

## **Alaska Board of Game**

**May 26, 2010**

Teleconference meeting re  
Unimak Island Wolf Hunting and Trapping Seasons

### Summary of Actions

The Board of Game met by teleconference on Wednesday, May 26, 2010 to consider a petition from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to extend by emergency regulation the wolf hunting and trapping seasons for a portion of Unimak Island in Unit 10. Five of seven board members were present (Bradley, Turner absent). Public listen-only teleconference sites were available at Department of Fish and Game offices in King Salmon, Anchorage, and Juneau.

The department presented information on Unimak Island caribou and wolf population levels. It described the recent rapid decline in the caribou population due to poor calf recruitment and exceptionally low bull:cow ratios. The department conveyed that the viability of the caribou population is in question and that action is needed sooner than later to protect the herd. Staff explained that the Unimak Wolf Management Plan (5 AAC 92.125(l)) adopted in March 2010 may face implementation issues with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and that a wolf season extension could provide at least a partial benefit to caribou herd recovery efforts.

The board discussed how much wolf hunting could be anticipated during June, the potential benefits to caribou calf survival if wolf numbers were reduced, the financial cost and effectiveness of caribou transplant efforts should these be needed, and the potential that denning wolves might be harvested. The board noted that its intent was to reduce but not eliminate the number of wolves. The board indicated a preference for a more focused wolf reduction effort conducted by department personnel timed precisely during caribou calving.

The board adopted a finding of emergency based on the Unimak Caribou Herd's rapid decline (from 1,200 in 2002 to about 400 today), a bull:cow ratio decline (from about 54:100 to less than 5:100), and the extremely low calf production. The board expressed that any further delay in action would extend the time needed for herd recovery.

The board voted to extend the wolf trapping and hunting seasons to June 30 for that portion of Unimak Island west of 164° longitude. The board clarified its intent to have the emergency regulation expire this summer, recognizing that there would be opportunity during future meetings to make additional adjustments as needed.