Unit 23 Planning Process

May 8-9, 2013

Background Information

Jim Dau
Unit 23: Land Ownership & G-O Areas

(map prepared by Sally Timp, ADF&G)
Western Arctic Herd:

- Population estimates

Harvest Data:

- Hunters by species hunted
- Residence of visiting hunters
- Timing of nonlocal hunting effort
- Distribution of hunters among Guide-Outfitter areas
- Hunters by commercial services used

WAH Movements & Camp Locations in Fall 2012
Harvest Data

- Data from harvest ticket, registration & drawing permit systems

- Data is only for hunters who live outside Unit 23
  - Nonresidents (including alien hunters)
  - Residents of Alaska who live outside Unit 23

- 1 Record per hunter: caribou, moose, brown bear & sheep hunters combined

- Data from Fall 1998 through Fall 2012
  - August 1-October 31
Western Arctic Caribou Herd
Western Arctic Caribou Herd Population Estimates

Rivest et al. (1998) estimated number of caribou

minimum count population estimate
WAH Working Group
• Initiated around 1995 and became functional ~2000
• Broad spectrum of users: subsistence users, recreational hunters, environmentalists, reindeer herders, guides & transporters
• Supported by ADF&G, BLM, FWS & NPS
• A number of people in this group are either currently or have been part of the WAH Working Group

The latest revision of the Plan was finalized in December 2011 – This version of the plan will be reviewed by the BOG at the January 2014 meeting

There are 7 primary elements of the plan – Two are most relevant to user conflicts in Unit 23:
• Regulations
• Population Management
Regulations Element

Strategies
A. Support the existing regulatory process of state advisory committees & federal regional advisory councils
B. Acknowledge and provide for local caribou hunting and use patterns as well as opportunities for other users
C. Develop hunting regulations according to herd management strategies outlined in this plan
D. Simplify caribou hunting regulations

Management actions
1. Promote consistency between state and federal regulations
2. Encourage efficient, effective and consistent enforcement of regulations affecting caribou hunting
3. Support efforts such as the Unit 23 Working Group
4. Reevaluate the amount of caribou reasonably necessary for subsistence uses as needed
5. Submit recommendations regarding hunting to the appropriate advisory committees and regional advisory councils
Population Management Element

Table 1 relates population size and trend to management actions and harvest levels

Appendix 2 provides detailed recommendations regarding:

• population monitoring by agencies
• harvest management by BOG & FSB

NOTE: This section of the plan does not attempt to establish hard and fast rules or thresholds for managing the WAH. Instead, population values and recommendations are presented only as guidelines to help the agencies and regulatory boards adjust to changes in the biological status of this herd.
### Management & Harvest Levels Relative to Population Size and Trend

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Level and Harvest Level</th>
<th>Population Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Declining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low: 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>Pop: 265,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harvest: 18,550-24,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Pop: 200,000-265,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harvest: 14,000-18,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservative</td>
<td>Pop: 130,000-200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harvest: 8,000-12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical</td>
<td>Pop: &lt;130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Bull:Cow ratio &gt;40 Bull:100 Cow</td>
<td>Harvest: 6,000-8,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Management Recommendations

Liberal Management (green)
• Reduce nonresident bull harvest only to maintain 40 bulls:100 cows
• No restriction of resident bull harvest unless <40 bulls:100 cows

Conservative Management (orange)
• No harvest of calves
• No nonresident cow harvest
• Restrict nonresident bull harvest
• Encourage voluntary reduction in resident cow harvest
• Limit subsistence harvest of bulls only if <40 bulls:100 cows

Preservative Management (yellow)
• No harvest of calves
• Limit harvest of cows by residents through permit hunts and/or village quotas
• Limit subsistence harvest of bulls only if <40 bulls:100 cows
• Harvest restricted to residents only according to state and federal law – closure of some federal public lands may be necessary

Critical Management (red)
• No harvest of calves
• Highly restrict resident cow harvest through permit hunts and/or village quotas
• Limit subsistence harvest of bulls to maintain 40 bulls:100 cows
• Harvest restricted to residents only according to state and federal law – closure of some federal public lands may be necessary
Unit 23 Harvest Data
Numbers of Nonlocal Hunters by Species & Year (Fall 1998-2012)

Categories are mutually exclusive; each hunter counted only once even if hunted >1 species
Average Annual Number of Nonlocal Hunters by Species
(Fall 1998 thru 2012 combined)
Numbers of Nonresident & Nonlocal Alaskan Resident Hunters

Year

Nonresident
Nonlocal AK

Number of Hunters
0 50 100 150 200 250 300 350 400 450 500 550 600 650 700 750 800

Graph showing the number of nonresident and nonlocal Alaskan resident hunters from 1998 to 2012.
‘Date of kill’ used to track chronology of effort; when >1 species taken, midpoint date was calculated.
Nonlocal Fall Hunters by Guide-Outfitter Area & Year
(1998 through 2012)
Average Annual Nonlocal Hunter Density (#/100 mi²) By G-O Area (Fall 1998-2012)
2012 Fall WAH Movements & Camp Locations

Camp locations & WAH satellite collar data provided by ADFG, DPS, FWS, NPS & BLM

**NOTE**: Camp locations reflect distribution of enforcement effort as much or more than distribution of hunters.
Questions?