For Immediate Release

Flying Reindeer Hunting Closed

(Juneau) – As flying season fast approaches for magic reindeer, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reminds hunters that the season is closed. Advisory Announcement CO-12-2023 was issued closing the hunting season on 12/24/2023 at 6:00pm through 12/25/2023 6:00am. This closure is specific to reindeer named Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen, and of course Rudolph.

Last season, many ADF&G offices reported an increase in the number of calls and questions regarding magic reindeer. Santa's reindeer (R.t. saintniconolas magicalus) look very similar to common reindeer or caribou, but have many characteristics that distinguish them from the seven other common subspecies. They retain their antlers year-round. The population is small and their range is limited to the North Pole area, with one notable seasonal exception. Researchers differ over whether the annual night flight of R.t. saintniconolas magicalus may technically be considered a migration.

The diet of Santa's reindeer during the month of December consists almost entirely of carrot snacks with a little sparkly oatmeal. This enables them to fly long distances, during short periods of time, in unfavorable visibility conditions. While feeding wildlife is generally prohibited in Alaska, it is permissible to provide carrot snacks and glitter laced oatmeal on Christmas eve should the faint sounds of harness bells and hoofbeats be detected on the rooftop.

More information on Santa's magic reindeer is available on the ADF&G website: https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=santasreindeer.main