



Federal Subsistence Board News Release



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
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Forest Service

For Immediate Release:
February 7, 2023

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Federal Subsistence Board Acts on Subsistence Fish and Shellfish Regulations, Fishery Closure Reviews, Deferred Wildlife Proposals, Delegation of Authority Letters, Threshold Analysis for Request for Reconsideration RFR22-01, and Threshold Assessment for Nonrural Determination Proposal NDP25-01

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) met January 31 to February 3, 2023, at the Egan Center in Anchorage, to consider proposed changes to Federal subsistence fish and shellfish regulations and fishery closure reviews. In addition, the Board acted on deferred Wildlife Proposals WP22-40, WP22-07, WP22-08, and WP22-10, a threshold analysis for RFR22-01, a Nonrural Determination Proposal threshold assessment, and other items.

After hearing staff analyses and comments from the public, Regional Advisory Councils, Tribes, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the Interagency Staff Committee, the Board adopted 7 out of the 16 fishery proposals and took no action on 3 of them. The Board also acted on 19 fishery closure reviews, voting to rescind 10, maintain status quo on 6, and defer action on 1 until the next fisheries regulatory cycle. The Board took no action on 2 closure reviews based on action on submitted proposals. Some of the more significant decisions, which will be implemented in the 2023–2025 regulatory years, included:

- FP23-01- Rescinds the Jim River drainage closure to fish other than salmon, allows for the use of rod and reel, and establishes a Grayling harvest limit
- FP23-02- Recognizes the customary and traditional use of all salmon in the Yukon River Management Area by residents of Chevak, Hooper Bay, and Scammon Bay
- FP23-06a- Rescinds Womens Bay closure to salmon, allows for the use of rod and reel, and matches State sport fishing limits
- FP23-06b- Rescinds Buskin River closure to salmon and allows for the use of rod and reel
- FP23-08- Recognizes the customary and traditional use of all fish in the Kenai Peninsula District waters north of and including the Kenai River drainage within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and the Chugach National Forest by residents of Moose Pass
- FP23-20- Recognizes the customary and traditional use of shellfish in the Southeastern Alaska Area by residents of Southeastern Alaska and Yakutat Fishery Management Areas
- FP23-21- Closes Kah Sheets Creek to non-federally qualified users from July 1 to July 31

The Board did not recognize the customary and traditional use of salmon in the Kodiak Area by residents of the Kodiak Coast Guard Base (FP23-05a) and in the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River District by residents of the Serendipity subdivision and residents who live between named communities

along the Alaska Highway from the U.S./Canada Border to Dot Lake (FP23-14/15). The Board also opposed changes to the description of the Kodiak Area (FP23-05b), changes to the subsistence rod and reel fishery on the Kenai River (FP23-07), and a request to remove the lower Copper River Area dip net and rod and reel fishery (FP23-19). The Board deferred Fisheries Closure FCR23-05 to the next fisheries regulatory cycle.

The Board adopted with modification deferred Wildlife Proposal WP22-40 to allow the use of snowmachines to approach and pursue wolves and wolverines in Units 9B, 9C, and 17, provided the snowmachine does not contact a live animal. The Board also opposed the three deferred wildlife proposals requesting restrictions to deer hunting by non-Federally qualified users in Unit 4 (WP22-07, WP22-08, and WP22-10).

The Board took action on Request for Consideration RFR22-01, submitted by Ahtna, Incorporated, requesting the Board reconsider their 2022 decision on FP21-10 which provided an opportunity for a subsistence dipnet and rod and reel fishery on the lower Copper River. The Board found potential merit with one of the claims identified in the threshold analysis. Office of Subsistence Management staff will conduct a full analysis of that claim for Board consideration at a future meeting.

The Board concurred with the Office of Subsistence Management's recommendation that the Nonrural Determination Proposal NDP25-01 met the threshold requirements. Office of Subsistence Management staff will proceed with a full analysis of the request to rescind the nonrural determination of Ketchikan, which could result in a rural designation of the Ketchikan Area. The Board will take action on NDP25-01 at the next fisheries regulatory meeting in 2025.

Lastly, the Board updated all fisheries delegation of authority letters to include the authority to issue Temporary Special Actions, supported a Hunter Ethics Education and Outreach Initiative, and recommended the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture approve a list of identified submerged lands in the Tongass National Forest for inclusion in the areas where Federal subsistence regulations apply.

Transcripts from the January 31 – February 3, 2023 meeting will be posted at <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/library/transcripts/federal-subsistence-board> when available.

Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at www.doi.gov/subsistence or by visiting www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

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