

Division of Wildlife Conservation
Bruce Dale, Director
Region IV, Glennallen Office
PO Box 47
Glennallen, AK 99588-0047



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Sam Cotten, Commissioner
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Todd Rinaldi
Regional Management Coordinator
Phone: (907) 861-2105

Winter Seasons Closed for Nelchina Caribou Hunts RC561, RC562, DC485

(Glennallen) – Winter hunting seasons for Nelchina caribou Tier I hunts RC561 and RC562, and drawing permit hunt DC485, are closed by emergency order.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game's July 2018 post-calving survey estimated the Nelchina herd at approximately 35,700 caribou, near the lower end of the population objective of 35,000–40,000. To prevent overharvest, the department issued an emergency order limiting 2018 harvest to bulls-only for all Unit 13 state-managed caribou hunts (RC561, RC562, CC001, and DC485). The emergency order also established a harvest quota of 1,400, allocated as follows:

- RC561 – 500 bulls
- RC562 – 500 bulls
- DC485 – 250 bulls
- CC001 – This hunt is also bulls only, but is managed under a separate cap.

The early-season RC561 Tier I hunt closed by emergency order on August 18, when the quota of 500 bulls was met. The draw hunt closed by emergency order on August 26, and the quota of 250 bulls was met that day. The second Tier I caribou hunt, RC562, opened September 1, and the quota of 500 bulls was met when the season closed on September 20. CC001 has not reached its cap and will open as scheduled on October 21.

All RC561, RC562, and DC485 permit holders are required to report on their unsuccessful or unused permits within 15 days of this announcement. In addition to the bulls-only restrictions and harvest quotas, a three-day harvest reporting requirement applies to the remaining state-managed Unit 13 caribou hunt, CC001. Successful hunters can provide wildlife managers the information they need to closely track in-season harvest by filing hunt reports online at https://secure.wildlife.alaska.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=interperm.enter_report_hunterid, by phone at (907) 822-3461, or in person at the Glennallen or Palmer Fish and Game offices.

For hunt updates and additional information call the Nelchina Hotline at 907-267-2304 (24/7) or contact Todd Rinaldi at todd.rinaldi@alaska.gov or (907) 861-2105.

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