Unit 23 Working Group
May 14-15, 2015

Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly Chambers
163 Lagoon Street, Kotzebue, Alaska

Thursday, May 14                Friday, May 15
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.           9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Public radio station KOTZ will broadcast the meeting on
Wednesday, May 14, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm and
Thursday, May 15, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm
Tune to 89.9 FM or AM 720, or listen via the web at www.kotz.org

AGENDA

Meeting Topics

- Update on Western Arctic herd population, movement, and harvest data.
- Report on March 2015 Board of Game meeting, changes to caribou harvest regulations. Update on Federal Subsistence Board consideration of regulation changes.
- Discuss 2014 hunting season & preparation for 2015 season
- Education efforts (general public, pilots, youth)
- Federal and state agency planning, permitting, management, and enforcement topics related to reducing hunting conflicts in Unit 23
- Research reports
- Public comment session – By phone or at Assembly Chambers
  Thursday, May 14, 2:00-3:00 p.m.
  Dial 1-800-268-5851
- Discussion of additional topics and recommendations raised by Working Group members
Thursday, May 14

9:30 a.m.  Coffee/Refreshments

10:00 a.m.  Welcome, Moment of Silence, Introductions – Review Agenda / Revise if necessary
   • List of Unit 23 Working Group members
   • Summary of recommendations made by the Working Group at past meetings (reached by group consensus)

10:15 a.m.  Unit 23 Big Game Population, Hunter & Harvest Information
   Brandon Saito, Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G)

11:00 a.m.  Unit 23 Caribou Harvest – Regulation Changes
   • State Regulation Changes affecting Western Arctic Herd harvest, adopted March 2015 by Alaska Board of Game
     Jim Dau, ADF&G
   • Federal Subsistence Program – Regulatory proposals received in spring 2015 regarding Western Arctic Herd
     Chris McKee, US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Office of Subsistence Management
   • Working Group questions & comments

12:00 p.m.  Lunch

1:15 p.m.  Working Group Discussion (more discussion time on Day 2)
   1) Discussion of 2014 hunting season and preparation for 2015
   2) What changes in user conflicts might there be, with the herd population decline and hunt regulation changes?
   3) Recommendations regarding ways to prepare for and reduce conflicts?

2:00 p.m.  Public Comment Opportunity regarding user conflicts related to hunting in Unit 23 – Call-In & In-person Comments
   Comments by phone, dial 1-800-268-5851
   To participate in Kotzebue, please come to the Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly Chambers. Time per comment may be limited, to ensure opportunity for those who want to speak.

3:00 p.m.  Break
Thursday, May 14, continued

3:20 p.m. **Education Update** – Update on Unit 23 education initiatives
   (general public, youth, pilot education, work with Federal Aviation Administration)
   Meghan Nedwick, ADF&G

3:50 p.m. **State & Federal Agency Management** – Agency presentations and Working Group comments/discussion
   • Selawik National Wildlife Refuge
     Susan Georgette, US Fish and Wildlife Service
   • Bureau of Land Management – Squirrel River Management
     Alan Bittner, Bureau of Land Management
   • State of Alaska – Permitting of guides/transporters & status of Guide Concession Program
     Valerie Baxter, Department of Natural Resources

5:00 p.m. Adjourn for the day

Friday, May 15

8:30 a.m. **Coffee/Refreshments**

9:00 a.m. Welcome

9:10 a.m. **Federal Agency Management – Agency presentations and Working Group discussion**
   • Noatak National Park & Preserve
     Stephanie Stephens, National Park Service (NPS)
   • Research Reports
     - Non-subsistence hunting in Noatak Preserve
     Andrew Ackerman, NPS

10:20 a.m. Break

10:40 a.m. **Continue research reports**
   - Noatak Traditional Knowledge Project
     Gabriela Halas, University of Alaska Fairbanks
     *(teleconference)*
Friday, May 15, continued

11:00 a.m.  Working Group Discussion & Action
   • Topics raised by Working Group members
   • Follow-up on presentations or public comments
   • Working Group Recommendations / Actions
   • Future of Unit 23 Working Group – meet again in 2016?

12:15 p.m.  Assignments / Wrap up

12:30 p.m.  Adjourn

Additional information about the Unit 23 Working Group can be found at the project web site: