



Federal Subsistence Board

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



In Reply Refer To
F26016

JUL 15 2026

Rebecca Skinner, Chair
Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chair Skinner:

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 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.

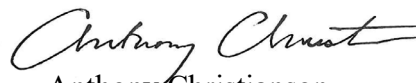
The enclosed 805(c) report provides the justification for when the Board's decision did not follow your Council's recommendations on proposals and/or closures.

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 Leigh Honig, Council Coordinator, at 907-891-9053 or leigh_honig@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,


Anthony Christianson
Chair

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

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Kodiak/Aleutians 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 Affecting Kodiak/Aleutians Region

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	Kodiak/Aleutians Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Kodiak/ Aleutians	WP26-32 – Unit 8 brown bear, recognize customary and traditional uses of Kodiak	Support as modified by Kodiak/Aleutians Council, to revise the customary and traditional use determination for brown bear in Unit 8 to read: All residents of Unit 8, except those residing within Kodiak Station Census Designated Place (CDP). Individuals permanently residing in Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge housing also qualify under this customary and traditional use determination.	Adopt with Board modification to add all residents of the Kodiak Island Road system, east of the line from Crag Point south to the westernmost point of Saltery Cove, including Anton Larsen Bay, except residents of Kodiak Station Census Designated Place (CDP), to the customary and traditional use determination for brown bear in Unit 8.
Kodiak/ Aleutians	WP26-33 – Unit 8 brown bear, issue up to four permits to Kodiak	Support	Adopt with Board modification to allocate up to 4 brown bear permits in Unit 8 to the residents of the Kodiak Island Road system east of the line from Crag Point south to the westernmost point of Saltery Cove, including Anton Larsen Bay and to delegate authority to the Kodiak NWR manager to define harvest areas and determine the permit allocation system on an annual basis (i.e. set the number of permits to be issued through a limited registration or random drawing hunt) via delegation of authority letter only.

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

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	Kodiak/Aleutians Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Kodiak/ Aleutians	WP26-34 – Unit 8 brown bear, allow the sale of handicrafts using any non-edible byproduct	Support as modified by Kodiak/Aleutians Council to allow the production and limited sale of handicrafts made from all non-edible byproducts of brown bears, while removing proposed regulatory language requiring: consignment sales only; sales be conducted within the United States only; transferred or gifted non-edible byproducts be accompanied by a wildlife transfer statement; and registration permit number be retained with handicrafts.	Adopt as modified by OSM to allow the production and limited sale of handicrafts made from all non-edible byproducts of brown bears except gallbladders while removing proposed regulatory language requiring: consignment sales only; sales be conducted within the United States only; transferred or gifted non-edible byproducts be accompanied by a wildlife transfer statement; and registration permit numbers be retained with handicrafts.
Kodiak/ Aleutians	WP26-35 – Unit 9 caribou, modify fall season dates	Support	Adopt
Southcentral	WP26-15 – Unit 6D deer, close Hawkins and Hinchinbrook islands to non-federally qualified users	Take no action and defer to home region	Reject
Southcentral	WP26-16 – Unit 6 beaver, increase possession limit and extend hunting season	Take no action and defer to home region	Adopt
Bristol Bay	WP26-36 – Unit 9 wolverine, modify hunting season dates	Support	Adopt
Bristol Bay	WP26-37 – Unit 9 and 17 beaver, modify trapping season dates and methods and means	Support as modified by OSM to allow the take of beavers by firearm under a trapping license in the unit-specific provisions of Units 9 and 17.	Adopt as modified by OSM to allow the take of beavers by firearm under a trapping license in the unit-specific provisions of Units 9 and 17.
Statewide	WP26-01 - Move authority delegated through letters to unit-specific regulations	Support as modified by OSM	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting

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 (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.

KODIAK/ALEUTIANS AREA WILDLIFE PROPOSALS

Regional Proposals

Wildlife Proposal WP26-32 – Unit 8 brown bear, recognize customary and traditional uses of Kodiak

DESCRIPTION: Wildlife Proposal WP26-32, submitted by the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Kodiak/Aleutians Council), requested that the Board recognize the customary and traditional use of brown bears in Unit 8 by residents of Kodiak, which the proponent defines as including the entirety of the road system. Specifically, the proponent describes the community of Kodiak as including Monashka, Kodiak City, Bells Flats to Chiniak, and Pasagshak and Anton Larsen Bay, but excluding Nimitz, the U.S. Coast Guard Base, and residents of the Pacific Spaceport Complex – Alaska (previously known as the Kodiak Rocket Launch Facility).

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS: Kodiak/Aleutians Council – **Support as modified by the Council** to revise the customary and traditional use determination for brown bear in Unit 8 to read:

All residents of Unit 8, except those residing within Kodiak Station Census Designated Place (CDP). Individuals permanently residing in Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge housing also qualify under this customary and traditional use determination.

BOARD ACTION: **Adopt with Board’s modification** to add all residents of the Kodiak Island road system, east of the line from Crag Point south to the westernmost point of Saltery Cove, including Anton Larsen Bay, but not including residents of Kodiak Station Census Designated Place (CDP), to the customary and traditional use determination for brown bear in Unit 8.

JUSTIFICATION: The Board noted that there is a robust history of customary and traditional use of brown bears throughout Kodiak Island, including in the area of the contemporary road system. Brown bears have been a distinct subspecies present on Kodiak Island for around 12,000 years, and Kodiak Alutiiq people have consistently harvested and used brown bears for as long as they have lived on the island. More recently, written accounts from the late 1700s through the early 1900s described traditional patterns of brown bear harvest and use on Kodiak Island, including in historic villages near contemporary Kodiak Road Zone communities. Many of these practices continue today.

The Kodiak/Aleutians Council submitted this proposal to recognize these customary and traditional uses in Unit 8 by residents of Kodiak. While the proposal was initially supported by the Council with a modification recommended by the Office of Subsistence Management, it was later determined that the modification did not fully reflect the Council's original intent. During discussions between the Board and the Council Chair, both parties agreed that the Board's modification more accurately identifies the intended user group by recognizing customary and traditional use by residents of the Kodiak Island Road system while excluding residents of Kodiak Station CDP, whose generally shorter residency and lower participation in subsistence activities distinguish them from long-term Kodiak residents. The Board's modification therefore better aligns with the documented history of use, the Council's recommendation, and the original intent of the proposal, and was the basis for adopting WP26-32 with the Board's modification.

Wildlife Proposal WP26-33 – Unit 8 brown bear, issue up to four permits to Kodiak

DESCRIPTION: Wildlife Proposal WP26-33 requested up to four brown bear permits be allocated to the community of Kodiak.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS: Kodiak/Aleutians Council – **Support**

BOARD ACTION: **Adopt with Board Modification** to allocate up to four brown bear permits in Unit 8 to the residents of the Kodiak Island road system east of the line from Crag Point south to the westernmost point of Saltery Cove, including Anton Larsen Bay and to delegate authority to the Kodiak National Wildlife manager to define the harvest areas and determine the permit allocation system on an annual basis (i.e. set the number of permits to be issued through a limited registration or random drawing hunt) via delegation of authority letter only.

JUSTIFICATION: Following the C&T determination passed by the Board (WP26-32), the Board supported allocating up to four brown bear permits to the residents of the Kodiak Island Road system as defined in their action above and in deference to the Kodiak-Aleutians Council. The intent of the Kodiak-Aleutians Council was to allocate permits to those along the present-day road system. The Board's modification aligns with the description in Proposal WP26-32 for those that now have a customary and traditional use determination for brown bear in Unit 8. This proposal will increase subsistence hunting opportunities in Unit 8 for people in Kodiak and adding four additional permits should not pose a conservation concern. There is currently no conservation concern, and the in-season manager will have the flexibility to address any that arise by excluding any area of high conservation concern. The Federal permit hunt is currently

undersubscribed with only 1.6 bears out of the maximum of 13 bears reported harvested on average each year.

Wildlife Proposal WP26-34 – Unit 8 brown bear, allow the sale of handicrafts using any nonedible byproduct

DESCRIPTION: Wildlife proposal WP26-34 requested that the Board allow the sale of handicrafts made from the non-edible byproducts of legally harvested brown bear taken under Federal subsistence regulations in Unit 8.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS: Kodiak/Aleutians Council – **Support as modified by the Council** to allow the production and limited sale of handicrafts made from all non-edible byproducts of brown bears, while removing proposed regulatory language requiring: consignment sales only; sales be conducted within the United States only; transferred or gifted non-edible byproducts be accompanied by a wildlife transfer statement; and registration permit numbers be retained with handicrafts.

BOARD ACTION: **Adopt as modified by OSM** to allow the production and limited sale of handicrafts made from all non-edible byproducts of brown bears except gallbladders while removing proposed regulatory language requiring: consignment sales only; sales be conducted within the United States only; transferred or gifted non-edible byproducts be accompanied by a wildlife transfer statement; and registration permit numbers be retained with handicrafts.

JUSTIFICATION: The Board noted that adopting WP26-34 with OSM's modification would allow federally qualified subsistence users to more fully utilize and benefit from brown bears harvested under Federal regulations in Unit 8 by facilitating the continued production of traditional handicrafts made from brown bear parts. However, the Board stated that it was necessary to specifically restrict the use of brown bear gallbladders in the proposed regulation because not doing so could potentially provide a loophole for the illegal use and sale of these gallbladders outside of the U.S. in lucrative international markets for traditional medicine. Similarly, the Board noted that the sale or barter of bear gallbladders is prohibited under State regulations, and there is a specific resolution under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) designed to limit trade in bear gallbladders and products made from gallbladders.