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PRESS RELEASE

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State Opens Winter Registration Moose Hunt in Unit 22A Central

(Nome) – The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announces an emergency order opening of winter season registration moose hunt RM844 in the central portion of Unit 22A during the period December 1 to December 31, 2012 with a harvest quota of 6 antlered bull moose.

The RM844 hunt area includes Unit 22(A) that portion in the Unalakleet River drainage and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound north of the Golsovia River drainage and south of the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik River drainages. The winter season will close December 31, 2012 or by a subsequent emergency order if the harvest quota is reached. This hunt is open to residents only and registration permits will be available from the license vendor in Unalakleet.

Moose seasons in Unit 22(A) Central were closed in 2005 because of a declining trend in the area's moose populations since 1989. A stratified moose census completed in March 2007 estimated 339 moose in the area, and beginning in 2008 the Alaska Board of Game adopted a registration moose hunt regulation with harvest quotas to prevent over harvest. A stratified moose census completed in February 2012 estimated 545 moose in the survey area, which is a 13% annual rate of increase since the 2007 population survey.

The department set a harvest quota of 22 antlered bull moose for this portion of Unit 22(A) for regulatory year 2012-2013. Due to community needs and low harvest during poor weather, the fall season was extended 6 days until September 20 to allow additional opportunity to reach the harvest quota of 22 antlered bulls. After the season extension the combined total fall harvest from state and federal hunts was 16 antlered bulls, which leaves an unmet quota of 6 antlered bulls. This emergency order provides additional opportunity through a winter season for 6 antlered bull moose by registration permit in Unit 22(A) Central during the period December 1 to December 31, 2012. Harvest will be monitored closely by the department to ensure that overharvest does not occur.

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