

GMU 26 B & C Update
October 13-14, 2022
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Jason Caikoski – Area Biologist

ADF&G Staffing Update

- Area Biologist Beth Lenart retired in April 2022 after over 30 years of service with ADF&G
- Jason Caikoski was hired as the new area biologist in July 2022
- Recruitment for a new assistant area biologist will occur in early winter

Central Arctic Caribou Herd Update

- 2019 population estimate = 30,100 caribou
- The population objective = 28,000–32,000 caribou
- A photocensus was completed on June 30th 2022, results will be available this winter
- Spring 2022 calving surveys resulted in significantly lower than average parturition rate (60%) and calf:cow ratio (44 calves:100 cows). Adult and yearling survival was average during the previous year.

Porcupine Caribou Herd Update

- 2017 population estimate = 218,000
- The population objective = 100,000–150,000 caribou
- A photocensus has not been conducted since 2017 due to poor aggregations
- Spring 2022 calving survey resulted in a slightly lower parturition rate (70%), however early calf survival was excellent (93%) and the calf:cow ratio was high (68 calves:100 cows). Adult and yearling survival was average during the previous year

Unit 26B Muskox

- The spring 2022 minimum count = 362 muskoxen
- The population has been growing since 2017
- The population has been closed to hunting since 2007 due to conservation concerns
- The population objective is to maintain at least 300 muskoxen
- The management plan objective is to allow hunting when the populations is at least 300 muskoxen and stable or growing
- The population will be open to hunting starting in Fall 2023, using the current hunt structure in state regulations as follow:
 - Tier II subsistence permit, any muskox, Aug 1-Mar 31 (application in November 2022). Hunt area includes Unit 26A, east of 153 degrees of longitude and Unit 26B west of the Dalton Highway.
 - Registration permit, 15 day spring season in March or April. Hunt area includes Unit 26B, east of the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area (permits issued in Kaktovik and Nuiqsut)
 - Drawing Permit, Bull Only, Sept 1-Oct 10 and Mar 10-Mar 30. Hunt area includes Unit 26B, east of the Dalton Highway.