

Proposal 21

5 AAC 92.106. Intensive management of identified big game prey populations.

Establish and implement an Intensive Management plan in Units 22, 23, and the southwestern portion of 26A, for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) as follows:

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

5 AAC 92.XXX, Intensive Management Plans

Establish and implement an intensive management plan in Game Management Units 22, 23 and Unit 26A, Colville River drainage upstream from the Nuka River, and drainages of the Chukchi Sea south and west of, and including the Kuk and Kugrua drainages to facilitate the growth of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH). This program is designed to increase caribou abundance and harvest by reducing predation on caribou by wolves and bears. Thus, it is expected to make a contribution to achieving the intensive management (IM) objectives.

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

Establish and implement an Intensive Management plan in Units 22, 23, and the southwestern portion of 26A, for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH). The WACH is undergoing an alarming and ongoing decline, with the most recent population estimate at 120,618 animals representing a significant drop from prior years. This trend underscores the urgent need to implement necessary measures across the range of the WACH to ensure the long-term viability of the herd. At the latest WACH Working Group meeting in December 2025, the group classified the herd as "critical, declining," the lowest population tier in their management plan. This designation requires intensive efforts for the herd's survival.

The Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (SPRAC) requests the Board of Game establish an Intensive Management Plan across the range of the herd to curb caribou mortality as a result of predation by wolves and bears.

Of note, the SPRAC also submitted proposals to reduce the resident caribou harvest limit, and eliminate cow harvest in Units 22, 23, and the southwestern portion of Unit 26A, and close the nonresident hunt in Unit 22 as additional conservation measures for the WACH.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

The Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in Game Management Unit 22. The Council provides a public forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations regarding matters related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region, and we speak on behalf of 19 communities within the region. The proposal was developed during the March 2026 Council meeting at the request of Council members who reside in the region.

PROPOSED BY: Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (OI-F26-051)
