



BRISTOL BAY
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL
ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Materials

February 28 - March 1, 2017
Naknek



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On the cover...

Red Fox is lounging in the snow on Alaska Peninsula and Becharof National Wildlife Refuge



USFWS photo by Bob Dreeszen

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BRISTOL BAY SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dolly’s Hall
Naknek

February 28 – March 01, 2017
8:30am – 5:00pm daily

TELECONFERENCE: call the toll free number: 1-866-916-7020, then when prompted enter the passcode: 37311548.

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

- a. Revisions to Draft MOU with State of Alaska

11. New Business (Chair)

- a. Call for Federal Wildlife Proposals 15
 - 1. Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd Report
- b. Wildlife Closure Review
 - 1. WCR15-05* 19
 - 2. WCR15-07* 28
- d. Approve FY2016 Annual Report* (*Crystal Leonetti*) 37
- e. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Alaska Native Relations Policy*

12. Agency Reports

(Time limit of 15 minutes unless approved in advance)

Native Organizations

- a. BBNA
 - 1. Emperor Goose and handicraft update
 - 2. Mulchatna Caribou TEK project
 - 3. Pacific Walrus – endangered species list

- b. BBNA Partners Program

USFWS

- a. Togiak NWR 39
- b. Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR 45

NPS

- a. Katmai National Park & Preserve

ADF&G

OSM

13. Future Meeting Dates*

- Confirm Fall 2017 meeting date and location 49
- Select Winter 2018 meeting date and location 50

14. Closing Comments

15. Adjourn (Chair)

To teleconference into the meeting, call the toll free number: 1-866-916-7020, then when prompted enter the passcode: 37311548.

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 Donald Mike, 907-786-3629, donald_mike@fws.gov, or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on January 24, 2017.

REGION 4
Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Seat	Year Appointed <i>Term Expires</i>	Member Name and Community	
1	1993 2019	Peter M. Abraham Togiak	
2	2016 2019	Dennis Andrew, Sr. New Stuyahok	
3	2003 2019	Nanci Ann Morris Lyon King Salmon	Vice Chair
4	2007 2017	Molly B. Chythlook Dillingham	Chair
5	2014 2017	Senafont Shugak, Jr. Pedro Bay	
6	2014 2017	William J. Maines Dillingham	
7	2003 2017	Dan O. Dunaway Dillingham	
8	2012 2018	Lary J. Hill Iliamna	
9	2015 2018	Victor A. Seybert Pilot Point	
10	2009 2018	Richard J. Wilson Naknek	Secretary



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



Forest Service

Federal Subsistence Board News Release

For Immediate Release:

**This provides corrected information to News
Release dated December 9, 2016*

Contact: Caron McKee

(907) 786-3880 or (800) 478-1456
caron_mckee@fws.gov

Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture appoint members to Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, with the concurrence of Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, has made appointments to the 10 Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils. The Councils advise the Federal Subsistence Board on subsistence management regulations and policies and serve as a forum for public involvement in Federal subsistence management in Alaska. With these appointments (shown in bold), the current membership of the Councils is:

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Steve K. Reifenstuhl, Sitka
Frank G. Wright Jr., Hoonah
Patricia A. Phillips, Pelican
Michael A. Douville, Craig
Harvey Kitka, Sitka
Robert Schroeder, Juneau

Albert H. Howard, Angoon
Donald C. Hernandez, Pt. Baker
Kenneth L. Jackson, Kake
Raymond D. Sensmeier, Yakutat
John A. Yeager, Wrangell
Michael D. Bangs, Petersburg
Cathy A. Needham, Juneau

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

Diane A. Selanoff, Valdez
Eleanor Dementi, Cantwell
R. Greg Encelewski, Ninilchik
Deaniel E. Stevens, Chitina
Edward H. Holsten, Cooper Landing
Gloria Stickwan, Copper Center

James R. Showalter, Sterling
Michael V. Opheim, Seldovia
Andrew T. McLaughlin, Chenega Bay
Judith C. Caminer, Anchorage
Ingrid Peterson, Homer
Thomas M. Carpenter, Cordova
Ricky J. Gease, Kenai

KODIAK/ALEUTIANS

Antone A. Shelikoff, Akutan
Patrick B. Holmes, Kodiak
Richard Koso, Adak
Samuel I. Rohrer, Kodiak

Thomas L. Schwantes, Kodiak
Coral Chernoff, Kodiak
Rebecca Skinner, Kodiak
Della Trumble, King Cove
Speridon M. Simeonoff Sr., Akhiok
Melissa M. Berns, Old Harbor

BRISTOL BAY

Pete M. Abraham, Togiak
Dennis Andrew, Sr., New Stuyahok
Nanci A. Morris Lyon, King Salmon
Molly B. Chythlook, Dillingham
William J. Maines, Dillingham

Senafont Shugak, Jr., Pedro Bay
Dan O. Dunaway, Dillingham
Lary J. Hill, Iliamna
Victor A. Seybert, Pilot Point
Richard J. Wilson, Naknek

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA

William F. Brown, Eek
James A. Charles, Tuntutuliak
John W. Andrew, Kwethluk
Michael Peters, Marshall
Lester Wilde Sr., Hooper Bay
Dale T. Smith, Jr., Mekoryuk

Anthony Ulak, Scammon Bay
Annie C. Cleveland, Quinhagak
Dorothy G. Johnson, Mountain Village
Raymond J. Oney, Alakanuk
Greg J. Roczicka, Bethel
Robert E. Aloysius, Kalskag
David A. Bill, Sr., Toksook Bay

WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA

Shirley J. Clark, Grayling
Donald V. Honea Jr., Ruby
Pollock Simon Sr., Allakaket
Raymond L. Collins, McGrath
Jack L. Reakoff, Wiseman

Darrel M. Vent, Sr., Huslia
Timothy P. Gervais, Ruby
Dennis R. Thomas, Sr., Crooked Creek
Jenny K. Pelkola, Galena
Fred W. Alexie, Kaltag

SEWARD PENINSULA

Theodore Katcheak, Stebbins
Brandon D. Ahmasuk, Nome
Louis H. Green Jr., Nome
Thomas L. Gray, Nome
Leland H. Oyoumick, Unalakleet

Fred D. Eningowuk, Shishmaref
Elmer K. Seetot Jr., Brevig Mission
Charles F. Saccheus, Elim
Ronald D. Kirk, Stebbins

NORTHWEST ARCTIC

Raymond Stoney, Kiana
Beverly M. Moto, Deering
Hannah P. Loon, Kotzebue
Michael C. Kramer, Kotzebue
Enoch Mitchell, Noatak

Verne J. Cleveland Sr., Noorvik
Louie A. Commack, Jr., Ambler
Enoch A. Shiedt Sr., Kotzebue
Percy C. Ballot Sr., Buckland
Calvin D. Moto, Deering

EASTERN INTERIOR ALASKA

Susan L. Entsminger, Tok Cutoff
Andrew P. Firmin, Fort Yukon
Lester C. Erhart, Tanana
William L. Glanz, Central

Andrew W. Bassich, Eagle
Will M. Koehler, Horsfeld
Donald A. Woodruff, Eagle
Virgil L. Umphenour, North Pole

NORTH SLOPE

Ester Hugo, Anaktuvuk Pass
Robert V. Shears, Wainright
Wanda T. Kippi, Atqasuk
Steve Oomituk, Point Hope

Sam Kunaknana, Nuiqsut
James M. Nageak, Anaktuvuk Pass
Gordon R. Brower, Barrow
Lee Kayotuk, Kaktovik
Rosemary Ahtaungaruak, Barrow

The Federal Subsistence Board is accepting applications for the 2017 appointment cycle until February 3, 2017. For more information, go to the Federal Subsistence Management Program website at <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/statewide>.

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

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.

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BRISTOL BAY SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dillingham Middle School Gym

Dillingham, Alaska

October 26-27, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by Chair Molly Chythlook

Roll Call: Present; Molly Chythlook, Dan Dunaway, Lary Hill, Nanci Morriss Lyon, Dan O'Hara, Senafont Shugak. **Online;** Richard Wilson, Peter Abraham **Absent:** William Maynes, Victor Seybert

Quorum established

Six members present and two members participating via teleconference.

Introductions

Each Council member introduced themselves and introductions from State and Federal representative and participating public in attendance.

Review/Adopt Agenda

- amend the meeting agenda to accommodate Staff and Council, move the Refuge report on first day of meeting to accommodate their field work
- add Katmai National Park to agency reports
- move discussion of nonrural determination.

Agenda adopted as amended

Review/Approve Meeting minutes

The Council reviewed the minutes and identified one strike out in public testimony heading. Meeting minutes of the March 10, 2016 meeting in held in Anchorage approved with amendment.

Chair and RAC member Reports

Chair report – Chair Chythlook discussed the All-Council meeting and how successful a very informative meeting. The Councils reported the need for meetings in more remote villages rather than larger hub communities to hear from other subsistence users

Mr. Peter Abraham discussed walrus populations on Round Island and that it recently peaked at around 400 animals with around three being harvested; in the 1960s, the population reached in the thousands. Mr. Abraham reported on the status of halibut, King Salmon and seal population declining in the Togiak area. These issue needs to be discussed by the Council. Bycatch is a real concern for salmon populations and harvest by subsistence users. He reported that moose hunting was okay but that there aren't many large bulls in his area.

Mr. Richard Nelson reported that redfish harvest was excellent. Mr. Wilson wanted to change State hunting regulations for the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd (NAPCH) changed to

open up a hunt (9C remainder and 9E) and that 9C remainder (south of north bank of Naknek River) hunt need not be a Tier II because the Mulchatna Herd is doing well.

Mr. Dan Dunaway reported a productive berry season and excellent fishing.

Mr. Larry Hill stated fishing overall was good, although some salmon runs were late. Redfish were plentiful and wild berries were excellent. Moose hunting was very successful as moose were plentiful and plenty of bears in the area. Caribou hunting requires a lot of travel for successful harvest. Seal populations are doing well. He stated local residents have noticed gull eggs are soft a year after poor salmon runs.

Ms. Nanci Morris Lyon discussed the guiding academy for students in the Bristol Bay region. She is concerned that some maritime regulations have hindered full student participation in the program.

Mr. Dan O'Hara reported on salmon runs into the Naknek River and reported, in recent years, the run has been late.

Mr. Senafont Shugak Jr. reported the death of a valuable elder at age 89. Moose hunting in the fall has been difficult and plenty of salmon in his area.

Ms. Molly Chythlook was grateful for an early salmon season that was plentiful. Berries came in quickly and it was difficult to harvest them due to the close timing with the salmon runs. She reported a successful moose harvest as well.

Public and Tribal Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Ms. Kate Gomez (student from Dillingham HS) discussed her concerns about moose and caribou hunting seasons and climate change. Ms. Gomez stated set seasons are not flexible enough for subsistence users to feed their families. She thinks the Federal Subsistence Board should consider changing set dates and whether or not it will provide opportunity for people to provide for themselves.

Mr. Robert Heyano talked about Togiak herring. He commented that the herring biomass estimate has either been steady or increasing in recent years (>30 tons). He feels the stock is very healthy and there is no reason for residents to worry about a conservation concern.

Mr. Daniel Wassley (Dillingham) had a question about the timing of subsistence fisheries before and after the commercial fisheries.

Mr. Joe Chythlook spoke about the Bristol Bay Native Corporation (BBNC) and its role in the Federal Subsistence Management Program. Mr. Chythlook invited the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) to the BBNC Leadership Forum in December to present subsistence management to its participants and inform them on how regulations are formulated and how the public can participate in the regulatory process.

Old Business

Draft Nonrural Determination Policy

Mr. Chris McKee, OSM, presented the briefing to the Council.

The Council had several comments and questions. The Council asked will we ever be rural but regulated into an essential nonrural status? Like Bethel? Might we ever get to the point of exceeding the carrying capacity of the local environment? Response was that it will be the burden of the proponent to explain why a community should be considered nonrural. Population has long been a significant factor, but there are many other factors as well. There are a lot of safe guards via multiple levels of review to ensure a valid proposal.

The increase in human population along with a decrease in carrying capacity until there is an exceptionally limited subsistence opportunity, and few communities would want to give up their rural status.

Communities like Dillingham that have growing populations – resource monitoring should be one of those red flags that should be an indication that we need to visit the community’s status for rural designation.

The Council stated in the past that more criteria was needed when the Council was last briefed on this topic. Additionally, communities should look to other entities (local governments/agencies) for input. Mr. McKee reiterated that the most significant input comes from the Councils.

Rural residents are managing the people to manage the resource. People move to larger communities because of better jobs, lower costs, but still want to compete with those in rural areas for those rural resources. Council reviewed former comments on page 19 of their Council Book.

805(c) Report

The Council was referred to the Federal Subsistence Board 805 (c) report to the Council on actions taken by the Board on wildlife proposals for the Bristol Bay region.

2015 Annual Report Reply

The Council was briefed on the 2015 Annual Report Reply from the Federal Subsistence Board.

New Business

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP)

Ms. Robbin La Vine and Mr. Don Rivard gave an overview of the FRMP and priority information needs for the Southwest Region (Bristol Bay and Kodiak/Aleutian Councils). Reliable stock estimates for salmon for the Meshik River was brought up by the Council as a priority. Motion to include Togiak River drainage salmon and Meshik River drainage as a regional priority information need for reliable escapement estimates and reliability of escapement measures. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Cody Larson, Bristol Bay Native Association, and Mr. Ted Krieg (Alaska Department of Fish & Game Subsistence Division-Dillingham) gave an overview of current FRMP projects (Togiak River Chinook subsistence harvest assessment and biological sampling 16-453, and the Bristol Bay subsistence salmon network description and analysis 16-451).

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Revision to the MOU with State of Alaska – Briefing was provided by Mr. Chris McKee.

The Council commented that the MOU is more explicit in stating the significant role the Council and the State Advisory Committees play and that these agencies getting together to define a process driven by the local people/communities, but it doesn't take away the complications of the dual management system. The MOU should address the patchwork of State and Federal lands and conflicting regulations. The focus is on the bottom up process with the revision of the MOU.

Other comments stated residents do not like giving up control over when and how residents can use the resources.

The MOU can reduce conflicts and encourage cooperation among the agencies, and any changes will lead to further agency cooperation.

Ms. Morris Lyon moved to adopt the revised MOU as presented, justified by the lack of changes and the tone of cooperation. Motion adopted.

2016 Annual Report

The following list is the annual report items to the Federal Subsistence Board;

1. Meshik River Salmon

Residents of Port Heiden depend on the Meshik River, one of several salmon tributaries on the Alaska Peninsula, for their subsistence Sockeye and Chinook Salmon needs. Over the past several years, residents of Port Heiden were not able to meet all their subsistence needs due to commercial activities and low run returns.

The Council considered various Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program priority information needs for the Bristol Bay region at its fall meeting and supported funding for the Meshik River priority information needs. It is important to develop a monitoring program for the Meshik River for managers to have the data available for reference when making management decision on subsistence and commercial activities and to manage for a sustainable fishery.

2. Outreach

Public meetings of the Council are held in Dillingham and King Salmon/Naknek each fall and winter cycles, respectively. These two communities are able to accommodate the Council meetings due to availability of hotels, lodges, and restaurants. Whereas, communities outside these two communities are limited to host a public meeting with limited accommodations and limited meeting venues.

The Council recognizes the need to engage other subsistence communities during public meetings and recognizes the need to improve outreach efforts to the surrounding communities of upcoming scheduled public meetings, and to encourage the communities to participate on important subsistence resource related issues. Public meetings of the Council typically begin at 8:30 am and end at 5:00 pm, during normal working hours. Community members involved in natural resource issues usually work day jobs and cannot attend the public forum to bring forth their concerns.

Accommodating the public wishing to participate in subsistence resource-related management issues is challenging when meetings are held during the day. Outreach efforts to include communities to participate in public meetings should include social media, and incorporate automatic email notices, for those that wish to be notified via email, that public meetings are being scheduled. Direct email to Tribal and city offices should also be included to notify the public and encourage them to attend in person or via teleconference.

The Council therefore requests that the Board, through the Office of Subsistence Management, ensure that all possible venues of outreach are being considered, and to also consider possibly holding meetings outside of the normal business day.

Charter Review

The Council approved as presented the Charter by unanimous consent. No changes.

Tongass Submerged Lands Proposed Rule

No action taken on the proposed rule. Proposed rule does not affect the Bristol Bay region.

Feedback On All Council Meeting

The Council commented that other regions had similar issues to the Bristol Bay region as addressed and allowed for more interaction with other Council members statewide. The training available was beneficial, but some members thought the sessions available to sign up was too numerous, which may have led to confusion by some participants to sign up for individual tracks.

Other observations from the Council, it would have preferred to have more time to consult with neighboring Councils about mutual concerns.

Agency Reports

FWS

Federal agencies representing the US Fish & Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, National Park Service, and the Office of Subsistence Management provided reports on various resource management activities as well as report from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Mr. Andy Aderman presented the Togiak Refuge caribou report. He discussed the many special actions for the Nushagak caribou herd. 64 caribou were taken during the entire season last year (54 Federal, 10 State). A photo census found a minimum of 1230 caribou which is a decline of 84 animals. The current hunting season has seen 39 caribou harvested (34 Federal, 5 State). 513 RC501 (Unit 17) permits have been given out by the State. 410 of the permits went to

Dillingham, Togiak, Manokotak and the rest going to nonlocal areas, and majority or all, of the harvest was by rural resident users.

Moose surveys will be ongoing without snow cover and it is the first attempt to do so in these conditions and they are about $\frac{3}{4}$ done with the planning. They're trying to get a sightability correction factor for the survey.

Ms. Susanna Henry with the Togiak Refuge NWR discussed the Refuge Final Rule as it pertains to predator control and the public comments received on the Rule.

Ms. Susan Alexander with Becharof/Alaska Peninsula Wildlife Refuge discussed the refuges report and updated the Council on the moose and caribou hunts in Unit 9 as they pertained to recent proposals passed by the FSB. The refuge is contributing their pilot to help out Togiak Refuge with moose surveys. 10 Federal permits were given out for hunts in 9C and 9E. The refuge hired a student from Naknek as a Youth Ambassador in a partnership with BBNA to interview elders on the Peninsula about subsistence and changes they have experienced in their lifetime.

Mr. Gilbert Castellanos and Ms. Sarah Creachbaum discussed the Arctic Council, the CAFF working group and how the RAC can get involved with the program.

Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G)

Kris Peterson (Unit 9 and 17 Assistant State Area Biologist) discussed the Mulchatna Caribou Herd (MCH). In the late 1990s, the MCH reached a population high of approximately 200,000 animals. A number of factors led to a rapid decline of caribou at the turn of the century down to approximately 20,000 – lower productivity, lower survival and higher predation, poor range and disease. Recent surveys include 10 month female surveys (indirect indicator of habitat quality), pregnancy rates – have about 160 collars out, fall composition count (just completed for this year) determine bull, cow, calf and bull age estimation. Population estimate was at 26K and 31K in 2014 and 2015 respectively, this is an increasing trend. Since 2000, weights of 10 month old females have been increasing, which is an indirect measure of habitat quality. Lichens and willows on the range are looking good. Pregnancy rates are at 90% for older cows and good rates on younger cows as well. Fall comp counts are at 39:100 bull cow ratio which is above management objectives and calf cow ratio has averaged 23:100 over the last 10 years, though the last two years it has been at 29:100. The herd could withstand more harvest than it is currently experiencing and this is most likely due to poor winter weather conditions preventing access to the herd.

Mr. Ted Krieg with the ADF&G Subsistence Division in Dillingham discussed their project looking at Nushagak River Chinook harvest surveys and mapping fishing locations. He also discussed harvest of Dolly Varden by residents of Togiak. They documented that 82% of households eat this species.

NPS

Ms. Linda Chisolm with the Katmai National Park briefed the Council on staff announcing that Mr. Mark Stern is new Superintendent. The park is only at about half staffed currently. The

Pike Ridge EIS is still underway and Ms. Chisolm discussed the four alternatives currently being considered. The draft EIS will be out in winter 2017.

Native Organizations/Tribal Reports

Ms. Gayla Hosseth and Mr. Cody Larson gave an overview of projects being conducted by BBNA and issues related to Migratory Bird management, as well as the Partners Program from the Bristol Bay region.

Future Meeting Dates

The Council confirmed its winter meeting for February 28-March 01, 2017 in Naknek. The fall 2017 meeting dates are November 1-2, 2017 in Dillingham.

Closing Comments

The Council Chair and member Lyon presented Council member Dan O'Hara with a plaque for his 30 years of service to the Council and the Federal Subsistence Program.

Adjourn

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

February , 2017

Donald Mike, DFO
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

Molly Chythlook, Chair
Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.



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

Federal Subsistence Board Informational Flyer



Forest Service

Contact: Theo Matuskowitz
(907) 786-3867 or (800) 478-1456
theo_matuskowitz@fws.gov

How to Submit a Proposal to Change Federal Subsistence Regulations

Alaska residents and subsistence users 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 assist with effective management of subsistence activities and ensure consideration of traditional and local knowledge in subsistence management decisions. Subsistence users also provide valuable wildlife harvest information.

A call for proposals to change Federal subsistence fishing regulations is issued in January of even-numbered years and odd-numbered years for wildlife. The period during which proposals are accepted is no less than 30 calendar days. Proposals must be submitted in writing within this time frame.

You may propose changes to Federal subsistence season dates, harvest limits, methods and means of harvest, and customary and traditional use 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 management unit number and species. Quote the current regulation if known. If you are proposing a new regulation, please state, “new regulation.”
- Write the regulation the way you would like to see it written in the regulations.
- Explain why this regulation change should be made.
- You should provide any additional information that you believe will help the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) in evaluating the proposed change.

You may submit your proposals by:

1. By mail or hand delivery to:
Federal Subsistence Board
Office of Subsistence Management
Attn: Theo Matuskowitz
1011 E. Tudor Rd., MS-121
Anchorage, AK 99503
2. At any Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meeting (A schedule will be published in the Federal Register and be announced statewide, bi-annually, prior to the meeting cycles)
3. On the Web at <http://www.regulations.gov>

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: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>. All proposals and comments, including personal information, are posted on the Web at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

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

How a proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations is processed:

1. 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.
2. The proposals are compiled into a book for statewide distribution and posted online at the Program website. The proposals are also sent out 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 45 calendar days. Comments must be submitted within this time frame.
3. The lead analyst works with appropriate agencies and proponents to develop an analysis on the proposal.
4. The analysis is sent to the Councils, ADF&G and the ISC for comments and recommendations to the 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 of the comments and recommendations received by interested/affected parties. This packet of information is then presented to the Board for action.
5. 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.
6. The final rule is published in the Federal Register and a public regulations booklet is created and distributed statewide and on the Program's website.

A step-by-step guide to submitting your proposal on www.regulations.gov:

1. Connect to www.regulations.gov – there is no password or username required.
2. In the white space provided in the large blue box, type in the document number listed in the news release or available on the program webpage, (for example: FWS-R7-SM2014-0062) and select the light blue “Search” button to the right.

3. Search results will populate and may have more than one result. Make sure the Proposed Rule you select is by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and **not** by the U.S. Forest Service (FS).
4. Select the proposed rule and in the upper right select the blue box that says, “Comment Now!”
5. Enter your comments in the “Comment” box.
6. Upload your files by selecting “Choose files” (this is optional).
7. Enter your first and last name in the spaces provided.
8. Select the appropriate checkbox stating whether or not you are providing the information directly or submitting on behalf of a third party.
9. Fill out the contact information in the drop down section as requested.
10. Select, “Continue.” You will be given an opportunity to review your submission.
11. If everything appears correct, click the box at the bottom that states, “I read and understand the statement above,” and select the box, “Submit Comment.” A receipt will be provided to you. Keep this as proof of submission.
12. If everything does not appear as you would like it to, select, “Edit” to make any necessary changes and then go through the previous step again to “Submit Comment.”

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

WILDLIFE CLOSURE REVIEW BRIEFING

As called for in the Closure Policy, the Office of Subsistence Management is reviewing existing wildlife closures to determine whether the original justifications for closure continue to apply. These reviews are being conducted in accordance with guidance found in the Federal Subsistence Board's Policy on Closures to Hunting, Trapping and Fishing on Federal Public Lands and Waters in Alaska, which was adopted in 2007. According to the policy, existing closures will be reviewed at least every three years, and are typically completed on a three-year rotational schedule. Most of the closures being reviewed this cycle were last reviewed by the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) in 2012. A summary of the current closure reviews which are applicable to your Regional Advisory Council (RAC) are provided.

Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) establishes a priority for the taking of fish and wildlife on Federal public lands and waters for non-wasteful subsistence uses over the taking of fish and wildlife for other purposes (ANILCA Section 804). The Federal Subsistence Board is authorized to restrict or close the taking of fish and wildlife by subsistence and non-subsistence users on Federal public lands and waters (ANILCA Section 804 and 815(3)) when necessary for: 1) the conservation of healthy populations of fish and wildlife; or 2) to continue subsistence users of such populations. In addition, the Board may also close Federal public lands and waters to any taking of fish and wildlife for reasons of public safety, administration, or to assure the continued viability of such population (ANILCA Section 816(b)).

Distribution and abundance of fish and wildlife populations are known to fluctuate based upon a variety of factors such as weather patterns, management actions, habitat changes, predation, harvest activities, and disease. Subsistence use patterns are also known to change over time in response to many factors including resource abundance, human population changes, among others. It is for these reasons that the Board decided in 2007 to conduct reviews every 3 years or earlier if new information becomes available that would potentially allow the closure to be lifted.

A Wildlife Closure Review contains a brief history of why a closure was implemented, along with a summary of the current resource condition and the OSM recommendation as to whether the closure should be continued or lifted.

Councils are asked to consider the OSM recommendation and share their views on the issue. Input from the Councils is critical to the development of regulatory proposals needed to address adjustments to regulations. After the Council reviews the closure review, they have three options, which should be in the form of an **action item**. They can recommend to:

- maintain the status quo
- modify or eliminate the closure
- other recommendation

If the Council recommends to modify or rescind, they should submit a proposal (**a separate action item**) at this time. Councils may choose to work with OSM staff to develop a proposal; however, proposals addressing these issues can be submitted by other individuals or organizations as well.

Regardless of the Council recommendation, closures remain in effect until changed by the Federal Subsistence Board, and any regulatory proposals that may result from this review process will be considered through the normal regulatory cycle.

**FEDERAL WILDLIFE CLOSURE REVIEW
WCR15-05**

Closure Location: Unit 9C – that portion draining into the Naknek River from the south

Current Federal Regulation

Unit 9C – Moose

*Unit 9C – that portion draining into the Naknek River from the south – Aug. 20 – Sept. 20
1 bull by State registration permit. Public lands are closed during Dec. 1 – Dec. 31
December for the hunting of moose, except by Federally qualified
subsistence users hunting under these regulations.*

Closure Dates: Dec. 1 – Dec. 31

Current State Regulation

Unit 9C – that portion draining into the Naknek River

Residents: One bull by permit in person in King Salmon beginning Aug. 16 Sept. 1 – Sept. 15

Or

*Residents: One antlered bull by permit in person in King Salmon Dec. 1 – Dec. 31
beginning Nov. 15*

*Nonresidents: One bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more Sept. 5 – Sept. 15
brow bines on at least one side by permit in person in King Salmon
beginning Aug. 16*

Regulatory Year Initiated: 1992

Regulatory History

As early as 1990, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) had issued Emergency Orders closing the December antlerless moose harvest in all or parts of the Naknek drainage in Unit 9C. These antlerless hunts were originally intended to prevent the moose population from outgrowing available habitat (OSM 1992). In 1992, in response to evidence that the moose population was relatively stable, several proposals were submitted to restrict or eliminate antlerless moose harvest in the Naknek River drainage. Proposal P92-45, submitted by ADF&G, proposed that the harvest limit be changed from 1 moose to 1 bull moose in the entire drainage. Proposal P92-47, submitted by the Bureau of Land

Management, also proposed restricting harvest to one bull, but only in the portion of Unit 9C that drains into the Naknek River from the north. Proposal P92-46, submitted by the Alaska Peninsula/Becharof National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), proposed a harvest limit of one bull for the Sept. 1 – 15 season, and the establishment of an antlerless moose quota of 5 for the Dec. 1 – 31 season. The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) rejected proposals P92-46 and P92-47, but adopted P92-45 with modification to incorporate some of the elements of the former two proposals. As a result of the Board's action, the Naknek drainage was divided into two hunt areas. For the area draining into the Naknek River from the north, harvest was restricted to 1 bull for both the Sept. 1 – 15 and the Dec. 1 – 31 seasons. Harvest during the December season required the use of a Federal registration permit. In the area draining into the Naknek River from the south, harvest was limited to 1 bull for the Sept. 1 – 15 season. For the Dec. 1 – 31 season, a quota of 5 antlerless moose was established, by Federal registration permit only. Additionally, Federal public lands in this hunt area were closed to moose harvest during December except by Federally qualified users (OSM 2016a).

In 1993, Proposal P93-39 was submitted by the Office of Subsistence Management to clarify the regulations resulting from the Board's action on P92-45. Ambiguous regulatory language had resulted in confusion about whether or not the antlered bull season would remain open once the antlerless quota was reached (OSM 1993). The Board adopted P93-39, clarifying that the antlered bull season would remain open even if the antlerless moose quota was reached (OSM 2016a).

In 1995, Proposal P95-30 was submitted by the Bristol Bay Native Association. It requested that the fall moose season in the portion of 9C draining into the Naknek River from the south be extended from Sept. 1 – 15 to Aug. 20 – Sept. 15, and that a Federal registration permit be required for the August portion of the fall season. It also requested that the harvest limit be changed from one antlered bull to one bull for both the fall and winter seasons and that the allowance for the harvest of five antlerless moose be eliminated. Finally, it requested that the closure of Federal public lands during the December season be rescinded (OSM 1995). The Board adopted P95-30 as recommended by the Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council), which extended the fall season as proposed, and required the use of a Federal registration permit during August. This action did not result in changes to harvest limits or restrictions, nor did it address the closure (OSM 2016a).

However, harvest restrictions were addressed in 1998, when the Board considered Proposal P98-50. This proposal was submitted by the Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR and requested that the harvest limit of one antlered bull be changed to one bull in Units 9A, 9B, 9C in the Naknek drainage, and 9E. This request addressed hunts that were more restrictive under Federal regulation than under State regulation (OSM 1998). With the Board's adoption of P98-50 (OSM 2016a), Federal and State harvest limits and restrictions for moose in Unit 9 were aligned.

In 2006, Proposal WP06-24, submitted by ADF&G, requested elimination of the December antlerless hunt in Unit 9C, citing a declining population and insufficient calf recruitment (OSM 2006). The Board adopted WP06-24 as recommended by the Council, which resulted in elimination of antlerless harvest but required a Federal registration permit for the entirety of the fall and winter seasons (OSM 2016a).

In 2008, Proposals WP08-30 and WP08-31, addressing moose in Units 9B and 9C, were submitted by the Council. Proposal WP08-30 requested a shorter moose season in Unit 9B while WP08-31 requested a closure of Federal public lands to non-Federally qualified users in Units 9B and 9C (OSM 2008). The Council's support of WP08-30 was contingent upon adoption of WP08-31. After extensive discussion and input from the State of Alaska and the Council Chair, the proposals were deferred by the Board so a working group could be formed to identify other management options that would address conflicts in Unit 9 subunits (FSB 2008).

Based on the direction given by the Board, the Office of Subsistence Management provided funding for, and worked in cooperation with, ADF&G to initiate a Unit 9 Moose Working Group (Working Group). The Working Group was established to better understand the conflicts in the region and to develop management strategies and recommendations. Subsequently, the Council submitted a number of proposals (WP 10-47, -48, -49, -50, -52) to address user conflicts. In May 2010, the Board considered those proposals, as well as proposals WP10-45 (deferred WP08-30) and WP10-46 (deferred WP08-31). The Board deferred all of these proposals, consistent with the recommendations of the Council, until the Working Group could finish its work (FSB 2010).

The Working Group discussed a number of management strategies and came to consensus on three recommendations (ADF&G 2010):

- Submit proposals to the Alaska Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board to create a registration permit for all moose hunts in Unit 9.
- Conduct educational outreach directed at local moose hunters.
- Offer educational trapping seminars in the Unit 9 villages.

To address the need for more data and better exchange of information between local residents and ADF&G, the Working Group proposed creating a registration permit hunt for moose throughout Unit 9. The requirements of this hunt would increase information available to wildlife managers about the moose hunt through hunter reports. In addition, such a hunt would increase exchange of information between biologists and moose hunters during the permit distribution process. This hunt would also allow managers to redistribute hunting pressure to help eliminate user conflict.

In March 2011, the Alaska Board of Game adopted Proposal 14, which was submitted by the Working Group. The proposal requested the establishment of registration permit hunts for moose in Unit 9. At this meeting, the Alaska Board of Game also adopted Proposal 17, which extended the moose season five days in Units 9C and 9E (Alaska Board of Game 2011). In Unit 9C, this changed the end date from Sept. 15 to Sept. 20. Based on the actions of the Alaska Board of Game, the Council supported aligning, to the maximum extent possible, Federal regulations for moose hunting in Unit 9 with the changes made in State regulation (BBSRAC 2011).

In 2012, deferred Proposals WP10-45, -46, -47, -48, -50 and -52 were addressed by the Board. WP10-45 requested a change to the moose season dates in a portion of Unit 9. Proposals WP10-46, WP10-49 and WP10-50 requested that portions of Unit 9 be closed to the taking of moose by non-Federally qualified

subsistence users. Proposals WP10-47, WP10-48 and WP10-52 requested that non-Federally qualified subsistence users hunting moose in portions of Unit 9 be restricted from harvesting moose within a two mile wide corridor on either side of waterways within Federal public lands. All of the proposals were originally deferred by the Board during its May 2010 meeting, pending the outcome of the Unit 9 Moose Working Group process (OSM 2012). In 2012, the Board rejected Proposals WP10-46, -47, -48, -49, -50 and -52 and adopted Proposal WP10-45 with modification to require a State registration permit to harvest moose during the fall season in Unit 9 and to add an additional 5 days to the fall seasons in Units 9C and 9E (FSB 2012). In Unit 9C, this changed the season end date changed from Sept. 15 to Sept. 20, consistent with State regulation.

In 2015, Emergency Special Action Request WSA15-01 was submitted by the Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR, requesting that a Federal permit be required for the fall 2015 season on Federal public lands within the Refuge. This request was submitted due to concern that the existing requirement for a State permit, with different season dates, would result in confusion. Since there was already a Federal registration permit required for the December moose season in the affected portion of Unit 9C, the fall season dates could simply be added to that permit (OSM 2015). WSA15-01 was approved by the Board in March 2015 (OSM 2016a).

In 2016, this issue was revisited with the submission of Proposal WP16-22 by the Alaska Peninsula Becharof NWR. WP16-22 requested that a Federal registration permit be required to hunt moose in the portion of Unit 9C draining into the Naknek River from the south for the same reason given in WSA15-01. It also requested that a State registration permit be required for reporting purposes (OSM 2016b). The State agreed to print the Federal season dates on the State registration permit, and as a result, the Board adopted WP16-22 with modification to require a State permit for both the fall and winter seasons (OSM 2016a).

Proposal WP16-24 was also considered by the Board in 2016. This proposal was submitted by Richard Wilson of Naknek and requested that Federal lands in Unit 9B and 9C be closed to moose harvest except by Federally qualified subsistence users. This proposal was based on the belief that limiting harvest to local residents would be an appropriately conservative management approach, given the lack of current population estimates (OSM 2016c). This proposal was rejected by the Board, consistent with the recommendation of the Council (OSM 2016a).

Closure last reviewed: 2012 – WCR12-05

Justification for Original Closure (Section 815(3) Criteria)

Section 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 the public lands (other than national parks and park 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;

In 1992, Proposal P92-45 was adopted with modification, addressing concerns about the conservation status of the Unit 9 moose population. A primary issue was whether this population could withstand the continued harvest of cow moose. In order to protect the herd and provide a priority for subsistence users, a bull-only harvest was initiated and Federal public lands draining into the Naknek River from the south were closed to moose harvest except by Federally qualified subsistence users (OSM 1992).

Council Recommendation for Original Closure

Although local residents desired an antlerless moose season, the Council questioned whether this population could sustain a cow harvest. In order to protect the herd and to provide a priority to Federally qualified subsistence users, the Council believed that a bull-only harvest should be allowed and that Federal public lands draining into the Naknek River from the south should be closed to non-Federally qualified subsistence users. The Council believed that this would result in a greater number of bulls available for subsistence users and a larger cow base for herd expansion in the future.

State Recommendation for Original Closure

The State recommended that the Naknek River drainage be closed to the taking of antlerless moose during the State's December season. Their recommendation was based on their concern for the population of moose north of the Naknek River in the King Salmon Creek drainage. The original recommendation from the State to close the antlerless season was presented in P92-46, but was addressed by the Board via its action on P92-45.

Biological Background

Since the early 20th century, moose on the Alaska Peninsula gradually expanded their range southwestward. This expansion was accompanied by a dramatic population increase until the 1960s, when the population peaked and then began to decline. Biologists believe that range damage from over-browsing led to the decline (Butler 2010). Even after a series of hunting restrictions and improvements in range conditions, the moose population in some subunits declined as much as 60% from its peak in the 1960s. Brown bear predation on neonatal moose was thought to be the primary limiting factor of moose in Unit 9 (Butler 2010).

The current State population objectives for moose in Unit 9 (Crowley and Peterson 2014) are to:

1. Maintain existing densities in areas with moderate (0.5–1.5 moose/square mile) or high (1.5–2.5 moose/square mile) densities
2. Increase low-density populations (where habitat conditions are not limiting) to 0.5 moose/square mile
3. Maintain sex ratios of at least 25 bulls:100 cows in medium-to-high density populations and at least 40 bulls:100 cows in low-density areas

Assessment of moose population status and trends in Unit 9 is difficult for several reasons, including low moose density, and snow and weather conditions that are frequently inadequate for surveys. As a result, a

current population estimate is not available for Unit 9C, and assessment of density objectives is precluded.

Several composition surveys have been conducted in Unit 9C since 2005 (**Table 1**). On average, for the 2005 – 2011 time period, there have been 37 bulls:100 cows, which is approaching the objective for low density populations. The bull:cow ratio has exceeded this objective in three of the last 7 surveys (Crowley and Peterson 2014).

Calf:cow ratios in Unit 9 have typically been variable (Butler 2008). In Unit 9C, for the 2005 – 2011 time period, there were 9 – 21 calves:100 cows (**Table 1**), with an average of 14 calves:100 cows (Crowley and Peterson 2014). While there is no composition data for the most recent years, hunters have reported seeing many calves, including twins, during fall hunts in the past several years (Crowley 2016, pers. comm.).

From the 1990s to the 2010s, it was suspected that moose density in Unit 9C was stable to declining slightly, based on composition surveys and decreased hunter success (Riley 2012; Crowley and Peterson 2014). It's worth noting, however, that the human population in Unit 9C also declined during this period which could partially account for declining moose harvest (Crowley and Peterson 2014).

Table 1. Unit 9C moose fall composition estimates, 2005 – 2013 (Crowley and Peterson 2014).

Year	Bulls:100 cows	Calves:100 cows
2005	34	19
2006	24	9
2007	42	21
2008	47	13
2009	35	16
2010	48	13
2011	27	9

Harvest History

Total reported moose harvest in Unit 9C has declined since the early 2000s (**Figure 1**). For the 2000 – 2007 time period, total reported harvest averaged 35 moose annually. This declined to 21 moose annually for the 2008 – 2015 time period. Harvest among local users, defined as those with a customary and traditional use determination, declined from 19 moose for the earlier time period to 14 moose for the later time period, but much of the decline in total harvest can be attributed to a decrease in non-local harvest. Local harvest appears to have improved since 2009, when it was at its nadir, and has increased in each of the past two regulatory years. Similarly, harvest success among locals has been variable but has improved each year since 2013 (**Figure 2**). Collectively, this could be an indication that moose are becoming less scarce on the landscape. However, it could also reflect changes in moose distribution or

changes in harvest effort, and it may be premature to say that these changes in reported harvest constitute a positive trend.

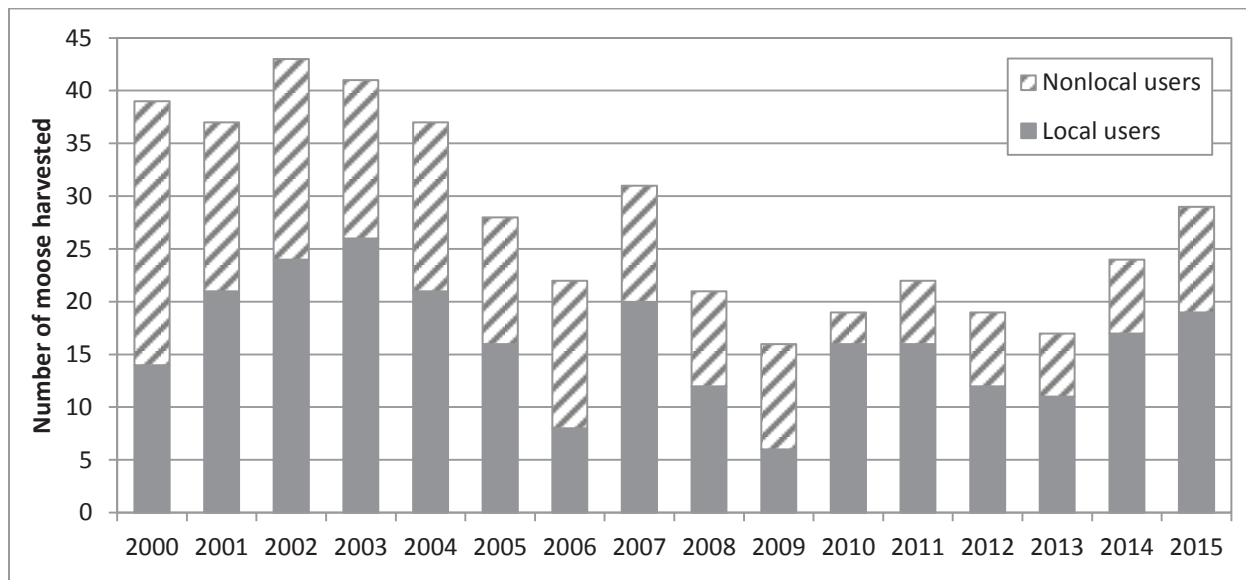


Figure 1. Unit 9C moose harvest by local and nonlocal users, 2000 – 2015. Local users are defined as those with a customary and traditional use determination (ADF&G 2016; OSM 2016a).

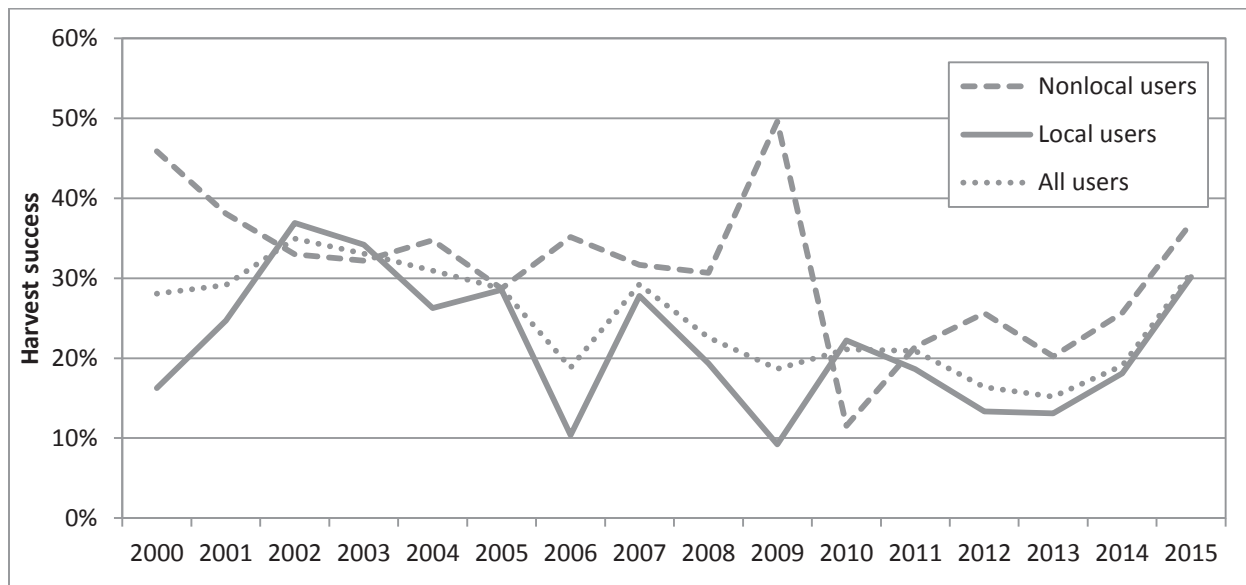


Figure 2. Unit 9C moose harvest success by local and nonlocal users, 2000 – 2015. Local users are defined as those with a customary and traditional use determination (ADF&G 2016; OSM 2016a).

OSM Preliminary Recommendation:

- maintain status quo**
- initiate proposal to modify or eliminate the closure**
- other recommendation**

Justification

Subsistence users continue to voice concern about low moose densities and limited moose harvest in Unit 9C. While reported harvest and harvest success have improved relative to 2009, when those metrics were at their lowest among local users, the population status remains uncertain. The conservative approach for managing the moose population in this hunt area is to maintain the Federal lands closure to non-Federally qualified subsistence users until conditions allow for the completion of a population census. Maintaining the status quo will also ensure the continuation of subsistence uses and does not violate the prohibition of ANILCA Section 815(3). The closure to moose harvest on Federal public lands in this hunt area will be reassessed in three years, consistent with the Federal Subsistence Board Closure Policy, or sooner if additional survey data suggest the closure should be rescinded.

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**FEDERAL WILDLIFE CLOSURE REVIEW
WCR15-07**

Closure Location: Units 17A and 17C—Caribou

Current Federal Regulation

Unit 17A and 17C— Caribou

Units 17A and 17C – that portion of 17A and 17C consisting of the Nushagak Peninsula south of the Igushik River, Tuklung River and Tuklung Hills, west to Tvativak Bay – up to 5 caribou by Federal registration permit. Federal public lands are closed to the taking of caribou except by residents of Togiak, Twin Hills, Manokotak, Aleknagik, Dillingham, Clark’s Point, and Ekuk hunting under these regulations. Aug. 1 – Mar. 31

Current State Regulation

Unit 17— Caribou

Unit 17A, all drainages that terminate east of Right Hand Point—two caribou by permit may be announced

Unit 17C remainder—two caribou by permit may be announced

Regulatory Year Initiated: 1994

Regulatory History

Caribou were reintroduced to the Nushagak Peninsula in 1988, with the intention of providing a subsistence resource to area residents (USFWS et. al. 1994). In 1994, adoption of Proposal P94-42 established a Jan. 1 – Mar. 31 harvest season for the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Herd (NPCH) in portions of Units 17A and 17C, and instituted a closure to all users except residents of Togiak, Dillingham, Manokotak, Twin Hills, Aleknagik, Clark’s Point, and Ekuk (FSB 1994). The newly established season began on January 1, 1995 and had a harvest limit of 1 caribou. Approval of special Action S95-06 extended the season from Jan. 1 – Mar. 31 to Dec. 1 – Mar. 31 for the 1995/1996 regulatory year. In 1996, the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) adopted Proposal P96-34, which changed the caribou season from Jan. 1 – Mar. 31 to Dec. 1 – Mar. 31 and also established an Aug. 1 – Aug. 30 fall season (FSB 1996). In 1997, the Board adopted Proposal P97-47, which increased the harvest limit from 1 caribou to 2 caribou on the Nushagak Peninsula, as there was a harvestable surplus of caribou and the previous year’s harvest had been well below the management objective (FSB 1997). In

1998, the Board approved Special Action S97-10, which extended the fall season from Aug. 1 – Aug. 30 to Aug. 1 – Sep. 30. This extension became regulation when the Board adopted Proposal P99-39 in 1999 (FSB 1999).

In 2001, the Board adopted Proposal WP01-18, authorizing the use of a designated hunter permit (FSB 2001). In 2002, the Board approved Special Action WSA02-13, which reduced the harvest limit from 2 caribou to 1 caribou for the NPCH hunt, and gave the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) manager authority to close the season when harvest objectives were met. This action was intended to prevent overharvest of the declining NPCH. In 2003, Board action on Proposal WP03-22 changed the harvest limit from 2 caribou to up to 2 caribou and delegated authority to the Togiak NWR manager to set harvest objectives and limits, determine the number of permits to be issued, and to close the season. WP03-22 also required that hunters report their harvest within 24 hours after returning from the field (FSB 2003). These changes provided management flexibility and reduced the need for special actions and follow-up proposals.

Special Action WSA15-02, submitted by the Village of Manokotak in April 2015, requested that the season be extended to May 31, due to poor winter travel conditions and subsequent low caribou harvest. This request was not approved by the Board because 1) immobilization drugs used during a recent capture and collaring project could have posed a human health risk prior to May 10, and 2) any season extension beyond May 10 would overlap with the calving season (OSM 2016).

The Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Planning Committee submitted four special action requests for the 2015/16 regulatory year. WSA15-14 requested increasing the harvest limit to 3 caribou through March 31, 2016. WSA15-15 requested opening Federal public lands to caribou harvest by all residents of Alaska through March 31, 2016. WSA15-16 requested extending the winter season from Dec. 1 – Mar. 31 to Dec. 1 – Apr. 15. WSA15-17 requested that subsistence harvest of Nushagak caribou be exempted from the prohibition on same-day airborne harvest Jan. 1 – Apr. 15. These requests sought to increase harvest and slow population growth of the NPCH. All four requests were approved by the Board, with a modification of WSA15-16 that retained the 3 caribou limit through April 15, 2016 (OSM 2016).

In early 2016, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced a State season by Emergency Order (EO 04-03-16), targeting caribou migrating off the Nushagak Peninsula in portions of Units 17A and 17C. This season opened on March 4, 2016. The approval of WSA15-15 provided an opportunity for ADF&G to expand the hunt to include Federal public lands on the Nushagak Peninsula, which occurred on March 17. The State season was open through March 31, 2016, had a limit of 2 caribou of either sex, and required the use of a State registration permit (RC501).

After the Federal and State seasons closed in spring 2016, Emergency Special Action Request WSA15-18 was submitted by the Manokotak Village Council, requesting that the Federal caribou season on the Nushagak Peninsula be extended through the end of May, or until females begin calving. The request was approved with the modification to 1) reopen the season through May 10, a date that provided reasonable assurance that the season wouldn't overlap with calving, and 2) raise the harvest limit to 3

caribou, consistent with recent action on WSA15-14 and WSA15-16. As a result, the season was reopened May 3 – May 10, 2016.

Several proposals related to Nushagak caribou were submitted for consideration for regulatory year 2016/17. Proposal WP16-25/26, submitted by the Togiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee and the Nushagak Fish and Game Advisory Committee, requested increasing the harvest limit from 2 caribou to 3 caribou and modifying the existing split season to a single Aug. 1 – Mar. 31 season. Proposal WP16-31/32, also submitted by the Togiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee and the Nushagak Fish and Game Advisory Committee, requested that same day airborne harvest of Nushagak Peninsula caribou be allowed during the winter season, Jan. 1 – Mar. 31. The Board adopted WP16-25 with modification, raising the harvest limit to up to 5 caribou and creating a single season, as proposed. They also adopted WP16-31. The Board took no action on WP16-26 and WP16-32, based on action taken on WP16-25 and WP16-31 (FSB 2016).

In spring 2016, Special Action Request WSA16-02 was submitted by the Togiak NWR and ADF&G for consideration by the Board. They requested that the closure be lifted for the 2016/17 regulatory year, as long as the population did not fall below 900 animals, the upper population objective. Members of the public and tribal representatives acknowledged the need for population reduction but offered limited support due to concerns about maintaining subsistence priority, particularly during the winter season, concerns about the limitations imposed by current customary and traditional use determinations, and concerns that the 900 caribou threshold for opening Federal public lands might persist beyond regulatory year 2016/17 and become a permanent management parameter. The Board acknowledged these concerns and encouraged revision of the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Management Plan to accommodate a wider range of situations, but approved WSA16-02 with modification to delegate authority to the manager of Togiak NWR to reinstate the closure if the population falls below 900 animals, given the biological necessity for population reduction.

Reviews of the 1994 closure were most recently conducted in 2008 and 2012 (WCR08-07 and WCR12-07). The Council unanimously recommended maintaining the closure during both reviews (BBSRAC 2009, 2013). The Council felt that the NPCH was an important subsistence resource and that it was important to maintain the closure. Local residents were still having a difficult time finding moose and Mulchatna caribou, and in spite of an increasing NPCH population, maintaining the closure provided a subsistence priority for use of this resource. It is worth noting that the NPCH has grown considerably since the last closure review.

Closure last reviewed: 2012 – WCR12-07

Justification for original closure (Section 815(3) criteria)

Section §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 the 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;

Caribou were reintroduced to the Nushagak Peninsula in February 1988 after an absence of over 100 years. The reintroduction was a cooperative effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ADF&G, the villages of Togiak, Manokotak, Dillingham, and Choggiung Limited, with the goal of reestablishing a caribou population large enough to sustain a reasonable harvest, while still allowing the herd to grow.

A subsistence hunt was established in 1994, and Federal public lands were closed to the harvest of Nushagak caribou by all users, except by residents of Togiak, Dillingham, Twin Hills, Manokotak, Aleknagik, Clark's Point, and Ekuk. Community studies conducted in four of the seven villages slated to participate in the Nushagak caribou harvest indicated that caribou were an integral component of the seasonal round of wild resource harvest activities.

The closure was established and has been maintained since the caribou population is not large enough to allow for uses other than subsistence uses.

Council Recommendation for the Original Closure

The Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council supported the establishment of the hunt as well as the closure to non-Federally qualified users by stating that “[Togiak National Wildlife Refuge] will be able to monitor the hunt fairly closely with the Traditional Councils administering the permits; there's a real ownership with the people in this herd and in the management. The State will keep it closed on the State side so they can honor the original agreement” (USFWS 1994:340).

State Recommendation for the Original Closure

The State supported Proposal 42 in 1994, stating that they had been part of the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Management Planning Committee and agreed with its recommendation (USFWS 1994:340).

Biological Background

Within the first 10 years following reintroduction, the NPCH grew from 146 animals in 1988 to over 1,200 caribou by 1998. Subsequently, calf recruitment and adult female survival decreased and the population fell below 600 caribou by 2006. By 2015, the population had increased to over 1,300 caribou (Aderman 2015, pers. comm.) (**Table 1**).

The causes of the decline between 1999 and 2009 are not clearly understood and are almost certainly multi-factored (Aderman and Lowe 2012). The most likely explanation for the decline is that the exceptionally high growth through 1998 produced large annual cohorts of females that survived until a relative old age, at which time they declined in productivity. This high proportion of unproductive females, combined with high harvest years in 2001 and 2002, changed the population trajectory from an increasing trend to a decreasing trend, which persisted until the ultimate replacement of old, unproductive females with younger, more productive females. Changing nutritional conditions (both short-term, such

as those associated with drought or winter icing, as well as long-term changes, such as lower overall carrying capacity due to continuous grazing on the Nushagak Peninsula since 1988) underlaid and exacerbated this decline. Predation on the population has not been shown to be a significant factor. A study of wolf predation from 2007–2011 found that this was not a primary driver of Nushagak Peninsula caribou population dynamics (Walsh and Woolington 2008). Brown bears are common on the Nushagak Peninsula and likely have learned to exploit the caribou population, but their impact on the NPCH is not known (Aderman and Lowe 2012).

Table 1. Sex and age composition and minimum counts of NPCH, southwest Alaska, 1988-2015 (Aderman 2015, Aderman 2015, pers. comm.).

Year	Bulls:100 Cows	Calves:100 Cows	Population Size (Minimum Count)
1988	11.7	10	146
1989	---	---	268
1990	---	---	383
1991	---	---	561
1992	59.8	71.6	734
1993	---	---	1,007
1994	71.3	64.6	1,106
1995	---	---	1,214
1996	---	---	1,255
1997	63.7	62.0	1,273
1998	57.4	62.6	1,281
1999	48.1	52.5	1,159
2000	51.5	38.1	1,037
2001	45.9	34.8	937
2002	42.9	36.1	810
2003	47.3	44.1	780
2004	42.5	33.8	665
2005	38.2	32.4	600
2006	31.3	35.6	550
2007	49.2	40.0	560
2008	43.8	59.6	575
2009	37.1	34.8	600
2010	42.1	45.2	801
2011	28.9	38.6	805
2012	52.0	50.2	902
2013	32.2	40.3	926
2014	43.8	52.5	1,018
2015	65.1	46.3	1,313

Since 2007, the population has increased due to improved fall calf recruitment and adult female survival (Aderman 2015). The most recent population count occurred in June 2015, when a minimum of 1,313 caribou were observed (**Table 1**). This minimum count is well above the upper end of the Nushagak

Peninsula Caribou Management Plan’s population objective, which is to maintain a population of 400–900 caribou and an optimum of 750 caribou (Aderman 2015). The most recent composition surveys were conducted in October 2015. These surveys estimated 65 bulls:100 cows, one of the highest bull:cow ratio on record, and 46 calves:100 cows (**Table 1**) (Aderman 2015, pers. comm.). Managers are concerned that continued growth of the herd may result in a population crash or exodus of the population from the Nushagak Peninsula. Caribou harvest will need to increase substantially to prevent another population decline like the one experienced in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Aderman 2015).

Harvest History

In 2011, the Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Management Plan’s harvest strategy was reviewed and updated to make it more responsive to a dynamic caribou population. The updated strategy established an annual harvest goal based on population size and trend, and allows harvest when the population exceeds 200 caribou and is stable or increasing. The revised harvest strategy calls for a liberal harvest when the population is 800 caribou or greater, and recommends harvesting all animals over a minimum count of 750 caribou (Aderman 2015).

Hunting effort is influenced by travel conditions, availability of and opportunity to harvest other resources, including Mulchatna caribou and moose, as well as economic factors (Aderman and Lowe 2012). Typically, annual harvest of the NPCH has increased as the population has grown and harvest limits have increased (**Table 2**). Historically, most of the reported harvest has occurred in February and March (**Table 2**), due to improved hunter access to the herd via snowmachines (Aderman and Lowe 2012). In recent years, total reported harvest has been lower than expected, given the NPCH size. In particular, winter harvest has been low, due to poor travel conditions resulting from low snowfall and warm temperatures.

Despite the liberalization of harvest regulations in early 2016, spring harvest remained well below harvest levels typical during times of caribou abundance. In March and April, only 22 caribou were harvested under State and Federal regulations (**Table 2**), probably due to the persistence of warm temperatures and low snowfall. Of the 123 State permits issued for the spring hunt, 6 were issued to residents of Soldotna, while the remainder were issued to residents of the seven communities who currently qualify for the Federal subsistence hunt. All caribou harvested under State and Federal regulation were harvested by residents of these seven communities.

OSM Preliminary Recommendation:

- maintain status quo**
- initiate proposal to modify or eliminate the closure**
- other recommendation**

Justification

The NPCH currently exceeds the established population objective and continues to grow. In addition, due to poor travel conditions in recent years, harvest is well below management targets. Local managers

believe that population reduction is essential for the continued viability of this population, which is likely to experience a population crash or leave the Nushagak Peninsula if growth continues. Either of these events could preclude subsistence uses of this resource into the future. Rescinding the closure and increasing participation in NPCH hunts offers the best potential to increase harvest and ensure continuation of this important subsistence resource.

Table 2. Reported harvest of the NPCH, by month, for regulatory years 1994/1995 – 2015/2016 (Aderman 2015; OSM 2015; Aderman 2016, pers. comm.).

Regulatory year	Month								Total
	Aug.	Sep.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	Unknown	
1994/1995	NS ^a	NS	NS	3	1	25	NS	6	35
1995/1996	NS	NS	3	0	5	43	NS	1	52
1996/1997	5	NS	0	0	2	13	NS	0	20
1997/1998	5	NS	0	2	25	35	NS	0	67
1998/1999	0	2	0	0	0	50	NS	3	55
1999/2000	0	0	0	2	7	54	NS	0	63
2000/2001	0	6	0	0	22	98	NS	0	126
2001/2002	0	3	0	0	9	115	NS	0	127
2002/2003	3	0	0	0	0	0	NS	0	3
2003/2004	2	3	0	0	0	29	NS	0	34
2004/2005	1	0	0	0	0	8	NS	0	9
2005/2006	1	1	0	0	0	9	NS	0	11
2006/2007	NS	NS	NS	NS	0	NS	NS	0	0
2007/2008	NS	NS	NS	NS	0	0	NS	0	0
2008/2009	NS	NS	NS	NS	5	2	NS	1	8
2009/2010	NS	NS	NS	NS	3	14	NS	1	18
2010/2011	NS	NS	NS	NS	18	27	NS	0	45
2011/2012	0	2	NS	NS	20	64	NS	0	86
2012/2013	6	3	0	5	6	89	NS	0	109
2013/2014	3	1	0	0	0	98	NS	0	102
2014/2015	8	7	0	0	1	0	NS	0	16
2015/2016 ^b	28	14	0	0	0	15	7	0	64
Total	62	42	3	12	124	788	7	12	1050
% of Total	6	4	0	1	12	75	1	1	

^a NS = No season

^b Current reporting as of April 18, 2016. Includes 10 caribou harvested under State regulation Mar. – Apr., 2016.

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**Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
U.S Fish & Wildlife Service
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503**

Anthony Christenson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
U.S. & FWS, Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Chairman Christenson:

The Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) submits this FY2016 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 meeting in Dillingham on October 26-27, 2016 the Council identified concerns and recommendations for this report, [*approving it at its winter 2017 public meeting in Naknek*]. 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 Bristol Bay Region.

1. Meshik River Salmon

Residents of Port Heiden depend on the Meshik River, one of several salmon tributaries on the Alaska Peninsula, for their subsistence Sockeye and Chinook Salmon needs. Over the past several years, residents of Port Heiden were not able to meet all their subsistence needs due to commercial activities and low run returns.

The Council considered various Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program priority information needs for the Bristol Bay region at its fall meeting and supported funding for the Meshik River priority information needs. It is important to develop a monitoring program for the Meshik River for managers to have the data available for reference when making management decision on subsistence and commercial activities and to manage for a sustainable fishery.

2. Outreach

Public meetings of the Council are held in Dillingham and King Salmon/Naknek each fall and winter cycles, respectively. These two communities are able to accommodate the Council meetings due to availability of hotels, lodges, and restaurants. Whereas, communities outside these two communities are limited to host a public meeting with limited accommodations and limited meeting venues.

The Council recognizes the need to engage other subsistence communities during public meetings and recognizes the need to improve outreach efforts to the surrounding communities of upcoming scheduled public meetings, and to encourage the communities to participate on important subsistence resource related issues. Public meetings of the Council typically begin at 8:30 am and end at 5:00 pm, during normal working hours. Community members involved in natural resource issues usually work day jobs and cannot attend the public forum to bring forth their concerns.

Accommodating the public wishing to participate in subsistence resource-related management issues is challenging when meetings are held during the day. Outreach efforts to include communities to participate in public meetings should include social media, and incorporate automatic email notices, for those that wish to be notified via email, that public meetings are being scheduled. Direct email to Tribal and city offices should also be included to notify the public and encourage them to attend in person or via teleconference.

The Council therefore requests that the Board, through the Office of Subsistence Management, ensure that all possible venues of outreach are being considered, and to also consider possibly holding meetings outside of the normal business day.

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 for continuing discussions about the issues and concerns of subsistence users of the Bristol Bay Region. If you have questions about this report, please contact me via Donald Mike, Subsistence Council Coordinator, with the Office of Subsistence Management at 1-800-478-1456 or (907) 786-3629.

Sincerely,

Molly Chythlook
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Eugene R. Peltola, Jr., Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence
Management
Stewart Cogswell, Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence
Management
Carl Johnson, Council Coordination Division Chief, Office of Subsistence
Management
Donald Mike, Subsistence Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Administrative Record



United States Department of the Interior

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INFORMATION BULLETIN - December 2016

Cooperative Salmon Escapement Monitoring Projects. Contact: Pat Walsh

In 2014 the Federal Subsistence Board cancelled the funding for the salmon escapement monitoring projects (weirs) on the Kanektok (KRW) and Middle Fork Goodnews (MFGRW) Rivers. ADF&G and Coastal Villages Seafood provided the bulk of the funding to operate both projects although counting for the coho salmon spawning season was cancelled due to the lack of Federal funding.

On the Middle Fork Goodnews River, ADF&G has monitored Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon escapement since 1980. Escapement goals and management of the commercial fishery are based on salmon escapement at the weir. Togiak Refuge has worked with ADF&G since 1992 to include the coho salmon and Dolly Varden runs in the project operation. ADF&G funds the project operation. Togiak Refuge provided staff support; one intern from the Careers Discovery Internship Program (CDIP) for the MFGRW.

On the Kanektok River, ADF&G, Native Village of Kwinhagak, Coastal Villages and Togiak Refuge have worked cooperatively to monitor salmon and Dolly Varden runs since 2001. This project was cancelled for 2016 due to lack of funding

Arctic Char Population Inventory Contact: Pat Walsh

Togiak Refuge has developed a multi-year study to inventory Arctic char populations throughout the Refuge. This species was previously confirmed to occur in 27 lakes. During 2014-2016 we visited 21 lakes and documented Arctic char occurrence in 13 new lakes. We have collected size and genetic information from 355 fish and provided the UAF museum with voucher specimens.

Mulchatna Caribou Contact: Andy Aderman

Togiak Refuge assisted ADF&G with telemetry monitoring flights, radiocollar deployment, satellite data acquisition, data entry and database management. A photocensus conducted June 28, 2016 estimated 27,242 caribou, down from the 2015 estimate of 30,736 caribou (Neil Barten, ADF&G, personal communication). Composition surveys in October 2016 estimated 38 bulls and 23 calves per 100 cows. The bull to cow ratio has steadily increased over the last 10 years, while the calf to cow ratio for 2016 was below the 10-year average of 27 calves per 100 cows (Neil Barten, ADF&G, personal communication).

Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Contact: Andy Aderman

A photocensus conducted on June 30, 2016 found a minimum of 1,230 caribou. A similar effort in 2015 found a minimum of 1,313 caribou. A composition survey in October estimated 51 bulls and 40 calves per 100 cows. The previous 5-year average ratios were 44.4 bulls and 45.6 calves per 100 cows. As of December 20, 2016, a total of 39 caribou (28 bulls and 11 cows) have been reported harvested (34 by Federal permit and 5 by State permit).

Moose Contact: Andy Aderman

During the 2016 fall hunt in Unit 17A, 55 bulls were reported harvested (Neil Barten, ADF&G, personal communication). Results of a Refuge-wide moose survey conducted in October are forthcoming. In addition, 44 sightability trials involving radio-collared moose were conducted. Survey crews detected the radio-collared moose in 32 of the trials suggesting a sightability correction factor of 1.375. Snow cover was absent for all areas searched. Another moose population survey on the Togiak Refuge is planned for March 2017.

The relationships of wolf and brown bear predation with moose population density and growth at Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and BLM Goodnews Block, Alaska Contact: Pat Walsh

In summer 2014, Togiak Refuge, the USFWS Genetics Lab, ADF&G, and BLM initiated a study to understand the effects of wolf and brown bear predation in regulating the populations of moose. The study relies on radio telemetry and stable isotope analysis. Our approach is to relate the predation impact by wolves and bears on moose at varying levels of moose population density. We will use existing population estimates for brown bears, and through the use of radio telemetry, we will estimate the number and composition of wolf packs on the Refuge. We will model wolf and bear predation on moose based on the quantity of wolves and bears and diet composition of both species determined through analysis of carbon and nitrogen isotopes occurring in bear and wolf hair. Hair is being collected from wolves when captured during radio collaring operations, and has been collected from brown bears using break-away hair snares. So far, we have captured and radioed 13 wolves from four packs. During summers 2014-2016, we deployed over 400 snares, and collected over 200 brown bear hair samples.

Walrus Contact: Doug Holt

The Togiak Refuge has annually monitored the number and timing of Pacific walruses at haul-outs since 1985, using ground counts (1985-2008), aerial surveys (2003-2011) and time lapse photography (2010-2016). Overall, walrus numbers have declined, with the greatest declines at Cape Peirce and Cape Newenham. Peak counts in the most current year (2015) totaled 1,031 at Cape Peirce, 726 on Hagemeister Island, and 396 at Cape Newenham. Walrus using haul-outs in Bristol Bay are typically recorded from late spring to late fall but have been observed at Cape Newenham every month since cameras were deployed in fall of 2014.

Seabirds Contact: Kara Hilwig

The abundance and reproductive success of black-legged kittiwakes, common murre, and pelagic cormorants has been monitored annually at Cape Peirce from 1990-2014, and intermittently at Cape Newenham from 1990-2009. Seabird studies were resumed at Cape Peirce in 2016 with the hiring of a new Seabird Biologist in May. From 1990-2014, average numbers of kittiwakes counted per year ranged from 423-1906 individuals. In 2016, the average count of

kittiwakes was 547. From 1990-2014, average numbers of pelagic cormorants counted per year ranged from 48-149 individuals. In 2016, the average count of cormorants was 32. From 1990-2014, average numbers of common murrelets counted per year ranged from 1680-4563 individuals. In 2016, the average count of murrelets was 83. Observations of murrelets and cormorants were the lowest recorded since the initiation of the monitoring project. Initial observations indicate near complete nest failure for kittiwakes and murrelets. However, large cormorant chicks were observed in early July.

Water Temperature Monitoring Contact: Doug Holt

Stream temperature was monitored at 18 river sites on Togiak Refuge between 2001 and 2016. Temperature was recorded on an hourly and the data were successfully recovered from the field ~75% of the time. Maximum daily mean temperature readings varied from ~11.5 - >20° C across sites, with the Kukaktlim Lake outlet site being the warmest and the Weary River the coldest. There was evidence for a trend of cooler water temperatures from 2001 until about 2012 but that trend has been increasing since summer of 2013.

A die off of stickleback and Alaska blackfish was reported by public users on Kukaktlim Lake and observed by Service employees retrieving temperature loggers on Gechiak Lake. A review of measurements from these loggers showed that temperatures were over 20° C for several hours on several days prior to each observed die off. It is unclear if the fish die offs were a direct result of the sustained high temperatures or a result of other factors, either independently of or in connection with, the temperatures. Constant monitoring of temperature are the only data available on the lakes where the die offs were observed.

Temperature was monitored at 2 lakes with temperature loggers equally spaced from surface to lake bottom and temperature recorded every hour. Both lakes exhibited similar patterns of turnover and surface freezing in winter beginning near the end of November and thawing near the end of April each year. Data from each lake showed evidence of multiple freeze/thaw events during the winter of 2015-2016.

Quantifying River Discharge Contact: Pat Walsh

Togiak Refuge and the USFWS Water Resources Branch have worked cooperatively since 1999 to acquire baseline hydrologic data of the flow regime (magnitude, duration, timing, frequency, and rate of change) and water quality. A network of stream discharge gages collected stream flow data from 1999-2005 at 20 locations. A subset of five of these stations continued to collect data through fall 2009, after which three of the five stations were removed. We will monitor discharge in the Togiak and Kulukak Rivers indefinitely. Each gage is instrumented with pressure sensors that measure water level every 15 minutes. On-grounds discharge measurements are made 3 to 6 times a year. In 2014, satellite transmitters were added to the stream gages that allow remote monitoring of the equipment.

Education and Outreach Contact: Terry Fuller

Togiak Refuge has an active education and outreach program including the Migratory Bird Calendar; National Wildlife Refuge Week; career fairs; production of Bristol Bay Field Notes (a new episode airs each week on KDLG); and numerous teacher requested classroom presentations

in 12 villages in the Southwest Region, Lower Kuskokwim, Dillingham City school districts and the Dillingham 7th Day Adventist School. The 2017 Migratory Bird Calendar is now available. Field trips with area students for the 2015-2016 school year included bird walks, animal tracks and ID, archery, salmon life cycles, aquatic resources and bear safety. The refuge website is also an education tool and is available at <http://togiak.fws.gov>. Togiak Refuge has a very active Facebook page which disseminates information on a daily basis to a rapidly growing global audience. Also, the refuge partners with others to conduct three environmental education camps described below:

Cape Peirce Marine Science and Yup'ik Culture Camp Contact: Terry Fuller

In July 2016 an enthusiastic group of eight area junior high students representing three villages traveled to Cape Peirce for this camp. Students experienced outstanding and uncharacteristic sunny weather and were able to observe seabirds, marine mammals, learn how field studies are conducted, as well as learning about food webs and ecological relationships. Students and agency staff also learned about traditional Yup'ik uses of animals and plants and about Native survival skills. This camp is designed to help students gain a better understanding of the biological diversity of a marine ecosystem. It also strengthens their sense of stewardship for local natural resources. Other topics at this camp included tide pools, wilderness survival skills, archery, bear safety, Leave No Trace camping practices and careers with USFWS. Amanda McCutcheon also discussed opportunities with the National Park Service (NPS), her former agency. Traditional councils and school districts from throughout western Bristol Bay are cooperators with this camp.

Southwest Alaska Science Academy (Salmon Camp) Contact: Terry Fuller

This past June and July (2016), Togiak Refuge helped with the 15th year of a summer camp aimed at teaching middle and high school students about fisheries science and the importance of salmon to our ecosystem. Students were selected from the Bristol Bay region. During the camp students worked in the field alongside fisheries professionals. Cooperators with the refuge on this project included the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, Bristol Bay Science and Research Institute, University of Alaska, University of Washington School of Fisheries, the Dillingham City and Southwest Region school districts, and ADF&G. This year Togiak Staff were able to share with camp students about the following: identifying the different species of Pacific salmon at various stages in their development, the salmon life cycle, jobs associated with the fishing industry, salmon in art (fish taxidermy) and archery.

Summer Outdoor Skills and River Ecology Float Camp Contact: Terry Fuller

The 2016 Float Camp took place on the Pungokepuk River. At this camp, six high school students (two from Manokotak and four from Dillingham) learned about river ecosystems and how to enjoy them safely and responsibly while taking part in a float trip conducted on a refuge river. Students observed and learned about the many fish, wildlife and plant species found on the Pungokepuk. Rafting skills, water safety, different angling practices (Catch and Release), Leave No Trace camping practices and bear safety were topics during the trip. Students also participated in other outdoor activities such as animal tracking (plaster casting tracks, with several nice bear tracks cast) and wilderness survival skills. This camp helps students understand the biological diversity of riparian ecosystems and the importance of salmon as a nutrient source, while

developing a deeper sense of stewardship for local natural resources. Traditional councils and school districts in western Bristol Bay are cooperators with this camp.

River Ranger Program Contact: Amanda McCutcheon Cochran

The Refuge River Ranger Program was conceived during the public use management planning process and was first implemented in 1991. The program serves many purposes. River Rangers are the main contact source for sport fishermen and local residents. Information distributed to the public includes Service policies, regulations, resource management practices, State sport fish regulations, bear safety, wilderness ethics, Leave-No-Trace camping and information about private lands to prevent trespass. Rangers document public use occurring on the river along with the location and timing of activities, conflicts between users, and sport fish catch/harvest per unit effort. Rangers also assist Refuge and ADF&G staff at the Kanektok River weir and assist Refuge staff with biological studies. In addition, Rangers patrol campsites for litter, monitor compliance of sport fishing guides and offer assistance as needed.

Quinhagak Resident Charlie Roberts was re-hired for summer 2016 to work as a River Ranger on the Kanektok River with Refuge Information Technician (RIT) John Mark. During the Winter Charlie is a student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Charlie attended the refuge's Summer Outdoor Skills and River Ecology Float Camp several years, and it later lead to this summer job that helps him save money to continue his college education.

Togiak Resident Keemuel Kenrud was hired by the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation for the summer and was assigned to the Togiak River to work with RIT Pete Abraham. Keemuel was also selected as an Arctic Youth Ambassador. The program was established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and U.S. Department of State in partnership with nonprofit partner Alaska Geographic. Youth from the program have been featured around Alaska and even in the White House to call attention to environmental and cultural issues in the Arctic.

Solid Waste Removal Contact: Pat Walsh

A new project to identify and remove solid waste from Togiak Refuge was initiated this year. Solid waste damages valuable habitat, negatively impacts ecosystems, and degrades the wilderness character of the refuge. We identified 25 sites consisting of abandoned snow machines, camps gear, fuel cans, and barrels. We cleaned five sites, removing approximately 2,300 pounds of solid waste.

Conservation Easement Baseline Documentation Report Contact: Pat Walsh

Togiak Refuge and Choggiung Ltd. have begun discussions of refuge acquisition of a conservation easement on Choggiung land on the Nushagak Peninsula. We have completed a Baseline Documentation Report which documents existing conditions and conservation values of the land.

Staff Update

Several vacant staff positions were filled this year, and four positions will be vacant at the end of 2016. In January, Wildlife Biologist Roger "Doug" Holt was hired and is overseeing the marine

mammal and water monitoring projects on Togiak Refuge. In May Wildlife Biologist/Pilot Kara Hilwig was hired to oversee the refuge's seabird program and to assist the Refuge with aviation. Amanda McCutcheon Cochran was hired as the Visitor Services Manager in May and is overseeing the Refuge Information Technician (RIT), outreach, environmental education, and river ranger programs. Administrative Officer Debbie Reiswig is transferring to the National Park Service – Denali National Park at the end of December. Also departing in December is Law Enforcement Officer and Pilot Jeff Hicks who is transferring to Kodiak NWR. Long-time Fisheries Biologist Mark Lisac retires January 20, 2017 and Refuge Information Technician Pete Abraham retires December 31, 2016. Debbie, Jeff, Pete, and Mark will all be missed.



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR
P. O. Box 277
King Salmon, Alaska 99613
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Agency Report to:

Bristol Bay Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Public Meeting, Naknek, Alaska February 28 - March 1, 2017

Inventory and Monitoring Plan

Alaska Peninsula-Becharof NWR is scheduled to complete an Inventory and Monitoring Plan (IMP) by 2018 in accordance with revised Service policy 701 FW 2. The Refuge IMP will prioritize wildlife and habitat survey and research efforts in light of their relative importance for informing management decisions, addressing subsistence, treaty and policy obligations, increasing knowledge of rare or limited resources, and achieving Refuge objectives and purposes. The IMP will also identify information gaps or management issues not addressed in the 2006 CCP. For example, climate change was not addressed by the CCP because completion of that plan predated identification of this topic as a priority concern of the Service. Upon completion, IMP decisions will direct the allocation of Refuge base funds for support of biological monitoring surveys to reflect the highest refuge priorities.

The Alaska Peninsula-Becharof NWR IMP will specify measurable outcomes, not just actions; document our assumptions; explicitly connect actions to assumed results; and document and prioritize IMP management and conservation surveys for the application of information to increase knowledge and support decisions regarding resource management. Ultimately the IMP will provide guidance, transparency and continuity for the biological program and assists managers with budget allocation decisions. Refuge staff will revisit the IMP annually to ensure that the current biological surveys are relevant, the refuge has the resources to conduct them and new opportunities, partnerships, and issues and/or constraints are considered.

For more information on the Inventory and Monitoring Plan contact: William Smith, USFWS, Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR, PO Box 277, King Salmon, AK 99613. Phone: 907-246-1213; e-mail: William_Smith@fws.gov

Mammal Projects

Project: **Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd Composition Surveys (GMU 9)**

Composition surveys are generally not intended to estimate herd size but they provide important information regarding the age and sex composition of caribou herds. This information is used by managers to evaluate the status and trends of caribou herds. The Alaska Department of Fish & Game accomplished a composition survey of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd (NAPCH) in 2016. A total of 1,556 caribou were counted. Estimated composition ratios were 24 calves:100 cows and approximately 50 bulls:100 cows. The State Tier II hunt and the Federal subsistence draw hunt are ongoing.

Project: Moose Composition and Trend Surveys Summary (GMUs 9C & 9E) 2015–2016

Poor weather and survey conditions (e.g., inadequate snow cover, high winds) frequently limit moose composition and trend-area surveys in GMU 9 and many areas are infrequently surveyed. Snow was present for a portion of the fall 2016 moose composition survey period (Nov 01 – Dec 10) and some surveys were conducted. At the time of writing, the data had not been evaluated. The Refuges plan to continue conducting moose trend-area abundance surveys during the winter survey season when survey conditions are present.

Project: Moose Reproduction and Survival Study

The Refuge continued to study moose reproduction and survival on the Northern Alaska Peninsula. The primary objective of this study is to estimate annual twinning rates and calf survival. Twenty four cow moose with radio-collars are tracked regularly throughout the year. These radio-collared cows are easily identifiable by the large numbered tag attached to the collar. Because the proportion of cows giving birth to twins versus cows birthing single calves is influenced by nutrition, this study uses twinning rates of radio-collared moose as an indirect measure of the moose population's nutritional condition and overall health. Relatively high twinning rates in the study area suggest that habitat is not a primary factor limiting moose abundance. In addition, captured adult and yearling cow moose appeared to be in good to excellent body condition, further suggesting good nutritional condition among moose in the area.

Chronically low calf survival appears to be the principal factor limiting moose population growth on the Alaska Peninsula. Although the actual causes of calf mortalities cannot be identified without intensive and expensive calf monitoring projects, the timing of calf mortalities suggests that predation is probably the primary factor limiting calf survival within the study area. Predation by bears was documented as the cause of several adult and calf mortalities during 2014 and 2015. In addition, GPS location data show that radio-collared cows often move out into open tundra habitats to give birth which may be a predator avoidance strategy. Information gained from this study is valuable but there is still much we do not know. Because reproduction and survival often vary among years due to a variety of factors, it is important to monitor these demographics over multiple years to provide an adequate representation of population trends. At the time of writing, the 2016 data has not been evaluated.

For more information on the Refuges' mammal programs contact: Bill Smith, USFWS, Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR, PO Box 277, King Salmon, AK 99613. Phone: 907-246-1213; e-mail: William_Smith@fws.gov

Avian Projects

Project: Alaska Landbird and Breeding Bird Monitoring Surveys

The Refuge continued landbird monitoring with participation in the Alaska Landbird Monitoring Survey (ALMS) and an Off-road Breeding Bird Survey (ORBBS). These surveys document breeding birds and their habitats. Data is utilized by the Refuge in addition to being sent to the USGS's Alaska Science Center for storage and further analysis. Participation aligns with the Refuge's mission to assess the presence, relative abundance, distribution, and trends in populations of wildlife and plants. In 2016 we conducted 49 total point counts at three established survey sites. These sites had previously been surveyed in 2012 and 2014. The total number of landbirds and the total number of species detected remains within 16% of historical averages. Further analysis

and monitoring is required to determine the long-term population trends at the local and state level.

Project: Tree Swallow Nest Box Monitoring Project

The Refuge expanded the existing nest box monitoring efforts in participation with The Alaska Swallow Monitoring Network, part of the Alaska Songbird Institute. Initial efforts to monitor tree swallows began in 2007. This year a total of 82 nest boxes were monitored. The project focuses on nest box occupancy, nesting phenology, nesting success rates, and recapture data collected from banding efforts.

In 2016, 61 of the 82 nest boxes were occupied (74%). Phenology dates, including nest initiation, lay, hatch, and fledge dates were the earliest recorded since the project began in 2007. The overall nest success rate was 82%, a decrease from the record 92% in 2015. In 2016, 378 birds (includes both adults and chicks) were banded and 40 birds were recaptured with bands from previous years.

The Alaska Peninsula represents the southwestern edge of the tree swallow breeding range, global declines in aerial insectivore populations have prompted increased study of these species, especially at range edges where declines are likely to be more pronounced. In addition to scientific data collection, a large portion of the 2016 efforts focused on education and community outreach. This year education efforts extended to remote villages on the Alaska Peninsula, local Naknek/King Salmon schools, summer camp students, and many local business and community members. Students participated in nest box construction, box monitoring, bird banding demonstrations and learned about avian conservation issues.

For more information on avian projects contact: Melissa Cady, USFWS, Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR, PO Box 277, King Salmon, AK 99613. Phone: 907-246-3339; e-mail: Melissa_Cady@fws.gov

Aquatic Projects

Project: Monitoring Lake Temperature at Varying Depths.

The primary purpose of this project is to acquire a long-term data series on the temperature of selected lakes. Lake temperature was recorded every hour at various depths between the lake surface and 100m. Monitoring sites were visited once or twice per year to extract data and to service monitoring equipment. With enough time, this data will be used to document long term temperature regimes in selected lakes and may help support management decisions regarding research in relation to climate change. Monitoring stations were deployed in upper Ugashik Lake, Mother Goose Lake, Needle Lake, and Becharof Lake in the fall of 2011. Unfortunately, the Becharof Lake monitoring station could not be relocated so another unit will be deployed. The remaining lakes show some individual differences but follow a similar short-term pattern of increasing summer surface temperatures from 2012 – 2014. Additional monitoring is needed.

Project: Pilot Project on Bathymetric Mapping of Selected Lakes

Work on bathymetric mapping of Refuge lakes continued this year. We utilized an inflatable raft, GPS, commercially available sonar (fish finder), and specialized software to construct a bottom contour map of Mother Goose Lake. Additional work was done to assess the data quality and the quality of the constructed bathymetric model. Knowing the temperature and depth profiles, substrate composition, and human visitation patterns may

help identify areas of concern and suitability for non-native introduction and establishment while providing useful data on the physical structure of lakes.

For more information on aquatic projects contact: Kevin Payne, USFWS, Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR, PO Box 277, King Salmon, AK 99613. Phone: 970-586-1296; e-mail: Kevin_Payne@fws.gov

Visitor Services Programs

Project: Youth Ambassador Film Internship

The Alaska Peninsula and Becharof National Wildlife Refuges partnered with the Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) on this exciting project.

BBNA hired one Youth Ambassador Film Intern, Lakota Thompson of Naknek, to document subsistence on the Alaska Peninsula and specifically changes over time. Over the course of this past summer (2016), Lakota travelled to the native villages of Chignik Lake, Perryville, Port Heiden and Naknek to conduct and film interviews with elders living in the community. In total, twenty interviews were conducted and captured on film. Lakota then travelled to Anchorage to work with youth producers and staff to compile the video and create a high quality short film product. A final draft of this video was shown at the First Alaskans Elders & Youth Conference to Bristol Bay residents and in the coming months Refuge staff will be travelling back to participating villages on the Alaska Peninsula to share the final product.

Project: Annual Outreach Efforts for the Migratory Bird Calendar Contest

Working closely to follow state curriculum guidelines, Refuge staff developed a curriculum for grades K-12 to learn about migratory birds and this year's theme "Migratory Birds Bring Me _____". For this year's competition, Refuge staff and Volunteer Janet Saczawa travelled to Perryville, Chignik Bay, and Port Heiden, and plans to travel to Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, and Pilot Point to work with students in creating quality artistic entries for the contest.

This year, Refuge staff focused on a renewed effort to increase the number of entries in the literature portion of the competition. Over a five-week period, Visitor Services Manager Sarah Griffith will be partnering with volunteers at the Bristol Bay School in Naknek to educate students on and aid in the creation of poetry, as well as artwork, submissions for the Migratory Bird Calendar Contest. These repeat visits will occur with the students in grades Pre-k through 5th.

For more information on the visitor services program contact: Sarah Griffith, USFWS, Alaska Peninsula/Becharof NWR, PO Box 277, King Salmon, AK 99613. Phone: 907-246-1201; e-mail: Sarah_Griffith@fws.gov

Fall 2017 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

August - November 2017

Meeting dates and locations are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug. 20	Aug. 21 Window Opens	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24 NS — Wainwright	Aug. 25	Aug. 26
Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Sept. 1	Sept. 2
Sept. 3	Sept. 4 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY	Sept. 5	Sept. 6	Sept. 7	Sept. 8	Sept. 9
Sept. 10	Sept. 11	Sept. 12	Sept. 13	Sept. 14	Sept. 15	Sept. 16
Sept. 17	Sept. 18	Sept. 19 K/A - Cold Bay	Sept. 20	Sept. 21	Sept. 22	Sept. 23
Sept. 24	Sept. 25	Sept. 26	Sept. 27	Sept. 28	Sept. 29	Sept. 30
Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6	Oct. 7
Oct. 8	Oct. 9 COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY	Oct. 10 WI - Galena	Oct. 11 YKD — Bethel	Oct. 12	Oct. 13	Oct. 14
Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19 AFN - Anchorage	Oct. 20	Oct. 21
Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24 SP — Nome	Oct. 25 NW - Shungnak	Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28
Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31 SE - Juneau	Nov. 1 BB — Dillingham	Nov. 2	Nov. 3	Nov. 4
Nov. 5	Nov. 6 SC — Seldovia/Soldotna	Nov. 7	Nov. 8 EI — Tanana	Nov. 9	Nov. 10 Window Closes VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY	Nov. 11

Winter 2018 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

February-March 2018

Meeting dates and locations are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Feb. 4</i>	<i>Feb. 5</i> <i>Window Opens</i>	<i>Feb. 6</i>	<i>Feb. 7</i>	<i>Feb. 8</i>	<i>Feb. 9</i>	<i>Feb. 10</i>
<i>Feb. 11</i>	<i>Feb. 12</i>	<i>Feb. 13</i>	<i>Feb. 14</i>	<i>Feb. 15</i>	<i>Feb. 16</i>	<i>Feb. 17</i>
<i>Feb. 18</i>	<i>Feb. 19</i> PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY	<i>Feb. 20</i>	<i>Feb. 21</i>	<i>Feb. 22</i>	<i>Feb. 23</i>	<i>Feb. 24</i>
<i>Feb. 25</i>	<i>Feb. 26</i>	<i>Feb. 27</i>	<i>Feb. 28</i>	<i>Mar. 1</i>	<i>Mar. 2</i>	<i>Mar. 3</i>
<i>Mar. 4</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>Window Closes</i>	<i>Mar. 17</i>

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

Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

CHARTER

- 1. Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Bristol Bay 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 (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 three members to the Lake Clark National Park and three members to the Aniakchak National Monument Subsistence Resource Commissions, 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 \$135,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.0 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 Council and subcommittee meetings,
 - Prepare and approve all meeting agendas,
 - Attend all Council 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 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

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