

Subsistence Advisory Council Supports Hunt Ban

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Diana Gish/KMXT

What appears to be a shrinking population of caribou on Unimak Island has been raising alarm with subsistence hunters. As a measure to protect the herd, the Federal Subsistence Board has suggested closing the island to caribou hunting.

Last week the Kodiak/Aleutians Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council met to review that and other federal subsistence management proposals.

According to long-time advisory council member Pat Holmes, the bull-cow ratio is low right now and mortality rates are very high. He said it's a problem that's been developing for several years.

(Subsistence 1 "and there was ... of a rebound")

The answer to the declining caribou population problem may come in the form of a cooperative effort between state and federal management agencies.

-- (Subsistence 2 "And so I ... Unimak Island one.")

Other than the caribou herd management proposal, the council dealt with several administrative proposals meant to streamline and clarify federal subsistence regulations.

The Kodiak-Aleutians Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory council meets twice a year to make recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board on proposals to change subsistence regulations.

Maureen Clark, Public Affairs specialist for the Federal Office of Subsistence Management talked about the role the council plays in subsistence management.

-- (Subsistence 3 "It's important for ... are very important.")

Last fall, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar initiated a departmental review of the Federal Subsistence Management Program in order to evaluate how well the program is fulfilling its purpose as set out by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. The secretary had toured parts of Alaska with Senator Mark Begich in October.