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Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, Oct 16, 2019

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Fortymile Caribou State Winter Season Cancelled

The State of Alaska winter hunting season for Fortymile caribou in all hunt zones **will not** open on October 27, 2019 as tentatively indicated in Alaska Hunting Regulations. This only applies to state caribou hunts in zones 1-4 shown in the map below. The federal caribou hunt on federal lands is not affected by these changes and is scheduled to open on November 1. Hunters with questions about federal subsistence regulations should call the Office of Subsistence Management at (800) 478-1456.

High hunter participation and abundant caribou accessible from the Steese Highway (Zones 1 and 4) during the first 5 days of the fall hunt resulted in harvest of 2,178 caribou in this area. Combined with an additional harvest of 393 caribou in other Fortymile Caribou hunt zones, the total fall harvest was 2,582 caribou. The entire 2019-2020 annual Alaska harvest quota for the Fortymile caribou hunt area (Zones 1 through 4) and all hunts (fall and winter) was set at 2,500 caribou. Because the Fortymile herd has grown over the decades, this year's harvest quota is two and a half times the harvest quota of 1,000 caribou in 2016 and sixteen times more than the 1996 quota of 150.

"Based on previous experience and August caribou locations, we predicted it would take about 5 days for hunters to harvest the quota of 860 caribou allocated to the areas accessible from the Steese Highway," said Tok Area Biologist Jeff Gross. "We were surprised by the level of hunter participation and harvest success."

The Alaska Board of Game endorsed the Fortymile Caribou Herd Harvest Plan (harvest plan) as a means of guiding harvest of the herd. The harvest plan allocates 65% of the annual harvest quota to Alaska and 35% to Yukon, Canada. In Alaska, 75% of the harvest quota is allocated to the fall hunt and 25% to the winter hunt. The Alaska harvest quota is further divided between 4 zones south of the Yukon River in portions of Game Management Units 20B, 20D, 20F and all of Units 20E and 25C. At about 83,000 animals, the Fortymile Herd is the largest caribou herd in Interior Alaska.

Hunters are reminded to report as soon as possible to avoid penalties. Fortymile permit holders who fail to report will not be allowed to obtain registration, drawing, or tier I and II permits to hunt big game next year and may be cited for a violation of the Alaska hunting regulations.

Hunters can report on the internet at <http://hunt.alaska.gov>, or in person or by phone to the ADF&G office in Tok (883-2971). Hunters who report by phone must also mail their permit reports or drop them off to the Tok ADF&G office. Unsuccessful hunters must return their reports to the Tok office or report online at <http://hunt.alaska.gov>. Hunters are urged to obtain a receipt when they turn in their hunt reports or to mail them by delivery confirmation receipt.

