

98-123-BOG

FINDING OF EMERGENCY

The Alaska Board of Game finds that an emergency exists and the attached regulations are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety or general welfare. The facts constituting the emergency include the following:

The Northern Alaska Peninsula caribou herd population management goal is 15,000 to 20,000 caribou, with a minimum bull:cow ratio of 40 bulls per 100 cows. The herd size was 16,500 caribou in 1992 and declined to 12,000 in 1994. The current estimate is 9,200 animals.

The board has been concerned by this gradual population decline and has been watching it closely; it was the department's belief that the regulations currently in place were restrictive enough to protect the population, and yet offer some hunting opportunity for local and nonlocal hunters.

Now that the population size has dropped below 10,000, the existing regulations do not adequately protect cows. The harvest of cows occurs primarily during the winter months, primarily by Unit 9 residents. Last year, the harvest of cows was estimated at 500 animals. Prudent management of this herd would require that cow harvest is reduced as much as possible to reverse the downward trend. Although the overall population has declined below 10,000 animals the bull:cow ratio is relatively high at 42 bulls per 100 cows; therefore, bulls can be harvested without contributing to the decline or dropping the bull:cow ratio to an unacceptable level.


Accordingly, the board finds that the most effective measure to curtail the population decline is to substantially reduce harvest of cow caribou and redirect the winter and spring harvest by residents from cows to bulls. This is especially important in Unit 9C where much of the winter harvest occurs. Additionally, it is important for all hunters to take only bulls during September through November to protect calves and maximize productivity. If regulatory action is delayed, the population will continue to decline to an unacceptable level and may result in closure to the hunting of this herd in the future.

ADOPTION ORDER

Under the authority of AS 16.05.255, AS 16.05.258, and under a delegation of authority from the Board of Game under AS 16.05.270, the attached regulations are therefore adopted as emergency regulations to take effect immediately as provided in AS 44.62.180 (3).

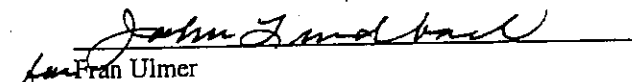
This action is not expected to require an increased appropriation.

DATE: 8.19.98
Juneau, Alaska


Frank Rue, Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

FILING CERTIFICATION

John Lundback For
I, Fran Ulmer, Lieutenant Governor for the State of Alaska, certify that on Aug 20, 1998, at 9:33 a.m., I filed the attached regulations according to the provisions of AS 44.62.


Fran Ulmer
Lieutenant Governor

Effective August 20, 1998

Register 147, October 1998

Expires December 17, 1998
unless made "permanent"
by the adopting agency.