

# North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

## Meeting Materials



**NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Egan Center  
Anchorage, Alaska  
March 9, 2016  
8:30 am-5:30 pm

**TELECONFERENCE:** call the toll free number: 1-866-864-5314 then when prompted enter the passcode: 3091862

**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. 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. **Roll Call and Establish Quorum** (*Secretary*)..... NS-3
2. **Invocation**
3. **Call to Order** (*Chair*)
4. **Welcome and Introductions** (*Chair*)
5. **Review and Adopt Agenda\*** (*Chair*) ..... NS-1
6. **Election of Officers**
  - Chair (*DFO*)
  - Vice-Chair (*New Chair*)
  - Secretary (*New Chair*)
7. **Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes\*** (*Chair*) ..... NS-4
8. **Reports**
  - Council Member Reports
  - Chair’s Report
9. **Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items**
10. **Old Business** (*Chair*)

- a. OSM proposed amendment to Unit 26A caribou regulatory proposals to split hunt area to manage the Teshekpuk and Western Arctic caribou herds separately\* ..... NS-22
- b. National Park Service Proposed Rule on Subsistence Collections\* .....218
- c. Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve – update and report on allotment access (Marcy Okada)
- d. Review/Discussion/Finalize Anaktuvuk Pass controlled use area proposal to Board of Game\*

**11. New Business (Chair)**

- a. Call for Federal Fish and Shellfish Regulatory Proposals \* (*OSM Fisheries*).....225
- b. Develop Priority Information Needs for FRMP\* (*OSM Fisheries*) ..... NS-31
- c. Approve FY2015 Annual Report\* (*Council Coordinator*) ..... NS-27

**12. Agency Reports**

- a. Subsistence caribou household harvest and sharing patterns (*Jim Magdanz, University of Alaska Fairbanks*)
- b. Other Agency reports from Fall 2015 meeting - requested by NSRAC

**13. Joint session with Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (to be held March 11, 1:30 pm)**

- a. Use of snow machines for hunting discussion
- b. WSA 16-01 (closure of hunt for caribou in Unit 23 to non-Federally qualified subsistence users)

**14. Future Meeting Dates\***

- Confirm date and location of Fall 2016 meeting .....235
- Select date and location for Winter 2017 meeting .....236

**15. Closing Comments**

**16. Adjourn (Chair)**

To teleconference into the meeting, call the toll free number: 1-866-864-5314, then when prompted enter the passcode: 3091862

*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 Eva Patton, 907-786-3358, [eva\\_patton@fws.gov](mailto:eva_patton@fws.gov) or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on February 20, 2016.

**REGION 10**  
**North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

<b>Seat</b>	<b>Year Apptd Term Expires</b>	<b>Member Name Community</b>
<b>1</b>	2011 2017	<b>Gordon R. Brower</b> Barrow
<b>2</b>	2011 2016	<b>Robert V. Shears</b> Barrow
<b>3</b>	2015 2016	<b>Steve A. Oomituk</b> Point Hope
<b>4</b>	2016	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>5</b>	1993 2017	<b>Harry K. Brower Jr.</b> Barrow <span style="float: right;"><b>Chair</b></span>
<b>6</b>	2014 2017	<b>Sam Kunaknana</b> Nuiqsut
<b>7</b>	2016	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>8</b>	2015	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>9</b>	2006 2018	<b>Lee Kayotuk</b> Kaktovik <span style="float: right;"><b>Secretary</b></span>
<b>10</b>	2009 2018	<b>Rosemary Ahtuanguaruak</b> Barrow <span style="float: right;"><b>Vice Chair</b></span>

NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC MEETING

City of Anaktuvuk Pass Community Center  
Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska

November 3-4, 2015  
8:30 am – 5:30 pm

**Council Members Present:**

Harry K. Brower, Jr. - Chair  
Rosemary Ahtuanguak – Vice Chair (via teleconference)  
Gordon Brower  
Lee Kayotuk  
Robert Shears  
Sam Kunaknana  
James Nageak

**Meeting Attendees:**

*Public and Local organizations:*

Raymond Paneak, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Sollie Hugo III, Killikmiut  
Jerry S. Sikvayugak, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Earl Williams, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Rhoda Ahgeak, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Laura Tickett, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Peter Earl Williams, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Louisa Riley, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Just Jensen, Resident of AKP

Kenny Mekiana, Mayor AKP  
Esther Hugo, City of Anaktuvuk Pass  
Kathy Morry, City of Anaktuvuk Pass  
Thomas Rulland, City Anaktuvuk Pass  
Jack Williams, City of Anaktuvuk Pass  
Susan Morry, City of Anaktuvuk Pass  
Lawrence Burris, Nunamiut Corporation  
Timothy Ahgook, UCAN TUTTU  
Riley R. Sikvayugak, Jr. Nunamiut Corp. and UCAN TUTTU president  
Anthony Edwards, North Slope Borough  
Vicky Monahan, Simon Paneak Museum

*Tribal Organizations:*

Anna Nageak, Naqragmiut Tribal Council  
Andrew Hopson, Naqragmiut Tribal Council

Vera K. Nay, AKP ICAS & Naqsrarmiut Tribal Council

*Agency staff:*

Eva Patton, Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management  
Carl Johnson, Council Coordination Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management  
Jennifer Hardin, Anthropology Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management  
Tom Evans, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management  
Karen Hyer, Fisheries Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management  
Dave Yokel, Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Land Management, Arctic Field Office  
Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator, Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve  
Al Smith, Park Ranger, Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve, Anaktuvuk Pass  
Adrienne Fleek, Alaska Native Affairs Liaison, National Park Service, Anchorage  
Erin Drake, National Park Service, Anchorage  
Lincoln Perrett, Wildlife Biologist, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Barrow  
Brian Person, Wildlife Biologist, North Slope Borough  
Earnest Nageak, Native Affairs Specialist, US Fish and Wildlife Service Barrow Field Office  
Uinniq Ahgeak, Biologist, US Fish and Wildlife Service Barrow Field Office  
Brian Glaspell, USFWS Arctic National Wildlife Refuge  
Tom Whitford, USDA Forest Service Interagency Staff Committee  
Glen Chen , Bureau of Indian Affairs Interagency Staff Committee

*Via teleconference:*

Drew Crawford, State subsistence liaison, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Nikki Bream, Anthropologist, Subsistence Division, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Carmen Daggett, Board Support, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Beth Lenart, Wildlife biologist, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Heather Tonneson, Ecologist/Planner US Fish and Wildlife Service, Anchorage  
Robbin Lavine, Anthropologist, Office of Subsistence Management  
Dan Sharp, Interagency Staff Committee, Bureau of Land Management  
Bud Rice, Interagency Staff Committee, National Park Service  
Kumi Rattenburi, Wildlife biologist, National Park Service  
Kyle Jolly, Wildlife biologist, National Park Service  
Ken Atkisson, Subsistence Program Manager, National Park Service Kotzebue  
Edward Rexford, Sr. Kaktovik/ Native Village of Kaktovik

**Roll call**

Quorum was established. Vice Chair Rosemary Ahtuanguaruak participated by teleconference for portions of the meeting while on travel for her work.

**Welcome and Introductions**

The Council welcomed the many local participants to the meeting and expressed appreciation for the welcome from Anaktuvuk Pass to hold the meeting here. The Council Chair Harry Brower, Jr. encouraged applications to the Council and discussed the importance of meeting in villages outside of Barrow. He expressed the Council wants to hear concerns from the community to

help generate solutions. Vice Chair Rosemary Ahtuanguaruak also thanks all who have contributed to have voice and address concerns and urged participants to persistently bring concerns forward.

### **Council Member Recognition**

James Nageak, who is retiring from the Council, was recognized for his seven years of service and awarded with a certificate from the Federal Subsistence Board for his service. James worked double job as both RAC and SRC member but language and culture is his passion and he will focus on his work with the recent appointment to the Inupiaq Commission

Council members expressed their appreciation for all the knowledge, expression of Inupiaq culture and also humor that James has shared with through his work on the Council.

The Council held a moment of silence to recognize Council member Teddy Frankson of Point Hope, who passed away earlier this year. Council members shared their stories of Teddy Frankson, subsistence advocate, friend, husband, father, subsistence hunter and provider for family and community. Council members also shared appreciation for Teddy's sense of humor and persistence in advocating for subsistence.

### **Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted with some updates and modifications to agency presentations to accommodate guest speakers and timing of caribou reports prior to Council taking action on wildlife proposals.

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

No corrections were found and previous meeting minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

### **Council Member Reports:**

Robert Shears: moved to Barrow couple years ago from Wainwright and now has a full time job that keeps him very busy but has been a subsistence hunter and provider for decades. This year Robert highlighted he is blessed by those who shared berries from Point Hope, caribou from Wainwright, sheep from Anaktuvuk Pass, cisco from Nuiqsut. He notes in his travels he has shared a table with the whole region.

Lee Kayotuk: Reported that it was a good season for whaling and the community of Kaktovik got a few whales. Caribou have been scarce around the community and hunters have had to travel a long ways to find caribou. He notes moose numbers are down and it is hard to feed families. Lee did find fishing was good and some were able to get up into mountains to get sheep to provide sheep for thanksgiving feast. There were a lot of polar bears and tourism activity this summer. Freeze up was late this fall.

Gordon Brower: Provide his report in Inupiaq covering information including the Ipikpuk River, Atqasuk, Tutu, and concerns about fishing.



Gordon stressed it is important to be able to speak in Inupiaq and important to translate to let elders understand clearly. He also feels it is important for land managers to hear this sharing from the land because people are reporting for the fish and the caribou and observe how they are doing - sharing from the people helps land managers to learn. Gordon reported he goes to the Ikpikpuk River where his parents and their parents always fished but now things are warming and it's not always safe ice conditions. Normally he had nets under the ice by September 20 in a normal year of good fishing and then hauls the catch back to Barrow to share with community. He notes fortunately this year froze up good.

Gordon expressed concern about caribou issues with USGS camp activities that were in the path of the migration deflecting the caribou from coming through. He has been looking for which way they made a new trail but the terrain is difficult to get to. He stressed that USGS and other researchers should talk to people before setting up research camp – talk to local folks to optimize research.

Gordon is concerned about fish mold in Ikpikpuk River but he checked and got all healthy fish this fall. The Ikpikpuk is a very important subsistence river for fish.

Sam Kunaknana: Expressed thanks for being able to speak on behalf of Nuiqsut. Nuiqsut is surrounded by industry and it is very difficult as a subsistence hunter and provider. Industrial activity has caused the caribou migration route to change and this has changed subsistence. They used to wait for caribou to come to us now everything changed since industry come. Now Nuiqsut is getting sick fish – he notes they go in the river healthy but when come back out are moldy and sick. He stressed the need to study the area and changes since the establishment of Alpine and other development impacts to the lakes and rivers.

Sam noted he would like to work with Nunamiut to work on Tutu and for the Native Village of Nuiqsut Tribal Council to get together with Anaktuvuk Pass to work on caribou migration. He feels a strong Tribe and strong Subsistence Council working together combined from both communities helps Tribes to unify and are stronger together.

Sam stressed subsistence fish needs and priorities for studies on grayling and finally just started study on whitefish. Grayling and whitefish are very important to Nuiqsut and they go fishing on Fish Creek and get *anluks* for *sulunuk*.

James Nageak Shares he has been speaking for Anaktuvuk Pass on the Council but now the community is here to speak for themselves. He notes that many hunters and providers in Anaktuvuk Pass are in the audience at this meeting (people in audience were acknowledged and applauded). James reports on the work of UCAN, the caribou association of the Nunamiut People and acknowledges all the work they have been doing together. He referenced the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission as an example but that caribou if the most important to unify the Caribou people because Anaktuvuk Pass does not have whale or beluga or walrus.

The community has been hurting for caribou and when it went to Facebook fish starting arriving from the south and walrus from the west and whale from Barrow – people from all over

responded and sent subsistence foods to help the people of Anaktuvuk Pass in this very difficult time. James honored Ester Hugo, Vice Chair City of AKP noting she is a “small women but big voice” to help with caribou concerns.

James shared stories of missing soul food of caribou. He was adopted by Nunamiut, born in Barrow, raised in Kaktovik and would go to mountains in fall for sheep and migration of the caribou got a lot of caribou – they would harvest and bury caribou to preserve it in the ground to access later. He relayed a story from Rhoda that they used to hear bull antlers clacking when they were running and now they yearn for that sound to hear it when it doesn’t come. Ancestors always told us when you try to do something on your own when strong without asking the creator who created the animals for help – started praying for caribou at the church in the morning and a few came. The whale give themselves and the caribou give themselves too.

Chairs Report: Harry Brower, Jr.

Harry addressed the community in Inupiaq and shared at length in Inupiaq so that the elders and everyone can understand and participate in their language.

Chair Harry Brower, Jr. took time to recognize all the people from Anaktuvuk Pass attending the meeting, noting Ester Hugo and others who have attended Western Arctic Caribou Herd meetings. So many meetings and still not resolved but Harry stressed how critical to keep working to meet communities’ needs – many meetings and regulation changes, but still not meeting needs at the end. Keep working on that.

Harry shared his own subsistence hunting activities.

Bearded seal hunting was successful had ice coming back and forth like used to and were successful. Good whaling good ice this year, good migration of whales that come close to shore. Barrow, Wainwright, Kaktovik all had good whaling this year.

Harry notes the migratory birds have a different pattern that has changed when they are flying back south. This year was good fishing grayling, broad whitefish, round whitefish, people are jigging for grayling in ice as he speaks. Harry notes some salmon species showing up – people are catching them more around Barrow and other communities on the North Slope.

Harry is concerned that in many areas the resources are there but *access is changing*. Even when resources are good they continue to have to work on it to provide for community. Many communities across North Slope are helping to share subsistence foods with Anaktuvuk Pass and respond to their call - try to provide for community and prepare for the next season.

Caribou movements and activities that divert them is an ongoing concern when it has been several years that the caribou have not migrated through Anaktuvuk Pass.

**Tribal and Public Comment:**

The Council welcomed the many local participants to the meeting and expressed appreciation for the welcome from Anaktuvuk Pass to hold the meeting here. The Council Chair Harry Brower, Jr. encouraged applications to the Council and discussed the importance of meeting in villages outside of Barrow.

Many Anaktuvuk Pass community members shared heartfelt and extensive testimony on the hardships the community has faced with the limited harvest of caribou in the past few years. Common concerns expressed by the many people who addressed the Council were the importance of caribou to the culture and primary subsistence food of the community, challenges with competing uses and user conflict with sport hunters and air traffic disturbance of the lead caribou being deflected prior to their migration through Anaktuvuk Pass, increasing costs of equipment and fuel required to travel further in order to harvest caribou, and native allotment access on park service lands.

Extensive Tribal and Public Comments were received from Anaktuvuk Pass residents: Raymond Paneak, Sollie Hugo III, Earl Williams, Rhoda Ahgeak, Louisa Riley, Kenny Mekiana, Esther Hugo, Susan Morry, Lawrence Burris, Timothy Ahgook, and Anna Nageak.

Lawrence Burris, Nunamiut Corporation also presented on behalf of the community of Anaktuvuk Pass Alaska Federation of Natives 2015 Annual Convention Resolution 15-7 titled: Requesting state action to address conflicts between village residents and sport hunters and to ensure meaningful subsistence opportunities for village residents. Lawrence read the letter into the record for the Council.

The Council discussed writing a letter of support to this AFN resolution. Overall the Council wished to highlight and acknowledge the testimony that was shared by all the Anaktuvuk Pass residents highlighting the importance of caribou to their culture, community fabric, and subsistence needs wish to draft a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board and Federal and State land management agencies the imperative to provide for subsistence priority for Anaktuvuk Pass. The Council requested a letter be drafted that included extensive details from the public testimony and also an excerpt from the transcripts so that the full extent of the knowledge and feelings could be conveyed. Some testimony was shared in Inupiaq and the Council would like to see translation so that all have an opportunity to participate fully in their native language. Council discussed options and approaches to assist the community of Anaktuvuk Pass with bringing their concerns to the Federal Subsistence Board and working with both the Park Service and State Board of Game process for increased protections for migrating caribou in the controlled use areas. The Council referenced the work and successful precedent of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission and policies that prevent any disruptive activities or noise disturbance during the whale migration and community whale hunts and seeks to find similar avenues for protecting the caribou migrations by preventing disruptive activities during this time and allowing lead caribou to pass in order to ensure subsistence harvest has an opportunity to take place.

The Council discussed the role and work of the Porcupine Caribou Management Board as a possible model for a similar work for the Western Arctic Herd. Arctic National Wildlife Refuge manager, Brian Glaspell spoke about his role in advising the US fish and Wildlife Director on the Porcupine Caribou Management Board and State, Federal, and Canadian involvement in this management approach across the range of the herd. Brian Glaspell noted that the Porcupine Caribou Board will meet in Yellowknife Canada and he could relay the Councils interest and report back.

## **Old Business**

### *Rural Determination*

Carl Johnson provided an update on the status of the rural determination process and answered questions related to implications for the North Slope region. The Council discussed concerns about the Prudhoe Bay Industrial Complex reverting back to Rural status under the new determination.

### *Red Sheep/Cane Creek RFR*

Carl Johnson provided an update on the status of the Red Sheep/Cane Creek Request For Reconsideration submitted by the State of Alaska and the general reasons for why the Federal Subsistence Board rejected it, maintaining the closure to non-federally qualified users.

Anaktuvuk Pass community members discussed the cultural importance of the Red Sheep Creek area to Residents of Arctic Village and recognition of subsistence priority by ensuring undisturbed access for local subsistence hunters and expressed that this was a very similar situation in Anaktuvuk Pass and for the Federal Subsistence Board to take into consideration subsistence priority including opportunity by ensuring the herd was not deflected by disturbance.

## **New Business**

### *Review Federal Subsistence Board FY2014 Annual Report Reply*

The Council reviewed its annual report reply from the Federal Subsistence Board and discussed some of the points they would like more detail and follow up on.

### *Annual Report topics for FY2015\**

The Council identified several issues for inclusion in the annual report, including:

- Food security and its role in identifying whether an area is rural for purposes of the Federal subsistence priority.
- Decline of the caribou and the need for control of the sport harvest, such as implementing a Tier II hunt or finding a way to control and limit the sport harvest during the early part of the fall migration.
- Access to Native allotments within Gates of the Arctic.
- Less vagueness in responses from the Board. Need to acknowledge all impacts to resources – not just climate change but also industrial activity.

### *Appointment of Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission member\**

The Council appointed Sam Kunaknana (Nuiqsut is a resident zone community to the park) to provide an interim replacement for James Nageak on the Gates of the Arctic SRC, pending appointment of a new Council member from the community of Anaktuvuk Pass with the expectation that such a Council member would then be appointed to the SRC. Sam Kunaknana

expressed he felt it was important to have an Anaktuvuk Pass member be appointed by the Council but in the absence stated he was honored to serve in this capacity and hoped to strengthen the ties between Nuiqsut and Anaktuvuk Pass on shared subsistence issues.

*Western Arctic and Teshekpuk Caribou herd updates*

Lincoln Perrett, ADF&G wildlife biologist, provided a comprehensive power point presentation on the current status and trends of the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk caribou herds. Key updates included: lowest number of Teshekpuk calves this year but they survive well and the herd number appear to be stable, the 2015 WACH photo census was not fully possible due to extensive fires and heavy smoke preventing flights and visibility. Lincoln reviewed current state regulations for caribou that were enacted as conservation measures in July 2015 and based on extensive feedback and compromise to come to agreement from people across the region.

The Council discussed concerns about ANS for WACH and Teshekpuk herds combined and how to differentiate management for the smaller Teshekpuk herd. The Council discussed approaches through the State Board of Game process to submit a proposal to expand the protections of the Controlled Use Area. Nikki Bream, ADF&G Subsistence Division anthropologist (via teleconference) provided information on the States ANS determination process. Carmen Daggett, ADF&G, Board Support (via teleconference) provided information provided brief introduction to the Board of Game Process and responded to the Councils questions on the current membership of the BOG.

*Wildlife Special Action updates*

Tom Evans, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management provided updates federal subsistence Wildlife Temporary Special Actions updates:

- WSA15-07 – Sheep subsistence closure in portions of Units 23 and 26A
- WSA15-08 – Moose subsistence closure in Units 26B remainder and 26C and
- WSA15-03/04/05/06 - Caribou reduction in harvest limits and change in bull and cow season date.
- WSA15-03/04/05/06 was submitted by the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council as a conservation measure and effort to align the current State regulations for caribou harvest reductions with subsistence regulations on federal lands in Units, 23, 24, 26A and 26B. The Federal Subsistence Board adopted WSA15-03/04/05/06 with some modifications and the regulations were enacted in July for the 2015/2016 regulatory year.

*Federal Subsistence Wildlife Proposals\**

Tom Evans, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management provided an overview and analysis of all Federal Subsistence Wildlife Proposals submitted for the North Slope Region and relevant cross-over proposals with adjoining regions.

*North Slope Region Proposals:*

**WP16-61** – Caribou harvest limits; change in bull and cow seasons; new hunt area descriptor Unit 23.

**Council Action:** Support WP16-61 as modified by OSM.

**Discussion/Justification**

The Council noted that their proposal WP16-61 for Unit 23 only made a request to change the regulations for the area affecting Point Hope based on their feedback (from consultations some Council members had been involved with over the past year) so as not to make a recommendation affecting communities outside of the North Slope RAC region. However, the Council supported the OSM modification to make changes to Unit 23 remainder so that regulations would be consistent throughout the Unit and simplify hunt area descriptors and Northwest Arctic Council had already provided their recommendation in support of this.

The Council disagreed with the NWARAC modification to extend the bull season to October 31 due to the poor quality of meat during the rut.

The Council discussed Inupiaq ways of knowing caribou, noting that there are two Inupiaq words to describe a bull caribou, differentiating a young bull from a mature bull. The Council suggested modifying the language in the regulation to specify a “mature bull” may be helpful for clarification but did not add this specifically as an amendment.

**WP 16-62** – Caribou change in hunt area descriptor; harvest limits; change in bull and cow season dates in a portion of Unit 24B

**Council Action:** Support WP16-62, accepting only the OSM modifications to the unit descriptors, not the full OSM modification.

**Discussion/Justification**

The Council supported their proposal WP16-62 for Unit 24 affecting Anaktuvuk Pass north of the Kanuti River with only the OSM modification specifying the unit descriptor. The Council again discussed concern that they did not want to make regulatory recommendations effecting communities outside of the North Slope RAC region and in this case Units 24C and 24D have a distinct boundary so the Council deferred to the Western Interior RAC to make recommendations for that area in their region.

The Council did discuss concerns about the restriction on the take of cows with calves only extended until October 15 and that a young caribou could still face difficulty to survive on its own if orphaned after that date. The Council stressed that local practice would not take a cow only to leave a calf to fend for itself from predators and this may only happen inadvertently on rare occasion. The Council stressed that current conservation efforts are to protect the calf and cows with calves to best support the rebound of the caribou population. The Council also discussed local knowledge of Inupiaq ways of identifying cows that are no longer bearing as opposed to “*kuvuluk*” which is able to bear calves.

There were specific concerns discussed about restricting the opportunity to harvest calves for the people of Anaktuvuk Pass due to the traditional use of calf skins in the making of drums; however the Council supported the proposal for conservation reasons due to the benefits of supporting calf recruitment for the caribou population to rebound.

**WP 16-63** – Caribou change in harvest limits and change bull and cow season dates Unit 26A

**Council Action:** Support WP16-63 as modified by OSM.

**Discussion/Justification**

The Council supported their proposal WP16-63 for Unit 26A with the modification by OSM. The Council supports any additional opportunity to take bulls and supports extended protection of cows with calves. The Council did express some concern about the wording on take of cows with calves and recognition of traditional conservation measures that are already practices that avoid leaving a calf orphaned when it can't protect itself. The discussion of the OSM modification cows accompanied by calves may not be taken July 16 – October 15 was reviewed again that is was assumed the calves would be weaned by October 15 and fully developed enough be able to be on their own and therefore no longer consider a calf. The Council discussed Inupiaq knowledge of recognizing when a calf is grown up enough to be on its own, elaborating that it is evident when the calf is on own because they are fattened up with good meat.

**WP 16-64** – Caribou new hunt area descriptor; harvest limits; change in bull and cow season dates in a portion of Unit 26B

**Council Action:** Support the proposal WP16-64 as modified by OSM.

**Discussion/Justification**

The Council supported their proposal WP16-64 for Unit 26B with the modification by OSM. The Council supports any additional opportunity to take bulls when they are good to eat, while supporting conservation measures for cow and calves. The Council also supports reducing regulatory complexity between hunt areas for local hunters. They Council further supports the hunt boundary description that was developed in order to protect the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd but allow more liberal harvest of the healthy Central Arctic Herd in the area where the two herds do not overlap.

**WP16-65** – Create delegated authority 26B remainder and 26C for subsistence moose hunt

**Council Action:** Support WP16-65 as modified by OSM.

**Discussion/Justification**

There were concerns expressed about public participation and communication with the community, but the refuge manager noted that there was a MOU in place between the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Village of Kaktovik that enhanced communication. The Council ultimately supported the proposal because it would eliminate the “middle man” and allow for a more direct process to open even a limited subsistence moose hunt for Kaktovik if the survey data indicated it could support the harvest. The Council supported greater flexibility for the community of Kaktovik to be able to work directly with the Refuge to harvest even one or two moose if conditions changed without having to go through a full regulatory process.

Kaktovik resident and Native Village of Kaktovik President, Edward Rexford, Sr. called in to the meeting via teleconference to participate in this discussion but notes that the Kaktovik Tribal Council had not yet met to make a formal recommendation on this proposal to the Council. He asked to be apprised of the Federal Subsistence Board meeting and Tribal Consultation opportunities at that time.

**WP16-66** – Delegation of authority for quota and “to be announced” season for sheep Unit 26A

**Council Action:** Support WP16-66 as modified by OSM.

**Discussion/Justification** The Council supported the direct communications and flexibility for managers to be able to open a subsistence sheep hunt if the surveys indicated that the sheep populations could support even a small harvest. The Council did request that the National Park Service keep communications and outreach ongoing between the affected communities, the Subsistence Resource Commission and the Regional Advisory Council on this matter.

*Crossover Proposals with Western and Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council:*

**WP16-37** – Caribou change in season and harvest limit in Unit 21D, 22, 23, 24, 26A and B  
**Council Action:** Take no action on WP16-37 based on Councils action on proposals WP16-61/62/63/64. **Discussion/Justification:** The Council deferred to the other affected Regional Advisory Councils to make recommendations for their own regions on this proposal.

**WP16-48** – Allow use of snow machines to position animals

**Council Action:** Support WP16-48 as written.

**Discussion/Justification:**

Testimony from the Council supported the analysis that the use of snow machines to position animals was a customary and traditional practice. The Council discussed that for many subsistence hunts for different animals you are moving all the time in order to pursue the animal. The Council also noted that moving to position allowed for a closer clean shot and is more humane than trapping. The Council concluded that these are traditional practices using modern technology and that Federal regulations are just now catching up to recognize traditional methods.

The Council recessed until December 10-15 to complete its agenda via teleconference follow up meeting. Remaining on the agenda for action items are:

- WP16-49/52
- WP16-53/54
- FRMP
- Board of Game proposals to draft based on AKP testimony
- Requested endorsement of AFN Resolution 15-7 (requesting sport hunting management plan)

The Council shared closing brief closing comments and recessed at approximately 6:00 p.m. for a community dinner and Drum and Dance with the community of Anaktuvuk Pass.

I certify to the best of my knowledge the forgoing minutes are accurate and complete.

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Eva Patton, Designated Federal Officer  
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management



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Harry K. Brower, Chair  
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its March 2016 winter public meeting. Any corrections or notations will be incorporated at that meeting.

**NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC MEETING**

Via Teleconference  
USFWS Regional Office  
Anchorage, Alaska

December 14, 2015  
8:30 am – 5:30 pm

**Council Members Present:**

Harry K. Brower, Jr. - Chair  
Rosemary Ahtuanguak – Vice Chair  
Gordon Brower  
Lee Kayotuk  
Robert Shears

**Meeting Attendees:**

*Agency staff:*

Eva Patton, Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management  
Carl Johnson, Council Coordination Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management  
Jennifer Hardin, Anthropology Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management  
Tom Evans, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management  
Karen Hyer, Fisheries Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management  
Orville Lind, Native Liaison, Office of Subsistence Management  
George Pappas, State Liaison, Office of Subsistence Management  
Brian Glaspell, USFWS Arctic National Wildlife Refuge  
Vince Mathews, Subsistence liaison, USFWS Arctic National Wildlife Refuge  
Dave Yokel, Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Land Management, Arctic Field Office  
Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator, Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve  
Glen Chen, Bureau of Indian Affairs Interagency Staff Committee  
Dan Sharp, Interagency Staff Committee, Bureau of Land Management  
Ken Atkisson, Subsistence Program Manager, National Park Service Kotzebue  
Kumi Rattenburi, Wildlife biologist, National Park Service  
Brian Person, Wildlife Biologist, North Slope Borough  
Carmen Daggett, Board Support, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Brendan Scanlon, Fisheries biologist, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Drew Crawford, State subsistence liaison, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

**Roll call:** Quorum was established with 5 of 6 Council members participating. (Current Council membership is 6 with the passing of Teddy Frankson and recent retirement of James Nageak). New Council members will be appointed in mid-December, 2016.

**Adoption of agenda:** The agenda was adopted with a review of the remaining action items and agency reports that there was not time to complete at the Council meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass on November 3 and 4, 2014.

**Recap of the previous meeting:** Council Coordinator, Eva Patton provided a review of the discussion and recommendations the Council had generated at the previous meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass as a refresher for the remaining action items at this follow up teleconference meeting.

Council member Gordon Brower expressed concern about the language on the taking of cows with calves that was part of the regulatory modification to caribou proposals WP16-61-64. Proposals WP16 61-64 were submitted by the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council in an effort to effect conservation measures for the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk caribou herds on Federal lands that would closely mirror the recently enacted State regulations based on State proposal 202. Gordon discussed traditional ways of hunting that take care not to harvest a cow with a calf because it would leave the calf orphaned to die. He expressed concern about the way the regulation modification suggested by OSM for the closed period when the take of cows with calves was not allowed made it sound like there was a period when you could take cow with calves. OSM Wildlife biologist Tom Evans reviewed that aspect of the modification that the closure dates reflected the time period when calves would not be able to survive but was lifted when it was assumed to be late enough in the fall that calves were fully grown enough to survive on their own. The OSM modification in effect put into regulation the traditional measures expressed by the Council and communities to not take cows with calves.

Chair Harry Brower requested greater clarity when presenting proposals to highlight and separate the original proposal from the recommended OSM modifications. Carl Johnson clarified the OSM analysis process and OSM recommendations are included in the meeting book for review by both the Council and public prior to the meeting. Councils do not need to accept the suggested OSM modifications – just make recommendations to the Board and justification on the record that makes the Councils intention clear.

Bob Shears re-affirms the Council made a good effort and worked hard to develop these Federal subsistence caribou conservation proposals that would best mirror state regulations for consistency and less confusion for hunters across the region. He noted the Council heard a lot of testimony in Anaktuvuk Pass and also took a lot of time to carefully work through and make recommendations on WP61/62/63/64.

**Federal Subsistence Wildlife Proposals – Remaining action items from previous meeting:**

Tom Evans, Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management provided a summary overview of the remaining wildlife proposals and analyses that the Council had not yet addressed for their region. Tom also addressed the Councils request to revisit the language on proposal WP16-61 since it had similar language to WP49/52 and suggested modification on the take of cow with calves that the Council wanted to re-review.

The Council read the details of each proposal motion and for clarity referenced the page number of the meeting book for reference to exact regulations proposed.

### ***Crossover Proposals with Western and Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council***

#### **WP16 - 49/52** – Change harvest seasons and bull and cow season for caribou

The Council had a lengthy discussion on this proposal working through the details and several possible modifications on restrictions for the take of cows with calves and possible language to allow for ceremonial take for new drum skins the Council wanted to consider. Ultimately the Council came back to the main motion to support WP16 – 49/52 with the OSM modification for support of overall conservation measures and consistency across regions.

Discussion by others attending the meeting included updates from Marcy Okada that the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource commission met and supported with proposal with the modification due to the decline of the caribou herd. Carmen Daggett provide actions from the State AC's including Kotzebue AC supported the proposal. Brain Person, Wildlife biologist for the North Slope Borough encouraged keeping all caribou proposals as closely aligned to the State proposal 202 since it had been widely discussed and vetted across all communities and also in an effort to avoid any complicated regulatory differences on State and Federal lands.

**Council Action:** Amending motion to adopt OSM modification to WP16-49 Roll call vote: 5 yes and 1 absent.

Main motion to Support WP16 – 49 with modification as written in the OSM Preliminary Conclusion. Roll call vote: 3 yes, 1 no and 2 absent

Robert Shears - Yes

Gordon Brower - No

Harry Brower – Yes

Lee Kayotuk Yes

Rosemary Ahtuanguaruk (absent for vote due to loss of phone connection – had discussed support for the proposal for protective conservation measures and consistency during the discussion)

**Discussion/Justification:** The Council is primarily concerned about the Singoalik River drainage added in the OSM modification since that is within the North Slope RAC region but also agrees on OSM modification to keep the regulations consistent throughout the Unit to avoid confusion for those who hunt in the region. The Council supports the knowledge and recommendations of the Northwest Arctic RAC that submitted proposal WP16-49 and agrees with the conservation effort to help the caribou herd recover, including protections for calves and cows with calves.

**WP 16-53/54** - Change hunt area descriptor and provide delegated authority for sheep Unit 23 and Unit 23 remainder

**Council Action:** Support WP16-53/54 with modification by OSM

Roll call vote: 5 yes and 1 absent.

**Discussion/Justification:** Council supports WP16-53/54 with the caveat that the Council gets a regular report from the Western Arctic Parklands on the status of the sheep and communications with the affected communities. Closure of this region affects Point Hope which is within the North Slope RAC region. The Council noted that Point Hope has expressed concern that they are

often left out of communications on subsistence management affecting Unit 23. The Council would like to hear about the Park Service plans for outreach to Point Hope and other affected communities on the status of the sheep population, updates on the current subsistence closure or possible subsistence hunt opportunities.

The Council supports the proposal with the modification by OSM to open by “May be announced” season so that if in the future the sheep population indicates a subsistence hunt can be supported that it can be opened, closed, and harvest limits set with more flexibility than the full federal subsistence regulatory process.

Other discussion on the proposal included an update from Marcy Okada that the Gates of the Arctic SRC supported WP16-54 with modification due to the decline of the sheep in the area. Carl Johnson reported that the Northwest Arctic RAC voted to support the proposal and requested further restrictions throughout the region until the data supported a sustainable hunt with federal subsistence priority.

**Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program:**

Karen Hyer, OSM Fisheries Biologist provided Brief update on the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program call for proposals. Approximately 50 proposals were submitted statewide and several research proposals submitted were recommended for funding in the North Slope Region. Proposals recommended for funding included North Slope Overwintering Aerial Monitoring Dolly Varden project and this project is aerial monitoring of Dolly Varden overwintering abundance in the Anaktuvuk, Ivishak, Canning, Hulahula and Kongakut Rivers, Chandler Lake spawning aggregations of lake trout, Meade River Changes in Subsistence Fisheries which will evaluate changes in harvests and abundance of broad whitefish and other non-salmon and salmon species, evaluate the subsistence harvest and how it's changed over time. They also want to evaluate possibly what the causes are of those changes and last project will investigate seasonal habitat and migration of subsistence grayling on Coleville River.

The Council discussed their observations of fish conditions and feedback they received from communities highlighting past requests made by Paul Bodfish, Sr. of Atqasuk asking about a study of why the whitefish flesh was not normal and many had jelly-like consistency. The Council discussed the importance of Grayling in the Coleville to the community of Nuiqsut and the importance of broad whitefish for many communities across the North Slope region. The Council wanted to continue to pursue the observations of mold on whitefish and ongoing concerns about contaminants in the Nuiqsut area. Overall the Council wants to see the Colville River elevated in importance for study of the subsistence fisheries and also baseline monitoring of the habitat and water due to the increase in development in and around this important subsistence fishery. The Ikpikpuk River was also identified as critical spawning habitat for whitefish and baseline habitat studies to understand critical habitat in advance of development since whitefish are such an important subsistence fish and shared or traded widely across the North Slope region for other subsistence foods.

The Council discussed the Chandler lake project with PI Brendan Scanlon. The Council confirmed community of Anaktuvuk Pass discussions that Chandler lake is a very important for their subsistence harvest of lake trout, however a study design with any fall activities that might

impact the migration of caribou in the area was not supported by the community. Brendan Scanlon confirmed that they had change the study plan based on this feedback from the community and would survey the lake in the summer and not conduct any fall activities. Chair Harry Brower and Council discussed the importance of researchers communicating with the communities and local knowledge of fishers to best answer local concerns, avoid any impacts to the community, and to partner with communities in doing the research and monitoring so that the research projects best reflect the interests and concerns of the communities in the region. Overall the Council expressed support for the current recommended FRMP proposals to be funded in the North Slope region with a desire to see projects fine tuned to the requests of the community and more focus on other important subsistence species in addition to focus on Dolly Varden char such as broad whitefish, grayling, and cisco.

**Refuges Proposed Rule:**

Brian Glaspell, USFWS Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Manager provide the Council with a brief overview of the Refuges proposed rule and an update on the anticipated timeline that it would be posted to the Federal register for public comment.

**Follow up action items discussed by the Council at the November 3 and 4, 2015 meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass:**

- 1) Motion to submit letter jointly addressed to the Federal Subsistence Board, National Park Service and State Board of Game in support of Anaktuvuk Pass AFN resolution 15-7. Supported by Unanimous Yes Vote.
- 2) Motion to submit a proposal to the State Board of Game to increase the restrictive measures in the Anaktuvuk Pass Controlled Use Area by expanding the closure dates for use of aircraft to access hunting of caribou during the migration and also expand the restriction to include prohibition of aircraft to access the area for hunting of other animals similar to the language in the Noatak Controlled Use area. The Council seeks an effective controlled use area proposal that will take out loopholes and develop solid closure dates with the intent to protect the migratory movements of the caribou herd and ensure availability and subsistence priority for the community of Anaktuvuk Pass. Supported by Unanimous Yes Vote.
- 3) Motion to draft a letter to the State Board of Game requesting reconsideration of the current methodology for Harvestable Surplus and Amounts Necessary for Subsistence (ANS) for the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk caribou herds in order to manage each herd individually for conservation purposes.
- 4) Motion to nominate Lee Kayotuk to serve as the North Slope RAC representative on the newly formed ADF&G Sheep Working Group. Lee discussed the importance of sheep to the community of Kaktovik with traditional hunt areas both in the British Mountains and the Brooks Range and is very interested in participating in the discussion with the Sheep Working Group. Supported by Unanimous Yes Vote.

**Future Meeting Dates\***

Winter meeting planned to be held March 7-11, 2016 in Anchorage with all 10 Regional Advisory Councils.

Fall meeting: November 1, 2, and 3 2016. Barrow if necessary to meet in a hub but ongoing request to meet in Kaktovik due to subsistence concerns and issue in each of those communities that the Council felt would facilitate addressing those concerns directly by meeting there.

Council Chair Harry Brower noted that he had to prepare for other meetings and travel and requested remaining agency reports be deferred until the Winter 2016 meeting. Council adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

I certify to the best of my knowledge the forgoing minutes are accurate and complete.

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Eva Patton, Designated Federal Officer  
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

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Harry K. Brower, Chair  
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its March 2016 winter public meeting. Any corrections or notations will be incorporated at that meeting.

## **Summary of State and Federal Hunting Regulations**

In response to declines of approximately 50% in the Teshekpuk (TCH) and Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) populations since 2005, the State adopted new caribou hunting regulations for the 2015/2016 regulatory year. State regulatory changes and the proposed changes to Federal regulations represent the first time in over 30 years that harvest restrictions have been implemented for the WACH and TCH. These regulations, which included lower bag limits, changes to harvest seasons, modification to the hunt area descriptors, restrictions on bull and cow harvest and a prohibition on calf harvest, were developed to help reverse or slow the decline of these populations. Changes to State caribou regulations for the 2015/2016 season were adopted while the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (NSRAC), the last council to meet during the spring of 2015, was in session. Realizing that changes to Federal subsistence caribou hunting regulations would be needed for the conservation actions taken by the State to be more effective and to reduce regulatory complexity between State and Federal regulations, the NSRAC requested a Temporary Special Action for 2015/2016 regulatory year, which closely mirrored changes to State regulations with the exception of changes to the hunt areas. The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) approved Temporary Special Action WSA15-03/04/05/06 with modification to reduce the harvest limit in Units 23, 24, 26A, and 26B to 5 caribou per day, prohibited the take of calves, reduced the cow and bull seasons, and provided for protection of cows with calves.

Subsequently numerous proposals were submitted to change the caribou hunting regulations on Federal public lands in Units 21, 22, 23, 24, and 26 within the range of the WACH and the TCH for 2016-2018 regulatory cycle. Following recommendations at the fall Regional Advisory Council meetings, OSM staff updated their recommendations and made an attempt to provide consistency among all proposals. Consideration was given to seasonal movements and migration patterns of the different caribou herds, the need for conservation actions for the WACH and TCH, and providing subsistence opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users.

Proposed changes to these regulations not included in the OSM preliminary conclusion in wildlife proposals presented during the fall Regional Advisory Council meetings are included as an addendum for the Board. One of those proposed modifications was to split Unit 26A into a north and south area to reflect the range, seasonal migration, and availability of caribou from the WACH and TCH to subsistence users on Federal lands. These modifications are highlighted in yellow on pages 3-5 along with the justification and changes from the Federal Subsistence Regulations for 2014-2016, the NSRAC recommendation, and the State regulations. The NSRAC will be presented with the proposed modification at the March 2016 Council meeting for their recommendation.



**White Paper – Proposed Changes**

**NSRAC - Unit 26A Caribou Regulations for 2016/2018 Season**

**Unit 26—Caribou**

**WP16-63**

<p><b>Unit 26A—Caribou</b></p>	<p><i>Up to 5 caribou per day; however calves may not be taken <del>10 caribou per day; however, cow caribou may not be taken May 16—June 30</del></i></p>	<p><i>July 1—June 30</i></p>
	<p><i>Bulls may be harvested;</i></p>	<p><i>July 1— Oct. 14 Dec. 6—June 30</i></p>
	<p><i>Up to 3 cows per day; however cows accompanied by calves may not be taken July 16—Oct. 15</i></p>	<p><i>July 16—Mar. 15</i></p>

**OSM (new) - Unit 26A Caribou Regulations for 2016/2018 Season (changes highlighted)**

**Unit 26—Caribou**

**WP16-63**

<p><b>Unit 26A— that portion of the Colville River drainage upstream from the Anaktuvuk River, and drainages of the Chukchi Sea south and west of, and including the Utukok River drainage</b></p>	<p><i>Up to 5 caribou per day; however calves may not be taken <del>10 caribou per day; however, cow caribou may not be taken</del> May 16— June 30</i></p>	<p><i>July 1— June 30</i></p>
	<p><i>Bulls may be harvested;</i></p>	<p><i>July 1— Oct. 14 Dec. 6—June 30</i></p>
	<p><i>Cows may be harvested; however cows accompanied by calves may not be taken July 15—Oct. 15</i></p>	<p><i>July 15—Apr. 30</i></p>
<p><b>Unit 26A remainder</b></p>	<p><i>5 caribou per day; however calves may not be taken <del>10 caribou per day; however, cow caribou may not be taken</del> May 16— June 30</i></p>	<p><i>July 1— June 30</i></p>
	<p><i>Bulls may be harvested;</i></p>	<p><i>July 1— Oct. 15 Dec. 6—June 30</i></p>
	<p><i>Up to 3 cows per day may be harvested; however cows accompanied by calves may not be taken July 16—Oct. 15</i></p>	<p><i>July 16—Mar. 15</i></p>

## **Justification**

- Unit 26A was split up into two hunt areas based on the range and seasonal migration patterns of the TCH and the WACH. The TCH occur primarily in the north half and the WACH in the south half of Unit 26A.
- Regulations are specific to each herd. Reflects some of the concerns raised by the NSRAC over lumping the ANS for both the WACH and the TCH under the State regulations. A reminder that this is a Federal regulation and would not affect current State regulations. The main concern is that the TCH warrants greater conservation measures and thus should be managed separately and thus splitting Unit 26A into two hunt areas would help address this concern in the Federal Subsistence regulations.
- The cow season for the north half of Unit 26A reflects the need to protect cow-calf bonds early in the breeding season and because more protection is needed due to the population status, high natural cow mortality, and low recruitment of the TCH. To avoid reduced survival of calves through abandonment by hunter-harvested cows, the harvest limit excludes cows accompanied by calves during the period July 16–Oct. 15. After Oct. 15, calves are more independent and have a better chance of survival if they become separated from their mother. We also heard that the local practice of subsistence hunters is not take a cow and leave and orphaned calf and that they know when a calf is grown up enough to be on its own.
- The longer cow season for the south half reflects the availability of the WACH on Federal public lands to Federally qualified subsistence hunters.

Changes from Federal subsistence regulations in the book include the following:

1. A reduction in the harvest limit from 10 to 5 caribou per day.
2. A shortening of the bull and cow seasons.
3. A prohibition on the harvest of calves.
4. A prohibition on the harvest of cows with calves.

Differences from the RAC recommendation:

1. NSRAC supported OSM's original recommendation which did not divide Unit 26A into two hunt areas – the north half for the TCH and the south half for the WACH. Season dates for bulls and cows are the same as for the north half. The cow season for the south half was extended to April 30 and the restriction on the 3 cows per day was removed.

Differences from the State regulations:

1. Hunting season for bulls begins December 6<sup>th</sup> vs Feb 1<sup>st</sup> for the South area
2. Hunting season for bulls begins December 6<sup>th</sup> vs Jan 1<sup>st</sup> for the North area
3. Cow season essentially the same as the State Season for the TCH (State 26A-remainder - North)
4. Unit 26A was the only area within the State regulations that protects cows with calves – This provision was not carried over to other areas because of potential difficulties with enforcement and in actually determining which cows were with calves.

**North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**  
c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Office of Subsistence Management**  
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

RAC NS15058.EP

Mr. Tim Towarak, Chair  
Federal Subsistence Board  
c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Office of Subsistence Management  
1011 E. Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Tim Towarak:

The North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) appreciates the opportunity to submit this annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) under the provisions of Section 805(a)(3)(D) and section 805(c) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). At its public meeting on November 3 and 4, 2015 in Barrow, Alaska, the Council identified concerns and recommendations for its 2015 report. The Council approved its annual report during the winter 2016 meeting in Anchorage.

**1. Preventing Deflection of Caribou and Food Security Management**

The Council addressed the Board last year in its annual report about pressing concerns for food security for communities in the North Slope Region. The Council would like to further address this issue in regards to the current situation with the decline of the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk Caribou Herds. The Council held its fall 2015 meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass and heard extensive testimony from many residents there on the hardships they are experiencing due to both the decline in the caribou herds and shift in the normal migration route that no longer brings caribou close enough to the community to hunt in the past few years.

The Council seeks avenues through the Federal Subsistence Management Program to respond to the situation that the community of Anaktuvuk Pass is faced with, not having met there subsistence needs for several years due to the decline and deflection of the caribou herd. Being an inland Inupiaq community, Anaktuvuk Pass relies extensively on caribou for subsistence and has little access to marine resources and migratory birds or fish that other communities in the North Slope region can rely on when caribou are not as plentiful. Harvest data collected by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Subsistence Division confirms that caribou is the predominant subsistence resource and makes up the largest food by weight eaten annually by residents of Anaktuvuk Pass. The Council will be submitting a letter to the Board that shares

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some of the heartfelt testimony by residents of Anaktuvuk Pass that provides preponderance of evidence of just how critical this subsistence resource is to the community.

Given that caribou specifically is the primary subsistence food that feeds this community, it is imperative to ensure subsistence priority is met. The Council seeks avenues through the Federal Subsistence Management Program to ensure that federal subsistence priority for caribou is met and this also entails ensuring that activities on non-Federal public lands do not deflect caribou from their migratory path through Anaktuvuk Pass. This is a very real matter of food security and the Council seeks the assistance of the Federal Subsistence Program to generate solutions to alleviate the situation.

This is a concern that goes beyond the community of Anaktuvuk Pass. The Council would like to reiterate that access to subsistence resources is an essential aspect of meeting subsistence needs. While the Federal Subsistence Board does not have direct jurisdiction over development or management of non-Federal public lands if caribou are deflected away from communities or subsistence hunt areas, this action affects realizing any subsistence priority over other uses and is detrimental to communities meeting their subsistence needs. The Council seeks to work with the Federal Subsistence Program on solutions to address sources of disturbance to caribou. While some factors driving the decline of the herds may be elusive – disturbance by human activity can readily be mitigated.

Successful examples of policies currently in place to avoid disturbance of migratory routes and subsistence activities can be used as a template for approaches through the Federal Subsistence Management Program. Council members highlight their own experience with their efforts to protect the subsistence whale hunt and the whales themselves from disturbance during the migration. It is now enforceable policy that activities that cause noise or would intercept or interfere with the subsistence hunt are halted until the community harvests whale. Similar policies could also be developed in order to protect subsistence opportunity for the harvest of caribou, even with regard to activities that occur on non-Federal public lands.

## **2. Development Impacts and Multi-jurisdiction Cooperation**

In follow up on the concerns for food security, the Council would like to revisit some of the concerns that were articulated in the Council's fiscal year 2014 annual report but not fully addressed in the Federal Subsistence Board's reply. There are many factors creating challenges for subsistence communities to meet their food needs. Changes in the environment are affecting safe travel or access to resources or are changing the timing of the migration or condition of subsistence resources, subsistence fish and wildlife populations are declining, and cost of gas and resources needed to hunt and fish are continuing to rise. In addition, this Council has brought concerns to the Board about the interaction of industrial development and other activities such as remote access transporters for hunters or recreation, and even flights and activities of researchers that have been observed to disturb or deflect important subsistence resources such as caribou.

The Council again asks for understanding and awareness of the interaction of industrial development or transporter flights with subsistence activities. While the Federal Subsistence

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Management Program does not have direct jurisdiction over development activities and air traffic on the North Slope, impacts to subsistence foods on federal lands is a direct concern of the program in that barriers to migratory routes, disturbance that deflects or stresses animals, or contaminants that may impact subsistence foods all have direct bearing on access, harvest, and safe consumption of important subsistence foods that the Federal program does manage. Additionally, the Federal Subsistence Management Program could be more engaged in ensuring that Federal agencies involved in those activities are properly conducting and executing the analyses required under ANILCA Section 810.

### **3. Access to Native Allotments within Gates of the Arctic National Park**

The Council received testimony from numerous public participants at the fall 2015 meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass about challenges to access their Native allotments within Gates of the Arctic National Park. The absence of travel corridor easements in these areas prevents residents from being able to readily access these allotments which are private land inholdings within the Park. Many allotments are far from the community and accessing the inholdings by some form of motorized transportation is important to maintain cabins and conduct subsistence activities there which otherwise would require walking for days and having to carry heavy supplies and equipment. These allotments are important to subsistence hunting and other subsistence activities but otherwise are not able to be utilized because of the difficulty of long overland travel.

The Council wishes to bring this issue to the attention of the Federal Subsistence Board and also seeks avenues to assist the community with more information and potential avenues to secure access to their allotments through the National Park Service.

### **4. Adequate time to conduct Council business and engage with public participation.**

The Council requests again more time to conduct Council business and fully engage with public participants. Based on experience, the Council feels strongly that three days is a minimal requirement to be able to convene, share information with each other to be apprised of subsistence knowledge and concerns from throughout the region, hear public and tribal feedback and be able to discuss and fully deliberate critical subsistence issues before making recommendations.

The Council has on numerous occasions felt rushed to take action without the opportunity to fully understand, ask questions, and deliberate with the people we serve in the region and amongst the Council itself. The Council takes to heart the gravity of the potential impacts of the decisions made through the Federal Subsistence Management Program and seeks to carefully and thoroughly consider all aspects before making a recommendation to the Board.

The Council requests that it routinely be permitted to hold three day meetings (as the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council always does without seeking special permission) to cover all agenda items thoroughly when it is full of complex proposals or challenging issues. Members of the Council are appointed to serve the subsistence users in the region, and it is critical to have ample time for public involvement and adequate Council deliberation when making fully informed recommendations on regulatory proposals and generating positive

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solutions to complex subsistence management issues. The Council greatly appreciates that the Office of Subsistence Management has been supportive of meeting in villages in the North Slope region outside of Barrow in order to engage directly with subsistence communities. The Council is very pleased at the broad level of participation, testimony and feedback on subsistence issues when meeting in Nuiqsut and recently in Anaktuvuk Pass. These were important opportunities for the Council to connect with the many and diverse people that attended the meetings; however, the Council received feedback that the very full agenda prevented adequate time to listen and for all who wanted to address the Council on important subsistence issues of the community. The Council requests three day meetings to accomplish its work effectively and for understanding of cultural ways of communication that may take more time to fully engage with the people we are appointed to serve.

Thank you for the opportunity for this Council to assist the Federal Subsistence Program to meet its charge of protecting subsistence resources and uses of these resources on Federal Public lands and waters. We look forward to continuing discussions about the issues and concerns of subsistence users of the North Slope Region. If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Eva Patton, Subsistence Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management at 1-800-478-1456 or (907) 786-3358.

Sincerely,

Harry K. Brower  
Chair

cc: North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
Federal Subsistence Board  
Eugene R. Peltola, Jr., Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management  
Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management  
Carl Johnson, Council Coordination Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management  
Eva Patton, Subsistence Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Administrative Record





## United States Department of Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve  
4175 Geist Road  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709



### Accessing Native Allotments in National Park System Units in Alaska

ANILCA section 1110(b) requires the National Park Service (NPS) to give owners of properties within National Park System units such rights as may be necessary to assure **adequate and feasible access** to their properties for economic and other purposes.

ANILCA section 1110(b) gives the National Park Service the responsibility to reasonably regulate access to inholdings to protect natural and other values of National Park System Units.

ANILCA section 1110(a) authorizes the public's use of motorboats, airplanes (fixed-wing), and snowmachines, as well as non-motorized methods, for traditional activities, in National Park System units. Snowmachine access requires adequate snow cover.

ANILCA 1110(b) Right-of-Way Certificates of Access (RWCAs) to inholdings are needed when operating motorized highway vehicles or ORVs on National Park System lands where no designated road or trail exists.

The National Park Service recognizes that access is crucial to the use and enjoyment of National Park System units in Alaska. The National Park Service is committed to working with the owners of Native allotments to meet their access needs across park service lands.

- As a first step, Gates of the Arctic staff will focus on requests to access specific Native allotments.
- NPS will contact allotment owners to gauge specific interests and understand their concerns.
- NPS will then schedule an in-person meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass with any interested allotment owners and heirs. Staff will explain how the permitting process works and will schedule follow-up meetings as needed.

Residents of the community of Anaktuvuk Pass have shared their interest in accessing their Native allotments and Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve staff are committed to working with allotment owners to assist with the permit process.

For more information please contact Marcy Okada, Subsistence Program Manager at (907) 455-0639 or [marcy\\_okada@nps.gov](mailto:marcy_okada@nps.gov)



National Park Service Update  
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve  
North Slope Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
March 9, 2016

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<https://edit.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/migrated/subsistence/library/maps/upload/unit26.pdf>

### Moose

A moose survey covering the Alatna, John and North Fork of the Koyukuk Rivers was conducted in March 2015. We estimated a moose density of 0.16 moose/square mile and 10 calves:100 adults. Results are similar to the last survey conducted in 2004 and are available in a published report. Analysis of the 2008-2013 moose collaring project continues. Two papers and one report about moose movements were published and are available.

For more information, contact Kyle Joly, [kyle\\_joly@nps.gov](mailto:kyle_joly@nps.gov)

### Caribou

The Western Arctic Caribou Herd has been in decline for a decade now. Changes to sport and subsistence hunting regulations are occurring, but continued discussions will be needed should



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the population drop even further. A new paper analyzing caribou diets and stress, as well as an NPS Caribou annual report, were published and are available.

For more information, contact Kyle Joly, [kyle\\_joly@nps.gov](mailto:kyle_joly@nps.gov)

### **Bears**

In 2015, NPS and USGS deployed more GPS collars on grizzly bears along the proposed corridor to the Ambler Mining District. We are collecting information on the movements, denning characteristics, diets and health of these animals prior to future development occurring in this region. Year 2016 will be the last year of field work scheduled for this project.

For more information, contact Kyle Joly, [kyle\\_joly@nps.gov](mailto:kyle_joly@nps.gov)

### **Dall's Sheep**

Preliminary results from Dall's sheep surveys conducted in June and July 2015 indicate continued decline and poor lamb recruitment in the western Baird Mountains in Noatak National Preserve, but some signs of recovery potential in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. In northeastern Gates adult numbers appear to have stabilized or increased slightly compared with the steep declining trend seen in 2013 and 2014 and there were ~40 lambs per 100 ewe-like sheep, higher than the long-term average and substantially higher than the 1 and 12 lambs per 100-ewe-likes observed in 2013 and 2014. Total and adult sheep may be down 25% since 2010 when ~10,000 sheep were estimated to be in Gates of the Arctic.

For more information, contact Kumi Rattenbury, 907.455.0673, [Kumi\\_Rattenbury@nps.gov](mailto:Kumi_Rattenbury@nps.gov)

### **Fire Management**

The 2015 Alaska fire season was the second largest fire season in Alaska's history. There were 351 human ignited wildfires that burned 26,696.7 acres and 416 lightning ignited fires that burned 5,121,325.6 acres. On July 15<sup>th</sup> Gates of the Arctic had one lightning ignited fire named Lockwood fire, in a Limited Fire Management Zone. The fire was located south of the Kobuk River and north of the Norutak Hills area. The fire burned 79.2 acres in a predominantly black spruce fuel type. No cabins, cultural areas, and natural areas were threatened by the fire. The fire was unstaffed and was naturally extinguished by rain on August 9<sup>th</sup>. Please visit the National Park Service Learning Center website for Firewise Alaska and Fire Prevention at: [http://www.nps.gov/akso/nature/fire/Learning\\_Cnt.cfm](http://www.nps.gov/akso/nature/fire/Learning_Cnt.cfm).

For more information, contact James Sullivan at 907-455-0651 or [james\\_sullivan@nps.gov](mailto:james_sullivan@nps.gov)



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**Subsistence Updates**

The Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) held a meeting in Fairbanks on November 9-10, 2015. The main topics of discussion were resource surveys, cultural resource project updates, and federal subsistence wildlife proposals. Additionally, the SRC met via teleconference to provide comments on the proposed NPS subsistence regulations to allow federal subsistence users in Alaska to collect and use non-edible animal parts and plants for the making and selling of handicrafts. The next SRC meeting will be held in Anaktuvuk Pass on April 26-27, 2016.

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

**North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

**Charter**

- 1. Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory (Council).
- 2. Authority.** The Council is renewed by virtue of the authority set out in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3115 (1988)), 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.** The Council has authority to perform the following duties:
  - a. Recommend the initiation of, review, and evaluate 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 decisionmaking 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.
    - (4) Recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.
  - e. Appoint one member to the Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission in accordance with Section 808 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).
  - f. Make recommendations on determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources.
  - g. Make recommendations on determinations of rural status.
  - h. 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 \$120,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 0.9 staff years.
  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 7, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DFO is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will:
    - Approve or call all of the advisory committee's and subcommittees' meetings,
    - Prepare and approve all meeting agendas,
    - Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings,
    - Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and
    - 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 it is renewed in accordance with the 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.

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.

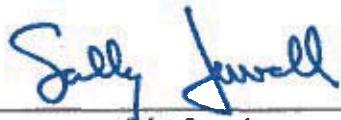
Members will be appointed for 3-year terms. A vacancy on the Council will be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

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 specific party matter in which the member has a direct financial interest in a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, or related litigation with the Department.

14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purpose of compiling information and 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. The Council Chair, with the approval of the DFO, will appoint subcommittee members. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.
  
15. **Recordkeeping.** Records of the Council, and formally and informally established subcommittees or other subgroups of the Council, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.



Secretary of the Interior

NOV 20 2015

Date Signed

DEC 03 2015

Date Filed