



Federal Subsistence Board

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



In Reply Refer To
F26023

JUL 15 2026

Brower A. Frantz, Chair
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chair Frantz:

This letter provides a report on the actions taken by the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) on regulatory proposals as well as select closures identified for review in the proposed rule for this regulatory cycle. The Board met on April 21-24, 2026, to consider wildlife closures and proposed changes to Federal subsistence management regulations for the harvest of wildlife on Federal Public Lands in Alaska.

The Board considered 78 proposals and 17 closures during the 2026-28 wildlife regulatory cycle. The Board adopted 52 of the proposals, deferred five, approved the withdrawal of three (WP26-27 and WP26-41/42), rejected 12, and took no action on 11. The Board reviewed and acted on 17 wildlife closures under review this cycle, voting to retain status quo on 12 of them. The Board also adopted deferred fisheries proposal FP25-02 as modified by the Southeast Council and determined RFR25-01, the request for reconsideration of Ketchikan's rural status, does not meet the threshold. The enclosed table provides a summary of Board actions on proposals and closures affecting your region.

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 (Council) 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 to set forth the factual basis and reasons for the decision.

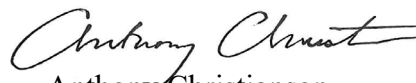
The enclosed 805(c) report provides the justification for when the Board's decision did not follow your Council's recommendations on proposals and/or closures.

Additional details of the Board's actions and deliberations are contained in the meeting transcripts. 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/library/transcripts/federal-subsistence-board>.

The Federal Subsistence Board appreciates your Council's active involvement in and diligence with the regulatory process. The ten Regional Advisory Councils continue to be the foundation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program, and the stewardship shown by the Regional Advisory 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 Gisela Chapa, Council Coordinator, at 907-310-6129 or gisela_chapa@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,



Anthony Christianson
Chair

Enclosures: Table of Board's Actions affecting the North Slope Region for the 2026-2028
Wildlife Regulatory Cycle
805(c) Report

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

Enclosure 1 – Federal Subsistence Board Action Summary at the April 2026 regulatory meeting

Wildlife Proposals and Closures Affecting the North Slope Region

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	North Slope Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Statewide	WP26-01 – Move authority delegated through letters into unit-specific regulations	Support as modified by OSM	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting
North Slope	WCR26-25 – Unit 26C, review of muskox hunting closure except by Kaktovik residents	Retain Status Quo and modify the regulatory language, as recommended by OSM	Retain Status Quo and modify the regulatory language, as recommended by OSM
Northwest Arctic	WP26-65 – Unit 23 muskox, establish a muskox hunt in Unit 23 remainder	Support	Reject
Northwest Arctic	WP26-66 – Unit 23 wolf, modify season and increase harvest limits	Support as modified by OSM	Adopt
Northwest Arctic	WP26-67 – Unit 23 muskrat, extend trapping season	Support	Adopt
Northwest Arctic	WP26-68 – Unit 23 ptarmigan, increase harvest and possession limits and modify season dates	Support	Adopt
Northwest Arctic	WP26-69 – Unit 23 mink/weasel, extend season to close April 15	Support as modified by OSM	Adopt
Northwest Arctic	WCR26-18 – Unit 23, review of sheep hunting closure to non-federally qualified users in the Baird Mountains	Retain Status Quo	Retain Status Quo
Northwest Arctic	WCR26-45 – Unit 23, review of caribou hunting closure to non-federally qualified users around Noatak	Retain Status Quo	Retain Status Quo

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD 805(c) REPORT

April 21-24, 2026

Anchorage, AK

Section 805(c) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act provides that the “Secretary ... shall consider the report and recommendations of the regional advisory councils concerning the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within their respective regions for subsistence uses.” The Secretary has delegated authority to issue regulations for the take of fish and wildlife to the Federal Subsistence Board. Pursuant to this language in Section 805(c), the Board defers to the Council’s recommendations. However, Section 805(c) also provides that the Board “may choose not to follow any recommendations which [it] determines is not supported by substantial evidence, violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation, or would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs.” The purpose of this report is to detail how the Board’s action differed from the Council’s recommendations based on these criteria.

NORTH SLOPE AREA WILDLIFE PROPOSALS

Crossover Proposals

Wildlife Proposal WP26-65 – Establish a muskox hunt around Selawik in Unit 23, remainder

DESCRIPTION: WP26-65 requested to establish a muskox hunt around Selawik in Unit 23, remainder.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council – **Oppose**
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council – **Support**

BOARD ACTION: Reject

JUSTIFICATION: The Board acknowledged the concerns of the North Slope Council regarding loss of caribou and salmon in the area combined with the high cost of food in the region and the desire to support a hunt for muskoxen around Selawik in Unit 23, remainder. Currently, no official surveys have been conducted to determine the status of the muskoxen located there, from which population they originate, or whether they are transient or resident. Without formal surveys, a harvestable surplus for muskox occurring in Unit 23, remainder cannot be determined. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is open to working with State and Federal partners to identify ways to support surveys in the future. The Northwest Arctic Council was the original proponent of the proposal; however, they now believe there are too many unknowns and data gaps to establish this hunt. In deference to the Northwest Arctic Council, the Board opposed Proposal WP26-65.

Wildlife Proposal WP26-66 – Increase the harvest limit and extend the season for wolf hunting in Unit 23

DESCRIPTION: Wildlife Proposal WP26-66 requested to increase the harvest limit and extend the season for wolf hunting in Unit 23 to match State regulations. Specifically, WP26-66 requested increasing the hunting harvest limit to 20 wolves and extending the season to open August 1.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council – **Support as modified by OSM**
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council – **Support as modified by OSM**

BOARD ACTION: Adopt

JUSTIFICATION: The Cape Krusenstern Subsistence Resource Commission (CAKR), the Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission (KOVA), and the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission supported the proposal as written. CAKR and KOVA did not agree with OSM's recommendation to modify the proposal to exclude Parklands to provide refugia to wolves in Unit 23, as the Parklands should be to maximize subsistence opportunities for Federally qualified subsistence users. The Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council supported the proposal with OSM modification, which was to exclude the Parklands. Both SRC's recommendations were unavailable to the Council at the time of their meeting, and the Councils recommendation did not address excluding Parklands but did support increasing subsistence opportunities for the take of wolves on Federal lands and to align the State and the Federal subsistence regulations to reduce regulatory complexity.

Wildlife Proposal WP26-69 – Extend the mink and weasel trapping season in Unit 23

DESCRIPTION: WP26-69 requested to extend the trapping season for mink and weasel to close April 15 in Unit 23.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council – **Support**
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council – **Support as modified by OSM**

BOARD ACTION: Adopt

JUSTIFICATION: This proposal increases opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users, and there are no conservation concerns as users are already able to trap until April 15 on most Federal public lands in Unit 23 under State regulations. Additionally, Federal and State regulations for mink and weasel trapping in Unit 23 would be aligned, reducing regulatory complexity. The National Park Service Subsistence Resource Commission comments highlight that one of the primary purposes for the creation of Cape Krusenstern National Monument and

Kobuk Valley National Park is to ensure the continuation of a subsistence way of life for federally qualified subsistence communities and to support the thriving Inupiaq culture that has existed there for thousands of years. There are no conservation concerns with implementing this proposal; it will not likely result in big changes to current harvest and will be allowed on all Federal lands in Unit 23. In deference to the Northwest Arctic Council, the Board adopted Proposal WP26-69.