

WP14-42

Name: Eastern Interior Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Date: February 20, 2013.

Organization: Office of Subsistence Management

Address: Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Contact: Eva Patton, Council Coordinator

Phone: 907-786-3358

1: What Regulation do you wish to change?

Customary and Traditional Use Determinations

Sheep—Units 25B and 25C

No Federal subsistence priority

Sheep—Unit 20E

All rural residents.

2: How would the new regulation read?

Customary and Traditional Use Determinations

Sheep—Units 25B and 25C

~~*No Federal subsistence priority*~~ *Rural residents of Units 25B, 25C, and Unit 20E*

Sheep—Unit 20E

~~*All rural residents.*~~ *Rural residents of Units 25B, 25C, and Unit 20E*

3: Why should this regulation change be made?

Currently, there are no open Federal subsistence seasons for sheep in Units 25B, 25C, and 20E. Establishing a rural subsistence priority for sheep is important as Chinook salmon subsistence harvests are likely to decline in the future. People will have to rely on substitute species, including sheep, and there are not a lot of other fish species in the river to harvest at that time of year.

An area in the Charley River drainage was used by subsistence hunters. Stan Galvin's father built an airstrip in the area to hunt sheep many years ago. Council member Bill Glanz, Central resident, has hunted in the Yukon Charley area for 28 years. Mr. Glanz also listed many people he knows in the community of Central and Circle who have hunted sheep in the area for 30-50 years and Athabaskan families in Circle who have hunted sheep for generations. Council member Don Woodruff, Eagle resident, hunts sheep in 25B up the Tatonduck River and has been hunting there for 32 years. He also knows people in his community hunt sheep locally up Eagle Creek in Unit 25B.

Sheep have been harvested on many of the parcels of Federal public lands in the management units, and Council members are aware of this use through local oral history. The Council voted to include in the proposal all Federal public lands in the management units.

The Council acknowledged that in two of the units, currently there is no Federal subsistence priority and requested that only residents of the units should be included in the customary and traditional use determination. In another unit, the customary and traditional use determination includes all rural residents, and the Council requested that OSM staff review which rural residents have demonstrated customary and traditional uses in the unit. The Council requested OSM staff to bring their recommendation for the Council to review at its fall 2013 meeting.

In some areas, State draw permit hunts have made it difficult to obtain a permit to hunt for many years.

Seasons and bag limits are to be determined (see transcript day 1 pages 94–104).

4: What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

None

5: How will this change affect subsistence uses?

It will create an opportunity for Federal subsistence users to hunt sheep.

6: How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

The State season and harvest limit may be restricted, depending on harvestable surplus.

WP14-43

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Contact: Eva Patton, Council Coordinator

Phone: 907-786-3358

1: What Regulation do you wish to change?

Unit 20—Sheep

No Federal open season.

Unit 25—Sheep

Unit 25B—No regulation

Unit 25C—No regulation

Unit 25D—No open Federal season

2: How would the new regulation read?

Unit 20—Sheep

Unit 20E—1 ram with full-curl horn or larger. Aug. 10–Sept. 20.

Unit 20 remainder—No Federal open season

Unit 25—Sheep

Unit 25B—One ram with full-curl horn or larger. Aug. 10–Sept. 20

Unit 25C—One ram with full-curl horn or larger. Aug. 10–Sept. 20

Unit 25D—~~No Federal open season~~ One ram with full-curl horn or larger. Aug. 10–Sept. 20

3: Why should this regulation change be made?

At this time there is no Federal open season.

4: What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

None.

5: How will this change affect subsistence uses?

It will give subsistence users priority over other uses on Federal public lands.

6: How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

It could change the State's harvest quota.

WP14-44

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Address: Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Contact: Eva Patton, Council Coordinator

Phone: 907-786-3358

1: What Regulation do you wish to change?

Unit 20F remainder—Moose

1 antlered bull. Sept. 1–25 and Dec. 1–10

2: How would the new regulation read?

Unit 20F remainder—Moose

1 antlered bull. Sept. 1–25 30 and Dec. 1–10

(The Council is submitting a proposal to the State Board of Game to extend the season from Sept. 1–15 to Sept. 1–30.)

3: Why should this regulation change be made?

It is too warm in early September with temperatures in recent years reaching into the 60s (degrees F). It has been warmer than in the past. A hunter cannot shoot a moose and preserve it before it spoils, unless the harvest occurs near an electric line and freezer. The season should be extended to compensate for lost hunting days during the early season when moose should not be harvested due the warm weather.

The Council is aware that Federal public lands in the remainder area occur away from the river in a hilly to mountainous area, which requires transport of some distance to pack the meat home.

4: What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

The Council did not answer this question directly, but it is assumed the Council thought the proposal would have no impact on moose populations.

5: How will this change affect subsistence uses?

Subsistence hunters will have five additional days in which to hunt later in September when outside temperatures are cooler and meat is less likely to spoil before being preserved.

6: How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

They will not be affected.

WP14-45

Name: Eastern Interior Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Date: February 21, 2013

Organization: Office of Subsistence Management

Address: Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Contact: Eva Patton, Council Coordinator

Phone: 907-786-3358

1: What Regulation do you wish to change?**Unit 12—Caribou**

Unit 12, that portion east of the Nabesna River and the Nabesna Glacier and south of the Winter Trail running southeast from Pickerel Lake to the Canadian border—1 bull by Federal registration permit only. Sept. 1–30.

Federal public lands are closed to the harvest of caribou except by residents of Chisana, Chistochina, Mentasta, Northway, Tetlin, and Tok.

2: How would the new regulation read?**Unit 12—Caribou**

Unit 12, that portion east of the Nabesna River and the Nabesna Glacier and south of the Winter Trail running southeast from Pickerel Lake to the Canadian border—1 bull by Federal registration permit only. Sept. 1–30.

*Federal public lands are closed to the harvest of caribou except by **residents of the area and** residents of Chisana, Chistochina, Mentasta, **Nebesna**, Northway, Tetlin, and Tok.*

3: Why should this regulation change be made?

The Council feels the people living in the hunting area should be eligible to hunt caribou in the area. They were overlooked in the initial consideration.

The Council notes that the people who live with the caribou year round in the hunt area should definitely qualify to hunt the animals where they live. The Council also notes that the community of Nebesna was overlooked when considering customary and traditional uses of caribou in this region even though it is located right near the herd's range and has historical use.

4: What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

None. This change will not affect the caribou harvest quota.

5: How will this change affect subsistence uses?

It will allow residents of Nebesna and people who live in the hunt area to hunt caribou under Federal regulations. The change will provide opportunity to a few hunters living in this area who otherwise are not able to hunt caribou in the area.

6: How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

No affects. They will not be affected by this change. The area will continue to be closed to all uses other than subsistence.

WP14-46

Proposal to change Federal Subsistence Regulation for Customary and Traditional Use Determination for Caribou in Unit 25B

1. Submitted by: Steven Hamilton P.O. Box 9 Eagle, Alaska 99738, phone (907) 547-2295, no fax or e-mail.
2. I want to change the Customary and Traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 25B from: Unit 25B and 25C - rural residents of unit 25
3. To: Unit 25B rural residents of unit 25 and residents of Eagle. Unit 25C - rural residents of unit 25.
4. The people of Eagle have a long history of hunting both sides of the Yukon River. Therefore they should have a Customary and Tradition use determination to allow them to hunt both game management units as they have traditionally done. Without this determination the Eagle people are blocked from using one half of their traditional hunting range.
5. The population of Eagle is small enough that I don't foresee much of an impact on the caribou numbers.
6. The affect on subsistence use is, as I noted earlier, to open up to use all of the hunting area that has been traditionally used by the Eagle area residents.

7. The affect on other users of Unit 25B will be minimal because of the units remoteness, and because of the time of year when the caribou normally use Unit 25B.

Thank You

WP14-47**Name:** Eastern Interior Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**Date:** February 20, 2013**Organization:** Office of Subsistence Management**Address:****Contact:** Eva Patton, Council Coordinator**Phone:** 907-786-3358**1: What Regulation do you wish to change?****Customary and Traditional Use Determinations—Caribou**

<i>Units 20D and 20E</i>	<i>Residents of Units 20D, 20E, and 12 north of Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve</i>
<i>Unit 25A</i>	<i>Residents of Units 24A and 25</i>
<i>Unit 25B and 25C</i>	<i>Residents of Unit 25</i>
<i>Unit 25D</i>	<i>Residents of Units 20F, 25D, and Manley Hot Springs</i>

2: How would the new regulation read?**Customary and Traditional Use Determinations—Caribou**

<i>Units 20D and 20E</i>	<i>Residents of Units 12 north of Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve, 20D, 20E, 20F, 25, and Eureka Livengood, Manley Hot Springs, and Minto</i>
<i>Unit 25A</i>	<i>Residents of Units 24A and 25</i>
<i>Unit 25B and 25C</i>	<i>Residents of Units 12 north of Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve, 20D, 20E, 20F, 25, and Eureka Livengood, Manley Hot Springs, and Minto</i>
<i>Unit 25D</i>	<i>Residents of Units 20F, 25D, and Manley Hot Springs</i>

3: Why should this regulation change be made?

The management of this herd follows the 2012-2018 Fortymile Caribou Herd Harvest Plan (harvest plan), which was developed by a coalition of the Fairbanks, Upper Tanana/Fortymile, Central, Delta Junction, Eagle, Anchorage, and Mat Valley Advisory Committees and the Eastern Central, Delta Junction, Eagle, Anchorage and Mat Valley Advisory Committees and the Eastern Interior Regional Subsistence Advisory Council in cooperation with Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Yukon Department of Environment, Yukon First Nations and the Alaska Management Board, and ADF&G. The Fortymile Caribou Herd has been increasing since the mid-1990s; as the population has continued to grow the herd has expanded its range into Unit 25C (the White Mountains National Recreation Area). During the last

revision of harvest plan in 2011–2012, concerns were expressed that as the herds range expands there is a potential for increased Federal harvest in the road accessible portion of Unit 25C. As part of the 2011–2012 harvest plan revision, the EIRAC intended to submit a proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB), for their spring 2012 meeting, to change the C&T for caribou in Unit 25C from all federally qualified subsistence users to residents within the herds range. The way the 2012 FSB proposal from the EIRAC was written inadvertently asked the board to change the C&T for caribou to residents of Unit 25. What the EIRAC intended to do was only change the C&T for caribou in Unit 25C to address concerns about the Fortymile Herd specifically. This proposal will change the C&T for caribou in Units 20D, 20E, 25B, and 25C to allow all federally qualified users within or adjacent to the Fortymile Herd’s range to hunt under federal hunting regulations throughout the herds range as originally intended.

4: What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

There should be no impact to the caribou herd as harvest is controlled via a joint Federal/State registration permit and harvest quotas.

5: How will this change affect subsistence uses?

If the C&T is expanded as recommended, it will allow federally qualified subsistence users, that live within or adjacent to the herd’s range, to hunt the herd throughout its range rather than being restricted to hunting the caribou in only a portion of its range. Because caribou move within their range, they may not be available within certain Units within their range during hunting season.

In addition, this change will continue to exclude some federally qualified subsistence users from outside the local area from harvesting Fortymile Caribou, in Unit 25C; this will address the original concerns about increased Federal harvest in the road accessible portion of Unit 25C and will benefit local federally qualified subsistence users by preventing competition for a limited resource and allowing the harvest season to stay open longer as the quota should be reached more slowly.

6: How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

There should be no impact to sport/recreational and commercial users as harvest is controlled via a joint Federal/State registration permit and harvest quotas.

WP14-48**Submitted by:**

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 99740

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Current Federal Regulation:

Unit 25A—Rural residents of Units 25A and 25D

Unit 25A—1 antlered bull

Dates: Aug. 25–Sept. 25, Dec. 1–Dec. 10

Current State Regulation:

25A remainder

Residents: one bull, Sept 5-Sept 25

Nonresidents: one bull with 50-inch antlers or 4 or more brow tines on at least one side
 Sept 5-Sept 25

Proposed Federal Regulation:

Unit 25A that portion consisting of the drainage of Sheenjek River upstream from and including Monument Creek, and the drainages of the Coleen River and Old Crow River (including Bilwaddy Creek), — 5 bulls by Federal registration permit by residents of Arctic Village, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, and Fort Yukon only. Only 5 Federal registration permits will be issued. Federal public lands described above are closed to the taking of moose except by a resident of Arctic Village, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, or Fort Yukon holding a Federal registration permit and hunting under these regulations.

Dates: Aug. 25–Sept. 25

Note: Office of Subsistence Management will want to do an ANILCA 804 analysis.

3. Why should this regulation change be made?

Moose populations in the proposed regulation area declined significantly during 1991 to 2000 and remain at a very low level for the past 12 years (Table 1). Moose counted in the upper Sheenjek population trend area declined to only 21 moose in 2000, down 84% from a previous average of 135 moose recorded during 1977-1989. Moose counted in the upper Coleen River population trend area declined to 129 moose in 2000, down 41% from a previous average of 229 moose recorded during 1977-1991. Counts completed in fall 2012 revealed a total of 26 moose for the upper Sheenjek and moose counts for the upper Coleen have declined further to 79 moose, down 65% from earlier levels.

Table 1. Total moose counted by fall aerial surveys during 1977 to 2012, eastern Brooks Range, Alaska.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Kongakut</i>	<i>Firth</i>	<i>Coleen</i>	<i>Sheenjek</i>
1977 ¹	No Survey	No Survey	219	104
1978 ²	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey	125
1979 ³	No Survey	No Survey	245	151

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1983 ⁴	174	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey
1984 ⁵	215	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey
1985 ⁶	180	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey
1986 ⁷	247	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey
1987 ⁸	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey	149
1989 ⁹	No Survey	169	220	147
1991 ¹⁰	163	245	233	81
2000 ¹¹	70	88	129	21
2002 ¹²	95	132	103	21
2008 ¹³	No Survey	No Survey	No Survey	22
2011 ¹⁴	127	212	No Survey	No Survey
2012 ^{15,16}	No Survey	No Survey	79 ¹⁵	26 ¹⁶

¹ Haggstrom, 1977 (ADFG)	⁹ Mauer, 1989 (Arctic Refuge)
² Spindler, 1978 (Arctic Refuge)	¹⁰ Mauer and Akaran, 1991 (Arctic Refuge)
³ Spindler, 1980 (Arctic Refuge)	¹¹ Mauer, 2000 (Arctic Refuge)
⁴ Martin and Garner, 1984 (Arctic Refuge)	¹² Bucholtz, 2002 (Arctic Refuge)
⁵ Martin and Garner, 1985 (Arctic Refuge)	¹³ Wertz, 2008 (Arctic Refuge)
⁶ Muelenhardt and Garner, 1986 Arctic Refuge	¹⁴ Caikoski, 2011 (ADFG)
⁷ Weiler and Liedberg, 1986 (Arctic Refuge)	¹⁵ Caikoski, 2012 (ADFG)
⁸ Nowlin, 1987 (ADFG)	¹⁶ Wald, 2012 (Arctic Refuge)

Studies of moose movements in the Eastern Brooks Range during 1995-1998 (Mauer 1998) and Old Crow Flats during 2007-2009 (Yukon Department of Renewable Resources) indicate that a very high proportion of moose in this region migrate in the spring to Old Crow Flats (Canada) where they give birth to calves and remain through the summer season. In late August these moose begin to move out of Old Crow Flats towards winter ranges located in the upper Kongakut and Firth River drainages of GMU 26C, and upper Sheenjek and Coleen River drainages in GMU 25A. Studies in 2007-2009 identified movement of moose from Old Crow Flats to the middle section of the Coleen River as well.

Following a widespread decline in moose populations throughout the north slope of Alaska, moose hunting was closed in 1996 for all of GMU 26C, including the upper Kongakut and upper Firth areas. Although similar declines of moose were detected for the upper Sheenjek and Coleen Rivers, these areas have remained open to moose hunting. Recent fall moose counts in trend survey areas of the upper Kongakut and Firth Rivers suggest that moose numbers in these areas may be improving (Table 1). However, no recovery of moose numbers has been detected in the upper Sheenjek and Coleen River areas.

The fall migration of moose to the upper Sheenjek and Coleen River areas occurs during the current hunting season (September 5-25). Due to the open tundra, low shrub and black spruce taiga communities found in the south slopes of the eastern Brooks Range, migrating moose are easily visible. Studies using GPS technology have indicated that moose follow the same routes, and often travel over the same trails during the fall migration (Yukon Department of Renewable Resources). Radio telemetry studies have found that individual moose have a very high fidelity to rut areas, winter ranges, calving and summer ranges (Mauer 1998). These characteristics render migratory moose of the proposal area highly vulnerable to harvest. Commonly used metrics derived in more southern moose ranges do not readily apply to this population. While ADFG reports a density of 0.2 moose per mile² for the proposal area, the reality on the ground is more complex spatially and temporally. According to observations of local residents, throughout the Coleen River drainage there are no or very few moose during late spring and

summer. During the fall moose migrate along several routes leading from Old Crow Flats, and during winter they are thinly distributed where suitable willow habitat exists. In spite of critically low numbers of moose remaining in the upper Sheenjek and Coleen areas, the vulnerability of migrating moose in open country and their concentration in well defined migratory routes result in generally high hunter success ratios, although this measurement shows a declining trend (Figures 1 and 2). A reduction of hunting pressure is necessary to conserve the existing moose, and enhance the opportunity for population regrowth in the future.

4. What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

This proposal will significantly reduce harvest pressure on moose inhabiting the area, helping to conserve a population that is critically low, and provide an opportunity for growth and recovery. Moose of the upper Sheenjek and Coleen Rivers are part of a distinct population, whose migratory strategy has allowed it to achieve densities in the past that are significantly higher than would be expected for a resident population. To restore this migratory tradition to its former healthy status would be of great benefit to both local and non-local hunters, and would also be consistent with conserving wildlife in their natural diversity, a primary purpose for the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

5. How will this change effect subsistence uses?

This proposed regulation change will not affect current subsistence use because the known level of harvest by federally-qualified subsistence users is provided for in the proposed permit system. This proposal will reduce current hunting pressure from non-local hunters. As a result, the moose population will likely increase over time, and ultimately provide greater opportunity for both local and non-local hunters.

6. How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

Sport/recreational uses in this region are not exclusively tied to moose hunting. Most sport hunting here includes several species such as caribou, Dall sheep and brown bear. This proposal will not affect hunting for these species. Other uses such as recreational hiking and river floating would also not be directly affected. As the moose population recovers, wildlife viewing would improve. Commercial services for both hunting (except for moose) and non-hunting activities would continue in the region of this proposal. Two commercial hunting guides are currently authorized to take moose within the proposal area. Commercially guided moose hunting reported in the proposal area during the period of 2004 through 2012 averaged 4.2 hunters/year and 2.4 moose harvested/year (Table 2). This proposal may have a positive effect for the hunting of moose by non-local and commercially guided hunters in the future as the moose population increases and a higher sustainable harvest quota is achieved.

Table 2. Total Reported Commercially Guided Moose Hunters and Harvest in the Proposal Area. (Source:

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge)

Year	Hunters	Moose Harvested
2012	2	1
2011	3	1
2010	5	2
2009	6	2
2008	4	4
2007	4	1
2006	6	4

2005	4	3
2004	4	3

Figure 1
 Number of moose hunters and moose harvested in the upper Sheenjek River drainage in GMU 25A, 1990-2012. Data from ADFG Winfonet, accessed March 2013. (upstream from and including Thluichohnjik Creek)

Year	Hunters	Kills	% success
1990	26	21	80.8
1991	24	13	54.2
1992	14	7	50.0
1993	10	3	30.0
1994	11	6	54.5
1995	13	6	46.2
1996	8	5	62.5
1997	13	11	84.6
1998	21	13	61.9
1999	10	5	50.0
2000	20	11	55.0
2001	39	15	38.5
2002	33	15	45.5
2003	17	9	52.9
2004	14	4	28.6
2005	15	9	60.0
2006	25	7	28.0
2007	27	7	25.9
2008	28	11	39.3
2009	25	9	36.0
2010	22	5	22.7
2011	11	5	45.5
2012	13	4	30.8

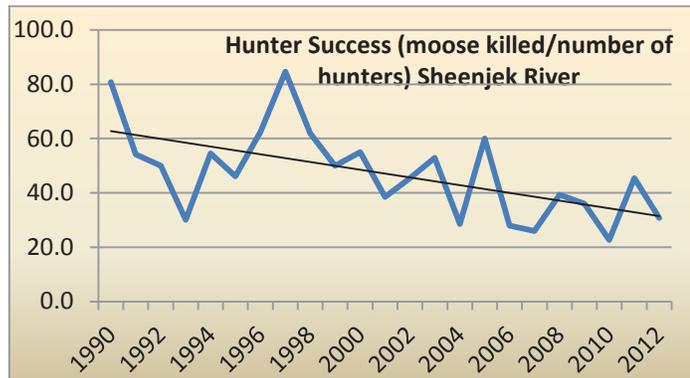
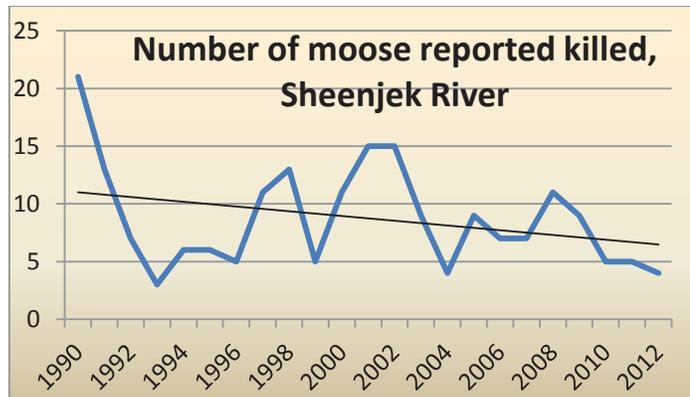
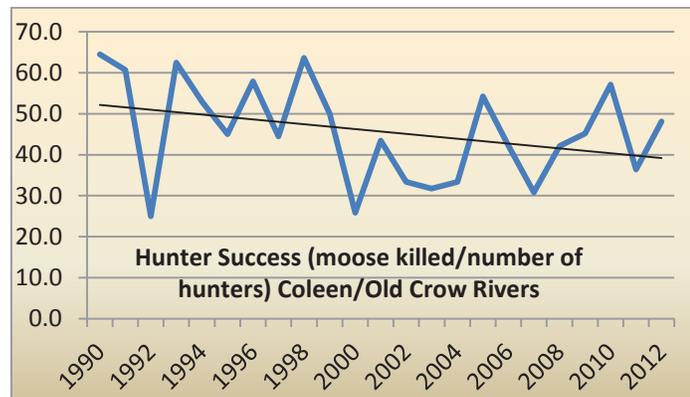
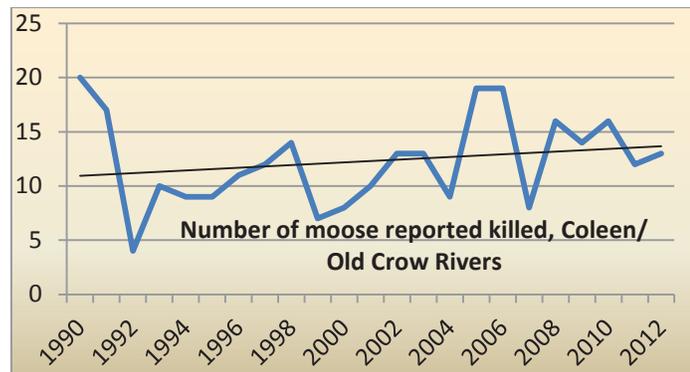
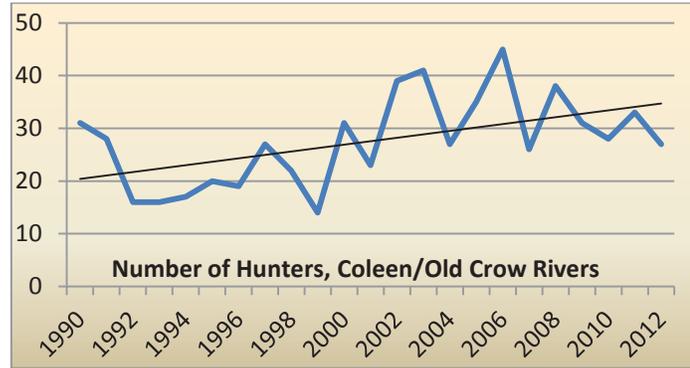


Figure 2

Number of moose hunters and moose harvested in the Coleen River and Old Crow drainages in GMU 25A, 1990-2012. Data from ADFG Winfonet, accessed March 2013.

Year	hunters	kills	% success
1990	31	20	64.5
1991	28	17	60.7
1992	16	4	25.0
1993	16	10	62.5
1994	17	9	52.9
1995	20	9	45.0
1996	19	11	57.9
1997	27	12	44.4
1998	22	14	63.6
1999	14	7	50.0
2000	31	8	25.8
2001	23	10	43.5
2002	39	13	33.3
2003	41	13	31.7
2004	27	9	33.3
2005	35	19	54.3
2006	45	19	42.2
2007	26	8	30.8
2008	38	16	42.1
2009	31	14	45.2
2010	28	16	57.1
2011	33	12	36.4
2012	27	13	48.1



WP14-49

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Organization:

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This proposal suggests a change to: harvest season

- 1. What regulation do you wish to change? Include management unit number and species. Quote the current regulation if known. If you are proposing a new regulation, please state “new regulation.”**

This proposal would modify the season dates for the Unit 12 caribou hunt that takes place east of the Nabesna River and Glacier and south of the Winter Trail.

Unit 12 Caribou

C&T Determinations	Harvest Limits	Open Seasons
Rural residents of Unit 12, Chistochina, Dot Lake, Healy Lake, and Mentasta Lake	Unit 12—that portion east of the Nabesna River and the Nabesna Glacier and south of the Winter Trail running southeast from Pickerel Lake to the Canadian border —1 bull by Federal registration permit only. Federal public lands are closed to the harvest of caribou except by residents of Chisana, Chistochina, Mentasta, Northway, Tetlin, and Tok.	Sept. 1-Sept. 30

- 2. How should the new regulation read?**

Change the dates of the fall season to avoid the rut and add a winter season (February 1 to March 31) to the Unit 12 caribou hunt that occurs east of the Nabesna River/Glacier and south of the Winter Trail.

Unit 12 Caribou

C&T Determinations	Harvest Limits	Open Seasons
Rural residents of Unit 12, Chistochina, Dot Lake, Healy Lake, and Mentasta Lake	Unit 12—that portion east of the Nabesna River and the Nabesna Glacier and south of the Winter Trail running southeast from Pickerel Lake to the Canadian border —1 bull by Federal registration permit only.	Aug. 10 Sept. 1- Sept. 20 30 <u>Feb. 1- Mar. 31</u>

	<p><u>You must leave all edible meat on the bones of the front quarters, hind quarters, and ribs of the caribou until you remove the meat from the field or process it for human consumption.</u></p> <p>Federal public lands are closed to the harvest of caribou except by residents of Chisana, Chistochina, Mentasta, Northway, Tetlin, and Tok.</p>	
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3. Why should this regulatory change be made?

The fall season dates should be adjusted to provide an opportunity to harvest caribou before the rut. In late September, as the rut approaches, the meat quality declines significantly. Access to this remote hunt area is difficult. Adding a winter season to the harvest opportunity for the Chisana caribou herd will allow subsistence users more access options (i.e., use of snowmachines) and more time for their hunt.

Given the remote hunt location, the meat-on-the-bone requirement will ensure that all the edible meat is removed from the field.

4. What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

No effect. The harvest quota would remain the same. This proposal simply allows a subsistence user a longer season for his or her hunt.

5. How will this change affect subsistence uses?

This proposal enhances subsistence opportunity by providing qualified subsistence users with additional time to access this remote hunt area. In addition, the winter season means that snowmachines may be used for access, a more viable means of access for some subsistence users than aircraft. The date change in the fall season ensures that the harvest opportunity will occur with meat quality is high.

6. How will this change affect other uses, i.e., sport/recreational and commercial?

No effect. This harvest opportunity is only open to federally qualified subsistence users in those communities most dependent on the resource.

WP14-50

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Date: February 20, 2013

Organization: Office of Subsistence Management

Address: Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Contact: Eva Patton, Council Coordinator

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1: What Regulation do you wish to change?

Unit 25D

(iii)(A) (A) You may use bait to hunt black bear between April 15 and June 30 and between August 1 and September 25; you may use bait to hunt wolves on FWS and BLM lands.

2: How would the new regulation read?

Unit 25D—Unit specific regulations

*(iii)(A) You may use bait to hunt black bear **and brown bear** between April 15 and June 30 and between August 1 and September 25; you may use bait to hunt wolves on FWS and BLM lands.*

A similar proposal will be submitted by the Council to the Alaska Board of Game for Unit 25D. These proposals are intended to align the federal regulations with state regulations currently in place in Units 12, 20C, 20E, and 21D.

3: Why should this regulation change be made?

In Unit 25D, when brown bears appear at black bear baiting stations, it is illegal to harvest them. Hunters should be allowed to harvest brown bear that show up at their bait stations. The harvest limit for brown bear is two per year. Both the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge manager and the biologist described the high density of black and brown bears in the area. The proposal will increase the opportunity to harvest brown bear.

Subsistence users have harvested brown bear over their moose gut piles. The brown bear season is year round.

A council member explained that this has been done in the area for generations. He went on to explain:

In the springtime you'll find the bears just coming out of their dens and the trappers that would have their carcasses from the winter trapping would use that as bait or something along that line, whatever didn't get eaten by the dogs, they would use that for bait in the springtime to get the spring bears and you'd use whatever was left from your moose kill in the fall for bait to get a fall bear and whatever else. Generally not taken in the summer due to the weather and, of course, they're busy fishing in the summer.

But those were the two times of year that they're normally taken, which the State season reflects on, but I'd just like to see it in the Federal reg. book as well so I don't have to play that lawyer GPS "where am I game" to go from State and Federal land and bounce around, and I could leave my bait stations where they are and not have to move camp 30 miles to get back onto Federal land or back onto State land as we have a checkerboard of land ownership in the Yukon Flats (Eastern Interior Council meeting transcripts, February 21, 2013, in Fairbanks, pages 255–256).

4: What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

None.

5: How will this change affect subsistence uses?

The proposal will increase opportunity for subsistence users to harvest brown bear.

6: How will this change affect other uses, such as sport/recreational and commercial?

No.

WP14-51

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Please answer the following questions. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

1. What regulation do you wish to change?

Unit 25A – Sheep

*Unit 25A – Arctic Village Sheep Management Area – 2 rams by Aug. 10 – Apr. 30
Federal registration permit only. Federal public lands are closed to
the taking of sheep except by rural Alaska residents of Arctic
Village, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Kaktovik, and Chalkyitsik hunting
under these regulations.*

2. How should the new regulation read?

Unit 25A – Sheep

*Unit 25A – Arctic Village Sheep Management Area – 2 rams by Aug. 10 – Apr. 30
Federal registration permit only. Federal public lands, except the
drainages of Red Sheep Creek and Cane Creek during the period
of Aug. 10-Sept. 20 in accordance with state regulation *5 AAC
92.003(h), are closed to the taking of sheep except by rural Alaska
residents of Arctic Village, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Kaktovik, and
Chalkyitsik hunting under these regulations.*

***5 AAC 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements**

(h) A person hunting within the RED SHEEP CREEK / CANE CREEK PORTION OF ARCTIC VILLAGE SHEEP MANAGEMENT AREA (AVSMA) OF GMU 25A must possess proof of completion of a department-approved hunter ethics and orientation course (to include land status and trespass information) upon hunting in this area.

3. Why should this regulation change be made?

The area is currently closed unnecessarily. The closure was requested due to reports of ongoing user conflicts focused mainly on trespass. Trespass issues are not within the purview of the Federal Subsistence Board as the mission of the board is to provide for subsistence opportunities for federally qualified users. The State of Alaska proposed a compromise to the closure requiring completion of an ethics and orientation course prior to hunting sheep in this area. The state's efforts were widely supported as an acceptable alternative, however the Federal Subsistence Board met prior to the Alaska State Board

of Game; therefore, action had not yet been taken to require the aforementioned course as a condition of hunting sheep in this area at the time the Federal Subsistence board took action.

The State has acted in good faith to pursue action. The Alaska Board of Game adopted this requirement at their March 2012 meeting directly following the January 2012 Federal Subsistence Board meeting. Therefore, regulations are currently in place to safeguard against user conflicts similar to those noted previously by requiring completion of an ethics and orientation course prior to exercising state hunting opportunities for sheep in this area.

State opportunity if the area is reopened is expected to be similar to previous opportunity with little to no impact to the resource.

Prior to closure action in January 2012 previous state opportunity read:

*State sheep hunting regulations for 25A east of the Middle Fork of the Chandalar River follow:
Unit 25A - One ram with full curl horn or larger with a harvest ticket between August 10 and September 20. Nonresident hunters must be accompanied by a registered guide. or*

Three sheep by permit RS595 available online or in person in Fairbanks and Kaktovik beginning September 21 for season between October 1 and April 30. The use of aircraft for access to hunt sheep and transport harvested sheep is prohibited in this hunt except into and out of Arctic Village and Kaktovik airports. No motorized access from Dalton Highway.

4. What impact will this change have on wildlife populations?

Harvestable surplus of sheep in this area will be made available to those who desire to regain the opportunity to harvest them. Changes in the population are expected to be de minimis as use of this resource by other users was categorically low. Since the re-opening in 2006, an average of 6 hunters harvested an average of 4 full-curl rams annually during 2006--2012.

5. How will this change affect subsistence users?

Federally qualified subsistence users will benefit as other users will be educated through an ethics and orientation course prior to utilizing this area, and may be cited by law enforcement for offenses which previously required a warning prior to citation. Federally qualified subsistence users will remain able to meet or exceed their needs, which were not in question prior to the closure.

6. How will this change affect other uses, i.e. sport/recreational and commercial?

Answer questions 7-9 only if you are proposing a change to a customary and traditional use determination.

Other users will regain a highly desired longstanding opportunity to harvest previously available resource and gain information to avoid user conflicts and increase respect for the resource and land owners.

7. Which communities have used this resource?

The most common communities in Alaska include Fairbanks, Anchorage, Palmer, Big Lake, and Sitka. Two non-residents hunted in these drainages during the previous 7 years.

8. Where has this resource been harvested?

Within the Red Sheep Creek / Cane Creek portion of Arctic Village Sheep management Area (AVSMA) of GMU 25A

9. In what months has this resource been harvested?

This resource has been harvested primarily in August and September.