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PRESS RELEASE

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Port Valdez North Goat Hunt RG248 Will Not Open

(Cordova)- Registration permit hunt RG248 for mountain goats in Unit 6D will not open for the 2015 regulatory year on October 1 due to overharvest in 2014. The hunt area includes the mainland drainages of Sheep Creek; north of Port Valdez, Robe Lake, and the Richardson Highway; and east of Shoup Glacier.

An aerial survey of the area was conducted and found a minimum count of 115 goats. The department set the maximum allowable harvest at five "goat units." Total goat units are calculated using one unit for billies and two units for nannies. The harvest in 2014 was 9 goat units, nearly double the maximum allowable harvest. Exceeding harvest objectives can harm the long-term stability of goat populations. According to Prince William Sound Area Biologist Charlotte Westing, "the hunt only lasted 48 hours and was plagued by late and incomplete reporting".

This hunt will likely open next year with a new hunt structure to prevent future overharvest and to provide a reliable annual hunt opportunity.

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