

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

c/o Office of Subsistence Management
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In Reply Refer To:
OSM 24025

FEB 27 2024

Anthony Christianson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Mr. Christianson,

I write to you on behalf of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) to ask that you forward a request from the Council to all State of Alaska House and Senate representatives asking them to put into law the requirement to acknowledge and meaningfully incorporate local, Indigenous, and traditional ecological knowledge (hereafter collectively referred to as TEK) into natural resource management in Alaska.

The Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region. It was established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council's charter establishes the Council's authority to initiate, review and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region. The Council also reviews resource management actions occurring outside their regions that may impact subsistence resources critical to communities served by the Council. The Council provides a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations regarding any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region.

The Council held a public meeting on October 10-12, 2023, in Anchorage. Among the items discussed was the need for TEK to be acknowledged and incorporated into natural resource management in Alaska, especially into the Alaska Board of Game and Board of Fisheries regulatory processes and into Alaska Department of Fish and Game management plans. The Council is extremely concerned about the way TEK is often dismissed as "anecdotal" and not considered as equally important as Western science for informing resource management. The Council would like to see this change and requests that the State of Alaska not only acknowledge the value of TEK but also make it a legal requirement that TEK be meaningfully incorporated in regulatory decision making and natural resource management planning.

The Council kindly asks that the Board forward this request to the State of Alaska House and Senate representatives for their consideration. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact me through our Subsistence Council Coordinator, Brooke McDavid, at (907) 891-9181 or brooke_mcdavid@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Oney", is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Raymond Oney, Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Mark Burch, Assistant Director, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Alaska Department of
Fish and Game
Administrative Record