



ANWR

INFORMATION BRIEF

Do the caribou really care?



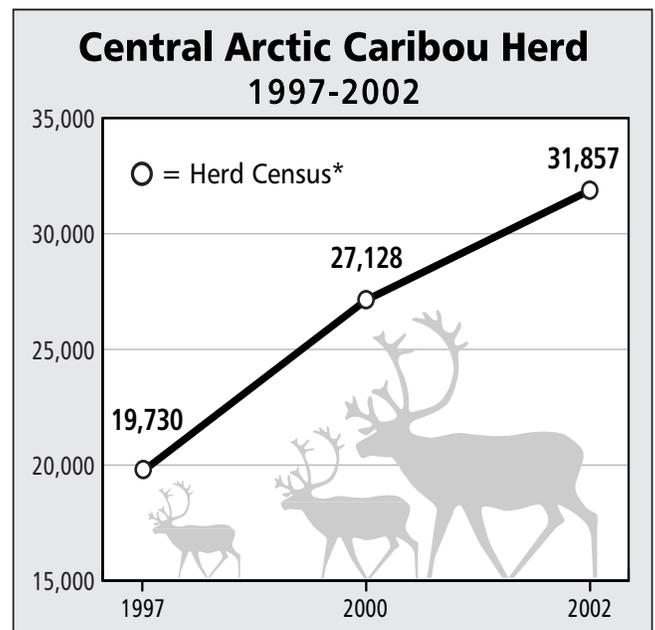
Central Arctic Herd near Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope.

Are caribou affected by oil development on the North Slope? It would appear not, based on the growing population of herds that use land in the existing oil fields in northern Alaska. The population of the Central Arctic caribou herd, which migrates north each summer into the oil fields near Prudhoe Bay, has been growing about 8.5 percent per year. Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game biologists counted 31,857 caribou in aerial surveys of this herd in July 2002. In July 2000, fish and game biologists counted 27,128. In 1997, the count was 19,730.

Caribou herd populations rise and fall with natural cycles, but one explanation biologists have for the increasing population of the Central Arctic Herd is good calf production and survival, and high survival of adults.

Pregnant caribou cows in the Central Arctic herd bear their calves on lands within or near operating oil fields. Some calves are born within a few hundred meters of oil field roads.

The Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game findings are backed by the Argonne National Laboratory. Argonne found no evidence that oil development harmed the Central Arctic Herd in the lab's work on the Environmental Impact Statement for an extension of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System federal right-of-way.

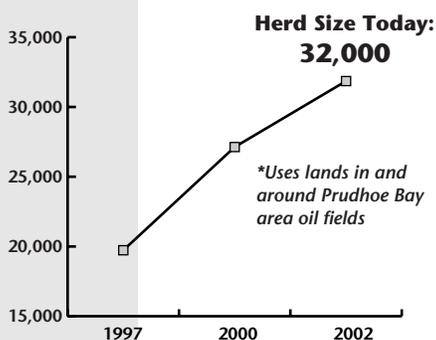


*Most recent survey taken in 2002

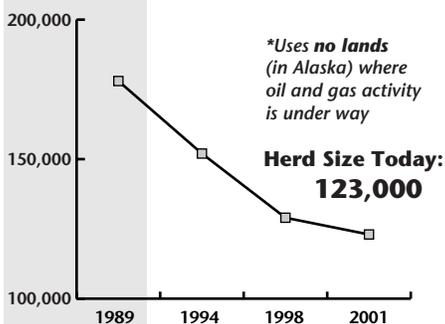
Arctic caribou herds

Caribou herds rise and fall in natural cycles, and it is interesting that while populations have been rising in the Central Arctic Herd (see chart) which use lands in the North Slope oilfields, populations have been declining in the Porcupine herd (see chart) which do not use lands where there is oil and gas development. The Central Arctic Herd increased to 32,000 animals in 2002, up from 27,000 in 2000. The Porcupine herd was estimated at 123,000 in 2001, 129,000 in 1998 and 152,000 in 1994. In 1989, the population was counted at 178,000. Most recent survey taken in 2002.

Central Arctic Herd*

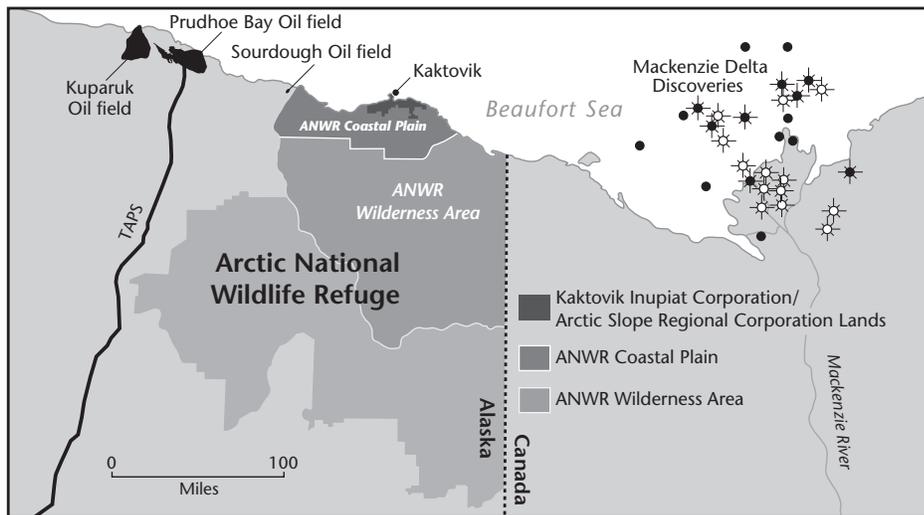


Porcupine Herd*



Central Arctic, Porcupine caribou mingle

There is now evidence that caribou mix between all of the North Slope caribou herds, the Porcupine, Central Arctic and Western Arctic herds. Using analysis of DNA, researchers from the University of Alaska, Texas A&M University and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture found that caribou in the three herds are genetically related. This reflects migration of animals between the herds over many generations.



Source: Alaska Department of Natural Resources

The truth on Arctic Caribou

- Caribou use of the 1002 Area of ANWR varies dramatically from year to year. In 1995, 92% of the Porcupine Caribou Herd used this area to calve. In 2000 none did so.
- In some years, the Porcupine Herd calves only in Canada.
- Choice of calving area depends on snow melt and early growth of forage plants.
- Caribou live a boom and bust cycle, due to predation, weather, and overhunting.
- During the summer, caribou frequently use oil field roads and gravel pads as insect relief habitat: they stand on the elevated gravel pads because fewer mosquitoes and flies harass them there.
- North slope oil facilities are specifically designed to allow caribou migration with elevated pipes to allow caribou to freely walk underneath and limited use of service roads.
- With 30 years of contact with oil development to go by, the industry has shown that caribou and oil fields can successfully co-exist. The Central Arctic Herd, which calves in the vicinity of the Prudhoe Bay, Kuparuk, and Milne Point oil fields, has increased 900% from an estimated 3,000 animals in the early 1970s to 32,000 in 2002.

ANWR Facts:

- Refuge totals 19.6 million acres.
- 8 million acres designated Wilderness;
- Coastal Plain, 1.5 million acres, set aside by Congress for study of oil potential;
- Only a small percentage of Coastal plain, about 2,000 acres, would be impacted by oil development;

The coastal plain is not a pristine wilderness:

- About 40 guide outfits offer hunting and recreation services in the coastal plain; A community, Kaktovik, exists in the Coastal Plain; Military installations operate on the Plain now and in the past.

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