

Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group Meeting

December 15, 2021 1:00pm – 5:30pm

Via Zoom (Video internet) and Teleconference Connections

Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group Mission

“To work together to ensure the long term conservation of the Western Arctic caribou herd and the ecosystem on which it depends, and to maintain traditional and other uses for the benefit of all people now and in the future.”

Agenda

1:00 Call to Order (15 min)

- Video (Zoom) & Teleconference Logistics
- WACH Working Group Roll Call / New WG Member Approvals / Quorum
- Review & Approve Agenda

1:15 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Status & Management Level (85 min)

- 1:15 Western Arctic Herd Overview and 2021 Census – including Technical Committee recommendation on the herd Management Level per the 2019 WACH Cooperative Management Plan (30 min) – Alex Hansen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) (p. 13)
- 1:45 National Park Service Caribou Monitoring (10 min) – Kyle Joly, National Park Service (NPS) (p. 23)
- 1:55 Western Arctic Herd Registration Permits (15 min) – Alex Hansen, ADFG (p. 33)
- 2:10 Working Group discussion and decision on herd Management Level per the 2019 WACH Cooperative Management Plan (30 min)

2:40 State of Alaska Wildlife Harvest Regulations (15 min)

- Statewide proposal 245 to eliminate requirement to salvage rib meat on the bone for caribou (includes Units 23 and 24) – Comments due to Alaska Board of Game on February 18, 2022 (p. 43)
- Working Group discussion & decision re: comment to Board of Game

2:55 Break (15 min)

3:10 Federal Wildlife Harvest Regulations (40 min) – Lisa Grediagin and Hannah Voorhees, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management (OSM)

- Proposal WP22-47: Proposal to allow calf harvest on federal lands in Unit 22. (NOTE: This proposal was submitted to the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) by the WACH Working Group) (p. 45)
- Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-45: FSB review of whether to retain current closure of portions of Unit 23 along the Noatak River to harvest of caribou by non-Federally qualified users. (p. 47)

WACH Working Group Meeting – Agenda (continued)

- Wildlife Special Action WSA 21-01: OSM discussion with Working Group members about proposed special action to close Federal public lands in Units 23 and 26A to harvest of caribou (and moose) by non-Federally qualified users. *(NOTE: The FSB deferred action on this special action request in 2021 and will reconsider prior to the 2022 hunting season.) (p. 49)*
- Working Group discussion & decisions re: comments to FSB

3:50 Working Group Committee Reports (40 min)

- Resource Development Committee Update (30 min) – Tim Fullman, Committee Chair *(p. 65)*
- Communication Committee Report & Questionnaire (10 min) – Heather Jameson, ADFG *(p. 83)*

4:30 Community Harvest Assessment Program (10 min) – Helen Cold, ADFG Subsistence Division *(p. 97)*

4:40 Announcements / Business Meeting (50 min)

- Conference Announcement: 2023 North American Caribou Workshop, to be held in Alaska – Kyle Joly, NPS *(p. 105)*
- Caribou Roundtable Form – Please complete and mail in!
- Approve 2020 WACH Working Group Meeting Summary *(p. 107)*
- Nominations for Vice Chair for 2022-2024 term (ballot to be mailed later to WG members to vote via mail)
- Action Items
- 2022 Working Group meeting – Date / Location

5:30 Adjourn