

Proposal 28

5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

Close the nonresident caribou hunt in Unit 22 as follows:

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

5 AAC 85.025, Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou. Close the nonresident caribou hunting season in Unit 22 as follows:

Unit 22A, North of the Golsovia River drainage

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; AUG 1 -SEPT30]

Unit 22A, Remainder

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; MAY BE ANNOUNCED]

Unit 22B, West of Golovnin Bay, west of the west banks of Fish and Niukluk rivers below the Libby River (excluding the Libby River drainage and the Niukluk River drainage above, the mouth of the Libby River)

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; MAY BE ANNOUNCED]

Unit 22B, Remainder

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; AUG 1 -SEPT30]

Unit 22C

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; MAY BE ANNOUNCED]

Unit 22D, Pilgrim River drainage

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; MAY BE ANNOUNCED]

Unit 22D, in the Kuzitrin River drainage (excluding the Pilgrim River drainage) and the Agiapuk River drainage

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; AUG 1 -SEPT30]

Unit 22D, Remainder

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; MAY BE ANNOUNCED]

Unit 22E, East of and including the Sanaguich River drainage

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; AUG 1 -SEPT30]

Unit 22E, Remainder

NONRESIDENTS ONLY: No Open Season [ONE BULL; MAY BE ANNOUNCED]

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

The Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) is undergoing an alarming and continuous decline, with the most recent population estimate at 120,618 animals representing a significant drop from prior years and resulting in the WACH Working Group placing the herd in the “Critical Management” level. This decline has triggered the need to reduce caribou bag limits for Alaska residents across the range of the WACH to reduce the overall harvest pressure and contribute to the long-term viability of the herd. The Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (SPRAC) has also submitted a proposal requesting a reduction to the resident bag limit of caribou for Unit 22 and further recognizes that the low abundance of caribou observed on the Seward Peninsula also warrants closing caribou harvests by nonresident hunters in Unit 22.

The SPRAC requests to close the nonresident caribou hunt in Unit 22 to further reduce the hunting pressure on the herd while maximizing hunting opportunities for resident hunters. While the harvest of caribou by nonresident hunters may be considered a very small part of the total caribou harvest by some, every animal counts. Furthermore, this proposal is aligned with the recommendations established by the WACH Working Group under the “Critical Management” level of the herd as outlined in the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Cooperative Management Plan of 2019 to restrict the harvest of the herd to residents only.

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 at a Council meeting at the request of Council members who reside in the region.

PROPOSED BY: Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (OI-F26-048)
