

Fish and Game closes caribou on Seward peninsula

The Department of Fish and Game this week announced a caribou hunting closure on part of the Seward Peninsula and adjacent areas to prevent harvest of Western Arctic caribou herd animals that have recently moved into that area.

A Department spokesman said the area of Game Management Unit 22 north and west of the Ungalik River has been closed to the hunting of caribou. Game Management Unit 22 includes all but the northeastern section of the Seward Peninsula, and the Norton Sound river drainages along the coast, almost as far south as Kotlik. The Ungalik River is about 15 miles north of the village of Shaktoolik.

Fairbanks Regional Game Management Coordinator Oliver Burris said the closure was made to keep the total harvest of Western Arctic herd caribou at 3,000 animals or less.

Burris said the Board of Game intended to allow no more than 3,000 caribou to be taken by humans from the Western Arctic herd.

"Once the caribou crossed the Unit 22 boundary, they fell under the regulations of that

unit," he said. The bag limit of caribou in Unit 22 is three caribou.

"We closed the area because our biologists felt that a significant harvest of Western Arctic animals could have been taken in only a few days if the area had been left open to hunting," he said. "The entire 3,000 caribou quota has already been allocated to other villages outside of the closed area."