

Proposal 170

5 AAC 85.025 (a)(19) and (21). Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

Decrease the caribou hunting bag limit for residents in Unit 24A remainder from 10 caribou to 5 bulls, and in Unit 26B remainder from 5 caribou to 5 bulls as follows:

What solution do you recommend? In other words, if the board adopted your solution, what would the new regulation say?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(19) ...		
Unit 24(A) Remainder		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: <u>5 bulls</u> [10 CARIBOU]	July 1 – Apr. 30	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 2 bulls		Aug 1 – Sept. 30
(21) ...		
Unit 26(B) Remainder		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: <u>5 bulls</u> [5 CARIBOU]	July 1 – Apr. 30	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 2 bulls		Aug 1 – Sept. 15

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

The 2025 Central Arctic Herd (CAH) population estimate indicated there was a decrease in the population from 2022 (34,642 caribou, 95% CI 32,419–36,866) to 2025 (26,621 caribou, 95% CI 25,466 – 27,775). The 2025 population estimate is below the intensive management objective

for this herd of 28,000–32,000 caribou. The CAH range primarily encompasses Units 26B and Unit 24A.

To decrease harvest pressure on the reproductive component of the herd, the department recommends that the bag limits for units 24(A) and 26(B) be changed from any caribou bag limits to a 5 bull only bag limit. At the current population size and trend, there is no longer a harvestable surplus of cow caribou to support the current any caribou bag limits. However, the harvestable surplus of bulls is adequate to support continued bull harvest as long-term estimates indicate bull:cow ratios have remained above the management objective of 40 bulls per 100 cows.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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