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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Nushagak Peninsula State Registration Caribou Hunt Expands to Include Federal Hunt Area**

(DILLINGHAM) – Lands open to caribou hunting under state registration permit RC501 on the Nushagak Peninsula are expanding. Beginning March 17, the area open to caribou hunting under the state permits will also include lands within the federal registration permit hunt FC1702 area as well as those lands already open between Right Hand Point in Unit 17A and the Wood River in Unit 17C. For those who already acquired an RC501 permit, the second part of hunt condition (2) within the asterisks (\*\*), no longer applies; hunters do not need to acquire a new permit to participate in this expanded hunt area.

Caribou hunting in the FC1702 hunt area has traditionally been managed under a federal permit only, restricted to residents of Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, Aleknagik, Dillingham, Clark's Point, and Ekuk. Concerns that large numbers of caribou in the Nushagak Peninsula caribou herd could over-utilize habitat, leading to a rapid decline in the population and/or a migration away from the peninsula, have prompted the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, to cooperatively broaden the hunt.

"This will allow all resident hunters to participate and provide for a higher harvest, with the goal of preserving this caribou herd at a sustainable level and provide for a long-term subsistence resource," said Dillingham Area Wildlife Biologist Neil Barten.

The following regulations will apply to this hunt:

- Hunters can harvest two caribou
- Hunters can harvest caribou of either sex
- Hunters must have a separate permit for each caribou
- The season will close at midnight on March 31

- Hunters must abide by all conditions listed on the permit, including reporting their hunting effort and harvest

To participate, hunters must possess a valid Alaska state hunting license for the 2016 calendar year. Caribou harvested during this regulatory year under a state permit or harvest ticket, or under a federal permit count against hunters' state bag limits for hunting caribou anywhere in Unit 17. Permit hunt conditions may differ between state and federal permits; it is the hunter's responsibility to know which conditions apply. Hunters are reminded that the same-day airborne (SDA) allowance for caribou hunting on the Nushagak Peninsula applies only to the federal permit (FC1702), and not to the state permit RC501.

Permits will be available online @ <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or in person in Anchorage, Bethel, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Home, King Salmon, Palmer, and Soldotna.

For additional information contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Dillingham at 907-842-2334, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, at 907-842-1063.

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