

Cora Campbell, Commissioner



Public Communications
P.O. Box 25526
Juneau, Alaska 99802-5526
(907) 465-6167

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

NEWS

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CONTACT: Cathie Harms (907) 459-7231

Fortymile Caribou Season Opened on Steese Highway

The State of Alaska winter hunting season for Fortymile caribou (RC867) in areas accessible from the Steese Highway will open at 12:01 am Thursday morning, February 10, and close at 11:59 pm Friday evening, February 11, 2011.

"We flew over the area this week to see if the caribou are moving, and they are starting to disburse," said Tok Area Biologist Jeff Gross. "We're hoping to allow more hunters to harvest caribou while the animals are still available."

Gross said he expected the harvest of caribou in Zone 1 to increase over Thursday and Friday, but said the two-day opening should prevent exceeding the quota of 205 caribou. Hunters have reported taking 79 caribou in Zone 1 as of Tuesday, February 08.

If the harvest quota has not been met by Friday evening, Fish and Game staff will likely reopen the season at a later date.

The hunting season for Fortymile caribou in areas accessible from the Steese Highway has remained closed because large numbers of caribou were gathered near the highway and the adjacent trail systems. Hunting has been allowed south of Birch Creek, 10-20 miles south of the Steese Highway.

Hunting for Fortymile caribou is regulated by joint state-federal registration permit hunt RC867. The season for federally-qualified subsistence hunters has remained open on federal land in the area.

Gross noted that this is the first time that the Fortymile caribou hunting season has been open in the same time frame as the Yukon Quest Dog Sled race. "We've been in touch with Quest officials to make sure they understand what's happening with the hunt, and we're helping hunters learn about the race. We're encouraging everyone to be careful and enjoy all of the activities."

The State of Alaska hunt for Fortymile caribou will reopen in Zone 1 as shown on the attached map. Zone 1 includes lands accessible from the Steese Highway in Units 20B and 25C.

State and federal hunting seasons for Fortymile caribou remain open in Zone 2 (located in parts of Unit 20B, 20D north of the Tanana River, and western 20E) and in Zone 3 (on lands accessible from the Taylor Highway) north of milepost 60.

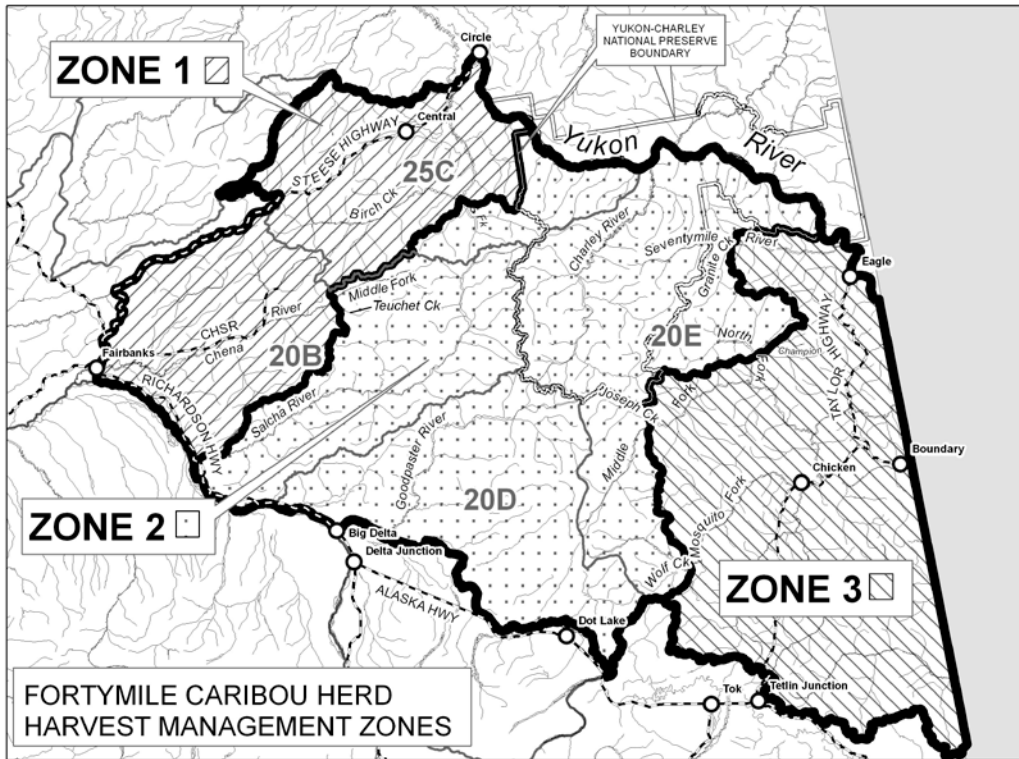
Successful hunters must report within three days of the kill on the internet at <http://hunt.alaska.gov>, or in person or by phone to the ADF&G office in Tok (883-2971). Hunters who report by phone must also mail their permit reports or drop them off to the Tok ADF&G office. Unsuccessful hunters must return their reports to the Tok office or report online at <http://hunt.alaska.gov> within 15 days of the end of the season.

Hunters are urged to obtain a receipt when they turn in their hunt reports or to mail them by delivery confirmation receipt. Permit holders who fail to report will not be allowed to obtain registration, drawing, or tier II permits next year, and may be cited for a violation of the Alaska hunting regulations.

Management is designed to allow the Fortymile herd to continue to grow and expand into its former range in Alaska and Yukon. At about 51,000 animals, the Fortymile herd is the largest caribou herd in Interior Alaska.

Hunters with questions about the state season should call the Fortymile Hotline at (907) 267-2310.

Hunters with questions about federal subsistence regulations should call (800) 478-1456.



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