditional way, which is by the neck.

The members of the Yukon Flats AC are unfamiliar with bucket snaring. During our February teleconference, ADF&G staff explained what bucket snaring is, but the Yukon Flats AC told the Department of Fish & Game that we didn't want to talk about this until we met face to face.

After all of the black bear proposals were deferred until the November 2010 BOG meeting at last spring's BOG, the Yukon Flats AC planned on having an October meeting after our Moose Management Meeting. One of the agenda items was to discuss the idea of bucket snaring with the Department.

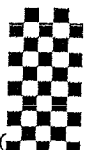
Since you changed the months of when you were taking up these proposals, the Yukon Flats AC did not get a chance to meet to talk about these proposals. We wanted to be able to talk about this idea before the BOG takes it up, and we were not given that chance. We would like the Board to defer any bucket snaring proposals in 25D to the regularly scheduled BOG meeting in March 2012.

Thank you,

*Larry Williams
Chairman, Yukon Flats
Advisory*

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Overview of Nelchmina Caribou Herd Regulation and Harvest History



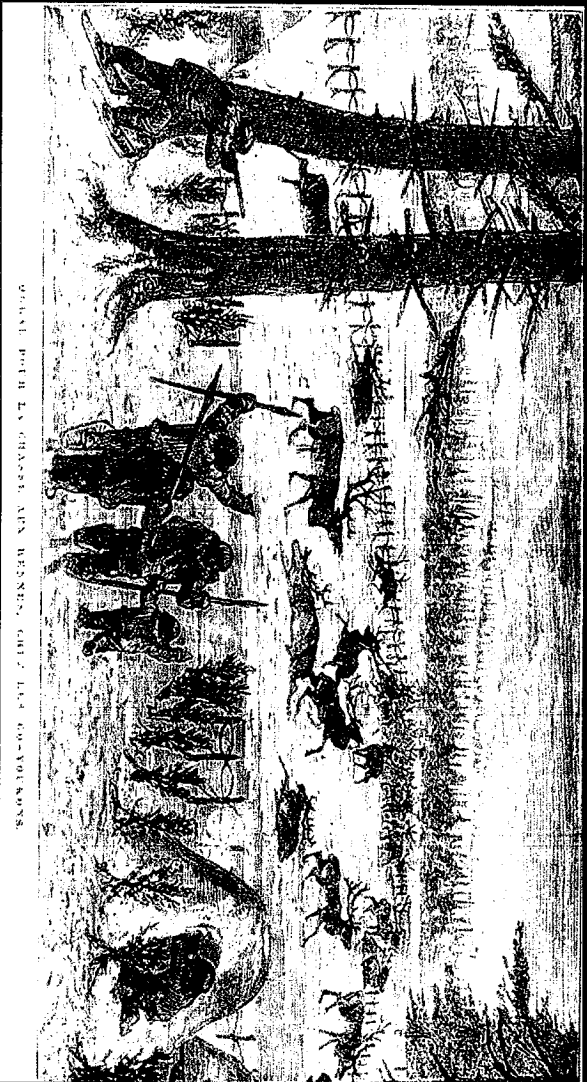
ADF&G Division of Subsistence
Alaska Board of Game
Anchorage, Alaska
October 8 – 12, 2010

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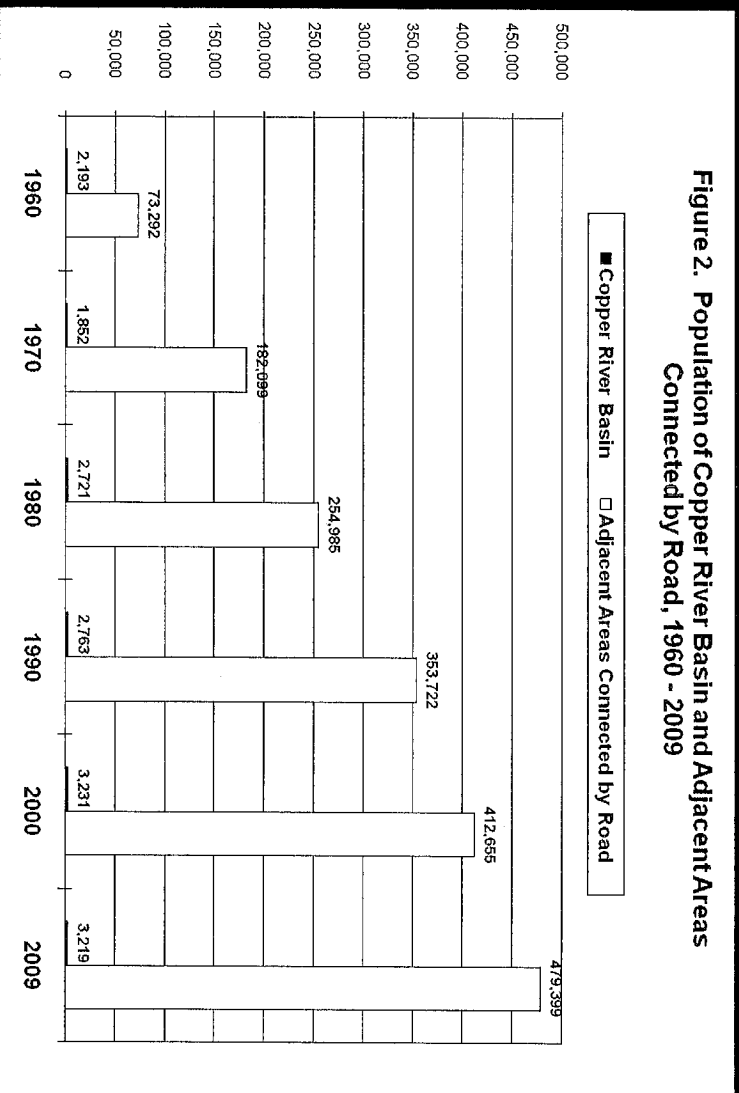
Customary and traditional patterns



- Established by Ahtna Athabascans in the Copper River Basin.
- Adopted by other local residents as part of mixed economy.
- Continue today within seasonal round of subsistence activities.
- Positive C&T finding in 1983; reaffirmed in 1992 and 2006.

Accessibility

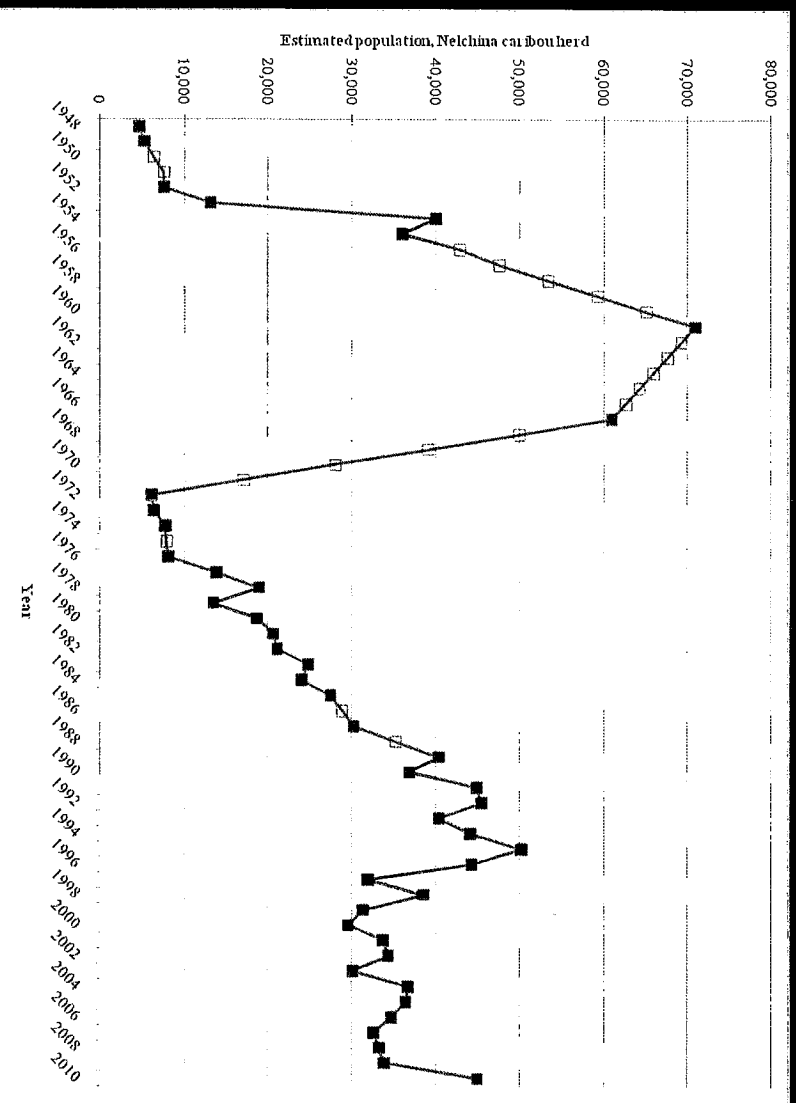
Figure 2. Population of Copper River Basin and Adjacent Areas Connected by Road, 1960 - 2009



- Highways built, connected GMU 13 to larger population centers.
- GMU 13 wildlife become popular source of recreation and food.
- Road-connected population grows; Copper Basin stable.

Nelchina herd sizes and harvest levels

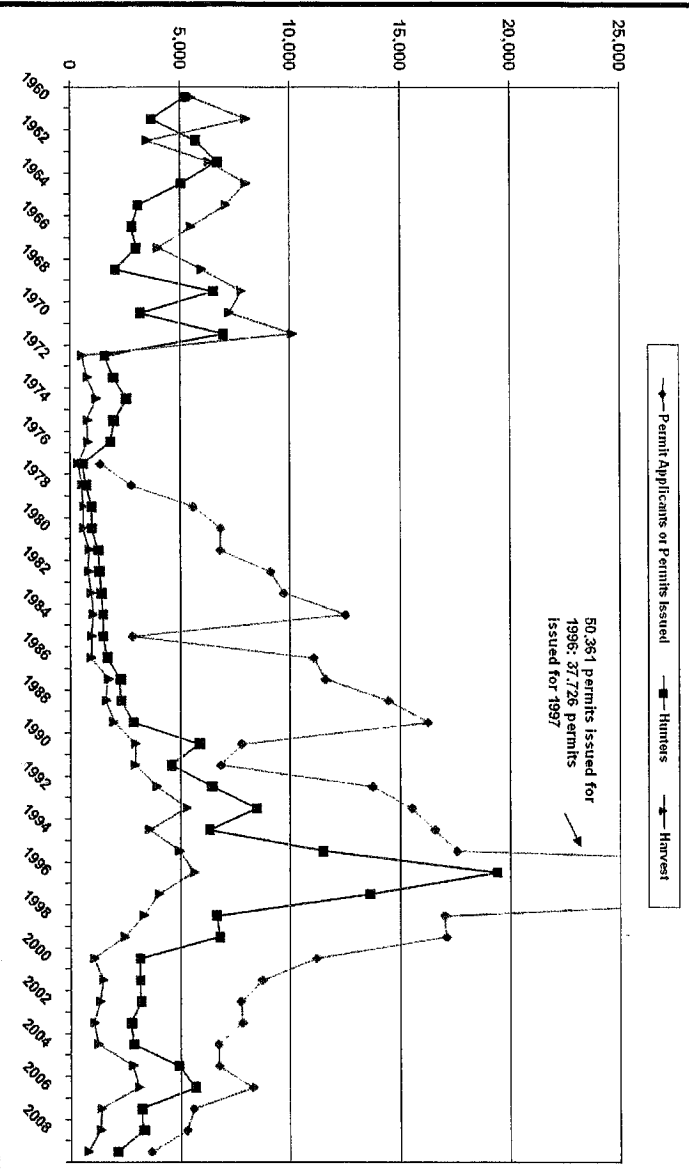
Figure 1. Herd size, Nelchina caribou herd



- 1950s-1960s – rapid growth of herd.
- 1961 – herd peaked at ~70,000: long seasons, liberal bag limits.
- 1971 – harvests peaked at ~10,000.
- Early 1970s – rapid drop in herd size; gradual recovery.
- Today – Goal is stable herd size at 35,000 – 40,000.

Tier II hunts and ANS finding

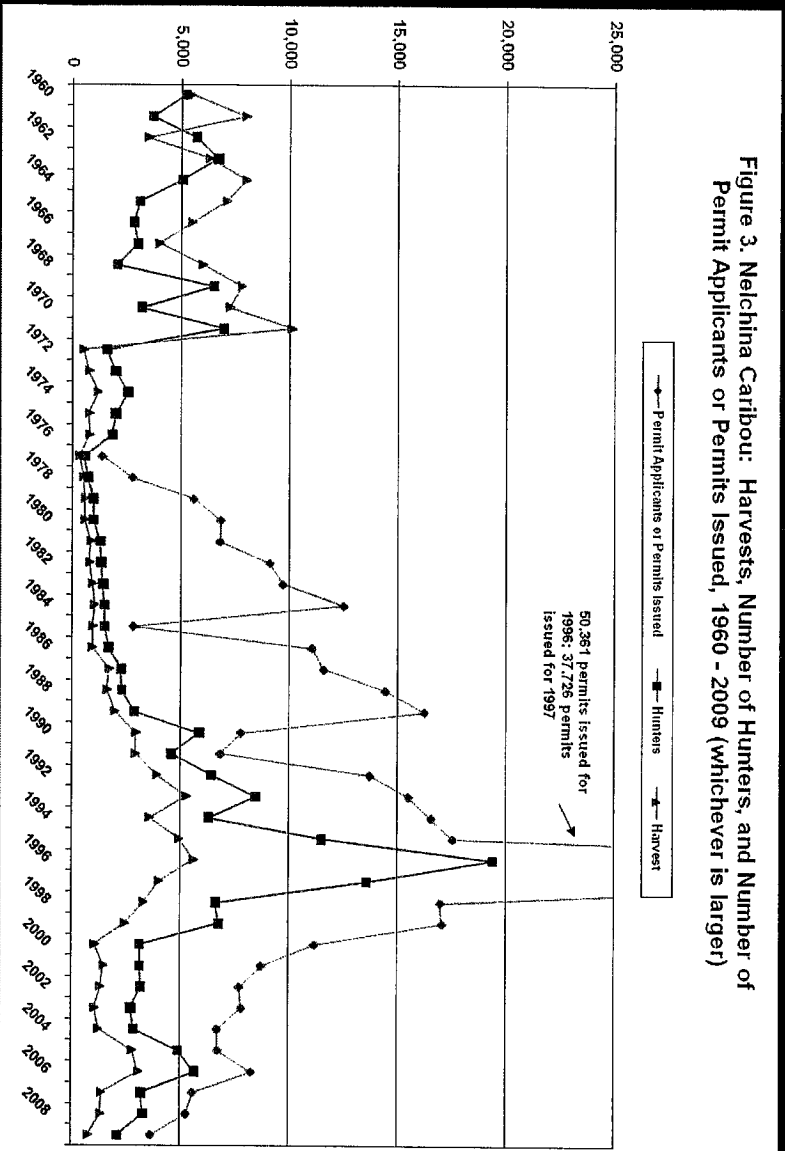
Figure 3. Nelchina Caribou: Harvests, Number of Hunters, and Number of Permit Applicants or Permits Issued, 1960 - 2009 (whichever is larger)



- 1990 - federal hunts begin; state registration and Tier II hunts.
- 1992 - new state subsistence law.
- 1993 - BOG review; "All Alaskans" policy; ANS at 100% of allowable harvest.
- 1991-2010 - Tier II hunts (except 2009).
- 1996, 1997 - special registration hunts.

Drawing permit and subsistence hunts

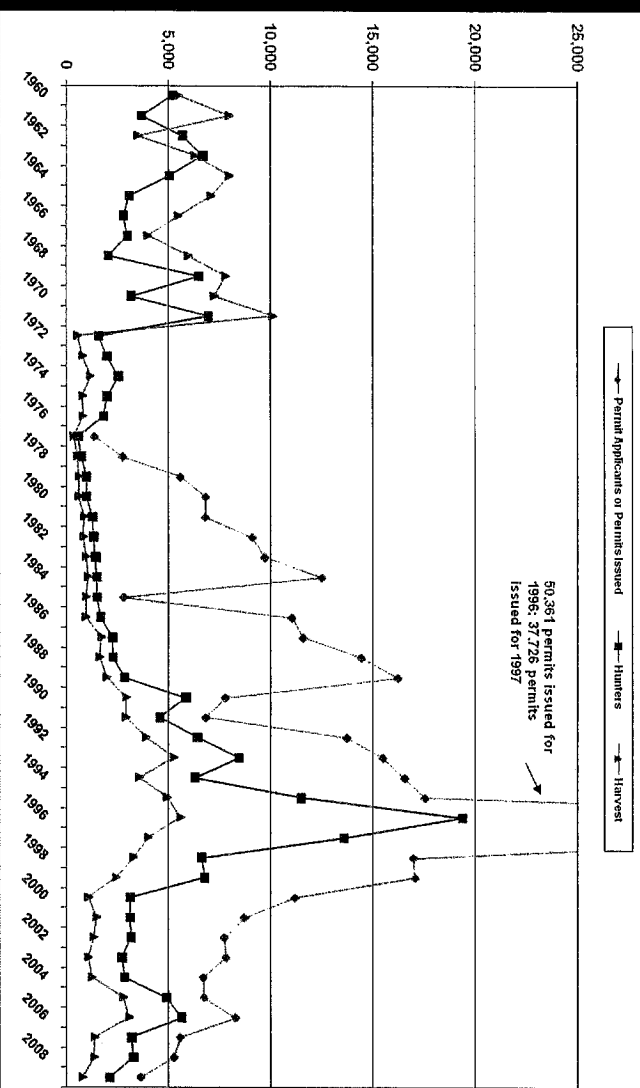
Figure 3. Nelchihna Caribou: Harvests, Number of Hunters, and Number of Permit Applicants or Permits Issued, 1960 - 2009 (whichever is larger)



- 1972 - reduction in season and bag limits.
- 1977 - drawing permit.
- 1978 - state subsistence law; Ewan case in 1980
- 1980 - ANILCA Title VIII.
- 1981 - state subsistence hunts begin.
- 1982 - Joint Board rural preference.
- 1983 - BOG C&T finding.
- 1986-1989 - subsistence registration hunts and general drawing hunts.
- 1989 - McDowell decision.

Review and revisions

Figure 3. Nelchina Caribou: Harvests, Number of Hunters, and Number of Permit Applicants or Permits Issued, 1960 - 2009 (whichever is larger)



- Revisions of Tier II questions (Appendix C).
- “Super-exclusive” hunt area proposal.
- 2006 Finding regarding patterns of use (Appendix D).
- New interpretation of “All Alaskans” policy.
- Hunt conditions to reflect C&T pattern.

C&T pattern, corresponding hunt conditions

C&T pattern

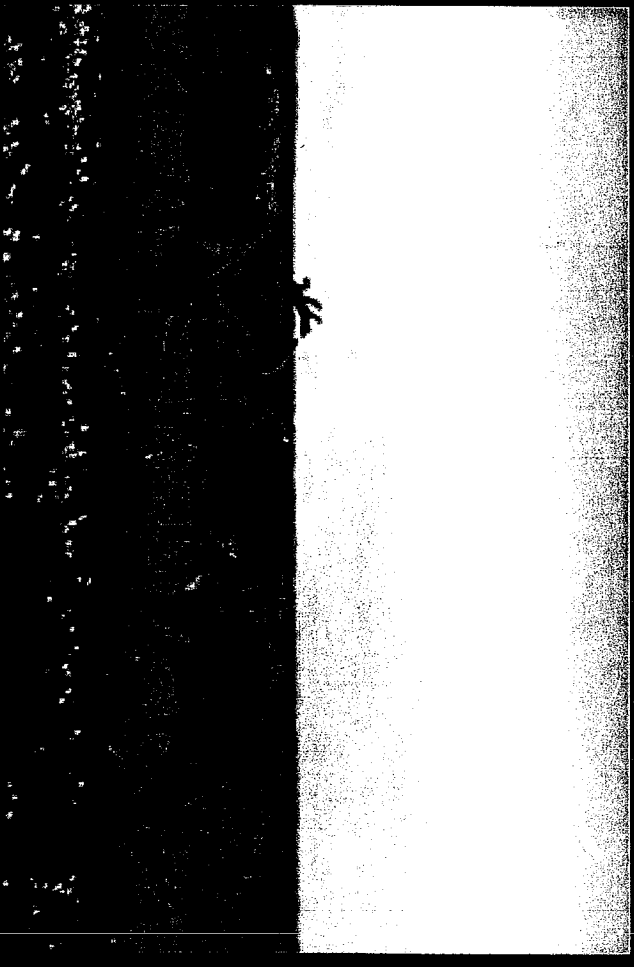
1. Efficient methods.
2. Thorough use of animal.
3. Hunting for food, not trophy.
4. Reliance on other resources from harvest area.

Hunt conditions

1. Restrictions on size of ORV.
2. Salvage requirements.
3. Destruction of trophy value of antlers.
4. Prohibition against hunting in other areas; Tier II question about time spent in area.

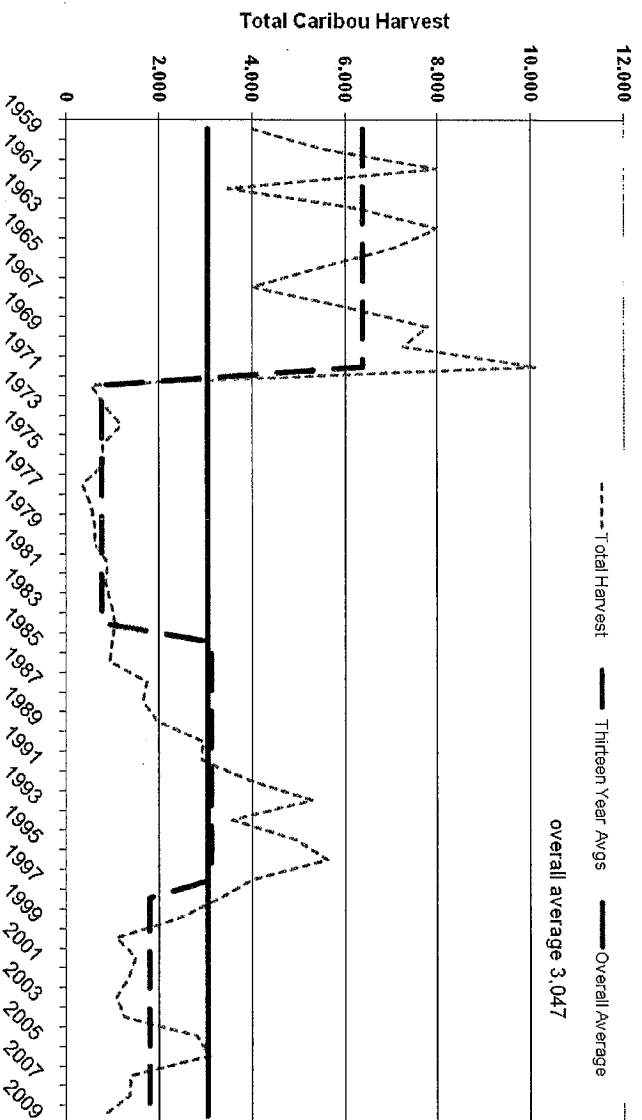
March 2009 meeting, Manning case

- ANS revised: 600 – 1,000.
- New “secondary” subsistence pattern.
- New community subsistence permit hunt.
- New Tier I hunt.
- Tier II hunt repealed.
- CHP and Tier I hunts in 2009-10; revised due to 2009 *Manning* ruling.
- July 2010 *Manning* ruling invalidated actions - lack of “factual evidentiary support”.
- Emergency regulations adopted July 2010.



Harvest data: ALL Alaskans

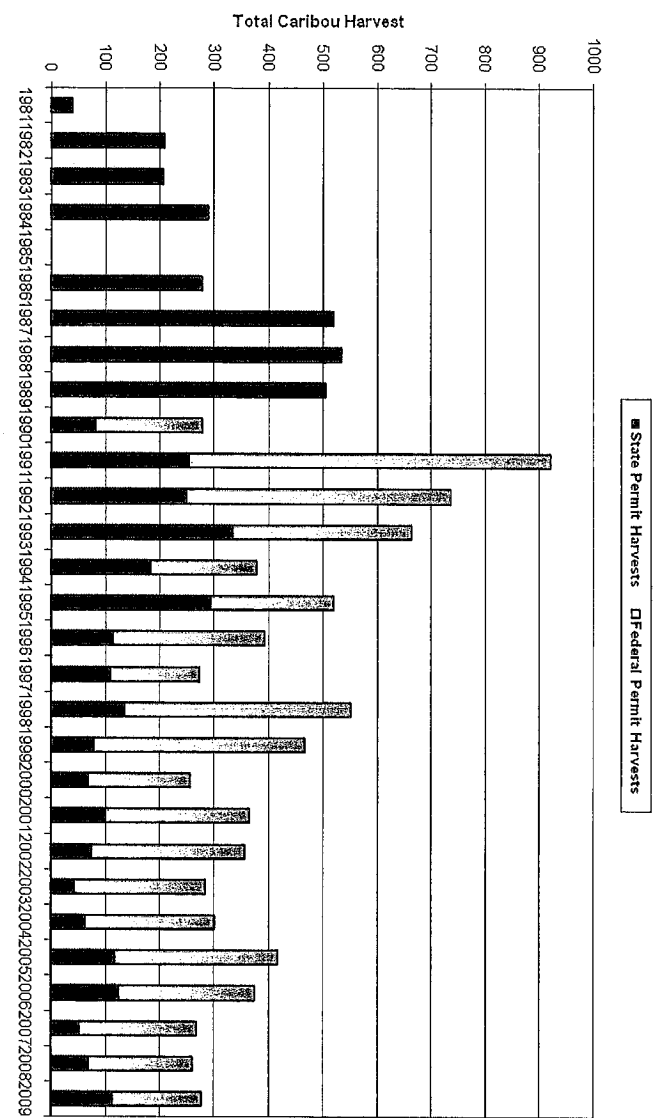
Figure 4. Harvest of Nelchima Caribou, All Alaska Residents
1959 to 2009 Showing 13 year Averages



- Average, peak herd size years = 6,391 (3,500 – 10,131)
- Average next 13 years (low herd size) = 779 (360 - 1,193)
- Average next 13 years (recovering herd size) = 3,127 (958 – 5,628)
- Average last 12 years = 1,795 (810 – 3,090)
- Average since statehood = 3,047 (360 – 10,131)

Harvest data: Local residents (GMUs 13 and 11)

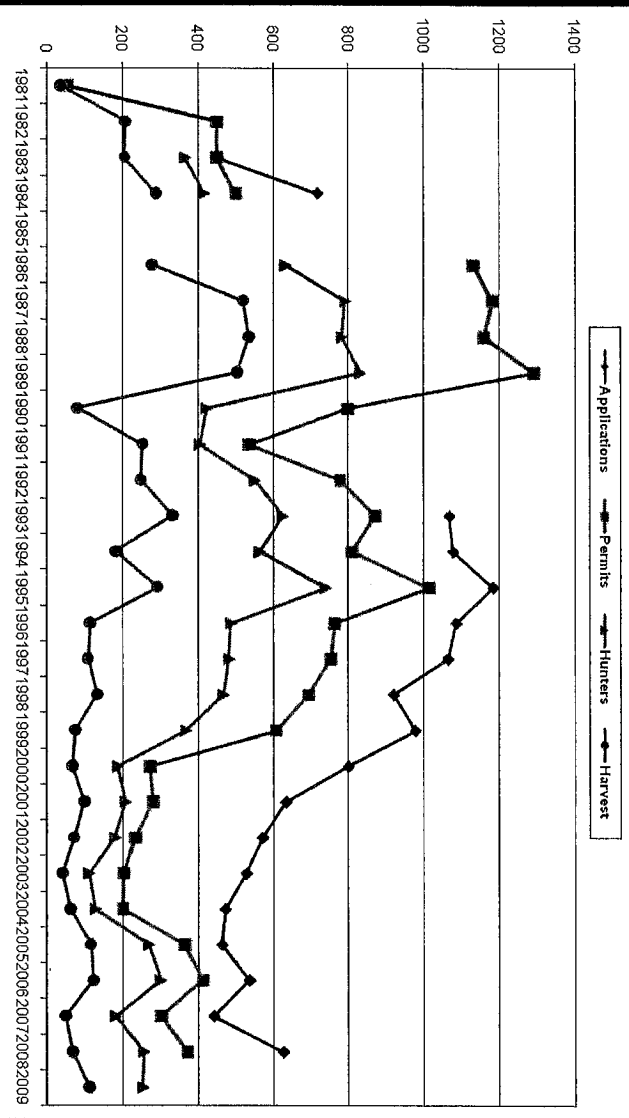
Figure 7. Nelchina Caribou Harvests by Local GMU 13 & 11 Residents, 1981 - 2009 State and Federal Subsistence Hunts



- Average, 1982 – 2009 = 405.
- Average, 1986 – 1989 (registration hunt) = 460.
- Average, 1990 – 2009 = 417.
(including 285 (68%) in federal hunts, 132 (32%) in state hunts)

Harvest data: Local residents (GMUs 13 and 11) continued

Figure 5. Number of Applicants, Permits Issued, Hunters, and Harvest: Nelchina Caribou Herd, by GMU 13 Residents (State Hunts Only), 1981 to 2009



- Participation in state hunts since 1981.
- Tier II hunts since 1991.
- Participation in state hunts peaked 1986 – 1989.
- Decline in participation in state hunts early 1990s to early 2000s.

C&T pattern options

- Subsistence uses = local and regional patterns.
- 2006 BOG finding: emphasis on community-based pattern, sometimes called "communal".
- Research also documents household and extended family patterns within the region.
- 2009 meeting record = "individualized" pattern, intermittent use (1 per 4 years), use of other herds.
- Past boards linked 2009 elements to non-subsistence patterns (general, sport, or recreational).



ANS options: background

- See separate RCs for more detail.
- Options based on available ADF&G data.
- Data from past hunts used to estimate ranges.
- Limitation 1: in most years since 1977, participation limited by permit (drawing or Tier II); reasonable opportunity not being provided.
- Limitation 2: for most years, cannot know how many hunted or would choose to hunt according to a C&T pattern, as sometimes required by hunt conditions.
- Providing reasonable opportunity for Alaskans to hunt under a given set of conditions is key to a credible ANS.

ANS range options

- A. 100% of allowable harvest.
- B. Based on long-term average of 3,000 caribou:
 - 500 - 4,500 (mean +/-SD)
 - 2,250 - 3,750 (mean +/- 25%)
 - 1,250 - 3,000 (low when within goal & mean)
- C. Based on mean harvests since 1990:
 - 1,250 - 4,250 (all years' mean [2,750] +/- SD)
 - 1,900 - 3,500 (mean of years within goal [2,700] +/- SD)
 - 1,300 - 2,700 (low within years within goal & mean)

ANS range options, continued

D. Separate findings for local residents and other residents:

Local residents: 250 – 600 (mean since 1986 +/-SD)

Local residents: 260 – 922 (low and high harvests since 1986)

E. Separate findings for local residents and other federally qualified rural residents, and other residents:

Local and other federally qualified: 340 – 680 (mean since 1986 +/-SD)

Local and other federally qualified: 278 – 922 (low and high harvests since 1986)

questions?

