



KODIAK/ALEUTIANS ALASKA  
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL  
ADVISORY COUNCIL  
Meeting Materials

*March 29 - 30, 2023  
Kodiak*





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Photo by Kristine Sowl/USFWS

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**KODIAK/ALEUTIANS SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center

Kodiak

March 29-30, 2023

convening at 9:00 AM daily

**TELECONFERENCE:** call the toll-free number: 1-877-807-6997, then when prompted enter the passcode: 73803960.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Public comments are welcome for each agenda item and for regional concerns not included on the agenda. The Council appreciates hearing your concerns and knowledge. The Chair will identify the opportunities to provide public comments. Please fill out a comment form to be recognized by the Council chair. Time limits may be set to provide opportunity for all to testify and keep the meeting on schedule.

**PLEASE NOTE:** These are estimated times and the agenda is subject to change. Contact staff for the current schedule. Evening sessions are at the call of the chair.

**AGENDA**

\*Asterisk identifies action item.

- 1. **Invocation**
- 2. **Call to Order** (*Chair*)
- 3. **Roll Call and Establish Quorum** (*Secretary*) ..... 4
- 4. **Meeting Announcements** (*Council Coordinator*)
- 5. **Welcome and Introductions** (*Chair*)
- 6. **Review and Adopt Agenda\*** (*Chair*)..... 1
- 7. **Election of Officers**
  - Chair (*Council Coordinator*)
  - Vice-Chair (*New Chair*)
  - Secretary (*New Chair*)
- 8. **Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes\*** (*Chair*)..... 5
- 9. **Reports**
  - Council Member Reports
  - Chair’s Report
- 10. **Service Awards** 5-Year Service Awards: Coral Chernoff and Rebecca Skinner (*OSM*)

**11. Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items** (available each morning)

**12. Old Business** (*Chair*)

- a. Follow up on North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference (*Kendra Holman, OSM Wildlife*) ..... 19
  - 1) Feedback from Councils on the State and Federal ungulate management in Alaska symposium (*Kendra Holman, OSM Wildlife*) ..... 20
- b. Update on Federal Subsistence Board Actions (*OSM Fisheries*)..... 21
- c. Council Correspondence Update (*Council Coordinator*)..... 24
  - Letter to Board of Fisheries in support of Proposals 98, 103, Alaska Peninsula, Chignik, Aleutian Meeting; and Proposal 169, Statewide Meeting
- d. Update of Sea Otters and Associated Nearshore Ecosystem, Kodiak area (*Dr. Paul Schuette, Marine Mammals Division, FWS*)

**13. New Business** (*Chair*)

- a. Kodiak NWR Wildlife and other Activity Report September 2022-January2023 (*Michael Brady; Bill Pyle, FWS*)..... 27
- b. Wildlife Report, ADF&G (*Nate Svoboda and Bill Dunker, Division of Wildlife, ADF&G*)
- c. Wildlife Closure Reviews – Crossover with BBRAC - (*Kendra Holman, OSM Wildlife*)
  - WCR24-06 Unit 9E closed to caribou hunting except by residents of Unit 9E, Nelson Lagoon and Sand Point ..... 32
- d. Call for Federal Wildlife Proposals\* (*Kendra Holman, OSM Wildlife*) ..... 48
- e. 2021 Council Charter Review\* (*Council Coordinator*)..... 122
- f. Update and discussion on Adak Island, Lake Andrew blockage (*Mike Williams, Alaska Maritime NWR; Pat Holmes, Member*)
- g. Update on Unalaska fishery and wildlife enforcement (*Tyler Lawson, Matt Keyse, ADF&G; Pat Holmes, Member*)
- h. Review and approve FY2022 Annual Report\* (*Council Coordinator*) ..... 51
- i. Updated Draft Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Correspondence Policy 2023\* (*OSM*) ..... 57
- j. Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Update (*Jason Roberts, Anthropology Division OSM*).
- k. Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program Update (*Jason Roberts, Anthropology Division OSM*)
- l. Regulatory Cycle Update (*Jason Roberts, Anthropology Division OSM*)

**14. Reports**

(Time limit of 15 minutes unless approved in advance)

- a. Tribal Governments
- b. Native Organizations
- c. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - i. National Weather Service: Spring Climate Outlook (Dr. Brian Brettschneider; NOAA)..... 59
  - ii. Alaska Fisheries Science Center – Status of Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea Ecosystem (Dr. Ellen Yasumiishi)
- d. US Fish and Wildlife Service
  - i. Alaska Maritime NWR Activity Report, Spring 2023 (Mike Williams; FWS).... 81
  - ii. Izembek NWR Activity Report, September 2022 – January 2023 (Maria Fosado, Leticia Melendez, FWS) ..... 84
  - iii. Migratory Bird Management and Refuge Teams - Waterfowl and Seabird Updates (TBD)
- e. Alaska Department of Fish and Game
  - i. Division of Sport Fish – Update on the Buskin River Sockeye Salmon Stock Assessment (Kelly Krueger, Mark Witteveen, ADF&G) ..... 87
  - ii. Division of Subsistence – Update on Subsistence Research Projects (Jackie Keating, Chance Wilcox, ADF&G)..... 100
  - iii. Division of Commercial Fisheries – Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Salmon Update (Tyler Lawson, Mathew Keyse, ADF&G) ..... 101
- f. Office of Subsistence Management (Lisa Grediagin)

**15. Future Meeting Dates\***

- a. Confirm Fall 2023 meeting date and location ..... 117
- b. Select preferred Winter 2024 meeting date ..... 118
- c. Select preferred Fall 2024 meeting date and location ..... 119

**16. Closing Comments**

**17. Adjourn (Chair)**

**To teleconference into the meeting, call the toll-free number: 1-877-807-6997, then when prompted enter the passcode: 73803960.**

*Reasonable Accommodations*

The Federal Subsistence Board is committed to providing access to this meeting for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, closed captioning, or other accommodation needs to Lisa Hutchinson, 907-310-4097, lisa\_hutchinson@fws.gov, or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on March 10, 2023.

## REGION 3

### Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory Council

Seat	Year Appointed <i>Term Expires</i>	Member Name	Represents
1		VACANT	
2	2001 <b>2025</b>	<b>Patrick Brian Holmes</b> Kodiak	Subsistence
3	2006, 2021 <b>2025</b>	<b>Richard Rudolph Koso</b> Adak	Subsistence
4	2004 <b>2025</b>	<b>Samuel Isaac Rohrer</b> Kodiak	Comm/Sport
5	2017 <b>2023</b>	<b>Christopher Lee Price</b> <b>Secretary</b> Unalaska	Subsistence
6	2014 <b>2023</b>	<b>Coral Ann Chernoff</b> Kodiak	Subsistence
7	2014 <b>2023</b>	<b>Rebecca Louise Skinner</b> <b>Vice Chair</b> Kodiak	Subsistence
8	1997 <b>2024</b>	<b>Della Trumble</b> <b>Chair</b> King Cove	Subsistence
9	2018 <b>2024</b>	<b>Natasha M. Hayden</b> Kodiak	Subsistence
10		VACANT	



## KODIAK/ALEUTIANS SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

### Meeting Minutes

Community Center  
Cold Bay, Alaska  
September 21 – 22, 2022

#### Invocation:

Mr. Patrick Holmes provided an invocation.

#### Call to Order, Roll Call, and Quorum Establishment:

Wednesday, September 21, 2022. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am. Council Chair Della Trumble and Council members Coral Chernoff, Patrick Holmes, Christopher Price, and Rebecca Skinner were present in person, and Richard Koso and Natasha Hayden were present by teleconference. Samuel Rohrer was absent but excused. With seven out of eight seated Council members present (Council has two vacant seats) the quorum was established.

#### Attendees:

##### *In person:*

- Bureau of Indian Affairs Interagency Staff Committee and Federal Subsistence Board Acting member: **Glenn Chen, Ph.D.**
- Office of Subsistence Management (OSM): **Justin Koller, Jarred Stone, Katya Wessels, Scott Ayers, and Jason Roberts, Ph.D.**
- Izembek National Wildlife Refuge (NWR): **Maria Fosado, Laticia Melendez, and Alison Williams**
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G): **Tyler Lawson and Mathew Keyse**

##### *Via teleconference:*

- Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska: **Vince Tutiakoff**
- Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak: **Matt Van Daele and Daniel Smith**
- Koniag Inc. Community Affairs Liaison: **Amy Peterson**
- Native Village of Ouzinkie: **Tami Jones**
- The Aleut Community of Saint Paul: **Lauren Divine**
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): **Jill Klein and John Gerken**
- USFWS Alaska Maritime NWR: **Jeff Williams**
- USFWS Kodiak NWR: **Mike Brady**
- National Park Service (NPS): **Kim Jochum, Ph.D.**
- OSM: **Kendra Holman, George Pappas, Brent Vickers, Ph.D., Robbin La Vine, and Orville Lind**

- ADF&G: *Mark Burch, Bill Dunker, Lisa Fox, Jackie Keating, Kelly Krueger, Mark Lavine, Tyler Polum, Susan Klock, Chance Wilcox, Jeff Wadle, and James Jackson*

### **Review and Adopt Agenda:**

Motion by Member Skinner, seconded by Member Chernoff, to adopt the agenda as read with the following changes:

- 6. Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes; discuss closure reviews and inclusion in minutes
- 11i. Board of Fisheries meeting announcement and discussion on Proposal 98
- 12.c.2 ADF&G Kodiak Area Wildlife Conservation update

**The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:**

The Council discussed the meeting minutes. Mr. Holmes expressed that he would like to see that the minutes contain more detailed discussions the Council has during the meetings. In response to Mr. Holmes concerns, Katya Wessels, Council Coordination Division Supervisor for OSM, reminded the Council that all Council meetings are recorded, and transcripts are created and available for the public. She clarified that the Council Coordinator generally is responsible for summarizing the meeting transcripts for the minutes, and that the minutes only contain just the outline of the Council's meetings. She explained that the sole purpose of the minutes is a requirement by all the Councils that are chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Member Holmes motioned and seconded by Member Chernoff, to approve the winter 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Council Member and Chair Reports:**

Patrick Holmes of Kodiak reported his subsistence season was disrupted due to recovering from surgery. He was, however, able to do some tide pooling and got some sea urchins. Berries were good around his house. The salmonberries that were in direct wind were not as productive. Lingonberries were sparse on Pillar Mountain, which tends to happen when they have a dry July every 10 years. The Buskin River opened late in the season and closed early due to a weak run. Folks that were able to fish reported having trouble with sea lions and seals. The deer population is still in the recovery phase, but those who he talked with were able to get some nice deer.

Richard Koso of Adak reported that the Adak caribou population is doing well although continues slow decline. There was an informal meeting last March in Adak and by teleconference, to discuss the Adak Caribou Herd arranged by the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Manager Steve Delahanty. Several staff with the refuge were in attendance along with the ADF&G Area Wildlife Biologist Dave Crawley, and representatives from the Aleut Corporation, City of Adak, a few local Adak resident

subsistence hunters and a local hunting guide. The main purpose of meeting was to share information about the Adak Caribou Herd that is in decline. The Alaska Maritime NWR staff were not able to conduct a caribou survey but noted that the NWR would like to see the caribou population in the range of 150 animals, which Mr. Koso said is concerning as caribou are an essential subsistence resource for the community.

The ptarmigan population is still low, local guides elected not to hunt them, which will help with recovery. Mr. Koso reported that the last couple of years the road access to Lake Andrew has been blocked by the Navy due to the unexploded ordinance and cleanup efforts. He said that Sockeye Salmon spawn in the Lake, but currently rocks and sand and other debris from the ocean have blocked the outlet of this lake and locals need to gain access to open the outlet. He has worked with the Adak Community Development Corporation and the Governor to try and open the access again, without much success. It is a big concern in the community that they are going to lose their red salmon (Sockeye Salmon) return with the lake access being blocked. The lake provides safe access to the resource by subsistence users.

Natasha Hayden of Kodiak reported the Buskin River was closed. She was able to get some subsistence Sockeye Salmon from Pasagshak in July. She didn't see a lot of gillnetters while she was out there a few times. She thought escapement was met, but there might not have been a surplus. She noted seeing a lot of sport fishers, but was unsure of the amount harvested. The salmon return in Port Lions was adequate. Folks were able to harvest a few deer, but they're not seeing a huge amount of them. Blueberries were good and were ripe earlier than usual. She spotted lingonberries and salmonberries on Pillar Mountain and noticed more dead stalks on the salmonberries than usual.

Christopher Price of Unalaska reported that McLees Lake weir was successfully installed. He was thankful for the partnerships in the community that made the startup of the project successful. The weather at the beginning of the summer wasn't great and the fish didn't show up until mid-July. Nets were lost and boats got swamped in dangerous conditions making it difficult to harvest enough fish for the local community, elders, and Tribal members. Boxes of fish were purchased from Chignik to supplement the community. He reported that fishing on Front Beach was hit and miss. He suggested the Council may want to discuss additional reductions on the catch levels of red salmon (Sockeye Salmon) until Unalaska Lake and Iliuliuk River recover. He shared his concerns about the local economy, the reductions in King and the Opilio crab fisheries, ocean conditions in the Bering Sea and the effect on commercial fisheries in his community.

Rebecca Skinner of Kodiak reported that food security is a concern and emphasized the importance of being able to harvest local resources for subsistence. She noticed that grocery stores are not as well stocked, even when the barge does come in. She highlighted the effects of changing ocean conditions and the impacts on subsistence foods and commercial fishery that drives the local economy. Salmon fishing in Prince William Sound and Kodiak was not great. In Kodiak, the Sockeye and Coho salmon seasons closed early. The cod population seems to be improving slightly. She reported that the summer weather in Kodiak was cold and rainy.

Coral Chernoff of Kodiak reported that June was a warm month, setting four records for high temperatures. The heat caused a short and early burst of salmonberries. The salmon run on the Buskin River was different this year; the season closed early and then reopened early with a big push of salmon coming through the weir. The Coho Salmon run on the other side of the island came in slow, and she was not able to harvest any. She heard from four sportfishing lodges that clients were not catching their limits either. Harvesting fireweed, nettles, plantain, and high bush cranberries was phenomenal this year. Crayfish in the Buskin River was closed this year, and she looks forward to hearing from the Sun'aq Tribe about their studies on what crayfish are eating. Crab seemed to be scarce this year; there has been an increase in pressure to the crab stocks from fishermen coming up from Oregon due to their commercial fishing restrictions. As a representative for Kodiak on the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council (AMBCC), Ms. Chernoff reported they were updating the management plan for Emperor Geese that will allocate harvest amounts to the communities in the goose's range based on the previous year's population survey. The last couple of years there has been a permit requirement to hunt Emperor Geese on the road system in Kodiak, roughly 40 permits have been issued and not many birds were harvested last year. The AMBCC will look at removing this permit requirement in the future.

Chair Della Trumble of King Cove reported that fishing in June was decent, July and August were slow. There were a lot of salmonberries before the rain came. Blueberry harvest was good; however, mossberries wasn't as good as in the past. The crab closure has had a big impact on the community. She heard reports from Sand Point that the salmon season was not good. She echoed Ms. Skinner's concerns about changing ocean conditions and the effect on subsistence resources. Ms. Trumble stressed that it would take a lot of effort going forward to work together to adjust to these changes. She attended virtually the Federal Subsistence Board meetings that discussed proposals for the Kodiak/Aleutians area. She looks forward to the next meeting being held in person.

### **Service Awards:**

Dr. Glen Chen, Acting Regional Director for BIA and member of the Interagency Staff Committee presented Service Awards to Chair Della Trumble for 25 years of service to the Council and to Council Secretary Chris Price for 5 years of service. Dr. Chen also provided the award plaque to Council member Pat Holmes for his 20-year Service Award that was awarded during a previous teleconference meeting, but OSM was unable to present the actual plaque to Member Holmes out due to Covid travel restrictions. It was brought to OSM's attention that Coral Chernoff and Rebecca Skinner have served on the Council for 8 years and have yet to receive any award. Ms. Wessels apologized for this oversight and promised that OSM will present their 5-year service awards at the next Council meeting.

### **Public And Tribal Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

Two representatives from the Sun'aq Tribe (Matt Van Daele and Daniel Smith) spoke about concerns for the Buskin River salmon returns. They are considering applying for funding for a Sockeye Salmon smolt project and provided a report on crayfish research in the Buskin and looking at their potential consumption of salmon eggs.

Mr. Smith, Tribal Biologist with the Sun'aq Tribe, provided a brief overview of the Sun'aq Natural Resources Department's research projects on invasive signal crayfish population dynamics within the Buskin River watershed and are worried just how much the crayfish are affecting the Sockeye, Coho and Pink salmon and rearing environment within the lake and upper Buskin River. He reported that signal crayfish have an omnivorous and opportunistic diet and biologists believe these crayfish utilize food resources including salmon eggs and potentially also salmon fry and smolt predation. He reported that the research with the stabilized isotope analysis study will likely find out the extent of their predation on salmon egg, fry, and smolt during different points of the year. Mr. Smith, Mr. Daele, and Tyler Polum (ADF&G) addressed some questions by the Council.

A representative of Qawalangin Tribe and Mayor of Unalaska Vince Tutiakoff requested additional enforcement for current sport and subsistence fisheries in the Unalaska area as he reported that there are many who are taking more fish than they are allowed, and some may be fishing illegally. He also said that the only enforcement officer stationed in Unalaska is relocated to Bristol Bay during the summer months, which is primarily when salmon fishing occurs. Mr. Tutiakoff also commented on Council member Richard Koso's concerns about the blockage of the outlet of Lake Andrew to salmon that are returning to spawn.

Aleut Community of Saint Paul Ecosystem Conservation Office Director Laruen Divine provided comments under Tribal reports to the Council about negative interactions between subsistence users and non-local sport hunters. She asked for assistance with outreach and education for the non-local users to help them understand the importance of subsistence hunting and access to local sites. The Council asked for a letter from Ms. Divine to further explain the issues so that the Council can take this up at their Winter 2023 meeting and have appropriate agency people to speak to the different issues.

### **Old Business:**

The Council received presentations on the following topics:

- 805(c) Report summary. Council Coordinator Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough provided the Council with a summary of the 805(c) Report from the Federal Subsistence Board's (Board) actions on proposals affecting resident in the Kodiak and Aleutian Island Regions.
- Board FY-2021 Annual Report Replies summary. Ms. Hutchinson-Scarborough provided the Council with a summary of the Board's reply to the Council's items identified in their annual report. Member Chernoff shared with the Council that the State's new invasive species regulation did not go through the regular Board of Fisheries process and the affected Tribes were not consulted as part of the process. Tyler Polum, ADF&G Kodiak Area Management Biologist for the Sportfish Division, provided additional information to the Council on this topic.

### **New Business:**

#### ***Fisheries Management Reports:***

Jackie Keating, ADF&G Subsistence Resource Specialist, provided preliminary subsistence harvest data for Kodiak including specific detail about the Kodiak Station results. This information was provided to the Council to help inform their discussion on FP23-05a.

Tyler Lawson, the ADF&G Assistant Area Management Biologist for the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands, provided an overview of escapement and subsistence harvest for areas affected by the current proposals and closure reviews and provided general comments that ADF&G had for all the systems being considered by the Council. The presentation covered Adak-Kagalaska Island; McLees Lake, Unalaska Lake, Summers, and Morris Lakes on Unalaska Island; and Mortenson's Lagoon, Trout Creek, and Russel Creek in the Cold Bay portion of the Alaska Peninsula Area. A general trend in harvest is that fewer State subsistence permits have been issued over time for most of these areas. Salmon returns and surveys for these systems have been highly variable.

Mr. Lawson and James Jackson, ADF&G Kodiak Commercial Herring and Salmon Subsistence Management Biologist, and Mr. Polum, ADF&G Kodiak Area Sport Fish Biologist, provided ADF&G's comments on several of the proposals and closure reviews as they were presented by OSM staff, and when asked by the Council, provided additional information for clarity on the fisheries and systems during the Council's discussions and deliberations on the Fishery Proposals and Closure Reviews.

***Public And Tribal Comments on Agenda Items: Fishery Proposals and Closure Reviews***

Mr. Van Daele, Natural Resource Director for Sun'aq Tribe, Kodiak, provided the Council with the Tribe's position on the proposals and closure reviews for the Kodiak Island. The Tribe is definitely in favor of anything that's going to bring them to alignment with Title VIII of ANILCA, as well as protecting access to subsistence resource and especially wise use in management conservation of resources. Mr. Van Daele added that the Sun'aq Tribe requested that they see more information in future what the actual regulations would change to in terms of types of harvest, methods of harvest, etc., before they can provide more substantive comments.

Tami Jones, Grant Administrator for the Native Village of Ouzinkie, concurred with Mr. Van Deale's comments and urged the Council that any regulatory changes to the Kodiak area bring management in line with Title VIII of ANILCA.

Vince Tutiakoff, a lifelong Unalaska resident, member of the Qawalangin Tribe, and Mayor of Unalaska, testified via teleconference about his and other local subsistence users concerns over rescinding the closures for the Unalaska region; particularly within systems assessable by road citing lack of enforcement on both sport and subsistence fisheries. He said many in the subsistence community share concerns about increasing opportunity and additional gear, such as gillnets, that could be utilized for subsistence salmon fishing, which would add more pressure on these fragile systems already. Mr. Tutiakoff voiced concerns about conservation, ongoing enforcement issues, and the desire to generate a local solution before rescinding Unalaska closures.

Jeff Wasley, a Cold Bay resident and a 10-year licensed sport fish and hunting guide with Izembek NWR, testified in person over his concern if Fisheries Closures FCR 21-13 for Russel Creek and Nurse Lagoon and FCR 23-13 for Trout Creek were rescinded as this might affect his ability to take his clients sport fishing in these areas for Coho Salmon. In addition, he stated his objection to the Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposal 103 that if passed would reduce the bag and possessions limit of Coho and Sockeye salmon in salt water and freshwater drainages of Cold Bay to 2 per species per day. Mr. Wasley testified that his clients almost exclusively fish for Coho Salmon because Coho will bite a fly or lure whereas Sockeye Salmon you can only catch by snagging, which is illegal. He said most of his clients would not want to come all the way to Cold Bay to only catch 2 Coho Salmon per day. Furthermore, he reported that most local subsistence users prefer Sockeye Salmon and generally fish in other systems or locations than his clients. He concluded that this regulation, if passed, would hurt his and the other few local guides business that also bring money to the community. The Council asked Mr. Wasley several questions about his and other local guides to better understand his concerns and try to better understand approximately the number of salmon by species taken by his clients in a season.

### ***Regional Fisheries Proposals (FP) and Closure Reviews (FCR).***

OSM Fishery Biologists Jarred Stone, Justin Koller, and OSM Anthropologist Dr. Jason Roberts provided the Council with background information and OSM's analyses for each of the four Fishery Proposals (FP) and fourteen Federal Closure Reviews (FCR) for the Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, and Aleutian Island Regions to aid the Council in their deliberations and determining their recommendations to the Board. After thorough evaluation, questioning for clarity from OSM and ADF&G Fisheries staff, information received from public comments, and often extensive debate, the Council deliberated on and made recommendations to the Board. This included four Fishery Proposals and seven closure reviews for the Kodiak Region; two closure reviews for the Alaska Peninsula Region (Cold Bay Area); and five closure reviews for the Aleutian Region, four for Unalaska, and one for Adak. The Council made the following recommendations to the Board.

### ***Kodiak Area Fishery Proposals & Closure Reviews***

#### **FP23-05a – Customary and Traditional Use revisions for the Kodiak Area**

FP23-05a was submitted by the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. The proponents are requesting to recognize the residents of the Kodiak Coast Guard Base's (Base) customary and traditional use for salmon for the Kodiak Area. The proponents are also requesting to change the area descriptors for the customary and traditional use determination zones within the Kodiak Islands, to clarify the areas under regulation and reduce administrative complexity for the public and Kodiak NWR staff.

The Council was concerned that adding more users to customary and traditional use determination for salmon in the Kodiak Area would potentially cause conservation issues for the limited salmon resources in the Buskin River. The Council was also concerned that recognizing customary and traditional use of salmon by the Base might lead to a change in the rural status of the Kodiak Area. They additionally noted

the disparity in resources available to residents of the Base compared to other residents of the Kodiak Area. They also did not feel that Base residents met the factors for eligibility for customary and traditional use, and that the culture of how Base residents hunt and fish is different than that of other groups living in the Kodiak Area.

Motion to adopt FP23-05a by Member Holmes, seconded by Member Price. **The Motion failed on a unanimous vote.**

#### **FP23-05b – Revisions to the Kodiak Area waters description**

After much debate, The Council supported the intent of the proposal, but had concerns about the current area description not matching the area that is eligible for harvest of fish under Federal subsistence regulations.

Motion to adopt FP23-05b by member Holmes, seconded by Member Chernoff. Motion by member Holmes to amend the motion by starting with “In the Federal public waters of Kodiak Island” followed by the proposed revision to the area language, seconded by Member Skinner. **The Motion to amend failed on a unanimous vote. The Motion to adopt failed.**

*FP23-06a and FCR23-15 were addressed simultaneously because of their overlap and if the Council voted to adopt FP23-06a, then no action likely would be needed for FCR23-15.*

#### **FP23-06a – Womens Bay Rod and Reel**

In support of the Federal subsistence priority, this fishery would allow for subsistence harvest while also ensuring that conservation concerns are taken into consideration through the limited gear type.

Motion to adopt FP23-06a by Member Holmes, seconded by Member Chernoff. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR23-15 – Women’s Bay Closure**

Given the Council’s recommendation on FP23-06a to rescind the closure and implement a rod and reel fishery, the Council took no action on this closure review.

Motion to take no action on closure FCR23-15 by Member Skinner, seconded by Member Price. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

*FP23-06b and FCR21-16 were addressed simultaneously because of their overlap and if the Council voted to adopt FP23-06b, then no action would likely be needed for FCR 23-15.*

#### **FP23-06b – Buskin River Marine Waters Rod and Reel**

In support of the Federal subsistence priority, this fishery would allow for subsistence harvest while also ensuring that conservation concerns are taken into consideration through the limited gear type.



Motion to support proposal FP23-06b by Member Skinner, seconded by Member Price. **Amendment 1** by Member Chernoff “to rescind the closure and follow the general area provisions for the subsistence taking of fish”. **Amendment 1 failed** due to lack of second. **Amendment 2** by Member Chernoff to use Federal subsistence area harvest limits, rather than State harvest limits that are more restrictive, seconded by Member Skinner. **Motion to support proposal with Amendment 2 passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR21-16 – Buskin River Marine Waters Closure**

Given the Council’s recommendation on FP23-06b to rescind the closure and implement a rod and reel fishery, the Council took no action on this closure review.

Motion to take no action on closure FCR21-16 by Member Holmes, seconded by Member Chernoff.  
**Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR21-18 – Afognak Bay Closure**

The Councils recommends rescinding the closure to bring the Federal subsistence regulations in compliance with the rural subsistence consumptive priority set forth in Title VIII of ANILCA.

Secondary motion by Member Skinner, seconded by Member Chernoff, for the Council to further recommended that if the Board rescinds this closure, that the manager limits the gear type to rod and reel.  
**Secondary motion withdrawn by member Skinner with the consent of the second following Council discussion.**

Motion to rescind closure FCR21-18 by Member Chernoff, seconded by Member Skinner. **The Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR21-19 – Afognak Island Freshwater Drainages Closure and FCR23-22 – Little Kitoi Creek Closure**

The Councils recommends rescinding the closure to bring the Federal subsistence regulations in compliance with rural subsistence consumption priority set forth in Title VIII of ANILCA. In addition, the Federal manager can step in as needed in times of conservation concern to limit fisheries if needed.

Motion to rescind closures FCR21-19 and FCR23-22 by Member Skinner, seconded by member Chernoff. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR23-19 – Selief Bay Creek Closure**

The Council believes that rescinding the closure will bring the Federal subsistence regulations into compliance as there are no Federal public waters in this location.

Motion to rescind closure FCR23-19 by Member Skinner, seconded by Member Chernoff. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR23-21 – King Crab Around Kodiak and Afognak Closure**

In Council's opinion, retaining this closure protects the depleted stocks while maintaining a rural priority for Federally qualified subsistence users.

Motion to maintain the status quo for closure FRC23-21 by Member Skinner, seconded by member Chernoff. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR23-22– Little Kitoi Creek**

The Council noted that these changes would bring the Federal subsistence regulations in compliance with rural subsistence consumption priority set forth in Title VIII of ANILCA. In addition, the Federal manager can step in as needed in times of conservation concern to limit fisheries if needed.

Motion to rescind closure FCR23-22 by Member Skinner, seconded by member Chernoff. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

### *Alaska Peninsula Area Closure Reviews*

#### **FCR21-13 – Russel Creek and Nurse Lagoon and FCR23-13 – Trout Creek**

FCR21-13 and FCR23-13 were deliberated on by the Council at same time. The Council acknowledges the current lack of priority for Federally qualified subsistence users at these locations. The Council prefers to provide opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users and to be able to provide a rural preference in times of conservation concern.

Motion to rescind closures FCR21-13 and FCR23-13 by Member Skinner, seconded by Member Chernoff. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

### *Aleutian Islands Area Closure Reviews*

#### **FCR23-11 – Unalaska Bay Freshwaters**

The Council supports maintaining the status quo for this closure in deference to recommendations and comments from Council members and other representatives from the area. Testimony included concerns about conservation, ongoing enforcement issues, and the desire to generate a local solution before rescinding the closure.

Motion to maintain status quo on closure FCR23-11 by Member Holmes, seconded by Member Price. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

#### **FCR21-08 – Unalaska Lake Closure, FCR21-09 – Summers and Morris Lakes Closure, and FCR21-11 – McLees Lake Closure**

The Council deliberated simultaneously on FCR21-08, FCR21-09, and FCR21-11. The Council supports retaining the status quo for these closures in deference to recommendations and comments from Council members and other representatives from the area. Testimony included concerns about conservation, ongoing enforcement issues, and the desire to generate a local solution before rescinding the closure.

Motion to maintain status quo for closures FCR21-08, FCR21-09, and FCR21-11 by Member Holmes, seconded by Member Price. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

### **FCR23-12 – Adak and Kagalaska Freshwaters Closure**

The Council acknowledges the current lack of priority for Federally qualified subsistence users at this location. The Council prefers to provide opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users and to be able to provide a rural preference in times of conservation concern.

Motion to rescind closure FCR23-12 by Member Koso, seconded by Member Skinner. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

### ***2024 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP):***

Mr. Stone, Dr. Roberts, and Mr. Koller presented the FRMP overview and worked through the Priority Information Need process for the 2024 FRMP Notice of Funding Opportunity. The Council reviewed the draft list provided to them by staff and made updates based on earlier testimony about concerns for Unalaska Lake and enumeration of smolt in the Buskin system. Member Skinner moved to adopt the Priority Information Needs as revised, which was seconded by Member Holmes. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

### ***Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program***

Mr. Stone and Mr. Koller provided brief overview of the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring (Partners) Program and the upcoming Notice for funding opportunity for the next Partners Program cycle.

### ***Joint meeting: North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in May 2023***

Kendra Holman, OSM Wildlife Division Biologist, gave an overview of the Joint Meeting of the North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in Anchorage in May 2023 and requested that the Council nominate a member and alternate to attend. OSM would provide travel, lodging and per diem to attend. The topics of predator control and the importance of timely, complete surveys were suggested by the Council for the Alaska management symposium during this conference.

Member Holmes made a motion to nominate Rick Koso (primary) and Chair Della Trumble (as backup) to attend the Joint Meeting of the North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in May 2023. Motion was seconded by member Chernoff. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

***Council Member reimbursement for telephonic/internet expenses related to Council teleconference meetings***

Ms. Hutchinson-Scarborough read to the Council information for past or future reimbursement for telephonic/internet expenses related to Council teleconference meeting. The Council did not provide comment.

***Fall 2022 Council application/nomination open season:***

Ms. Wessels announced that membership applications or nominations for seats on the 10 Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils are being accepted through February 21, 2023 and encouraged the Council and public to get the word out to Kodiak and Aleutian communities to recruit new applicants and reminded members that have terms expiring next year to reapply. The Council had a brief discussion about the need by Council Members and OSM to increase outreach in unrepresented communities.

***State of Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) proposals:***

The Council discussed BOF proposals 98 and 103 for the Alaska Peninsula/ Aleutian Islands, Chignik finfish meeting, February 13-17, 2023; and BOF proposal 169 for the Statewide Finfish meeting, March 10-14, 2023.

Member Skinner made a motion, seconded by Member Holmes, for the Council to provide a comment written by the Council Coordinator and Council Member Skinner, in support of proposal 98. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Candice Nielsen, Cold Bay resident and the proponent for proposal 103, provided an overview in person to the Council of the proposal and her reasons for submitting it.

Member Chernoff made a motion, seconded by Member Koso, for the Council to provide a comment written by the Council Coordinator and Council member Skinner, in support of proposal 103. **Motion passed by unanimous vote**

Member Skinner made a motion, seconded by Member Holmes, for the Council to write a comment written by the Council Coordinator and Council Member Skinner in support to the Board of Fisheries Statewide Proposal 169. **The motion passed by unanimous vote.**

***Identify Issues for FY2022 Annual Report:***

Ms. Hutchinson-Scarborough presented a short overview of this action item asking the Council to identify regional issues or concerns they would like the Board to hear and respond to. The Council identified seven FY-2022 Annual Report topics:

- Fisheries Enforcement concerns. There has been much discussion during this meeting about concerns for Federal enforcement of regulations across the region.

- The King Cove Road. This has been a long-standing issue for this Council and there is support for moving things forward.
- Council meeting locations in hub communities. OSM policy has limited meeting sites to hub communities, and we disagree with that policy and which communities have been identified as hubs.
- Changing ocean conditions and climate change are having a big impact on our communities and subsistence lifestyle.
- The BIL (bipartisan infrastructure law) should have funded weirs. They are important infrastructure and should be noted as such.
- Increased access to Federal subsistence permits in Kodiak and tidying up the permitting process. Permits can only be obtained from one location currently, whereas there are villages across the island that need to get them and either need to fly into town to obtain them or ask ADF&G to mail them one. Chair Trumble noted that she has worked with the Izembek NWR to have permit materials mailed to her for King Cove and other communities, which works well.
- Concerns raised by Member Koso about the outlet of Lake Andrew on Adak Island being closed off from access to the sea for fish, which is directly impacting the Sockeye Salmon returns. Help is needed to coordinate efforts to get the lake reopened.

## Reports:

### Tribal Governments

- Qawalangin Tribe and Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries McLees Lake Cooperative Weir FRMP project update presented by Tyler Lawson
- The Aleut Community of Saint Paul, Office of Ecological Service Director, report presented by Lauren Divine

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge update presented by Jeff Williams
- Izembek National Wildlife Refuge update presented by Maria Fosado, Laticia Melendez, and Alison Williams
- Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge update presented by Bill Brady

### Alaska Department of Fish and Game

- Division of Division of Sport Fish, Buskin River Sockeye Salmon projects presented by Kelly Krueger
- Division of Subsistence, FRMP funded subsistence research projects presented by Jackie Keating
- Division of Wildlife, Kodiak Area Wildlife Conservation Office, Bill Dunker was scheduled present project update, but remote connection with him was lost

Office of Subsistence Management. Overview presented by Scott Ayers

**Future Meeting Dates:**

The Council selected March 29-30 in Larsen Bay for their Winter 2023 meeting, with a back-up location of Kodiak. Further, they selected King Cove on September 19-20 for their Fall 2023 meeting.

**Closing Comments:**

The Council appreciated the work of all the presenters at the meeting, and specifically noted the efforts of Mr. Lawson (ADF&G) and Mr. Stone, Mr. Koller, and Dr. Roberts (OSM). Member Holmes requested that the Council write letters about enforcement concerns in Unalaska and Cold Bay and to the appropriate people regarding Lake Andrew on Adak.

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Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough, DFO  
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

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Della Trumble, Chair  
Kodiak Aleutian Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Kodiak Aleutian Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, April 5 and 6, 2023 in Larsen Bay or Kodiak, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes at that meeting.

For a more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcript and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough at 1-800-478-1456 or 907-310-4097, email at [lisa\\_hutchinson@fws.gov](mailto:lisa_hutchinson@fws.gov).



# 2023 NORTH AMERICAN CARIBOU WORKSHOP & ARCTIC UNGULATE CONFERENCE

Anchorage, Alaska ■ May 8-12, 2023

Come to the conference to share your knowledge and learn from others! Join an international group of managers, biologists, Indigenous and Local Knowledge holders, and others to share knowledge of caribou, muskoxen, Dall's sheep, moose, and reindeer. The meeting will provide opportunities for exchanging viewpoints, concerns, and recommendations regarding the health, stewardship, use, and study of these important species.

The theme for the joint meeting is *Crossing Boundaries*. Arctic ungulates regularly cross landscape boundaries, connecting ecosystems and peoples, necessitating partnerships and collaboration across management and political boundaries. A critical component of such partnerships involves crossing the boundaries of Western science and Indigenous knowledges to identify creative opportunities to sustain Arctic ungulate populations in a changing world. We will explore these themes across four days of research talks, storytelling, workshops and panel discussions. Join us!

For more information visit [www.nacw-auc-2023.org](http://www.nacw-auc-2023.org) or e-mail [info@nacw-auc-2023.org](mailto:info@nacw-auc-2023.org).





## Feedback from Regional Advisory Councils on the State and Federal Ungulate Management in Alaska Symposium

At the North American Caribou Workshop and  
Arctic Ungulate Conference [www.nacw-auc-2023.org](http://www.nacw-auc-2023.org)

**Description:** This session is intended as a neutral forum for Federal Regional Advisory Council (Council) members, State Fish and Game Advisory Committee members, Federal and State agency staff, and any other interested parties to discuss ungulate management in Alaska, specifically regarding harvest regulations. The format will be facilitated discussion where participation by all attendees is encouraged. Specific topics will be determined after the Councils provide input during their fall 2022 and winter 2023 meetings.

### Potential Topics

1. The effectiveness and impact of antler restrictions in moose harvest management (i.e. do spike-fork and brow-tine restrictions actually provide more subsistence harvest opportunity or is it just an easy way to manage moose populations).
2. How to manage young growth forests for moose
3. Regulations that conflict with each other and across user groups (e.g. State community hunts)
4. How biological data is collected (e.g. population surveys)
5. Habitat changes (natural, manmade, and from climate change) and their effects on ungulates
6. Predator Control
7. Identification, viability, and utilization of resident caribou herds (vs. migratory)
8. Effects of climate change, disease and overgrazing on ungulate populations
9. Summer vs. winter diet of caribou (e.g. protein intake)
10. Bull caribou harvest during the rut
11. Effects of hunting pressure on caribou movements and migration routes
12. Effects of roads/development on caribou distribution and movements
13. Population thresholds for caribou herd recovery
14. Wanton waste of meat
15. The importance of funding wildlife surveys and receiving timely reports
16. Muskox harvest management
17. Honoring and incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge into harvest management (i.e. letting the leaders pass and ensuring uninterrupted caribou migrations)
18. Harvest management strategies when caribou populations are too high (e.g. showing signs of nutritional stress).
19. Unsafe and disrespectful hunting practices; need for better hunter education
20. Food security
21. Climate change impacts on ungulates, particularly caribou migration routes
22. Caribou distribution patterns in relation to village harvest needs; and exploring new ways to address the needs of villages (e.g. village quota systems)
23. Sport hunter disturbance to caribou and law enforcement
24. Harvest reporting: how to improve



Federal Subsistence Board Action Summary  
 Kodiak Aleutians Region  
 2023 Fisheries Regulatory Meeting  
**Consensus Agenda**

<b>Sub-Region</b>	<b>Proposal/Closure Review</b>	<b>KARAC Position</b>	<b>Board Action</b>
<b>Unalaska</b>	FCR21-08 Unalaska Lake and tributaries	Retain status quo	<b>Retain status quo</b>
<b>Unalaska</b>	FCR21-09 Summers and Morris Lake drainages	Retain status quo	<b>Retain status quo</b>
<b>Unalaska</b>	FCR21-11 McLees Lake drainage	Retain status quo	<b>Retain status quo</b>
<b>Unalaska</b>	FCR23-11 freshwaters flowing into Unalaska Bay	Retain status quo	<b>Retain status quo</b>
<b>Kodiak</b>	FP23-05a: Requests to add residents of the Kodiak Coast Guard Base to the customary and traditional use determination for salmon for the Kodiak Area.	Oppose	<b>Oppose</b>
<b>Kodiak</b>	FP23-05b: Requests a change in the description of a Kodiak Island fishing area	Oppose	<b>Oppose</b>
<b>Kodiak</b>	<b>FCR23-19:</b> Selief Bay Creek (Kodiak)	Rescind the closure	<b>Rescind the closure</b>

Federal Subsistence Board Action Summary  
 Kodiak Aleutians Region  
 2023 Fisheries Regulatory Meeting  
**Non-Consensus**

Region	Proposal/Closure Review	KARAC Position	Board Action
Adak/Kagalaska	FCR23-12: all freshwaters on Adak and Kagalaska Island	Rescind the closure	Rescind the closure
AKPen/Cold Bay	FCR21-13: Russell Creek and Nurse Lagoon	Rescind the closure	Rescind the closure
AKPen/Cold Bay	FCR23-13: Trout Creek and within 500 yards outside its mouth	Rescind the closure	Rescind the closure
Kodiak	FP23-06a: Rescind the closure on the Federal marine waters of Womens Bay and implement a new rod and reel fishery that would match the State sport fishing regulations and harvest limits.	Support	Adopt
Kodiak	FCR21-15: closed marine waters of Women's Bay	Take no action (addressed by FP23-06a)	Take no action
Kodiak	FP23-06b: Rescind the closure to harvest salmon by Federally qualified subsistence users in the closed marine waters of Buskin River and implement a new rod and reel fishery that matches current State sport fish regulations.	Support with modification of FP23-06b; to remove "Season dates and harvest limits shall be the same as the State of Alaska sport fishing regulations"	Adopt
Kodiak	FCR21-16: marine waters near Buskin River	Take no action (addressed by FP23-06b)	Take no action
Kodiak	FCR21-18: Afognak Bay	Rescind the closure	Rescind the closure
Kodiak	FCR21-19: freshwater systems of Afognak Island	Rescind the closure	Rescind the closure
Kodiak	FCR23-21: King in the marine waters near Womens Bay, Gibson Cove,	Retain status quo	Retain status quo

*Summary of Federal Subsistence Board's Actions on Proposals and Closure Reviews*

	Karluk River and Afognak surrounding marine waters		
<b>Kodiak</b>	<b>FCR23-22: Little Kitoi Creek</b>	Rescind the closure	<b>Rescind the closure</b>



c/o Office of Subsistence Management  
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199  
Phone: 907-786-3888 Fax: 1-907-786-3898  
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In Reply Refer To:  
RAC/KA.23019.LHS

FEB 03 2023

Ms. Märit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair  
Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Chair Carlson-Van Dort:

During the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council's (Council) fall public meeting held on September 21-22, 2022, the Council developed the following positions and comments on Proposals 98, 103, and 169 that will be taken up by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) at upcoming BOF meetings.

The Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in the Kodiak and Aleutian Region of Alaska. The Councils were established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council's charter establishes the Council's authority to initiate, review, and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence use of fish and wildlife within the region. The Council also reviews resource management actions occurring outside their regions that may impact subsistence resources critical to communities served by the Council. The Council provides a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations regarding any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region.

### **Alaska Peninsula/ Aleutian Island/ Chignik Finfish BOF Meeting comments**

#### **PROPOSAL 98**

***Modify waters closed to subsistence fishing for salmon to increase access for subsistence users who are not commercial salmon fishery permit holders. 5 AAC 01.425.***

The Council **supports Proposal 98**. The Council supports increasing access for subsistence users, who do not hold a commercial limited entry permit, to harvest salmon for subsistence when fish are readily available. Current restrictions, which prohibit commercial permit holders from harvesting salmon when commercial fishing is closed, will remain in place. Both Federal Subsistence Board and State Board of

Fisheries have established customary and traditional use determinations for subsistence salmon in the Alaska Peninsula Area. The current regulation limits opportunities and causes unnecessary burden on subsistence users in this area. Moreover, subsistence fishermen are restricted from subsistence fishing during commercial salmon openings, while sport fishermen are allowed to fish.

**PROPOSAL 103**

***Reduce the bag and possession limit for coho and sockeye salmon in the salt waters and freshwater drainages of Cold Bay. 5 AAC 65.022.***

The Council **supports Proposal 103**. The Council supports this proposal and noted concerns from local subsistence users in Cold Bay, including the failure to achieve escapement of Sockeye Salmon in Mortensen's Lagoon since 2018 and an increase in sport fishing efforts on the north side of Cold Bay including Kinzarof Lagoon and outlet of Swan Creek. The Council supports this proposal to reduce the daily bag limit of Sockeye and Coho salmon combined to 5 per day that would provide for more conservative management for the saltwater and freshwater drainages of Cold Bay.

**Statewide Finfish and Supplemental Issues BOF Meeting Comments**

**PROPOSAL 169**

***Classification of banned invasive species. Amend the list of banned and invasive species into two categories to allow the legal possession and import of edible portions of listed species that may be sport caught in other states for consumption. 5 AAC 41.075.***

The Council **supports Proposal 169**. The Council supports this proposal because it will allow public removal of the Crustacean species of Signal Crayfish from the Buskin River area in Kodiak. Signal Crayfish are a banned invasive species that may not currently be "possessed" under existing regulations at any stage of its lifecycle. This regulation if adopted would allow for the harvest, possession, and consumption of Signal Crayfish, that are now present and prolific in the Buskin River and Buskin Lake on Kodiak Island. Sockeye Salmon return to the Buskin River annually and the system supports an important subsistence fishery. The Council has concerns that the Crayfish are consuming Sockeye Salmon eggs, alevin, and fry in Buskin Lake. This regulation would allow for harvest of Signal Crayfish from Buskin River and Buskin Lake, which will help reduce this invasive species and lessen negative impacts on Sockeye Salmon.

The Council thanks you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals. If you have any questions or would like to follow up, please contact me through our Subsistence Council Coordinator Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough at (907) 310-4097 or [lisa\\_hutchinson@fws.gov](mailto:lisa_hutchinson@fws.gov).

Chair Carlson-Van Dort

Sincerely,



Della Trumble  
Chair

Enclosure

cc: Federal Subsistence Board  
Kodiak Aleutian Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Mark Burch, Special Projects Coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Administrative Record



# United States Department of the Interior



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
 Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge  
 1390 Buskin River Road Kodiak, Alaska 99615-0323  
 (907) 487-2600

## Federal Subsistence Activity Report Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, September 2022 – January 2023

### Subsistence Permit Summary

Federal subsistence regulations afford opportunity for rural residents of the Kodiak area to harvest Sitka black-tailed deer, Roosevelt elk, and brown bear on Kodiak Refuge lands. Harvest opportunity for bear is restricted to residents of selected village communities. In complement, federal subsistence regulations afford opportunity to harvest fish and shellfish. Most fish permittees target sockeye and coho salmon of inshore marine waters under jurisdiction of Alaska Maritime Refuge. Federal subsistence permits can be obtained at the Refuge’s headquarters office. Permittees are required to carry their federal subsistence permits, current state licenses, harvest tickets (deer), and locking tags (bear) while hunting or fishing.

Table 1. Federal subsistence permits issued and reported harvest (#), Kodiak Area, 2015-2022 regulatory years.

Species	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 <sup>2</sup>
Bear	6 (3)	3 (0)	3 (1)	0 (0)	1 (0)	2 (1)	1 (1)	3 (0)
Deer <sup>1</sup>	39 (51)	50 (66)	66 (15)	25 (12)	40 (19)	45 (19)	32(0)	29 (35)
Elk	4 (2)	6 (0)	7 (1)	8 (0)	5 (1)	11 (5)	19 (3)	17 (2)
Fish	19 (63)	51(241)	56 (560)	30 (55)	43 (153)	28 (222)	18 (104)	17 (261)

<sup>1</sup>Number issued of federal designated hunter permits and reported deer harvested under these permits.

<sup>2</sup>Preliminary data.

### Subsistence Regulations

The Refuge is working to improve public understanding of federal subsistence regulations. Presently we are developing informational flyers addressing regulations for brown bear, Roosevelt Elk, and Sitka black-tailed deer. Outreach information will be made available by the August 1 start of (deer) hunting season.

### Brown Bear

#### Population Assessment

Since last reporting, results have been compiled for the Brown Bear Stream Survey, which monitors trend in bear use and composition on nine streams systems in SW Kodiak Island. The average number of observed bears (6.4) was within the range observed over the last 10 years (5.4 bears). The percentage of females with cubs was about 23% of the total adults plus subadult population for a subset of six streams (n=6), which was slightly higher than the 10-year average

for those areas (13%). However, select streams (Sturgeon, Pinnell) had lower proportions of maternal females represented (5%), a decrease from the 10-year average for those areas (8%).

#### Bear-Berry Monitoring

Analysis of 2015-2022 data is a focus of winter 2023 action. Results will be reported to the Council at its next meeting.

#### **Sitka Black-tailed Deer**

Preliminary assessment suggests ‘average’ over-winter survival associated with average winter conditions. By average conditions we mean that lower elevations of the island area have not experienced prolonged deep snow and ice combined with sub-freezing temperatures and high winds. If average conditions are maintained, then we don’t expect any decrease 2023 harvest opportunities. The last severe winter and substantial over-winter mortality occurred in western and northern Kodiak Island in winter 2019-2020. Archipelago deer populations are regulated primarily by variation in winter severity.

#### **Mountain Goat**

In 2022, biologists with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Refuge completed minimum count surveys throughout the known summer range of goats on Kodiak Island in early August prior to hunting. Of the 2,892 goats observed, 2,328 were adults and 560 were kids. The ADF&G issued 309 drawing permits and 1,113 registration permits. To date (25 Jan 2023), 114 goats have been harvested in drawing hunts, and 134 goats have been harvested in registration hunts. Some additional harvest may occur in registration hunt RG480 before the March 31 close of the hunting season.

#### **Roosevelt Elk**

The ADF&G completed elk abundance and composition surveys in mid-July to monitor herd locations and estimate herd composition and population size prior to the hunting season. A total of 1,020 Elk were observed throughout the range of the population including 23% calves and 33 bulls:100 cows. Survey results indicated an estimated population size of 1,410 elk including 200 in the Waterfall herd, which summers in the vicinity of Refuge lands on Afognak Island. Post-hunt analysis indicated that 123 elk were harvested in 2022 including 4 animals from the Waterfall herd.

#### **Northern Sea Otter**

##### Population Assessment

Robin Corcoran, Avian Biologist with the Refuge, systematically surveyed sea otters, seals, and marine birds in three regional nearshore marine areas (eastside, westside, Afognak) in June and August on 9 of 11 years between 2011-2022. Sea otters were commonly seen on the west side of Kodiak Island and around Afognak and Shuyak Islands (Table 2). However, they were nearly absent from the east side of Kodiak Island outside of Chiniak Bay. Due to the rarity of sea otters outside Chiniak Bay and their clumped distribution within the bay, variability was high of the population estimate for East Kodiak. We will provide a copy of the full report at the Council’s March 2023 meeting.



Table 2. Point estimates of sea otter population size by regional survey area in June and August 2011-2022, Kodiak Archipelago, Alaska.

East Kodiak	East Kodiak	Afognak	Afognak	West Kodiak	West Kodiak
June 2011	August 2011	June 2012	August 2012	June 2013	August 2013
562	5,099	8,573	13,319	5,438	4,514
June 2014	August 2014	June 2015	August 2015	June 2016	August 2016
2,764	1,199	7,589	9,311	5,613	4,294
June 2019	August 2019	June 2021	August 2021	June 2022	August 2022
2,108	1,580	12,922	9,073	5,716	6,511

### Harvest

The Service’s Marine Mammal Division provided the following update of hunter harvest data for the Kodiak Area.

Table 3. Native Alaska hunter harvest of northern sea otter by village community and calendar year in Kodiak Area, 1989-2021.

Village	1989-2017	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Afognak	25	7	5	3	0	0	40
Akhiok	4	0	1	0	0	0	5
Kodiak	1,418	14	58	34	58	40	1,622
Larsen Bay	265	11	0	0	3	0	279
Old Harbor	181	0	1	4	1	0	187
Ouzinkie	152	262	19	29	0	0	462
Port Lions	762	60	12	25	1	0	860
Total	2,807	354	96	95	63	40	3,455
Statewide	27,803	1,560	1,629	1,252	1,248	593	34,085

### **Salmon Fisheries**

*Please note that results of salmon counts presented below were provided by the ADF&G.*

#### Western Area

Sockeye salmon escapements were met for the Karluk, Ayakulik, Upper Station, and Dog Salmon Rivers in 2022. Outreach to subsistence users in Larsen Bay and Karluk indicated that they were able to meet their harvest needs.

Chinook salmon escapements for Karluk and Ayakulik failed to meet respective lower escapement goals. This was the third consecutive year that the lower escapement goal was not met on the Karluk, and the seventh consecutive year it was not met on the Ayakulik. In response, the ADF&G continued to implement conservation measures including a requirement of commercial salmon fishers to return unharmed any Chinook salmon caught that exceed 25 inches and, in rivers, and to disallow recreational sport harvest.

Northern Area

The sockeye salmon escapement for Buskin River started out poor but finished strong, exceeding the upper escapement goal of 8,000 fish. Fishing restrictions were placed on the Buskin River drainage from June 11, 2022 (EA #9-RS-01-22) to July 2, 2022 (EA #9-RS-02-22), which lightened the fishing pressure on this stock. During the period when fishing was closed, many subsistence users traveled to other areas (e.g., Port Lions, Litnik) to meet their needs. In the Afognak River, sockeye salmon escapement (29,509 fish) was within the escapement goal range (20,000 to 50,000 fish) for 2022.

Akalura Creek Salmon Escapement Monitoring

The Refuge initiated this survey in 2015 in response to concern about trend of diminished escapement and availability of sockeye salmon for human and brown bear subsistence. Surveys documented a large downward trend in escapement between 2015-2021 (Table 4). Results from 2022 will be reported at the Council’s next meeting.

Table 4. Estimated escapement of late-run sockeye salmon to Akalura Lake, Kodiak Island, 2015-2021.

Year	Escapement	Lower CL <sup>1</sup>	Upper CL <sup>1</sup>
2015	22,404	18,961	26,369
2016	32,869	26,762	37,220
2017	6,259	5,256	7,685
2018	5,461	4,683	6,290
2019	2,080	1,668	2,665
2020	344	270	467
2021	1,312	1,052	1,652

<sup>1</sup>Confidence limit

**Education, Outreach, and Other Noteworthy Activity**

Outreach

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, in collaboration with ADF&G and the Koniag Community Affairs Liaison, are in the process of ensuring Federal subsistence hunting guidance is incorporated to the Refuge’s website and available in a quick-reference handout that can be shared digitally or by print.

Alaska Migratory Bird Youth Art Calendar Contest

The 2023 Alaska Migratory Bird Youth Art Calendars are out! November features the beautiful art of now 11th grader Tina Covarrubias from Port Lions and December features the writing of 2nd grader Isabel Szert from Old Harbor. Atagua! Congratulations to these students and their teachers, Sheila Leinberger and Beth Dunlop. Let the Kodiak Refuge office know if you would like a copy of the calendar, or you're welcome to stop by to pick one up at the Refuge Administrative Offices or Kodiak Refuge Visitor Center.

The theme for the current contest is Tunes from Trees to Tundra, in celebration of bird songs and their habitat. Entries are due March 3, 2023. Art paper and contest information were provided to schools and homeschoolers in eligible communities including Port Lions, Ouzinkie, Larsen Bay, Karluk, Old Harbor and Akhiok. Contact Shelly Lawson (Kodiak Refuge) or Amy Peterson

(Koniag/Kodiak Refuge) for more information.

Koniag Community Affairs Liaison Upcoming Collaborations

During January and February 2023, the Koniag Community Affairs Liaison will be participating with the ADF&G to assist with subsistence surveys, meet with Tribal Environmental Departments to continue gathering information for the Kodiak Tribal Climate Adaptation Plan, and visit rural schools for outreach, education, and activities to highlight Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

Researchers with the ADF&G's Subsistence Division will be conducting household subsistence surveys to document the importance of wild resources for Ouzinkie and Port Lions residents. Surveyors will visit households in late January through mid-February. Study results, which will document local use and knowledge, can be applied to ensure sustained opportunities for subsistence.

The ADF&G and Refuge will be hosting two evening events, the first in the Tribal Hall of Ouzinkie at 6pm Monday, January 30, and the second in the Tribal Conference Room of Port Lions at 6pm on Tuesday, February 7. Purposes include sharing project information and discussing employment opportunities for local research assistants.

Update on Refuge Personnel Vacancies

Danielle Fujii-Doe, the new Deputy Refuge Manager, started work for the Refuge in late January. Danielle will work with all Refuge programs, collaborate with staff and partners, and assist the lead Manager.

## FEDERAL WILDLIFE CLOSURE REVIEW

### WCR24-04 and WCR24-06

**Issue:** Wildlife Closure Reviews WCR24-04 and WCR24-06 review closures to caribou hunting in Unit 9C, remainder and Unit 9E, respectively. In Unit 9C, remainder, Federal public lands are closed to caribou hunting, except by residents of Unit 9C and Egegik. In Unit 9E, Federal public lands are closed to caribou hunting, except by residents of Unit 9E, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point. These closures target the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd (NAPCH).

**Closure Location and Species:** Unit 9C remainder, and 9E—Caribou (**Figure 1**)

#### Current Federal Regulation

##### Unit 9—Caribou

*Unit 9C, remainder – 1 bull by Federal registration permit or State permit. Federal public lands are closed to the taking of caribou except by residents of Unit 9C and Egegik* *May be announced*

*Unit 9E – 1 bull by Federal registration permit or State permit. Federal public lands are closed to the taking of caribou except by residents of Unit 9E, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point* *May be announced*

**Closure Dates:** Year-round

#### Current State Regulation

##### Unit 9—Caribou

*Residents: Unit 9C, south of the north bank of the Naknek River – 1 caribou by permit* *TC505 Aug. 10 – Oct. 10*

*Nov. 1 – Feb. 28*

*Residents: Unit 9E – 1 caribou by permit* *TC505 Aug. 10 – Oct. 10*

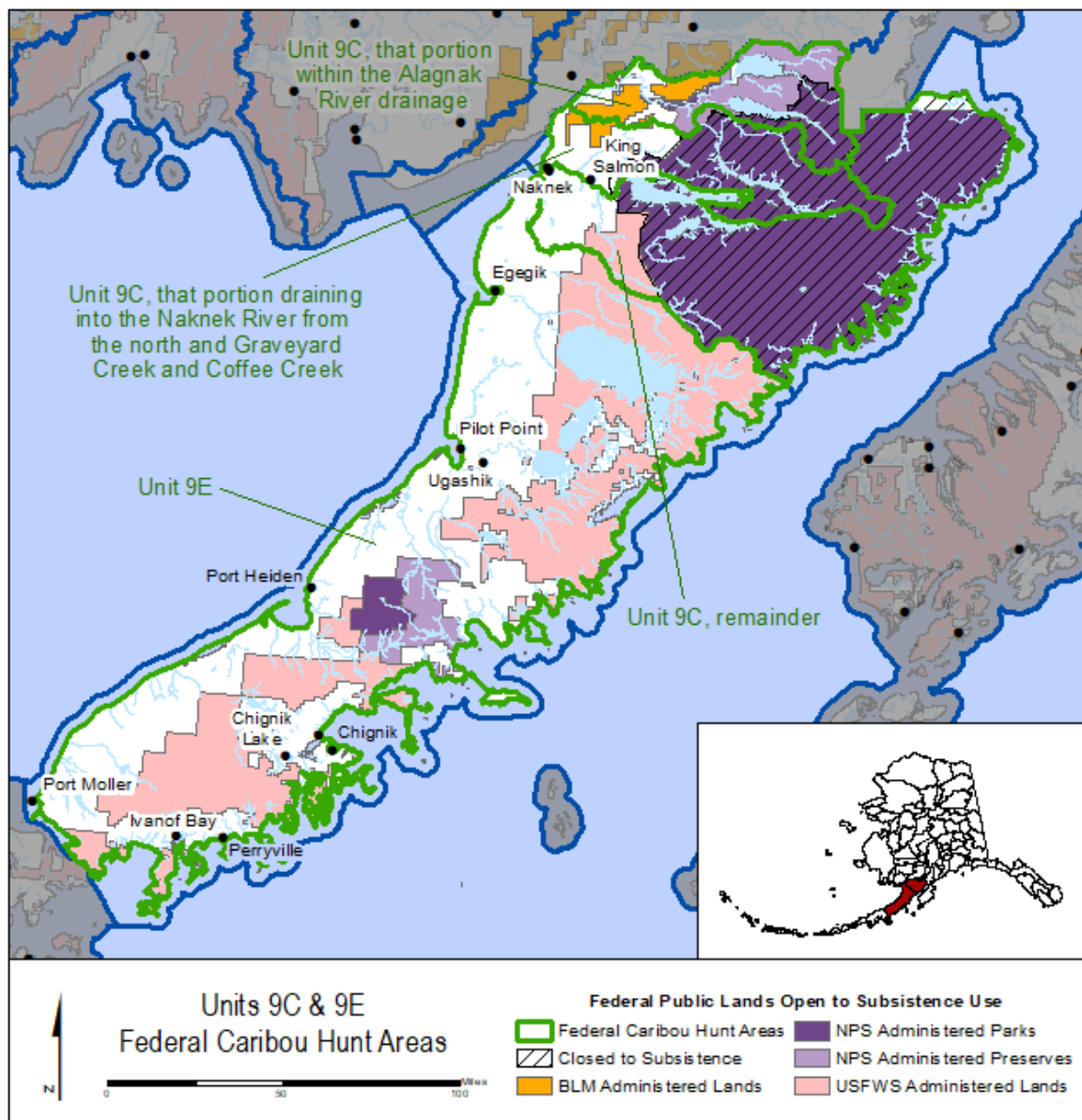
*Nov. 1 – Apr. 30*

**Regulatory Year Initiated:** 1999, closed except to residents of Units 9C and 9E; 2006, closed to all users; 2016, closed except by some Federally qualified subsistence users.

**Extent of Federal Public Lands**

Unit 9C is comprised of 85% Federal public lands and consists of 78% National Park Service (NPS) managed lands, 4% U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) managed lands and 4% Bureau of Land Management (BLM) managed lands. Of note, Katmai National Park is closed to subsistence hunting.

Unit 9E is comprised of 49% Federal public lands and consists of 44% USFWS managed lands and 5% NPS managed lands (**Figure 1**).



**Figure 1.** Units 9C and 9E Federal caribou hunt areas.

### **Customary and Traditional Use Determination**

Residents of Units 9B, 9C, 17, and Egegik have a customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 9C remainder.

Residents of Units 9B, 9C, 9E, 17, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point have customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Unit 9E.

### **Regulatory History**

Prior to 1999, the harvest limit in Unit 9C remainder and Unit 9E remainder (which included most of Unit 9E) was 4 caribou. The season began on Aug. 1 in both hunt areas and ended on March 31 in Unit 9C remainder and on Apr. 30 in Unit 9E remainder. At that time, there was no Federal season in the southernmost portion of Unit 9E.

The Federal Subsistence Board's (Board) 1999 decision on three proposals resulted in the first iteration of the current closure. Collectively, WP99-32, submitted by the Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council), WP99-33, submitted by Tim Enright of Pilot Point, and WP99-34, submitted by Chignik Lagoon Traditional Council, requested more restrictive harvest limits, more conservative seasons, and closure of some Federal public lands to the harvest of caribou in Units 9C and 9E. In response to a decline in the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd (NAPCH), the Board adopted these proposals with modification. In addition to reduction in harvest limits and seasons, this action resulted in the closure of Federal public lands within Unit 9C remainder and all of Unit 9E to caribou harvest except by residents of Unit 9C and 9E. The Alaska Board of Game (BOG) implemented a Tier II hunt for the NAPCH the same year.

In 2000, the Board considered WP00-33, which was submitted by the Bristol Bay Native Association and requested the provision of designated hunter permits for caribou in Unit 9C and 9E. The Board approved this request because it was consistent with customary and traditional hunting practices and was not expected to impact the caribou population.

In 2004, the Board considered WP04-43, a request from the Council to allow same day airborne hunting for caribou throughout Units 9 and 17, except on NPS managed lands. All four Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils that voted on this proposal (Bristol Bay, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior Alaska, Kodiak/Aleutians) opposed it, and the Board rejected the proposal.

In 2005, caribou seasons in Units 9C remainder and 9E were the subject of two special actions, both submitted by the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM). The first, Emergency Special Action WSA05-02, requested that caribou hunting on Federal lands be closed in Unit 9C remainder and Unit 9E, following the rapid decline of the NAPCH and the State's closure of the Tier II season. As authorized by the Board, this request was approved with the unanimous consent of the Interagency Staff Committee. Subsequently, Temporary Special Action WSA05-11 was submitted, a necessary step to extend the closure beyond the 60-day period approved through WSA05-02. With support of the Council, the Board adopted this request, resulting in closure of the caribou season for the entirety of the 2005-06 regulatory year.

The Council reviewed the Federal public lands closures in Units 9C remainder and 9E at their winter in 2005 meeting (WCR05-04/06). The Council concurred with OSM's recommendation, which was to maintain the status quo given continued population decline and insufficient recruitment. At the same meeting, the Council voted to submit a proposal to close Federal public lands in Units 9C remainder and 9E to the harvest of caribou by all users, effectively extending the closure that resulted from the Board's actions on WSA05-02 and WSA05-11. This proposal, WP06-22, was adopted by the Board, resulting in elimination of the Federal season for caribou in these units (BBRAC 2005). The State Tier II hunt was closed in 2005 as well.

In 2011, the Council reviewed the Federal public lands closure again (WCR10-04/06) and voted in favor of maintaining the closure (BBRAC 2011).

In 2015, the Council reviewed Wildlife Closure Review 14-04 and 15-06 (WCR14-04/06). During this meeting Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) reported a limited Tier II hunt would occur in fall 2016, dependent on the NAPCH survey results having positive composition counts and population minimum counts (BBRAC 2015). The Council unanimously recommended to modify the closure to provide for a hunt on Federal public lands to Federally qualified subsistence users, should the State open the Tier II hunt. This resulted in Wildlife Proposal 16-21 (WP16-21).

In response to the 2014 closure review, the Council voted to submit Proposal WP16-21 to modify the conditions of the hunt. Specifically, the Council requested that the closure be modified to allow caribou harvest by residents of Units 9C and 9E. The Council also requested that a may-be-announced caribou season be established in Units 9C remainder and 9E, noting that the State was considering opening a Tier II drawing hunt. The Council believed that it would be useful for Federal managers to have the flexibility to open a hunt on Federal lands as well, particularly considering the extent of Federal land in Unit 9 (BBRAC 2015).

In 2016, the Board adopted Proposal WP16-21 was adopted by the Board at their April 2016 meeting, establishing a may-be-announced season (FC0914 and FC0915) and delegate authority to open and close the season, set quotas, any permit requirements or conditions, and harvest limit, including any sex restrictions to the Alaska Peninsula Becharof National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) manager. The Board adopted the proposal with modification to reduce the pool of eligible subsistence users on Federal public lands in Unit 9C remainder to residents of Unit 9C and Egegik, and on Federal public lands in Unit 9E to residents of Unit 9E, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point. The new Federal hunt coincided with 2016 changes in State regulations that opened a Tier II hunt (TC505).

In 2018, State harvest regulations for caribou in Unit 9 were again modified when the BOG acted on Proposals 125 and 127. As a result of the BOG's action on Proposal 125, the Tier II season for the NAPCH was extended throughout the TC505 permit area. In the portion of Unit 9C south of the north bank of the Naknek River, it was extended by 34 days to Aug. 10 – Oct. 10 and Nov. 1 – Feb. 28. In Unit 9E, it was extended by 20 days to Aug. 10 – Oct. 10 and Nov. 1 – Apr. 30. The BOG's action on proposal 127 resulted in the portion of Unit 9C north of the Naknek River and south of the Alagnak

River drainage becoming part of the RC503 Mulchatna Caribou Herd (MCH) permit area, with an Aug. 1 – Mar. 31 season, rather than part of the NAPCH TC505 permit area.

The Board considered a similar change in 2018. Proposal WP18-21, submitted by the Council, in part requested that the caribou season in Unit 9C north of the Naknek River be changed from a may-be-announced season to an Aug. 1 – Mar. 15 season with a harvest limit of 2 caribou. This request was consistent with requested Federal regulation changes throughout the range of the MCH and similar to the new State regulations in this hunt area. The Board adopted WP18-21 with modification to create a new hunt area, removing the portion of Unit 9C that drains into the Naknek River from the north and Graveyard Creek and Coffee Creek from Unit 9C remainder. The Board's action effectively shifted the regulatory emphasis within the new hunt area from the NAPCH to the MCH, reflecting current distribution patterns of these two herds.

In August 2020, the Board approved a revised closure policy, which stipulated all closures will be reviewed every four years. The policy also specified that closures, similar to regulatory proposals, will be presented to the Councils for a recommendation and then to the Board for a final decision. Previously, closure reviews were only presented to Councils who then decided whether to maintain the closure or to submit a regulatory proposal to modify or eliminate the closure.

In 2020, the Board reviewed the closure in Unit 9C, draining into the Naknek River from the north and Graveyard Creek and Coffee Creek; Unit 9C, remainder; and Unit 9E. The Board retained the closures within Units 9C remainder and 9E because the NAPCH continued to have a low population count and insufficient recruitment. The closure in Unit 9C, draining into the Naknek River from the north and Graveyard Creek and Coffee Creek was rescinded, as the NAPCH no longer range within this area.

**Closure last reviewed:** 2020 – WCR20-04/06

**Justification for Original Closure:**

§815(3) of ANILCA states:

*Nothing in this title shall be construed as – (3) authorizing a restriction on the taking of fish and wildlife for nonsubsistence uses on public lands (other than national parks and monuments) unless necessary for the conservation of healthy populations of fish and wildlife, for the reasons set forth in section 816, to continue subsistence uses of such populations, or pursuant to other applicable law...*

The original closure, in 1999, was initiated at a time when the NAPCH population was declining and there was a need to ensure subsistence opportunity for local users. By 2006, when Federal public lands were closed to all users, the caribou population had declined to a point that any harvest was unsustainable. In 2016, the state opened a Tier II system, and the Board adopted a may-be-announced season dependent on having positive composition counts and population minimum counts.



### **Council Recommendation for Original Closure:**

The Council's actions in 1999 addressed both conservation concerns and the need to provide continued subsistence opportunity for local communities. Specifically, the Council supported more restrictive harvest limits and seasons due to the declining caribou population size. They also supported closing Federal public lands in Units 9C remainder and 9E to caribou harvest except by residents of Unit 9C and 9E. The Council believed it was reasonable to limit distribution of Federal permits to these users, considering who has a customary and direct dependence on the resource, who is in closest proximity to the resource, and who has access to alternative resources.

In 2006, noting that recruitment was insufficient to offset adult mortality, the Council agreed that closing Federal public lands to all users was an appropriate compliment to the State's decision to close the State Tier II season.

In 2016, the Council supported Proposal WP16-21, which closed Units 9C remainder and 9E, except by some Federally qualified subsistence users, established a may-be-announced season, a cultural and traditional use determination for the NAPCH in Unit 9C and 9E, and delegated authority to Alaska Peninsula Becharof NWR manager to manage the hunt.

### **State Recommendation for Original Closure:**

In 1999, the State supported efforts to improve herd productivity by restricting harvest limits, reducing the season and limiting harvest through the use of quotas. In 2006, acknowledging the serious conservation concern, the State stopped issuing Tier II permits and supported closing the Federal caribou season. In 2016, the State opened a Tier II system, dependent on having positive composition counts and population minimum counts.

### **Biological Background**

Generally speaking, the NAPCH occupies Units 9C and 9E, from the Naknek River in the north to Port Moller in the south. It has varied considerably in size in the last century, ranging from approximately 2,000 during population lows to approximately 20,000 during population highs. These fluctuations in population size have been accompanied by shifts in distribution and movement patterns, likely due to impacts of population size on habitat quality. Following the most recent population peak in the mid-1980s, the herd began wintering north of the Naknek River. More recently, this northern range has become less important, with few caribou crossing to the north side of the Naknek River by 2000 (Crowley 2015).

The NAPCH experienced a steady multi-decade decline in population size between the mid-1980s and the mid-2010s, approximating historical lows of 2,000 caribou. Nutritional limitations have been implicated in the decline. In recent years, the population has showed a positive growth trend and was estimated to be approximately 3,800 caribou in 2018 (**Table 1**) but remains well below the State's population objective of 12,000 – 15,000 caribou (Crowley 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019, pers. comm.).

Calf-cow ratios have improved markedly from the single digit ratios of the mid-2000s. At last count, in 2018, there were 35 calves:100 cows. Bull:cow ratios have also improved in the last decade. The two most recent surveys, prior to 2018, estimated at least 70 bulls:100 cows (**Table 1**). Regardless, the bull:cow ratios have shown an increasing trend and local biologists believe that the current bull:cow ratio exceeds the management objective of 35 bulls:100 cows (Crowley 2014, 2016, 2018 pers. comm.).

**Table 1.** Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd composition counts and population estimates, 1984 – 2018 (Crowley 2014, 2016, 2019, pers. comm. and Reiley 2021, pers. Comm).

Year	Bulls: 100 cows	Calves: 100 cows	% of Total bulls			Composition sample size	Population Estimate
			Small bulls	Medium bulls	Large bulls		
1984	39	39	67	16	17	1,087	20,000
1990	41	29	-	-	-	1,484	17,000
1991	42	47	54	34	12	1,639	17,000
1992	40	44	44	38	19	2,766	17,500
1993	44	39	52	29	19	3,021	16,000
1994	34	34	58	28	14	1,857	12,500
1995	41	24	49	29	22	2,907	12,000
1996	48	38	71	19	10	2,572	12,000
1997	47	27	54	31	14	1,064	10,000
1998	31	30	57	28	15	1,342	9,200
1999	40	21	58	30	12	2,567	8,600
2000	38	18	59	24	18	1,083	7,200
2001	49	28	61	24	15	2,392	6,300
2002	46	24	57	19	24	1,007	6,600
2003	36	11	46	30	24	2,776	-
2004	34	7	40	34	25	1,355	-
2005	23	7	37	41	22	1,914	-
2006	26	14	26	43	31	1,725	-
2007	27	7	29	38	33	1,719	-
2008	19	10	33	25	43	1,841	-
2009	19	16	30	35	35	2,126	-
2010	25	18	30	31	39	1,795	2,169 <sup>a</sup>
2011	26	20	26	37	37	2,395	2,321 <sup>a</sup>
2012	28	22	24	37	40	1,352	2,525 <sup>a</sup>
2013	31	21	26	41	33	2,076	2,708 <sup>a</sup>
2014	40	34	23	50	28	2,295	3,101 <sup>a</sup>
2015 <sup>b</sup>	38	29	53	29	18	2,122	3,411 <sup>a</sup>
2016	70 <sup>c</sup>	24	30	47	23	1,556	3,617 <sup>a</sup>
2017	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2018	72 <sup>c</sup>	35	29	42	29	1,327	3,800 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Estimate based on simulation modeling; <sup>b</sup>Survey limited to northern portion of NAP range.

<sup>c</sup>Likely biased high due to inability to locate entire herd

## Cultural Knowledge and Traditional Practices

There are 33 communities with an estimated total population of over 7,500 people included in the customary and traditional use determination for caribou in Units 9C remainder and 9E. However, only 14 of these communities have been eligible to harvest caribou on Federal public lands since 2015, based on the three criteria in ANILCA Section 804: (1) reliance on the resource as the mainstay of livelihood, (2) proximity to the resource, and (3) availability of other resources (see Proposal WP16-22 described above in **Regulatory History**). Eligible communities in the Unit 9C remainder hunt area are King Salmon, Naknek, South Naknek, and Egegik; and in the Unit 9E hunt area are Chignik Bay, Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Lake, Egegik, Perryville, Ivanof Bay, Pilot Point, Port Heiden, Ugashik, Nelson Lagoon, and Sand Point (**Figure 1**). The population of these communities is estimated at almost 2,000 people based on the 2020 U.S. Census and has declined since the 1990s (**Table 2**, ADCCED 2022).

Caribou were among the most important subsistence resource for Northern Alaska Peninsula communities (Fall 1993). The herd last peaked in about 1984, and harvest seasons were closed from 2005 through 2015. Residents of eligible communities have reported their harvests on household surveys since 1983. Residents' overall harvest of caribou and per person harvest in pounds edible weight have generally decreased by community since 1983 (ADF&G 2022, **Appendix 1**). Because of the lack of commercial vendors selling hunting licenses and the remoteness of many of the communities, reported harvest and periodic household subsistence surveys have been used in conjunction to produce more accurate estimates of community harvest.

The most recent household harvest surveys were conducted in 2014, 2016, and 2018. Residents of Egegik, Pilot Point, and Ugashik participated in harvest surveys in 2014 before the hunting season opened in 2016 (Sill et al. 2022). Residents commented on their preference for caribou, "Many respondents, particularly elders, commented that though salmon was a very important food source, caribou remained their preferred wild resource even though many had not had any in longer than two decades. There were residents who longed for caribou to return to their region so they could once again acquire them to feed their families" (Sill et al. 2022:247).

Some expressed fear that people would lose the ability to hunt and process caribou with legal hunts being closed for so long. An Ugashik resident made this comment during they survey, "I worry that the younger generation will not have anyone to teach them how to hunt if caribou return." Others spoke of how much they missed eating caribou, for example from Pilot Point, "I have not had one piece of caribou in so long I can't remember, but I can still taste it" (Sill et al. 2022:247).

Some harvesting opportunity has been available since 2015. The results of harvest surveys conducted since 2015 are described in **Table 3**. In the 1980s and 1990s, the annual caribou harvest for Pacific drainage communities in Unit 9E were generally lower than those of the Bristol Bay side—which includes Port Heiden and Egegik—because of more limited access to caribou (Fall 1993).

In 2018, Port Heiden community members commented on their experiences hunting caribou since 2015 after the long closure and reduced herd size. Jones and Cunningham (2020) described these comments,

Reestablishing caribou hunting also regenerated important learning, sharing, and trading networks within the community and with other communities. Port Heiden residents explained that enough people are still around and available to help bestow their caribou hunting and processing wisdom upon the younger generation whose members had yet to experience caribou hunting due to the regulatory closure. Regarding the transmission of caribou hunting knowledge, one key respondent explained: ‘ . . . Tier II caribou hunts closed, and hunting was a lost art. They [Port Heiden youth] didn’t know how to hunt, where to go, how to process. We’re lucky that hunt came back, and we were able to get the young people involved’ (Jones and Cunningham 2020:100).

Jones and Cunningham (2020) described changes in hunting patterns in 2018 compared to in the 1980s and 1990s, “According to elders and expert caribou hunters from Port Heiden, in the past, frozen rivers provided access to caribou hunting areas throughout the Alaska Peninsula. However, since the Tier II permit hunt opened in 2016, many of the rivers that hunters traditionally used for winter travel have not frozen adequately enough for safe passage to caribou hunting grounds. Many commented on this change in access to caribou hunting” (Jones and Cunningham 2020:98).

**Table 2.** The number of people living in northern Alaska Peninsula communities. Residents of these communities have been eligible to harvest caribou in Units 9C remainder and 9E since 2016 when hunting opportunity was provided for the first time since 2004 (ADCCED 2022).

Community of residence	Community	1980	1990	200	2010	2020
9C	King Salmon	545	696	442	374	307
9C	Naknek	318	575	678	544	470
9C	South Naknek	145	136	137	79	67
9E	Egegik	75	122	116	109	39
9E	Chignik Bay	178	188	79	91	97
9E	Chignik Lagoon	48	53	103	78	72
9E	Chignik Lake	138	133	145	73	61
9E	Ivanof Bay	40	35	22	7	1
9E	Perryville	111	108	112	113	88
9E	Pilot Point	66	53	100	68	70
9E	Port Heiden	92	119	119	102	100
9E	Ugashik	13	7	11	12	4
9D	Nelson Lagoon	59	83	83	52	41
9D	Sand Point	625	878	952	976	578
	TOTAL	2,453	3,186	3,099	2,678	1,995

**Table 3.** The estimated harvest of caribou by residents of communities eligible to harvest caribou in Units 9C remainder and 9E for one year study periods since reopening in 2016 (CI 95%, lower harvest estimate is the lower bound of the estimate or the reported harvest, whichever is larger) (ADF&G 2022a).

Community	Study year	Estimated Harvest	Lower harvest estimate	Upper harvest estimate	Per person harvest in pounds edible weight
Port Heiden	2018	44	37	51	64
Port Heiden	2016	31	23	39	44
Chignik Bay	2016	6	5	8	11
Chignik Lagoon	2016	0	0	0	0
Chignik Lake	2016	6	5	8	9
Egegik	2016	0	0	0	0
Perryville	2016	6	4	9	8
Sand Point	2016	4	2	7	1

### Harvest History

Harvest of the NAPCH peaked in 1993 and has declined since. These changes correspond to population size and harvest restrictions. Between 1990 and 1993, when the herd was large and seasons and harvest limits were liberal, annual reported harvest approached or exceeded 800 caribou annually. Declining herd size, fluctuating distribution and more restrictive regulations resulted in reported annual harvests of 400 – 500 caribou between 1994 and 1999 (**Table 4**). Reported harvest during the 1990s was skewed heavily toward hunters residing outside of Units 9C and 9E. However, unreported harvest was high at an estimated 500 – 1,500 caribou annually, particularly among residents of Units 9C and 9E. Accounting for this, residents of Units 9C and 9E likely harvested a greater proportion than harvest data suggests (Sellers 1995, 1999).

In 1999, following implementation of the State Tier II hunt, more restrictive Federal regulations, and implementation of the Federal public lands closure, reported harvest declined dramatically, averaging just 96 caribou per year between 1999 and 2004 (**Table 4**). User demographics shifted as well, with at least 90% of the reported harvest attributable to local users, defined here as those who are currently eligible to harvest caribou on Federal public lands in either Unit 9C remainder or in Unit 9E (residents of Units 9C, Egegik, 9E, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon). Legal harvest ceased in 2005, following closure of the State and Federal hunting seasons (ADF&G 2018b).

Federal and State seasons were reestablished in 2016. Since then, State reported harvest has averaged 52 caribou annually (**Table 4**), all of which were taken by local users. Federal reported harvest has averaged 2 caribou annually (**Table 5**). On average, harvest was 84% bulls, and 60% of reporting hunters were successful. Nearly two-thirds of the total harvest was taken during the winter hunt, between December and April. September and December were the most popular months, with an average of 19% of the total harvest occurring during each of these months (ADF&G 2018b, 2019c). Local biologists believe that the NAPCH can sustain a 4% harvest rate (152 caribou, based on 2018 population) and continue to grow (BOG 2018). Local State and Federal managers have the authority to manage for this quota through Emergency Orders and Special Actions. The quota has not been exceeded since seasons were opened in 2016.

**Table 4.** Reported harvest of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd 1990 – 2021, by sex. (Sellers 1995, 1999; ADF&G 2018b, 2019c, 2022b).

Year	Harvest (number of caribou)			
	Total	Males	Females	Unknown Sex
1990	791	679	110	2
1991	806	688	115	3
1992	921	816	98	7
1993	1,345	1,165	175	5
1994	569	478	91	-
1995	533	486	47	-
1996	481	438	43	-
1997	482	446	36	-
1998	490	453	31	6
1999	155	147	8	-
2000	82	76	6	-
2001	95	87	8	-
2002	82	78	4	-
2003	128	122	6	-
2004	32	30	2	-
2005-2015 <sup>a</sup>	-	-	-	-
2016	82	74	8	-
2017	58	42	16	-
2018	63	55	8	-
2019	43	39	3	1
2020	38	26	12	-
2021	25	23	1	1

<sup>a</sup>No season

**Table 5.** Reported harvest with Federal permits (FC0914, Unit 9C remainder and FC0915, Unit 9E) from 2016-2021 (OSM 2022).

	FC0914		FC0915	
	Permits Issued	Successful	Permits Issued	Successful
2016	1	1	0	0
2017	0	0	2	0
2018	5	0	8	3
2019	4	0	11	6
2020	0	0	3	1
2021	2	0	2	0

## Effects

Retaining the status quo would maintain the Federal subsistence priority and continue Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest at low levels on Federal public land. The caribou population remains low, and recruitment continues to be low. The population is unable to sustain additional harvest.

Rescinding the closure would allow for non-Federally qualified subsistence users to hunt caribou on Federal public lands under State regulations. Historically a large number of non-Federally qualified subsistence users hunted this area; however, currently the State hunt is a Tier II permit hunt, which limits participation and harvest. Currently the caribou population is not large enough to sustain high levels of hunting pressure or any additional harvest.

Modifying the closure to open to all Federally qualified subsistence users and, closed to non-Federally qualified users would allow a larger number of subsistence users to harvest caribou. Currently, the population of the NAPCH remains low and is unable to sustain additional harvest. There remains a conservation concern for the herd.

Modifying the closure to close to all users would prevent Federally qualified subsistence users from harvesting an important subsistence source. While the population of the NAPCH is low, it is on the rise from the lowest point in 2010, and current harvest levels appear to be sustainable (Crowley 2014 pers. comm.), but it is still not large enough to open to all users.

## OSM PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION:

- Retain the Status Quo**
- Rescind the Closure**
- Modify the closure to . . .**
- Defer Decision on the Closure or Take No Action**

## Justification

The NAPCH remains a population of concern in Unit 9C remainder and Unit 9E. Although this population has shown recent improvement in population size, as well as bull:cow and calf:cow ratios, it remains well below the established population size objective. The current management approach, which includes the State's Tier II hunt, limiting harvest on Federal lands to those with recognized customary and traditional use of the resource and direct dependence on it, and a harvest quota managed by Emergency Order/Special Action, appears to be effective in allowing harvest while supporting population growth. Consequently, retaining the Federal public lands closure within Units 9C remainder and 9E is appropriate and likely offers the best opportunity for both continuation of subsistence uses and recovery of the NAPCH.

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## APPENDIX 1

**Appendix 1.** The estimated harvest of caribou by residents of communities eligible to harvest caribou in Units 9C remainder and 9E for one year study periods between 1983 and 2018 (CI 95%, lower harvest estimate is the lower bound of the estimate or the reported harvest, whichever is larger) (ADF&G 2022).

Unit of residence	Community	Study year	Estimated Harvest	Lower harvest estimate	Upper harvest estimate	Per person harvest
9C	King Salmon	1983	182	122	242	74
		1994	226	155	297	92
		1995	183	121	245	66
		1996	114	58	169	46
		2007	16	14	18	10
	Naknek	1983	140	92	188	55
		1994	432	332	532	118
		1995	252	167	336	70
		1996	279	201	357	82
		2007	74	66	83	21
	South Naknek	1983	135	75	195	147
		1992	82	68	100	91
		1994	103	77	129	119
		1995	128	110	149	133
		1996	138	128	175	157
9E	Chignik Bay	2007	2	2	3	7
		1984	6	4	9	7
		1989	12	11	15	15
		1991	13	9	20	16
		1994	1	1	2	2
		1995	3	3	5	6
		1996	5	5	6	9
		2003	1	1	3	2
	Chignik Lagoon	2016	6	6	8	11
		1984	5	4	8	11
		1989	4	4	4	15
		1994	21	20	24	33
		1995	15	9	26	25
		1996	5	3	9	10
		2003	8	6	13	17
Chignik Lake	2016	0	0	0	0	
	1984	82	66	98	79	
	1989	129	97	180	173	
	1991	105	79	131	120	
	1994	111	91	134	105	
	1995	67	48	86	88	
	1996	55	36	77	76	
Egegik	2003	19	13	33	25	
	2016	6	5	8	9	
	1984	151	112	190	233	
		1994	147	90	204	186

Unit of residence	Community	Study year	Estimated Harvest	Lower harvest estimate	Upper harvest estimate	Per person harvest
		1995	128	109	146	144
		1996	77	56	98	86
		2014	0	0	0	0
		2016	0	0	0	0
	Ivanof Bay	1984	20	12	31	82
		1989	23	23	23	108
		1994	5	4	6	21
		1995	14	9	29	52
		1996	13	13	13	78
	Perryville	1984	30	22	41	39
		1989	22	19	29	28
		1994	12	8	22	18
		1995	24	15	49	27
		1996	23	16	42	29
		2003	12	10	17	15
		2016	6	4	9	8
	Pilot Point	1987	98	93	109	229
	PilotPoint/Ugashik	1991	135	135	135	261
	Pilot Point	1994	127	118	144	182
		1995	51	44	61	65
		1996	129	113	160	170
		2014	0	0	0	0
	Port Heiden	1987	168	168	168	245
		1991	174	174	174	227
		1994	139	114	178	197
		1995	240	167	312	275
		1996	175	120	241	228
		2016	31	23	39	44
		2018	44	37	51	64
	Ugashik	1987	20	20	20	300
		1994	21	16	26	350
		1995	21	13	29	300
		1996	34	31	37	435
		2014	0	0	0	0
9D	Nelson Lagoon	1987	53	38	81	119
	Sand Point	1992	39	22	56	10
		2016	4	2	7	1



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

## Federal Subsistence Board Informational Flyer



U.S. Forest Service

**Contact:**

Office of Subsistence Management  
(907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456  
[subsistence@fws.gov](mailto:subsistence@fws.gov)

## How to Submit a Proposal to Change Federal Subsistence Regulations

Alaska rural residents and the public are an integral part of the Federal regulatory process. Any person or group can submit proposals to change Federal subsistence regulations, comment on proposals, or testify at meetings. By becoming involved in the process, subsistence users and the public assist with effective management of subsistence activities and ensure consideration of traditional and local knowledge in subsistence management decisions. Subsistence users also provide valuable fish and wildlife harvest information.

A call for proposals to change Federal subsistence regulations is issued in January of even-numbered years for fish and shellfish and in odd-numbered years for wildlife. Proposals to change the nonrural determinations will be accepted in January of every other even-numbered year (every other fish cycle). The period during which proposals are accepted is no less than 30 calendar days. Proposals must be submitted within this time frame. Announcements are made each year regarding the proposals being accepted and timelines that apply.

You may propose changes to Federal subsistence season dates, harvest limits, methods and means of harvest, customary and traditional use and nonrural determinations.

**What your proposal should contain:**

*There is no form to submit your proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations. Include the following information in your proposal submission (you may submit as many as you like):*

- Your name and contact information (address, phone, fax, or e-mail address)
- Your organization (if applicable)
- What regulations you wish to change. Include game management unit number, drainage, or area, and species. Quote the current regulation if known. If you are proposing a new regulation, please state “new regulation.”
- The proposed regulation written as you would like to see it
- An explanation of why this regulation change should be made
- Any additional information that you believe will help the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) in evaluating the proposed change

**You may submit your proposals by one of the following methods:**

- Electronically: Go to the Federal Rulemaking Portal: <https://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter the Docket number [the docket number will list in the proposed rule, news releases, and other forms of outreach]. Then, click on the Search button. On the resulting page, in the Search panel on the left side of the screen, under the Document Type heading, check the Proposed Rule box to locate this document. Ensure you select the proposed rule by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and **not** by the U.S. Forest Service. You may submit a comment or proposal by clicking on “Comment.”
- By mail: Submit by U.S. mail or hand delivery: Public Comments Processing, Attn: [list the Docket number]; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W); Falls Church, VA 22041–3803.
- By hardcopy: If in-person Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) meetings are held, you may also deliver a hard copy to the Designated Federal Official (DFO) attending any of the Council public meetings. Information on the dates, locations, and call-in numbers for the Council meetings are announced with several news releases, public service announcements, on our webpage, and social media (see bottom of page for web addresses).

Submit a separate proposal for each proposed change; however, ***do not submit the same proposal by different accepted methods listed above.*** To cite which regulation(s) you want to change, you may reference 50 CFR 100 or 36 CFR 242, or the proposed regulations published in the Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/>. All proposals and comments, including personal information, are posted online at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

We cannot accept proposals delivered or sent to the Alaska Regional Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this includes: phone or voicemail, fax, hand delivery, mail, or email.

For the proposal processing timeline and additional information contact the Office of Subsistence Management at (800) 478-1456 / (907) 786-3888 or go to <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/proposal/submit.cfm>.

**How a proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations is processed:**

- Once a proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations is received by the Board, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) validates the proposal, assigns a proposal number and lead analyst.
- The proposals are compiled into a book for statewide distribution and posted online to the Program website (<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/current-proposals>). The proposals are also sent out to the applicable Councils and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Interagency Staff Committee (ISC) for review. The period during which comments are accepted is no less than 30 calendar days. Comments must be submitted within this time frame.
- The lead analyst works with appropriate agencies and proponents to develop an analysis on the proposal.
- The analysis is sent to the Regional Advisory Councils, ADF&G, and the ISC for comments and recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board. The public is welcome and encouraged to provide comments directly to the Councils and the Board

at their meetings. The final analysis contains all the comments and recommendations received by interested/affected parties. This packet of information is then presented to the Board for action.

- The decision to adopt, adopt with modification, defer, or reject the proposal is then made by the Board. The public is provided the opportunity to provide comment directly to the Board prior to the Board's final decision.
- The final rule is published in the Federal Register and a public regulations booklet is developed and distributed statewide and on the Program's website.

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**Missing out on the latest Federal subsistence issues?** If you'd like to receive emails and notifications on the Federal Subsistence Management Program, you may subscribe for regular updates by emailing [fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov](mailto:fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov). Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence> or by visiting [www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](http://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

### **Background**

ANILCA established the Annual Reports as the way to bring regional subsistence uses and needs to the Secretaries' attention. The Secretaries delegated this responsibility to the Board. Section 805(c) deference includes matters brought forward in the Annual Report.

The Annual Report provides the Councils an opportunity to address the directors of each of the four Department of Interior agencies and the Department of Agriculture Forest Service in their capacity as members of the Federal Subsistence Board. The Board is required to discuss and reply to each issue in every Annual Report and to take action when within the Board's authority. In many cases, if the issue is outside of the Board's authority, the Board will provide information to the Council on how to contact personnel at the correct agency. As agency directors, the Board members have authority to implement most of the actions which would effect the changes recommended by the Councils, even those not covered in Section 805(c). The Councils are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

### **Report Content**

Both Title VIII Section 805 and 50 CFR §100.11 (Subpart B of the regulations) describe what may be contained in an Annual Report from the councils to the Board. This description includes issues that are not generally addressed by the normal regulatory process:

- an identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the region;
- an evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife populations from the public lands within the region;
- a recommended strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs related to the public lands; and
- recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.

Please avoid filler or fluff language that does not specifically raise an issue of concern or information to the Board.

### **Report Clarity**

In order for the Board to adequately respond to each Council's annual report, it is important for the annual report itself to state issues clearly.

- If addressing an existing Board policy, Councils should please state whether there is something unclear about the policy, if there is uncertainty about the reason for the policy, or if the Council needs information on how the policy is applied.
- Council members should discuss in detail at Council meetings the issues for the annual report and assist the Council Coordinator in understanding and stating the issues clearly.

- Council Coordinators and OSM staff should assist the Council members during the meeting in ensuring that the issue is stated clearly.

Thus, if the Councils can be clear about their issues of concern and ensure that the Council Coordinator is relaying them sufficiently, then the Board and OSM staff will endeavor to provide as concise and responsive of a reply as is possible.

### **Report Format**

While no particular format is necessary for the Annual Reports, the report must clearly state the following for each item the Council wants the Board to address:

1. Numbering of the issues,
2. A description of each issue,
3. Whether the Council seeks Board action on the matter and, if so, what action the Council recommends, and
4. As much evidence or explanation as necessary to support the Council's request or statements relating to the item of interest.



**Kodiak Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

c/o Office of Subsistence Management  
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199  
Phone: (907) 787-3888, Fax: (907) 786-3898  
Toll Free: 1-800-478-1456

**In Reply Refer To:**  
RAC/KA.23017.LHS

Anthony Christianson, Chair  
Federal Subsistence Board  
c/o Office of Subsistence Management  
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chairman Christianson:

The Kodiak Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) appreciates the opportunity to submit its FY-2022 Annual Report to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) under the provisions of Section 805(a)(3)(D) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). At its public meetings held on September 21-22, 2022, in Cold Bay the Council identified concerns and recommendations for this report. The Council approved this Annual Report at its March 29-30, 2023, public meeting held in Kodiak. The Council wishes to share information and raise a number of concerns dealing with implementation of Title VIII of ANILCA and the continuation of subsistence uses in the Kodiak/Aleutians Region.

**1. Fisheries Enforcement Concerns**

The Council expressed concerns over the lack of enforcement of fishing and hunting regulations across the region. They would like more presence of enforcement officers to monitor both sport and subsistence salmon fishing and enforce violations. The area of greatest concern is in Unalaska. The Council believes there are no Federal Wildlife Protection Officers based in the Aleutian Islands, and the lone Alaska State Wildlife Trooper based in Unalaska gets relocated to monitor the fisheries in Bristol Bay during the summer. The population of Unalaska is over 4,000 people, and there are only a few salmon streams that are easily accessible from the limited road system. Some of the Council members have received reports from residents in Unalaska of numerous annual fishing violations without any officer to call other than the local police. The Council also expressed similar concerns for lack of enforcement in Kodiak and Cold Bay and is alarmed that these violations, particularly overharvesting, threaten the sustainability of salmon returns to streams utilized for subsistence.

## **2. The Proposed King Cove Road**

The Council supports the King Cove Road project. The proposed King Cove Road will connect the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay through a portion of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. This road would provide King Cove residents access to the airport in Cold Bay in the event of medical emergencies when the small airport in King Cove cannot be accessed due to weather conditions or darkness. This has been a long-standing issue and the Council wants to see the project move forward.

## **3. Importance of Holding Meetings in Non-Hub Communities**

The Council disagrees with the OSM policy that restricts meetings to be held primarily in hub communities. The Council also disagrees with the current list of communities that have been identified as hubs. The Council stressed the importance of occasionally meeting in some of the smaller communities or more remote communities where most residents are subsistence users. This effort would allow residents, including youth, the benefit of being able to attend a meeting and communicate their concerns about their local subsistence resources to the Council. In addition, this effort could lead to improved outreach about the Federal Subsistence Management Program, potentially increase Council membership applications, and result in a more diverse representation across the region.

## **4. Changing Ocean Conditions and Climate Change Are Having a Big Impact on Our Communities and Subsistence Lifestyle**

The Council expressed many concerns over the vulnerabilities of communities and marine ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. The Council noted warmer summers and unpredictable weather patterns creating more forceful storms and ocean conditions that have made it increasingly more difficult for residents to safely access the ocean for subsistence, sport, and commercial fishing opportunities. At the same time, climate change affects fishery resources on which the community relies for both for subsistence and economic stability. The Council recognizes that the Board cannot do anything about climate change but wanted to ensure the Board was aware that the impacts of climate change are making life more challenging for all the communities in the region.

## **5. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Should Have Funded Weirs**

The Council expressed concerns that the BIL does not include funding for fish weirs. Weirs are important infrastructure and should be noted as such. The BIL provides funding to invest in health, equity, and resilience of communities. However, the Council feels the law stopped short of allowing funding for certain kinds of infrastructure and for agencies or entities with projects that support subsistence activities in rural Alaska, such as fish weirs. Salmon is the one of the primary resources utilized for subsistence throughout the region. The Council stresses the importance of fish weirs, which are the most reliable method fishery managers have to estimate escapement of salmon, if they are available. If runs are poor for example, weir counts can provide information to the managers allowing more fine scale management actions to lessen the

impacts to access of subsistence resources if closures are necessary. The Council believes there is a strong tie between the need for the infrastructure and the impacts on access to subsistence.

**6. Increased Access to Federal Subsistence Permits in Kodiak and Tidying up the Permitting Process**

The Council expressed that the process of obtaining subsistence fishing and hunting permits is cumbersome and confusing. There are different Federal and State permits required for hunting and fishing and different permits for different fisheries, resources, and locations. The Council would like the process to obtain required permits to be easier for people wishing to subsist. Most of the smaller communities throughout the region do not have a local permit vendor, so a person wishing to hunt, or fish needs to either fly into Kodiak, Cold Bay, or Sand Point to get a permit or contact a Federal agency to obtain Federal permits. Chair Trumble noted that she has worked with the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge to have permit materials mailed to her for King Cove, which can be a good solution.

**7. Lake Andrew Outlet on Adak Island Access to Sea is Blocked off for Fish due to Ocean Debris**

The Council has concerns that the outlet of Lake Andrew on Adak Island is closed off from access to the sea due to ocean debris such as rocks and gravel. Lake Andrew is one of the island's major spawning areas for Sockeye Salmon and the area most utilized for subsistence by Adak residents. This blockage is directly impacting the Sockeye Salmon returns and subsistence opportunities. The lake is on Federal Lands, and the Navy is in the final stages of cleaning up sites contaminated with ordnance and remediation on the island. However, because of the cleanup efforts and for safety concerns, the Navy is preventing the community access to Lake Andrew to unblock the outlet the lake. The Council is concerned that if fish cannot get up there to spawn, the run will die off, which will greatly impact subsistence. The Council said that help is needed to coordinate efforts to get the lake reopened.

The Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council appreciates the Board's attention to these matters and the opportunity to assist the Federal Subsistence Management Program in meeting its charge of protecting subsistence resources and uses of these resources on Federal public lands and waters. The Council looks forward to continuing discussions about the issues and concerns of subsistence users in the Kodiak/Aleutians Region. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me via Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough, Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management, at [lisa\\_hutchinson@fws.gov](mailto:lisa_hutchinson@fws.gov), or 1-800-478-1456 or 1-907-310-4097.

Sincerely,

Della Trumble  
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board  
Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Mark Burch, Special Projects Coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Administrative Record

DRAFT

## Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Correspondence Policy

The intent of the Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) correspondence policy is to ensure that Councils can correspond appropriately with the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) and other entities. In addition, the correspondence policy will assist Councils in directing their concerns in an effective manner.

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Title VIII required the creation of the Councils to serve as advisors to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to provide meaningful local participation in the management of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands. Within the framework of Title VIII and the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Congress assigned specific powers and duties to the Councils. These are also reflected in the Councils' charters. (*Reference: ANILCA Title VIII §805, §808, and §810; Implementing regulations for Title VIII, 50 CFR 100 .11 and 36 CFR 242 .11; Implementing regulations for FACA, 41 CFR Part 102-3.70 and 3.75*)

The Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture created the Board and delegated responsibility for implementing the Title VIII rural subsistence priority regarding fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters. The Board was also given the duty of establishing rules and procedures for the operation of the Councils in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) was established to facilitate the work of the Federal Subsistence Management Program.

### Policy

1. **Council correspondence shall be limited to subsistence-related matters, including matters related to the operation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program, and issues relevant to the subsistence way of life.**
2. Councils may and are encouraged to correspond directly with the Board. The Councils are **advisory bodies** to the Board.
3. Councils are urged to make use of the annual report process to bring matters to the Board's attention.
4. Types of communication encompassed by this policy include but are not limited to the following: letters of support, resolutions, letters offering comment or recommendations, **ANILCA §810 comments (subsistence and land use decisions)**, and any other correspondence to any government agency or any tribal or private organization or individual.
5. The correspondence process is as follows:
  - **Councils shall discuss and agree upon the contents of proposed correspondence during a public meeting.**
  - Council Coordinators draft the correspondence in accordance with the Council's position.
  - Council Coordinators will transmit all draft correspondence to the Assistant Regional

Director (ARD) of OSM for review prior to mailing, except as noted in items 6, 7, and 8 of this policy.

- Recognizing that such correspondence is the result of an official Council action and may be urgent, the ARD will complete this review in a timely manner.
  - Modifications identified as necessary by the ARD will be discussed with the Council Chair. **Council Chairs have the final authority to approve letters.**
6. Councils may submit notification of appointment directly to Subsistence Resource Commissions under §808 without review by the ARD of OSM.
  7. **Councils may submit comments regarding proposed regulatory changes affecting subsistence uses within their regions to the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the Alaska Board of Game without review by the ARD of OSM. The comments will be channeled through the appropriate OSM division(s) supervisors for review. A copy of comments or proposals will be forwarded to the ARD when the original is submitted.**
  8. Administrative correspondence such as letters of appreciation, requests for agency reports at Council meetings, and cover letters for meeting agendas will be channeled through the Council Coordinator to the appropriate OSM division(s) supervisor for review.
  9. **Due to Hatch Act restrictions, Councils may not communicate with elected officials political appointees in other Federal agencies. Councils further may not write Secretaries of Federal agencies or their offices, and instead may write to the Board to request that the Board relay correspondence on relevant subject matters of interest to the Secretaries of the Interior or Agriculture or to other Federal agencies at the Secretarial level.** This does not prohibit Council members from acting in their capacity as private citizens or through other organizations with which they are affiliated.
  10. Councils will submit copies of all correspondence generated and received by them to OSM to be filed in the administrative record system.

Approved by the Federal Subsistence Board on June 15, 2004.

Revised by the Federal Subsistence Board on XXXXXXXX.

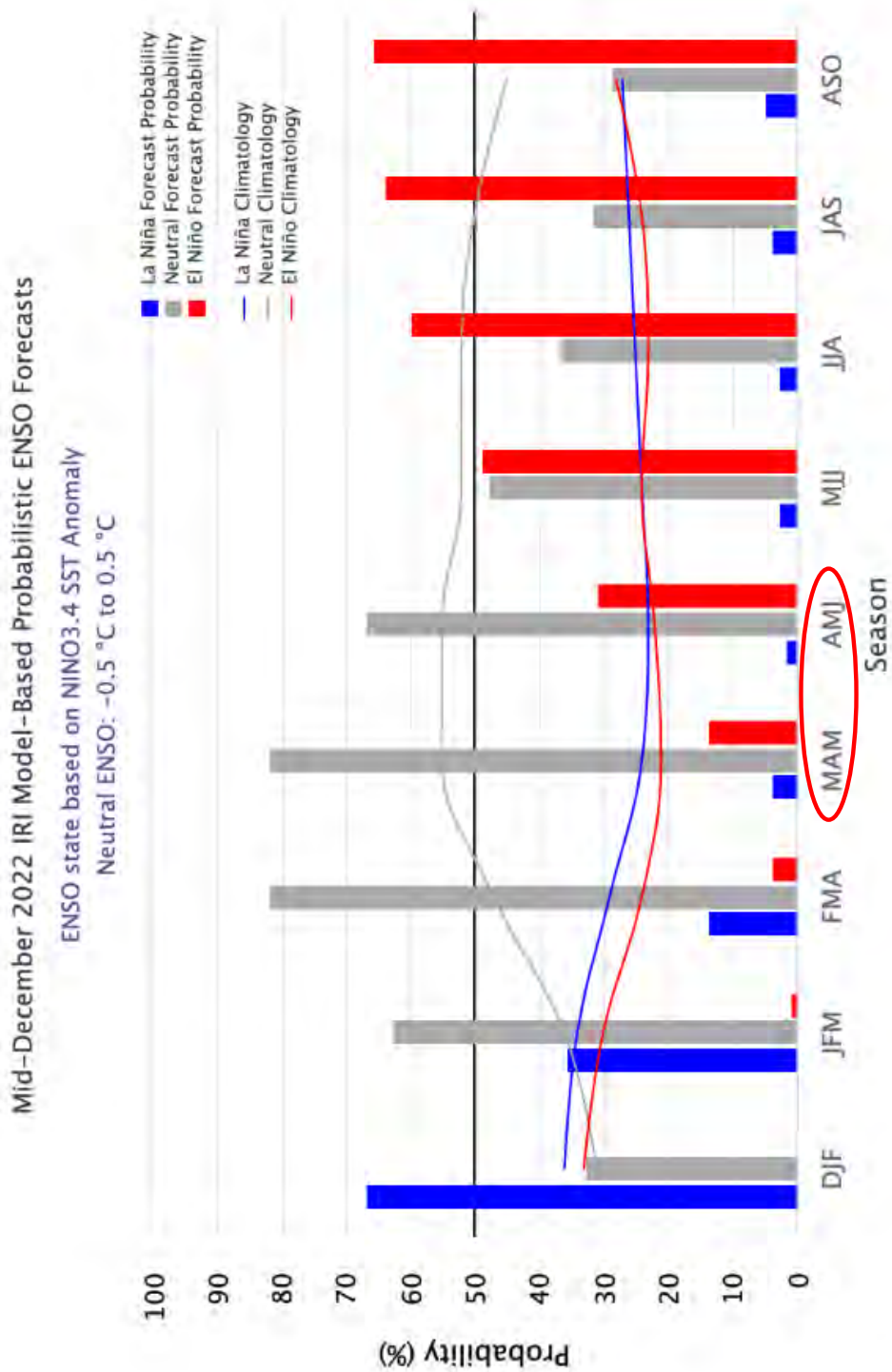
# Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council Spring Climate Outlook

Brian Brettschneider, PhD  
National Weather Service – Alaska Region



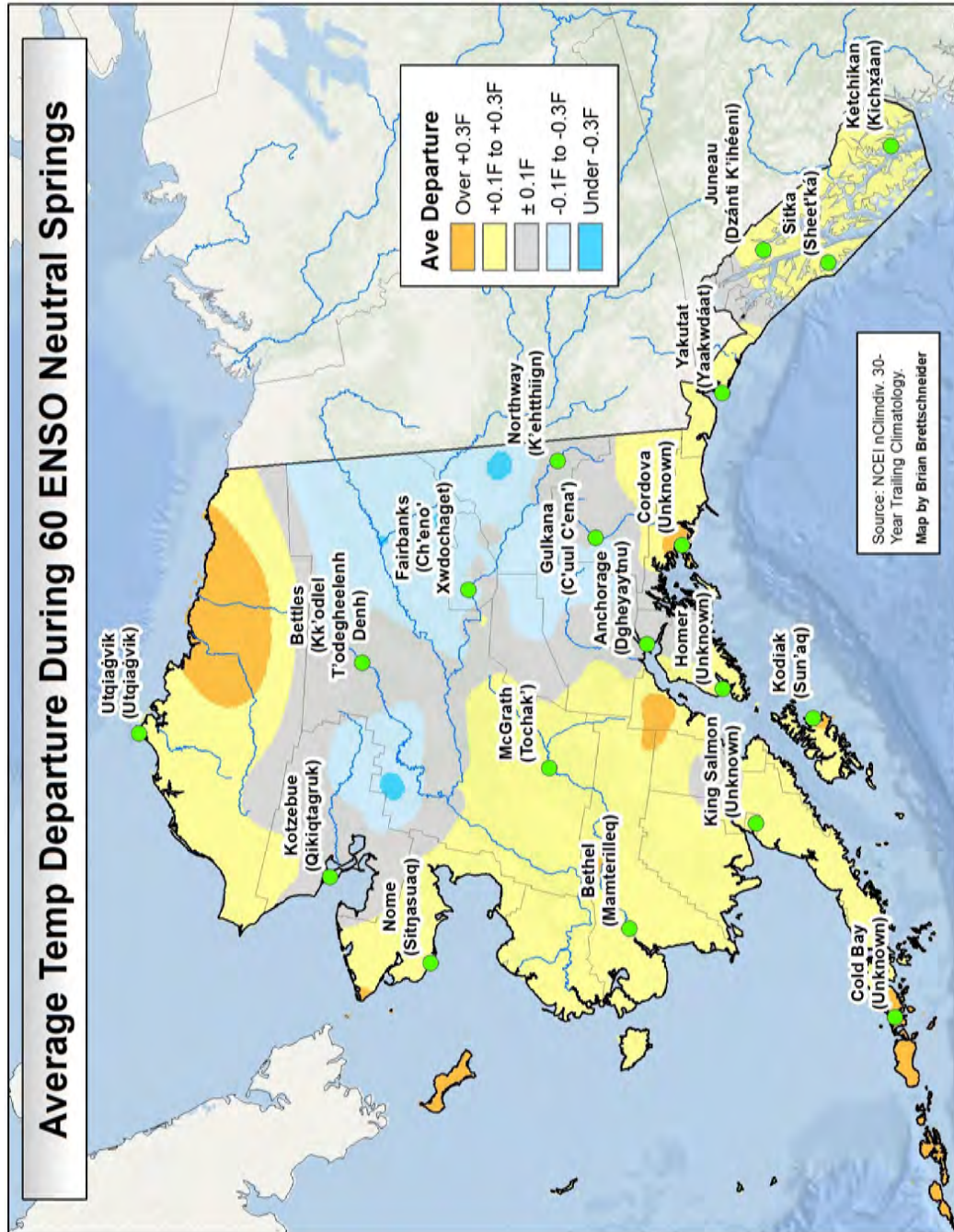
[brian.brettschneider@noaa.gov](mailto:brian.brettschneider@noaa.gov)

# ENSO Often Drives the Seasonal Outlooks

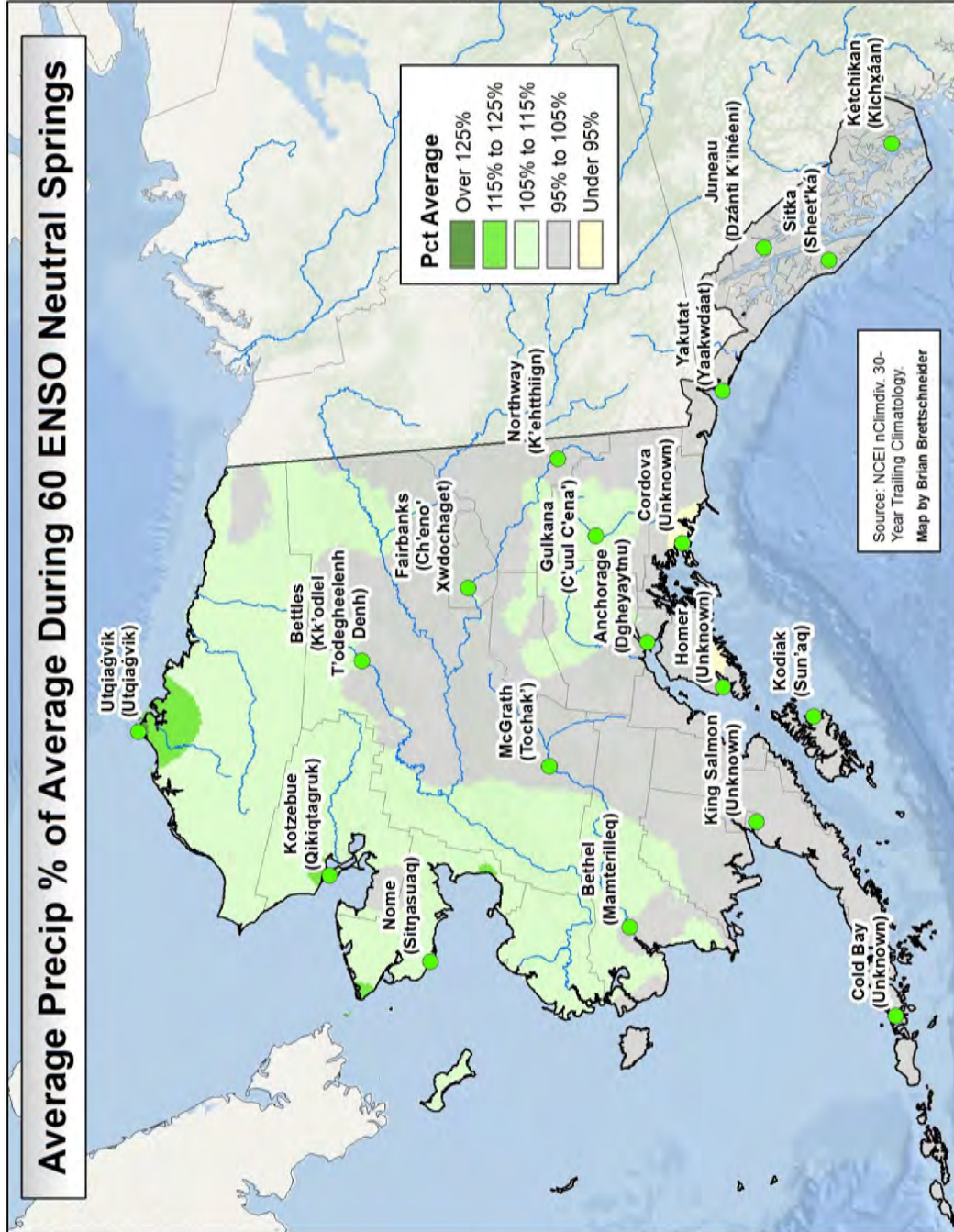




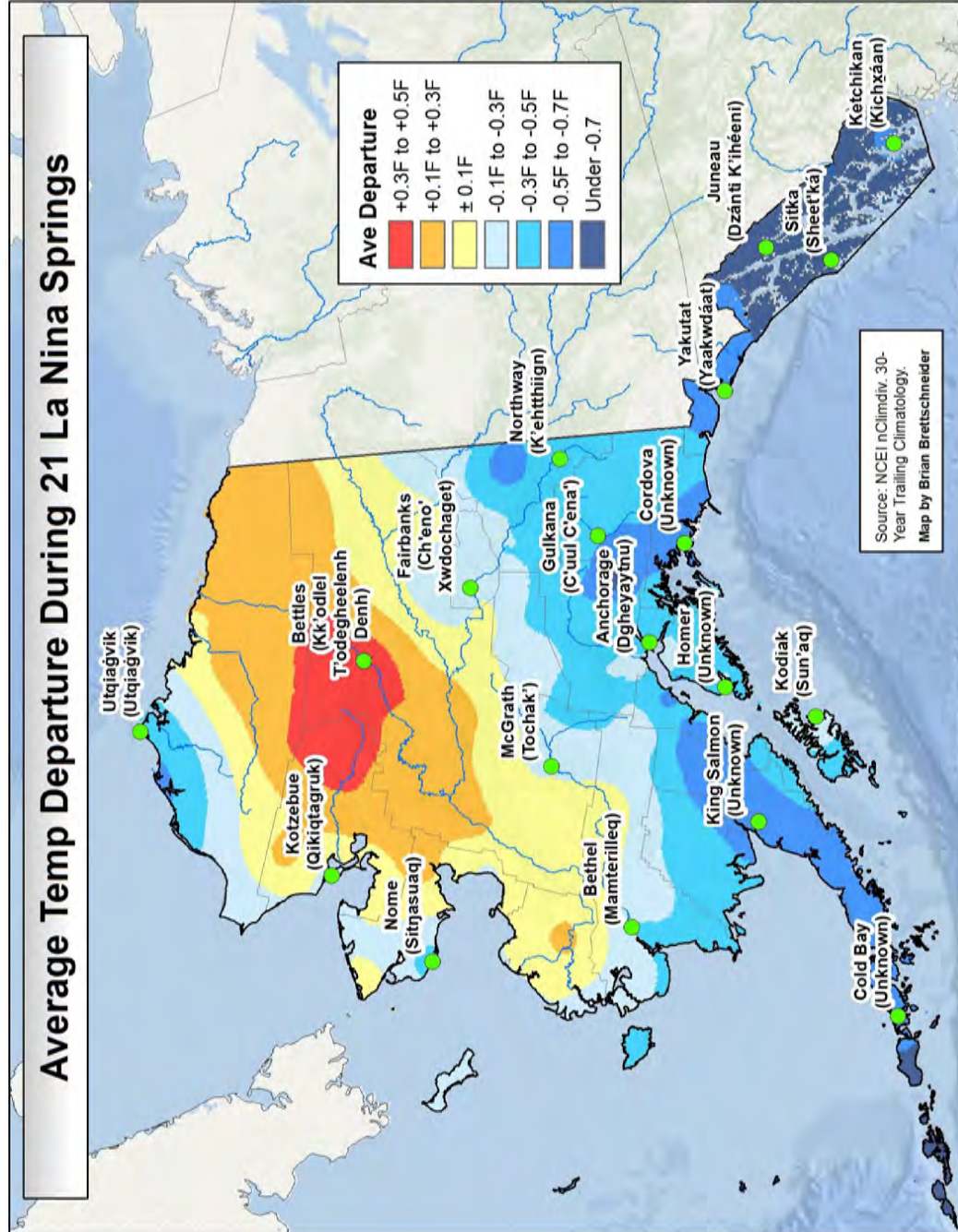
# ENSO Neutral Temperature Composite



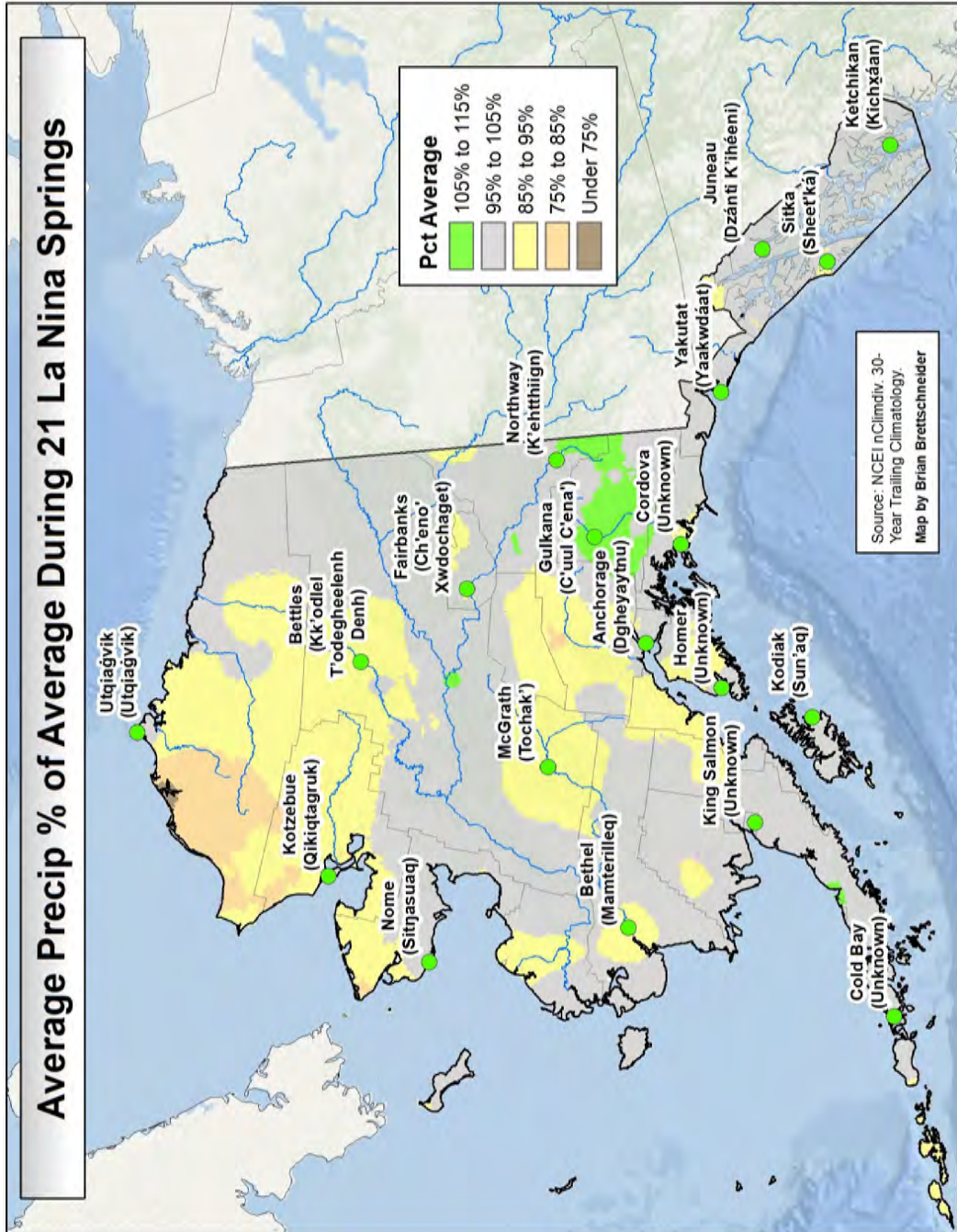
# ENSO Neutral Precipitation Composite



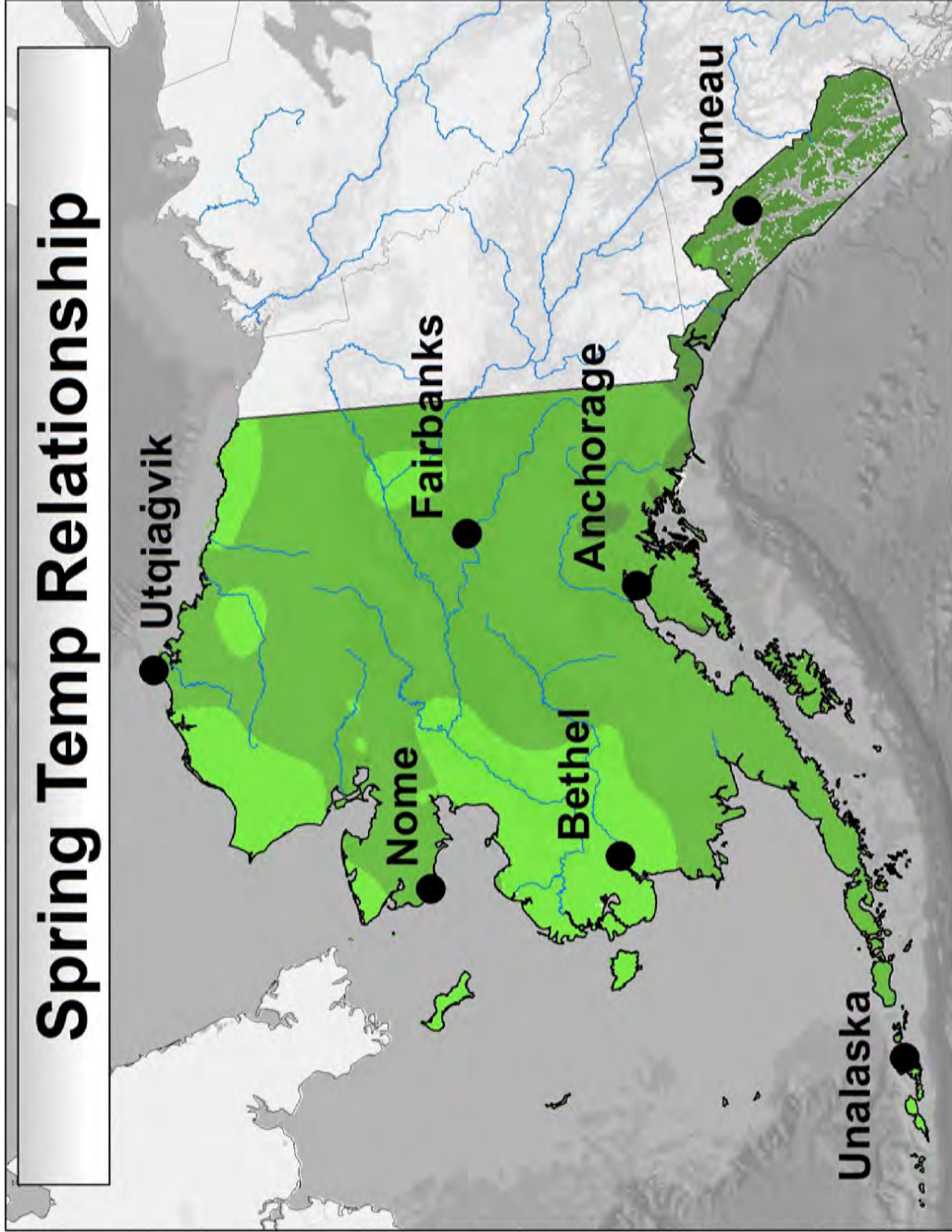
# La Nina Temperature Composite



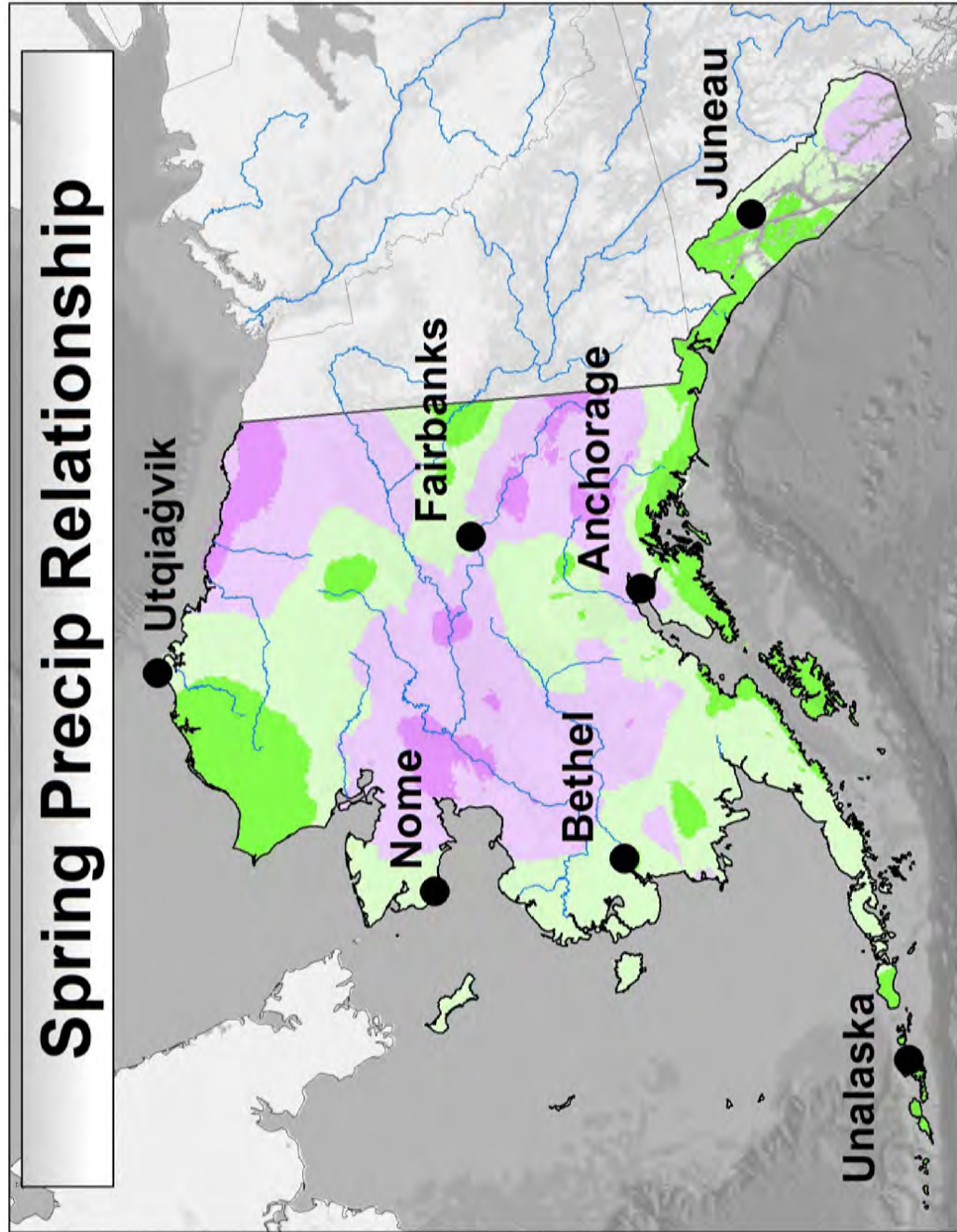
# La Nina Precipitation Composite



# ENSO Status Correlations With Temps



# ENSO Status Correlations With Temps



**Sea ice is a major factor in Spring conditions.**





# **Official CPC Outlooks**

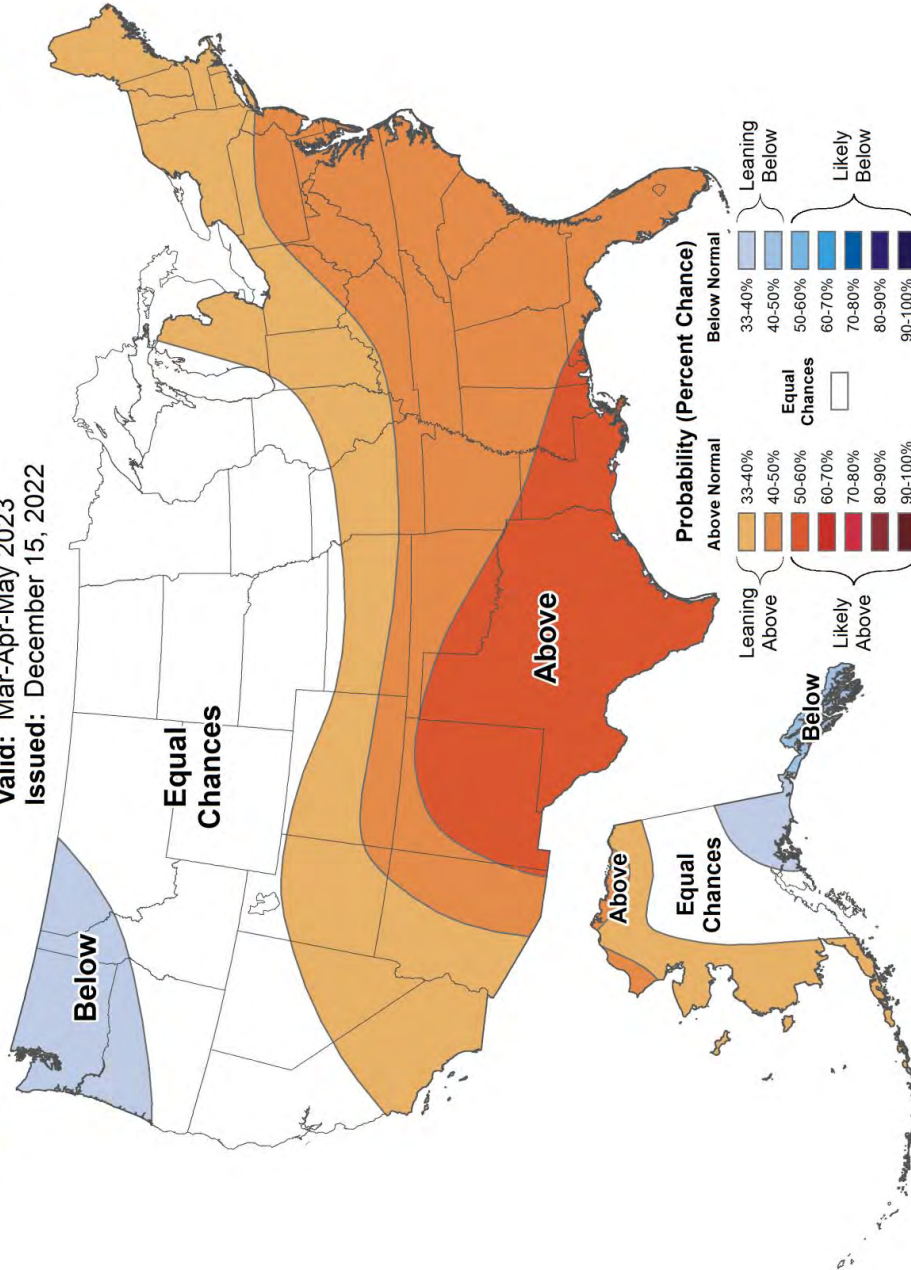
# CPC Spring Temp Outlook Issued Dec 15, 2022



## Seasonal Temperature Outlook



Valid: Mar-Apr-May 2023  
Issued: December 15, 2022



Newer Outlooks here: [https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long\\_range/](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/)

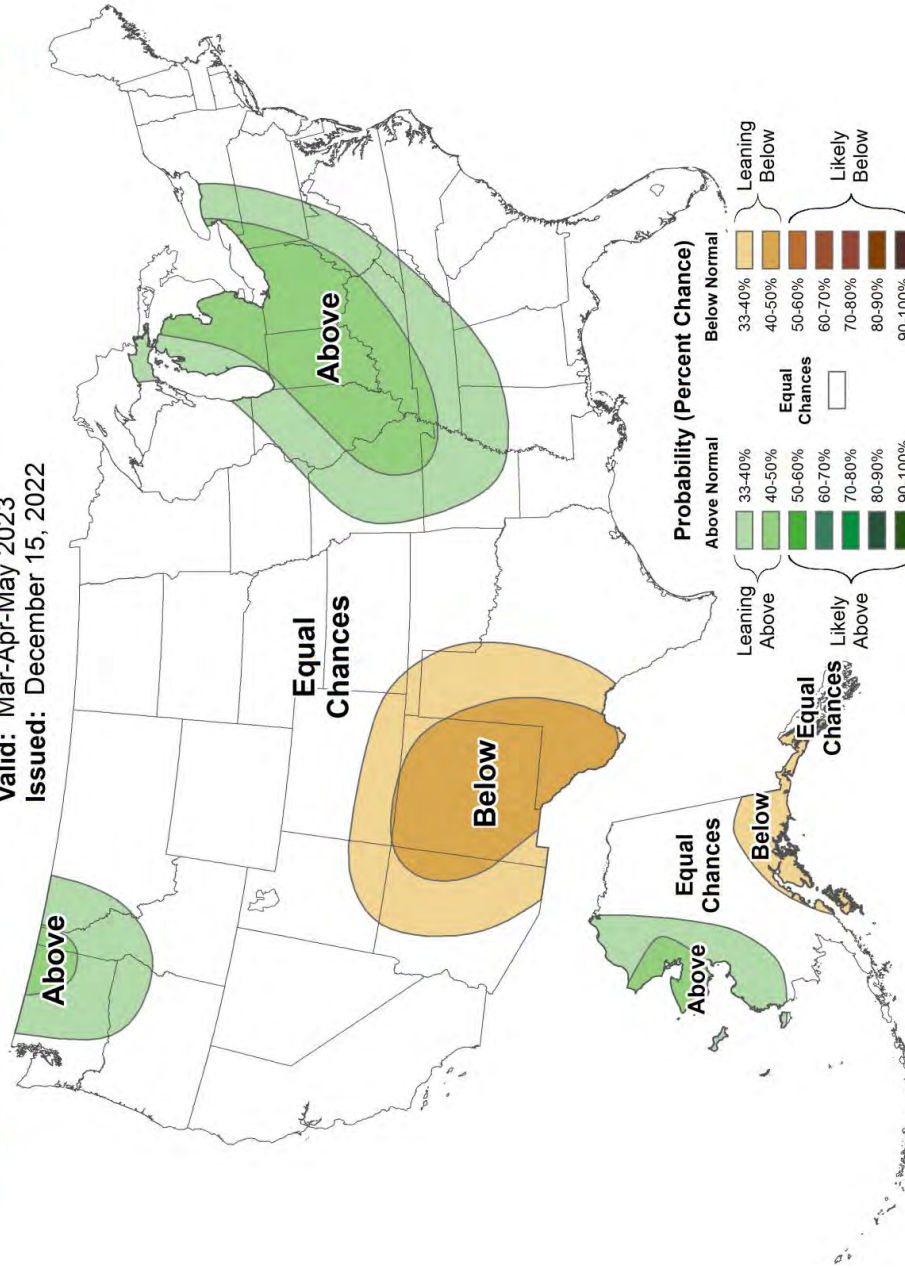
# CPC Spring Precip Outlook Issued Dec 15, 2022



## Seasonal Precipitation Outlook

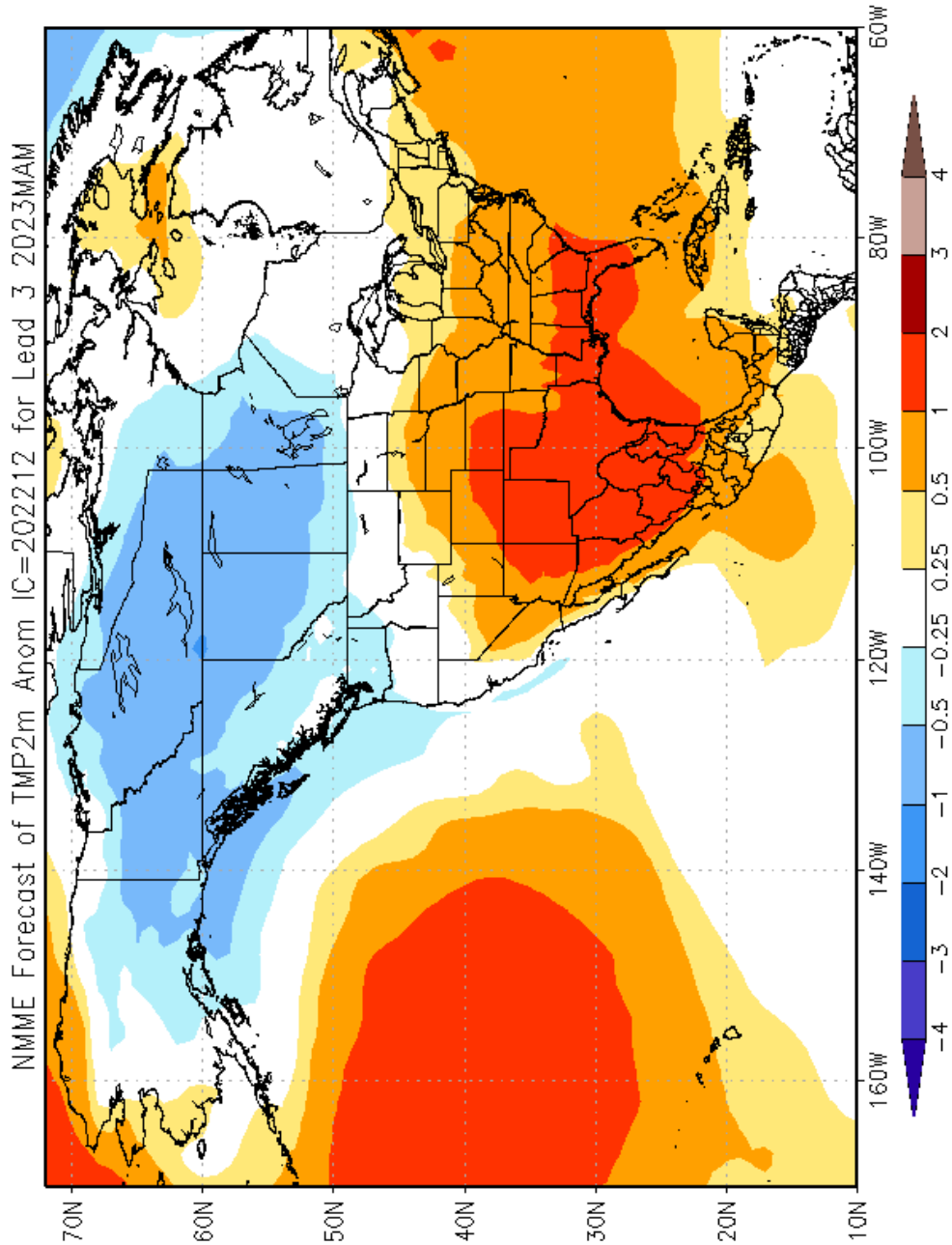


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Issued: December 15, 2022



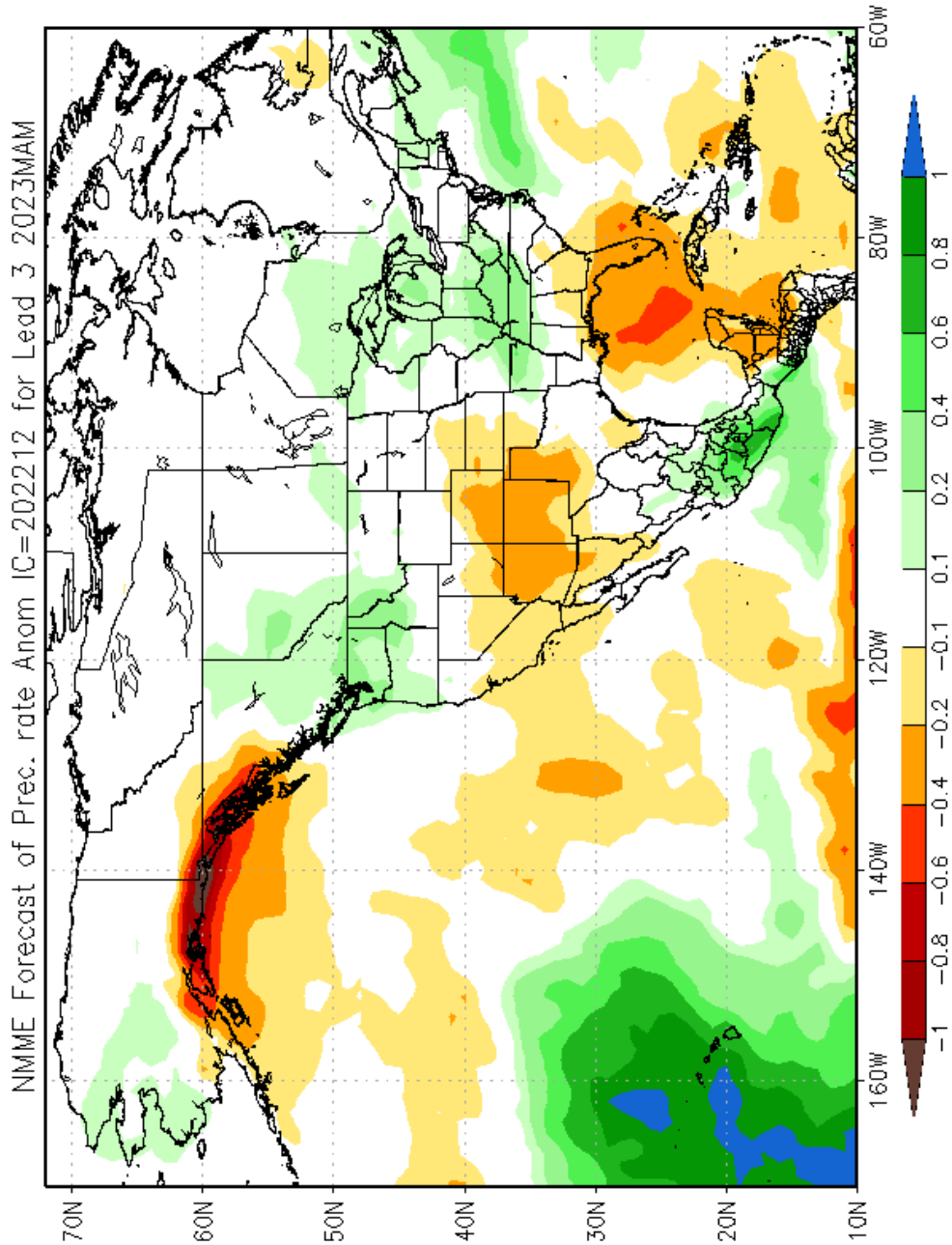
Newer Outlooks here: [https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long\\_range/](https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/)

# NMME Spring Temp Outlook Issued Dec 2022



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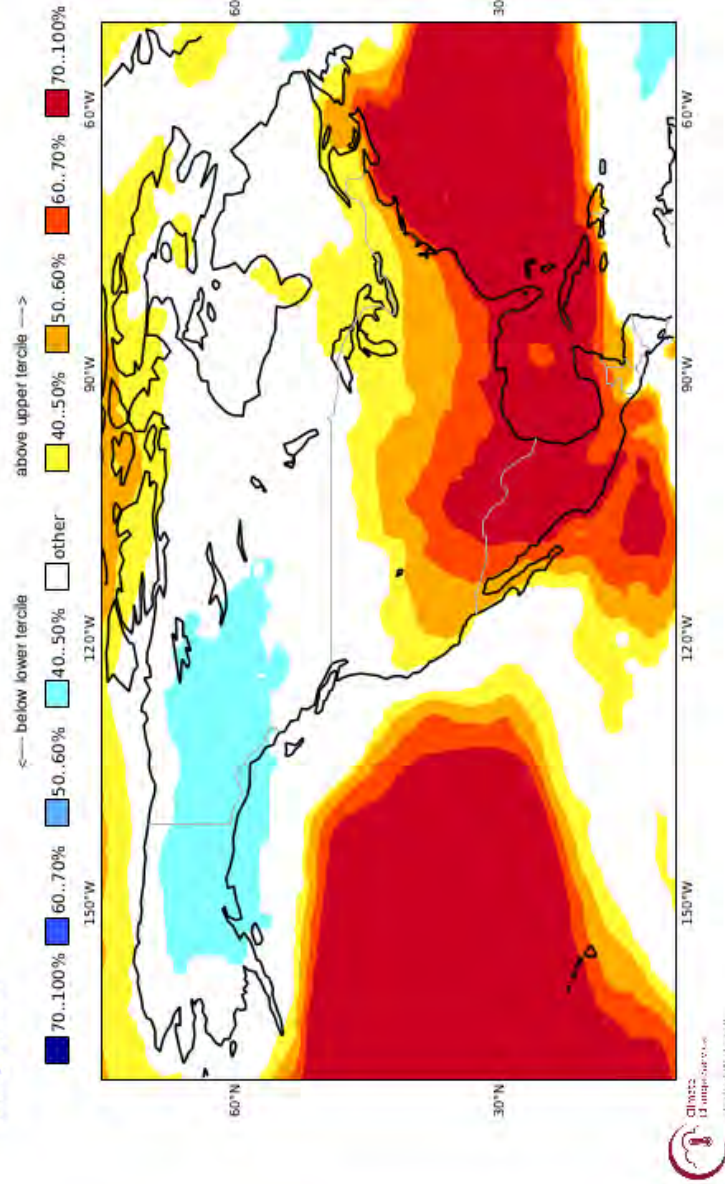
# NMME Spring Precip Outlook Issued Dec 2022



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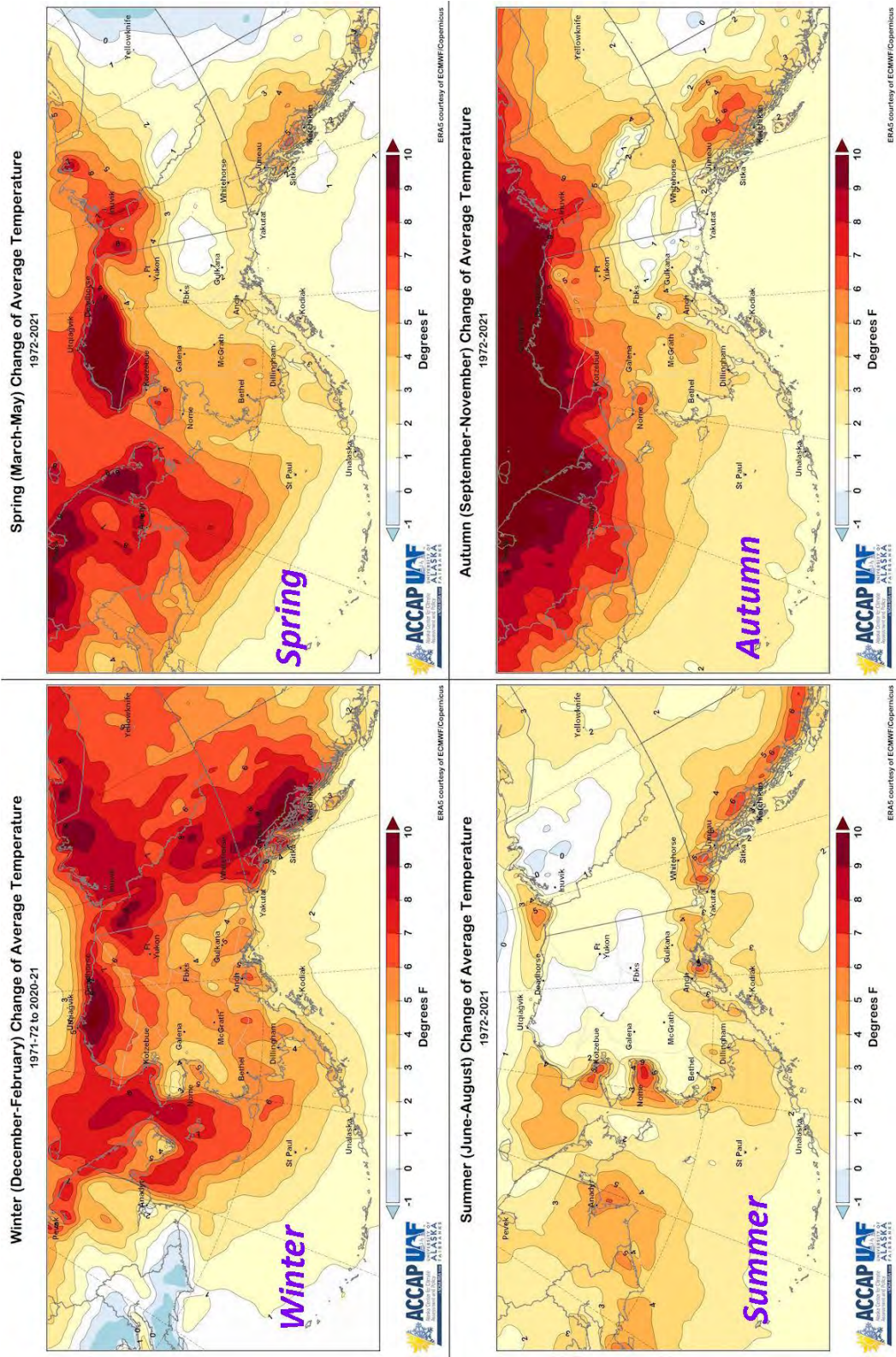
# CS3 Winter Temp Outlook Issued Oct 1, 2022

C3S multi-system seasonal forecast    ECMWF/Met Office/Météo-France/CMCC/DWD/NCEP/JMA/ECCC  
Prob(most likely category of 2m temperature)    MAM 2023  
Nominal forecast start: 01/12/22  
Unweighted mean



## **Trends are a major factor in climate forecasts**

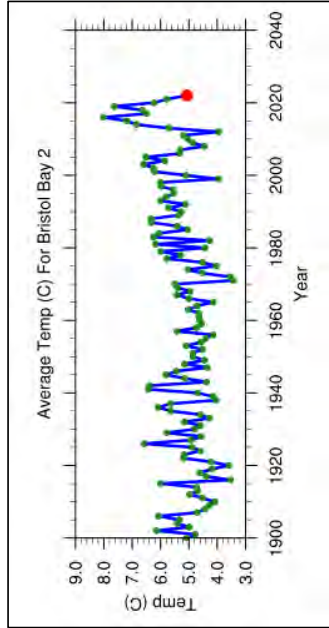
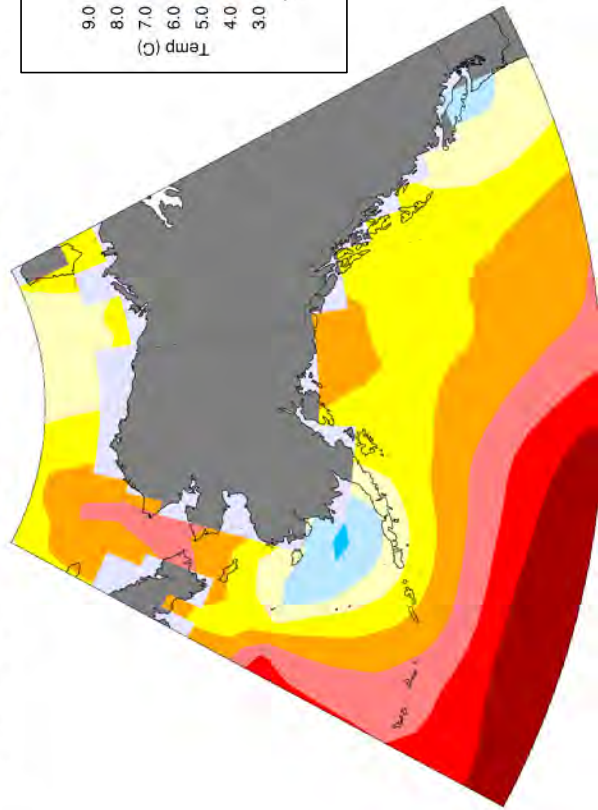
# Trends Are Not Our Friend



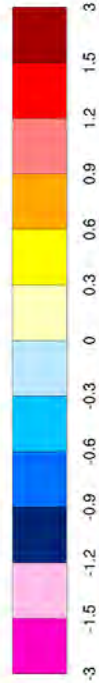


# Sea Surface Temps in Bristol Bay

ERSST v5 Temp: Ave Depart from Normal (C) Jan 2022 - Dec 2022



(c) B. Brettschneider 2022 (Data Source: ERSSTv5).  
Based on a total of 12 possible months  
using the 1951-2000 climate normal period.

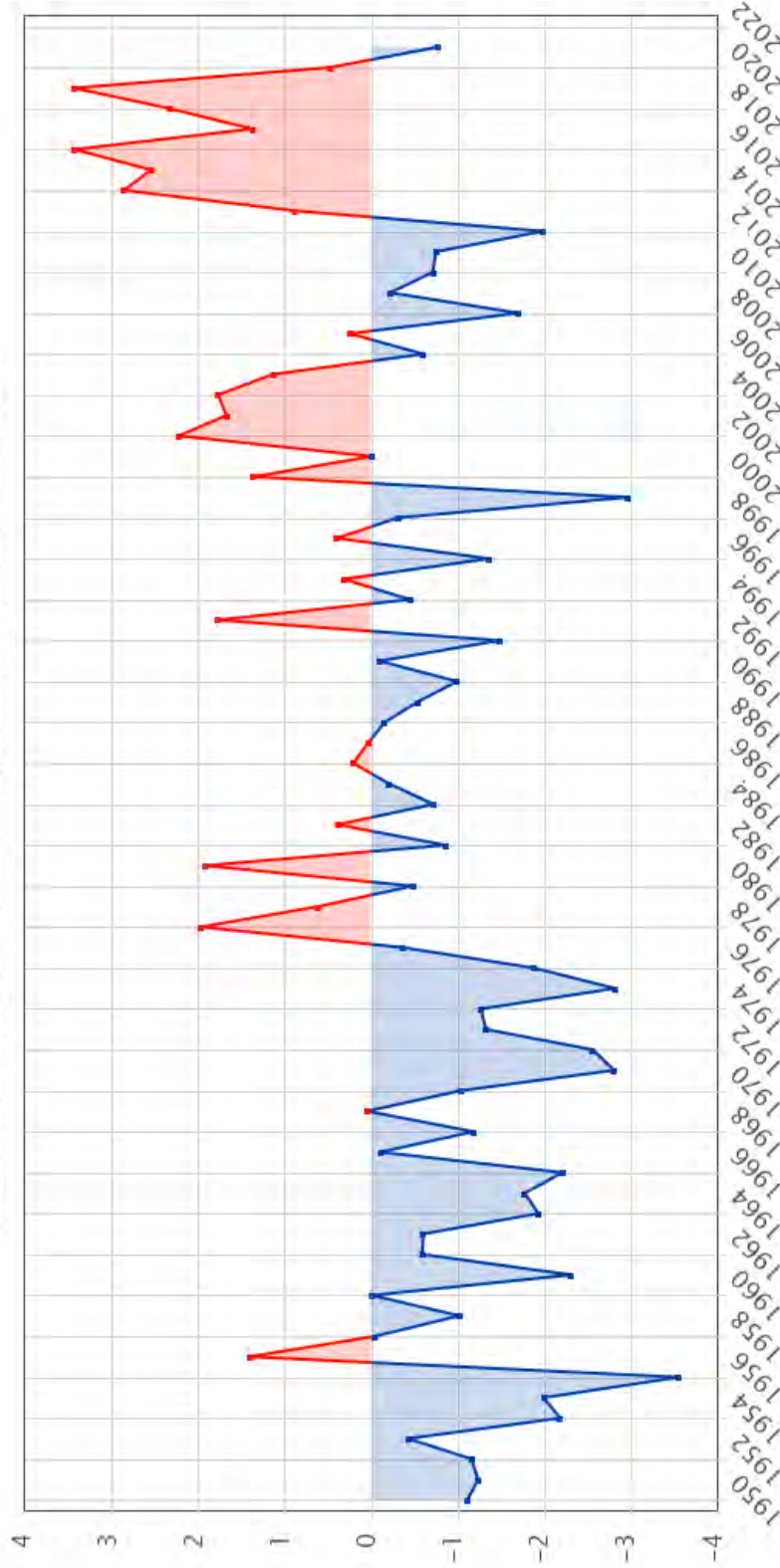


Analysis of all months between January 2022 and December 2022  
Global Average is: 0.49 C

# Annual Trend In Temperature for BB Region

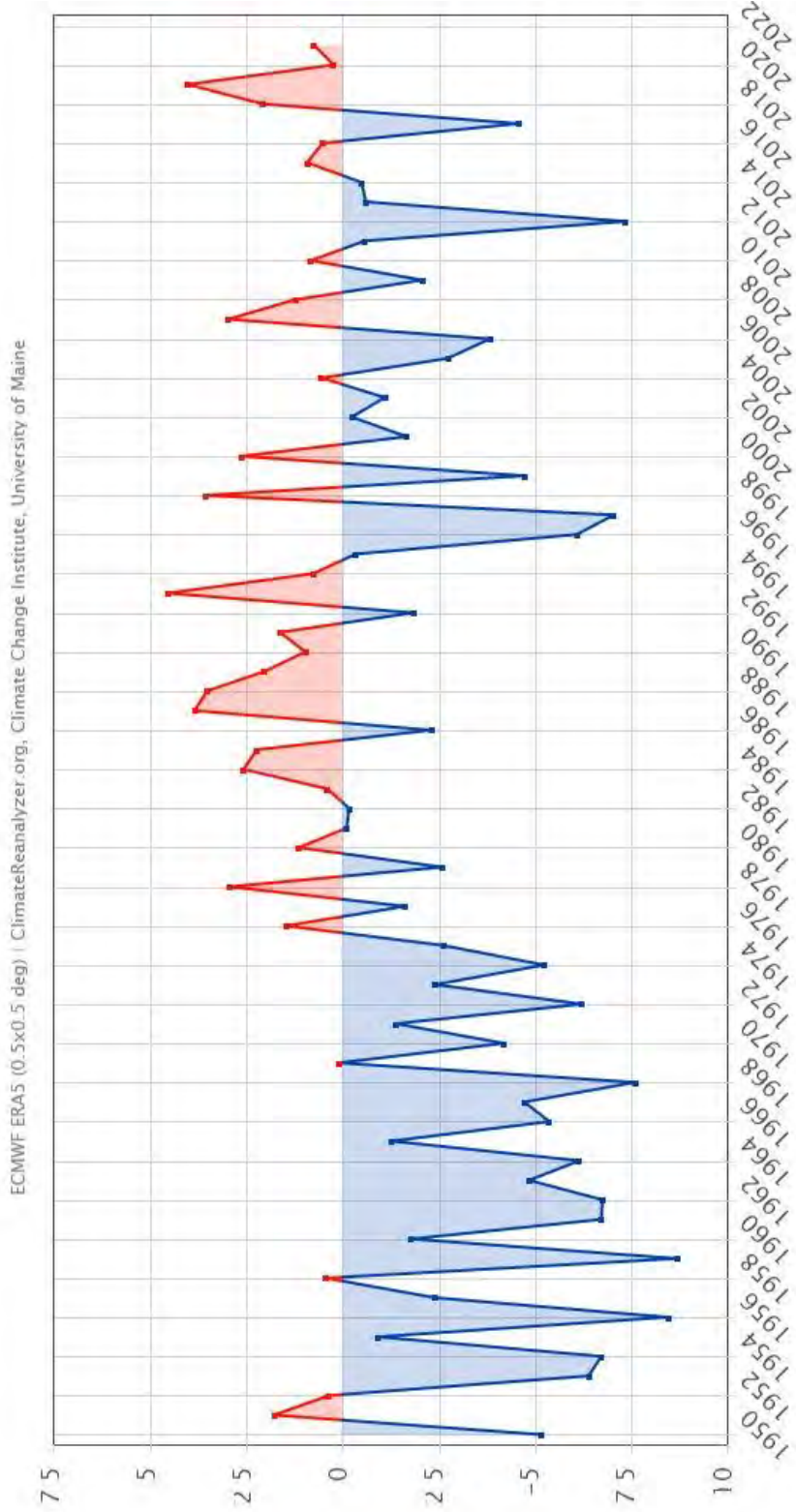
Annual 2m Temperature Anomaly (°C) [1981-2010]  
Specify Point (60°N, 158°W)

ECMWF ERA5 (0.5x0.5 deg) | ClimateReanalyzer.org, Climate Change Institute, University of Maine



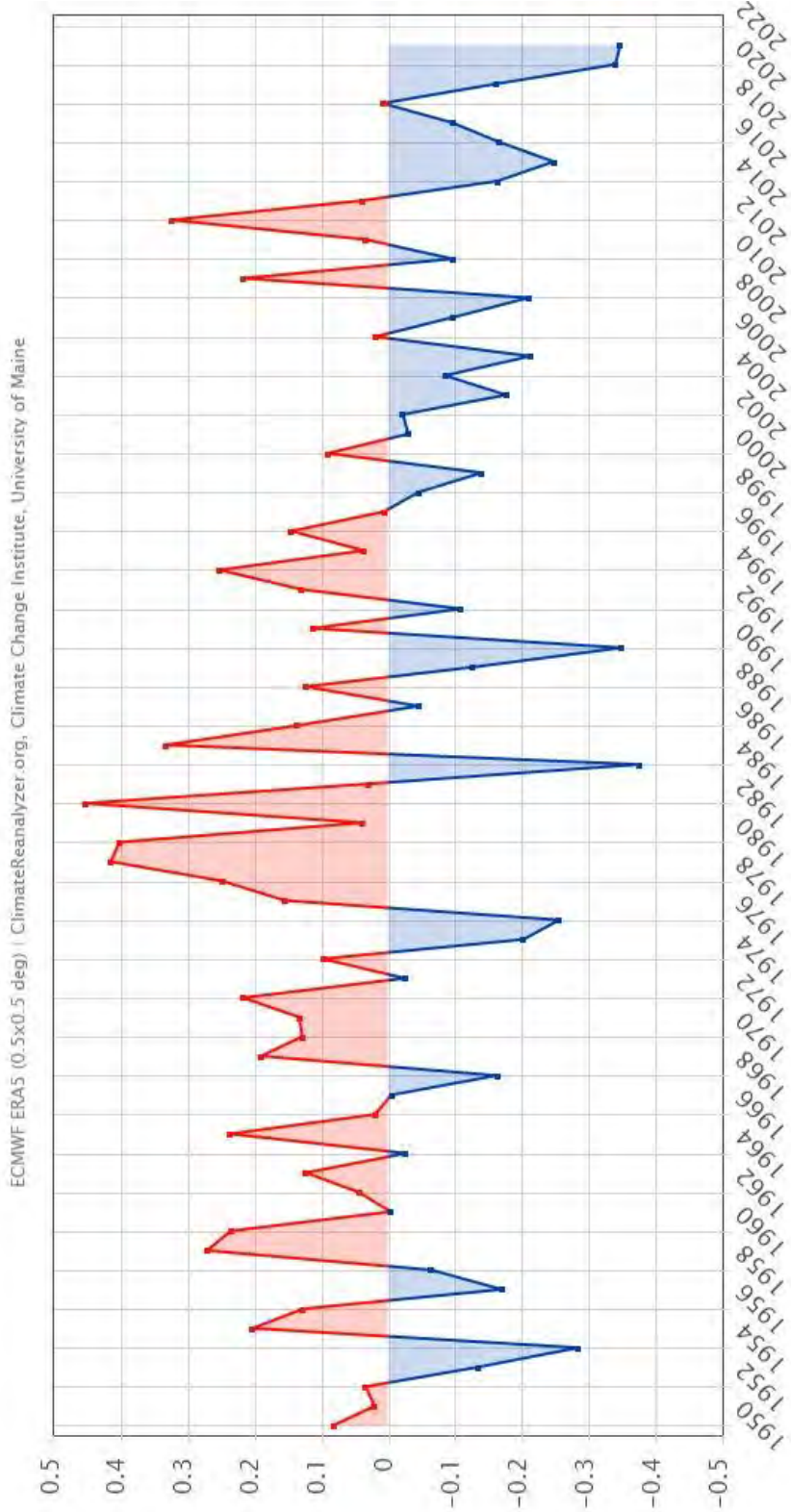
# Annual Trend In Cloudiness for BB Region

Annual Total Cloud Cover Anomaly (%) [1981-2010]  
Specify Point (60°N, 158°W)



# Annual Trend In Wind Speed for BB Region

Annual 10m Wind Speed Anomaly (m/s) [1981–2010]  
Specify Point (60°N, 158°W)





## Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge

### Spring 2023 report

### For Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Advisory Council

#### Caribou population on Adak

The Alaska Volcano Observatory plans to conduct work on volcano monitoring sites in 2023 and will base their work out of Adak for a period this summer. AVO plans to use a helicopter for much of their work and the refuge is connecting ADF&G with AVO to make arrangements for use of the helicopter to conduct an aerial survey of caribou this upcoming summer. Arrangements were in place last summer, but AVO cancelled work in the Adak area due to pressing needs elsewhere. The Refuge has offered to logistically support ADF&G in our bunkhouse if the survey is able to be flown.

#### Rat eradication planning – Great Sitkin

We continue to investigate the feasibility of rat eradication in the Aleutians. A team of USDA researchers and Island Conservation biologists spent two weeks on the island last summer studying bait degradation and movement in freshwater, fish presence in streams and lakes, distribution of rats in upland areas, and rat habitats on the island, including around volcanic features. Cooperators are preparing reports of activities conducted that will be submitted in the next couple months.

#### Seabird monitoring

Staff members were preparing the annual report card of seabird health at the exact time of the fall RAC meeting and results were not available. 2023 was a good year for seabirds across Alaska. Productivity for nearly all species was significantly above average. We include the Alaska seabird report card with this report.

This good news is tempered by the fact that some species are not faring well. Refuge biologists and other researchers wrote a [paper](#) that documented a dieoff of murrelets throughout Alaska during the marine heatwave of 2015-2016. Total numbers of dead murrelets were thought to have been between 500k - 1 million birds. Some of these same researchers led by refuge staff have re-examined the numbers of murrelets on colonies throughout Alaska and believe the number is much higher and in the range of a few millions. A presentation is in preparation to be given at the Pacific Seabird Group meeting in California in February, that presentation will suggest nearly half of all common murrelets in Alaska perished in the marine heat wave of 2015-2016 – a number much higher than previously thought. Surprisingly, the thick-billed murre which breeds on cliffs alongside common murrelets did not show evidence of a similarly large dieoff.

#### Summer planning

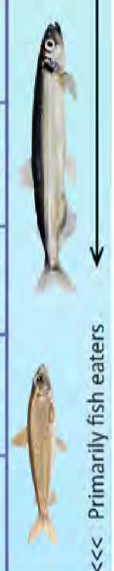
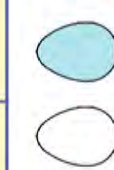
- Refuge staff are ramping up planning for summer activities. We plan to support culture camps in Unalaska, Sand Point, and the Pribilof Islands, Visitor Services have already visited Sitka, St. Paul, and Unalaska to give school programs and conduct community outreach this spring.

- We will host the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival in May. The shorebird festival is Alaska's largest festival focused on wildlife.
- The refuge gained two much needed new employees: Adrienne McGill and Matt Rustand. Adrienne will be our new Visitor Services Supervisor and lead the outreach and education staff here in Homer. Adrienne joins us from the Chugach Forest. Matt joins us from the Bureau of Land Management and will be our new wildlife biologist for the Bering and Chukchi Sea units.
- US Army Corp of Engineers, Department of Energy, and FAA are making plans to visit or remediate contaminated sites on several refuge islands including: USACE – Tanaga (munitions remediation); Cape Wislow, Unalaska (site investigation); DoE – Amchitka (5-yr sampling) USN – Amchitka (PCB monitoring); FAA – Caton Island (Lead contaminated with archaeological site investigation).
- The refuge finalized closure on a former contaminated WWII US Navy cabin site that was used as a refuge administrative site up until the 1990's. In 2022, the refuge had contractors remove the cabin which contained lead paint, fuel tanks, asbestos and other unwanted items. Alaska DEC agreed that the site met cleanup standards and removed the site from the State database.
- Planning continues for a mid-life refit for the refuge vessel R/V *Tiglax*. Propulsion, electrical systems, navigation, electronics, refrigeration, boilers, safety systems and more - everything on the ship that has met or exceeded its expected lifespan is being replaced or repaired. The major work will be completed at SNOW shipyard in Seattle in the winter of 2023/24.



Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge  
2022 Seabird Report Card

Region	Annual monitoring site	Red-faced cormorants	Glaucous-winged gulls	Common murre	Thick-billed murre	Horned puffin	Tufted puffin	Red-legged kittiwakes	Black-legged kittiwakes	Northern fulmar	Fork-tailed storm-petrels	Leach's storm-petrels	Parakeet auklets	Least auklets
Chukchi Sea	Cape Lisburne													
Bering Sea	St. George	😊		😊	😞			😊	😊					😊
	St. Paul	😊		😊	😞			😊	😊					😊
Aleutian Islands	Buldir		😊	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊	😊		😊	😊	😊	😊
	Aiktak		😊	😊	😊	😊	😊				😊	😊		😊
Alaska Penin.	Chowiet	😊		😊	😊	😊	😊		😊				😞	
Gulf of Alaska	East Amatuli		😊	😊			😞		😊		😊			
	St. Lazaria		😊	😊	😊				😊		😊	😊		😊



Eggs represent overall productivity relative to the long-term average.  
White eggs indicate productivity derived from monitoring data;  
colored eggs indicate productivity based on anecdotal observations.

Way above average!  
Average  
Below average  
Complete failure

Primarily fish eaters <<<  
Primarily zooplankton eaters >>>



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Izembek National Wildlife Refuge  
P. O. Box 127  
Cold Bay, Alaska 99571



**Activity Report**  
**Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, September 2022 - January 2023**

**AVIAN**

*Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza*

USGS staff were present in Cold Bay August-October of 2022 to sample for Avian Influenza during the height of avian presence at Izembek NWR. Samples were taken from hunter-harvested birds and the environment to test for presence and type of avian influenza viruses. This was particularly important work during the current outbreak of H5N1 virus that has been documented nation-wide in domestic and wild birds. No major mortality events suspected to be avian influenza were documented during the fall and winter of 2022-23.

*Brant Age Ratio Surveys*

The Izembek Brant Age Ratio Survey was conducted October 3-14, 2021. A total of 8 observers participated in the survey, which was conducted by foot and boat throughout Izembek Lagoon and surrounding areas. Over the course of the survey, observers counted about 49,000 brant from 101 flocks, which was used to model an estimate of productivity for the year. The productivity estimate for 2022 indicated that approximately 15% of the fall staging population were juvenile first-year birds. This was well below the long-term average of 24% but had little effect on the weakly decreasing long-term trend of productivity, which is declining at 0.6% per year.

*Brant Captures for Transmitter Attachment*

During the 2022 field season, Izembek Staff assisted in the first local attempt to capture brant by nighttime spotlighting on Izembek Lagoon, with the objective of affixing location transmitters to brant shortly before migration away from Izembek. The project is a collaboration with the USGS Alaska Science Center, as part of a Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)-funded study on brant migration. The information collected by this study will be used by BOEM to analyze potential effects to Black Brant and other migrating waterfowl from offshore wind energy projects off the Pacific coast of the U.S. Capture attempts occurred October 16-23. Over the course of 4 capture days, 7 brant were captured and 4 were fitted with transmitters. Since the conclusion of the project, 2 of the birds with transmitters have been harvested.



## **CARIBOU**

### *Federal Subsistence Hunt—Unit 9D (Southern Alaska Peninsula)*

The Izembek NWR 2022-23 Federal Subsistence Caribou Hunt in Unit 9D is split into two hunting periods. The first period runs August 01 - September 30, 2022. The second half is open November 15 - March 31, 2023. These dates run concurrently with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) sport hunt. After consultation with ADF&G, they support US Fish & Wildlife Service mirroring the state resident harvest regulations. The harvest limit of caribou in Unit 9D is three per hunter. To date there have not been any harvest reports submitted to the refuge from the participating communities.

### *Federal Subsistence Hunt – Unimak Unit 10*

The residents of Cold Bay and Nelson Lagoon have been added to the federal registration hunt in Unit 10, which covers Unimak Island. The hunt period is August 1 - September 30, 2022. In consultation with The Alaska Department of Fish & Game there has been an increase in hunter harvest from total 5 to a total of 10 bull in Unit 10 and 15 permits were allocated. To date there have not been any harvest reports submitted to the refuge from the participating communities.

### *Annual Winter Caribou Population Survey*

The annual winter caribou population survey of the Southern Alaska Peninsula and Unimak Caribou Herds is scheduled for February 13-23, 2023. These winter counts are important in understanding general population trends over time.

## **MAMMALS**

### *Annual Brown Bear Stream Survey*

The Brown Bear Stream Survey was scheduled for August 24 – September 2, 2022. The survey was unable to be completed due to challenges with plane logistics and weather. This survey is planned to resume in 2023.

## **HABITAT**

### *Water Temperature Monitoring*

Izembek NWR and the USFWS Water Resources Branch are working to retrieve and redeploy water temperature monitoring sensors that are deployed in anadromous streams across the Izembek NWR. Some sites have not been visited since 2019. These water temperature sensors are important for understanding water quality on the refuge, which can directly impact fisheries.

## **OUTREACH**

### *Cold Bay Events*

Izembek NWR conducted some public outreach events in the community of Cold Bay, including a pollinator education event, where kids learned about pollinators and played games to learn what is like in the day of a bee! Izembek staff also put on a Halloween Skull Detective event, where kids learned about animal skulls and how to identify them.

*King Cove School Visit*

Izembek NWR hosted the King Cove School Ornithology and Marine Biology classes in November 2022 to provide the students with an opportunity to tour the refuge, learn more about FWS and careers in public lands, and of course, go birding! The Refuge hopes to work with the school to establish a yearly visit to Izembek moving forward!

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**Alaska Department of Fish and Game Report to the Kodiak-  
Aleutian Islands Subsistence Regional Advisory Council: Buskin  
River Sockeye Salmon Fishery and Stock Assessment Project  
Update through December 31, 2022**

**By  
Kelly Krueger  
and  
Mark Witteveen**



**February 2023**

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**Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

**Division of Sport Fish**

## INTRODUCTION

The Buskin River drainage, located on Kodiak Island approximately 2 miles southwest from the city of Kodiak, traditionally supports the single largest subsistence salmon fishery within the Kodiak/Aleutian Islands Region in federal waters. The fishery occurs in nearshore marine waters adjacent to the river mouth and targets several species of salmon (Table 1). Sockeye salmon typically comprise about 70% of the total subsistence harvest (Table 1), but due to low runs in the past several years, the most recent 5-year average is 55% sockeye salmon. Between 2017 and 2021, subsistence users harvested an average of 1,631 Buskin River sockeye salmon, which accounted for 11% of the total subsistence sockeye salmon harvest reported for the Kodiak Archipelago (Table 2).

During 2008 and 2009, low sockeye salmon escapement on the Buskin and closure of the subsistence fishery prompted subsistence users to fish elsewhere. Participation and harvests have varied since then, corresponding with fluctuating sockeye salmon runs to the Buskin River drainage. During 2018, the Buskin River sockeye salmon run was well below average and virtually no subsistence harvest occurred. In 2019 and 2020, the sockeye salmon run rebounded; however, it was still lower than previous years. During 2021, the sockeye salmon was the lowest on record and escapement failed to meet the lower end of the goal despite subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries closures. Historically, 40 to 50% of the sockeye salmon harvest in the city of Kodiak area has come from the Buskin fishery and half of all permit holders in the region report fishing the Buskin area.

**Table 1.- Buskin River drainage reported subsistence salmon harvest by species, 2017-2021<sup>a</sup>.**

Year	Permits	Reported Subsistence Harvest									
		Chinook		Sockeye		Coho		Pink		Chum	
		No. Fish	% of Total	No. Fish	% of Total	No. Fish	% of Total	No. Fish	% of Total	No. Fish	% of Total
2017	242	11	<1%	4,983	93%	300	6%	60	1%	6	<1%
2018	108	1	<1%	474	28%	1,171	70%	26	2%	0	0%
2019	111	4	<1%	859	62%	340	25%	145	11%	31	0%
2020	163	8	<1%	1,642	63%	780	30%	152	6%	4	0%
2021	54	0	0%	195	27%	516	72%	7	1%	0	0%
Average	136	5	<1%	1,631	55%	621	40%	78	4%	8	<1%

<sup>a</sup>. Source: ADF&G Division of Subsistence Database, Kodiak.

**Table 2.- Kodiak Area reported subsistence harvest of sockeye salmon by location, 2017-2021<sup>a</sup>.**

Location	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017-2021 avg.
Buskin River	4,983	474	859	1,642	195	1,631
Pasagshak River	5,794	400	414	580	1,182	1,674
Afognak Bay	1,934	538	1,026	1,475	956	1,186
Ouzinkie Narrows	1,854	4,795	1,722	2,876	3,383	2,926
Settler Cove/Barabara Cove	746	275	420	391	905	547
East Side	2,051	1,055	831	2,583	2,474	1,799
South End	945	1,232	980	1,031	695	977
West Side	2,445	3,463	1,877	3,983	3,035	2,961
Remainder Afognak	2,075	1,786	1,345	1,971	1,155	1,666
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,827</b>	<b>14,018</b>	<b>9,474</b>	<b>16,532</b>	<b>13,980</b>	<b>15,366</b>

<sup>a</sup> Source: ADF&G Division of Subsistence Database, Kodiak. 2022 data unavailable.

In 2000, in order to ensure sustained sockeye salmon production over time, a stock assessment study was initiated by Alaska Department Fish and Game (ADF&G) on the Buskin River. It was funded by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management with the goal to establish a Biological Escapement Goal (BEG) for the sockeye salmon run on the Buskin River. The BEG is based on a population model which incorporates annual escapement and harvest figures with the age composition of annual returns to estimate the total production of each year of spawning (known as a brood table). Samples of male to female ratios, average length and age classes are collected each year over the course of the run from the escapement and the subsistence harvest. The BEG is set at 5,000 - 8,000 sockeye salmon and is used for management of the subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries to ensure a sustained yield from the population.

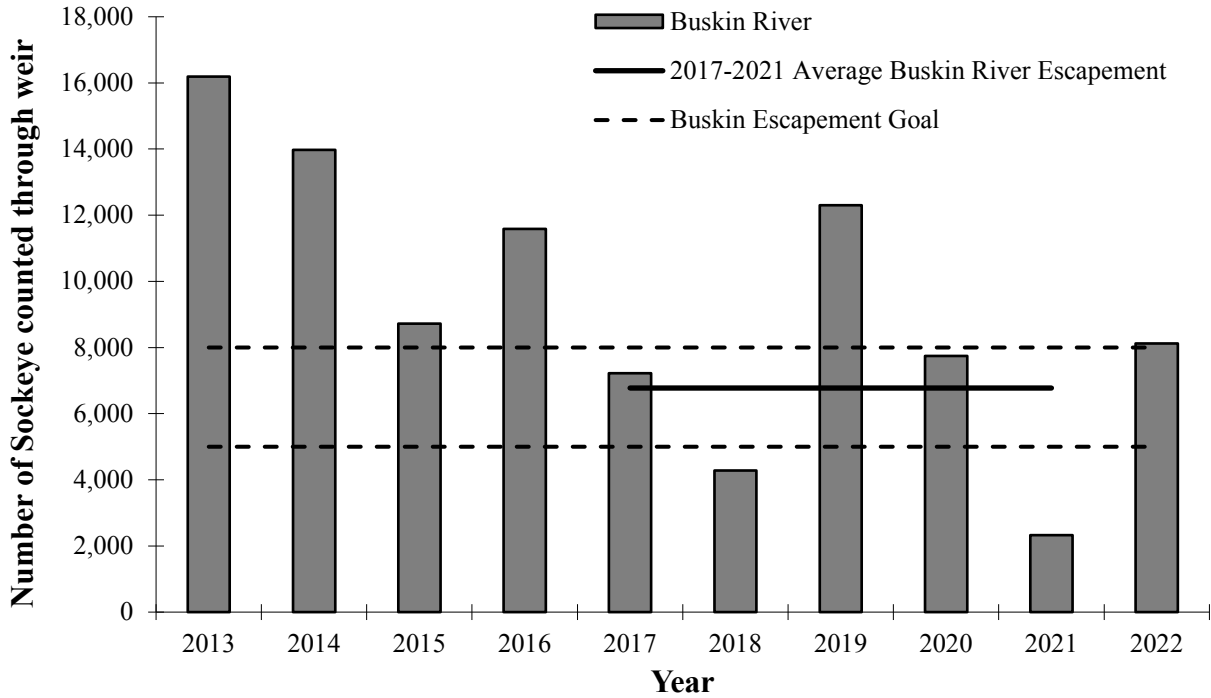
Sockeye salmon escapements are annually enumerated through inseason counts of adult fish migrating into the drainage. A salmon counting weir located on Buskin River has been operated by ADF&G for this purpose since 1985. In 2002 through 2021, a second weir was installed on a tributary stream flowing into the Buskin River from Catherine and Louise Lakes. Escapement through the second weir into Louise Lake was sporadic and generally small and was not included in funding for the 2022-2025 project cycle.

## 2022 PROGRESS REPORT

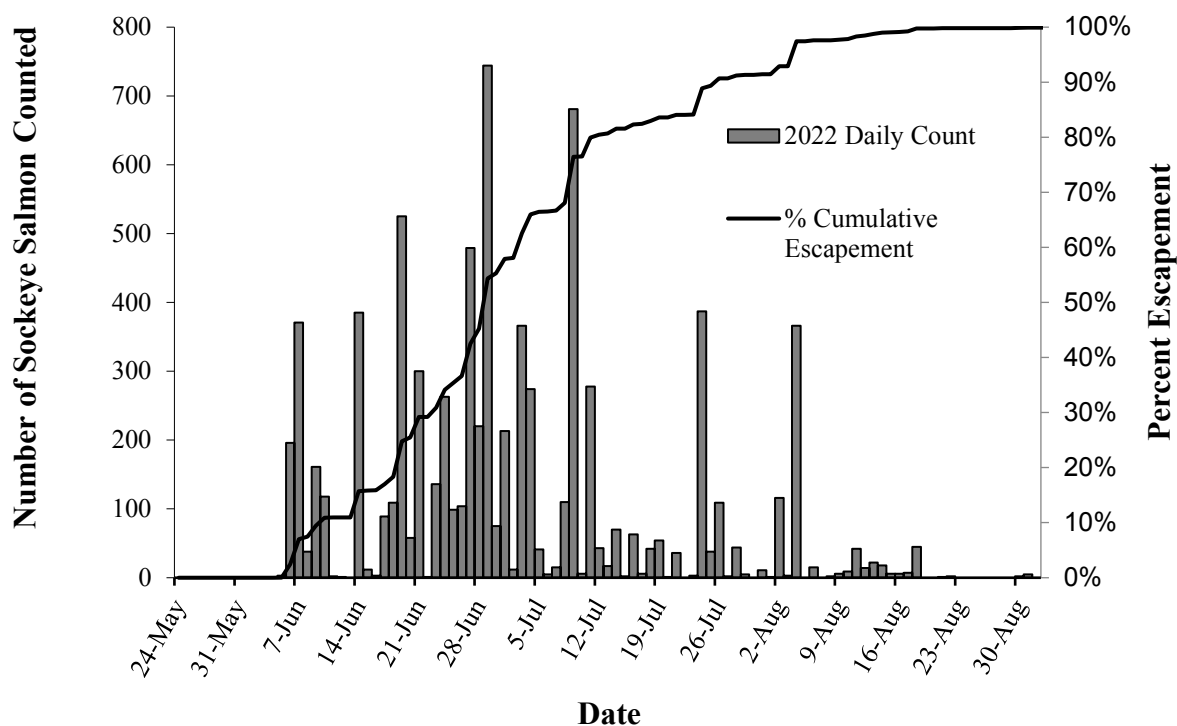
### ESCAPEMENT

Through September 27, the count of sockeye salmon at the Buskin River was 8,121 fish. This is above the recent 5-year average of 6,775 fish and above the upper escapement goal range of 5,000 to 8,000 fish (Figure 1). The Buskin River weir, located at the outlet of Buskin Lake, was operational on May 16 and was removed on August 3. A weir associated with a separate project was installed in the lower portion of the river on August 2 and sockeye salmon continued to be

counted through September 27. The 2022 run started fairly slow and the subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries were closed for a period of about 3 weeks during June (Figure 2).



**Figure 1.- Buskin River sockeye salmon escapement, 2013-2022.**



**Figure 2.- Daily and cumulative sockeye salmon weir counts into Buskin Lake through September 1, 2022.**

The Lake Louise tributary weir was monitored in the previous budget cycle of this project; however, a weir was not installed as part of the current budget cycle. In occasional observations of the tributary, very few fish were observed, even during high water events.

Emergency orders were issued in early June 2022 closing Buskin River sockeye salmon for subsistence, sport, and commercial fishing; however, increased escapements resulted in the emergency orders being rescinded about 3 weeks later.

**STOCK ASSESSMENT- 2022 RESULTS**

Samples and data collected from the 2021 season were analyzed during the spring of 2022. The escapement goal was reviewed, and details are provided in the final report for the previous budget cycle (Stock Assessment of Sockeye Salmon in the Buskin River, 2018–2021). A spawner-recruit analysis was used to assess the Buskin Lake sockeye salmon BEG using four additional years of data. The analysis indicated that an escapement range of about 4,300 to 8,000 fish would provide for sustained yields within 90% of maximum sustained yields with 90% or greater probability. While the lower end of the escapement goal range was slightly lower than the current 5,000 fish, it was recommended to retain the current BEG of 5,000 to 8,000 fish.

Data was collected for further future stock assessment during 2022. Temporal sample goals were exceeded with a total of 401 fish sampled for age, sex, and length (goal: 320). The 2022 Buskin River sockeye salmon escapement was primarily composed of age-2.2 fish at 38.3% of the escapement followed by age-1.3 fish (27.9%), age-2.3 (27.1%), and age-1.2 (3.8%). Female sockeye salmon averaged 485 mm (mid-eye to tail-fork), only slightly smaller than the 2017-2021 average of 495 mm. Similarly, male sockeye salmon averaged 459 mm, which was below the recent five-year average size of 512 mm.

### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

Since 2003, the Buskin River project has been a vehicle for fisheries-based education and development of career interests for young subsistence users through establishment of a high school intern program. During this internship, students gain knowledge of the principles involved in fisheries management and research while obtaining field experience in fisheries data collection methods and techniques. The intern program annually employs two top qualified students who work on the Buskin project under supervision of ADF&G staff between June 8 and August 8. There was only one qualified applicant in 2022 who was subsequently hired. Due to her success as an intern, we hope she returns to work for the Department as a technician. The high school intern program has had outstanding success, to the extent that at least six former interns are currently employed with ADF&G as seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technicians or Fisheries Biologists, and 22 of 33 former interns have returned to work for the Department at some point.

### **CONCLUSION**

The 2022 escapement was above the recent 5-year average and fishing pressure was low due to the closure of the subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries in June because of slow and late run timing (Figure 2). While no formal forecasting is calculated for the Buskin River sockeye salmon run, it appears that the 2022 run was similar to the informal estimate. Sport and subsistence harvests have yet to be estimated, so total run information is not available. Based primarily on a strong age 2.2 component of the 2022 run, we are cautiously optimistic about a stronger run of 3-ocean fish than observed in recent years and an above average 2023 run.

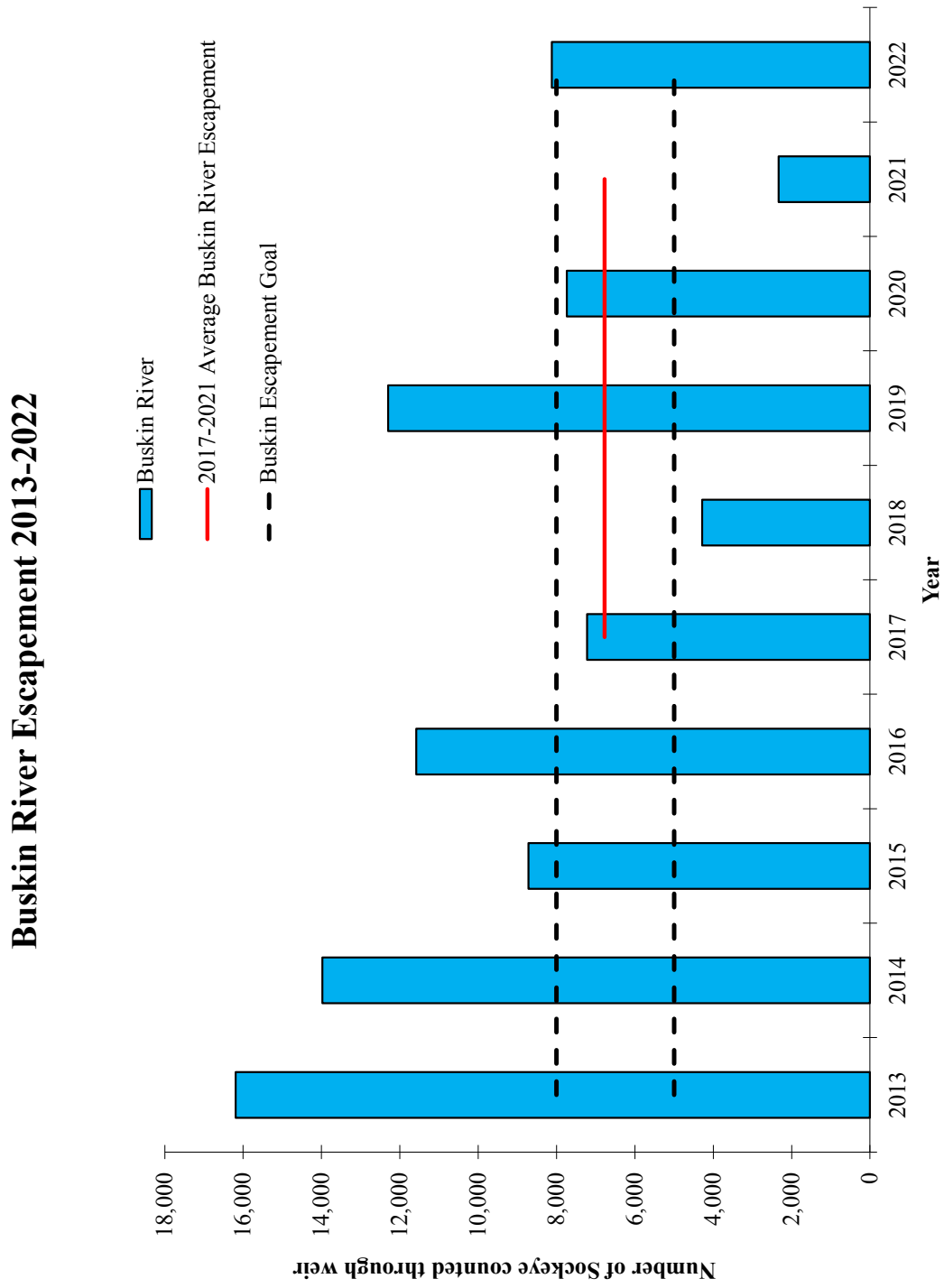
The new component of this project includes scale measurement to estimate growth at various life stages and to explore that variability with climate conditions. Equipment and software are currently being purchased and setup will occur this spring. Scale measurement will begin this upcoming fall and winter. Over the course of the 4 years of this funding cycle, scales collected during previous years will be measured for growth.

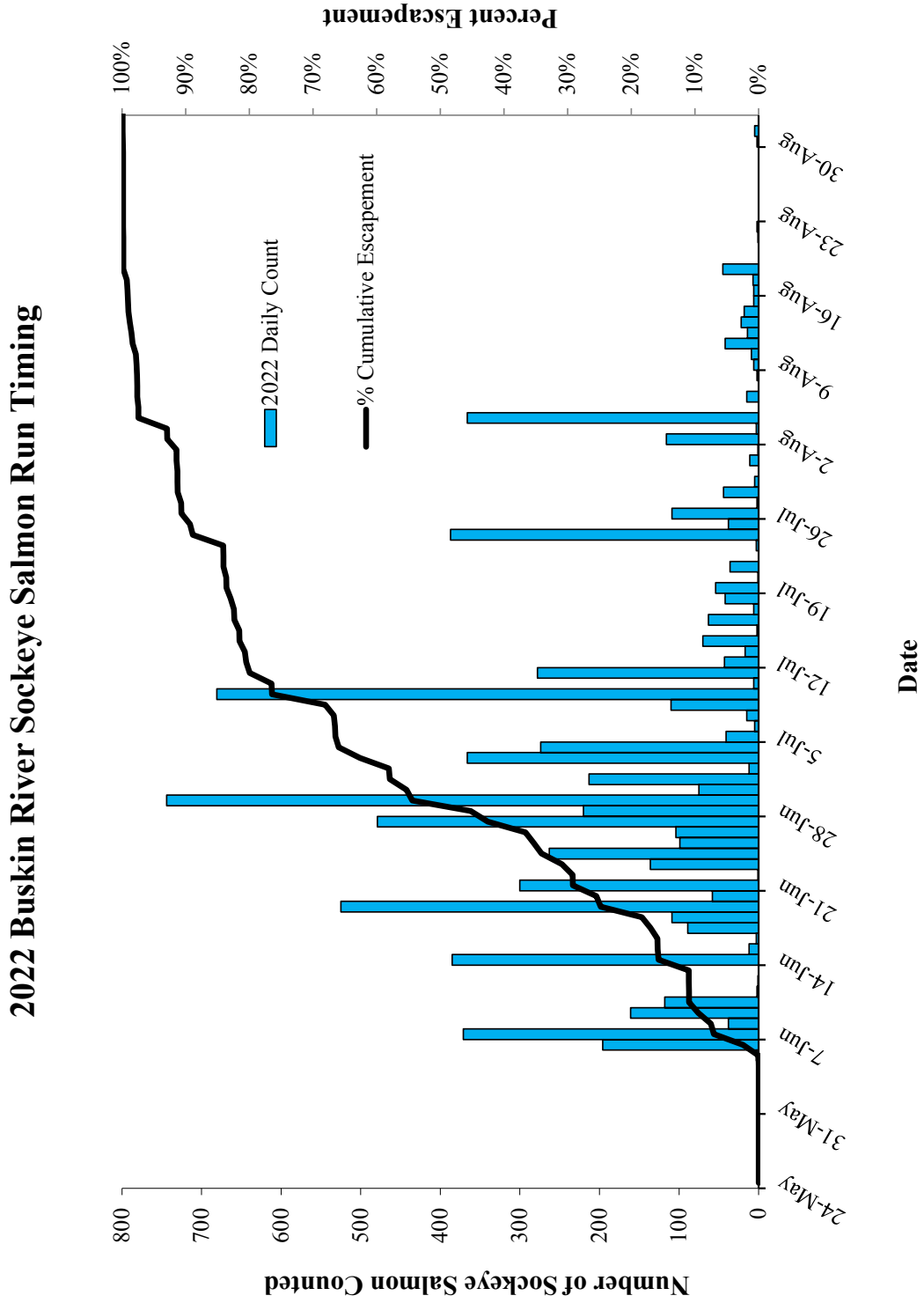
It is important to note that the Buskin River sockeye salmon run size has been on a decreasing trend over the past 20 years or so. The causal factors for this decline is unknown and further investigation will be beneficial.

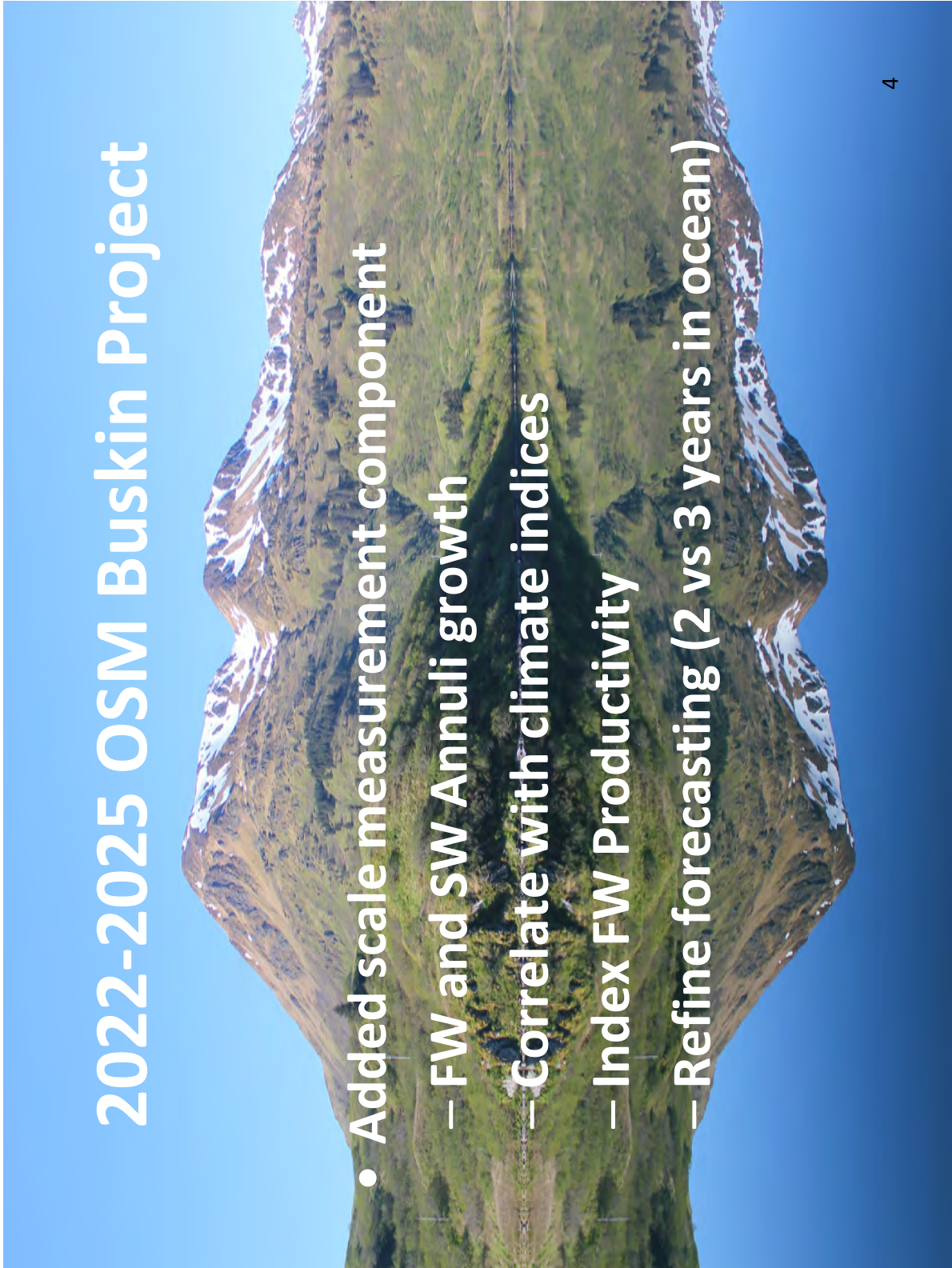
Annual implementation of the Buskin River sockeye salmon weir project, made possible with funding from the Fisheries Research Monitoring Program, has been essential for inseason management that is necessary to sustain the health of the Buskin River sockeye salmon stock while providing maximum harvest opportunity for subsistence users. Continuation of this project will allow for additional analysis of run productivity to aid in the ongoing assessment of sockeye salmon returns to the Buskin River. It will also aid in refining the BEG concurrent with triennial Board of Fisheries meetings, as in the 2011 cycle when the goal was changed as a direct result of this project.







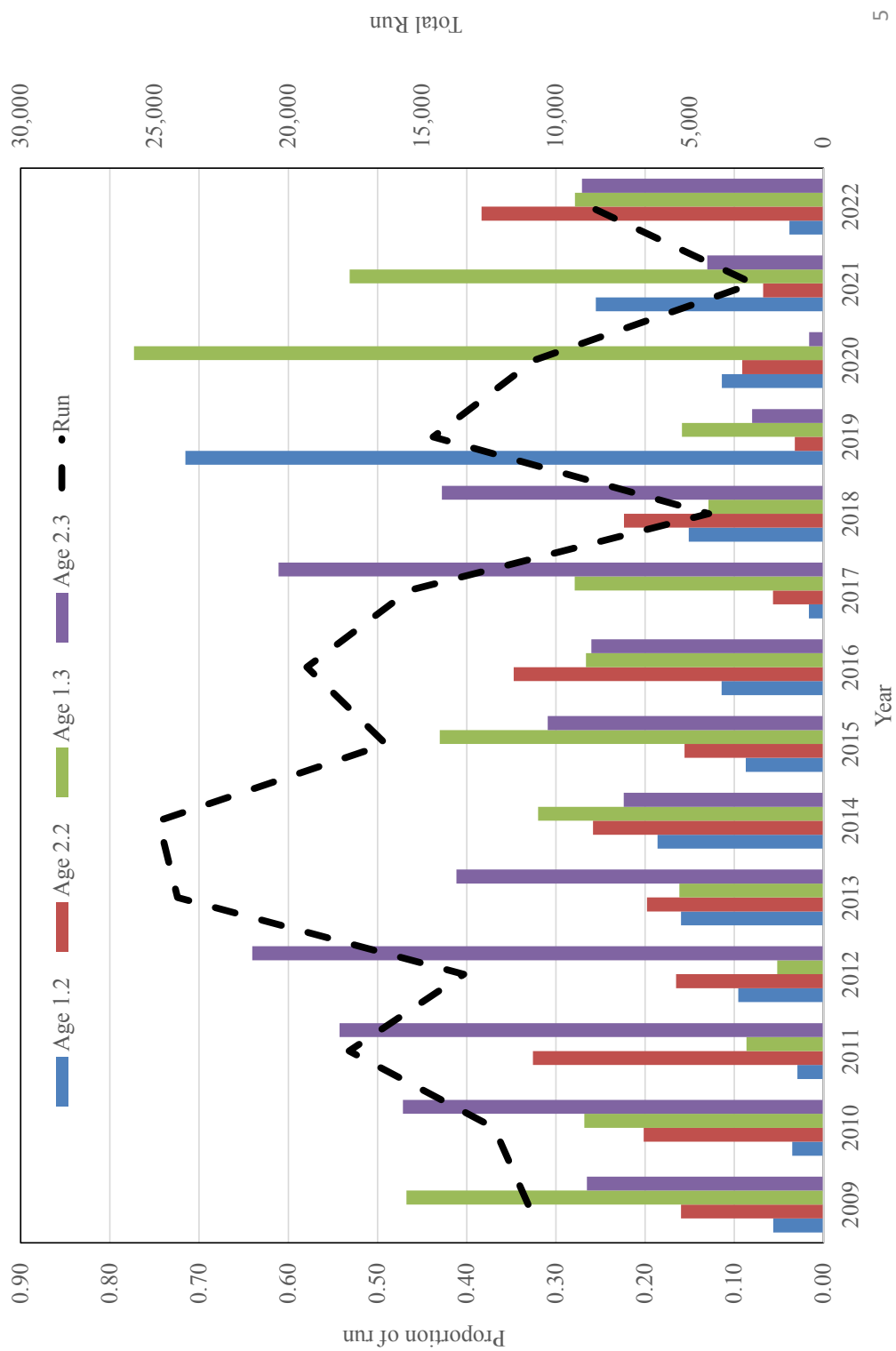


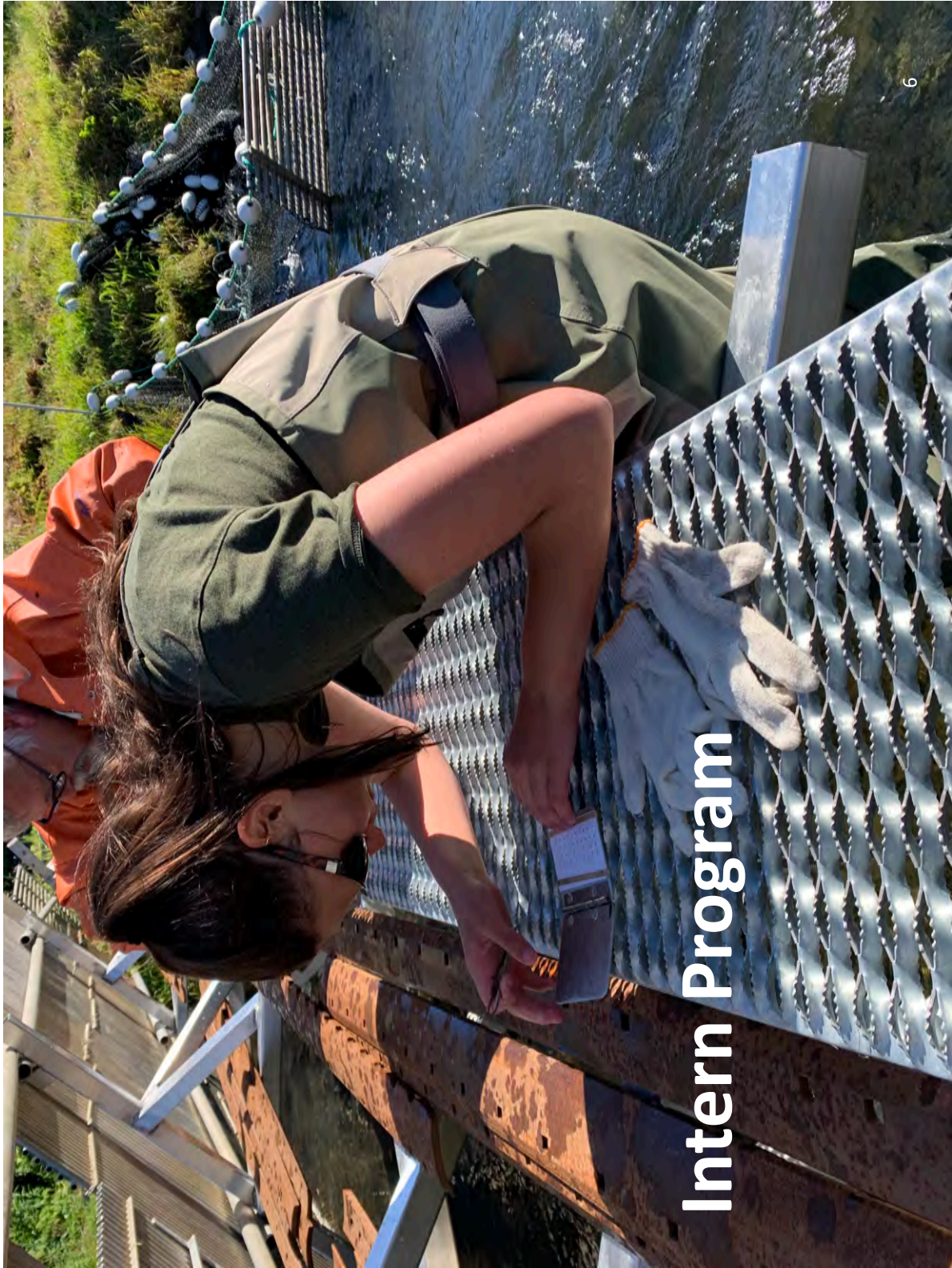


# 2022-2025 OSM Buskin Project

- Added scale measurement component
  - FW and SW Annuli growth
  - Correlate with climate indices
  - Index FW Productivity
  - Refine forecasting (2 vs 3 years in ocean)

Age Composition and Run Size of Buskin River Sockeye Salmon 2009-2022







Questions?



### Project Updates

1. **FRMP 18-450: Changing Regulations, Changing Environment, Changing Practices: A Study of Fish Harvest Practices in Unalaska** (Ends December 31, 2022)

**Purpose:** Produce reliable estimates of the harvest and use of salmon and other nonsalmon fish species used for subsistence in Unalaska.

**Next step:** The final report was submitted to OSM by the December deadline, and can be downloaded at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/techpap/TP491.pdf>.

2. **FRMP 2020-450: Subsistence harvest trends of salmon and nonsalmon fish in Kodiak City and road-connected areas** (Ends June 30, 2024)

**Purpose:** (1) Provide reliable harvest estimates of the use of salmon and other nonsalmon fish species for subsistence, and (2) document local observations of change in fish populations and associated effects on subsistence uses for the Kodiak Road System.

**Next step:** Draft results were presented at a community data review meeting on November 3, 2022. There were 10 attendees. Additional key respondent interviews will take place in summer 2023 and the final report will be complete by June 2024.



3. **FRMP 2022-454: Reliable estimates of subsistence harvests and uses in Ouzinkie and Port Lions** (Ends December 31, 2024)

**Purpose:** (1) Produce reliable estimates of salmon and other resources harvested and used for subsistence; (2) Create comprehensive spatial maps of subsistence harvest areas; and (3) Document local observations of subsistence harvesting practices and potential changes in subsistence resource populations, harvesting trends, and areas used.

**Next step:** In partnership with the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, five subsistence staff traveled to Ouzinkie and Port Lions in February 2023 with Amy Peterson. The group conducted surveys and key respondent interviews, and ADF&G is currently analyzing the data. Community data review meeting will take place in fall of 2023. Thank you to Ouzinkie and Port Lions for the warm welcome!

4. **FRMP 2022-452: False Pass and Nelson Lagoon Subsistence Harvest Monitoring and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Investigation** (Ends June 30, 2025)

**Purpose:** (1) Estimate subsistence salmon and other wild resources harvest amounts for study year 2023; (2) evaluate the subsistence salmon permit system and recommend improvements based on study findings; (3) document traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) observations related to the effects of environmental change on salmon populations and subsistence activities.

**Next step:** Researchers will travel to both communities for a scoping meeting prior to the 2024 household harvest surveys for the 2023 study year.

### For more information or concerns about subsistence

1. Contact Jackie Keating, Southcentral Subsistence Resource Specialist: (907) 267-2368, [jacqueline.keating@alaska.gov](mailto:jacqueline.keating@alaska.gov) or Bronwyn Jones, Southwest SRS, at [bronwyn.jones@alaska.gov](mailto:bronwyn.jones@alaska.gov).
2. Visit the Community Subsistence Information System: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sb/CSIS/>
3. Download Subsistence Publications: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/>

The mission of the Division of Subsistence is to scientifically gather, quantify, evaluate, and report information about customary and traditional uses of Alaska's fish and wildlife resources (AS 16.05.094).



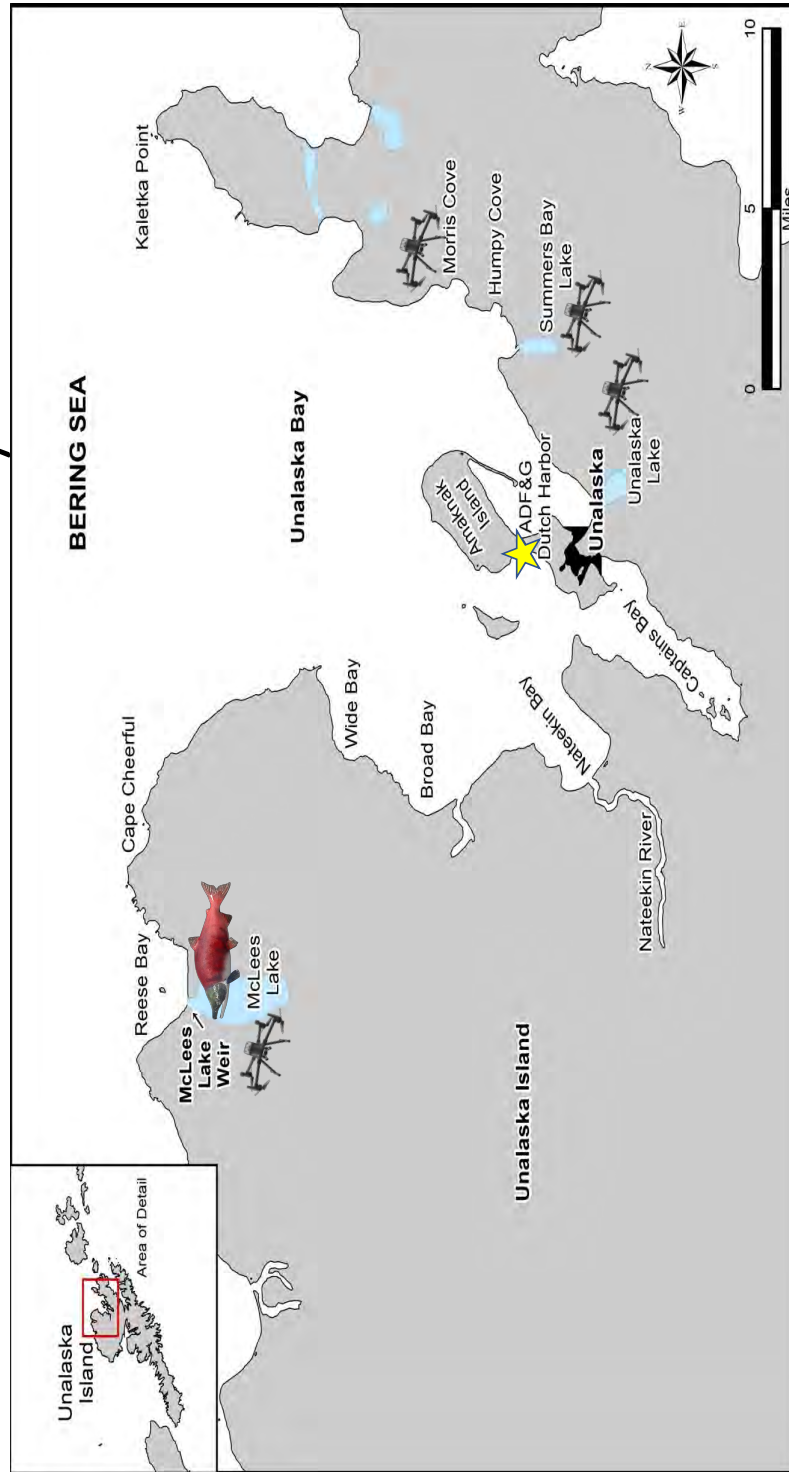
# Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Salmon Update Spring 2023



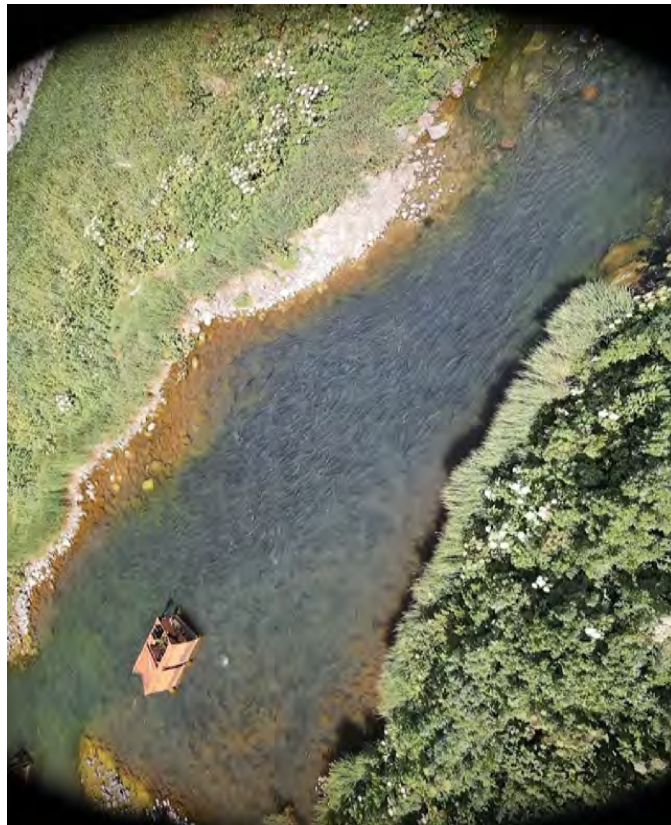
## Timeline for Salmon Drone Surveys

- 2018-present: Roadside surveys performed on Morris Cove, Summer Bay, and Unalaska (Iliuliuk) Lakes.
- 2020 & 2021: pilot drone surveys of McLees Lake done
- 2022 & 2023: AKSSF funding for mark-recapture studies of McLees drone surveys
- 2022: Drone Surveys performed on Russell Creek, Trout Creek, and Swan Lake in Cold Bay

# Unalaska Island Drone Survey Locations



Good, Not Bad, and Ugly



# Unalaska Lake

• Sept 10, 2021



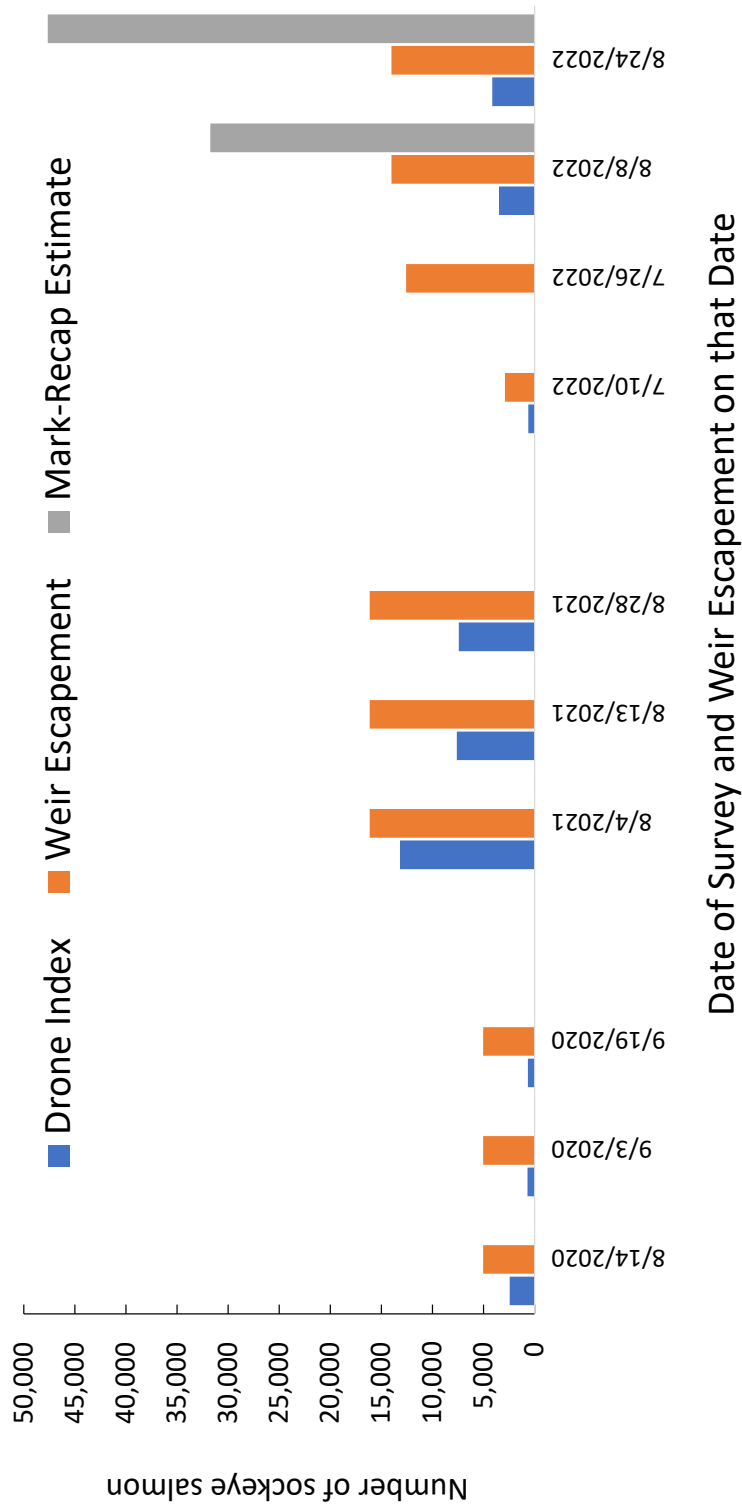
• Aug 23, 2022



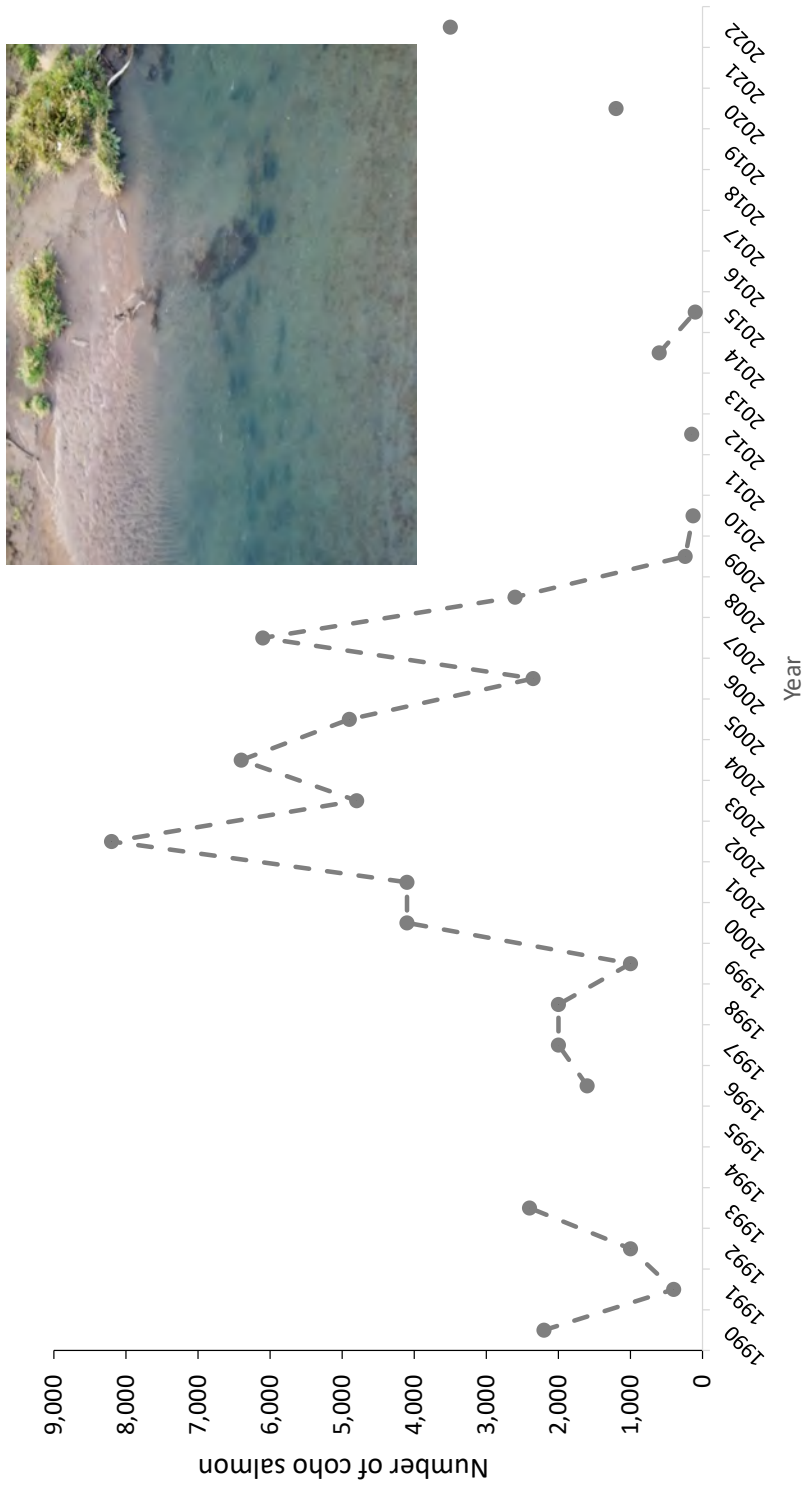
## 2022 & 2023 Mark-Recapture Drone Surveys



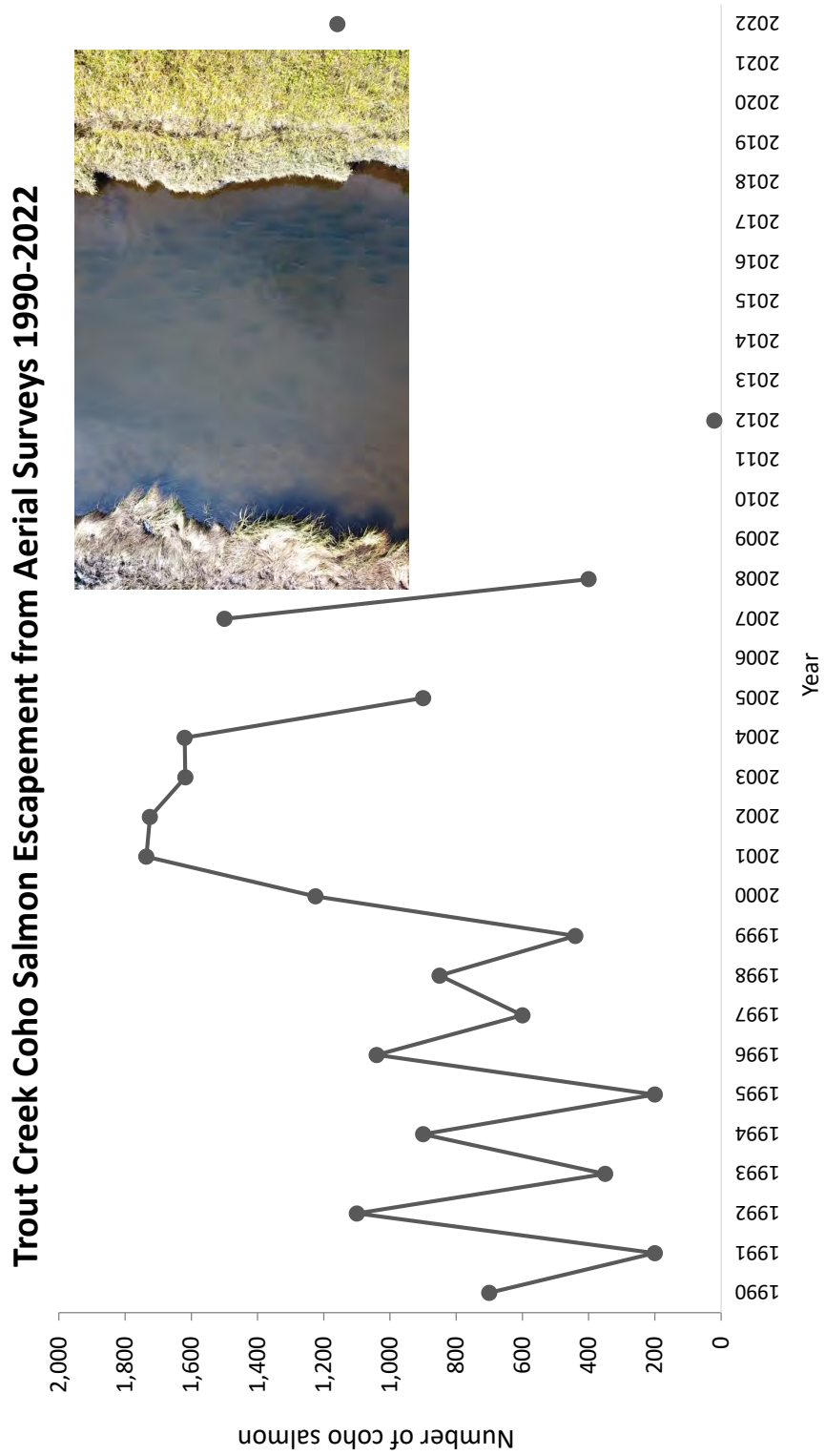
# McLees Lake Drone Surveys vs Weir Escapement



Russel Creek Coho Salmon Escapement from Aerial Surveys 1990-2022









Swan  
Lake  
and  
Cygnet  
Pond



**Swan Lake**  
• 101 sockeye in  
Cygnets Pond

## Other ADF&G Updates

- April 2023: Unalaska Drone Survey Memo will be sent out
- 2023 Board of Fisheries
- 2022 South Alaska Peninsula Salmon Annual Management Report and 2021 Subsistence Fisheries in the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amliia Islands Management Areas
  - Appendix E10-E15; F6 & F11
- Co-PI for next round of FRMP funding for McLees Weir

Qagaasakung!





## **Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Correspondence Policy**

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) recognizes the value of the Regional Advisory Councils' role in the Federal Subsistence Management Program. The Board realizes that the Councils must interact with fish and wildlife resource agencies, organizations, and the public as part of their official duties, and that this interaction may include correspondence. Since the beginning of the Federal Subsistence Program, Regional Advisory Councils have prepared correspondence to entities other than the Board. Informally, Councils were asked to provide drafts of correspondence to the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) for review prior to mailing. Recently, the Board was asked to clarify its position regarding Council correspondence. This policy is intended to formalize guidance from the Board to the Regional Advisory Councils in preparing correspondence.

The Board is mindful of its obligation to provide the Regional Advisory Councils with clear operating guidelines and policies, and has approved the correspondence policy set out below. The intent of the Regional Advisory Council correspondence policy is to ensure that Councils are able to correspond appropriately with other entities. In addition, the correspondence policy will assist Councils in directing their concerns to others most effectively and forestall any breach of department policy.

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Title VIII required the creation of Alaska's Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils to serve as advisors to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to provide meaningful local participation in the management of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands. Within the framework of Title VIII and the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Congress assigned specific powers and duties to the Regional Advisory Councils. These are also reflected in the Councils' charters. (*Reference: ANILCA Title VIII §805, §808, and §810; Implementing regulations for Title VIII, 50 CFR 100 \_\_.11 and 36 CFR 242 \_\_.11; Implementing regulations for FACA, 41 CFR Part 102-3.70 and 3.75*)

The Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture created the Federal Subsistence Board and delegated to it the responsibility for managing fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands. The Board was also given the duty of establishing rules and procedures for the operation of the Regional Advisory Councils. The Office of Subsistence Management was established within the Federal Subsistence Management Program's lead agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to administer the Program. (*Reference: 36 CFR Part 242 and 50 CFR Part 100 Subparts C and D*)

### **Policy**

1. The subject matter of Council correspondence shall be limited to matters over which the Council has authority under §805(a)(3), §808, §810 of Title VIII, Subpart B §\_\_\_.11(c) of regulation, and as described in the Council charters.
2. Councils may, and are encouraged to, correspond directly with the Board. The Councils are advisors to the Board.
3. Councils are urged to also make use of the annual report process to bring matters to the Board's attention.

4. As a general rule, Councils discuss and agree upon proposed correspondence during a public meeting. Occasionally, a Council chair may be requested to write a letter when it is not feasible to wait until a public Council meeting. In such cases, the content of the letter shall be limited to the known position of the Council as discussed in previous Council meetings.
5. Except as noted in Items 6, 7, and 8 of this policy, Councils will transmit all correspondence to the Assistant Regional Director (ARD) of OSM for review prior to mailing. This includes, but is not limited to, letters of support, resolutions, letters offering comment or recommendations, and any other correspondence to any government agency or any tribal or private organization or individual.
  - a. Recognizing that such correspondence is the result of an official Council action and may be urgent, the ARD will respond in a timely manner.
  - b. Modifications identified as necessary by the ARD will be discussed with the Council chair. Councils will make the modifications before sending out the correspondence.
6. Councils may submit written comments requested by Federal land management agencies under ANILCA §810 or requested by regional Subsistence Resource Commissions (SRC) under §808 directly to the requesting agency. Section 808 correspondence includes comments and information solicited by the SRCs and notification of appointment by the Council to an SRC.
7. Councils may submit proposed regulatory changes or written comments regarding proposed regulatory changes affecting subsistence uses within their regions to the Alaska Board of Fisheries or the Alaska Board of Game directly. A copy of any comments or proposals will be forwarded to the ARD when the original is submitted.
8. Administrative correspondence such as letters of appreciation, requests for agency reports at Council meetings, and cover letters for meeting agendas will go through the Council's regional coordinator to the appropriate OSM division chief for review.
9. Councils will submit copies of all correspondence generated by and received by them to OSM to be filed in the administrative record system.
10. Except as noted in Items 6, 7, and 8, Councils or individual Council members acting on behalf of or as representative of the Council may not, through correspondence or any other means of communication, attempt to persuade any elected or appointed political officials, any government agency, or any tribal or private organization or individual to take a particular action on an issue. This does not prohibit Council members from acting in their capacity as private citizens or through other organizations with which they are affiliated.

Approved by the Federal Subsistence Board on June 15, 2004.



# Fall 2023 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

*Last updated 11/7/2022*

Due to travel budget limitations placed by Department of the Interior on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of Subsistence Management, the dates and locations of these meetings will be subject to change

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug. 13	Aug. 14 <b>Window Opens</b>	Aug. 15	Aug. 16	Aug. 17	Aug. 18	Aug. 19
Aug. 20	Aug. 21	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24	Aug. 25	Aug. 26
Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Sep. 1	Sep. 2
Sep. 3	Sep. 4 <b>Labor Day Holiday</b>	Sep. 5	Sep. 6	Sep. 7	Sep. 8	Sep. 9
Sep. 10	Sep. 11	Sep. 12	Sep. 13	Sep. 14	Sep. 15	Sep. 16
Sep. 17	Sep. 18	Sep. 19	Sep. 20	Sep. 21	Sep. 22	Sep. 23
		<b>KARAC (King Cove)</b>				
Sep. 24	Sep. 25	Sep. 26	Sep. 27	Sep. 28	Sep. 29	Sep. 30
Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6	Oct. 7
	<b>SCRAC (Kenai)</b>		<b>EIRAC (Tok or Fairbanks)</b>			
Oct. 8	Oct. 9 <b>Columbus Day Holiday</b>	Oct. 10	Oct. 11	Oct. 12	Oct. 13	Oct. 14
		<b>YKDRAC (Anchorage or Bethel)</b>				
		<b>WIRAC (Fairbanks)</b>				
Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19	Oct. 20	Oct. 21
	<b>NWARAC (Kotzebue)</b>					
Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24	Oct. 25	Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28
		<b>BBRAC (Dillingham)</b>				
		<b>SEARAC (Sitka)</b>				
Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 1	Nov. 2	Nov. 3 <b>Window Closes</b>	Nov. 4
			<b>NSRAC (Utqiagvik)</b>			
			<b>SPRAC (Nome)</b>			

# Winter 2024 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

*Last updated 12/22/2022*

Due to travel budget limitations placed by Department of the Interior on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of Subsistence Management, the dates and locations of these meetings will be subject to chang

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday-	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Mar. 3</i>	<i>Mar. 4 Window Opens</i>	<i>Mar. 5</i>	<i>Mar. 6</i>	<i>Mar. 7</i>	<i>Mar. 8</i>	<i>Mar. 9</i>
<i>Mar. 10</i>	<i>Mar. 11</i>	<i>Mar. 12</i>	<i>Mar. 13</i>	<i>Mar. 14</i>	<i>Mar. 15</i>	<i>Mar. 16</i>
<i>Mar. 17</i>	<i>Mar. 18</i>	<i>Mar. 19</i>	<i>Mar. 20</i>	<i>Mar. 21</i>	<i>Mar. 22</i>	<i>Mar. 23</i>
<i>Mar. 24</i>	<i>Mar. 25</i>	<i>Mar. 26</i>	<i>Mar. 27</i>	<i>Mar. 28</i>	<i>Mar. 29 Window Closes</i>	<i>Mar. 30</i>

# Fall 2024 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

*Last updated 12/22/2022*

Due to travel budget limitations placed by Department of the Interior on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of Subsistence Management, the dates and locations of these meetings will be subject to change

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug. 18	Aug. 19 <b>Window Opens</b>	Aug. 20	Aug. 21	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24
Aug. 25	Aug. 26	Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31
Sep. 1	Sep. 2 <b>Labor Day Holiday</b>	Sep. 3	Sep. 4	Sep. 5	Sep. 6	Sep. 7
Sep. 8	Sep. 9	Sep. 10	Sep. 11	Sep. 12	Sep. 13	Sep. 14
Sep. 15	Sep. 16	Sep. 17	Sep. 18	Sep. 19	Sep. 20	Sep. 21
Sep. 22	Sep. 23	Sep. 24	Sep. 25	Sep. 26	Sep. 27	Sep. 28
Sep. 29	Sep. 30	Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5
Oct. 6	Oct. 7	Oct. 8	Oct. 9	Oct. 10	Oct. 11	Oct. 12
Oct. 13	Oct. 14 <b>Columbus Day Holiday</b>	Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19
Oct. 20	Oct. 21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24	Oct. 25	Oct. 26
Oct. 27	Oct. 28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 1 <b>Window Closes</b>	Nov. 2



**Department of the Interior  
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

**Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

**Charter**

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council).
2. **Authority.** The Council is renewed by virtue of the authority set out in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) (16 U.S.C. 3115 (1988)) Title VIII, and under the authority of the Secretary of the Interior, in furtherance of 16 U.S.C. 410hh-2. The Council is regulated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, (5 U.S.C., Appendix 2).
3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The objective of the Council is to provide a forum for the residents of the Region with personal knowledge of local conditions and resource requirements to have a meaningful role in the subsistence management of fish and wildlife on Federal lands and waters in the Region.
4. **Description of Duties.** Council duties and responsibilities, where applicable, are as follows:
  - a. Recommend the initiation, review, and evaluate of proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters relating to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife on public lands within the region.
  - b. Provide a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations by persons interested in any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife on public lands within the Region.
  - c. Encourage local and regional participation in the decision-making process affecting the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within the region for subsistence uses.
  - d. Prepare an annual report to the Secretary containing the following:
    - (1) An identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the Region;
    - (2) An evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife populations within the Region;

- (3) A recommended strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the Region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs; and
    - (4) Recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.
  - e. Make recommendations on determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources.
  - f. Make recommendations on determinations of rural status.
  - g. Provide recommendations on the establishment and membership of Federal local advisory committees.
5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Council Reports.** The Council reports to the Federal Subsistence Board Chair, who is appointed by the Secretary of the Interior with the concurrence of the Secretary of Agriculture.
6. **Support.** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will provide administrative support for the activities of the Council through the Office of Subsistence Management.
7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the Council's functions are estimated to be \$175,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.0 Federal staff year.
8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The DFO is the Subsistence Council Coordinator for the Region or such other Federal employee as may be designated by the Assistant Regional Director – Subsistence, Region 11, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DFO is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will:
- (a) Approve or call all Council and subcommittee meetings;
  - (b) Prepare and approve all meeting agendas;
  - (c) Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings;
  - (d) Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest; and
  - (e) Chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the advisory committee reports.
9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Council will meet 1-2 times per

year, and at such times as designated by the Federal Subsistence Board Chair or the DFO.

10. **Duration.** Continuing.
11. **Termination.** The Council will be inactive 2 years from the date the charter is filed, unless prior to that date, the charter is renewed in accordance with provisions of section 14 of the FACA. The Council will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.
12. **Membership and Designation.** The Council's membership is composed of representative members as follows:

Ten members who are knowledgeable and experienced in matters relating to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife and who are residents of the region represented by the Council.

To ensure that each Council represents a diversity of interests, the Federal Subsistence Board in their nomination recommendations to the Secretary will strive to ensure that seven of the members (70 percent) represent subsistence interests within the region and three of the members (30 percent) represent commercial and sport interests within the region. The portion of membership representing commercial and sport interests must include, where possible, at least one representative from the sport community and one representative from the commercial community.

For geographic membership balance, it is a Council goal to seat four members who reside on the Kodiak Archipelago, three members who reside on the Alaska Peninsula, and three who reside on the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands.

The Secretary of the Interior will appoint members based on the recommendations from the Federal Subsistence Board and with the concurrence of the Secretary of Agriculture.

Members will be appointed for 3-year terms. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

If appointments for a given year have not yet been announced, a member may continue to serve on the Council following the expiration of his or her term until such appointments have been made. Unless reappointed, the member's service ends on the date of announcement even if that member's specific seat remains unfilled.

Alternate members may be appointed to the Council to fill vacancies if they occur out of cycle. An alternate member must be approved and appointed by the Secretary before attending the meeting as a representative. The term for an appointed alternate member will be the same as the term of the member whose vacancy is being filled.

Council members will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary for a 1-year term.

Members of the Council will serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, Council and subcommittee members engaged in Council, or subcommittee business, approved by the DFO, may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in Government service under Section 5703 of title 5 of the United States Code.

13. **Ethics Responsibilities of Members.** No Council or subcommittee member will participate in any Council or subcommittee deliberations or votes relating to a specific party matter before the Department or its bureaus and offices including a lease, license, permit, contract, grant, claim, agreement, or litigation in which the member or the entity the member represents has a direct financial interest.
14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO’s approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purpose of compiling information or conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full Council for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.
15. **Recordkeeping.** The Records of the Council, and formally and informally established subcommittees or other subgroups of the Council, must be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedules. These records must be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

          /signature on the filed original/            
Secretary of the Interior

          Dec. 10, 2021            
Date Signed

          Dec. 13, 2021            
Date Filed





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