



Federal Subsistence Board

Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 6199



In Reply Refer To:
OSM.A24075

JULY 29 2024

Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary of the Interior
U.S. Department of the Interior
Office of the Secretary
1849 C Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 20240

Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Secretary
1400 Independence Avenue, Southwest
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretaries Haaland and Vilsack:

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) is writing to inform you of a request from your appointees on seven Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Council) to develop procedures for replies to the Councils on issues the Board elevates to the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior on behalf of the Councils.

Pursuant to Section 805 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils are authorized to be a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations about management of subsistence fish and wildlife resources in their regions. The ten Councils met during the All-Council Meeting March 5-8, 2024, in Anchorage, Alaska. Together the Councils discussed the issues of timeliness of responses and lack of responses to their correspondence. Periodically, the Councils write to the Board and request elevation of subsistence issues that directly impact federally qualified subsistence users but are outside the jurisdiction of the Board and the Federal Subsistence Management Program. Generally, the Board forwards these letters to the Secretaries as requested.

Councils put a lot of effort into drafting and sending correspondence in hopes of raising awareness and creating dialogue about issues that affect or have the potential to affect subsistence and the ability to continue customary and traditional practices. Enclosed you will

find a copy of the combined letter from six Councils, in which they outline their frustrations with the lack of replies to their correspondence. Also enclosed is a separate letter from the Southeast Alaska Regional Advisory Council echoing the same frustrations and concerns.

The Board and Office of Subsistence Management staff would appreciate the opportunity to discuss ideas with you or your representatives for ensuring the Councils know their concerns are being heard and considered by the Secretaries. We support developing appropriate protocols for more regular two-way communication between the Secretaries, the Board, and the Councils.

The Board thanks you for your consideration of this matter and asks that you respond with a point of contact from your offices for follow up on this important topic. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please direct them to the Office of Subsistence Management Policy Coordinator Robbin La Vine, robbin_lavine@fws.gov, 907-206-0900. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,



Anthony Christianson
Chair

Enclosures: 1. Six Council Letter – Correspondence Issues
2. SERAC Letter – Correspondence Policy Comments

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Interagency Staff Committee
Office of Subsistence Management
Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Administrative Record

Southcentral Alaska, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior Alaska, Seward Peninsula, Eastern Interior Alaska, and North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils

c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199
Phone: (907) 786-3888, Fax: (907) 786-3898
Toll-Free: 1-800-478-1456

In Reply Refer To:
OSM.24044

APRIL 3 2024

Anthony Christianson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
1011 East Tudor Road, M/S 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chair Christianson,

We write to you on behalf of Southcentral Alaska, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior Alaska, Seward Peninsula, Eastern Interior Alaska, and North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Councils) to highlight issues related to Council correspondence and request that the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) address these issues.

The ten Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils met together during the All-Council Meeting March 5-8, 2024, in Anchorage, Alaska. Among the items discussed were issues related to Council correspondence. These issues include: 1) promptness of Board's replies to or transmittal of Council correspondence; and 2) the lack of direct replies to the Councils from the Offices of the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to correspondence, which the Board forwards to them.

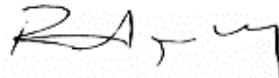
The Councils request the Board develop more streamlined processes to respond to Councils' correspondence and coordinate with the Secretaries to implement procedures for their replies to the Councils. There are several letters pending replies to the Councils from the Board and the Secretaries that are of great interest to us, and we look forward to seeing those responses.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. The Councils look forward to your reply. If you have questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Katerina Wessels, Council Coordination Division Supervisor, Office of Subsistence Management, at 1-800-478-1456 or (907) 786-3885 or katerina_wessels@fws.gov.

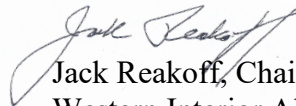
Sincerely,



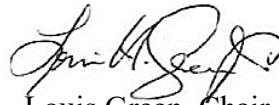
Greg Encelewski, Chair
Southcentral Alaska
Regional Advisory Council



Raymond Oney, Chair
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
Regional Advisory Council



Jack Reakoff, Chair
Western Interior Alaska
Regional Advisory Council



Louis Green, Chair
Seward Peninsula
Regional Advisory Council



Robert Wright Sr., Chair
Eastern Interior Alaska
Regional Advisory Council



Brower Frantz, Chair
North Slope
Regional Advisory Council

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Southcentral Alaska Regional Advisory Council
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council
Western Interior Alaska Regional Advisory Council

Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council
Eastern Interior Alaska Regional Advisory Council
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
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