



Federal Subsistence Board

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



In Reply Refer To
F26021

JUL 15 2026

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

Dear Chair Baker:

This letter provides a report on the actions taken by the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) on regulatory proposals as well as selected 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, voting to retain status quo on 12 of them. The Board adopted deferred fisheries proposal FP25-02 as modified by the Southeast Council and determined the request for reconsideration RFR25-01 of Ketchikan's rural status did not meet the threshold to proceed. The enclosed table provides a summary of Board actions on all 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 Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator, at (907)891-9051 or nissa_pilcher@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,


Anthony Christianson
Chair

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

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Northwest Arctic 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 Closure Affecting Northwest Arctic Region

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	Northwest Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Statewide	WP26-01 – Move authority delegated through letters to unit specific regulations	Support as modified by OSM	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting
Northwest Arctic	WP26-65 – Unit 23 remainder muskox, establish hunt	Oppose	Reject
Northwest Arctic	WP26-66 – Unit 23 wolf, increase hunting harvest limit and extend season	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 limit and extend season	Support	Adopt
Northwest Arctic	WP26-69 – Unit 23 mink/weasel, extend season	Support	Adopt
Northwest Arctic	WCR26-18 – Unit 23 Baird Mountains sheep closure review	Retain Status Quo	Retain Status Quo
Northwest Arctic	WCR26-45 – Unit 23 Noatak corridor caribou closure review	Retain Status Quo	Retain Status Quo
Seward Peninsula	WP26-53 – Units 22B and 22D caribou, change seasons to may be announced	Defer to Home Region	Reject
Seward Peninsula	WP26-64 – Units 22 and 23 muskoxen, extend season	Support	Adopt with clarification to extend the season to March 30

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.

NORTHWEST ARCTIC AREA WILDLIFE PROPOSALS

Regional Proposals

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

DESCRIPTION: Requested to increase the harvest limit to 20 wolves and extend the season for wolf hunting in Unit 23 to open August 1, matching State regulations.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Northwest Arctic Council – **Support as modified by OSM**

North Slope 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.