

Resolution on caribou season

By NELLIE WARD

Testifying last week representative Leo Schaeffer, D-Kotzebue, and Kobuk guide Tony Bernhardt breezed House Concurrent Resolution 23 by Schaeffer through the House Resources Committee with one amendment. The original resolution would have opened the caribou season in the Arctic Game Management Units on September 1 instead of October 1.

With Bernhardt saying, "With the way the season is now, even by the first week of October caribou isn't worth shooting." He said with an earlier opening the people would be able to use the meat. Rep. Schaeffer explained that by October 1, caribou have begun to rut and the meat is too strong to eat.

The Bill was amended to an opening date of August 1. That amendment came about on the recommendation from the Department of Fish and Game explaining that the crisis depletion of the Western Arctic caribou herd and the lateness of the game board meeting in Sept. 1976 forced October 1 as the earliest possible opening date.

Caribou went from an open season in past years to an October to March season set last fall as an emergency measure. Permit holders are now allowed one bull caribou per year with a total of 3,000 permits issued annually. In past years hunters were allowed 15 bulls annually.