**EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT:** You will be hunting the Central Arctic herd please understand that this is the only heard in the North slope that is accessible to hunt by road and has easy river access to Residents (Residents still have to have a boat to get 5 miles away from the rd. to hunt with rifle). Every year we do our very best to drop camps that are in remote area’s away from other hunters but in successful locations that the Caribou will be migrating through. Remember this is public land. There are other outfitters up north and we all try to communicate and stay out of each other’s way. But there may be a time that you are closer to other hunters than you expected. We are continuously doing research and tracking to try and ensure our drop camps are in the migration path. Please note that we cannot control the Caribou or the weather. The Weather drives the Migration and every year the weather is different, and the Migration starts every year at a different time.

Be prepared to spend many hours walking through Tundra and glassing looking for Caribou, some days there will be multiple groups of Caribou and some days there will be no Caribou as far as you can see. Also, just because you cannot see Caribou does not mean they are not there. Always keep your head on a swivel there are many low-lying areas that from afar you can’t see into. Caribou move casually on Tundra at around 10-15MPH you will move at a slow steady pace at around 1 MPH. You cannot chase them!! But you can get in front of them so just because you see caribou miles out does not mean they cannot be harvested. Plan to walk around 5-15 miles per day. Not 5-15 miles away from camp but in total. Patience is a must!

**PREPARING FOR YOUR HUNT:** The first rule of thumb with caribou hunting in Alaska, or any other big game hunting, is to expect the unexpected. Your success on an Alaska hunting trip is determined by how much and how well you have planned and prepared for your trip. The success of your trip is more than the harvest. Your overall hunting experience includes all sorts of challenges and rewards beyond a successful harvest. You must accept the fact that there are no guarantees.

Alaska is known for its tough terrain and weather Big game hunting is not a luxury vacation; instead, prepare to be challenged and to live in rustic, sparse wilderness conditions. Additionally, be sure your gun-handling and hunting skills are top-notch. These trips are not for novices or complainers. Challenges such as equipment maintenance or repair also add to the adventure; these types of situations distinguish fair chase hunting from controlled shooting experiences. Again, the pursuit is the experience and knowing personal limitations and thresholds before booking a trip saves everyone potential headaches.

You are an experienced hunter, but you are ready for the next challenge. You want to visit the remote Arctic and test your hunting skills, away from your daily routine. Taking an Alaskan hunting trip demands a lot of preparation for the hunter. Your success not only depends on the location of the hunt but also your physical, mental and logistical planning. The worst thing that most hunters do before taking their Alaska hunting trip is underestimating how much walking/hiking they will do. Sometimes in order to find the perfect trophy you have to walk through dense alder thickets, muskegs and even cross creeks. But even if you get lucky and find your trophy bull near your camp, the real work begins after you’ve taken your shot and now must clean and pack up your kill. Starting a physical regiment 4 to 6 months before your trip will have you better prepared for the Alaskan tundra.

Your time here is the opportunity of a lifetime; to continue the tradition of caribou hunting that has existed for eons. Your adventure requires nerve, skill, and even some guidance. We are here to help make your experience as successful as possible.

**WEATHER:** Weather is a variable that no one can control. Mentally, we want you to be prepared for bad weather. While in the field, always be mindful of the weather. You are in a remote area and weather issues can be life threatening. Keep your tent closed while away from camp. Winds can destroy unsecured flaps and leave you without shelter. The weather can change quickly and bring precipitation; keep rain gear with you when away from your tent. Secure camp supplies from the elements prior to departing camp for the day. As stated previously we make every effort to put you in game rich areas; however, your success directly relates to the effort you put into your hunt. While it does happen, the likelihood of shooting a trophy caribou from your tent is rare. Game is out in all types of weather so you might as well be too. As stated above we cannot control the weather plan for 15-20 mph winds daily, plan for temperatures in the 30’s or lower even in early August and plan for it to rain every single day. This is a worst case, but you can always downgrade clothing. There is nothing worse than planning an early August trip and getting caught off guard with winter weather. Obviously the later in the season you go the colder it gets, and the rain turns into snow. Be prepared for the [climate you will encounter](https://www.climate-zone.com/climate/united-states/alaska/barrow/)

**ARRIVING/DEPARTING PRUDHOE BAY:** It is important when booking your commercial airline tickets to PRUDHOE BAY, AK that you arrive either the day before or the morning of your hunt. Most flights coming into Prudhoe Bay in the morning are overnight flights leaving the day prior and arriving at approximately 0910 the day of your hunt. You may also arrive on the evening flight the day prior to your hunt and stay at the ‘Brooks Camp’. DHO will pick you up from the Brooks Camp on the morning the day your hunt starts. When booking your flight out of PRUDHOE BAY, AK., Please book your tickets to leave the day after your hunt, This allows for any weather issues and also allows us the time to properly assist you in getting your camp broken down, caribou packed up, and getting into town to start the shipping process for meat. If you schedule your flight out on the same day as the last day of your hunt, We cannot guarantee that you will make your flight.

Prudhoe Bay is **REMOTE** and primarily made up of oil workers and construction crews, and as such does not have many of the everyday conveniences, we commonly take for granted. Prudhoe Bay does have a few hotels, referred to as camps. The recommended camp is Brooks Camp (907-659-6233). Snacks, souvenirs, and some amenities are available for purchase at a small store across from the Brooks Camp. **It is not a grocery store or a gear store it is comparable to a small gas station**

Once your group has purchased their commercial airline tickets, please forward your itinerary information to us so we have confirmation of your arrival and departure flights. This will allow us to put your information on our schedule and have our personnel on time to meet you at the airport.

A representative of DHO will meet you on arrival in Prudhoe Bay or pick you up at Brooks Camp (typically around 0945) and transport you and your group to the boat launch. It is at this time that you will receive a basic orientation on what to do and not do in the field and basic safety rules for the boat. You will also receive an inventory of your ‘Drop Camp’ equipment if you rented from DHO Rentals. Required paperwork will be completed at the launch and **MUST** be kept while you are in the field.

Please bring a copy of your **Transport Contract** and **DHO Rental Agreement** with you. The State of Alaska requires you to have these on your person at all times

After the brief and the equipment is inventoried, DHO will stage equipment and supplies on the boat for the trip. It is **your responsibility** to examine your supplied and non-supplied items including food, camping equipment, etc. to make sure you have everything you need, nothing forgotten. You will also be able to change into your hunting clothes and store any gear that you will not need in the field. When you prepare to load the boat, make sure all of your gear is on the boat with you! Staging and loading can be hectic at times and with multiple people trying to help they can grab the wrong stuff. ***Be responsible for your own gear until you see all of it loaded onto the boat.***From the launch, DHO will transport you and your group by airboat 25-50 River Miles to your drop camp location. This is a lengthy trip be prepared to dress for the weather.

**END OF HUNT PICK-UP INSTRUCTIONS:** On your pick-up day, please have your gear packed and ready to go. Depending upon the weather, you may need to keep a tent up for shelter so please have it readied to be taken down timely. Your pick-up time will be coordinated on your drop-off day. Please be patient if we are not there at the exact time coordinated; many variables play a part in getting up and down the river.

**EARLY REMOVAL FROM FIELD:** Do not plan to be picked up prior to your departure date, if you tag out prior to your departure date there is plenty of opportunity to fish or hunt wolves (if you have a tag) or Ptarmigans. Be prepared to care for the meat and hide for the full 8 days you will not be taken in early.

**REQUESTING CAMP MOVE:** We do not offer the opportunity to request a camp move. Due to past issues with clients and unrealistic camp move requests we can no longer offer this. We spend a lot of time studying the herd and do our best to place you where you will be successful. Unfortunately, there are a lot of variables that go into a migration. We understand that its very frustrating when there are no caribou moving. We are just as frustrated as you. If we know that you are not seeing anything, and we feel as though there is time an opportunity to move you to a better location we will reach out to you.

**IN FIELD COMMUNICATIONS:** Your hunt is conducted in a REMOTE wilderness area within the Arctic Circle. Communications are limited in such remote areas. You should have good cell service while in Prudhoe Bay, but there is no cell service from the field. We will not be providing any type of communication while you are out in the field. Our only source of communication is INREACH. We strongly recommend at least one person in your party rent/buy an Inreach. You can also bring a satellite phone but that will not be able to communicate with us unless it can send and receive text messages. If you have brought an Inreach, we will provide you our numbers at the boat launch and you can communicate with us that way. If more than one person in your party has an INREACH we ask that only 1 person from the group messages us if something is needed. We have multiple groups of hunters on the ground and if all are messaging it gets confusing and some messages will get missed. If you are buying an INREACH for this trip when setting your name up, please make it recognizable. (example: Conn2128@inreach.garmin.com) That way when we receive a message, we know who it is. For your own personal safety, take extra precautions while doing even routine tasks. Unless you can attract someone’s attention, your ability to make contact outside of camp is **NEAR IMPOSSIBLE**. This is another reason we suggest an INREACH.

**FOOD/BEVERAGES/WATER:** Food **will not** be provided for your camp you must bring what you want to eat with you. (We understand that our video’s state that we provide MRE’s that will change once we have a chance to re-record our packing video) We recommend Mountain house meals since they are light and easy to pack. If you have rented your drop camp you will have a small cook stove and pots and pans. If you want to cook fish or anything else, you will need to bring oils and seasonings. The weather is typically cool enough to keep things like onions, potato’s and vegetables if you decide that you would like to bring fresh food. Most of the small villages in Alaska are dry, including Prudhoe Bay. If you wish to have alcohol, you will need to pack it from home or purchase in Anchorage (state law allows only personal consumption amounts in original containers being transported in, and luggage must be labeled to indicate it contains alcohol and all alcohol contents must be declared).

Water from the rivers in the area is quite safe to drink. If you have rented from DHO Rentals, DHO Rentals provides a 5-gallon water jug to fill up at the river and keep at your camp for drinking. It is your responsibility to bring water bottles. Water does not need to be boiled before drinking. This area of Alaska does not have pollution or Giardia like many other areas. For your peace of mind, we recommend bringing a filtered water bottle. This will allow you to drink from **ANY** water source you come across if needed. It is very important to stay hydrated when hunting; drink plenty of fluids constantly. Do not wait until you are thirsty, as you will quickly become dehydrated.

Remember, alcohol and guns do not mix. Please remember weapons safety at all times, There is absolutely no reason that you should have a round in the chamber at any time unless you are ready to pull the trigger on an animal. Your hunt is conducted in a remote area where accidents are perilous.

**LUGGAGE INFORMATION:** Please remember that hunter’s luggage and rifle cases typically look alike. Have your luggage clearly labeled to aid in keeping your gear properly identified. Weight is limited to 70lbs of gear per person, not including your weapon or cooler. Note, we do not transport hard-sided weapon cases into the field; they are kept in locked storage at the boat launch. Also, do not use extra-large bags or the large hard-sided suitcases; they do not fit well into the truck or boat. You are limited to one Dry bag and one empty frame pack for your gear going out to the field. (please watch our packing video’s those will tell you exactly what you need) Review your commercial airlines restrictions on weight/size of baggage items. Our packing video’s are available on our website, Youtube, and Facebook please watch them.

**WEAPONS AND AMMO:** Alaska law does not separate licenses or seasons by weapon. Both firearms and archery gear are acceptable. Black powder hunting is permitted but only if you are driving to Prudhoe Bay. Airline transport regulations do not permit the transport of black powder or percussion caps. Purchases of these items would need to be in state, driven to Prudhoe Bay, and disposed of before flying home.

**FIREARMS:** Appropriate caliber selection is important. We recommend .30 caliber or better. Smaller calibers work for Caribou, but you are in bear country and bigger calibers make better back up in the event you should have a close encounter. More important than caliber is ammunition. Select and sight in your rifle with PREMIUM AMMO. Select premium bonded ammo that shoots well in your weapon. These rounds shoot more consistent, and the bullets perform better. DHO wants you to be successful when opportunity presents itself. We do not want to see animals wounded or injured that cannot be taken cleanly and recovered promptly. Bullets are the cheapest part of your hunt and perform the largest task. When packing your ammo for your commercial flight it needs to be in the original box or in a container made to hold appropriate ammo. All persons, in the field, should carry their weapons loaded with an empty chamber. There will be ample time to chamber a round prior to taking your game. Carrying with an empty chamber ensures no accidental discharges from you weapon; it cannot fire if there is no round in the chamber.

**ARCHERY:** Alaska bow requirements are:

* 40lb minimum draw weight for caribou, black bear, Dall sheep, wolf, and wolverine
* 50lb minimum draw weight for mountain goat, moose, brown bear/grizzly
* Minimum 7/8” blade
* 300 grain minimum shaft/tip weight
* No mechanical broad heads for species requiring the 50lb minimum bow weight

As a bow hunter, you should be consistent in hitting your target out to 40 yards or more, both standing and kneeling. The hunting area is primarily open tundra with rolling hills. There are scattered bushes and stunted trees along stream banks and valleys to use as cover. Caribou primarily are seen in open areas, so bow hunters should be prepared for stalks, which require patients and crawling to get within shooting distance.

Crossbows are not considered archery in this GMU. They can be used but in Alaska a crossbow is considered a firearm in most GMU’s.

**You cannot use artificial light optics in the state of Alaska.**

**FIELD CARE OF TROPHIES:** Do not get in a big hurry with your knife. Make sure your weapon is safe, secure your tag on your trophy, and complete your harvest ticket. Take time to clean up, pose and take some good photos of your animal. Consider lighting and fill the frame with hunter and trophy. Take multiple shots in several different poses. Do not straddle or sit on your trophy; these do not yield quality photos. Prop the animal up and sit, or kneel, behind it. We recommend you consult with your taxidermist for instructions on caping and fleshing if you are not familiar with how to perform these important tasks. You will want to be prepared for your knowledge of [field dressing and meat packaging](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunting.meatcare). We also recommend splitting the skullcaps on all caribou. You or your taxidermist can easily put them back together. This will save hundreds of dollars on shipping fees.

While in the field, keep your capes opened and out of the direct sun; preferably hung in a small tree or bush for air circulation and cooling. The cool nights will help drastically. We recommend you ship capes and antlers to Fairbanks, AK to be fleshed if you choose not to do this in the field. They will expedite your antlers and capes to you or your taxidermist. The fur processor DHO recommends is Fairbanks Fur Tannery (907-452-6047). The taxidermists we recommend are Caribou Ridge Taxidermy (907-687-7417), located in North Pole, AK. Or Back to Life Alaska Taxidermy (907) 385-0321 also located in North Pole AK. There are many other Taxidermists in the Fairbanks and in North pole but If you choose to have your animal taxidermy done here in Alaska, ensure that whomever you choose will pick up your trophy in Fairbanks at Alaska Air Cargo.

We discourage transporting raw trophies to your home via airfreight. This method is labor intensive, expensive, and risky. Alaska Airlines will not accept improperly packaged or raw trophies (skull plates and capes) for transport as baggage.

**HUNTING REGULATIONS:** [Review the Alaska Hunting Regulations](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=wildliferegulations.hunting) for GMU 26B. You are hunting this area. Penalties for game violations are severe. DHO encourages you to obtain and study the game regulations so you do not, inadvertently, violate game laws.

**TAGS AND LICENSE:** [Purchase your tags and licenses online](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=hunting.main), prior to arrival. Your hunting license, fishing license, and harvest tag are printable from the website. The locking tag mailed to you by the Department of Fish and Game is to be brought with you. This tag takes 4-6 weeks to arrive. You should get your licenses no later than 90 days out. Ensure your Licenses are for the year you are hunting. New Licenses come out 1 July of every year. If there are any questions at all on this call Fish and Game to ensure you have the correct License.

* Hunting license: $160
* Caribou tag: $650
* Wolf: $60
* Wolverine: $350 (not recommended as they are rarely seen)
* Fishing for 7 days: $70

**MEAT CARE:** **ALL EDIBLE MEAT MUST BE SALVAGED** (including rib and neck meat). Meat of the front and hindquarters must remain on the bone until removed from the field (or consumed). It is each hunter’s responsibility to assure the quality and condition of his or her game meat and trophies. Under no circumstances will DHO accept responsibility for any damage, loss, or spoilage. At camp, keep your meat out of direct sun and a short distance away from your camp. Set the meat so it can cool and allow air to circulate around it. Do NOT put meat in a pile; it will quickly spoil. **Per Alaska state law, you CANNOT remove antlers from the kill site until ALL salvageable meat has been removed.**  **BY LAW, DHO MUST REPORT ALL WANT AND WASTE AND ANY ILLEGAL HUNTING VIOLATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**. As stated previously the new regulations come out July 1st of every year. It is your responsibility to read and understand the regulations. For hunters wishing to take meat home with them, you can purchase wet lock boxes from Alaska Airlines in Prudhoe Bay. Alaska Airlines allows wet lock boxes to be checked as luggage or shipping can be through Alaska Air Cargo.

For those wishing to donate meat, you must complete a transfer of possession form (we have them). Deboning meat is not permitted by airport regulation at the airport facility. Meat will stay in the field with you unless arrangements are made between you and the boat crew for an earlier removal. We can transport your caribou back to the boat launch or into Prudhoe Bay, to be stored We have freezers at the boat launch or Alaska Air Cargo has large freezers if needed.

**SHIPPING MEAT AND MOUNT:** Alaska Air Cargo is in Prudhoe Bay and they have everything you need to ship your animal to your home. When we take you back to Prudhoe Bay, we will assist you with your shipment. We have a Known shipper number that you are welcome to utilize to save money on your shipment. There are a couple different ways to ship your meat, #1 you can ship your meat in the cooler that you brought with you. #2 you can purchase fish boxes from Alaska Air Cargo for $15 per box. 1 Caribou typically fits into 4 fish boxes. There is also a couple different ways to ship your mount #1 you can ship your antlers through Antler express. Doing it this way you must have all hide and meat off the skull prior to shipping. When shipping this route your skull and antlers will be shipped to Anchorage then picked up by FedEx and shipped through FedEx to your location of choice. #2 You can ship your mount through regular cargo. This option is more expensive but allows for you to keep the hide and meat on the skull. If you select this option, your mount will be packaged and held in Alaska Air Cargo freezer until frozen solid then shipped.

**DROP CAMP EQUIPMENT RENTAL:** We recommend DHO Rentals for drop camp equipment. Rental fee is $500 for everything you and your party need to be comfortable in the field. Please understand you **ARE NOT** required to rent from DHO Rentals. You are welcome to bring your own gear or rent from another company. If you do choose to rent from DHO Rentals, please look at our website Drop camp page for items included in rental.

Over time, we have found these supplies to be sufficient enough for the duration of your hunt. Please bear in mind your REMOTE setting. If you are careless or wasteful with your supplies, you will not have those items for the remainder of your hunt.

Equipment sent into the field with you will be in good condition. Please treat this gear as you would your own; others will need to rely on it as well. You will be required to pay DHO Rentals for any damaged/lost equipment. We recommend not cooking inside your tent; this practice can deplete oxygen and can damage the tent, leaving you without shelter.

**CAMP SITE:** Hunters are responsible for set-up and teardown of their own tents and camping equipment. Prior to setting up your camp look around the immediate area; try to locate your tent(s) next to trees/bushes that will serve as protection from the wind. Look for a level spot to set up, and take time to remove small/sharp twigs, and level the ground surface prior to placing your tent. A few minutes preparing the ground will be well worth the time. Keep food items out of and a short distance away from your tent. Keep food in the totes with the lids on to reduce scent and protect your cache from rodents. Make sure you set a waypoint in your GPS with your camp location. Look at your surroundings, study the hills and valleys around you to help familiarize yourself with the area. Select an area away from your camp for your “privy,” and cover your waste prior to leaving. Consider burning food items, which are odorous or greasy. Please be sure to bag up metal and other garbage items to be hauled out, this is essential to prevent problems with bears, predators, and rodents. We practice **“leave no trace”** camping, therefore, do not bury or leave trash behind – it must be picked up and hauled out. Camp clean-up is each hunter’s responsibility -- leave the camp in a condition you would like to find it. You may make small campfires. Use of downed or dead wood products is permissible. Keep fires small and be certain they are dead out when not attended.

**FISHING:** Your drop camp will be situated next to a river. The rivers in this area contain Arctic Char, Dolly Varden, and Arctic Grayling. If you are interested in fishing, you should bring light, packable spinning gear (8-10lb line) and a few small spoons and spinners (Pixie’s, Mepp’s, or similar). You will need an Alaska fishing license to fish.

**WOLVES:** This area does have a good population of wolves, which are huntable. If you are interested in trying to harvest a wolf, you should purchase a wolf tag. Harvested wolves must be skinned (both hide and skull) for transport out of the field. There is no trophy fee or additional charge to transport wolf hides from the field. Please keep in mind that if you harvest a wolf must be sealed by DF&G prior to it leaving the state. There are two ways to do this #1 You can send the wolf to Caribou Ridge Taxidermy and he will get your information and seal it for you then prepare it how you would like. #2 you extend your flight in Anchorage or Fairbanks, Ship the wolf to yourself and take care of the sealing at DF&G. There is not anywhere to seal animals in Prudhoe Bay.

**PTARMIGAN:** The season for Ptarmigan is 10 August thru April. There are plenty of Ptarmigan to harvest up in the area you will be hunting. There is no special license or tag required to Ptarmigan hunt. The hunting license that you bought for your Caribou hunt is enough. Per the Alaska regulations published 1 July 2019 you can harvest 20 per day with no more than 40 in possession. If you would like to bring a shotgun with you or a .22 you are welcome to it adds a little fun to your trip after your harvest a Caribou.

**BEARS:** Welcome to grizzly country! Respect them. Be mindful of them. Watch for them. If spotted from a distance, avoid them if possible. Generally, they do not want to be near you, however, if startled or you come upon their food, they can be aggressive. If you encounter a grizzly, make noise – YELL continuously. Stand up; make yourself appear as large as possible. Do not cower or run. Defend yourself only if absolutely necessary. Most encounters result in bears walking away. Check your hunting regulations; you **CANNOT** shoot a bear to reclaim your trophy. You can move to a position that allows your scent to carry to the bear. This will often cause them to leave or you can yell to scare them off. Be swift in your recovery of meat/trophy if a bear has been on your kill site, they will return. If a bear has claimed your kill and ruined the meat, you are not required to salvage it. However, you will need to document the location and happenings (i.e., GPS coordinates, photos).

**KEEPING WARM:** Moisture is your enemy! Your sleeping bag will hold moisture. A few days of moisture buildup may make your bag lose a significant amount of insulation ability. Open your bags and hang to let them dry. Dry wet or damp clothing in the sun or next to a small fire. Be careful by fire, the “done” v.s “ruined” amount of heat is a real small window! Damp clothing can be worn in your sleeping bag and your body heat will dry it overnight. Utilize layering of clothes during the day but do not overdress while hiking. Your body will generate heat to stay warm and sweating will make you cold for hours. Take off what you do not need and carry extra clothing in your pack for use while sitting.

Through this document DHO, has tried to cover what we think is important for you to know about your hunt and the area you will be hunting. We know that it is impossible to cover all questions that could arise while you are preparing for your trip. You can email, or call, at any time during your planning phase. And please know we will be reaching out to you as your trip gets closer to ensure you are prepared and answer any questions.

**Contact: Jeremy Conn at (907) 669-2280 or deadhorseoutfitters@gmail.com**

Thank you for allowing Deadhorse Outfitters the opportunity to provide you the HUNT of a LIFETIME! We look forward to seeing you in the field.