



Federal Subsistence Board

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



In Reply Refer To
F26015

JUL 15 2026

Greg Encelewski, Chair
Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 – 6199

Dear Chair Encelewski:

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 Southcentral Region for the 2026-2028
Wildlife Regulatory Cycle
805(c) Report

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Southcentral 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 Southcentral Region

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Statewide	WP26-01 – Move authority delegated in letters to unit specific regulations	Support	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting
Statewide	WP26-01b – Southcentral Region specific delegated authority	Support as modified by Council	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting
Southcentral	WP26-11 – Require a Federal registration permit for black bear and close portions of Unit 6D to black bear hunting by non-federally qualified users	Oppose	Reject
Southcentral	WP26-12/13a/14a – Recognize C&T of brown bear for Cordova, Chenega Bay, and Tatitlek	Support	Adopt
Southcentral	WP26-13b/14b – Establish brown bear hunt in Unit 6	Support as modified by OSM	Adopt as modified by OSM
Southcentral	WP26-15 – Close Hawkins and Hinchinbrook islands in Unit 6 to deer hunting by non-federally qualified users	Support	Reject
Southcentral	WP26-16 – Increase beaver possession limit to 3 and extend hunting season to year-round in Unit 6	Support	Adopt
Southcentral	WP26-17 – Establish late fall moose season in Unit 7	Fall 2025: Support with Council modification Winter 2026: Support	Adopt
Southcentral	WP26-18/20/21/23 – Require trap setbacks and active trapping signs in Cooper Landing area	Take no action	Take no action
Southcentral	WP26-19 – Require 50-yard setback around campgrounds in Cooper Landing area	Support as modified by OSM	Adopt as modified by OSM

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

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	Council Recommendation	Federal Subsistence Board Action
Southcentral	WP26-22 – Require 100-yard setbacks along Quartz Creek Road, Old Sterling Hwy., and Sterling Hwy. pullouts	Take no action	Defer to 2027 Fisheries Meeting
Southcentral	WP26-24 – Increase brown bear harvest limit to two bears in Unit 11	Support	Adopt
Southcentral	WP26-25/26 – Increase brown bear harvest limit to two bears in Unit 13	Support	Adopt
Southcentral	WP26-27 – Change harvest limit to up to two caribou in Unit 13 remainder	Support as modified by OSM to delegate additional authority to define harvest areas and to clarify and simplify the regulatory language.	Approved the Withdrawal
Southcentral	WP26-28a – Extend Unit 11 moose season to close Sept. 30	Support	Adopt with Board modification to establish a may-be-announced moose season in Unit 11 from Sept. 21-30 and to delegate authority to the WRST superintendent to open/close a season between Sept. 21-30 via delegation of authority letter
Southcentral	WP26-28b/29/30 – Extend moose season to close Sep. 30 in Unit 13	Support WP26-28b and Take No Action on WP26-29/30	Adopt WP26-28b and Take No Action on WP26-29/30
Southcentral	WP26-31 – Close BLM lands in Unit 13 to moose hunting by non-federally qualified users	Support	Adopt
Eastern Interior	WP26-71 – Increase brown bear harvest limit to two bears in Unit 12	Support	Adopt
Eastern Interior	WP26-74 – Add Chitina and Kenny Lake to sheep C&T in Unit 12	Oppose	Reject

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.

SOUTHCENTRAL AREA WILDLIFE PROPOSALS

Regional Proposals

Wildlife Proposal WP26-15 – Closure of Federal public lands on Hawkins Island and Hinchinbrook Island in Unit 6D to deer hunting by non-federally qualified users.

DESCRIPTION: Requested to close Federal public lands on Hawkins Island and Hinchinbrook Island in Unit 6D to deer hunting by non-federally qualified users.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Southcentral Council – **Support**

BOARD ACTION: Reject

JUSTIFICATION: While the Board respects and considers all public and Tribal testimony given, there was not enough evidence provided to meet ANILCA standards for a closure to non-federally qualified users. The Board stated there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate either a conservation concern or the need to close the area for the continuation of subsistence uses. Federally qualified subsistence users harvest more deer than other user groups. Community conflicts exist, but this is not a justification for a closure to a particular user group. The Board hopes that rejecting WP26-15 will promote collaboration between two user groups to find compromise on the issue.

Wildlife Proposal WP26-27 – Change the caribou harvest limit in a portion of Unit 13 and delegate the authority to determine harvest limit and sex to the in-season manager.

DESCRIPTION: Requested to change the caribou harvest limit in Units 13C, 13D, and 13E from “2 bulls” to “up to 2 caribou,” and that authority to determine harvest limit and sex be delegated to the in-season manager.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Southcentral Council – **Support as modified by OSM**

BOARD ACTION: **Approved the withdrawal**

JUSTIFICATION: The proponent (Bureau of Land Management) requested to withdraw the proposal because of information provided by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on why it is not the right time to be discussing liberalizing harvest of the Nelchina Caribou Herd.

Wildlife Proposal WP26-28a – Extend the season for moose in Unit 11

DESCRIPTION: Requested to extend the season closing date for moose in Unit 11 by ten days, from September 20 to September 30.

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Southcentral Council – **Support**

BOARD ACTION: **Adopt with Board modification** to establish a may-be-announced moose season in Unit 11 from September 21-30 and to delegate authority to the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve superintendent to open/close a season between September 21-30 via delegation of authority letter only.

JUSTIFICATION: Creating a may-be-announced season from September 21-30 would provide management flexibility that supports both subsistence priority and conservation needs. This approach provides additional opportunities for harvest when available while also allowing closures to prevent overharvesting if necessary.

Decisions about whether to announce this season must be made prior to the season opening on August 20, in collaboration with all other agencies, so that users have adequate time to plan their hunts. Establishing this may-be-announced season into the cooler part of the month may afford the opportunity for subsistence hunters to harvest at a more appropriate time. It also allows federally qualified subsistence users to hunt moose at a time when the State season is closed, reducing competition and providing a subsistence priority.