



Federal Subsistence Board

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



In Reply Refer To:
F26014

JUL 15 2026

Donald Hernandez, Chair
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, AK 99503-6199

Dear Chair Hernandez:

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, voting to retain status quo on 12 of them. The Board adopted deferred fisheries proposal FP25-02 as modified by your Council and determined RFR25-01, and the request for reconsideration of Ketchikan's rural status did not meet the threshold to proceed. 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 DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator, at 907-209-7817 or deanna.perry@usda.gov.

Sincerely,


Anthony Christianson
Chair

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

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Southeast Alaska 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 Southeast Region

Region	Proposal/Closure	Southeast Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Statewide	WP26-01 - Move authority delegated in letters to unit-specific regulations. WP26-01a – Southeast area specific	Support as modified by OSM Support as modified by OSM	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting
Southeast	WP26-02 - Prohibit take of large land mammals in Units 1-5 between civil sunset and civil sunrise.	Oppose	Rejected
Southeast	WP26-03 - Close Unit 2 to harvest of deer by non-federally qualified users (NFQUs).	Support with Council modification to close all of Unit 2 from Jul. 24 – Aug. 15 to NFQUs and reduce the harvest limit for NFQUs to 1 buck.	Adopted as modified by Southeast Council
Southeast	WP26-04 - Conduct Section 804 analysis for deer in Unit 2.	Support with Council modification to close all of Unit 2 from Jul. 24 – Jul. 31 and from Jan. 1 – 31 to deer hunting by FQSUs from Units 1C, 1D, 4, 5, and Ketchikan and limit harvest by these FQSUs to 2 bucks; and to close all of Unit 2 from Jan. 1 – 31 to deer hunting by FQSUs from Units 3, 1B, and the remainder of Unit 1A (including Metlakatla and Saxman) and limit harvest by these FQSUs to 4 bucks.	Adopted as modified by Southeast Council
Southeast	WP26-05 - Limit non-POW federally qualified subsistence users (FQSUs) to 2 bucks via Section 804 analysis; limit NFQUs to one buck, starting Aug. 15.	Take no action due to the actions taken on WP26-03 and WP26-04.	Took No Action (based on decision on WP26-03/04)
Southeast	WP26-06/07 - Eliminate the Federal doe hunt in Unit 2.	Oppose	Took No Action (based on decision on WP26-03/04)
Southeast	WP26-08 - Eliminate the Federal January deer season in Unit 2.	Oppose	Took No Action (based on decision on WP26-03/04)

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

Region	Proposal/Closure	Southeast Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Southeast	WP26-09 - Move the start date for wolf trapping in Unit 2 from November 15 to December 15.	Oppose	Rejected
Southeast	WP26-10 - Establish a guaranteed 47-day wolf trapping season by changing the end date for wolf trapping in Unit 2 from March 31 to December 31.	Support with Council modification to retain the codified season dates in regulation and stipulate the season must be at least 40 days long and close no earlier than December 24.	Rejected
Southeast	WCR26-01 - Standard review of a wildlife closure to the harvest of deer by NFQUs on Federal public lands in a portion of Prince of Wales Island in Unit 2 from Aug. 1-15 and the two buck harvest limit restriction for NFQUs in all of Unit 2.	Take no action based on actions taken on WP26-03 and WP26-04.	Took No Action
Southeast	WCR26-02 - Standard review of wildlife closures to the harvest of moose by NFQUs on Federal public lands in Unit 5A from Sept. 16 – Sept. 30 (East of the Dangerous River) and Oct. 8 – Oct. 21 (West of the Dangerous River).	Retain the status quo	Adopted as modified by OSM
Southeast	FP25-02 - Close the Federal public waters of the Unuk River to the harvest of Eulachon except by FQSUs.	Support as modified by OSM to close the Federal public waters throughout District 1 to the harvest of Eulachon except by FQSUs in the Unuk River.	Adopted as modified by OSM

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.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA AREA WILDLIFE PROPOSALS and CLOSURES

Regional Proposals

Wildlife Proposal WP26-10 – 47-day guaranteed wolf trapping season from Nov. 15 - Dec. 31 in Unit 2

DESCRIPTION: Proposal requested to establish a guaranteed 47-day wolf trapping season by changing the end date for wolf trapping in Unit 2 from March 31 to December 31.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Southeast Council – **Support with modification** to retain the codified season dates in regulation and stipulate the season must be at least 40 days long and close no earlier than December 24.

BOARD ACTION: Reject

JUSTIFICATION: The Board acknowledged significant public and Tribal testimony expressing concern that wolf populations in Unit 2 are too high and that subsistence needs for wolf pelts are not being met. However, the Board is bound by the requirements of ANILCA Title VIII, which mandates that the subsistence program aligns with sound management principles and the conservation of healthy wildlife populations.

Under ANILCA Section 802, subsistence management must be implemented consistent with sound management principles and the conservation of healthy populations. Section 805 requires the Board to defer to Regional Advisory Council recommendations unless they conflict with recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation. Additionally, Section 815 makes clear that subsistence uses may not be authorized at levels inconsistent with maintaining healthy populations. The Board felt that adopting a guaranteed season length with no harvest limit—thereby removing the in-season manager’s authority to respond to emergencies—would violate fundamental wildlife conservation principles and undermine ANILCA special action authority.

Finally, the Board noted that the Alaska Board of Game recently rejected a similar proposal to create a minimum 45-day Unit 2 wolf trapping season. Implementing WP26-10 would create conflicting federal and state regulations, limiting the effectiveness of the federal regulatory change since much of the wolf harvest occurs on state lands.

Regional Closures

Wildlife Closure Review WCR26-02 – Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench – seasonal closures to moose hunting by non-federally qualified users

DESCRIPTION: Wildlife Closure Review, WCR26-02, is a standard review of Federal subsistence wildlife closures to the harvest of moose by non-federally qualified users on Federal public lands in Unit 5A from Sep. 16 – Sep. 30 (East of the Dangerous River) and Oct. 8 – Oct. 21 (West of the Dangerous River).

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Southeast Council – **Maintain status quo**

BOARD ACTION: Modify closure as recommended by OSM

JUSTIFICATION: The Board heard testimony on the importance of moose to residents of Unit 5A. The Board voted to maintain the closure to non-federally qualified users in Unit 5A west due to the high level of hunting pressure and the quota being met by federally qualified subsistence users every year. The Board supported the OSM modification to rescind the Unit 5A east closure since it does not overlap with the state season, and the quota is not met by the end of the state and federal season in most years. ANILCA Section 805 requires the Board to defer to Regional Advisory Council recommendations unless they are not supported by substantial evidence. The Board noted that they did not find significant evidence that the closure in Unit 5A east was necessary to meet subsistence needs as it currently does not affect the state season. For those reasons, the Board felt that retaining the closure in 5A west was important for residents of Unit 5A and rescinding the closure in Unit 5A east was in line with the Board's closure policy and consistent with ANILCA Title VIII.