THE STATE of ALASKA
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Fish and Game

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
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An Agenda Change Request (ACR 1) has been submitted to the Alaska Board of Game (board) requesting to change 5 AAC 92.121. Intensive Management Plans. The proponent is asking the board to adopt an Intensive Management (IM) plan to benefit the Nelchina Caribou Herd (NCH). This would mean that the department can intensively manage the NCH through the use of predation control for high levels of consumptive use, if appropriate, as part of an active IM program to restore the abundance of the NCH.

With respect to the board's Agenda Change Request acceptance criteria (5 AAC 92.005):

A. The department is unaware of any error in regulation.
B. The department is unaware of any effects of regulations that were unforeseen when the regulation was adopted.
C. The NCH is currently below population and harvest objectives.
D. The request is not for the purpose of identifying an unforeseen, unexpected event, or effect that would otherwise restrict or reduce a reasonable opportunity for customary and traditional wildlife uses. However, the NCH currently has no available harvestable surplus and is below the lower range of the amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (600-1,000 caribou).
E. The department has not identified an unforeseen, unexpected resource situation where a biologically allowable resource harvest would be precluded by delayed regulatory action nor has the department identified an existing resource that would be unavailable in the future with delayed regulatory action.

The requested change would create an IM plan for the NCH, making predator control available to aid in restoring the herd to its population and harvest objectives. The request is largely similar to a proposal that was deliberated by board in January 2025. While the proposer is concerned the department has not yet provided a feasibility assessment, the herd is currently growing at a high rate. The department has not identified predation as significantly limiting the growth of the herd at this time, although predation control tools could be useful in the future if that situation were to change.

The board has identified the NCH as important for providing high levels of harvest for human consumptive use and established population and harvest objectives of 35,000–40,000 and 3,000–6,000 caribou, respectively. The board established a positive customary and traditional use finding for the NCH and set an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 600–1,000 caribou.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting for Central and Southwest Region is during winter/spring of 2027/2028. If the board accepts this ACR, the department recommends that the proposal come before the board at its March meeting in Fairbanks to allow for more public input.

Sincerely,

Ryan Scott

Ryan Scott
Director
Division of Wildlife Conservation