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Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: February 24, 2021

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Winter Fortymile Caribou Bag Limit Increased to 3 Caribou

(Fairbanks) – The resident bag limit for the ongoing State of Alaska Fortymile Registration Hunt (RC867) will increase to three caribou (either sex) in all Zones on February 27, 2021. Hunters must obtain a third RC867 registration permit in order to harvest their third caribou. This action will provide additional late-season hunter opportunity, puts more caribou in Alaskan’s freezers and helps make further progress toward meeting the 2020–2021 harvest objective for the herd.

Successful hunters must bring a 4-inch section of the lower jaw with front teeth attached to an ADF&G office in Tok, Delta Junction, or Fairbanks.

If a hunter already harvested one or two caribou in the fall or winter Fortymile caribou hunts (RC860 and RC867) or another hunt area in Alaska, a third caribou can be harvested under the RC867 hunt (excluding hunters and their households who hold permits for or have harvested caribou in the Nelchina caribou hunts RC561, or RC562). Hunters with questions about harvesting multiple caribou in Alaska can refer to the 2020–2021 State of Alaska Hunting regulations or contact the department for further clarification before heading to the field.

“Caribou are currently accessible in all portions of the range, with caribou still accessible near the road systems” said Fortymile caribou manager, Jeff Gross. “Harvest has been steady this winter, but with the larger harvest quota and multiple bag limit this year we anticipate the season will stay open for remainder of the winter season. This should provide hunters with excellent harvest opportunity as temperatures increase and daylight lengthens.” The season is scheduled to remain open through March 31.

Successful hunters must report within three days of the kill on the internet at <http://hunt.alaska.gov>, or in person or by phone to the ADF&G office in Tok (883-2971). Hunters who report by phone must also mail their permit reports or drop them off to the Tok ADF&G office. Unsuccessful hunters must return their reports to the Tok office or report online by April 15. Permit holders who fail to report will not be allowed to obtain registration, drawing, or tier I and II permits next year, and may be cited for a violation of the Alaska hunting regulations.

The winter Fortymile harvest quota is 5,000 caribou, including 3,000 in Zone 1 and 2,000 in Zone 3. Harvest in Zones 2 and 4 will be applied to the overall winter quota and may remain open until the end of the season. Zone quotas may be adjusted to help extend season length. This winter’s harvest quota is in addition to the fall harvest quota of 5,000.

These changes affect only State of Alaska seasons and bag limits and do not affect federally-qualified subsistence users hunting under federal regulations. Changes to Federal seasons and bag limits will be announced by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). For more information about federal seasons and bag limits, contact Eastern Interior Assistant Field Manager John Haddix at (907) 474-2350 or jahaddix@blm.gov.

State and federal land use restrictions by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources and the federal Bureau of Land Management apply to any vehicle use and are separate from hunting regulations. Hunters should contact these agencies for more information about vehicle use.

Following the fall hunt, the department assessed the herd's nutritional condition before setting this winter's RC867 harvest quota. After carefully monitoring herd nutritional status, natural mortality, and effects of increased harvest on the herd size, biologists concluded that the best management strategy was to use harvest to quickly reduce herd size to a more sustainable level. This strategy is the best option to reduce long-term impacts to the herd's forage from continued overgrazing and allow the nutritional condition of the herd to improve enough to help slow or arrest the decline.

Hunters should be aware of local ordinances and restrictions aimed at preventing the spread of COVID-19. Please respect any local restrictions, wear face coverings and practice social distancing when in communities in or near the hunt area. Hunters may want to call ahead to find out if local communities have supplies available for sale.

