

ANNUAL REPORTS

Background

ANILCA Title VIII Section 805(a)(3)(D) established the Regional Advisory Councils' authority to bring regional subsistence uses and needs to the attention of the Secretary of the Interior through preparation of an Annual Report. The Secretaries delegated to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) the responsibility to consider this "report and recommendations of the Regional Councils concerning the taking of fish and wildlife on public lands within their respective regions for subsistence uses" (ANILCA, Title VIII, Section 805(c); 50 CFR 100.10 (e)(1)).

The Annual Report provides the Councils an opportunity to address the Board including the directors of each of the four Department of the Interior agencies and the Department of Agriculture Forest Service in their capacity as members of the Federal Subsistence Board. In many cases, if the issue is outside of the Board's authority, the Board will provide information to the Council on how to contact personnel at the correct agency.

The Councils discuss the topics that they would like to bring to the Board's attention during each fall meeting cycle. Based on this discussion, OSM staff drafts the reports, and the Councils review and approve these draft annual reports at their winter meetings.

Report Content

Both Title VIII Section 805 and 50 CFR §100.11 (Subpart B of the regulations) describe the specific matters, not generally addressed through the normal regulatory process, that may be contained in an Annual Report from the Councils to the Board. Annual Reports should contain:

- "an identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the region;
- an evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife populations within the region;
- a recommended strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs; and
- recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy" (ANILCA Title VIII Section 805(a)).

Report Clarity

In order for the Board to adequately understand and respond if needed to Council's annual report topics, Council members should discuss in detail on the record the issues that they would like to include in the report. Some issues might be better communicated through letter writing. Councils should indicate whether a topic is informational only or if they would like a response from the Board. If a response is requested, the Council should clearly articulate what they are asking for (i.e. requested Board action or information). Please avoid filler or fluff language that does not specifically raise an issue of concern or provide information to the Board. To make the Annual Report process more productive, Councils need to have a clear understanding of the Board's authority under Title VIII of ANILCA when formulating their Annual Report requests. OSM staff and Council members should ensure each topic is understood and stated clearly, and sufficient evidence, detail and/or explanation is provided. Councils should not include in their Annual Reports topics that were communicated to the Board through letters or other methods of correspondence.