Fortymile Herd Recovery Efforts

- Mid–1970s Herd Size ~5,000–7,000 (Low)
- 1995 Fortymile Herd Management Plan
- 1997–2001 Non–Lethal Predator Control Program (Alaska)
- 2006–2012 FCH Harvest Management Plan
- 2006–2018 Lethal Wolf Control Program (Alaska)
- 2012–2018 FCH Harvest Management Plan
- 2019–2023 FCH Harvest Management Plan

2001–2018 FCH Harvest Plans

- Guide FCH Harvest Management
- **Primary goal** = Herd Growth within sustainable limits
- **Secondary goal** = Increase harvest when herd grows

2019–2023 FCH Harvest Plan

- Retains previous goals
- More emphasis on Herd Health and Habitat
- Manage based on herd’s nutrition status
Fortymile Caribou Herd Size

- IM Population Objective = 50,000-100,000

Fortymile Herd Harvest

- Fall and Winter Registration Hunts
  - ~4,500–5,000 Hunters Annually
- 2019 Herd Quota (YK & AK) = 3,350 (40% cows)
- IM Harvest Objective = 1,000-15,000
Fortymile Youth Hunt

Caribou – Fortymile Herd

Management Activities
- Photo Census
- Fall Composition
- Spring Birthrate
- Harvest Monitoring

Research
- Mortality Study
FCH Nutrition Indices

- Parturition Rates (Birthrates)
- Fall calf weights
- Seasonal movements
- Range expansion

FCH Parturition 1993–2019

- 4+yr old: $P = 0.2$, $R^2 = 0.04$, stable
- 3yr old: $P = 0.0006$, $R^2 = 0.20$, decline
Parturition as nutritional index

36-mo. more sensitive indicator
- Valkenberg et al. 2003
- Bergerud et al. 2008

5-yr Moving Average
- >60% – sufficient nutrition for herd size
- 55-60% – cautionary
- <55% – nutrition may be compromised – alert HMC
  - 2+ yrs <55% stabilization or reduction considered

2015–2019 Avg. = 50%
- Stabilize or Reduce
Range Expansion

- **Since mid-2000s** - White Mountains
- **2013** – Expanding further in Yukon
  - Dempster Highway Area
- **2017–2019** Reached the Elliot Highway north of Fairbanks
- Range expansion has not resulted in improved nutritional status of the herd
2019–2023 FCH Harvest Plan

• Harvest Objectives
  • Annual quota set to achieve desired herd trend based on nutrition.
    1. Slow Growth
    2. Stabilization
    3. Reduction
  • Harvest rate = based on demographic models using:
    • Pre-hunt population size
    • Reproduction, composition and survival data
  • Current – slow reduction until nutrition improves
    • Harvest Rate ~4–7%

2019–2023 FCH Harvest Plan

• Alaska Allocation
  • 65% of total annual herd quota

• Yukon Allocation
  • 35% of total annual herd quota
    • Little Harvest in Yukon to-date
    • 2001-2018 back to herd growth
    • Hunt strategies being developed
    • License hunting allowed after 25-year moratorium – Jan 1, 2020
Fortymile Caribou Hunt - Alaska

- **Fall Hunt** - Primary hunt
  - 75% of annual Alaska quota
  - Resident & non-resident hunting

- **Winter Hunt** - Residents only
  - 25% of annual Alaska quota
Fortymile Caribou Hunt - Alaska

**Codified (5 AAC 85.025)**

**Youth Draw Permit Hunt**
- Aug 1–21
- one caribou per lifetime

**Registration Permit Hunt**
- **Residents:**
  - Aug 1–Sept 30
  - Oct 21–March 31
  - Up to 3 caribou
- **Nonresidents:**
  - Aug 10–Sept 30
  - one bull

**2019-2020 Hunting Regulation Booklet**
- **Residents:**
  - **Youth Hunt**
    - Aug 1-21
    - one caribou per lifetime
  - **Fall Registration Hunt**
    - Aug 11–Sept 30 (All Zones)
    - one caribou
  - **Winter Registration Hunt**
    - Oct 27–March 31 (All Zones)
    - one caribou
- **Nonresidents:**
  - **General Fall Registration Hunt**
    - Aug 10–Sept 30 (All Zones)
    - one bull

**Remainder of Fortymile caribou regulations - no change**

---

Fortymile Caribou Hunt - Alaska

- **Registration Hunt – additional components**
  - Joint State/Federal Registration Hunt (Alaska)
  - 3-day reporting period for successful hunters
  - Seasons can be closed by EO if quota reached

- **Herd road crossings (Zones 1 & 3)**
  - Heavy Roadside Harvest
  - Harvest Control Issues for Managers
  - Safety Issues
  - Hunt quality
Fortymile Caribou Hunt - Alaska

- **Recommendations for road crossings**
  - Temporary openings/closures in:
    - “specific drainages” or “clearly defined areas”
  - Targeted hunts
- **Department has used these strategies to achieve desired harvest numbers**

Questions?