

**NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH ASSEMBLY
RESOLUTION 23-53**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH
ASSEMBLY OPPOSING ANY ACTION BY THE FEDERAL
SUBSISTENCE BOARD TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE THE
ALLOWABLE HARVEST OF WESTERN ARCTIC CARIBOU
HERD CARIBOU.**

WHEREAS: in June 2023, the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) considered Temporary Wildlife Special Action (WSA) Request WSA22-05 from Northwest Arctic Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, which would have reduced the caribou harvest limit in Unit 23 from 5 caribou per day to 4 caribou per year, only one of which may be a cow, for the remainder of the 2022-2024 regulatory cycle; and

WHEREAS: in June 2023, the Board also considered a similar proposal from the Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council for Temporary Wildlife Special Action Request WSA22-06, which would have reduced the caribou harvest limit across the range of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) from 5 caribou per day to 4 caribou per year, only one of which may be a cow, for the remainder of the 2022-2024 regulatory cycle, specifically reducing the harvest in 21D remainder, 24A remainder, 24C, 24D, and all caribou hunt areas within Units 22, 23, and 26A; and

WHEREAS: although both of these Special Action Requests were not approved by the Board after widespread public opposition, Borough recognizes the continuing threat to food security that future drastic harvest limits pose; and

WHEREAS: conservation concerns associated with the recent significant decline in WACH numbers led to these WSA requests; and

WHEREAS: ongoing conservation concerns and future calls for drastic reductions to the allowable harvest of caribou will continue until the herd's population significantly rebounds; and

WHEREAS: subsistence activities, including the pursuit, harvest, processing, sharing, and consumption of caribou, are central to the Inupiat culture and critical to the health and food security of Northwest Arctic Borough residents; and

WHEREAS: adoption of any action that drastically reduces the allowable caribou harvest will result in immediate and profound food insecurity and actual hunger within Borough communities; and

WHEREAS: sharp harvest limits would prevent the traditional, common, and essential sharing practices within Borough communities and would prevent the harvest by proxy for elders and others who cannot harvest needed caribou for themselves; and

WHEREAS: no stakeholder group has more to gain from conservation measures aimed at recovering the numbers of the WACH, and no stakeholder group has more to lose if the WACH continues to decline, than the subsistence hunters and their communities who depend on the animals as a significant and irreplaceable food source; and

WHEREAS: Northwest Arctic subsistence hunters and communities have successfully responded to sudden and significant shortages of subsistence resources in the past including caribou, by invoking customary and traditional conservation and harvest practices and limits; and

WHEREAS: Northwest Arctic subsistence hunters and communities have a long history of successful and respected self-management of harvests undertaken in collaboration with responsible State of Alaska and federal agencies; and

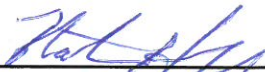
WHEREAS: if drastic harvest limits are imposed, enforcement of the proposed WSAs will force families to choose between criminal citation and feeding their families and communities; and

WHEREAS: food security and conservation of subsistence resources are top priorities of the Borough, its communities, and its residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: the Northwest Arctic Borough Assembly strongly opposes any measures by the Federal Subsistence Board to drastically reduce harvest limits of caribou across the full range of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: the Borough proposes that the Federal Subsistence Board consider and adopt a conservation program that employs community-based self-regulation of WACH harvests.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 19th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023.



Nathan Hadley, Jr., Assembly President

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 19th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023.



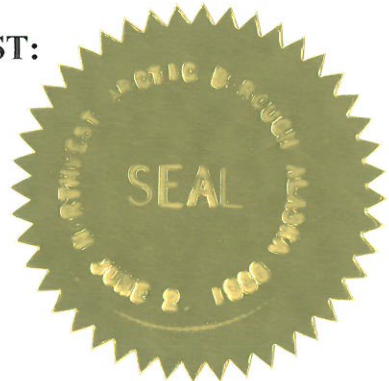
Dickie Moto, Sr., Mayor

SIGNED AND ATTESTED TO THIS 19th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023.



Stella Atoruk, Borough Clerk

ATTEST:



**NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 28-2023**

**A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED SPECIAL
ACTION BY THE FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD
DRASTICALLY REDUCING THE ALLOWABLE
HARVEST OF WESTERN ARCTIC CARIBOU HERD
CARIBOU FROM 5 PER DAY TO 4 PER YEAR**

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council submitted Temporary Wildlife Special Action (WSA) Request WSA22-05, asking the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) to reduce the caribou harvest limit in Unit 23 from 5 caribou per day to 4 caribou per year, only one of which may be a cow, for the remainder of the 2022-2024 regulatory cycle; and

WHEREAS, the Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council submitted Temporary Wildlife Special Action Request WSA22-06, asking the Board to reduce the caribou harvest limit across the range of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) from 5 caribou per day to 4 caribou per year, only one of which may be a cow, for the remainder of the 2022-2024 regulatory cycle, specifically reducing the harvest in 21D remainder, 24A remainder, 24C, 24D, and all caribou hunt areas within Units 22, 23, and 26A; and

WHEREAS, conservation concerns associated with the recent significant decline in WACH numbers led to these WSA requests; and

WHEREAS, subsistence activities, including the pursuit, harvest, processing, sharing, and consumption of caribou, are central to the Inupiat culture and critical to the nutritional well-being of North Slope residents; and

WHEREAS, adoption of either of these Temporary WSA Requests would result in immediate and profound food insecurity and actual hunger within all of the affected subsistence communities; and

WHEREAS, the proposed harvest limits are not in keeping with traditional, common, and essential sharing practices within our communities and would prevent the harvest by proxy for elders and others who cannot harvest needed caribou for themselves; and

WHEREAS, no stakeholder group has more to gain from conservation measures aimed at recovering the numbers of the WACH, and no stakeholder group has more to lose if the WACH continues to decline, than the subsistence hunters and their communities who depend on the animals as a significant and irreplaceable food source; and

WHEREAS, North Slope subsistence hunters and communities have successfully responded to sudden and significant shortages of subsistence resources in the past,

including caribou, by invoking customary and traditional conservation and harvest practices and limits; and

WHEREAS, North Slope subsistence hunters and communities have a long history of successful and respected self-management and co-management of harvests undertaken in collaboration with responsible State of Alaska and federal agencies, including co-management of the harvests of the bowhead whale and other marine mammals; and

WHEREAS, the North Slope Borough's Department of Wildlife Management, employing community-based Subsistence Research Specialists, has for decades documented the community harvest of and need for a full range of subsistence resources, including caribou; and

WHEREAS, while also hunting within the range of the WACH, subsistence hunters within six North Slope communities harvest the majority of their caribou from the Central Arctic and Teshekpuk Herds, which are either stable or increasing; and

WHEREAS, enforcement of the proposed WSAs would almost certainly result in the citation of North Slope and other subsistence hunters, unjustly criminalizing their efforts to feed their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, food security and conservation of subsistence resources are top priorities of the North Slope Borough, our communities, and our residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The North Slope Borough strongly opposes the adoption of Temporary Wildlife Special Action Requests WSA22-05 and WSA22-06 that would reduce harvest limits of caribou across the full range of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The North Slope Borough proposes as an alternative to the proposed WSAs that the Federal Subsistence Board adopt a conservation program that employs community-based self-regulation of WACH harvests.

INTRODUCED: June 6, 2023
ADOPTED: June 7, 2023

Vernon A. Edwardsen
Vernon A. Edwardsen, President
Date: June 7, 2023

ATTEST:

Sheila H. Burke
Sheila Burke, Borough Clerk
Date: June 7, 2023

Harry K. Brower, Jr.
Harry K. Brower, Jr., Mayor
Date: June 7, 2023

