



Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 6199



FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOREST SERVICE

JULY 25 2024

In Reply Refer To
OSM.A24096

Thomas Baker, Chair
Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chair Baker:

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) met on April 2-5, 2024, in Anchorage, Alaska, to consider proposed changes to Federal subsistence management regulations for the harvest of wildlife on Federal Public Lands in Alaska and wildlife closure reviews. This letter is to provide a report on the actions taken by the Board on proposals and closure reviews affecting Federally qualified subsistence users.

Section 805(c) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) provides that the Board will accept the recommendations of a Subsistence Regional Advisory Council(s) (Council(s)) regarding take unless, (1) the recommendation is not supported by substantial evidence, (2) the recommendation violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife management, or (3) adopting the recommendation would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs. When a Council's recommendation is not adopted, the Board is required by Secretarial regulations to set forth the factual basis and reasons for the decision.

The Board acted on 36 proposals and 18 closure reviews during the 2024-26 wildlife regulatory cycle. The Board agreed with the recommendations of the Councils, in whole or with modifications, on 34 of 36 proposals. The Board deferred one proposal WP24-01 until the August 2024 Board work session. The Board accepted the recommendations of the Councils on all the wildlife closure reviews, voting to maintain status quo on 15 of them. The Board also acted on fisheries request for reconsideration RFR22-01 opposing the request.

Details of these actions and the Boards' deliberations are contained in the meeting transcriptions. Copies of the transcripts may be obtained by calling toll free number 1-800-478-1456 and are available online at the Federal Subsistence Management Program website, <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence>.

The Board uses a consensus agenda on those proposals where there is agreement among the affected Council(s), a majority of the Interagency Staff Committee, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game concerning a proposed regulatory action. These proposals were deemed non-controversial and did not require a separate discussion. The consensus agenda contained one proposal and one closure review affecting the Northwest Arctic Region, for which the Board took actions consistent with your Council's recommendations as follows: the Board *adopted* **WP22-27**, which changed the Federal muskox permit system in Units 22 and 23 from a Federal registration permit to a Federal drawing permit, standardized language in the eight delegation of authority letters, and changed the in-season manager for the muskox hunt in a portion of Unit 23, and *rescinded* **WCR22-19**, which rescinded the closure to hunting muskox by non-federally qualified users south of Kotzebue Sound and west of and including the Buckland River drainage in Unit 23.

The remaining proposals affecting the Northwest Arctic Region appeared on the non-consensus agenda. However, for two of the proposals, the Board took action consistent with the Council's recommendations. The Board *adopted with modification* **WP24-28/29**, which reduced the caribou harvest limit across the range of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, excluding the eastern portion of Unit 26A, to 15 caribou/year, only one of which may be a cow.

Board actions differed from your Council's recommendation on three proposals on the non-consensus agenda: **WP24-30/31** and **WP24-01**. The Board's actions on these proposals are explained in detail in the enclosed report.

The Board appreciates your Council's active involvement in and diligence with the regulatory process. The ten Councils continue to be the foundation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program, and the stewardship shown by the Council chairs and their representatives at the Board meeting was noteworthy.

If you have any questions regarding the summary of the Board's actions, please contact Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough, Council Coordinator, at 907-444-9052 or lisa_hutchinson@fws.gov.

Sincerely,



Anthony Christianson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board

Enclosure: Federal Subsistence Board 2024 805c Report to Northwest Arctic Council

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council members
Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Administrative Record