

North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

c/o Office of Subsistence Management
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FEBRUARY 26 2026

Anthony Christianson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chairman Christianson:

The North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) appreciates the opportunity to submit its FY2025 annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) under the provisions of Section 805(a)(3)(D) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). At its public meetings held on September 16–17, 2025, the Council identified concerns and recommendations for this report. The Council approved this annual report at its February 24–25, 2026 meeting. The Council wishes to raise its concern regarding implementation of Title VIII of ANILCA and the continuation of subsistence uses in the North Slope Region, specifically related to the following issue:

1. Effects of Guides, Transporters, Commercial Operators, and Fly-in Hunters on Caribou Migration

The Council continues to express urgent concerns about disruptions to caribou migration and the resulting impact on the people of Anaktuvuk Pass (AKP). These disruptions – primarily caused by aircraft activity and sport hunting practices – threaten food security for local communities that rely on caribou as a primary subsistence resource. In its FY2024 annual report, the Council emphasized the need for research funding to study the effects of transporter and guided hunting activity on caribou behavior and subsistence practices.

The Council continues to receive reports of low-flying aircraft and hunting camps along the valleys of Anaktuvuk Pass, Gunsight Mountain, and the area around Galbraith Lake. These recurring incidents underscore the inadequacy and limitations of existing regulations, including ones for the AKP Controlled Use Area (CUA), which prohibits the use of aircraft for the harvest of caribou and other species during peak migration activity.

While the Council acknowledges that the AKP CUA is state-managed, it exemplifies how regulations without adequate enforcement fail to prevent such disturbances.

In accordance with Title VIII Section 805 of ANILCA, the Council has identified the current and anticipated subsistence needs in the region and recommends a strategy for the management of wildlife populations to accommodate such need. The Council reports a well-established trend of declining caribou availability for federally qualified subsistence users in Anaktuvuk Pass (AKP) and does not anticipate this trend to improve in the future. The Council, therefore, recommends that the Board implement the following strategy for managing caribou in the North Slope region.

Request to the Board

To address these concerns, the Council respectfully requests the following actions:

- Encourage Federal agencies to monitor and document caribou deflection to better understand the broader implications of disturbance on migration and subsistence practices.
- Formally request collaboration with State Troopers and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to monitor permitted activity from the Dalton Highway to AKP and surrounding valleys, and to strengthen enforcement in the CUA. Additionally, request collaboration of State and Federal enforcement officers to monitor the area west of AKP to Point Hope for fly-in hunters.
- Prioritize enforcement and request Federal agencies to establish law enforcement presence in the affected area during peak migration, from August through November.
- Continue the dialogue on this issue with the Federal Subsistence Board and Interagency Staff Committee members.

The Council appreciates the Board's attention to these matters and its commitment to protecting subsistence resources on Federal public lands and waters. We look forward to continuing discussions about the concerns of subsistence users in the North Slope Region. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me via Gisela Chapa, Subsistence Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management, at gisela_chapa@ios.doi.gov, or (907) 310-6129.

Sincerely,



Brower Frantz
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Interagency Staff Committee
Office of Subsistence Management
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Aaron Poetter, Federal Subsistence Liaison, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Administrative Record