2025 Alaska Department of Fish and Game Unit 26A Update

Teshekpuk Caribou Herd:

1) **Population Estimate:**

- Photocensus Estimate (2022): 61,600

2) Spring Short Yearling Surveys

- Observed 3,630 caribou 20% were short yearlings (April 2024)

  -10 year average 15% Average

3) Summer Calving Surveys:

- 45% pregnant (females ages 3 or older June 2024)

  -10-year average 68%

4) Adult Female Mortality:

- (2023-2024): 16% (15% ls the long-term average)

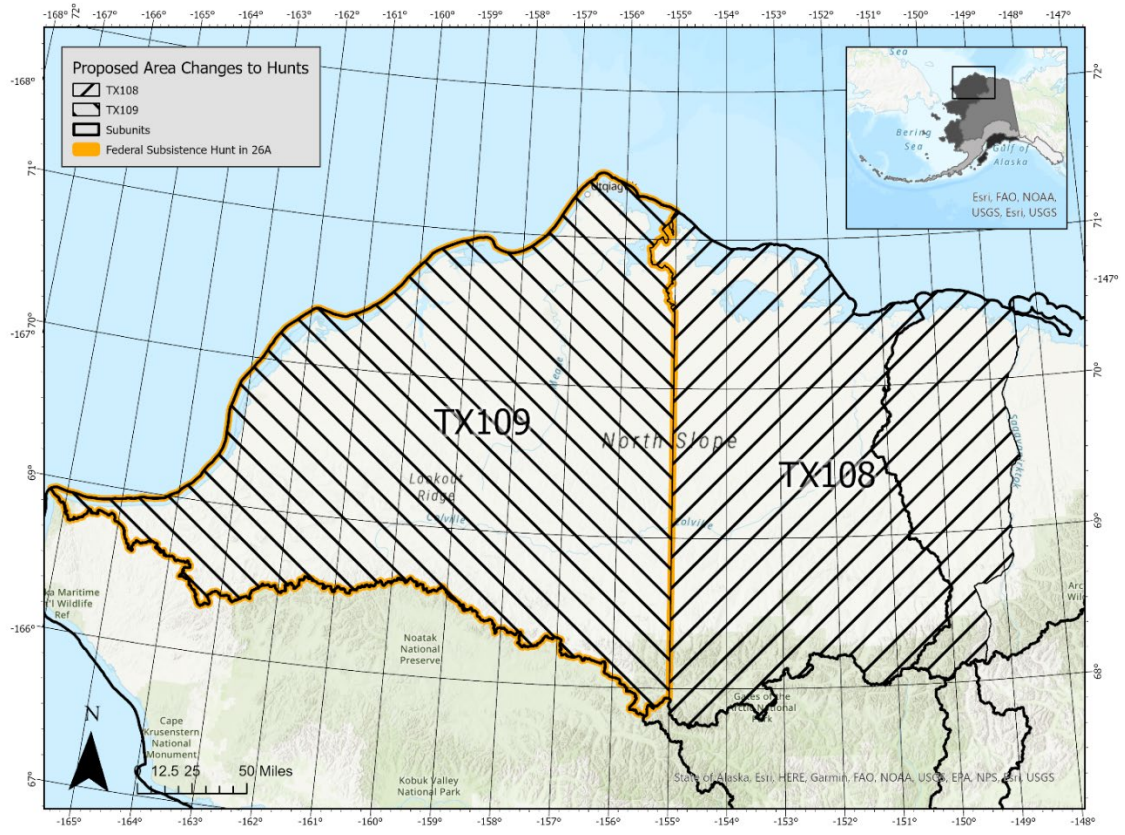
5) Caribou Health Assessment:

An in-depth research project began in 2022 and continues each summer for three years to look more closely at Teshekpuk caribou health including measurements of body condition, internal and external parasites, trace minerals, stress-related hormones, and a wide range of possible diseases.

Recent Caribou Mortalities on the North Slope: ADFG was made aware of caribou mortalities that were observed by Utqiaġvik hunters in March 2024. There was a minimum of 18 1–2-year-old caribou that were collected and investigated by NSB Wildlife in March and ADFG in June. ADFG and NSB wildlife are working to analyze the samples collected. Preliminary results suggest that the mortalities were not disease related but starvation potentially due to environmental conditions.

Western 26A Musk Ox:

- There were 421 muskoxen observed in Western 26A. There were 70 bulls:100 cows and 61 yearlings:100 cows (2022).
- There will be a musk ox survey in spring 2025.
- The boundary for the North Slope musk ox hunts was aligned with the federal hunt boundary and is displayed below.



Colville Moose: The most recent minimum count survey was conducted in 2021 and the minimum count was 427 moose and 20% of those were short yearlings with 18 sets of twins (4.2%). The moose population is relatively stable at low numbers. The next minimum count survey is planned for spring of 2026.

The western moose hunt boundary was moved to 155W longitude line similar to the map above except that it excludes the Colville River drainage.