

# Okla. University, Army, ADFG Cooperating in Caribou Study

"The University of Oklahoma, in cooperation with the United States Army and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, will soon continue their study of the disease incidence and transmittal in the caribou population along the north slope of the Alaska Range between Big Delta and Healy," said Jerry Kocer, leader of the group.

"Caribou are pursued with a helicopter, and darts containing a drug are fired from a CO<sub>2</sub> powered gun at close range. The caribou is immobilized shortly after the drug enters the bloodstream and the crew extracts a

blood sample, places a numbered metal tag in each ear and an orange plastic ear streamer in one ear. The drug soon wears off and the animal is on its way," said Kocer.

"We have tagged 208 caribou in the last three years and hope to immobilize an additional 75 this spring," said Kocer.

The Department of Fish and Game will analyze one half of all the blood samples, observe movements of ear-marked caribou from the air and obtain material to verify caribou age determination techniques.

Sportsmen are asked to bring the entire head or the ears and jaw of ear-tagged caribou they shoot and to report sightings of ear-marked caribou to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

The caribou hunting season ends March 31.