

Division of Wildlife Conservation
Bruce Dale, Director
Region III, Fairbanks Area Office
1300 College Road
Fairbanks, AK 99701-1551



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Sam Cotten, Commissioner
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Bob Schmidt
Wildlife Biologist
Delta Junction, (907) 895-7491
bob.schmidt@alaska.gov

Macomb Caribou Numbers Dip, Prompt Reduced Harvest; Abbreviated Hunting Season Expected

(DELTA JUNCTION) – Hunters planning to pursue the Macomb caribou herd in August under an RC835 permit are advised that the harvest quota has been reduced and an abbreviated hunting season is likely.

The registration hunt's harvest quota was decreased from 70 bull caribou to 40 bull caribou after aerial surveys in June indicated that 700-800 animals are within the hunt area. This number is within the population objective, and a harvest of 40 bull caribou continues the Department's conservative harvest management of the Macomb caribou herd.

Scheduled to open August 10, the hunt will close by emergency order once the harvest quota of 40 bull caribou is met. Biologists expect the closure will occur prior to August 26, when motorized access in the Delta Controlled Use Area would otherwise be allowed.

"We know many people look forward to two days of motorized hunting in the Delta Controlled Use Area for the Macomb herd, but that's very unlikely to happen this year," said Area Biologist, Bob Schmidt. "We want to get the word out early – before people make the big trip or buy plane or ferry tickets."

The Macomb caribou herd roams the eastern Alaska Range between Delta River and Yerrick Creek south of the Alaska Highway. Since the early 1970s, the herd's numbers have ranged from 350 to around 1,500 animals. Today the Macomb herd is managed for a fall population of 600-800 with a sustainable harvest of 30-70 caribou.

For more information, contact Wildlife Biologist Bob Schmidt in Delta Junction at (907) 895-7491, or e-mail bob.schmidt@alaska.gov

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