

EASTERN INTERIOR ALASKA
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Materials

February 7 - 8, 2017
Fairbanks



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On the cover...

Young lynx on the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge.



Photo by Tetlin NWR, US FWS

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EASTERN INTERIOR ALASKA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Binkley Room II, Pike’s Waterfront Lodge
Fairbanks

February 7 – 8, 2017
9:00 am – 5:00 pm daily

TELECONFERENCE: call the toll free number: 1-877-407-8065, then when prompted enter the passcode: 8201631.

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
- b. Wildlife Closure Review WCR15-22 (*Lisa Maas*)* 33
- c. Review and Approve FY2016 Annual Report* Supplemental
- d. State Board of Game Wildlife Proposals Discussion
- e. Memorandum of Agreement between Ahtna and Department of the Interior 42

12. Agency Reports

(Time limit of 15 minutes unless approved in advance)

Tribal Governments

Native Organizations

The 2016 ASL Chinook data report (*Brian McKenna and Nicole Farnham*)

Tanana Chiefs Conference Wildlife and Parks Program Upcoming 2017 Field Season
(*Brian McKenna and Nicole Farnham*) 67

USFWS

Yukon River 2017 Pre-season Salmon Management Review

(*Yukon Fish Management Staff*)

Artificial Propagation of Yukon River Salmon – An Agency Perspective

(*Fred Bue*) 72

NPS

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Backcountry and Wilderness Steward
Plan (*Barbara Cellarius*)

Report on Dall’s Sheep in Yukon-Charley Rivers National Park and Preserve (*Kyle
Joly*)

BLM

ADF&G

Yukon River Comprehensive Salmon Plan Update (*Jill Klein*) 74

The 2014 Comprehensive Harvest Assessment in Northway (*Anna Godduhn or
Caroline Brown*) 76

OSM

13. Future Meeting Dates*

Confirm Fall 2017 meeting date and location 82

Select Winter 2018 meeting date and location 83

14. Closing Comments

15. Adjourn (Chair)

To teleconference into the meeting, call the toll free number: 1-877-407-8065, then when prompted enter the passcode: 8201631.

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 Katerina “Katya” Wessels, 907-786-3885, katerina_wessels@fws.gov, or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on January 26, 2017.

REGION 9
Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Seat	Year Appointed <i>Term Expires</i>	Member Name and Community	
1	2001 2019	Susan L. Entsminger Mentasta	Chair
2	2007 2019	Andrew P. Firmin Fort Yukon	Vice-Chair
3		VACANT	
4	2007 2019	Lester C. Erhart Tanana	
5	2005 2017	William L. Glanz Central	
6	2002 2017	Andrew W. Bassich Eagle	
7	2014 2017	Rhonda O. Pitka Beaver	Secretary
8	2012 2018	Will M. Koehler Horsfeld	
9	2009 2018	Donald A. Woodruff Eagle	
10	2001 2018	Virgil Umphenour North Pole	



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:
December 9, 2016

Contact: Carl Johnson
(907) 786-3676 or (800) 478-1456
carl_johnson@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. Reifentstahl, 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

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
Joseph A. Garnie, Teller
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
Rhonda O. Pitka, Beaver
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
William J. Maines, Dillingham

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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**EASTERN INTERIOR ALASKA
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

MEETING MINUTES

**October 25-26, 2016
Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Hall
Fort Yukon**

Tuesday, October 25, 2017, first day of the meeting

Invocation: Lester Erhart provided an invocation.

Call to Order, Roll Call and Quorum Establishment:

The meeting of the Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council was called to order Tuesday, October 25 at 9:05 a.m. Rhonda Pitka, Council Secretary, conducted a roll call. Council members Sue Entsminger, Andrew Firmin, Rhonda Pitka, Donald Woodruff, Bill Glanz, Lester Erhart, Vigil Umphenour, and Will Koehler were present. Andy Bassich and Larry Williams were on an excused absence. With eight out of ten Council members present the quorum was established. Introductions were made for Council members, staff, and guests.

Attendees:

The following persons attended some portion of the meeting either in person or by teleconference, in addition to the Council members.

Walter Peter III		Student
Albert Thomas	Fort Yukon	School
Annisha Strom	Fort Yukon	School
Steve Berendzen	Fairbanks	Yukon Flats NWR, USFWS
Shirley Fields	Fort Yukon	GZGTG
Barbara Cellarius	Copper Center	Wrangell-St. Elias NPP
James Roberts	Tanana	Tanana Tribal Council
Jackie Carroll	Fort Yukon	GZGTG
Nancy Shewfelt	Fort Yukon	GZGTG
Phillip Solomon		Tribal member
Michael Hardy	Fort Yukon	GZGTG
Walter Peter	Fort Yukon	GZGTG tribal member
Tim Lorenzini	Tok	Tetlin NWR, USFWS
Nate Berg	Tok	Tetlin NWR, USFWS
Julie Mahler	Fort Yukon	RIT FWS/CATG
Brian McKenna		TCC
Clarence Alexander		Yukon River Intertribal Council

James Kelly	Fort Yukon	CATG
Shirley M. Thomas	Fort Yukon	
Freda James		
Gerald Maschmann	Fairbanks	USFWS
Patricia Stanley		CATG
Grafton Solomon	Fort Yukon	Tribal member
Shannon Guthrie	Beaver	Student
Pat Petrivelli	Anchorage	BIA
Andrew "Jim" Himes		
Vince Mathews	Fairbanks	USFWS
Nicole Farnham	Fairbanks	TCC
Catherine Moncrieff		YR DFA
Pippa Kenner	Anchorage	OSM
Fred Bue	Fairbanks	USFWS
Tom Kron	Anchorage	OSM
Nathan Hawkaluk	Fairbanks	Yukon Flats NWR, USFWS
Frank Harris	Anchorage	OSM
Jarred Stone	Anchorage	OSM
Carl Johnson	Anchorage	OSM
Katerina Wessels	Anchorage	OSM
Janece Fields	Fort Yukon	School
Michael Peter	Fort Yukon	Tribal member
Annie R. Peter	Fort Yukon	Tribal member
Michael Shane Peter	Fort Yukon	Tribal member
R. Carroll II		
Sally Lawrence		GZGTG
Mat Sorum		Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve
Pat Stanly		CATG
Nancy James	Fort Yukon	First Chief, GZGTG
Jeff Estensen	Fairbanks	ADF&G
Wayne Jenkins		Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association
Joshua Ream	Anchorage	OSM
Jill Klein	Anchorage	ADF&G
Dan Sharp	Anchorage	BLM
Gloria Stickwan	Tazlina	Ahtna, Inc.
Marcy Okada	Fairbanks	Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve
Scott Ayers	Anchorage	OSM
Holly Carroll	Anchorage	ADF&G
Edward Salmon	Arctic Village	

Review and Adopt Agenda:

The Council approved a motion (8-0) to adopt the Agenda as read with the additions of the Tanana Chief Conference report on the Henshaw Creek Weir project and Henshaw Science and Culture camp from Brian McKenna and Nicole Farnham and the Tetlin Wildlife Refuge report and with a correction of a year from 2014 to 2016 for agenda item number 10(a).

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:

The Council supported a motion (8-0) to approve the winter 2016 meeting minutes with no correction, changes, or additions.

Council Member Reports:

Will Koehler had nothing substantial to report for his area.

Bill Glanz reported that the Yukon-Charley National Preserve (NP) did not follow the safety rules at their cabins; specifically the NP did not build stairs access to their cabins, which resulted in an injury to his wife. Mr. Glanz offered Yukon-Charley NP his assistance with building stairs but they did not take him up on that, and two years later the stairs were still missing. Mr. Glanz noted that it seems like different Federal agencies do not follow the same safety rules. Mr. Glanz also noted that he sees a discrepancy when the Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell promises to help the Tribes but at the same time she is not permitting to build a road to medivac people in the Southwest Region of Alaska.

Rhonda Pitka reported on the salmon season. After Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott and Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Sam (ADF&G) Cotten visited and had meetings in all of the villages in 5D fishing Subdistrict, the fishing season was extended. The season extension significantly helped subsistence users, although generally the catch was below historic average. It was really beneficial that the Commissioner Cotton was able to travel to the communities and hear people's everyday concerns first hand. One of the main concerns is rapid erosion of the Yukon River banks. The Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council conducted erosion studies and found the signs of erosion in many areas. The erosion changes the quality of water and the areas of traditional fishing. The fishing year was difficult because of the 12 hour open fishing periods. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern Interior Regional Management Plan [and Environmental Impact Statement] were finalized, and tribes agreed with it. The plan (9,000 pages) is available to the public.

Andrew Firmin confirmed that a lot of requests made by tribes were satisfied in the BLM Eastern Interior Regional Management Plan. It has been helpful to the people in the community to get educated on the predator management and why it is important to avoid harvesting moose cows for potlatches. Fall hunt has been more successful; users have been hunting moose, bears (four black bears harvested in Fort Yukon), and wolves. The fishing season was very atypical with 12 hour open fishing periods and sudden closures. One of the open fishing periods was right when Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott and Commissioner Cotten visited Fort Yukon, so people speculated that this was done to reduce the number of meeting attendees and, thus, the number of complaints. The closure of the Porcupine River has posed an ongoing problem to its residents. Mr. Firmin asserted that the number of fish harvested on the Porcupine River should not make any impact on meeting the season's escapement goal; however, these closures drastically

affect people that live along the Porcupine River. Mr. Firmin also stated that it is extremely difficult for people who reside remotely to get the information on openers and closers in time. The fishing management of the Porcupine River needs to change, and there is no need to close the entire river.

Virgil Umphenour reported on attending the Intertribal Fish Commission luncheon. The Lieutenant Governor, Commissioner Cotten, and many fishermen from all of the Yukon reaches attended the lunch as well. One of the issues raised during this meeting was that fish camps are becoming a thing of the past and the passing of traditional values that were taught at the camp is lost. In Mr. Umphenour's opinion this is due to overregulation by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and due to hatchery production in the Southeast [Alaska] and Prince William Sound. Mr. Umphenour pointed out that in the [2016 Preliminary Yukon River Summer Season Summary handout] provided by the ADF&G, dated October 5, [2016?] [p.19, appendix C] states that the number of commercial salmon fishing gear permit holders in the upper Yukon went from 136 in 1995 to 28 in 1998. Furthermore, Mr. Umphenour extrapolated that after 16 million Chum Salmon were harvested in southeast Alaska in 1996 (with the 20 year average of 1.6 million fish a year) the market for Chum Salmon was totally destroyed and caviar prices plunged. Mr. Umphenour continued pointing out that 2007 was the last year District 5 fishermen could commercially fish for King Salmon on the Yukon River. In District 4 commercial fishing ended in 2014, and then in District 6 there just 2 permit holders in 2015 and 1 permit holder in 2016. Mr. Umphenour believes that overregulation by the DEC is a reason fishermen cannot make enough of money to cover the expenses of their subsistence activities, thus there are no fish camps, and that the bureaucracy needs to be reduced in order to remedy the situation. Mr. Umphenour pointed out that now there is no King Salmon fishery and it was the lowest commercial harvest of Chum Salmon in the Upper Yukon since the start of commercial fisheries.

Mr. Umphenour also reported that it was a good moose season with a 22 percent success rate for the permit holders.

Finally, Mr. Umphenour noted that even though the size of Chinook Salmon run reached the high end of the preseason projection, the run is still not nearly as strong as it used to be around 1997, when 175,000 fish were harvested annually. The fishermen on the Lower Yukon notice the small size of Chinook Salmon. In Mr. Umphenour's opinion, all that is stated above is a result of using large mesh gillnets and harvesting all of the big Chinook Salmon.

In conclusion, Mr. Umphenour also compared the current fall Chum Salmon situation on the Porcupine River to the Toklat River Chum Salmon situation in the early 1990s. According to the information that Mr. Umphenour obtained from old annual management reports [unspecified area], brown bears can eat as much as 50 percent of the salmon that made it to the spawning grounds. Mr. Umphenour suggested that the situation with fall Chum Salmon on the Porcupine River can be remedied with controlling bear population.

Donald Woodruff thanked Fort Yukon and its people for hosting the meeting. He noted that the Council is representing all the people in the room, including students, and encouraged the public to speak on any issues, concerns, or ideas. Mr. Woodruff spoke about meeting with Commissioner Cotten during his visit to fishing district 5D. The meeting was scheduled during a three day open fishing period. Mr. Woodruff noted that this year for the first time in 40 years the community of Eagle was able to harvest some excellent quality fish before the arrival of the first pulse. Mr. Woodruff also reminded everyone that the Chinook

Salmon are in a heavy decline, it is important not to overharvest them now and to preserve the species for future generations. Mr. Woodruff reported that only very few moose were harvested around Eagle and no caribou at all.

Lester Erhart agreed with statements made by Mr. Glanz and Mr. Umphenour. Mr. Erhart also said that we need to manage the Chinook Salmon very carefully because the population might not have been completely restored yet. The summer was also notable for a lot of high water and excess driftwood.

Chair Sue Entsminger reported that she attended the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) meeting that discussed a lot of the same issues that are on the Eastern Interior RAC agenda. Ms. Entsminger informed the Council about Emergency Special Action Request WSA16-04 that requested sheep be added to the designated hunter regulation in Unit 11 for the 2016-2017 regulatory year that was rejected, which she considered to be a justified decision. Some communities in Unit 12 have customary and traditional use determination for Unit 11, so if the WAS16-04 was approved it would have affected these communities. Ms. Entsminger also spoke about the approval of Emergency Special Action Request WSA16-05, requesting that the BLM Glennallen Field Office Manager be given delegated authority to open a ten day caribou season on Federal public lands in Unit 13 between October 1 and October 21, 2016. Ms. Entsminger mentioned that the Nelchina caribou herd has been increasing in size over the last several years and the hunt was open earlier. Further, Ms. Entsminger mentioned the Temporary Special Action Request WSA16-06 requesting that the caribou harvest limit for the winter season in Unit 12 remainder be increased from one to two caribou for the 2016/2017 regulatory year and the upcoming public meeting in Tok regarding this request.

The Council then discussed the migration of the Fortymile caribou herd, quota allocations for fall and winter hunt, necessity to have a harvest coalition meeting which has not been held for many years, and necessary updates to the Harvest Management Plan for 2018.

Then Ms. Entsminger welcomed to the meeting a group of high school youth and encouraged them to learn and ask questions.

Public and Tribal Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Walter Peter of Fort Yukon was the first to provide public comments on moose management strategies. He noted that the moose meat is one of the main subsistence foods. The reduction of bear population through harvest five or six years ago resulted in increase in moose population around Fort Yukon. Currently the moose population is getting small again in the Unit 25D, and it is necessary to bring it back up. Mr. Peter also stated that if the fisheries proposal FP17-02 to allow for harvest of early-run Chinook Salmon in Subdistrict 5D on the Yukon River would be approved it will greatly benefit the upper river fishermen and allow them to feed their families.

Council member Mr. Woodruff commented that it is important to keep the predator population down near their community in order to insure the increase of moose population in its proximity. It is equally important to avoid taking cow moose.

A discussion about predator control and its benefits ensued. Mr. Glanz mentioned a proposal that he wants to introduce to the Fairbanks Advisory Committee (AC) on same day flying and hunting of wolves and bears. The Council briefly talked about different management on Federal and State lands. Mr. Umphenour

stated that the two year study in Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) concluded that 50 to 70 percent of the moose calves are being killed by bears before they are a month old.

Clarence Alexander, a 77-year-resident of Fort Yukon, provided a public comment on White Fish. He noted that there is less and less White Fish coming back to its feeding ground because the rivers are being overgrown by willows and blocked by beaver dams. The US Department of Agriculture just began a new project, which identified the overgrown locations with a goal to clear them to insure fish return. Mr. Alexander also mentioned that historically he and other people used to primarily eat White Fish; salmon was considered to be dog food.

Fred Roberts talked about predator control being a sensitive issue between the Federal and State Governments. He noted a significant increase in wolf population in the last few years with wolves coming as close as two miles to town. Mr. Roberts expressed concern about potential decrease of moose population. He does not want any new regulations put in place that will restrict moose hunting, but there should be predator control in the Yukon Flats area. Mr. Roberts also seconded the statement made by Mr. Alexander about the necessity of clearing creeks and rivers to bring White Fish back. Mr. Roberts also spoke about the potential effects of mining, especially mining in Canada, on spawning grounds and inquired if there was any study on how mining waste waters affect salmon spawning. He also mentioned that short fishing open periods are very hard on the people who live remotely, especially because of the high gas prices, and suggested that they should be four days at a minimum every week in July. Mr. Roberts also questioned the accuracy of sonars in counting fish because his visual observations are often contrary to the information provided by managers.

James Kelley thanked the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) for arranging for the Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council meeting in Fort Yukon and giving the local people an opportunity to speak on various issues. Mr. Kelley spoke about the proposal to the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) on instituting a permit system for the fishermen in the fishing Subdistrict 5D and its possible effects on the fishermen and lack of information in regards to that. Mr. Kelley, who became a new Natural Resource Director for the Council of Athabaskan Tribal Government (CATG) in June of 2016, talked about having natural resource meeting every other year and focus on implementing projects in the alternate years. Mr. Kelley reported about moose management project that is funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and noted good working relationship with the Service. In reply to question regarding working with various village corporations and Doyon Corporation on organizing bear baiting during the moose calving season Mr. Kelley replied that they are exploring all of the available options. They are also working with the USFWS on identifying people to participate in the wolf snaring clinic, encouraging youth participation and elders mentoring, as well as thinking of developing participation incentives.

Mr. Woodruff clarified the fishing permit system, explaining that this is just a tool used by the ADF&G to record harvest data on the road system near the Yukon River. The word “permit” is confusing to people, who think that they need to have a permit to fish. Mr. Woodruff suggested that the law enforcement officers should have permits with them for the fishermen to fill them out on the spot. Also Mr. Woodruff clarified the usage of word “testimony” during the Council meeting.

Jeff Estensen of the ADF&G provided a phone number for anyone interested in clarification of the permit system on the Yukon.

Phillip Solomon, tribal member, talked about the hardship caused by 12-hour open fishing periods and necessity to eliminate the three wheel basket fishwheels to allow more salmon to pass. Mr. Solomon also suggested extending moose season both to earlier and later dates and to organize various derbies, such as bear, beaver, or pike derby.

Old Business:

Draft Nonrural Determination Policy

Tom Kron of the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) provided a standard briefing on the Draft Nonrural Determination Policy and requested the Council feedback. Carl Johnson provided some additional clarification on two different types of proposals that can be submitted as a result of this policy, the threshold requirements, general process timeline, and limitations on submission of proposals. Mr. Johnson also pointed out that the Policy will not contain any set overarching criteria for rural or nonrural determination and that instead the determination will be made based on the regional factors. Ms. Pitka made a suggestion regarding the language change in the decision making process section of the policy from “the Board will ... consider recommendations of the appropriate Subsistence Regional Advisory Council” to “the Board will give deference to recommendations of ...,” on the premises that rural and nonrural status affects take indirectly. Then the discussion ensued on how the proposals will be validated and several other suggestions were made on Draft Nonrural Determination Policy language change. Ms. Pitka also recognized that the new nonrural determination process is much needed and that she agrees with it in general. Eventually the Council decided to appoint a working group to develop a written version of all proposed language changes. The working group that included Ms. Pitka, Mr. Woodruff, and Mr. Umphenour convened over lunch break to develop the language based on the Council suggestions and discussion.

Motion to adopt the proposed language changes to the Draft Nonrural Determination Policy passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Umphenour, second by Glanz).

Proposed language changes to the Draft Nonrural Determination Policy

by the Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence RAC

- 1) Page 22, modify bullet point #4:
 - ~~Consider recommendations of~~ ***Give deference to*** the appropriate Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.
- 2) Page 22, last paragraph, modify last sentence:
~~However, dDeference to the Councils does not apply~~ applies because it does indirectly affect take.
- 3) Add a new bullet point under decision making:
 - Public comments shall include comments made to Regional Advisory Councils, comments made at public meetings held by the Federal Subsistence Board, and written comments submitted to the Board.

Narrative statement: The Council wanted to ensure that maximum participation by the public would be matter of policy, not practice, which may be effected by staff turnover.

- 4) Page 22, modify bullet point #6:
- ~~Engage in government to government consultation with affected tribes or consultation with affected ANCSA corporations.~~
 - Engage in government-to-government consultation with affected tribes.
 - Consider comments from affected ANCSA corporations.

Additionally, modify the following language in the first paragraph at page 22:

This schedule thus creates a three- year period for proposal review, analysis, Regional Advisory Council input, tribal **consultation**, ~~and~~ ANCSA corporation **comment** ~~consultation~~, public comment, and Board deliberation and decision.

Additionally, on page 23, under General Process Timeline, make changes to reflect that consultations are with tribes only and comments are received from ANCSA corporations.

Narrative statement: The Council wants the policy to clearly provide a distinction between tribes, who should be consulted on a government-to-government basis as opposed to ANCSA corporations, whose input should only be sought because of their status as land owners.

New Business:

Yukon River 2016 Salmon Season Review

Gerald Maschmann, Assistant Federal In-Season Manager for the Yukon River, US FWS, provided a brief overview of the 2016 Yukon River Salmon Season written report that was handed out to the Council members. He reported that although the Chinook Salmon run was close to the upper end of the preseason expectations and the summer and fall Chum and Coho Salmon run were well above the average runs, the season management was challenged with the wide disparity and run strength between the overlapping Chinook and summer Chum Salmon mixed stock fisheries. Mr. Maschmann specifically noted that subsistence fishermen in Subdistrict 5D were allowed to fish for the early portion of Chinook Salmon run prior to arrival of the first pulse. All summer and fall Chinook Salmon escapement goals were met; however the in-season subsistence salmon harvest information indicated that most fishermen did not meet their Chinook Salmon subsistence harvest goal.

Holly Carroll, ADF&G, indicated that the post season run estimates will be ready by January after the harvest surveys are compiled.

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association projects report

Catherine Moncrieff, Staff Anthropologist for the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA), presented a report on their projects some of which were funded by the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. The projects that Ms. Moncrieff reported on included: 1) preseason salmon fishery preparation meeting; 2) in-season Yukon River salmon teleconferences; 3) YRDFA's Yukon River Community Engagement Support for the Bureau of Land Management, Resource Management Planning; 4) the Yukon River in-season salmon harvest survey; 5) community helper program; 6) customary trade in the upper Yukon project; 6) workshop with elders from the lower Yukon to discuss Chinook Salmon; 7) how people

of the Yukon River value salmon project; and 8) paper about traditional knowledge in Federal fisheries management. The oral presentation was accompanied by a written report.

Yukon River Comprehensive Salmon Plan update

Jill Klein, Special Assistant to Commissioner Cotten, ADF&G, and Chair of the Regional Planning Team for the Yukon River Comprehensive Salmon Plan, presented information about the planning team, the plan and the process to update it. The Regional Planning Team is comprised of 13 voting members and that includes nine members that are nominated from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association and four members from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. There are also several nonvoting members: Association of Village Council Presidents, Tanana Chief Conference, Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association, the Yukon River Intertribal Fish Commission, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The team has a responsibility to develop and maintain a Regional Comprehensive Salmon Plan in order to rehabilitate natural salmon stocks and supplement natural salmon production if warranted. Ms. Klein requested Council's comments and feedback on the plan as it is in its revision process. She also indicated that a special survey will be developed that will be distributed to the Councils to solicit comments and project suggestions. Ms. Klein indicated that she would like to have a follow up discussion during the EIRAC Winter 2017 meeting.

Fisheries Regulatory Proposals

FP17-01

Jarred Stone of OSM presented draft staff analyses for the FP17-01 that was submitted by the EIRAC and requests a new regulation be made for Subdistrict 5D to allow for harvest of salmon during Federally recognized fisheries closures, once the mid-range of the Canadian Interim Management Escapement Goal (IMEG) and the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) goals for Chinook Salmon are projected to be achieved in the Yukon River at the Eagle sonar site. OSM's preliminary conclusion was to support FP17-01 with modification to change the wording in the proposed regulation from "projected to be achieved" to "achieved," and to specify that the Federal in-season manager is the person to declare when the IMEG and TAC are achieved. The preliminary conclusion to adoption of this proposal with modification could result in additional harvest opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users in Subdistrict 5D. The Western Interior RAC and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC both recommended to support the proposal as originally written. The ADF&G had a concern that adopting the proposals with modification suggested by the OSM will decrease in-season management flexibility and proposed alternate language, "in Subdistrict 5D salmon may be taken for subsistence use once the mid-point of the interim management escapement goal and the Canadian harvest share are projected to be achieved." The Council stated that recently users on the upper end of the river have borne the brunt of the conservation concerns for Chinook escapement and, unlike other users, they do not have a summer Chum fishery to meet their subsistence needs. Putting these provisions into regulation will remind managers to take these considerations into account. When Eagle Sonar estimates reach midrange or treaty obligation of 55,000 24/7 fishing should be allowed. If it remains worded as "projected and estimated," it gives managers flexibility as actual numbers are not achieved until after the season is over. This will allow more fishing time for upriver fishers rather than over escapement.

Motion to adopt the FP17-01 as written passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Umphenour, second by Pitka).

FP17-02

Jarred Stone of OSM presented draft staff analyses for the FP17-02 that was submitted by the EIRAC and requests a new regulation to be made to Subdistrict 5D to allow for harvest of early-run Chinook Salmon until arrival of the first pulse of Chinook Salmon. This would allow access to a small number of early-run Chinook Salmon while still protecting the main Chinook Salmon run. OSM's preliminary conclusion was to support proposal FP 17-02. ADF&G had a concern that "formalizing this management approach in regulation however might reduce flexibility to address timing on when the tricklers arrive in Y5D." The Western Interior RAC and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC both opposed FP17-02. The EIRAC moved to adopt the proposal on the basis that it would allow Subdistrict 5D fishers to get some early fish and still protect the first pulse. The in-season managers would have enough time to close the fishery if necessary. In the past, the beginning of the season was closed much sooner than necessary so opening and closing is seemingly at management discretion rather than actual run timing causing people to have less fishing time.

The one dissenting council member, Mr. Koehler stated that his concern was that the in-season manager may possibly be losing one tool in the toolbox while there are still conservation concerns for Chinook.

Motion to adopt the FP17-02 as written passed 7 to 1 (Motion by Umphenour, second by Glanz).

FP17-03

Pippa Kenner of OSM presented draft staff analyses for the FP17-03 that was submitted by the Western Interior RAC and requests to allow subsistence drift gillnet fishing for Chum Salmon in the lower portion of the Yukon River Subdistrict 4A annually between June 10 and August 2. The OSM preliminary conclusion was to support proposal FP 17-03 with modification to include the same regulatory language for the upper section of Subdistrict 4A. ADF&G supported the proposal as written and additionally supported OSM's modification. The Western Interior RAC and the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC both supported the FP17-02 with OSM modification. The Council moved to support the proposal as modified by the OSM on the bases that this action will allow Federal and State regulations to be more similar to reduce confusion in an area where there is a patchwork of jurisdictions. The simplified regulations make it easier for users to understand and follow them. Andrew Firmin abstained from the vote stating that he does not have enough knowledge of the subject.

Motion to adopt the FP17-03 as modified by the OSM passed with 7 votes and 1 abstain (Motion by Umphenour, second by Glanz).

FP17-04

The Council agreed to defer the decision on the FP17-04 to home region area in proposal as the Huslia River drainage is over 400 river miles away from our region.

Motion to take no action on the FP17-04 passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Firmin, second by Pitka).

FP17-11

Pippa Kenner of the OSM presented draft staff analyses for the FP17-11 that was submitted by the Dry Creek Community Corporation and requests that the residents of Dry Creek be added to the customary and traditional use determination for salmon in the Glennallen Subdistrict of the upper Copper River district.

The OSM preliminary conclusion was to support proposal FP17-11. The Southcentral Alaska RAC supported this proposal. The ADF&G comments on the FP 17-11 were neutral as this is a customary and traditional use determination by the Federal Subsistence Board. The Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission supported FP17-11 as written based on the testimony of the Dry Creek community members that demonstrated a long term customary and traditional pattern of use of salmon by the residents. The Ahtna Corporation opposed the proposal. The Council supported the proposal. Council members stated that Dry Creek residents showed a long term pattern of use noting that a year-round community descendants of the original settlement still live there and they continue to hand down hunting skills and values. They are going to care of the resource for their children. The Council members from the region provided much detail about the community's lifestyles. It was also stated that the passage of this proposal will allow the residents of Dry Creek to fish closer to their home community (from the same river).

Motion to take no action on the FP17-11 passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Entsminger, second by Glanz).

Recess for the day

Wednesday, October 26, 2017, second day of the meeting

Lester Erhart was absent from the meeting due to a pain and swelling in his foot.

Andrew Firmin was not present at the start of the second day due to other obligations. Six Council members, Entsminger, Glanz, Umphenour, Woodruff, Pitka, Koehler, were present and a quorum was established.

Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Shannon Guthrie, a ninth grader from Beaver and Rhonda Pitka's intern, thanked the Council for the opportunity to participate in the meeting and the CATG and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for sponsoring her. Ms. Guthrie stated that she is a part of future generation and she is thankful to the Council for their discussion and concerns.

James Kelly encouraged different regions and communities to work together in order to move forward and resolve the issues and concerns. Although all regions are different it requires collaboration and education to protect salmon and make sure it gets to the spawning grounds, otherwise if there is overfishing there might be a moratorium on all fishing, and this is not what Mr. Kelly wants to experience in his lifetime. The presence of the young generation at the Council meetings is very important because they learn about the issues.

Edward Salmon of Arctic Village told the Council that in the fall of 2011 70 percent of sheep have frozen or starved to death west of the Trans-Alaska pipeline due to a large freeze-up after the rain. Mr. Salmon have been waiting for a report from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the size of the sheep population prior to 2011 but have not seen it yet. Mr. Salmon also praised Secretary Jewell's intent to involve young generation into the work of the local councils.

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program – Priority Information Needs

Jarred Stone of OSM provided an overview of the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program prepared by the OSM staff.

Pippa Kenner of OSM provided an overview of the 2016 Yukon Region priority information needs list that the Council helped to develop in 2014 and some of the projects that began in 2016 to gather the identified priority information. Ms. Kenner explained how the projects are solicited and ranked and how the Council will participate in the decision making process on which projects are selected for funding. Then she asked the Council to review the list of the Yukon Region priority information needs. The discussion was tabled until later in the meeting due to Andrew Firmin's absence.

Discussion resumed upon Mr. Firmin joining the meeting. Ms. Moncrieff relayed ideas for the priority information needs provided by the people who reside along the river. The first idea was to interview elders regarding salmon spawning grounds to contribute to the Anadromous Waters Catalog. The second idea was to ensure funded projects have a local hire component. The third idea was to specify inclusion of the traditional ecological knowledge in the projects. The fourth idea was to expand the in-season salmon survey to include Chum Salmon.

Ms. Kenner reminded the Council about two priority information needs that were brought up during the Council's winter 2016 meeting: 1) middle Yukon assessment test fishery (at the rapids) needs to continue (formerly ran by Stan Zuray); 2) assessment of the quality of escapement past Eagle sonar into Canada and how many jacks are being counted in the escapement.

Mr. Glanz questioned why so much money were awarded to the test fisheries and if it is necessary or perhaps it was the way to provide local employment opportunities.

Mr. Woodruff expressed an opinion that studies of assessment of incidental mortality with gillnets are very difficult if not impossible to conduct.

The Council's opinion differed on the importance of Bering Cisco and Burbot population studies and who should be paying for this research if research needs to be done because of the commercial fishery down-river.

Mr. Umphenour spoke against funding projects under the priority information needs bullet #2: Geographic distribution of salmon and whitefish species; of specific interest are the Nulato River, Salmon Fork of the Black River, Porcupine River, and Chandalar River. He identified that his highest priorities are Chinook Salmon conservation concerns, quality escapement and quality of the assessment research, as well as ensuring healthy population of Bering Cisco so they are not disseminated by the commercial fisheries.

Ms. Pitka stated that her priorities were to study the Salmon Fork of the Draanjik River, the Porcupine River, and the Chandalar River, but not the Nulato River. She also said that to her the important projects were study of quality of escapement and mid-river test fisheries. Ms. Pitka did not consider Bering Cisco studies as a high priority. She agreed with the YRDFA's suggestions on the traditional knowledge inclusion and local hire. Ms. Pitka also spoke on behalf of Andy Bassich to increase studies of Chum Salmon.

Mr. Firmin considered studies of Bering Cisco are important because this species is used for subsistence, and he would like to see these projects completed. He also said that the salmon counting studies in the Porcupine River should continue on the U.S. side.

The Council voted on a motion for OSM staff to review the meeting transcripts for the FRMP discussion when developing a priority information needs list for the next period and consider the Council member's comments; this also needs to be taken in consideration when the project proposals are evaluated and ranked on their scientific merit.

Motion to use meeting transcripts as a guidance when developing the FRMP priority information needs list passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Umphenour, second by Koehler).

Revision to Memorandum of Understanding with the State

Tom Kron of the OSM briefed the Council about developing draft language for the Memorandum of Understanding between the FSB and State of Alaska on Coordinating Interagency Fish and Wildlife Management for Subsistence Users on Federal Public Lands in Alaska. Mr. Kron asked the Council to provide any comments they had on the draft language. The Council expressed a grave concern about the language in the bullet point #2, Section III Guiding Principles of the MOU. Mr. Umphenour insinuated that the language in the paragraph suggests that the Federal land managers can circumvent the public process guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and conduct the wildlife management according to their own understanding. Mr. Johnson provided clarification to the language in the aforementioned paragraph stating that the FSB has the authority to manage subsistence use of fish and wildlife regulations and other uses are managed by the individual land management agencies and still have an obligation under the Administrative Procedures Act to go through a public process. Mr. Glanz expressed an opinion that an MOU is not a binding contract and do not carry any legal weight.

Motion to support the comments made by the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Council passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Umphenour, second by Woodruff).

Identify Issues for 2016 Annual Report

The Council identified the following issues for the inclusion in their annual report:

1. Necessity to develop and increase understanding and tolerance for different cultural hunting values as means to reduce waste and work towards better hunter ethics in the field;
2. Request to use traditional Gwich'in river names for three rivers in the Eastern Interior Region on the Federal Subsistence Management Program maps, publications, and correspondence;
3. Recognize predator management is a subsistence practice;
4. Request the Board to look into new management solutions for the limited subsistence salmon fishing opportunities for remote rural residents of the Porcupine River;
5. Recognize importance of youth engagement in resource management and provide new opportunities for the youth;
6. Develop new approaches to communicate the notices to subsistence users on proposed changes to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs).

Charter Review

Carl Johnson of the OSM provided a short overview of the Council charter and reminded the Council that its needs to be renewed every two years. Most of the charter language is dictated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) but the Council can change its name, the number of members, a membership balance (such as for example geographic balance). The request to a formal appointment of alternates was submitted by the FSB to the Secretary of the Interior two years ago but no decision has been made yet.

Council discussed provided information and agreed not to make any changes to the charter.

Tongass Submerged Lands Proposed Rule

Tom Kron of OSM presented the Tongass Submerged Lands Proposed Rule materials included in the Council Meeting Materials book, informed the Council that the Secretary directed the Board to review this at all 10 Council meetings, and requested comments from the Council and the public on the proposed rule. Ms. Entsminger enquired how this proposed rule would affect the Eastern Interior, and Mr. Johnson replied that there are no implications on the land anywhere beyond Tongass National Forest and that this is related specifically to the Peratrovich case and the U.S. Federal District Court which deals exclusively with submerged lands in the Tongass National Forest.

No public comments.

Motion to take no action passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Pitka, second by Koehler).

Feedback on All Council Meeting

Carl Johnson of OSM asked the Council to provide a feedback on the All Council meeting. Mr. Woodruff stated that he enjoyed the All Council meeting and, especially, the Lieutenant Governor's presentation. He thought the Indian Law class was really beneficial. Mr. Glanz thought that discussions with three Councils on salmon were useful, cross border cooperation is important. In his opinion some of the classes were redundant. Ms. Pitka considered that meeting to be very important because of meeting members of other Councils and sessions were informative but the venue was crowded. She liked the Indian Law class as well. Mr. Umphenour's highlight was to meet with the other Councils' members and compare how different Councils operate and talk about various issues. Mr. Firmin agreed with the other Council members and added that networking and learning about issues in the other regions was very enlightening. His favorite speaker was Father Oleksa. Ms. Entsminger noted that sometimes being in a crowded room can work to your advantage but sometimes not and it was hard on the volunteer Council members to get away for such long time period as a week.

State Board of Game Wildlife Proposal Discussion

Mr. Umphenour noted that the next Board of Game meeting will be in Fairbanks in February [2017] but that he did not review the proposals. The decision was made to follow up with a discussion during the EIRAC February 2017 meeting in Fairbanks, after the local State Advisory Committees had a chance to discuss the proposals.

Agency Reports

Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Wildlife and Parks Department Overview of Activities

Brian McKenna and Nicole Franham provided an overview of the TCC Wildlife and Parks Department activities. Mr. McKenna stated that the TCC mission is to protect cultural and traditional lifestyle and resources and that it is its goal to advocate for the conservation and sustainability of customary and traditional practices to ensure they continue and pass down from generation to generation. The TCC strives to incorporate traditional and local knowledge into current research and management systems and also to develop partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and Tribes to help achieve these goals. Then Mr. McKenna provided an update on a genetic stock identification project for the Yukon River salmon population and Ms. Franham provided an overview of the abundance assessments and run timing trends for the Henshaw Creek weir project and annual science and culture camp hosted by the TCC and the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge and located at the Henshaw weir. Mr. Umphenour requested that the ASL (age, sex, length) data would be presented at the next Council meeting. The earliest data for the Henshaw that exists dates back to only to 1999. Later in the meeting Mr. McKenna presented 2015 Chinook Salmon data. Mr. Glanz praised the work done with youth.

Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge Biological Program Overview

Nate Berg, Subsistence Biologist, Tetlin NWR, presented an overview of the refuge biological program. The attempt to conduct a moose survey last year was unsuccessful. The monitoring of peregrine falcons, ospreys, and bald eagles continues. The Tetlin NWR collaborates with the State on a flycatcher project and every year it also does mixing ratio flights for Nelchina and Mentasta caribou. Then Mr. Berg provided a detailed report on the lynx project that aims to determine changes and movements by lynx during the course of a snowshoe hare population cycle. The secondary objective of the project is to learn about the habitat, use, diet, reproduction, predation rates and general movement patterns of lynx on the Tetlin NWR. In reply to Ms. Entsminger's question regarding how this study varies from Bob Stevenson 30-year-old study, Mr. Berg replied that the new GPS technology provides much better tracking opportunities of lynx movements. Usually mother lynx do not abandon their offsprings after humans handle them to attach ear tags.

Tim Lorenzini, Environmental Educator for the Tetlin NWR, introduced himself and informed the Council that he plans to work on hunter safety, water safety, and to educate adults and young people how to enjoy the resources safely. Mr. Lorenzini also plans to take students participating in the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program to view Ms. Entsminger's husband's collection of ducks. Mr. Koehler expressed his willingness to participate in any hunter education project as a volunteer when time allows.

Temporary Special Action WSA16-06

Nate Berg introduced Temporary Special Action WSA16-06, submitted by Tetlin NWR that requests that the caribou harvest limit for the winter season in Unit 12 remainder be increased from 1 to 2 caribou for the 2016/17 regulatory year. Then Mr. Berg provided the reasons for this request. ADF&G would like to increase the Nelchina herd caribou harvest from 4,000 to 6,000. Ms. Entsminger noted that one of the members of the Upper Tanana/Fortymile River put in a proposal a while back to change the harvest limit to 2, but it was rejected by the FSB at that time. Ms. Wessels announced that there is going to be a public

meeting on this special action in Tok on November 1, 2016. Mr. Umphenour noted that in his mind the reason why the Nelchina herd increased in size is because the State has an approved predator (bear and wolf) management program.

Motion to support Temporary Special Action WSA16-06 passed 8 to 0 (Motion by Umphenour, second by Glanz).

Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge Summary of Activities

Steve Berendzen, Manager of Yukon Flats NWR, highlighted some of the projects from the refuge's summary of activities, which included: 2015/2016 aerial scoter and scaup surveys; 2016 fire season; trail camera monitoring (lithium batteries allowed photo taking at -45 degrees Fahrenheit); working together with CATG on the Bering Cisco population study; 2016 Fort Yukon open house.

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) Summary of Activities

Vince Matthews, Refuge Subsistence Coordinator for Arctic, Kanuti, and Yukon Flats NWRs, presented a summary of ANWR activities. He talked about cooperative management of the Porcupine Caribou Herd through the International Board. The Board generally meets twice a year. The Porcupine Caribou Technical Committee monitors the herd and reports to the International Board. The size of the herd is currently the highest it is ever been recorded. Mr. Matthews provided a brief overview of the long-term changes in caribou distribution and abundance in the Alaskan Arctic project, a moose survey within North Slope drainages of game management unit 26C, aerial transect sheep surveys in the center of the Refuge, commercial permits issued to the businesses that bring clients onto the Refuge, and other projects.

Andrew Firmin had a request to the Yukon Flats NWR on the information on the trail cameras monitoring (areas they are in, what kind of information is gathered, possibility of seeing photos). Mr. Firmin also requested to be added onto the mailing list for the International Porcupine Caribou Herd, noting that their website was dated. He would like to know about and be able to attend the meetings.

Virgil Umphenour enquired about a summary of the breakdown of guiding permits on the Refuge (if they are primarily for sightseeing and rafting guiding or other activities); this enquiry was in relation to the situation that happen with the Red Sheep Creek and Cane Creek sheep hunt in the past and trying to avoid a similar situation happening. Mr. Umphenour also asked for statistics on accidents or wildlife encounters resulting from the use of the recreational permits.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Summary Report, the Chisana Caribou Herd Hunt Report, and the Statewide National Park Service Subsistence Collections Rule

Barbara Cellarius, Subsistence Coordinator and Cultural Anthropologist for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), provided an update on the statewide National Park Service rule on subsistence collections and limiting types of allowed bait. She noted that 30 public comments were received and drafting the final rule is underway. The NPS anticipates the final rule to be published in the spring of 2017.

Ms. Cellarius gave some quick highlights of information on Dall's sheep and distance sampling aerial surveys; wolf population survey in the range of the Chisana caribou herd, limiting harvest of the aforementioned herd (only 1 caribou was taken); community based subsistence survey together with the State

Subsistence Division (State can potentially give a presentation on this at next meeting); ethnographic report on the use of park lands and resources by different user groups prior to park establishment (in cooperation with the University of Alaska Fairbanks); Federal subsistence harvest permits harvest data update; and projects funded by the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Update on the Park's Backcountry and Wilderness Stewardship Plan

Barbara Cellarius stated that a draft plan that covers 9.4 million acres of wilderness and 2 million acres of backcountry within the Park and Preserve will be issued in the spring of 2017. A working group which includes the Wrangell Subsistence Resource Commission looks at what kind of impact this plan might have on subsistence. The Council would like to receive a more formal report on the plan and draft environmental assessment report during the next meeting.

Ms. Entsminger commented that there is a general concern regarding how this plan will affect access to wilderness. Mr. Woodruff mentioned that the NPS said they are not going to maintain an airstrip at the upper Charley River shutting off the access.

Ms. Cellarius also mentioned that the Denali National Park and Preserve provided a written report that is included into supplemental materials.

Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve Summary Update

Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator for Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, spoke about the two reports: moose population survey and Dall's Sheep aerial survey, and provided 2016 fire report. The Council (Glanz, Entsminger, Woodruff) requested information on the reasons for 40 percent decline in sheep population. Mr. Woodruff also requested information on bear surveys or bear population counts.

OSM Staffing Update

Tom Kron with OSM provided staffing update.

Future Meeting Dates

The Council confirmed and approved the winter 2017 meeting for February 7 and 8 in Fairbanks.

The Council selected November 8 and 9, 2017, and Tanana as the preferred winter meeting date and place. Tok was chosen as an alternative community to meet.

Closing Comments

- Thank you to Fort Yukon and its people for their hospitality. It was excellent;
- Having meeting in Fort Yukon helped local people to understand how the proposal process worked;
- The meeting had a great local turnout;
- The Council members and the OSM staff are always available to help and answer questions;
- The Council's goal is to manage the sustainable resources in a responsible manner so that the residents and their grandchildren can utilize them;
- It was great after five or six years to finally have a meeting a village;

- Community engagement is a really important part of the public process;
- Requesting the CATG to submit a report at the next meeting;
- The meeting was really informative and interesting.

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

December 27, 2016

Katerina Wessels, DFO
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

Susan Entsminger, Chair
Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Eastern Interior Alaska 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 2011. 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

WCR15-22

Closure Location: Unit 25D west - Moose

Current Federal Regulation

Unit 25D (west)—Moose

That portion lying west of a line extending from the Unit 25D boundary on Preacher Creek, then downstream along Preacher Creek, Birch Creek, and Lower Mouth of Birch Creek to the Yukon River, then downstream along the north bank of the Yukon River (including islands) to the confluence of the Hadweenzic River, then upstream along the west bank of the Hadweenzic to the confluence of Forty and One-Half Mile Creek, then upstream along Forty and One-Half Mile Creek to Nelson Mountain on the Unit 25D boundary—1 bull by Federal registration permit. Aug. 25-Feb. 28

Permits will be available in the following villages: Beaver (25 permits), Birch Creek (10 permits), and Stevens Village (25 permits). Permits for residents of 25D (west) who do not live in one of the three villages will be available by contacting the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge Office in Fairbanks or a local Refuge Information Technician.

Moose hunting on public land in Unit 25D (west) is closed at all times except for residents of Unit 25D (west) hunting under these regulations. The moose season will be closed by announcement of the Refuge Manager Yukon Flats NWR when 60 moose have been harvested in the entirety (from Federal and non-Federal lands) of Unit 25D (west).

Closure Dates: Aug. 25-Feb. 28

Current State Regulation

Unit 25D—Moose

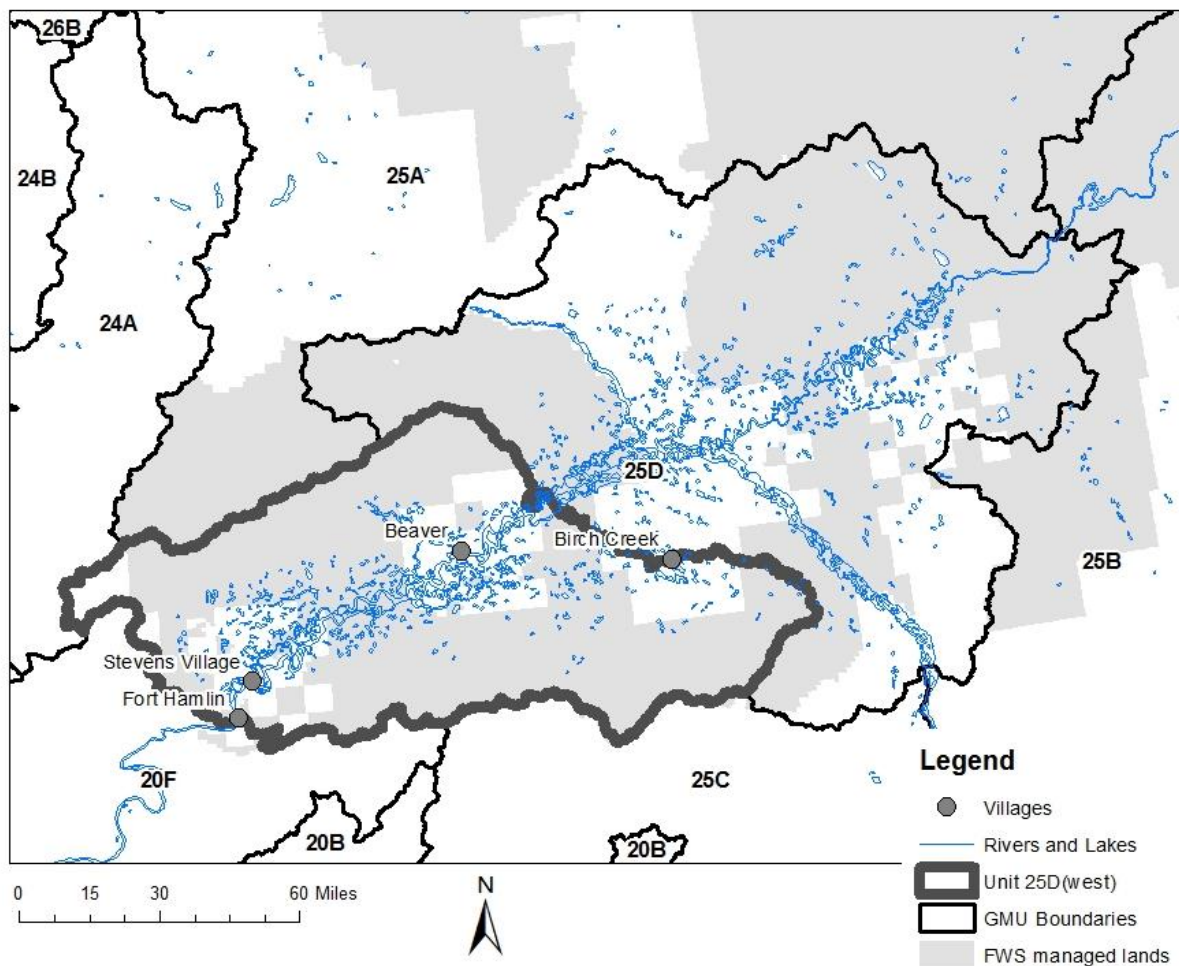
Lying west of a line extending from the Unit 25D boundary on Preacher Creek, then downstream along the west banks Preacher Creek, Birch Creek, and Lower Mouth Birch Creek to the Yukon River, then downstream along the north bank of the Yukon River Residents—1 bull by permit Aug. 25-Feb. 28

(including islands) to the confluence of the Hadweenic River, then upstream along the west bank of the Hadweenic River to the confluence of Forty and One-Half Mile Creek, then upstream along Forty and One-Half Mile Creek to Nelson Mountain on the Unit 25D boundary.

Regulatory Year Initiated: 1993

Extent of Federal Public Lands

Federal public lands comprise approximately 71% of Unit 25D (west) and consist of 100% U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) managed lands (**Map 1**).



Map 1. Unit 25D (west)

Regulatory History

In 1990, the Federal moose season in Unit 25D (west) ran Aug. 25-Sept. 25, Dec. 1-10, and Feb. 18-28. The harvest limit was one bull by Federal registration permit and only residents of Beaver, Birch Creek, and Stevens Village could hunt under Federal regulations. However, all state residents could hunt moose on Federal public lands during State seasons under State regulations. (Note: There was no open nonresident State moose season).

In 1992, the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) adopted Proposal P92-117 with modification, which specified that Federally qualified subsistence users could hunt moose in Unit 25D (west) under Federal regulations with a State Tier II permit and that the season would be closed when 35 bulls had been harvested. This was done to reduce the administrative burden on Federally qualified subsistence users by allowing them to hunt on State and Federal lands by acquiring one, rather than two, permits.

In 1993, the Board adopted Proposal P93-60 with modification to: 1) close moose hunting on Federal public lands in Unit 25D (west) to non-Federally qualified subsistence users, 2) modify the open season dates to Aug. 25-Sept. 25 and Nov. 1-Dec. 20, 3) restrict harvest to antlered bulls only, and 4) remove the individual harvest limit and reduced the quota to 30 antlered bulls, clarifying that the quota applied to all (Federal and non-Federal) lands of Unit 25D (west). This was done due to conservation concerns over the declining moose population. The removal of the individual harvest limit was done to better accommodate customary and traditional hunting practices.

In 1994, the Board adopted Proposal P94-77 with modification to: 1) expand the open season to Aug. 25-Feb. 28, and 2) remove the “antlered” harvest restriction, allowing the harvest of any bull. This was done to better accommodate the needs and traditions of the villages in Unit 25D (west) and because the existing quota insured against overharvesting.

In 1995, the Board adopted Proposal P95-52, allowing the take of moose and caribou in Unit 25 from a snowmachine or motor boat. This was done to alleviate unnecessary restrictions on Federally qualified subsistence users in Unit 25 as this provision was already allowed in other units across the State.

In 1999, the Board adopted Proposal P99-61, which allowed the take of bull moose in Unit 25D (west) outside the open seasons for memorial potlatch and traditional cultural events with the provisions that any harvested moose counts against the quota of 30 bulls and that the user must communicate the name of decedent, number of moose harvested, harvester’s name, and the date and location of harvest to the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) manager.

In 2000, the Board adopted Proposal P00-60 with modification to: 1) increase the harvest quota from 30 to 60 moose and 2) issue 60 permits annually with 25, 25, and 10 permits being issued to residents of

Stevens Village, Beaver, and Birch Creek, respectively. This was done due to recent surveys indicating that the moose population had increased and was able to sustain an increased harvest of bulls.

In 2001, the Board adopted Proposal WP01-43, which expanded the customary and traditional use determination for moose in Unit 25D (west) to include all residents of Unit 25D (west). The 60 permit limit was removed, although the community allocation was retained with the stipulation that residents of Unit 25D (west) who did not live in Stevens Village, Beaver, or Birch Creek could obtain a permit by contacting the Yukon Flats NWR office.

The closure of Federal public lands in Unit 25D (west) to moose hunting by non-Federally qualified subsistence users has been reviewed in 2006 (WCR05-22), 2009 (WCR08-22), and 2013 (WCR12-22). The decision in all past closure reviews has been to maintain the closure or “status quo” due to conservation concerns.

In 2012, the Board adopted Proposal WP12-63, which required edible meat to be left on the bones of caribou and moose harvested in Unit 25 until removed from the field and/or processed for human consumption. This was done to reduce meat spoilage.

Closure last reviewed: 2013 – WCR12-22

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 §816, to continue subsistence uses of such populations, or pursuant to other applicable law;

Results from population surveys conducted in 1992 estimated that there were 605 moose in Unit 25D (west), which was considerably lower than the population estimate of 1,479 moose in 1986. Although different population estimation methods were used, managers were concerned about the continued viability of this population based on its decline between 1986 and 1992, the low moose density, low survival of yearling cows, high mortality rates of younger aged moose and cows, and under-reporting of the harvest (FWS 1993).

Based on the management goal to limit harvest to no more than 5% of the population (n=605 in 1992), the Board adopted modified Proposal 93-60, which reduced the maximum allowable harvest to 30 bulls and closed moose hunting in Unit 25D (west) to non-Federally qualified subsistence users. Combined with the estimated annual subsistence harvest for Stevens Village, Beaver, and Birch Creek, it was determined that there was not a sufficient surplus of moose for harvest by nonresidents or residents living outside of

Unit 25D (west) (FSB 1993). Thus the original closure was implemented for the conservation of a healthy moose population and to ensure continued subsistence use of this population by local residents.

Council Recommendation for Original Closure

The Council members for the Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) had not been selected and finalized by the April 1993 Board meeting, so there was no recommendation. In all previous reviews (2005, 2009, 2013), the Council voted to maintain the closure to ensure the continuation of subsistence uses and due to conservation concerns caused by low moose abundance, low density, and a limited harvestable surplus (EIRAC 2005, 2009, 2013, FWS 2013).

State Recommendation for Original Closure

The State supported modified Proposal 93-60 (see above) due to conservation concerns (FWS 1993).

Biological Background

A Yukon Flats Cooperative Moose Management Plan was completed in 2002. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation developed the plan in cooperation with the Yukon Flats Fish and Game Advisory Committee, the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments, the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management (ADF&G 2002). The purpose of the plan was to “protect, maintain, and enhance the Yukon Flats moose population and habitat, maintain traditional lifestyles, and provide opportunities for use of the moose resource” (ADF&G 2002).

The Management Plan recommends goals, objectives, strategies, and actions for the moose population, harvest, and predator management (ADF&G 2002). Current State management goals and objectives for moose in Unit 25D are similar to those in the 2002 Management Plan and include (Caikoski 2012):

- Protect, maintain, and enhance the moose population and its habitat in concert with other components of the ecosystem while providing for maximum sustained harvest.
- Provide for subsistence use and for the greatest opportunity to harvest moose.
- Protect, maintain, and enhance the Yukon Flats moose population and habitat, maintain traditional lifestyles and provide opportunities for use of the moose resource.
- Increase the harvestable surplus of bull moose in key hunting areas near local communities by reducing mortality from bear and wolf predation.
- Improve moose harvest reporting.
- Minimize cow moose harvest, recognizing that some cows will probably be taken for ceremonial purposes when bull moose are seasonally in poor condition.
- Work with local communities to implement harvest strategies to increase bear and wolf harvest.

- Increase the size of the moose population by 2-5% annually in key hunting areas near local communities in Unit 25D.
- With assistance of the Division of Subsistence, implement a systematic household harvest survey in Unit 25D to obtain 90% reporting.
- Reduce illegal and potlatch harvest of cow moose to less than 5% of total annual harvest.
- Maintain a minimum of 40 bulls per 100 cows as observed in fall surveys.

Moose in Unit 25D (west) have been surveyed regularly (weather and snow conditions permitting) by the Yukon Flats NWR since 1992. Surveys have been conducted in both spring and fall. Fall surveys are preferred as cows and bulls can be differentiated. However, poor snow conditions have precluded fall surveys in some years. Spring and fall surveys cannot be compared due to variability in survey conditions, moose behavior, distribution, and survival (Lake 2013).

Moose density in Unit 25D (west) has been consistently low over the last 50 years and is among the lowest in Interior Alaska (Lake 2013, Caikoski 2012). Between 1992 and 2015, fall moose population estimates ranged from 418-862 moose/year, with an annual average of 597 moose (**Figure 1**). These estimates correspond to an estimated moose density of 0.18-0.44 moose/mi², with an annual average of 0.29 moose/mi² (Lake 2013, 2015). From 1999-2010, the overall fall moose population appeared to be trending downward; however, the moose population estimate increased significantly in 2015 (Lake 2015, **Figure 1**).

Between 1999 and 2013, spring moose population estimates ranged from 300-735 moose/year, with an annual average of 530 moose (**Figure 1**). These estimates correspond to an estimated moose density of 0.13-0.32 moose/mi², with an annual average of 0.23 moose/mi². While the spring moose population appears to be trending downward (**Figure 1**), this decline is not statistically significant (Lake 2013).

Between 1992 and 2015, the bull:cow ratio for moose in Unit 25D (west) fluctuated widely, ranging from 31-72 bulls:100 cows/year, with an annual average of 55 bulls:100 cows (**Figure 2**, Lake 2013, 2015). The most recent estimate (Fall 2015) is well above management objectives (Lake 2015).

Between 1992 and 2010, the calf:cow ratio for moose in Unit 25D (west) ranged from 22-53 calves:100 cows/year, averaging 34 calves:100 cows/year (**Figure 3**, Lake 2013, 2015). Calf:cow ratios of < 20 calves:100 cows, 20-40 calves:100 cows, and > 40 calves:100 cows may indicate declining, stable, and growing moose populations, respectively (Stout 2010). Over the long-term, the calf:cow ratio has exhibited a stable trend. However, the most recent calf:cow ratio (Fall 2015) is the highest ratio ever recorded, suggesting the population may be growing (**Figure 3**, Lake 2015).

Twinning rates are only available for a few years from two separate radio-collar studies. Observed twinning rates in 1998 and 1999 were 66% and 61%, respectively (Bertram and Vivion 2002). Most recently, Hinkes (2015) and Lake (2016, pers. comm.) determined minimum twinning rates of 19%, 54% and 47% in 2014, 2015 and 2016, respectively. The 2014-2016 twinning rates are considered minimum because surveys were conducted weekly versus daily, increasing the possibility that moose may have

already lost a calf between surveys. The reason for the low, minimum twinning rate in 2014 is unknown, but may be related to poorer body condition (low rumpfat) measured in November 2013 (Hinkes 2015). However, the other twinning rates indicate good body condition and underutilized habitat (Lake 2016, pers. comm.).

Predators are the primary factor limiting the moose population in Unit 25D (west), although harvest, particularly of cows, may also be an important factor (ADF&G 2002, Caikoski 2012). A calf mortality study conducted by the Yukon Flats NWR found black and brown bears were responsible for 45% and 39% of moose calf mortality, respectively (ADF&G 2002). Wolves are likely the most important source of mortality after snowfall (ADF&G 2002).

The Yukon Flats Cooperative Moose Management Plan recommended increased harvest of black bears, brown bears, and wolves by local residents as a strategy for increasing the harvestable surplus of moose. As a result of these recommendations, the Alaska Board of Game liberalized predator regulations, including black bear baiting and community harvest, brown bear seasons and bag limits, and wolf bag limits (ADF&G 2002).

In 2008, ADF&G completed an intensive management (IM) plan for Yukon Flats moose. A feasibility assessment of the IM plan determined that: 1) the estimated wolf density in Unit 25D (west) is too high for harvest by local residents to have any impact, and 2) the documented black bear density is the highest in Interior Alaska and harvest by local residents would not be sufficient to reduce abundance (Caikoski 2012).

Habitat

Wildland fire and flood events in the western Yukon Flats maintain early successional shrub communities (Caikoski 2012, Bertram 2015). The quality and availability of these communities for winter moose forage is variable across the Yukon Flats. Stands of new and early to mid-successional stage willows grow in lowlands, wetlands, newly formed river terraces, and upland burned areas. There are also large stands of old growth willow, growing primarily out of the reach for moose (Bertram 2015). Browse habitat does not appear to be limiting moose at their current densities, and the Yukon Flats can likely sustain higher browsing intensities and moose densities (ADF&G 2002). Current healthy calf production and recruitment and high parturition and twinning rates indicate good nutritional health and quality winter habitat (Hinkes et al. 2015, Lake 2015, Bertram and Vivion 2002, Caikoski 2012).

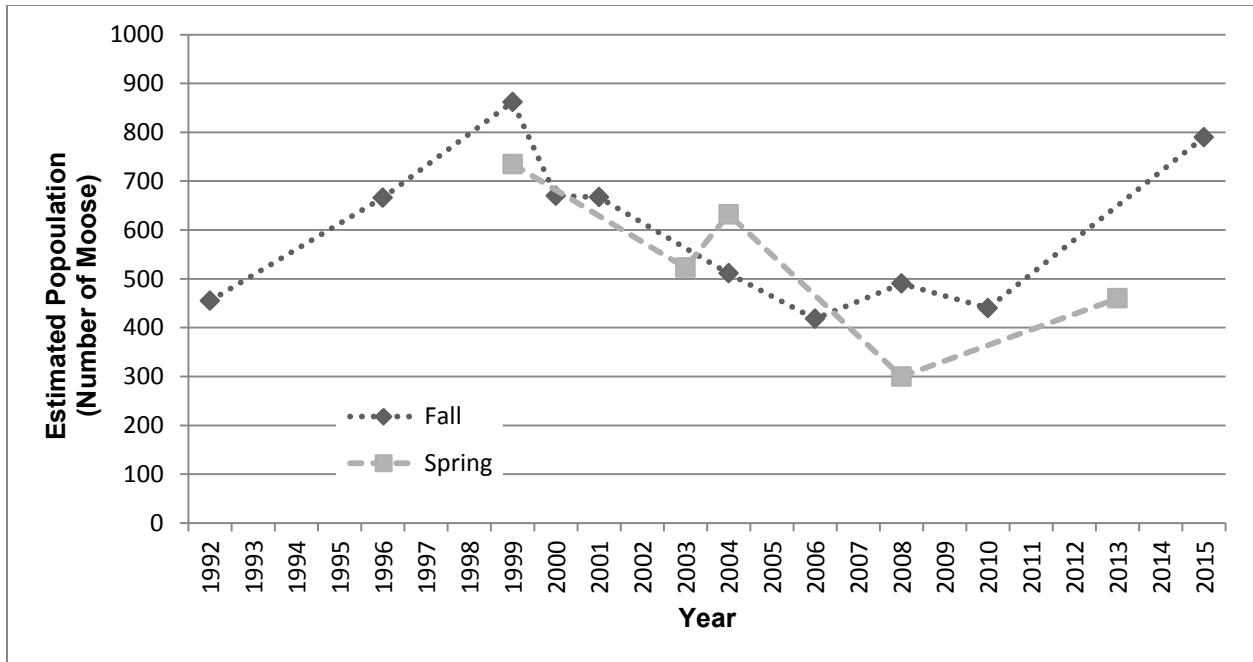


Figure 1. Estimated moose population in Unit 25D (west). Stratified random and regression analysis were used to determine estimates in 1992 and 1996, respectively. GeoSpatial Population Estimator (GSPE) was used in all other years. The sampling area in 1992 and 1996 was 1532mi². The sampling area in all other years was 2269mi² (Lake 2013, 2015).

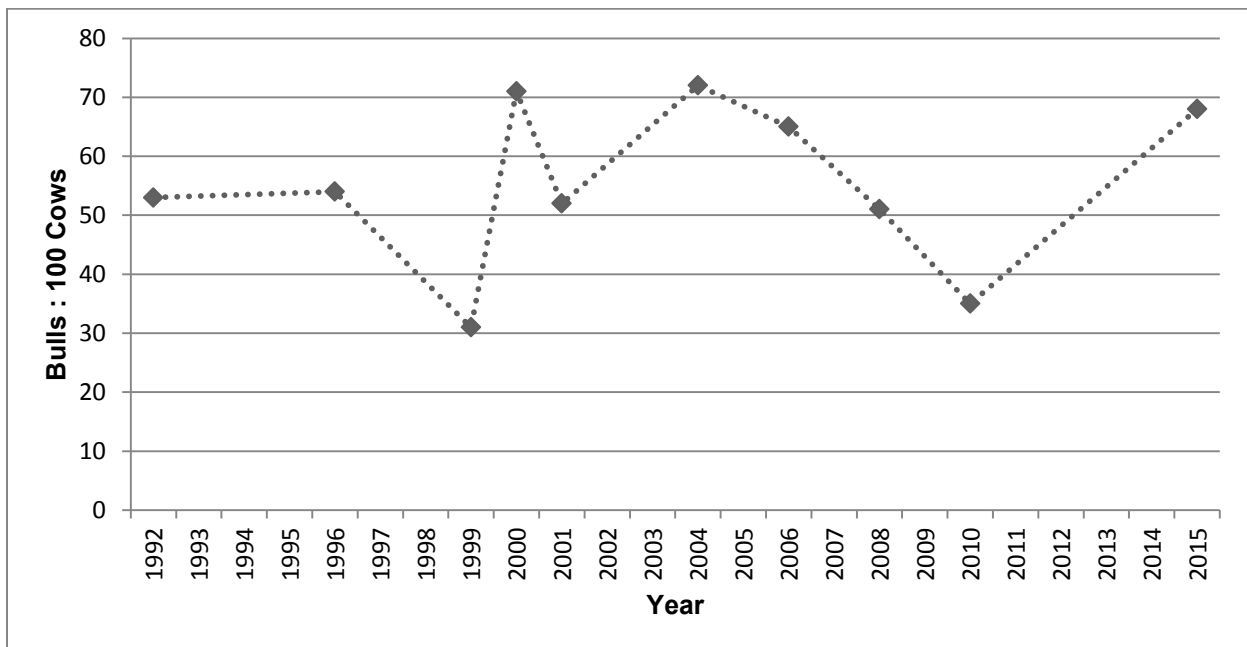


Figure 2. Estimated Fall Bull:Cow ratios for moose in Unit 25D (west). Stratified random and regression analysis were used to determine estimates in 1992 and 1996, respectively. GeoSpatial Population Estimator (GSPE) was used in all other years (Lake 2013, 2015).

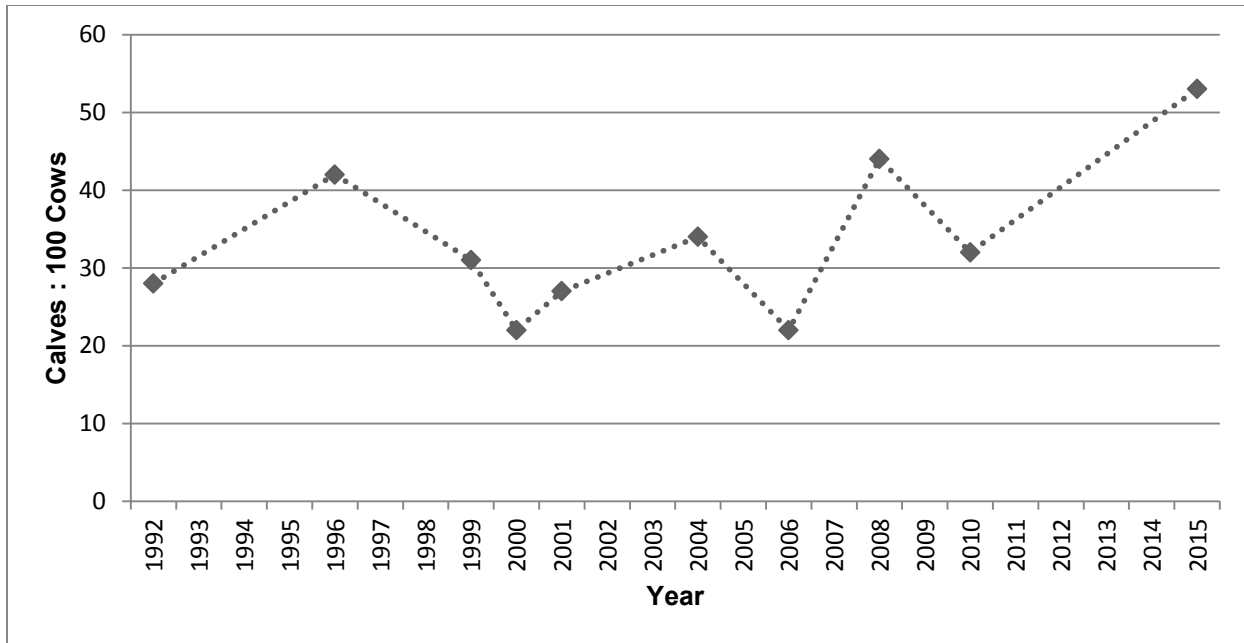


Figure 3. Estimated Calf:Cow ratios for moose in Unit 25D (west). Stratified random and regression analysis were used to determine estimates in 1992 and 1996, respectively. GeoSpatial Population Estimator (GSPE) was used in all other years (Lake 2013, 2015).

Harvest History

Moose are an important subsistence resource for all communities in the Upper Yukon basin (ADF&G 2002, Stevens and Maracle 2012). Sharing of harvested moose among households is common (Stevens and Maracle 2012). Most moose are harvested in September with a small fraction harvested in August (Stevens and Maracle 2012). Local hunters predominantly access moose hunting areas by boat and hunt within 30 miles of their community (Johnson et al. in review).

Between regulatory years (RY) 2000 and 2015, total reported moose harvest by State and Federal permits in Unit 25D (west) fluctuated annually, ranging from 4-21 moose/year and averaging 12 moose/year (**Figure 4**). During the same time period, reported moose harvest by Federal permit ranged from 3-14 moose/year, averaging 9 moose/year (**Figure 4**). On average, 68% of the reported moose harvest occurred by Federal permit, indicating that the majority of the reported moose harvest in Unit 25D (west) occurs on Federal public lands (**Figure 4**, Caikoski 2012, ADF&G 2016, OSM 2016).

Reporting rates by residents of Unit 25D have historically been low. Unreported harvest of moose, particularly illegal harvest of cows has remained a chronic issue (Caikoski 2012). The Council of Athabaskan Tribal Governments (CATG) has conducted numerous household surveys of Yukon Flats communities since 1993 (Stevens and Maracle 2012). According to these data, residents of Beaver, Birch Creek, and Stevens Village harvested 9-45 moose/year between 1993 and 2010, with an annual average of 22 moose (**Figure 5**, Stevens and Maracle 2012). These data do not reveal any long-term trends, but rather that harvest fluctuates annually due to various factors, including weather, water levels, moose distribution, fuel prices, and survey methodology and implementation (Stevens and Maracle 2012).

While the moose population and harvest vary annually, the average harvest rate between 1993 and 2010 was 3% (575 average moose population, Caikoski 2012; 22 moose harvested/year on average, Stevens and Maracle 2012).

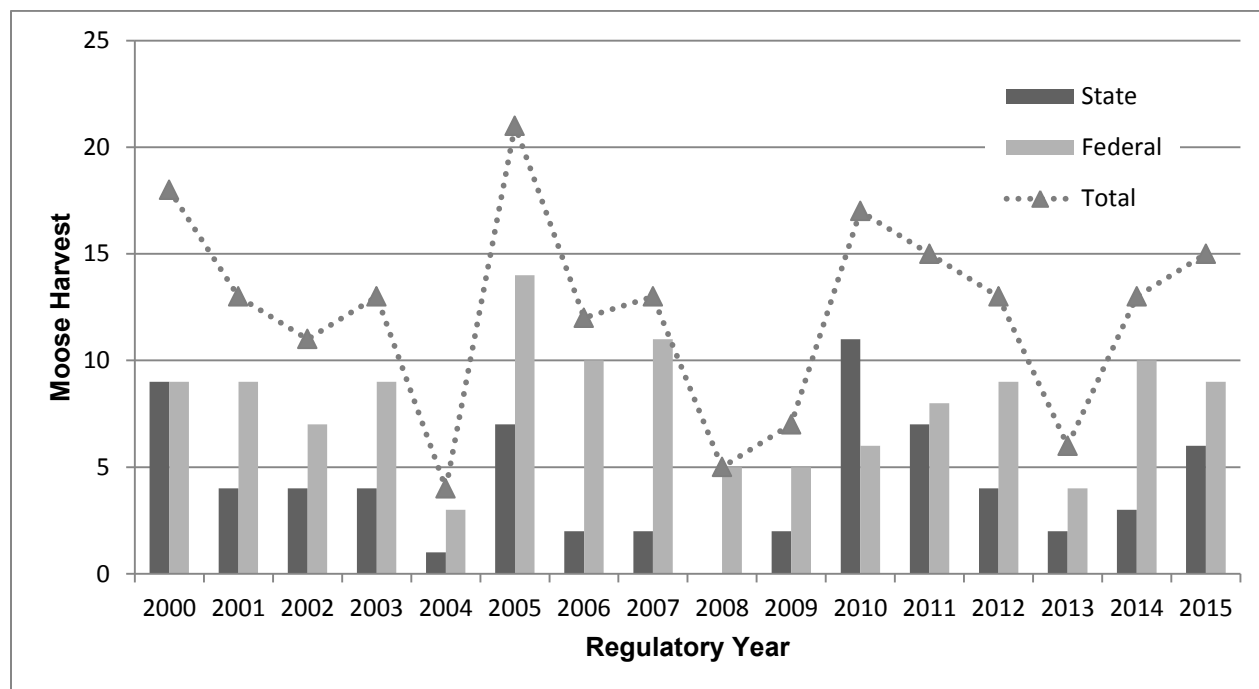


Figure 4. Moose harvest by State and Federal permit in Unit 25D (west) (Caikoski 2012, ADF&G 2016, OSM 2016).

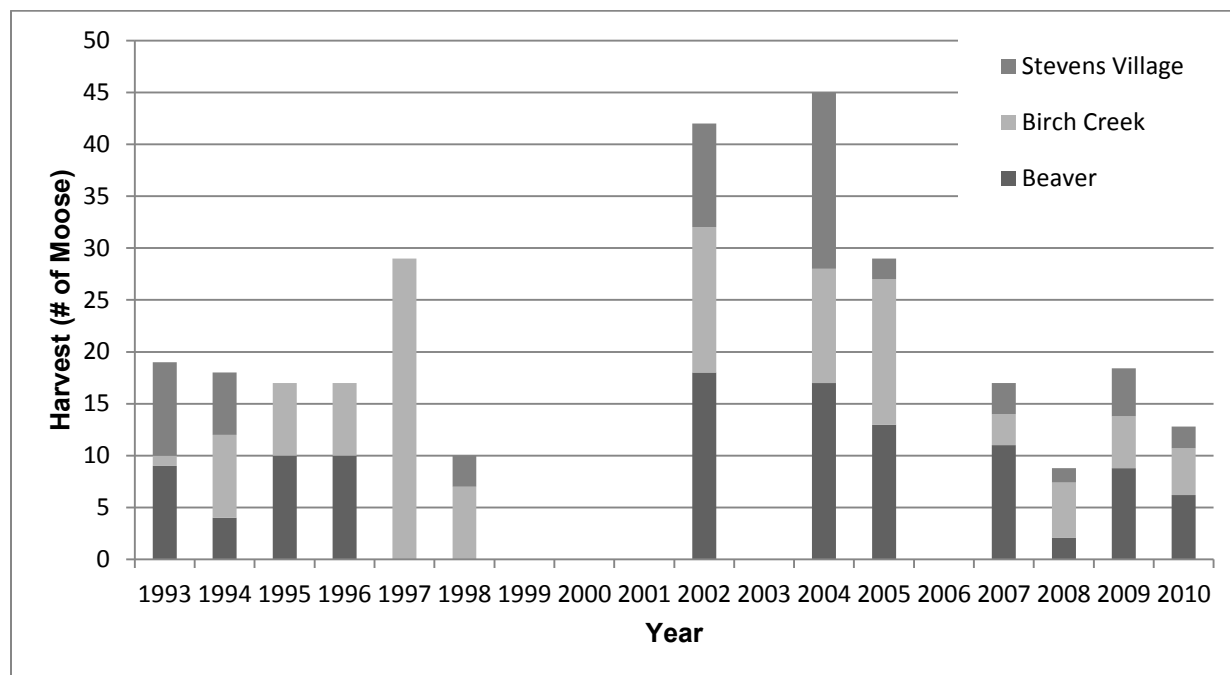


Figure 5. Moose harvest by community as reported from household surveys (Stevens and Maracle 2012).

OSM Preliminary Recommendation:

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

Justification

The moose population in Unit 25D (west) cannot sustain an increase in harvest. The population continues to persist at very low density, although recent surveys demonstrate improvements in abundance, bull:cow and calf:cow ratios. Moose are a very important subsistence resource to residents of Unit 25D (west) and the closure provides a meaningful subsistence priority as mandated by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Section 815(3).

If the closure was lifted, moose harvest may increase to unsustainable levels and competition from non-Federally qualified subsistence users would not provide a meaningful subsistence priority to Federally qualified subsistence users. If the closure was extended to all users, residents of Unit 25D (west) may not be able to meet their subsistence needs. Therefore, maintaining the status quo is recommended. The necessity of the closure to Federal public lands in the affected area will be reassessed in three years, per the Federal Subsistence Board Closure Policy, or sooner if additional survey data suggest the closure should be lifted.

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Ahtna

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND
AHTNA INTER-TRIBAL RESOURCE COMMISSION
FOR
A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FOR COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT OF
CUSTOMARY AND TRADITIONAL SUBSISTENCE USES IN THE AHTNA REGION**

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is entered into for the purpose of formalizing the subsistence wildlife management partnership between the United States Department of the Interior (Department) and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission (hereinafter referred to as AITRC) for the allocation and harvest of moose and caribou by rural residents of the Native villages in the Ahtna region (as shown on the attached map) on Federal public lands. It also establishes a process for the formation of a local advisory committee and memorializes the parties' mutual goal of developing a regional management plan for moose, caribou, and other wildlife populations traditionally taken by the Ahtna villages to allow for better informed management and decisionmaking in the future.

ARTICLE I – BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Department is committed to developing a subsistence wildlife management partnership project with the AITRC that will result in empowering the rural Native villages of the Ahtna region with greater self-determination and, when possible and in accordance with applicable law, providing improved hunting opportunities that will allow them to continue practicing their customary and traditional way of life. The Department recognizes that special circumstances within the Ahtna region have not permitted these local residents to meet their subsistence needs. Moreover, the Department recognizes the right of the rural resident members of the Native villages in the Ahtna region to maintain their cultural identity through opportunities to practice their subsistence lifestyle on the Federal public lands in a manner that enables them to pass down traditional knowledge and customary practices from generation to generation. The Department further recognizes that it has an obligation to uphold the Federal trust responsibility to tribes, a well-established legal obligation that originates from the unique historical relationship between the United States and the tribes. Central to the Department's mission is honoring and supporting the government-to-government relationship with tribes.

The Department and AITRC share a mutual interest in the conservation of healthy wildlife populations and their habitats as well as the opportunity for customary and traditional subsistence uses. The Department and AITRC are committed to developing and maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship that will serve the best interests of the residents of the Ahtna region, the wildlife management agencies within the Department, and the wildlife resources and the environment necessary to sustain healthy populations. To that end, the Department is committed to incorporating Ahtna traditional ecological knowledge and customary and traditional management practices, based on Ahtna's special geographical, historical, and cultural connections to the lands, waters and wildlife in the Ahtna traditional territory, into the Department's subsistence wildlife management structure and policies. The AITRC values the scientific and monitoring tools that the Department brings to subsistence wildlife management, and is committed to building capacity in this area and partnering with the Department on such projects. The Department and AITRC are committed to working together to arrive at mutually beneficial solutions and programs when, through law or policy, wildlife management objectives differ between the parties.

The Department and AITRC also share a mutual concern for the already very evident impact of climate change on the habitat and resources within the Ahtna region, including wildlife populations. The parties agree that in order to begin to address this changing environment, it will be necessary to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge broadly into wildlife management decision making, including, when appropriate, comprehensive wildlife and habitat management plans for the public lands within the Ahtna region.

ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY

The following authorities support the MOA:

- Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), 16 U.S.C. § 3111 et seq.
- Executive Order 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments"
- Secretarial Order 3317, "Department of Interior Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes"
- Secretarial Order 3335, "Reaffirmation of the Federal Trust Responsibility to Recognized Indian Tribes and Individual Indian Beneficiaries"
- Secretarial Order 3342, "Identifying Opportunities for Cooperative and Collaborative Partnerships with Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in the Management of Federal Lands and Resources"
- Federal Subsistence Board Regulations at 36 C.F.R. § 242 and 50 C.F.R. § 100

Congress has vested authority in the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture (Secretaries) through Title VIII of ANILCA to manage subsistence uses and resources on the Federal public lands in Alaska. The Secretaries have delegated significant aspects of subsistence management on Federal public lands to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board). The Secretary of Interior, (Secretary) however, retains broad management authority over the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management public lands in Ahtna's

traditional territory. Section 809 of ANILCA authorizes the Secretaries to enter into cooperative agreements or otherwise cooperate with other Federal agencies, the State of Alaska (State), Native Corporations, other appropriate persons and organizations to effectuate the purposes and policies of Title VIII. Additional Federal laws, including the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act as amended, authorize contracts, compacts and other forms of funding agreements with tribes for Federal programs.

The AITRC is composed of a representative of each of the eight federally recognized tribes in the Ahtna region, (Native Villages of Cantwell, Mentasta, Cheesh'na, Chitina, Gulkana, Gakona, Tazlina, and Kluti Kaah) Ahtna Inc., the ANCSA regional corporation, and Chitina Native Corporation, the ANCSA village corporation for the Native Village of Chitina. The other seven ANCSA village corporations for the Ahtna region merged with Ahtna, Inc. The eight federally recognized Ahtna tribes through resolutions of their governing bodies established the AITRC for the purpose of management of customary and traditional resources, lands and waters, including engaging in cooperative management agreements, and for related Federal tribal contracting opportunities.

The Southcentral Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (SCRAC) and Eastern Interior Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (EIRAC) (collectively, RAC), which were established pursuant to section 805 of ANILCA, have authority to make recommendations to the Board and Secretary on issues related to the taking of subsistence wildlife on the public lands within Ahtna's traditional territory. The Subsistence Resource Commissions (SRC) for the Denali and Wrangell-St. Elias National Parks are responsible for developing annual recommendations for subsistence hunting programs on park and preserve lands in Ahtna's traditional territory. The SRC recommendations go directly to the Secretary.

Both the Regional Advisory Council and SRC recommendations concerning the taking of fish and wildlife are entitled to deference pursuant to sections 805 and 808 of ANILCA and Federal regulations.

ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

This MOA formalizes an agreement for the purpose of establishing a process and structure as a demonstration project within the Federal Subsistence Management Program that provides the AITRC with authority to cooperatively manage, within parameters established by the Board, certain aspects of subsistence hunting on Federal public lands by rural residents who are members of the eight federally recognized tribes in the Ahtna region, which is delineated on the attached map.

A. The Department will immediately commence rulemaking to allow the issuance of AITRC-managed community harvest permit(s) through the Federal Subsistence Management Program.

- 1) The Department agrees that during the next subsistence regulatory cycle following the signing of this MOA, the Department will commence rulemaking with the goal of authorizing the Board to issue a permit, or series of permits, to the AITRC for subsistence taking of wildlife species, including moose, caribou, and other species culturally and

traditionally harvested, on Federal public lands within the Ahtna region pursuant to the following goals and caveats:

- a) Such permit or permits will allow AITRC to establish harvest limits, quotas, season dates, and methods and means within the framework, if any, established by the Board through its regulatory process and included as a condition or conditions of the permit(s) for the purposes of conservation of healthy populations, public safety, or administration. The objective is to provide maximum opportunity for the continuation of the Ahtna tribes' hunting way of life and right to self-determination through providing AITRC with authority to manage the taking of wildlife according to the customary and traditional knowledge and practices of the Ahtna people through a process that is consistent with the Board's legal mandates.
 - b) Such permit(s) may be for the benefit of the AITRC's member tribal communities only; however, the parties understand and agree that the taking of fish and wildlife on all Federal public lands must be implemented in a manner consistent with the statutory rural priority set forth in Title VIII.
 - c) The Secretaries will direct the Board to strive to authorize the subsistence taking on the Federal public lands within the Ahtna region of allocations of moose, caribou, and other wildlife species that are sufficient to meet the needs of the participating Ahtna villages to the fullest extent possible in light of the Board's legal obligations.
 - d) At its discretion, the Board may delegate to the agency field officers for the Wrangell-St. Elias and Denali National Parks, Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge, and for the Bureau of Land Management lands within the Ahtna region, the authority to issue the permit(s) and establish the AITRC quotas.
- 2) The AITRC agrees that when implementing the permit or permits, it will:
- a) Provide notice of all openings, closings, limits, and changes to methods and means to the appropriate agency field officers and the Office of Subsistence Management in a timely manner so as to allow adequate advanced notice to the public;
 - b) Comply with all permit conditions;
 - c) Provide the Department and Board with a list of all participants who will be hunting under the permit(s). The AITRC will also provide all hunters participating in the permit with a harvest tag or some other form of identification showing their eligibility to participate in the permit hunt and will ensure that all hunters understand all permit stipulations and applicable regulatory requirements.

B. The Department will seek to establish an Ahtna region specific local advisory committee pursuant to ANILCA section 805 to allow greater reliance on local ecological knowledge and input by regional residents into subsistence hunting management plans and decisionmaking.

- 1) The Department agrees that within 30 days following the signing of this MOA, the Office of Subsistence Management will, in consultation with AITRC, draft a charter for a subsistence local advisory committee pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 242.12, 50 C.F.R. § 100.12, and section 805(a) of ANILCA and initiate the regulatory process for implementing the charter. It is anticipated that membership shall consist of six residents of the Ahtna region nominated by AITRC and appointed by the Secretary, one representative each from the SCRAC, EIRAC, the Wrangell-St. Elias SRC, the Denali SRC, and the State of Alaska, for a total of eleven members.
 - a) The purpose of the local advisory committee will be to make recommendations concerning policies, standards guidelines, and regulations to the Secretary, Board (or its delegate), RAC's, and SRC for implementing a recommended strategy for the management and taking of wildlife species customarily and traditionally used within the Ahtna traditional territory.
 - b) The local advisory committee shall be permitted to meet at least twice per year, with planning, administrative assistance, and travel expenses including per diem (except for the State representative) to be borne by the Office of Subsistence Management.
 - c) The Board shall give substantial weight to the recommendations of the local advisory committee except when such recommendations either contradict the recommendations of the appropriate regional advisory council or, as set forth in section 805(c) of ANILCA, are not supported by substantial evidence, are contrary to recognized principles of fish or wildlife management, or are detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs.
 - i. Ahtna traditional knowledge and understanding of the customary and traditional needs, practices and uses of Ahtna tribal communities will be presumed to be substantial evidence.
 - ii. Ahtna traditional knowledge and customary and traditional management practices shall be presumed to be consistent with recognized principles of wildlife management unless it is demonstrated that there is a significant likelihood that the local advisory committee's recommendations for harvest management will result in material detriment to the conservation of a wildlife stock or population.
- 2) With regard to the establishment of the local advisory committee, AITRC understand as follows:

- a) Such committee will be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), including, but not limited to the requirements of: advanced notice and open meetings; attendance at meetings by a Designated Federal Officer; a membership that is fairly balanced in terms of those directly affected, interested, and qualified on the issues to be addressed by the committee; and, an approved charter.
 - b) Charter approval is a statutory prerequisite to action by any federal advisory committee. Such approval is a lengthy process and cannot be guaranteed, however, the Department will make all good faith efforts to expedite the process and charter approval.
- C. The future cooperative development and implementation of policies, programs and projects for the conservation and sustainable subsistence harvest of wildlife customarily and traditionally utilized on lands within the Ahtna region.**
- 1) Many wildlife species migrate, and none recognize political or ownership boundaries. The Department and AITRC agree that there are substantial potential benefits for the managers of neighboring land within the Ahtna region to cooperate in reaching subsistence wildlife management objectives. Section 802(3) of ANILCA recognizes the need for cooperation among Native corporations and adjacent land managers such as AITRC “in managing subsistence activities on public lands and in protecting the continued viability of all wild renewable resources in Alaska.” The parties therefore agree to a cooperative partnership for the development and implementation of policies, programs, and projects that will serve mutual subsistence management objectives.
 - 2) The partnership will address the conservation and sustainable subsistence harvest of wildlife customarily and traditionally utilized within the Federal public lands and Ahtna lands within the Ahtna region. The parties acknowledge that it may not be practicable to include all wildlife populations customarily and traditionally utilized by the Ahtna Native villages in the initial phases of the cooperative partnership. Moose, caribou, and any other large mammal populations identified by either party after consultation with the other party will be included.
 - 3) A central purpose of the partnership is the incorporation of Ahtna’s traditional ecological knowledge and customary management practices into the Department’s subsistence wildlife management structure and policies. The parties agree that one important means for achieving this mutual goal is the meaningful incorporation of AITRC in the implementation of the policies, programs, and projects derived from the partnership.
 - 4) Policies, programs, and projects cooperatively developed for purposes related to conservation and sustainable subsistence harvests will include those related to takings quotas and allocations, habitat conservation and enhancement, harvest and population monitoring, research, trespass control and enforcement, and access for subsistence hunting, including access by motorized vehicles to retrieve harvested game. The work of the partnership is intended to inform wildlife-related decisionmaking by the Board, the

Department land managing agencies, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, and the AITRC for the foreseeable future.

- 5) Both parties agree that it would be beneficial to the residents of the Ahtna region to include the State of Alaska in the development and implementation of the policies, programs and projects described in this section of the MOA. The Department and AITRC therefore mutually agree to invite the State's participation in the work described in this section in the hope that the State: 1) will participate in discussions with the parties that are consistent with the goals and purposes of this section into the future; and 2) will agree, to the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, to implement policies, programs, and projects mutually agreed upon by AITRC, the Department and the State on State managed lands. The State's participation shall have no impact on the ability of AITRC and the Department to reach independent agreements on other subsistence related matters, policies, programs, and projects.

D. Funding AITRC capacity building and participation in the development and implementation of the MOA.

Both parties agree to diligently pursue sources for funding that will assist AITRC in developing and sustaining the capacity to meaningfully participate in the permits and programs set forth in this MOA. It is the mutual goal of the parties that AITRC will, within the near future and depending on the availability of appropriations, enter into funding agreement(s) with the Department for the capacity, expertise, research, and administrative costs associated with development and implementation of the parts of this MOA.

ARTICLE IV – GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. No member of, or delegate to, Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this document, or to any benefit that may arise therefrom.
- B. The provisions of this MOA are complementary to and are not intended to replace Federal responsibility under Title VIII or any other law for the conservation of fish and wildlife on Federal public lands and the subsistence uses thereof.
- C. Nothing herein is intended to conflict with Federal, State, or local laws or regulations.
- D. Upon signing, the parties shall each designate an individual and an alternate to serve as the principal contact or liaison for implementation of this MOA.
- E. This MOA becomes effective upon signing by all signatories and will remain in force until: (1) terminated by one or both of the parties; or, (2) dissolution of AITRC or cessation of operations thereby.
- F. In the event that the State of Alaska assumes subsistence management on public lands within the Ahtna traditional territory under Title VIII of ANILCA, Article III Section A

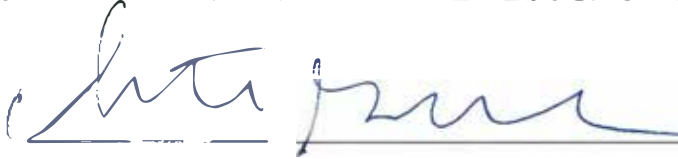
of this Agreement will be suspended for the period of State management. In the event that the State of Alaska ceases to manage public lands, this Agreement will resume and Article III Section A will return to full force and effect as if never suspended.

- G. Except as already required by law, nothing in this document shall be construed as obligating the signatories to expend funds or involving the United States or AITRC in any contract or other obligations for the future payment of money, except as may be negotiated in future cooperative funding agreements.
- H. This MOA establishes mutual goals and establishes proposed courses of action for reaching those goals, but it does not create any legally enforceable obligations or rights.
- I. This MOA does not restrict the signatories from participating in any other agreements with other public or private agencies, organizations, or individuals.

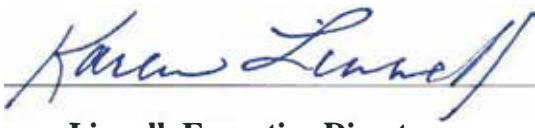
ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

FOR THE AHTNA INTERTRIBAL RESOURCE COMMISSION:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christopher Gene", written over a horizontal line.

Christopher Gene, Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Linnell", written over a horizontal line.

Karen Linnell, Executive Director

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael L. Connor", written over a horizontal line.

Michael L. Connor, Deputy Secretary of the Interior

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

Ahtna, Incorporated acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nicholas Jackson", written over a horizontal line.

Nicholas Jackson, Chairman of Ahtna, Incorporated

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michelle Anderson", written over a horizontal line.

Michelle Anderson, President of Ahtna, Incorporated

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Ahtna Customary and Traditional Use Committee acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eleanor Dementi". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Eleanor Dementi, Chair, Ahtna Customary and Traditional Use Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Roy Ewan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Roy Ewan, onorary Elder, Ahtna Customary and Traditional Use Committee

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Chitina Native Corporation acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Anne Thomas, President of Chitina Native Corporation

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Cantwell acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rene Nicklie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Rene Nicklie, Native Village of Cantwell

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Chistochina acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Sinyon", is written over a horizontal line.

Larry Sinyon, Native Village of Chistochina

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Rose Tyone", is written over a horizontal line.

Rose Tyone, President Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Gakona acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Darrin Gene". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Darrin Gene, Native Village of Gakona

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Gulkana acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eileen Ewan", is written over a horizontal line.

Eileen Ewan, Native Village of Gulkana

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Kluti-Kaah acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Craig", is written over a horizontal line.

John Craig, Native Village of Kluti-Kaah

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Mentasta acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ted Sanford", written over a horizontal line.

Ted Sanford, Native Village of Mentasta

ARTICLE V.

SIGNATORIES:

SIGNATURE OF SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS:

The Native Village of Tazlina acknowledges and supports this Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of the Interior and the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission, and the spirit of cooperation it manifests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gloria Stickwan".

Gloria Stickwan, Native Village of Tazlina

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

Ahtna Subsistence Local Advisory Committee

Charter

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Ahtna Subsistence Local Advisory Committee (Committee).
2. **Authority.** The Committee is established under the authority of the Secretary of the Interior as set out in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. § 3111 et seq.) and in furtherance of 16 U.S.C. § 410hh-2. The Committee is established in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2.
3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The objective of the Committee is to assemble local residents with knowledge of area conditions and traditional management practices, along with State and Federal biologists and officials, to seek area-specific solutions to the unique and challenging problems of hunter access, wildlife management, and competition for wildlife resources that exist in the area. These problems have prevented local rural residents and Alaska Natives from meeting their subsistence needs and continuing their cultural practices for many years.

The activities of the Committee will be restricted to the Ahtna Traditional Use Territory, as that area is defined by the enclosed map.

4. **Description of Duties.** The Committee possesses the 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 and management of wildlife on public lands within the Ahtna Traditional Use Territory.
 - b. Provide a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations by persons interested in any matter impacting or relating to the subsistence uses of wildlife on public lands within the Ahtna Traditional Use Territory.
 - c. Encourage local participation by those with knowledge of the needs, practices, and uses of people in the Ahtna Traditional Use Territory in the decision making process affecting the taking of wildlife on the public lands within the Ahtna Traditional Use Territory for subsistence uses.

- d. Collect, gather, and disseminate Ahtna traditional ecological knowledge and customary and traditional management practices, based on the regional peoples' special geographical, historical, and cultural connections to the lands, waters and wildlife in the Ahtna Traditional Use Territory, for incorporation into federal subsistence wildlife management plans, policies, and proposals.
 - e. Make recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to the Secretary, the appropriate Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils, the Subsistence Resource Commissions, the Federal Subsistence Board, and the Federal land managing agencies.
5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports.** The Committee 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 Committee 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 \$150,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.0 staff years.
 8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The DFO is the Subsistence Council Coordinator for the Southcentral or Eastern Interior 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 local advisory committee's meetings,
 - Prepare and approve all meeting agendas,
 - Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings,
 - Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and
 - Chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the advisory committee reports.
 9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Committee will be permitted to meet at least 2 times per year but may meet less often if the Committee Chair concludes that a meeting is unnecessary, and at such times as designated by the Federal Subsistence Board Chair or the DFO.
 10. **Duration.** Continuing.

11. Termination. The Committee is subject to biennial review and will terminate 2 years from the date the charter is filed, unless prior to that date, the Charter is renewed in accordance with the provisions of Section 14 of the FACA. The Committee will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.

12. Membership and Designation. The Committee's membership is composed of representative members as follows:

The composition of the Committee will be designed to ensure diversity of viewpoints and geographic diversity. In particular:

- Six residents of the Ahtna region traditional territory who are knowledgeable and experienced in matters relating to subsistence uses of wildlife within the area and who are knowledgeable about Ahtna traditional needs, practices, and uses, to be nominated by the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission;
- One representative each from the Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission, and the Denali Subsistence Resource Commission and nominated by the Councils and Commissions; and,
- One representative from the State of Alaska, to be nominated by the Governor.

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 up to a 3-year term. A vacancy on the Committee will be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

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

Members of the Committee will serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, Committee and subcommittee members other than the State representative who are engaged in Committee, 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 Committee or subcommittee member may participate in any specific party matter in which the member has a direct financial interest

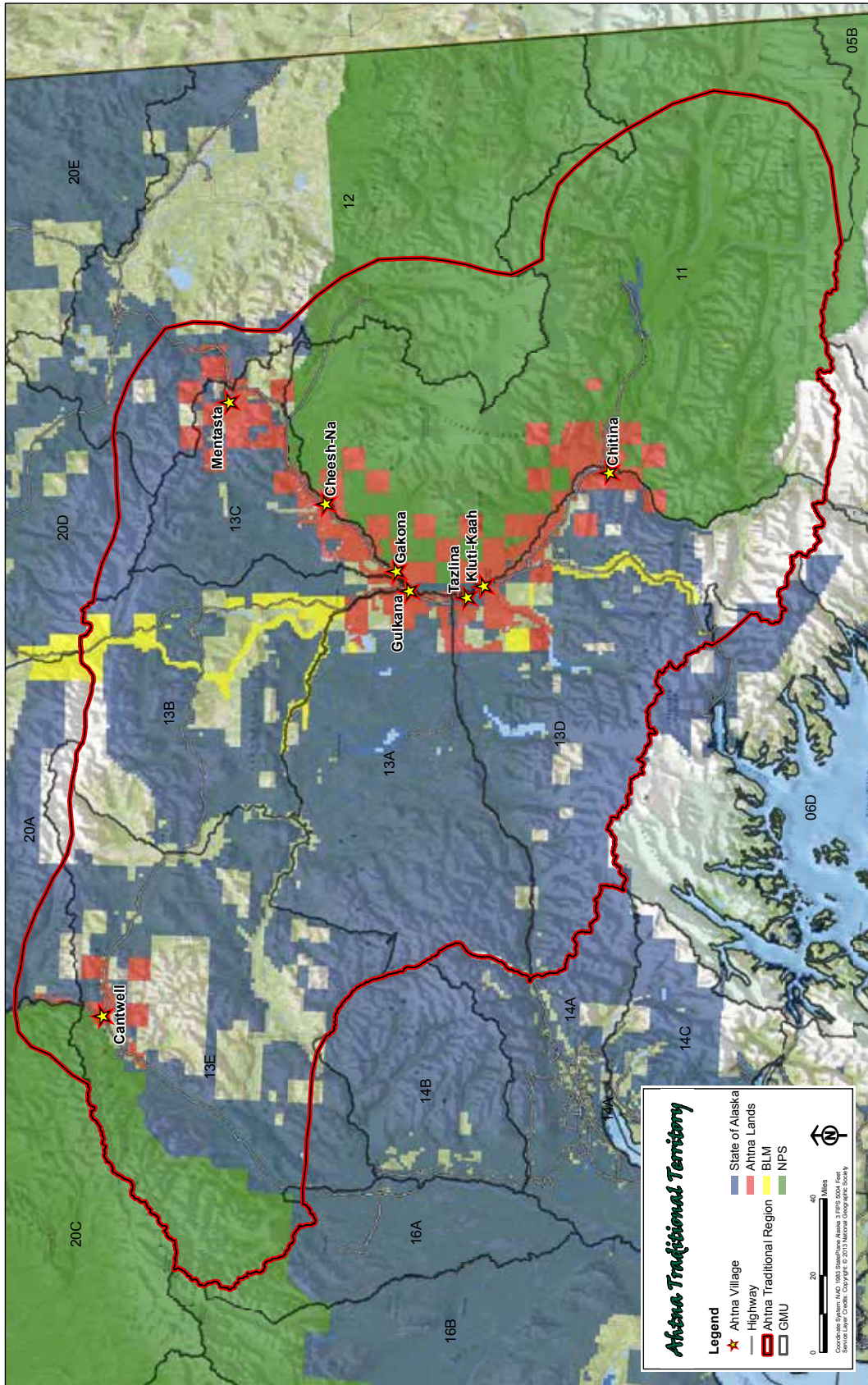
in a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, or related litigation with the Department.

14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purposes of compiling information or conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full Committee for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency. The Committee 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 Committee, and formally and informally established subcommittees or other subgroups of the Council, must be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26, Item 2, or 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

Date Signed

Date Filed





Tanana
Chiefs
Conference

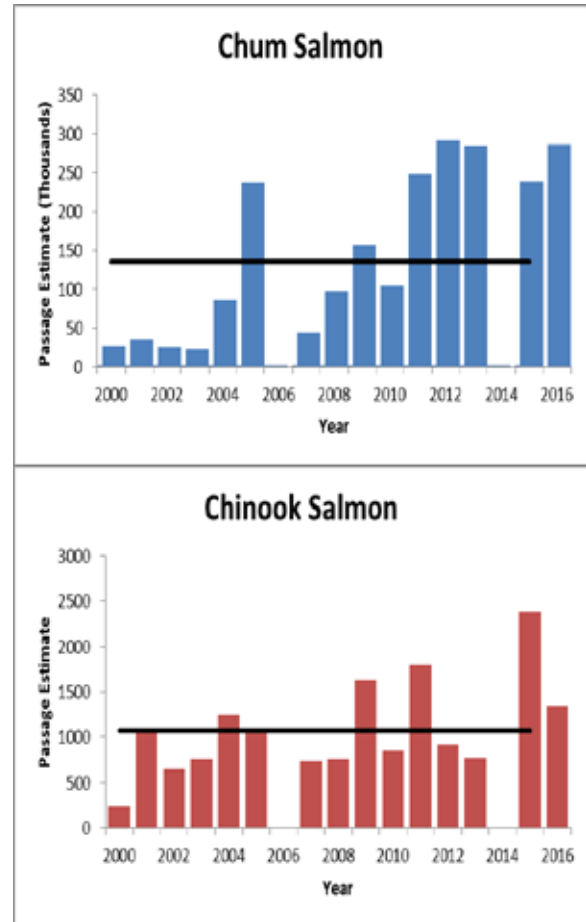
TCC Wildlife & Parks Program Upcoming 2017 Field Season



**Prepared for Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council
February 2017**

Henshaw Creek Weir:

The Henshaw Creek Weir project will be operational again in 2017. The project goals are to determine the escapement of adult Chinook and chum salmon in the Henshaw Creek, as well to observe escapement quality such as age, sex, and length compositions of the returning spawners. The weir will be installed in the same location as previous years. Dates of operation will be similar to previous years, and will be based on in-season run timing characteristics. Escapement enumeration and ASL sampling will likely occur between the last week of June and the first week of August. The Henshaw Creek Weir project has been operational since the year 2000, and is funded through the Office of Subsistence Management Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program through the 2019 salmon runs.



Henshaw Creek Science & Culture Camp:

The Science and Culture Camp at Henshaw Creek serves the communities of Allakaket, Alatna, Bettles, Evansville, Hughes, and Huslia. The camp goals are to connect youth with nature, and to expose youth to both western science and traditional knowledge. The camp is hosted at the Henshaw Creek Salmon Weir, and coincides with the peak of the Chinook and chum salmon runs. The science and culture camp is a one week camp, Monday through Friday, and typically occurs during the third week of July. Camp dates for 2017 should be made available in April. The camp is jointly operated by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, and the Allakaket Tribal Council. The camp is funded by the Alaska National Wildlife Refuges Science and Culture Camps program, and is funded through 2020.



Photos by Susan Paskvan

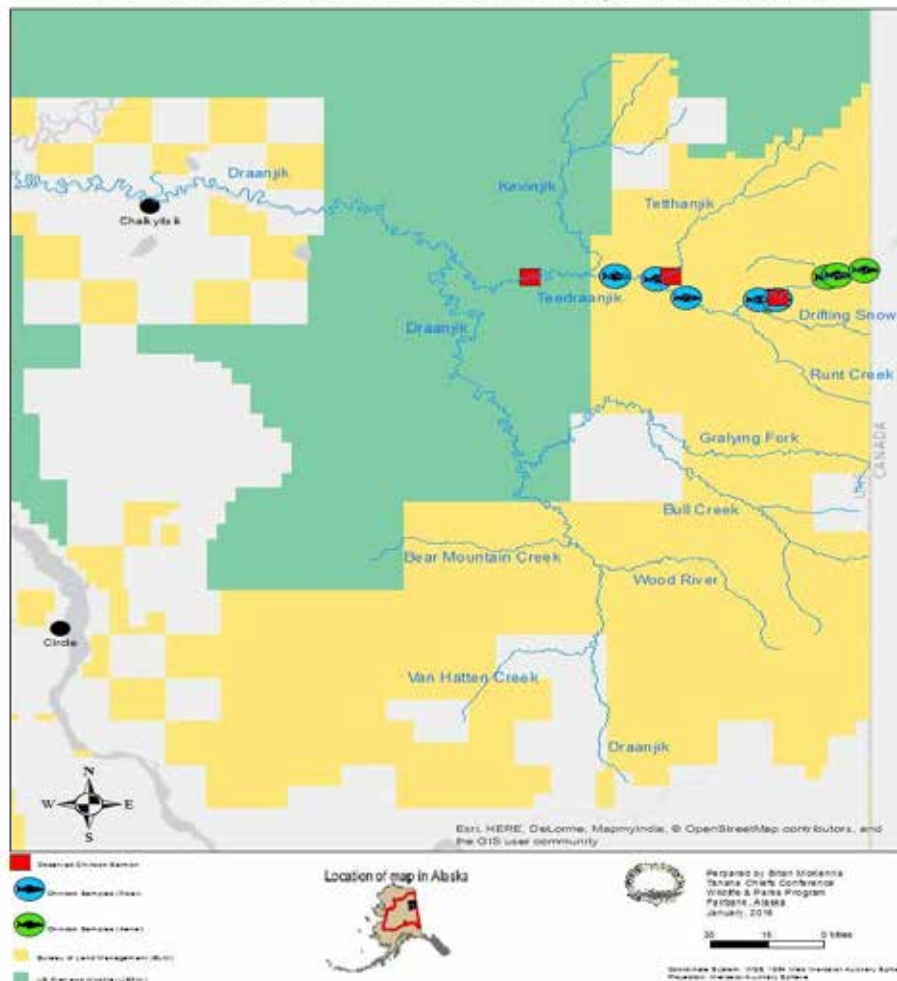


Yukon River Salmon DNA Baseline Sampling:

In 2017, TCC will be continuing efforts to collect tissue samples from Chinook salmon spawning in the Teedraanjik (Salmon Fork River). Chinook salmon tissue samples were collected in 2015 and 2016 from the Teedraanjik. Additional samples are needed for inclusion into the genetic baselines. 2017 collections will likely occur between the end of July and early August, and are funded through the 2012 Yukon River Chinook Salmon Federal Fishery Disaster administered by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.



2015 Chinook Salmon Tissue Sample Collections



Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Salmon Research:

TCC plans to utilize an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) to monitor Chinook salmon spawning habitat and population abundance. The goals for this project are to 1) create a digital elevation model (DEM) to characterize the spawning habitat for Chinook salmon, and 2) estimate population abundance for Chinook salmon spawning escapement. TCC will be collaborating with industry professionals at Remote Aquatics and Aquilo Alaska.





U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Artificial Propagation of Yukon River Salmon

An Agency Perspective



Returns of Chinook salmon to spawning grounds have increased over the past three years in the Yukon River, but largely due to decreased harvest. Production rates remain lower than normal. Plausible causes for lower production range from over-harvest; loss of older age classes; changes in freshwater habitats; natural or human-caused ecological changes in marine habitats; bycatch in non-salmon marine fisheries; and pathogens.

In recent years users have foregone harvests and invested in new gear to reduce harvest of large females. Agencies and their partners have restored access to rearing and spawning habitat; restored and protected riparian habitat; reduced water pollution; provided information to the public; and continued research.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is required by law to provide the opportunity for continued subsistence use of salmon by rural residents residing within national wildlife refuges while also maintaining the biological integrity, diversity and environmental health of salmon populations and the broad spectrum of fish, wildlife and habitat resources found within refuges. The Service also helps Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) fulfill obligations to Canada per the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

Currently, a regional planning team convened by ADF&G is discussing the use of artificial propagation in an update of the 1998 Yukon River Regional Comprehensive Salmon Plan. The Service supports the team in an ex officio capacity and has experience

with artificial propagation. The agency conducts artificial propagation to recover threatened or endangered aquatic species; restore declining populations to prevent listing under the Endangered Species Act; fulfill tribal trust obligations; and mitigate for federal water projects.

A review of scientific literature leads the Service to conclude that artificial propagation—expanding a wild salmon population beyond its natural production level—should not replace effective harvest management and habitat conservation for Yukon River Chinook salmon at this time. This perspective is consistent with the position of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (1993), the 1998 Yukon River Comprehensive Salmon Plan, and the Yukon River

Right: Yukon River fisherman using new gear to help meet conservation measures; Above: Yukon River; Inset: Yukon River salmon smolts on their way to sea
USFWS/K.Liebich



Salmon Agreement (2002), which declares, “Artificial propagation shall not be used as a substitute for effective fishery regulation, stock and habitat management or protection.”

Scientific literature indicates introducing salmon or eggs into streams with wild salmon may result in negative consequences for wild salmon, people and/or the environment including:

- Domestic juveniles can out-compete wild juveniles for food and refugia, or fail to migrate becoming stunted freshwater residents;
- Wild salmon can be overharvested because fishermen cannot target domestic salmon;
- Domestics can reduce egg-to-juvenile survival of wild fish;
- High densities of domestics can attract predators causing unnaturally-high rates of predation for both wild and domestic fish;
- Domestic spawners stray at higher rates and can spawn with wild fish diluting genetics;
- Domestics have lower-reproductive capacity resulting in smaller populations in the long-term unless supplementation is continued;
- Domestics are less fit and suffer greater mortality at all life stages; and
- Introduction of exotic pathogens, amplification of current pathogens, introduction of infection when fish are more vulnerable, alteration of genetic resistance, and introduction of pollutants into an ecosystem.

Furthermore, recent scientific assessments of artificial propagation examined the cost:benefit ratio; probability of achieving enhancement and conservation goals; and risks to wild salmon and the environment. These reviews suggest that if a wild salmon population has declined to perilously-low levels or has been extirpated, propagation efforts are likely to fail if the reasons for the decline have not been identified and resolved. If Yukon River Chinook salmon populations decline further and artificial propagation is desired, a rigorous scientific investigation and planning process should be completed to avoid and minimize risks to wild salmon populations, humans and the environment.

Contact

Randy Brown
US Fish and Wildlife Service
randy_j_brown@fws.gov
907-456-0295



Right: Yukon River. USFWS/K.Liebich
Above: baby Chinook Salmon emerge from a redd. Ilene Fernandez, Grade 2





THE STATE
of ALASKA
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Fish and Game

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Headquarters Office

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May 10, 2016

Mr. Art Nelson, Executive Director
Bering Sea Fishermen's Association
431 West 7th Avenue, Suite 204
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mr. Nelson:

This letter is to inform you of my approval of the reactivation of the Yukon River Regional Planning Team (RPT) for the purpose of updating the 1998 *Yukon River Regional Comprehensive Salmon Plan for Alaska* (CSP).

I understand that Yukon River RPT is not able to strictly adhere to the structure of RPTs as described in law and regulation due to the lack of a Regional Aquaculture Association (RAA) in the region. Therefore, the membership of the RPT will be purposely enlarged in order to ensure broad regional stakeholder representation. The membership shall consist of thirteen voting seats. Nine of the voting seats will be appointed by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA), apportioned across the fishery management districts on the Yukon River. The remaining four voting seats will be filled by ADF&G staff representing the divisions of Commercial Fisheries, Sport Fisheries, and Subsistence, whom I will appoint. There will be four ex-officio non-voting seats to include the Association of Village Council Presidents, Tanana Chiefs Conference, United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association.

The RPT shall proceed with the CSP update process in compliance with AS.10.375, and 5 AAC 40.300-370, and provide as much opportunity for public involvement as possible during the process. The plan should satisfy the regional planning process requirements for developing guidance for the permitting of salmon fishery enhancement activities while ensuring the continued sustainability of salmon stocks in the region. The plan should also provide a compilation of information pertaining to area fisheries and resources, and the statutes, regulations and policies that guide salmon fishery enhancement activities in Alaska.

Mr. Art Nelson, Executive Director - 2 -

May 10, 2016

I appreciate the efforts of Yukon River salmon fishery stakeholder representatives to reactivate the RPT and produce an updated CSP and I offer my best wishes towards a successful completion.

Sincerely,

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

cc:

Wayne Jenkins, Executive Director, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association

Myron Naneng Sr., President Association of Village Council Presidents

Victor Joseph, President, Tanana Chiefs Conference

Fred Bue, Subsistence Fisheries Branch Chief, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Ragnar Alstrom, Executive Director, Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association



Northway



Subsistence Harvests in 2014

Based on harvest surveys with 55 Northway households (75%), Northway produced an estimated total 60,791 pounds ($\pm 19\%$) of wild food in 2014. Harvests averaged 833 edible pounds per household and 314 edible pounds per person; 100% of households reported using subsistence resources.

In February of 2015, ADF&G Division of Subsistence staff and local research assistants invited all households to participate in comprehensive subsistence surveys; 75% of Northway households described their use of fish, wildlife, and plants that were collected locally and from other parts of the state during 2014. The data were expanded for 18 unsurveyed households, with an assumption that they were similar to the surveyed households.*

Surveyors asked participating households if they tried to harvest each kind of subsistence food during 2014; if they had tried, they were asked how much they harvested. Households were also asked if they had received wild resources from another household or community, and if

they had given any away. Additionally, nine interviews with ten key respondents provided detailed observations and concerns related to subsistence. Similar methods were used in 1988 for a comprehensive survey of 1987 harvests (Marcotte 1992), and in 2005 for a modified survey (land mammals and nonsalmon only) of 2004 harvests (CSIS). Figure 1 shows the 2014 harvest in estimated edible pounds by species. This study's results indicate that Northway harvested over 300 pounds of wild food for each resident in 2014. About 40% of household harvested most of that, but 95% of households harvested something. The full report is available online : http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/techpap/TP_421.pdf

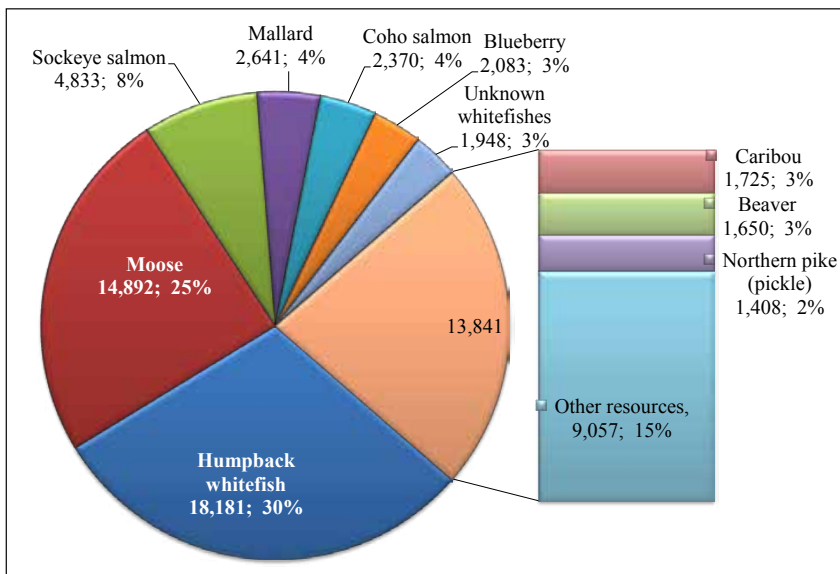


Figure 1.—Top 10 species by weight, in estimated edible pounds and percentage of total.

Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, traditional grounds of Upper Tanana Natives.

* The study attempted to include all permanent Northway residences: households present for at least 6 months of 2014 within three Census Designated Places (Northway Village, Northway, and Northway Junction) and a few beyond those boundaries. Northway Village, where 50% of households participated, was underrepresented among surveyed households. This apparently resulted in an underestimation of the total population and other demographic statistics such as household size and the percentage of Native residents. This study estimated 194 individuals (88% Native) in 2014; NVC counted 229 (92% Native) in 2015, with no major changes during the year between. A result that underestimated the population would also have underestimated the harvest, so the harvest estimate is also likely to be low—but per person averages are expected to be reasonable.

Some of the most important foods are harvested in relatively low amounts. Table 1 lists the wild foods used by the most households. Figure 2 shows the wild foods that students identified as most important in their homes—an accurate reflection of Figure 1 and Table 1.

Table 1.—Top 10 most widely used resources.

Rank	Resource	Households using
1.	Moose	96.4%
2.	Blueberry	87.3%
3.	Humpback whitefish	67.3%
4.	Lowbush cranberry	63.6%
5.	Mallard	54.5%
6.	Burbot	50.9%
7.	Spruce grouse	49.1%
8.	Arctic grayling	47.3%
9.	Sockeye salmon	45.5%
9.	Muskrat	45.5%
9.	Raspberry	45.5%
9.	Mushrooms	45.5%

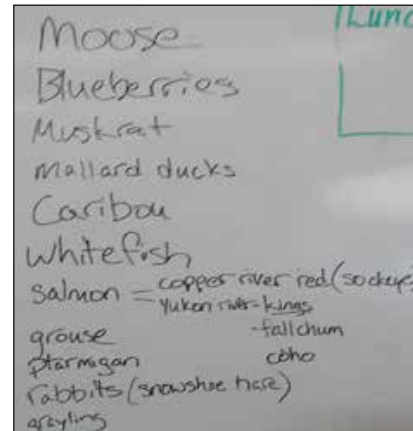


Figure 2 – Important wild foods identified by high school students (February, 2015).

Moose was the most widely used wild food in 2014, by 96% of Northway households (Table 1). Although in much lower amounts, blueberries were used by 87% of households. Humpback whitefish, the highest harvest by weight, was used by 67% of households. Sockeye salmon, the third most harvested species by weight, mostly came from the Copper River Basin, and was used by about 46% of households. The remainder of the 2014 wild food supply included over 60 additional species of wildlife, especially mallard ducks and coho salmon, as detailed in Table 2. Most search areas are included in Figure 5; some are not shown, such as coho salmon fishing on the Yukon River.

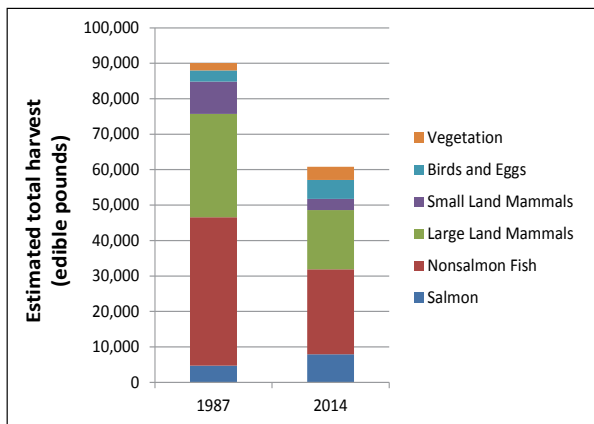


Figure 3 Total harvest by category, 1987 and 2014

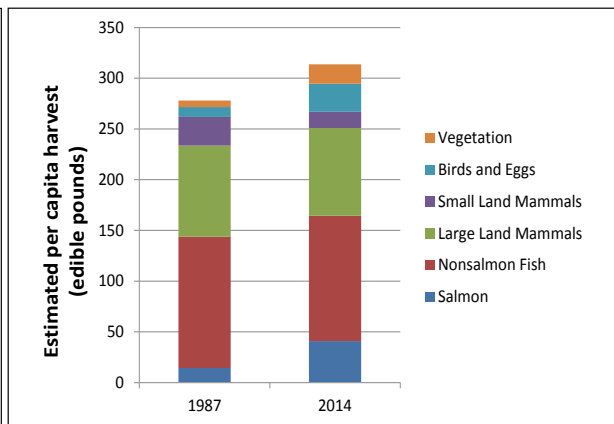


Figure 4 – Per capita harvest by category, 1987 and 2014

Comparisons to earlier studies show many similarities and some differences. Figures 3 and 4 show an overview of harvest data for the two main study years, in estimated total pounds and estimated per capita pounds harvested, by resource category. The per capita averages in Figure 4 account for changes in the human population size, and the patterns they reveal match descriptive information collected during extended interviews. Large land mammals (mostly moose) and nonsalmon fishes (mostly humpback whitefish) made up more than half of the wild food harvest. Assuming the study years are representative of typical years, the figures show that the total harvest has declined over decades but that the per capita harvest has been fairly consistent or even increased—now including larger portions of salmon, birds, and vegetation, and smaller portions of small land mammals. The report for this project, “Harvest and Use of Wild Resources in Northway Alaska, 2014, with special attention to nonsalmon fishes” (Technical Paper 421), also includes detailed concerns related to land jurisdiction and use, contamination, and other environmental conditions.

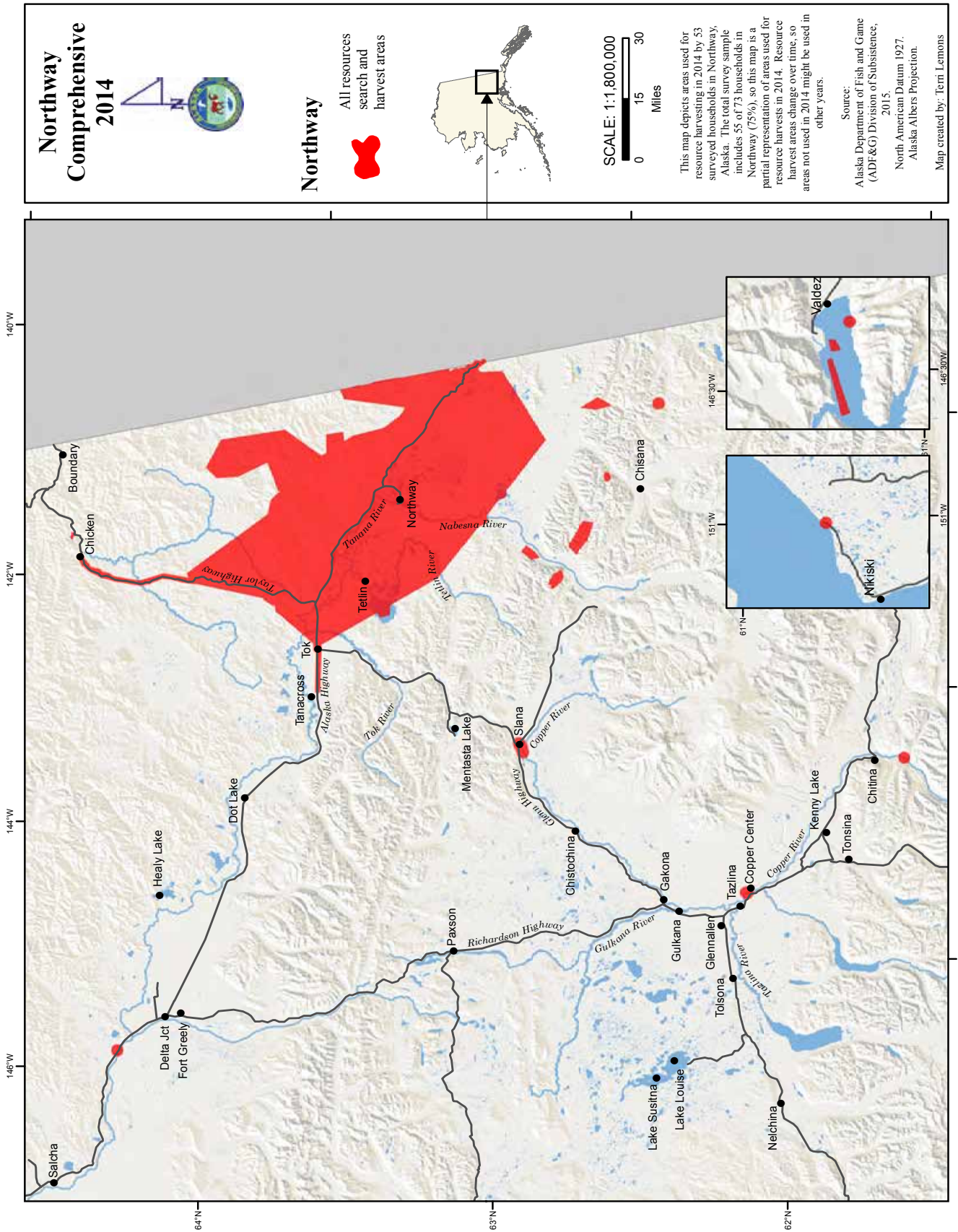


Figure 5.—Subsistence food search and harvest areas, Northway, 2014.

Wild foods are clearly critical in the Upper Tanana region, as they have been throughout history. For millennia, people lived most of the year in small family groups; seasonal gatherings brought families together during intensive efforts at fish weirs and caribou fences. Chief Sam, who trapped “about the mouth of the Nabesna” in 1929-1930, summarized the seasonal round for Robert McKennan:

In the old days the people seldom stayed in the village. Always they were on the trail, hunting and camping. In July, whitefish were dried and cached at the Fish Camp. Then the people went moose hunting, caching the meat. In the winter they visited the caches and then when the caribou came they killed caribou. After the moose season [August] the people went up to the head of the Nabesna to secure sheepskins for winter. Then they would return to the village; make their cloths; and then take the winter hunting trails to Ladue [River drainage], the Chisana Basin, and the White River, in the spring when the leaves were coming out they returned to the village. They would take birch bark and sew it together to make new tents and then wait for the caribou to come back again.
 -Chief Sam

luugn (humpback whitefish) are the most abundant fish in the Nabesna and Chisana rivers. Along with **ts’aan** (burbot), **ch’uljuudn** (Northern pike), **seejel** (Arctic grayling), and **taats’atol** (longnose suckers), whitefish are important traditional foods of the Upper Tanana region. These nonsalmon fish and other animals play key roles in ancient stories, including whitefish woman—who built the world. Related language is unique among Alaskan Athabaskans, for whom the word “fish” usually refers to salmon. In the Upper Tanana, humpback whitefish are **the** fish.

Table 3. Athabascan terms for “fish”

Language	Term	Meaning
Ahtna	luk’ae	‘salmon’
Dena’ina	liq’a	‘salmon’
Deg Xinag	legg	‘salmon’
Upper Kuskokwim	luk’a	‘salmon’
Koyukon	look’e (luk’E)	‘salmon’
Gwich’in	luk	‘salmon’
Lower Tanana	luk’a	‘salmon’
Tanacross	luug	‘whitefish’
Upper Tanana	luugn	‘whitefish’



Fish Camp at the old village of K’ehthhiign (lake outlet) was the main fishery, essentially the summer village, for decades after residents settled in permanent homes in the 1920s and 1930s. The Chisana River began to run through Charlieskin and Fish lakes in the 1980s, effectively ending the traditional fishery in the 1990s.

However, the fish and the fishers are adapting, and humpback whitefish are still a keystone species for Northway.

Ada Gallen Collection, courtesy James Gallen.





This survey was conducted by the Division of Subsistence in cooperation with the Northway Village Council, and funded by the National Park Service, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Local surveyors included Kelly Frank, Shala Sam, Joe Spitler, Michael Murphy, and Howard Sam (who mostly described the project to potential respondents); they all did a really great job. ADF&G staff thank Northway for gracious hospitality.

Sources of information:

CSIS (Community Subsistence Information System): <http://www.subsistence.adfg.state.ak.us/CSIS>



Friend, C., G. Holten, and N. Easton 2007 Fisheries and Subsistence—An American-Canadian Traditional Ecological Knowledge Study of the Upper Tanana River Fisheries. Alaska Park Science 6:2. https://www.nps.gov/akso/nature/science/ak_park_science/PDF/2007Vol6-2/friend.pdf

Godduhn, A. and M. Kostick 2016 Harvest and Use of Wild Resources in Northway, Alaska, 2014, with special attention to nonsalmon fishes. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, Technical Paper No. 421. http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/techpap/TP_421.pdf

Marcotte, J.R. 1992 Wild fish and game harvest and use by residents of five upper Tanana communities, Alaska, 1987-88. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, Technical Paper No. 168

McKenna, R.A. 1959 The Upper Tanana Indians, Yale University Publications in Anthropology 55.; New Haven.

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ADF&G complies with OEO requirements as posted at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=home.oestatement>.

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**

Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Charter

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Eastern Interior Alaska 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 one member to the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission and one member to the Denali National Park Subsistence Resource Commission in accordance with Section 808 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA).
 - f. Make recommendations on determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources.
 - g. Make recommendations on determinations of rural status.
 - h. Provide recommendations on the establishment and membership of Federal local advisory committees.
5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Council Reports.** The Council reports to the Federal Subsistence Board Chair, who is appointed by the Secretary of the Interior with the concurrence of the Secretary of Agriculture.
 6. **Support.** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will provide administrative support for the activities of the Council through the Office of Subsistence Management.
 7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the Council's functions are estimated to be \$160,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.15 staff years.
 8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The DFO is the Subsistence Council Coordinator for the Region or such other Federal employee as may be designated by the Assistant Regional Director – Subsistence, Region 7, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DFO is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will:
 - Approve or call all of the advisory committee's and subcommittees' meetings,
 - Prepare and approve all meeting agendas,
 - Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings,
 - Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and
 - Chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the advisory committee reports.

9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Council will meet 1-2 times per year, and at such times as designated by the Federal Subsistence Board Chair or the DFO.
10. **Duration.** Continuing.
11. **Termination.** The Council will be inactive 2 years from the date the Charter is filed, unless prior to that date it is renewed in accordance with the provisions of Section 14 of the FACA. The Council will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.
12. **Membership and Designation.** The Council's membership is composed of representative members as follows:

Ten members who are knowledgeable and experienced in matters relating to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife and who are residents of the Region represented by the Council. To ensure that each Council represents a diversity of interests, the Federal Subsistence Board in their nomination recommendations to the Secretary will strive to ensure that seven of the members (70 percent) represent subsistence interests within the Region and three of the members (30 percent) represent commercial and sport interests within the Region. The portion of membership representing commercial and sport interests must include, where possible, at least one representative from the sport community and one representative from the commercial community.

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

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

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

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

13. **Ethics Responsibilities of Members.** No Council or subcommittee member will participate in any specific party matter in which the member has a direct financial interest in a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, or related litigation with the Department.

14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purpose of compiling information and conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full Council for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency. The Council Chair, with the approval of the DFO, will appoint subcommittee members. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.

15. **Recordkeeping.** Records of the Council, and formally and informally established subcommittees or other subgroups of the Council, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.



Secretary of the Interior

NOV 20 2015

Date Signed

DEC 03 2015

Date Filed

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