Alaska and Newfoundland might be on opposite ends of the continent, but they are close together in their concern for caribou management. Indeed, there is a Newfoundland connection for much of what we know today about caribou ecology in Alaska.

In late October 1989 I was one of a group of 16 Alaskans who traveled to the northeastern-most point of the continent—the island of Newfoundland in the Canadian provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador—to reinforce this connection. The group was made up of biologists representing various state and federal agencies, private consulting firms, and the University of Alaska. Our goal was not to set some Guinness record of long-distance travel but to attend the Fourth North American Caribou Workshop (NACW) in St. Johns, Newfoundland.

Though far away, this workshop held real significance for the well-being of caribou in Alaska. Changes in Alaskan (and North American) caribou management, or proposals for change, are frequently initiated from findings presented and discussed at the NACWs, or at similar scientific meetings.
Newfoundland's highly successful caribou program was made possible by contributions of university-trained biologists working closely with people whose skill was acquired through experience.
The decade of the 1990s will be a particularly exciting and informative period for caribou biologists and others interested in caribou. Many North American herds are now larger than at any time in the memory of caribou biologists. Much of the theory and speculation about what happens when caribou populations are high will be tested in the 90s.

Alaska now has more caribou (750,000 or more) than at any other time since before 1930, and the number is still growing. Arguably, there are as many caribou in Alaska now as at any other time since written records have been kept. Certainly there are more caribou than at any time since the department was created with statehood in 1959. Hence, caribou-related phenomena currently being observed and studied constitute new ground.

Even more exciting for caribou management is the challenge of integrating the constantly changing human value judgments regarding wildlife with the new caribou ecology facts that are becoming known.
Muskoxen Make a Comeback

Animals of the Far North and How They Adapt to Cold