

# WAH Harvest Assessment Program

An oral report to the Board of Game  
Kotzebue, January 2024  
RC 4 Tab 1.4


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ADF&G Subsistence

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## Project Methods

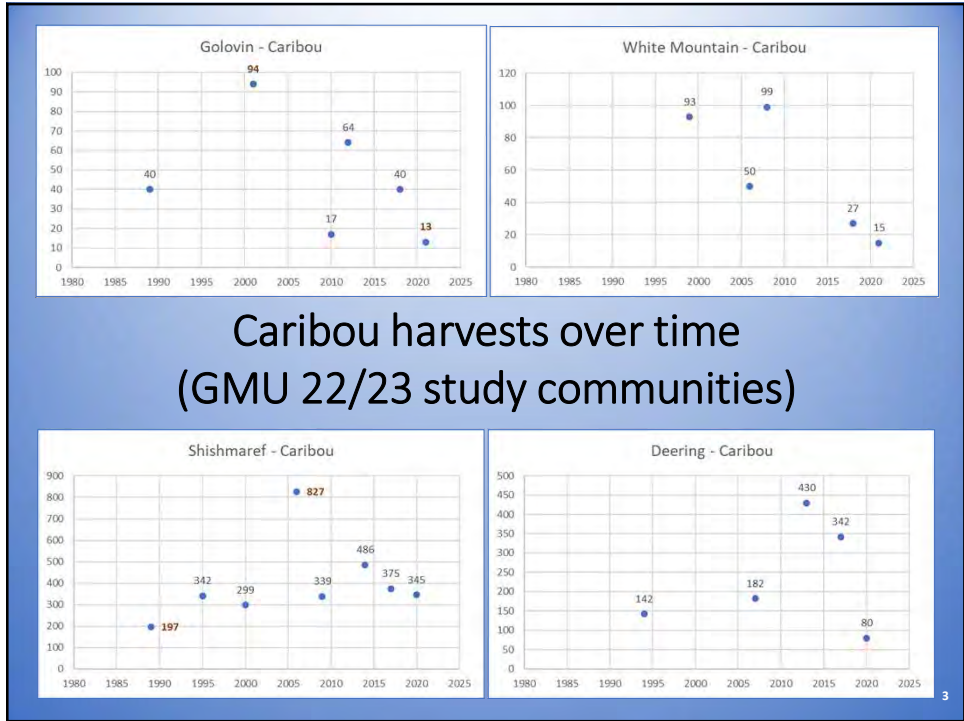
- ❖ March 2019 – June 2024
- ❖ Household (HH) surveys, ethnographic interviewing, and participant-observation
- ❖ COVID effect: surveys cancelled in 2020 and remote in 2021
- ❖ Fieldwork for spring 2020 postponed due to COVID
- ❖ Conducted 43 ethnographic interviews



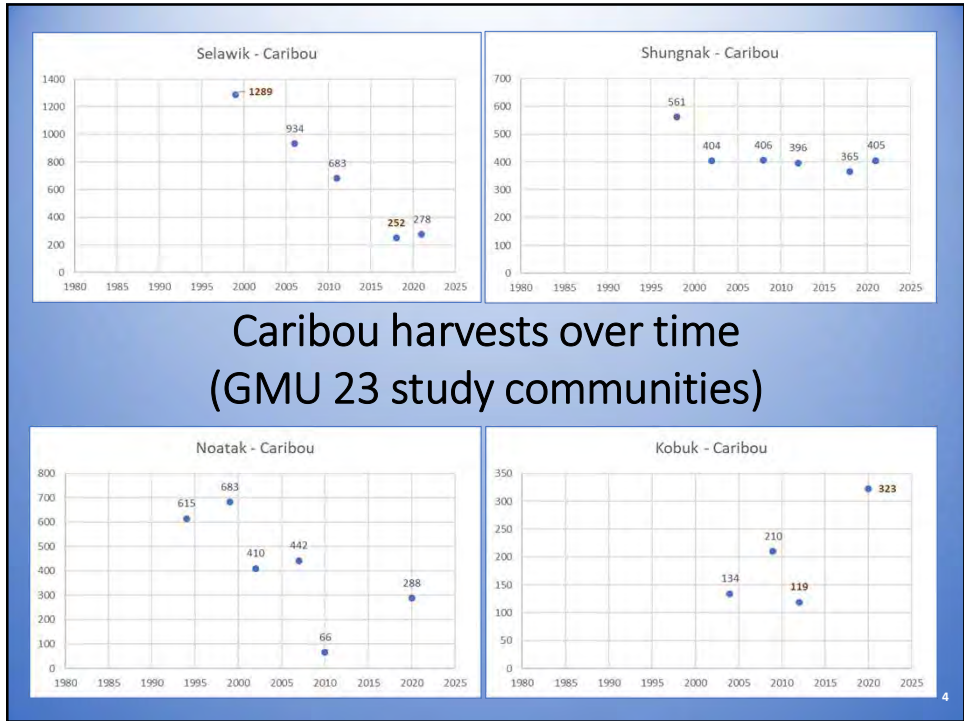
**Timeline:**  
**Spring 2020:** postponed  
**Spring 2021:** Shishmaref, Deering, Noatak and Kobuk  
**Spring 2022:** Golovin, Selawik, Shungnak, and White Mountain  
**Spring 2023:** Shishmaref, Deering, Noatak, and Kobuk  
**2024:** Report writing and community reviews

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## Local and Traditional Knowledge

### Methods:

- ❖ Household surveys
- ❖ Participant observation
- ❖ Ethnographic interviews

### Themes and observations:

- ❖ Changing patterns of harvest in response to caribou migratory changes
- ❖ New environmental patterns that impact caribou survival.
- ❖ Concerns about competition and impact of other users on caribou
- ❖ Increase in predators observed on landscape
- ❖ Sharing of caribou meat remains very important

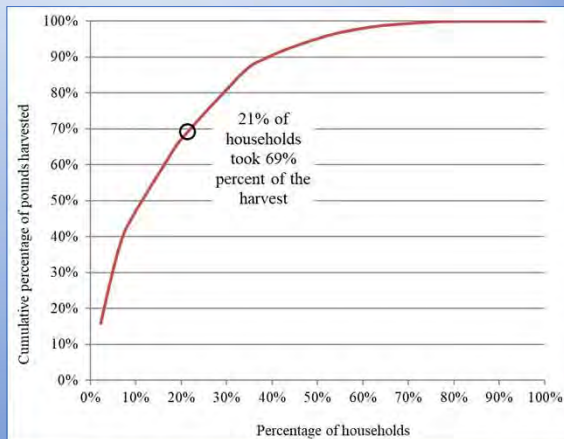
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## Harvest and Uses of Caribou

### Characteristics of subsistence-based communities:

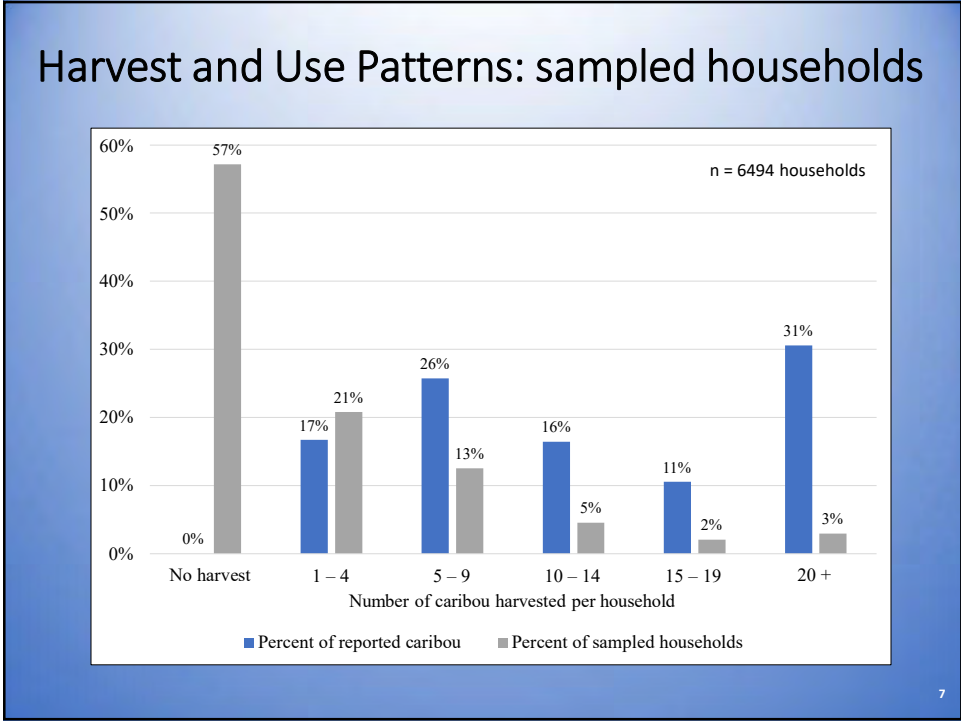
- ❖ Harvest specialization
- ❖ “Super Household” concept
- ❖ Sharing networks



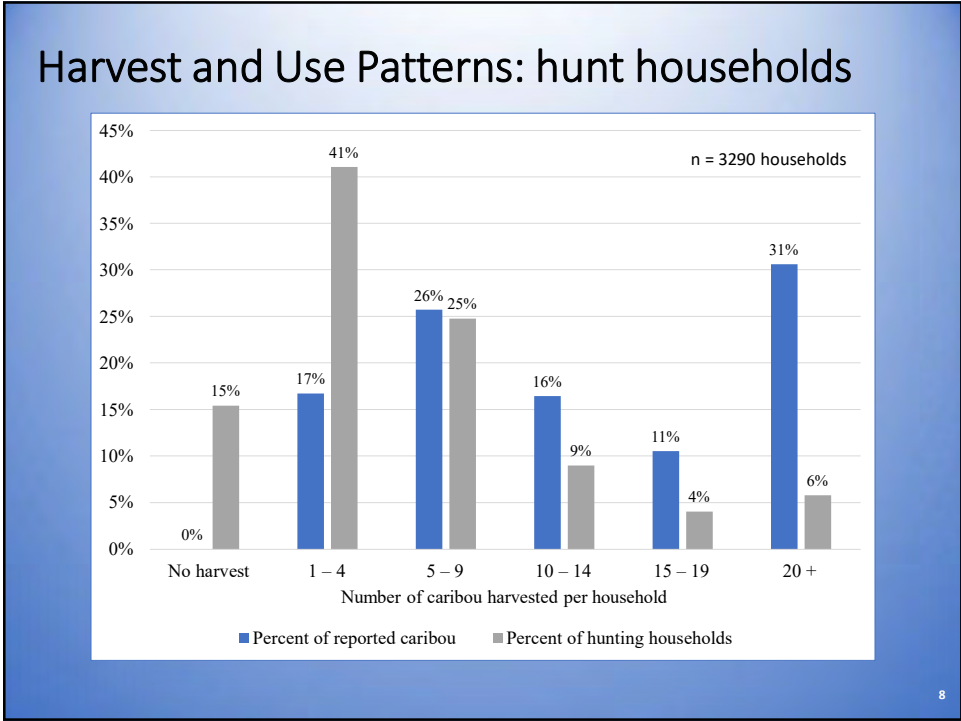
Harvest specialization, Kiana, 2021

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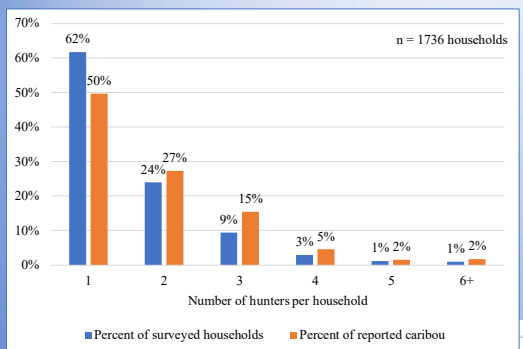


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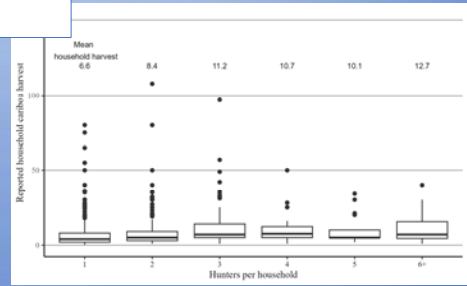
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### Harvest and Use Patterns: hunters per household

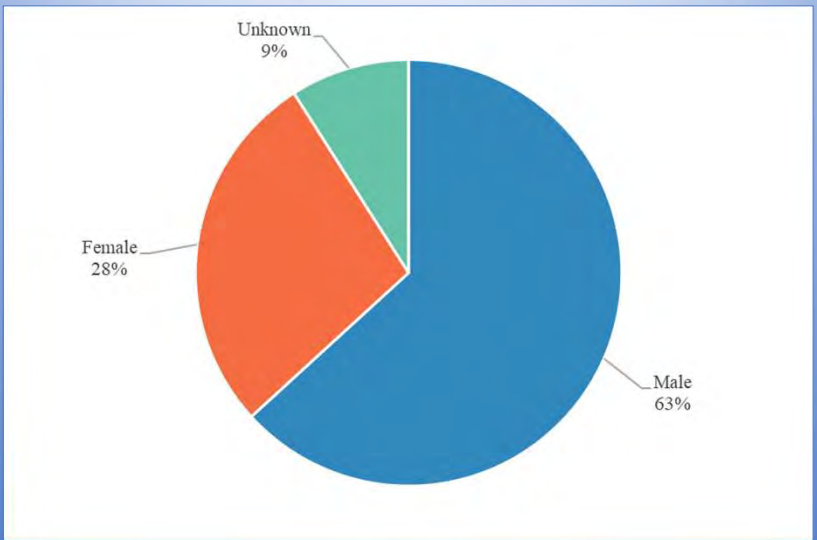


The majority of households reported only one hunter per household

High harvesting households are in all categories; harvests do not necessarily increase with more hunters per household



### Harvest and Use Patterns: harvest by sex



## Proposals

Proposal 2: Reduces the current resident bag limit for WAH caribou across the range of the herd

Proposal 3: Closes the nonresident season for WAH caribou across the range of the herd

Proposal 4: Aligns caribou seasons in GMUs 26A and 23 and a reduction of the current resident bag limit

Proposal 5: Reduces the current resident bag limit for WAH caribou in GMUs 26A and 23, and changes the nonresident hunt to a registration permit with additional restrictions

Proposal 18: Expands the current hunt area for caribou in 22A

Proposals 36 and 37: Reduces the caribou bag limit for residents in Unit 23 from 5 caribou per day to four caribou total, only one of which may be a cow

Proposal 38: Closes all nonresident caribou hunting in Unit 23

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## Future Research...

- ❖ In 2022, the WAHWG encouraged agencies to develop a comprehensive method to obtain accurate harvest data from communities across the herd's range
- ❖ In October 2023, ADF&G hosted a roundtable discussion to discuss future collaborative survey work  
Attendees: NANA, NSBWD, USFWS, NPS, ADF&G
- ❖ Topics: survey content, agency capacities, funding sources, project coordination

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Thank you

to the communities of  
Golovin, White Mountain,  
Deering, Shishmaref, Selawik,  
Shungnak, Noatak, and Kobuk!

also to the WAHWG  
and to DWC

Questions?



Matt Cameron, NPS 13