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PRESS RELEASE

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Registration Caribou Hunt RC501 to Open in Portions of Units 17A and 17C

(DILLINGHAM) – Registration caribou hunt RC501 will open in portions of Game Management Units 17A and 17C by emergency order (No. 04-04-17) at 12:01 a.m. on August 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018.

The announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service opens the area north of the Igushik River under the RC501 permit beginning on August 1, including:

- GMU 17A, all drainages that terminate east of Right Hand Point (*except for that portion of the Nushagak Peninsula south of the Igushik River, Tuklung River and Tuklung Hills west to Tvativak Bay*).
- GMU 17C remainder, west of the east banks of the Wood River, Lake Aleknagik, Agulowak River, Lake Nerka, and the Agulupak River (*except for that portion of the Nushagak Peninsula south of the Igushik River, Tuklung River and Tuklung Hills west to Tvativak Bay*).

The bag limit under the RC501 hunt is two caribou. Hunters are reminded that only two caribou per regulatory year can be taken under a state permit in Unit 17. Permits will be available online at <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or in person at department offices in Anchorage, Bethel, Dillingham, Fairbanks, Homer, King Salmon, Palmer, and Soldotna.

The RC501 permit area includes the ranges of two caribou herds – the Nushagak Peninsula herd and the Mulchatna herd. In spring and fall of 2016, the federal hunt area within the Nushagak Peninsula was opened to hunters using the RC501 permit in an effort to increase harvest and lower the population of the Nushagak Peninsula herd, which exceeded objectives. With a reported harvest in this area of 371 caribou during fall 2016 and spring 2017, the population estimate declined from 1,250 in 2016 to 968 in 2017. The Nushagak Peninsula herd is now closer to the optimum level of 750 and these federal lands and adjacent private lands south of the Igushik River will not be opened under this state permit. Opportunity will still be available on the north side of the Igushik River in the remainder of the RC501 hunt area where some animals from both the Nushagak Peninsula herd and the Mulchatna herd may be encountered.

For questions or specific information on lands open to caribou harvest in the RC501 hunt, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Dillingham at (907) 842-2334 or Andy Aderman with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, at (907) 842-1063.

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