

Proposal 177A

RC 37

5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

(15)

...

Units 20(B) and 20(F), those portions south of the Yukon River, and north and east of a line formed by the Richardson Highway from the Unit 20(D) boundary to its intersection with the Steese Highway, north along the Steese Highway to its intersection with the Elliot Highway, then northwest along the Elliot Highway to its intersection with the Dalton Highway, then north along the Dalton Highway to the Yukon River; and Unit 20(D) that portion north of the south bank of the Tanana River

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 caribou by registration permit only; or	Aug. 10–Sept. 30 Dec. 1–Mar. 31
---	------------------------------------

1 caribou by targeted [LIMITED REGISTRATION] permit only, during a season that may be announced by emergency order within a portion of the area during Dec. 1–Mar. 31	(Season to be announced by emergency order)
--	---

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by registration permit only	Aug. 10–Sept. 20
------------------------------------	------------------

...

Unit 20(E)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 caribou by registration permit Only; or	Aug. 10–Sept. 30 Dec. 1–Mar. 31
---	------------------------------------

1 caribou by registration permit only, during a season for up to three days	(Season to be announced by
---	----------------------------

that may be announced by emergency order within a portion of the area during the period Oct. 20–Nov. 30; or emergency order)

1 caribou by **targeted** [LIMITED REGISTRATION] permit only, during a season that may be announced by emergency order within a portion of the area during Dec. 1–Mar. 31 (Season to be announced by emergency order)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by registration permit only Aug. 10–Sept. 20

...

(20)

...

Unit 25(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 caribou by registration permit Only; or Aug. 10–Sept. 30 Dec. 1–Mar. 31

1 caribou by **targeted** [LIMITED REGISTRATION] permit only, during a season that may be announced by emergency order within a portion of the area during Dec. 1–Mar. 31 (Season to be announced by emergency order)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by registration permit only Aug. 10–Sept. 20

...

(82) “**Targeted** [HOT-SPOT] permit” means a [REGISTRATION] permit issued on **short notice and** a [RANDOM,] lottery basis to an applicant who has previously registered and **is willing** [AGREES] to participate in a hunt under short notice;

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Convert the winter limited registration permit hunt for the Fortymile Caribou Herd to a winter hot spot permit hunt.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **NO RECOMMENDATION**

RATIONALE: This proposal was submitted under authority of an agenda change request approved by the Board. It is an allocation issue that should be determined by the Board, and therefore, the Department has no recommendation.

Technological problems prevented the Department from implementing a limited winter registration permit hunt for the Fortymile Caribou Herd (FCH) in December 2012. This hunt was recommended by the Fortymile Caribou Herd Harvest Management Coalition (HMC) and approved by the Board at its March 2012 Interior/Easter Arctic meeting.

The purpose of the limited winter registration hunt was to allow a few hunters to take caribou along the Steese or Taylor Highways when large numbers of caribou are present near the highways and the unlimited registration permit hunt (RC867) closes because of concerns about exceeding the harvest quota. This proposal would convert the limited registration permit hunt to a “targeted” permit hunt, which is proposed to mean “*a permit issued on short notice and on a lottery basis to an applicant who has previously registered and is willing to participate in a hunt under short notice*”. Based on HMC recommendations, the “targeted” harvest would be limited to no more than 20% of whatever remains in the quota for the hunt zone where the hot spot hunt occurs.

Harvest management is guided by the *Fortymile Caribou Herd Harvest Plan 2012–2018* that was developed by the HMC and approved by the Board in March 2012. Alaska members of the HMC include Anchorage, Central, Eagle, Delta, Fairbanks, Upper Tanana/Fortymile and Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committees and the Federal Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council.

Total FCH harvest in Alaska has been limited to approximately 2% of the herd since 2001 to allow it to grow and to potentially reoccupy its former range in Alaska and Yukon, Canada. A total of 1,066 Fortymile caribou were harvested in regulatory year 2011–2012. The most recent FCH photocensus in July 2010 indicated a population of approximately 51,600 caribou. Models suggest the herd increased 4% annually during 2006–2010. Photocensus attempts were unsuccessful during 2011 and 2012. The Department will attempt another photocensus in June 2013. Harvest will be increased if the herd continues to grow.

Under 5 AAC 99.025 (a) (4), the Board has found that caribou in game management units (GMUs) 12, 20D, 20E, and 25C (FCH) have positive customary and traditional uses. The Board has also found that 350–400 caribou are the amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (ANS).

Prior to taking final action, the Board should determine whether the proposed regulations provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence.
