



## ***Board of Game Testimony Fairbanks Region III 2017***

*Resident Hunters of Alaska is dedicated to enhancing and prioritizing opportunities for Alaskan resident hunters in accordance with responsible wildlife management, focused on preserving our Alaskan hunting heritage for future generations.*

---

### **RHAK Proposal #105**

**Change the nonresident caribou bag limit for caribou and  
resident cow season in Unit 26B**

This proposal was drafted in May 2016 based on anecdotal information that the Central Arctic Herd (CAH) had declined and harvest rates of both cows and bulls was not sustainable.

Since this proposal was introduced, the Department came out with an updated population estimate that was half of the previous estimate, below the Intensive Management population objective, and recommended that harvests of CAH caribou be reduced by 200-300 caribou.

*“In light of the recent CAH population decline, ADF&G will recommend that the Board of Game reduce harvest in Unit 26B by 200–300 caribou. This can be achieved by reducing the bag limit from five animals to one or two, as well as shortening the hunting season. Cow harvest will also likely be restricted or closed entirely for all hunters. If the proposal passes, regulatory changes could go into effect spring of 2017.*

***See Proposal 105 and subsequent ADF&G recommendations located at: ADF&G website > Regulations > Board of Game> Meeting information> Interior Region – or this URL:***

*[www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo&date=02-17-2017&meeting=fairbanks](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo&date=02-17-2017&meeting=fairbanks)*

*Even under these changes, the herd may continue to decline. Some adult mortality already occurred from July to October 2016, prior to winter when most mortality usually occurs.”*

Unit 26 B remainder, below 69° 30N latitude:

## **Unit 26B, Remainder**

- **Resident hunters: 2 caribou by harvest ticket, August 1–April 30; however, cow caribou may only be taken November 1–April 30 (projected harvest of 320 bulls, 50 cows).**
- **Nonresident hunters: One bull by harvest ticket, August 25 – September 7 (projected harvest of 130 bulls)**

## Unit 26B, Remainder

- **Resident hunters: 2 caribou by harvest ticket, August 1–April 30; however, cow caribou may only be taken November 1–April 30**
- **Nonresident hunters: One bull by harvest ticket, August 1–September 15**

### Predicted bull harvest 26B remainder:

Nonresidents:	246 (=44% of projected harvest)
Residents:	315 (=56% of projected harvest)

**Total bulls: 561**

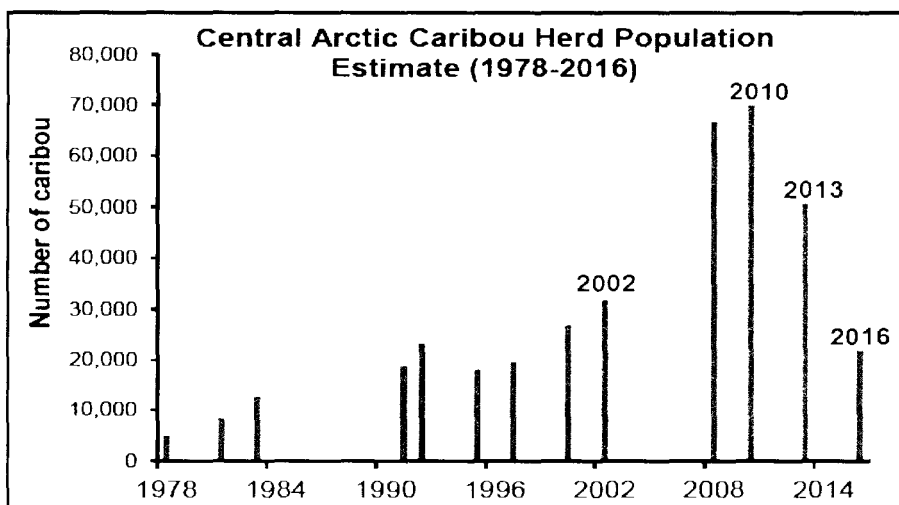
### Predicted cow harvest:

Nonresidents:	0
Residents:	35
Unit 26A residents:	20
<b>Total cows:</b>	<b>55</b>

## Current ADFG CAH population estimate of 22,000 animals

**Harvest Objective: 1,400 – 1,600**

**ANS is 250 -450 caribou**



CAH population estimates over a 38-year period. Population surveys are attempted 2-3 years after a successful one.

The population objective for CAH is 28,000-32,000.



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

PO Box 60095, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706 (907) 371-7436  
email info@residenthuntersofalaska.org web www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

---



THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR TIME!

RHAK  
IS COMMITTED TO  
ENSURING OUR  
HUNTING TRADITIONS  
AND OPPORTUNITIES  
ARE PASSED ON TO  
FUTURE GENERATIONS!





PO Box 622905, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706-22905 (907) 371-7436  
email: rhak@residenthuntersofalaska.org web: www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

February 18, 2017 Board of Game Region III meeting

Script of Testimony of Mark Richards, Exec. Director Resident Hunters of Alaska,  
in conjunction with Powerpoint presentation.

[slide 1] Good Afternoon Mr Chairman and members of the board. My name is Mark Richards. I'm the executive director of Resident Hunters of Alaska, our acronym is pronounced "RACK". RHAK is a not quite a year old and we represent over 1,000 Alaskan hunters from Barrow to Ketchikan and points in between, and we're growing every week.

This little guy in the picture up there with his first grouse, one of our member's sons, Landen, is what RHAK is all about, wanting to ensure and carry on our hunting traditions and opportunities for future generations of Alaskans.

Our public comments are PC 31, which list the proposals we support and oppose.

[slide 2] I'm going to use my time today to speak to our RHAK proposal #105, which asks for changes to Central Arctic Herd bag limits, seasons, and cow harvests for both residents and nonresidents.

We submitted this proposal in May of 2016 over concerns with the Central Arctic Herd. I worked closely with Beth Lenart while working on this proposal, based on the then-population estimate of the Central Arctic Herd.

We contacted air-taxis & transporters and tried to find a middle ground on what might be acceptable to all parties.

[slide 3] This next slide is from the new CAH newsletter that came out this winter. ADFG points to their A&Rs on our proposal 105, which I was basing our testimony on this past week.

Note that the Department states that even with these new recommended seasons and bag limits that the herd may still continue to decline.

[slide 4] Here are the Department A&Rs as of the start of this meeting. Based on the updated CAH population estimate after our proposal was submitted, the Department recommended much more stringent reductions that we had in our original proposal.

I prepared to come here and support the Department amendments to our proposal.

But yesterday the Department submitted RC 22 which recommended a much longer nonresident season with a much higher projected nonresident harvest.

[slide 5] This is the new Department recommendation for Unit 26B remainder, that came out yesterday afternoon, with the projected harvests from Beth that aren't within the Department RC.

The recommended nonresident projected bull harvests for Unit 26B remainder is now 44% of the overall bull harvest, which is higher than the 41% nonresident harvest of the Central Arctic Herd that has occurred during the last 3 years.

We are frankly baffled with these new recommendations that so differ from the original A&Rs. The Department is ostensibly neutral on allocation issues, and with such a drastic decline in the CAH we certainly understand why they have amended our proposal for more stringent reductions. But why would the Department recommend this new nonresident season that has such a high level of nonresident projected harvest? Even as a so-called "starting point"?

We cannot support this level of nonresident harvests when we need to reduce harvests by 200-300 caribou, we are below the Intensive Management population and harvest objectives, and this is among the last general season caribou meat hunt available to all residents.

We submitted this proposal because we had concerns about the Central Arctic Herd and closures in Unit 23 leading to more pressure on this herd. We compromised with guides and air taxis and transporters based on a population estimate that was double of what is now known. Reductions need to happen for all, but any reductions need to reflect a real fairness and priority to Alaskan residents who are continually losing out on general season caribou hunting opportunities to fill their freezers.

[Slide 6] While any new restrictions to bag limits for residents may not be deemed a "significant" reduction in the taking of caribou according to 16.05.255(f), which would put us in an Intensive Management scenario, we do know Alaskans for whom this would be a significant reduction in taking, in harvest.

The Department would like to see no more than 680 CAH caribou taken, 100 of those have been allocated to Nuiqsit in the northern portion of Unit 26. That leaves a total allocation of 580 caribou for Unit 26B remainder.

We recommend there be no cow season at all in Unit 26B remainder at this time. We support the 2 bull bag limit and season for residents in the Department recommendations.

As far as any nonresident season and bag limit, we sincerely ask the Board to fully weigh the fact that this is a substantial reduction in taking for residents, it is one of the last general season caribou meat hunts that residents can participate in, and that while we are currently above the ANS in terms of harvest, nonresidents should really not at this time receive any opportunity that results in harvests greater than 10%.

At the least, we'd like to see that be starting point of your deliberations, not the other way around.

[Slide 7]We would also recommend that whatever the board decides that there be some kind of review enabled to where if the CAH continues to decline that we don't have to wait til the next Region III cycle to change seasons or bag limits.