



YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA  
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Materials

*March 16-17, 2020  
Bethel*





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*On the cover...*

Broad whitefish (*akakiik*)



USFWS photo

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**YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Yupiit Piciryarait Cultural Center  
Bethel

March 16-17, 2020  
convening at 9:00 am daily

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

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

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

**AGENDA**

\*Asterisk identifies action item.

- 1. 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 (*Eva Patton, Designated Federal Officer*)
  - Vice-Chair (*New Chair*)
  - Secretary (*New Chair*)
- 7. Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes\*** (*Chair*) .....5
- 8. Reports**
  - Council Member Reports
  - Chair’s Report
- 9. Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items** (available each morning)

**10. New Business (Chair)**

- a. Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Update (*OSM*)
- b. Call for Federal Fish and Shellfish Proposals\* .....15
- c. Review and approve FY2019 Annual Report\* .....18

**11. Agency Reports**

(Time limit of 15 minutes unless approved in advance)

Tribal Governments

Orutsararmiut Native Council

Native Village of Napaimute

Native Organizations

Association of Village Council Presidents

Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Togiak National Wildlife Refuge.....23

Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge

2020 Yukon River Preseason Salmon Outlook (*USFWS/ADF&G*)

2020 Kuskokwim River Preseason Salmon Outlook (*USFWS/ADF&G*)

Bureau of Land Management

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Donlin Gold

Office of Subsistence Management

**12. Future Meeting Dates\***

Confirm Fall 2020 meeting date and location.....30

Select Winter 2021 meeting date and location.....31

**13. Closing Comments**

**16. Adjourn (Chair)**

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

*Reasonable Accommodations*

The Federal Subsistence Board is committed to providing access to this meeting for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, closed captioning, or other accommodation needs to Eva Patton, 907-786-3358, [eva\\_patton@fws.gov](mailto:eva_patton@fws.gov), or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on March 2, 2020.

**REGION 5**  
**Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

<b>Seat</b>	<b>Year Appointed Term Expires</b>	<b>Member Name and Community</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>2006 2022</b>	<b>John W. Andrew</b> Kwethluk
<b>4</b>	<b>2019 2022</b>	<b>Thomas G. Alstrom</b> Alakanuk
<b>5</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>2018 2020</b>	<b>James C. Landlord</b> Mountain Village
<b>7</b>	<b>2017 2020</b>	<b>Alissa N. Rogers</b> Bethel <span style="float: right;"><b>Chair</b></span>
<b>8</b>	<b>2018 2020</b>	<b>Phillip K. Peter, Sr.</b> Akiachak
<b>9</b>	<b>2018 2020</b>	<b>Carl D. Maxie, Sr.</b> Napaskiak
<b>10</b>	<b>2001 2021</b>	<b>Raymond J. Oney</b> Alakanuk <span style="float: right;"><b>Secretary</b></span>
<b>11</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>VACANT</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>2003 2021</b>	<b>Robert E. Aloysius</b> Kalskag
<b>13</b>	<b>2018 2021</b>	<b>Richard B. Slats</b> Chevak



# YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Meeting Minutes

Yupit Piciyarait Cultural Center, Bethel  
November 6-8, 2019

### Invocation:

Mary Matthias of Orutsararmiut Native Council gave an invocation.

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

The meeting was called to order on Wednesday, November 6 at 11:20 AM after inclement weather delays. Council members James Charles, William (Charlie) Brown, John Andrew, Carl Maxie, Phillip Peter, Richard Slats, James Landlord, and Alissa Nadine Rogers were present in person. Raymond Oney participated by teleconference. Robert Aloysius was not present and was excused. With nine out of ten seated Council members present (Council has three vacant seats) quorum was established on the morning of November 7 after delayed flights arrived.

### Attendees:

#### *In person:*

*Yupik Translation, Bethel:* Pat Samson, Sophie Evan  
*Office of Subsistence Management, Anchorage:*  
Eva Patton, Tom Kron, Suzanne Worker, Frank  
Harris, Robbin La Vine  
*Orutsararmiut Native Council, Bethel:* Mary  
Mathias, Janessa Esquible, George Guest, Pat  
Samson, Robert Lekander  
*Bethel Regional High School, Bethel:* Anson  
Jimmie, Sean Lupie, Sarah Lupie  
*Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission:*  
Mary Peltola (Bethel), Robert Lekander  
(Bethel), Charlene Erik (Cherfornak)  
*Association of Village Council Presidents,*  
*Bethel:* John Orr, Paige Jones  
*Inuit Circumpolar Council, Bethel:* Ben Charles  
*Bethel:* Alice Olsen  
*KYUK News, Bethel:* Anna Rose McArthur  
*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Yukon Delta*  
*National Wildlife Refuge, Bethel:* Ray Born,

Chris Tulik, Aaron Moses, Gary DeCossas,  
Aaron Webber, Matt McDonald  
*Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Bethel:*  
Patrick Jones  
*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:* Bruce Butler  
(Anchorage), Vince Mathews (Fairbanks),  
Gerald Maschmann (Fairbanks)  
*Bureau of Indian Affairs, Anchorage:* Glenn  
Chen  
*Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage:*  
Bonnie Million, Walter Gusse

#### *Via teleconference:*

*Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Palmer:*  
Mark Burch, Rick Merizon; *Anchorage:* Deena  
Jaalen, Nicholas Smith; *Fairbanks:* Jeff  
Estensen, David Runfola  
*Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association,*  
*Homer:* Wayne Jenkins  
*Western Alaska Conservation Cooperative,*  
*Anchorage:* Danielle Stickman

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office, Kenai: Jeff Anderson  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, Dillingham: Andy Aderman  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds, Anchorage: Rob Kaler

Kasigluk Traditional Council, Kasigluk: Sam Dietrick  
Intertribal Fish Commission, Aniak: Gerald Kameroff  
St. Mary's: Bill Alstrom

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

Motion #1 by Mr. Andrew, seconded by Mr. Slats, to adopt the agenda with the changes to present agency reports as information updates at the beginning of the meeting prior to quorum being established. Motion #1 passed unanimously.

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

Motion #2 by Mr. Landlord, seconded by Mr. Charles, to approve the winter 2019 meeting minutes with the following modifications: name-spelling corrections for Janessa (page 6) and for Catherine (pages 18-19), and a request to spell out all acronyms throughout the future minutes. Motion #2 passed unanimously.

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

Richard Slats of Chevak reported hunting geese in the middle of October, while normally they are hunted in August or September. Mr. Slats stressed that all of the changes: the early spring, late fall, warmer winter temperatures causing freezing rain, lack of winter snow cover, and thin ice cause treacherous travel conditions. Traditionally, Chevak residents would dipnet for tomcods on the sloughs but have not been able to do that for at least five years due to thin ice. The winter shore sea ice near Chevak does not freeze solid anymore. It moves out and high windstorms cause waves to batter the coast like never before. Mr. Slats is very concerned about all the dead fish being reported by fishers in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region. He reported seeing dead fish too, and the slough and river waters are now warm to the touch. Mr. Slats is also very concerned about seabirds dying and observed flocks of sick common murrelets that behave oddly and do not fly off when approached. Mr. Slats expressed great concern about the future of their subsistence way of life and culture, if the fish and animals they depend on start dying off. Elders said that these times are some of the toughest they have experienced in their life. It can be considered a state of emergency for their homeland. Mr. Slats worries that hunger is coming and management needs to keep the subsistence users in mind because of the current changes in the environment.

William (Charlie) Brown of Eek is thankful to be in good health to be able to attend the meeting before he retires from the Council. Mr. Brown reported that fishing season this summer went well; his family caught enough of fish and were able to fish in June when the weather was good for drying fish. People were thankful for the opportunity to fish when the openings coincided with good weather and low humidity for drying the fish well. He felt the management went smoothly and most communities were satisfied with their salmon catch. Mr. Brown stressed that everyone working together as good partners, especially the State, Federal, and Tribal agencies, is a good model to ensure people catch the fish they need and encouraged everyone to keep working together cooperatively for salmon conservation. He stressed that salmon are a

main food and essential to our communities. Mr. Brown reported observations, including his own, of salmon die-off on the Kuskokwim River and Bay this year. He would like biologists to research the cause for this unprecedented mortality. He is very concerned about murrens and other sea bird die-offs and wonders if this is related to hot weather and warm waters. He does not recall climate change ever directly affecting their ability to gather food. Mr. Brown recalled the Elders teachings to take care of the river and environment. He is worried about all organisms that depend on water being affected by the climate changes, and not just the fish. Mr. Brown is concerned that children and future generations will not have these subsistence foods available to them. He is happy that the moose moratorium worked and now there are moose available to hunt again, and he is glad to see photos of youth in the local newspaper harvesting their first moose.

James Charles of Tuntutuliak reported that winter rain and ice storms are causing problems for travelling to subsistence areas and meetings. Mr. Charles is also very concerned about the fish die-off. Red salmon are more abundant now than when he was a kid; even from a distance you can tell them by the color of their flesh hanging on drying racks. He wonders about the effect of hot temperatures on fish, noting that King and Chum salmon swim deeper in the river but Red salmon like to jump near the surface or out of the water. He hopes that everyone upriver and downriver gets the salmon they need for their families. Mr. Charles wants to ensure the resource is shared with everybody.

John Andrew of Kwethluk, who was named after his paternal grandfather's Yupik name, has been a hunter and trapper ever since he was a boy and people have always called him Trapper John. Mr. Andrew is grateful for everyone who came to the meeting, especially for the Elders. Mr. Andrew is thankful for the Chairwomen Alissa Rogers, whose grandfather is the late John Hanson, a longtime Council member and respected Elder. Mr. Andrew highlighted that Mr. Charles and Mr. Brown, longtime Council members, plan to retire and celebrate their many years of serving together. Mr. Andrew is very concerned about warm temperatures and fish die-off. When he boated from Kwethluk to Bethel throughout July in 80-90° temperatures, he saw dead fish floating down the river – mostly Reds and some Chinook. He also saw a lot of dead Red Salmon and some Chinook floating dead or dying 15 miles up Kwethluk River. The water temperature in the river was well above 70°. Water levels were also very low through the end of summer, and he observed fish not being able to get through beaver dams, and dead Humpback and Broad whitefish where the water was too low and warm. Chums, Reds, and Coho runs were late. He started catching Coho Salmon at the end of August and in September when the rains came. Low water also prevented people from getting to their usual moose hunting grounds, ruining their boat props, and moose were not moving in the warmer temperatures. Warm temperatures and low water are affecting subsistence by having negative impacts on fish and wildlife, as well as economic impacts resulting from additional time and resources needed to be successful.

James Landlord of Mountain Village reported that the temperature rose to over 80° around Mountain Village this year, which is about 10° above the hottest record. This year the water in the Yukon River was warm to the touch and dead salmon, pike, and Sheefish were floating down river. Mr. Landlord said that climate change is being experienced everywhere along the Yukon River and Y-K Delta Region. He serves on the Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council, which includes 77 Tribes from Canada to the Yukon Delta in Alaska, and climate change

effects has been a topic of discussion. His Tribe is working on a long-term plan to address the impacts of climate change on Mountain Village after seeing what coastal communities are currently experiencing.

Carl Maxie of Napaskiak reported that overall this has been a good year for subsistence with moose in the area and a good fishing season. Most people seem to be satisfied with their subsistence fishing and its schedules, and he has seen many smiling faces. Mr. Maxie is concerned about dying fish and sick seals and walrus. He suggests that government agencies conduct an environmental study to determine what the cause is in order to prevent any further harm to the environment and important subsistence resources in the future. Mr. Maxie reported seeing changes in the environment where he hunts and fishes. The area where he usually fishes for whitefish is now mostly full of pike, and perhaps pike are taking over other fish species in the area.

Phillip Peter of Akiachak thanked the Federal Subsistence Board and staff, Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission, the Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group, and the State of Alaska staff. He expressed the challenges of working with two governments: State and Federal. The sovereign tribes have the right to negotiate with both governments, since they have been here from time immemorial. All the people in Kuskokwim River communities are alive because of salmon. At one time when there were no regulations or closures, subsistence fishers knew their limits, controlled their catch, and looked to Elders for advice. Mr. Peter is concerned that in communities where he used to see 50 active fish camps, he now sees only 10 or 15 fish camps because people are afraid of breaking regulations or their gear being confiscated so they don't fish at all. There used to be many muskrat and fox around communities and now there are hardly any and few people hunt them. Mr. Peter heard good news this year from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the Chinook escapement was good so, hopefully, people can continue to fish for the rest of their lives.

Raymond Oney of Alakanuk thanked Mr. Charles and Mr. Brown for their long service on the Council advocating for subsistence and the Y-K Delta people and wished them well in their retirement. Mr. Charles and Mr. Brown passed to new generations their lifetime of Yup'ik knowledge of hunting on the land, working at fishcamp, subsisting throughout the four seasons, and learning from their Elders. Mr. Oney also grew up this way spending a whole summer out at camp and only coming back to the village for basic supplies. He said there is a resourcefulness and humbleness in this traditional way. Mr. Oney reported another early breakup on the Yukon River, which seems earlier every year. He has seen changes in the weather in the last ten years, and the ice starts to melt in place rather than a main breakup that pushes the ice out. The water is warmer, and this past summer he saw the fish die-off. He is concerned about the effects of no Bering Sea ice this past summer on fish and the seals. Mr. Oney feels people need to be observant of these changes in the environment and keep in their hearts the way that they grew up utilizing resources through the seasons. There are many moose along the Yukon River and the population is expanding to areas they never used to be 20 years ago. The presence of moose is bringing in bears and wolves around his community, which is a safety concern.

Alissa Nadine Rogers of Bethel reported that this was a good summer. Everything came in on time and there were lots of birds, mosquitos, and gnats in the springtime. Sheefish came in great this year and so

did smelt, although smelt had worms in them that she had never seen before. There were lots of beavers and muskrats this spring too. Ms. Rogers reported that the summer was good until the heatwave hit and then everything went wonky. She recalled many wasps this summer, which she had never seen before. Salmon came in good, but some of the fish had a strange decaying smell and tasted odd. The water was so warm this year that fish had to be put on ice immediately after catching them to keep them from spoiling. Reports of all the dead fish floating down the river due to the warm water temperatures are very concerning. Her family still met their subsistence salmon needs this year.

Ms. Rogers reported that things were a little late in the fall, but there were many ducks and even snow geese near her yard. Coho came in good but the humidity made it very difficult to keep them from spoiling. Even after drying fish in the garage with fans the first batch became dogfood. She was grateful the weather cleared a bit to dry a second batch of Coho outside and get it in to the smokehouse before it rained again.

### **Public Comment on non-agenda items:**

Pat Samson of Bethel addressed the Council about increasing safety concerns for winter travel due to warmer winters, thin ice, increasing winter storms, and the need to establish better trail makers for snowmachine travel on traditional trails in the region.

Motion #3 by Mr. Peter, seconded by Mr. Maxie, to write a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board and Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge managers asking to allow snowmachine trail markers for safety purposes on Federal lands within the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region. Motion #3 passed on a unanimous vote. The Council provided justification for the importance of snowmachine trail markers to increase the safety of winter travel on existing trails for subsistence activities between villages and reduce the possibility of death or injury from people becoming lost or breaking through thin ice from hazardous conditions caused by warmer winter weather. Trail markers would also assist search and rescue operations across the region dominated by Federal lands.

### **New Business:**

#### ***Wildlife Proposals:***

#### ***Regional Proposals:***

WP20-32/33: Rescind the closure, establish a season, and revise the hunt area for moose in Unit 18.

Motion # 4 by Mr. Charles, seconded by Mr. Andrew, to support WP20-32/33. The motion passed on a unanimous vote. The Council supported the opportunity to hunt moose in this area now that the population has grown enough to support a subsistence hunt. The Council believes that the proposal as presented with the plan to issue registration permits only in Quinhagak could effectively provide a Federal subsistence priority for rural residents in the hunt area.

WP20-34: Extend the trapping season for mink and weasel in Unit 18. Motion #5 by Mr. Maxie, seconded by Mr. Charles, to support WP20-34. Motion passed by unanimous vote. The Council supported this additional Federal subsistence opportunity to trap mink and weasel by extending the season until at least March 31. Trapping mink and weasel used to be much more prevalent in the region, and, since there



is currently no conservation concern, the extended season might help to encourage continuation of traditional cultural practices. Mink and weasel have been observed to be abundant around their communities. The winter season is a good time to trap and extending the season into the end of March may encourage youth to participate in trapping and get involved with fur arts and crafts through the local school in the spring. Mink and weasel are often the first animals children learn to trap and practice their subsistence skills. An extended season would provide additional opportunity to continue a traditional way of life and help generate income through traditional skills such as making parkas.

WP20-35: Establish a winter season for moose in a portion of Unit 18. Motion #6 by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr. Charles to support WP20-35. The motion failed on a unanimous vote. The Council discussed the current moose population and management in Kuskokwim River zones 1 and 2 and opposed opening a winter hunt at this time due to conservation concerns. The Council submitted this proposal; however, the current biological data indicated it would be too soon after the Kuskokwim moose hunt moratorium to open up an additional season. The Council believes the moose population should have an opportunity to recover fully in order to sustain the subsistence hunt into the future. Hunt pressure in Zone 1 could dramatically increase in the winter since travel by snowmachine would greatly increase access to area. Also, since the bulls typically drop antlers by mid-December, the Council felt a winter hunt would risk accidental harvest of cow moose, further jeopardizing the recovery of moose in the area. Icy winter conditions and thin ice on rivers and lakes with warmer winter temperatures in recent years can create hazardous conditions for moose if pursued. Overall, the Council expressed it would be best to avoid undue stress on the moose in this area until the population recovers sufficiently to sustain additional harvest.

Crossover Proposals:

WP20-27 to allow use of snowmachines to assist in the take of caribou in Unit 17. Motion #7 by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr. Peter, to support WP20-27. The motion failed on a 1 to 8 vote. The Council opposed proposal WP20-27 due to overriding concerns about the recent dramatic decline of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. The traditional way to hunt is to approach the caribou very slowly and carefully in order to take a clean shot without stressing the animals. However, in recent years there have been reports of younger hunters moving fast, causing the herd to run, and causing serious stress to the caribou in the process. The Council would be willing to revisit this proposal in support of the Bristol Bay region in the future when the caribou population recovers. However, at this time the overriding concern is to support the Mulchatna caribou recovery and avoid any further harm to the herd that could be caused by stress from being pursued by snowmachines.

WP20-28/29: Extend the bull season and establish an antlerless season for moose in Unit 17A. Motion #8 by Mr. Peter, seconded by Mr. Charles, to support WP20-28/29. The motion passed by a unanimous vote. The Council fully supported this additional subsistence moose hunt opportunity in Unit 17A. The data showed that the moose population in the area is healthy and can sustain additional harvest. It also reduces regulatory complexity by aligning State and Federal regulations for moose in Unit 17A.



WP20-26: Allow use of snowmachines for positioning wolf and wolverine in Units 9B, 9C, 17B, and 17C.

Motion # 9 by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr. Peter, to support WP20-26. The motion passed on an 8 to 1 vote. The Council supported this proposal because it would increase the opportunity for subsistence hunters to harvest a wolf or wolverine. With the decline of Mulchatna caribou, any increased subsistence harvest from the wolf and wolverine population in the area may help to reduce predation pressure on the caribou herd. Snowmachines are a means of transportation for hunters and fishers. This proposal would allow additional opportunity to harvest wolf or wolverine for furs when encountering them during winter travel.

Statewide Proposals:

WP20-08 to require traps and snares to be marked with a name or State identification number for all

furbearers in all units. Motion #10 by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr. Charles, to support WP20-08. The motion failed on a unanimous vote. The Council opposed marking of all traps and snares because it would cause unnecessary burden to subsistence hunters and trappers. The Council relayed challenges of finding a way to label hundreds of traps and snares and the cost to subsistence hunters. Marking traps and snares is unnecessary because traditionally hunters maintain their own trapping boundaries and jurisdictions, which are respected locally. People know who's trapping area it is or it may be marked by a hatchet mark on a tree to identify the trapline. Some Council members relayed that over a lifetime of active trapping they had purchased thousands of traps and given them away to younger family members or shared them with others. Individual identification would hamper this open sharing of subsistence equipment.

**2020 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program:**

The Council discussed the 2020 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program proposed projects for funding and had two general recommendations for improvement. The Council suggested the customary trade project on the Yukon River be expanded to include representative communities from along the Yukon River so that it is not targeting just one section of the river, which has the potential to inflame upriver-downriver tensions over salmon harvest. The Council recommended that similar type projects on the Kuskokwim River coordinate their work and not duplicate effort by asking similar questions of subsistence fishers. The Council stressed that the information is very important, but people get weary of being asked the same questions over and over again by different groups. The Council discussed research priorities of interest they would like to see investigated in the next call for Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program proposals and will follow up on this at their winter 2020 meeting.

**Identify Issues for FY2019 Annual Report:**

- Climate change impacts to subsistence fish, wildlife, and habitat
- Climate change impacts to subsistence activities, travel, and access to resources
- Continue information updates and research to address and mitigate climate change impacts in the Y-K Delta region
- Ongoing concerns about seabird die-offs and sick seals, request for continued informational updates on marine environment integral to subsistence

- Concerns about observed song bird declines in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region
- Concerns about Donlin Mine development impacts to subsistence
- Council member travel and ample time for full participation and sharing of traditional knowledge at Council meetings
- Expanding moose population on the Yukon River and management strategies
- Subsistence management strategies to address changing subsistence resources and changing access to resources due to changing environment
- Importance of appointing Yukon River representatives for balanced representation on the Council

***Alaska Board of Game Proposals:***

The Council reviewed and made recommendations on the following Alaska Board of Game statewide and Unit 18 wildlife proposals:

*Proposal 1: Prohibit nonresident hunting of moose or caribou under intensive management in the Western Arctic/Western Region until harvest or population objectives are met.* Motion #11 to support Proposal 1 by Mr. Charles, seconded by Mr. Landlord. The motion passed on a unanimous vote. The Council supported the plan to have a moose and caribou hunt closed to non-residents in the event moose or caribou populations decline enough to warrant intensive management. This would help provide for local communities' needs until the harvest or population objectives are met.

*Proposal 2: Establish intensive management programs for bear across the Western Arctic/Western Region.* Motion# 12 to support Proposal 2 by Mr. Slats, seconded by Mr. Maxie. The motion passed on a 5-1 vote. The bear population is increasing across the Yukon-Kuskokwim region with many reports of bears prevalent in and around local communities causing safety concerns. Bears are increasingly getting into fish camps and eating subsistence fish that takes so long to preserve.

*Proposal 6: Add muskox to the list of species that can be taken under a cultural education permit for Unit 18.* Motion #13 to support Proposal 6 with modification to include both Nunivak and Nelson Island schools by Mr. Charles, seconded by Mr. Maxie. The motion as amended passed unanimously. The Council supported this cultural education opportunity for youth to be able to harvest muskox and learn traditional skills associated with the hunt and preparation of meat and hides. The Council believes that this should also be open to Nelson Island and Nunivak Island since they traditionally hunt muskox.

*Proposal 7: Change the opening date for the registration moose hunt, RM615 in Unit 18 from September 1 to September 5.* Motion #14 to support Proposal 7 by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr. Maxie. The motion passed on a unanimous vote. The Council supported pushing back the start of the moose season in the zone 1 Kuskokwim moose hunt so that the start of the hunt begins under better weather condition later in the season when it is not so hot and humid. The hunt would only be open until the harvest quota is met so there would not be a conservation concern, only a more effective hunt for subsistence hunters when weather is cooler and better for meat preservation and the moose are more active. The Council suggested that if the later opening date is adopted that outreach would be very important to ensure everyone is aware that the moose hunt will not be opening on September 1, as most are accustomed to, so that they don't hunt out of season by mistake.

Proposal 11 and 12: Establish a minimum caliber rifle to be used to harvest moose in Unit 18 by restricting use of rifles .224 caliber and smaller and require a minimum of .243 or 6 mm caliber centerfire rifles for the harvest of moose in Unit 18. Motion #15 to support Proposals 11 and 12 by Mr. Charles, seconded by Mr. Maxie. The motion passed on a unanimous vote. The Council supported encouraging ethical moose hunting and salvage practices by mandating .243 caliber and larger, which will provide a better chance of a clean shot. The Council stressed anything smaller is not sufficient to effectively hunt large animals such as moose.

Proposal 13: Prohibit the sale of antlers from moose harvested in Unit 18. Motion #16 to support Proposal 13 by Mr. Charles, seconded by Mr. Oney. The motion passed on a unanimous vote. The Council supported this proposal due to increasing concerns over wanton waste and harassment of moose in order to obtain antlers for sale. The Council felt a regulation would help to start monitoring antlers shipped out of the region and ensure that moose are not killed just for their antlers while the meat goes to waste. Some communities have reported antlers stolen from properties now that the value is so high.

Proposal 15: Address customary and traditional use findings for Alaska hares in Unit 18 and modify season and bag limit for Alaska Hares from no closed season, no bag limit to 2 Alaska hares per day, 6 total and an Aug. 1 – May 31 season. Motion #17 to support Proposal 15 by Mr. Oney, seconded by Mr. Charles. The motion passed 5 to 1. The Council is supportive of some harvest limits being placed on Alaska hares (locally referred to as jackrabbits) until more is known about the hare population.

Proposal 16: Extend the hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear in Unit 18. Motion #18 to support Proposal 16 by Mr. Charles, seconded by Mr. Maxie. Motion #19 to amend the proposal and extend the season further from Sep. 1 – Jun. 30 to Sep. 1 – Jul. 31 by Mr. Landlord, seconded by Mr. Charles. Motion #19 to amend passed on a unanimous vote. The motion # 18 to support Proposal 16 as amended passed on a unanimous vote. The Council supported extending the brown bear season into July so that bear could be hunted when they are encountered around fish camps in the summer.

### **Agency Reports:**

- Office of Subsistence Management 2020 Wildlife Proposals and Wildlife Closure Review presented by Suzanne Worker
- Office of Subsistence Management Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program and Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program updates presented by Frank Harris and Robbin La Vine
- Orutsarmiut Native Council updates and Partners Program updates presented by Mary Matthias and Janessa Esquible
- Native Village of Napaimute updates and Partners Program update presented by Dan Gillikin
- Association of Village Council Presidents report presented by John Orr and Paige Jones
- Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association updates and FRMP reports presented by Wayne Jenkins
- Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission updates presented by Mary Peltola, Robert Lekander, and Charlene Erik

- 2019 Yukon River Salmon Season Summary presented by Gerald Maschmann, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Deena Jaalen and Jeff Estensen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- 2019 Kuskokwim River Salmon Season Summary presented by Ray Born, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Nicholas Smith, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge updates presented by Ray Born and Aaron Moses
- Togiak National Wildlife Refuge updates presented by Andy Aderman
- Bureau of Land Management updates presented by Bonnie Million and Walter Gusse
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program project reports presented by David Runfola
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife updates presented by Patrick Jones and Rick Merizon
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Birds, Seabird Die-off update presented by Robb Kahler
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Native Youth Ambassador Program presented by Vince Mathews

**Future Meeting Dates:**

The Council reconfirmed February 11-12 for winter 2020 meeting dates to be held in Bethel. The Council selected September 22-23 for fall 2020 meeting dates with a request to meet in a Yukon River community if budgets allow.

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Eva Patton, Designated Federal Officer  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management

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Alissa Nadine Rogers, Chair  
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its winter 2020 meeting in Bethel, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes at that meeting.

A more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcript and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Eva Patton at 1-800-478-1456 or 907-786-3358, email [eva\\_patton@fws.gov](mailto:eva_patton@fws.gov).



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:** Regulatory Affairs Division Chief  
(907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456  
subsistence@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](http://www.regulations.gov):**

1. Connect to [www.regulations.gov](http://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."

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

## Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

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

RAC/YK19053.EP

Anthony Christianson, Chair  
Federal Subsistence Board  
c/o Office of Subsistence Management  
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chairman Christianson:

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) submits this FY2019 annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) under the provisions of Section 805(a)(3)(D) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). At its public meeting in Bethel on November 6-8, 2019, the Council identified concerns and recommendations for this report, approving it at its winter 2020 public meeting in Bethel. The Council wishes to share information and raise a number of concerns dealing with implementation of Title VIII of ANILCA and the continuation of subsistence uses in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region.

At its fall 2019 meeting, the Council reviewed the Board's 2018 Annual Report Reply and discussed subsistence issues of importance to the region to consider for this year's annual report. The Council heard public comments regarding subsistence salmon, moose, and caribou management and the importance of timing for subsistence opportunity and successful preservation. The Council had an extensive discussion regarding observed climate change impacts to subsistence resources and activities. This overwhelming concern is central to this report to the Board.

From its various discussions, the Council identified the following issues to bring to your attention in this annual report:

### **1. Climate change impacts to subsistence fish and wildlife and habitat**

Council members have shared at length their observations of changes to subsistence fish, wildlife, and habitat in the areas around their communities and are extremely concerned for the continuation of their subsistence way of life. The Council stressed that increasing winter storms and weather events such as the extreme ice storm that delayed this very meeting is causing great impact to all the animals. Ptarmigan are declining because there is no snow for protective cover.

Hard freezing rain soaks their feathers and causes them to freeze to death. Moose have difficulty foraging and escaping predators on the slick ice and caribou are unable to scrape through inches thick ice covering the ground to access their food. Extreme hot summer temperatures and low, warm water has caused many fish to die. Council members recounted many observations this past summer of dead salmon floating downriver prior to spawning, and dead whitefish and even dead smolts due to very low and warm waters on both the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. The rivers are no longer breaking up as they remember. Now, the thinner ice melts in place and does not create the scouring floes like in the past. The timing of seasons are changing, causing animal and bird migrations to shift.

Council members relayed the changes they have seen in their lifetimes and the last ten years are nothing like they or their Elders have ever experienced. The Council wishes to convey to the Board that these changes are very real and to raise awareness of the gravity of the impact these changes have on subsistence resources.

## **2. Climate change impacts to subsistence activities, travel, and access to resources**

Changes occurring in the weather in recent years are causing more and more challenges for people to access subsistence resources and safely preserve harvested foods. The lack of winter snow has greatly hampered winter travel by snowmachine to conduct traditional subsistence hunting and fishing activities. Thin ice on lakes and rivers has resulted in extremely dangerous winter travel, jeopardizing the safety of those venturing out in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region. Winter subsistence fishing and trapping activities require ice thick enough to safely jig for fish, to set traps and under ice nets. Warmer winter temperatures make it difficult to freeze subsistence foods outside and store them safely over the winter as has been done traditionally. Increasingly hot summertime temperatures have created a challenge for safely preserving harvested meat and fish. Overall, these environmental changes are impeding subsistence access to many resources and impacting the ability to safely harvest and store subsistence foods.

## **3. Request for continued research and information to address and mitigate climate change impacts in the Y-K Delta region**

The Council requests Federal land managers and other agencies to engage in research to better understand the impacts of climate change on important subsistence resources and work on possible mitigation measures that will help support subsistence communities. The Council requests the Federal subsistence program continue to share this information with the Council and engage in dialog with the Council and communities on strategies to best address changing subsistence resources and ensure continued subsistence opportunity into the future.

## **4. Adaptive management strategies to respond to changing subsistence resources, access, and preservation of subsistence foods**

The Council requests the Federal Subsistence Board consider the issues raised in this report regarding climate change when making recommendations on Federal subsistence fish and wildlife regulations. Changing environmental conditions, shifting seasons and migratory patterns, and safe access to subsistence resources will likely continue to create the need for more

flexible regulations and management strategies into the future. Strategies discussed by the Council include shifting the fall moose hunt to later in the season when temperatures are cooler and moose are more active, which would result in more successful hunts, as well as better meat preservation; a to-be-announced hunting season in winter so that subsistence opportunity occurs when the snow and ice conditions are conducive for safe travel; and salmon fishing opportunities when the weather is good for drying fish with reduced risk of spoilage.

#### **5. Ongoing concerns about seabird die-offs, sick seals, and request for continued informational updates about marine environments integral to subsistence**

The Council raised the concern about sick and dying marine life in the previous Annual Report to the Board and appreciated receiving informational reports by lead agencies on this topic and a venue to share local observations. While the Council recognizes that the marine environment is outside the jurisdiction of the Federal Subsistence Board, marine resources are essential for the life and livelihood of all communities in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta region. What is occurring in the marine environment is integrally connected to the subsistence way of life in the region, as well as the life and well-being of critical subsistence resources such as salmon, seals and migratory birds. The Council very much appreciates the opportunity to receive the latest reports on these subjects and hopes to continue this dialog and information sharing at future meetings.

#### **6. Concerns about observed songbird declines in the Y-K Delta region**

The Council is very concerned about songbird declines observed in the region. Several Council members reported that in recent years they have seen fewer and fewer songbirds while out on the land and it is unusually quiet on the tundra. Council members reflected that they have enjoyed the song of little birds around their fish camp throughout their entire lives, but now when they bring their grandkids into the wilderness in the spring, it is quiet. While songbirds are not used for subsistence, they are a part of what they love about subsistence life. Council members are concerned what this songbird decline means for the rest of the environment and wonder if it is related to the seabird die-off.

#### **7. Concerns about Donlin Mine potential impacts to subsistence**

The Council is concerned about the environmental impacts to subsistence resources and changing access to these resources from the development of proposed Donlin Mine. The Council is also concerned about the risk of spills or contamination to the Kuskokwim River and surrounding environment. While the Council understands the interest in this economic development in the region, the subsistence resources such as salmon are an irreplaceable part of life and livelihood for all communities on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta.

The Council has expressed concerns at previous meetings about the likely impacts to subsistence as reported in the Donlin Gold Project Final EIS ANILCA Section 810 analysis, as well as concerns about the proposed number of daily barges on the Kuskokwim River required to support the Donlin mine development and operations. Opportunity for subsistence fishing on the Kuskokwim is already limited for Chinook conservation measures and greatly increased barge

traffic would only add to fisheries management challenges and interfere with subsistence fishing opportunity.

### **8. Council member travel and ample time for full participation and sharing of traditional knowledge at RAC meetings**

The Council requests more time to allow for safe travel to RAC meetings. While all travel is always dependent on weather in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, recent increases in winter storms and freezing rain have created more flight delays and cancellations, which are a real challenge for achieving quorum at meetings. Council travel is often booked immediately prior to the start of the meeting, and meeting days extend late into the night to complete all the business of a very full agenda covering subsistence management in a vast Yukon-Kuskokwim Region, which is not reasonable. The Council requests that the Board consider more realistic travel-time requirements to get to the Council members to a meeting safely with ample time to be rested and able to participate in full meetings. All Council members should have an opportunity to participate in person at the meetings to share traditional knowledge from throughout the entire region. Often coastal community representatives are at a disadvantage for flying due to the unpredictability of marine weather. A little more time for travel to account for likely delays would help increase the chance for Council members to make it to the meeting in time to participate in person.

### **9. Importance of appointing more Yukon River representatives for balanced membership on the Council**

The Council remains very concerned about the number of vacancies created because of an insufficient number of Council appointments in the last two years. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council serves a large and diverse region with over 40 communities, including several of the largest rivers and coastal deltas in both size and importance for subsistence fishing. The Council cannot adequately represent the many communities of the region and address resource management on the diverse subsistence hunting and fishing issues from the Yukon to the Kuskokwim, Kenektok, and Goodnews Rivers and Deltas and everything in between without a full membership of the 13-seat Council with a balanced representation from each part of the region. The complexity of fisheries management on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers in particular requires having at least several representatives who are residents from several villages along each river to adequately inform the Council's recommendations. The lack of sufficient Yukon River representatives has hampered the Council's ability to fully inform management on Yukon River specific subsistence issues. The Council requests the Board's support for outreach in the region to recruit a balance of applications from the 41 villages and to ensure that the Secretary of the Interior appoints highly qualified applicants from across the region.

Thank you for the opportunity for this Council to assist the Federal Subsistence Program to meet its charge of protecting subsistence resources and uses of these resources on Federal Public lands and waters. We look forward to continuing discussions about the issues and concerns of subsistence users of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region. If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Eva Patton, Subsistence Council Coordinator, with the Office of Subsistence Management at [eva\\_patton@fws.gov](mailto:eva_patton@fws.gov), or 1-800-478-1456 or (907) 786-3358.

Sincerely,

Alissa Nadine Rogers  
Chair

- cc. Federal Subsistence Board  
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
Thomas Doolittle, Acting Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management  
Greg Risdahl, Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director,  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Suzanne Worker, Acting Policy Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management  
Chris McKee, Wildlife Division Supervisor, Office of Subsistence Management  
Tom Kron, Acting Council Coordination Division Supervisor,  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Eva Patton, Subsistence Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management  
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Mark Burch, Special Projects Coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Administrative Record





## United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Togiak National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 270  
Dillingham, Alaska 99576  
Phone 907-842-1063  
Fax 907-842-5402



### INFORMATION BULLETIN - December 2019

***Cooperative Salmon Escapement Monitoring Projects.*** Contact: Pat Walsh

ADF&G has monitored Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon escapement on the Middle Fork Goodnews River since 1980. Togiak Refuge has worked with ADF&G since 1992 to assist in staffing the weir until 2017, after which reduced Refuge funding prevented providing staff assistance.

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

***Mulchatna Caribou*** Contact: Andy Aderman

Togiak Refuge assisted ADF&G with telemetry monitoring flights, radiocollar deployment, satellite data acquisition, data entry and database management. A July 2019 post-calving survey estimated the Mulchatna herd at approximately 13,500 caribou, well below the population objective of 30,000-80,000 caribou. In response, ADF&G issued an emergency order in August reducing the bag limit from two caribou to one caribou only under the RC503 hunt. In addressing WSA 19-07, the Federal Subsistence Board made the same change in Units 9A, 9B, 9C, and 17. In Units 18, 19A, and 19B the Federal Subsistence Board changed the harvest limit to one bull and closed federal public lands to caribou hunting except by federally qualified subsistence users. Refuge Manager Moos was appointed the in-season manager for federal public lands within the Mulchatna herd's range.

***Nushagak Peninsula Caribou*** Contact: Andy Aderman

A photocensus of the Nushagak Peninsula Herd on July 9, 2019 found a minimum of 710 caribou in 5 groups which resulted in a total population estimate of 822 +/- 164 (710-986) caribou at the 95% confidence interval (Meg Inokuma, ADF&G, personal communication). A similar effort in 2018 found a minimum of 709 caribou in 4 groups resulting in an estimate of 787 +/- 114 (673-901) caribou.

A composition survey conducted in October 9, 2019 estimated 26 calves and 33 bulls per 100 cows. The calf to cow ratio is the lowest recorded while the bull to cow ratio increased from the lowest recorded in 2018 (25 bulls per 100 cows).

The Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Planning Committee met October 25, 2019 and reviewed results of previous hunts, population and lichen monitoring and the harvest strategy. Average lichen cover on the Nushagak Peninsula has declined from 48% estimated in 2002 down to 30% in 2017. Based on the continued increasing decline in lichen cover, the agencies think it is prudent to lower the optimum population level down to 400 caribou. Andy explained that the mid-point between the minimum population count and estimated count was 766 caribou. Based on the lower optimum population level of 400, means we could harvest 366 caribou. The Committee was in agreement to increase the harvest limit from two to five caribou effective January 1, 2020. The Committee also supported (5 for, 3 abstained) WP20-27 which mirrors the Board of Game regulation regarding use of snowmachines for taking caribou in Unit 17. With the lower optimum population level, a Committee member suggested a federal subsistence proposal to restrict the customary and traditional use determination back to the original communities may be in order.

As of December 16, 2019, only 9 caribou (5 bulls and 4 cows) have been reported harvested in the Federal permit hunt. Four caribou (3 bulls and 1 cow) have been reported in the RC501 hunt immediately north of the Federal hunt (Lauren Watine, ADF&G, personal communication).

**Moose** Contact: Andy Aderman

In May 2019, 21 of 30 (70%) radio-collared adult cows produced 38 calves suggesting a production rate of 126.7 calves per 100 adult cows which is up from the previous 5 year average of 111.2 calves per 100 adult cows. The twinning rate was 76.2% which is higher than the previous 5 year average of 63.5%.

For the fall moose hunts in Unit 17A, a total of 60 moose were reported as follows: 47 bulls harvested under RM573, 9 moose (5 cows, 2 bulls, 2 unknown) harvested under RM571, and 4 bulls reported under DM570 (Lauren Watine, ADF&G, personal communication).

For the fall moose hunts in southern Unit 18, a total of 31 moose were reported as follows: 15 bulls harvested under RM 620 (Goodnews area) and 16 bulls harvested under RM617 (Kanektok/Arolik area) (Patrick Jones, ADF&G, personal communication).

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

In summer 2014, Togiak Refuge, the USFWS Genetics Lab, ADF&G, and BLM initiated a study to understand the effects of wolf and brown bear predation in regulating the populations of moose. The study relies on radio telemetry and stable isotope analysis. Our approach is to relate the predation impact by wolves and bears on moose at varying levels of moose population density. We will use existing population estimates for brown bears, and through the use of radio telemetry, we will estimate the number and composition of wolf packs on the Refuge. We will model wolf and bear predation on moose based on the quantity of wolves and bears and diet composition of both species determined through analysis of carbon and nitrogen isotopes occurring in bear and wolf hair. Hair is being collected from wolves when captured during radio collaring operations, and has been collected from brown bears using break-away hair snares. So far, we have captured and radioed 35 wolves from seven packs. During summers 2014-2016, we

deployed over 400 snares, and collected over 200 brown bear hair samples. Initial analysis in 2017 identified data gaps, so additional bear hair was collected in 2018. Lab analyses are ongoing.

**Walrus** Contact: Doug Holt

The Togiak Refuge has annually monitored the number and timing of Pacific walruses at haul-outs since 1985, using ground counts (1985-2008), aerial surveys (2003-2011) and time lapse photography (2010-2019). Overall, walrus numbers observed at haul-outs on Togiak Refuge have declined, with the greatest declines at Cape Peirce and Cape Newenham. Peak counts in the most current year when every day was counted (2016) were 401 at Cape Peirce, 897 on Hagemeister Island, and 454 at Cape Newenham. Walrus using haul-outs in Bristol Bay are typically recorded from late spring to late fall but have been observed at Cape Newenham every month since cameras were deployed in fall of 2014 with the exception of February, July, and September 2017. However, counts for 2017 are incomplete because field work was cancelled in 2018 due to weather and logistic constraints. Data were recovered at all sites during summer 2019 and results will be updated when the data are examined. The most recent report was completed in August 2019 and is available to the public at <https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFile/168185>.

**Seabirds** Contact: Kara Hilwig

The abundance and reproductive success of black-legged kittiwakes, common murre, and pelagic cormorants was monitored annually at Cape Peirce from 1990-2014 and 2016-2019. In the past 29 years, the long-term average number of birds counted on study plots was 1,075 kittiwakes (range = 238-1,906), 2,595 murre (range = 53-4,563), and 80 cormorants (range = 15-123). In 2019, an average of 1,052 kittiwakes, 564 murre, and 33 cormorants were counted, which is average for kittiwakes, but well below average for murre and cormorant adult returns. Counts of adult seabirds returning to the nesting cliffs were up 71%, 91% and 55% from last year's record low counts respectively (307, 53, and 15). Despite greater numbers of adult seabirds returning to the cliffs, all three species demonstrated zero or near zero fledging success. The long-term overall productivity (the number of nests with fledged chicks to the total number of nests) of kittiwakes, murre, and cormorants averaged 22%, 36%, and 49% respectively. Twenty-nine years of seabird monitoring at Cape Peirce has revealed high variation in nesting adult counts and reproductive success, but never four consecutive years of reproductive success as low as 2016-2019 for all three species. Population and productivity monitoring will continue in June 2020 at Cape Peirce.

**Invasive Aquatic Plant Surveys** Contact: Kara Hilwig

*Elodea spp.* is a highly invasive and difficult to control aquatic plant implicated in the degradation and loss of fish habitat across the world. It was confirmed present in Alaska in 2009 and is now found in several waterbodies across the State. In 2019, Refuge and Park staff cooperated to complete the second round of *Elodea* surveys at 20 sites within the Togiak Refuge, Wood-Tikchik State Park and the surrounding area. An additional 23 new sites were surveyed in 2019 and included the Nushagak and Mulchatna Rivers, Iliamna floatplane lakes, and Big River lakes. Thus far, no *Elodea* has been detected. Funding proposals are currently being submitted to continue this work in 2020.

***Water Temperature Monitoring*** Contact: Doug Holt

Stream temperature monitoring has been conducted at 21 locations on 14 rivers in Togiak National Wildlife Refuge since August 2001. Continuous hourly water temperatures were recorded at each site. Over 2.4 million temperature records were collected, quality-graded, and digitally stored in a relational database through October 2019. The warmest month each year was July. The maximum recorded mean daily summer temperatures varied by location, with median values of 9.8–22.9°C across sites. The warmest temperatures were observed in the Kukaktlim Lake outlet and the coolest temperatures were observed in the Weary River. The most recent stream temperature monitoring report was completed in September 2018 and is available to the public at <https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFiles/114702>.

We used moored all-season temperature arrays to record hourly temperatures throughout the water column in 2 lakes on or near the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge 2011-2018. The lakes differed significantly in surface area, water volume, and elevation with Ongivinuk Lake being smaller and at higher elevation than Snake Lake. We observed variation in lake ice phenology and fewer days of ice cover on Snake Lake than on Ongivinuk Lake each winter when data were available for both lakes. We observed that both lakes were dimictic, exhibiting turnover events in spring and fall. We observed water temperatures in excess of standards for fish rearing and migration habitats during summer down to 12.5 m in Snake Lake and down to 5 m in Ongivinuk Lake. The most recent lake water temperature monitoring report was completed in March 2019 and is available to the public at <https://ecos.fws.gov/ServCat/DownloadFile/169088>.

Togiak Refuge received reports of dead fish observed in streams throughout the Refuge during summer 2019. Warm water might play a role in fish die-offs. Water temperature monitoring is ongoing at stream and lake sites. Data from the summer of 2019 will not be available until sensors are recovered and downloaded in 2020. When those data are available water temperature reports will be updated and made publically available.

***Quantifying River Discharge*** Contact: Pat Walsh

Togiak Refuge and the USFWS Water Resources Branch have worked cooperatively since 1999 to acquire baseline hydrologic data of the flow regime (magnitude, duration, timing, frequency, and rate of change) and water quality. A network of stream discharge gages collected stream flow data from 1999-2005 at 20 locations. A subset of five of these stations continued to collect data through fall 2009, after which three of the five stations were removed. We will monitor discharge in the Togiak and Kulukak Rivers indefinitely.

***Education and Outreach*** Contact: Terry Fuller

Togiak Refuge has an active education and outreach program, conducting an average of 60+ classroom visits throughout 12 Bristol Bay villages annually. Classroom visits include lessons about the Migratory Bird Calendar, National Wildlife Refuge Week, careers in natural resource conservation, and numerous teacher requested classroom presentations. The refuge works with several school districts and private schools including the Southwest Region, Lower Kuskokwim, Dillingham City school districts and the Dillingham 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist School. Field trips with area students for the 2018-2019 school year included bird walks, wilderness survival skills, archery, salmon life cycles, aquatic resources and bear safety. The refuge website is also an education tool and is available at <http://togiak.fws.gov>.

The refuge, in partnership with Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Southwest Region School District, also conducts hunter safety courses throughout western Bristol Bay Villages. Classes have impacted more than 100 students in Manokotak, Dillingham, Twin Hills, Togiak, Aleknagik and Quinhagak. The refuge plans to continue these courses, as requested, in 2020 and is in the planning stages to add a National Archery in School Program to its offerings in the future. The Refuge also plans to train additional staff members as Hunter Safety instructors.

The refuge education program also produces Bristol Bay Field Notes, an award-winning weekly radio program on KDLG 670 AM that covers an array of outdoor-related topics (past episodes can be found on KDLG's website). Togiak Refuge has an active and heavily followed Facebook page which disseminates information on a daily basis to a rapidly growing global audience.

The refuge hosted its annual Open House at the Refuge Headquarters on Saturday, October 5, 2019 and over 100 people were in attendance and took part in a number of "hands on" activities. The refuge co-sponsored a 5K "Salmon Fun Run/Walk" on July 27, 2019 with the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation. Nearly 200 people participated and received information on healthy lifestyle choices, including staying active in the outdoors on National Wildlife Refuges.

Other annual outreach programs for the community continue as well. The refuge hosted a family bird feeder building program in December and the annual Christmas Bird Count (Dillingham circle) January 5<sup>th</sup>. The family "Build-A-Bird Feeder Workshop" increased the Christmas Bird Count participation. The refuge is grateful for financial assistance from the Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges to conduct these programs.

Togiak Refuge staff continues to work with the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to conduct household subsistence waterfowl surveys. Refuge staff and volunteers are currently conducting surveys (spring 2019) in Aleknagik, Dillingham, Togiak, Clark's Point, Igiugig, Port Alsworth, Newhalen, Naknek, Pilot Point, Chignik Lake, and Goodnews Bay.

Also, the refuge partners with others to conduct three environmental education camps described below:

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

In July 2019 an enthusiastic group of seven area junior high students representing three villages (Dillingham, Togiak and Platinum) traveled to Cape Peirce for this camp. Students were able to observe seabirds, marine mammals, and learn how field work is conducted, as well as learning about the food webs and ecological relationships found at the Cape Peirce area. Students also learned about traditional Yup'ik uses of animals and plants and about Native survival skills. This camp is designed to help students gain a better understanding of the biological diversity of a marine ecosystem. It also strengthens their sense of stewardship for local natural resources. Other topics at this camp included tide pools, wilderness survival skills, archery, bear safety, Leave No Trace camping practices and careers with USFWS. Refuge Interpreter Jon Dyasuk spoke with students about traditional resource uses. A special offering for this year's camp was the chance for the students to try their hand drawing with Colorado pastel artist Penny Creasy. Traditional



councils and school districts from throughout western Bristol Bay are cooperators with this camp.

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

In July 2019, Togiak Refuge helped with the 19<sup>th</sup> year of a summer camp aimed at teaching middle and high school students about fisheries science and the importance of salmon to our ecosystem. Students were selected from the Bristol Bay region. During the camp students worked in the field alongside fisheries professionals. Cooperators with the refuge on this project included the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, Bristol Bay Science and Research Institute, University of Alaska, University of Washington School of Fisheries, the Dillingham City and Southwest Region school districts, and ADF&G.

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

The 2019 Float Camp took place on the Togiak River early August. At this camp, four high school students learned about river ecosystems and how to enjoy them safely and responsibly while taking part in a float trip conducted on a refuge river. Students observed and learned about the many fish, wildlife and plant species found on the Togiak and its tributaries. Rafting skills, water safety, different angling practices (Catch and Release), Leave No Trace camping practices and bear safety were topics during the trip. Students also participated in other outdoor activities such as wilderness survival skills. This camp helps students grasp the biological diversity of riparian ecosystems and the importance of salmon as a nutrient source, while developing a deeper sense of stewardship for local natural resources. Montana Artist Mara Menahan was along as an “Artist-in-Residence” and all of the students had an opportunity to work with Mara on natural history illustration while in the field. Traditional councils and school districts in western Bristol Bay are cooperators with this camp.

***Division of Refuge Law Enforcement*** Contact: Derek Thompson

Federal Wildlife Officers work to protect wildlife and habitat and make refuges safe places for visitors and staff. Senior Federal Wildlife Officer (SFWO) Derek Thompson is stationed in Dillingham, AK. He is the Officer responsible for patrolling Togiak National Wildlife Refuge (TNWR) and managing TNWR’s law enforcement program.

SFWO Thompson encountered and investigated a multitude of resource and permit violations during 2019. Violations ranged from a human caused wildfire to littering. SFWO Thompson routinely works with other state and federal agencies to achieve efficient and effective law enforcement. This year SFWO Thompson teamed with law enforcement Ranger’s from the Bureau of Land Management and detailed an FWO from the Big Muddy NWR in Missouri. The additional officers provided assistance within TNWR and per signed memorandums of understanding SFWO Thompson helped those agencies in their patrol responsibilities.

SFWO Thompson encourages anyone with questions regarding US FWS law enforcement to contact him, and reminds all who enjoy TNWR their tips and eyewitness accounts are invaluable in protecting wildlife and punishing poachers.



***Staff Update***

We currently have a number of vacancies which need to be filled. Unfortunately, budget uncertainties and other regional priorities have not allowed us to advertise these positions. However, we have a new budget analyst, Yong Ellis, who reported to work Dec. 10 and we are excited to have her on board.

# Fall 2020 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

*Last updated on 11/12/19*

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug. 16	Aug. 17 <i>Window opens</i>	Aug. 18 <b>NS — Point Hope</b>	Aug. 19	Aug. 20	Aug. 21	Aug. 22
Aug. 23	Aug. 24	Aug. 25	Aug. 26	Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29
	<b>K/A — Unalaska (in conjunction with “Life Forum Conference”)</b>					
Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Sep. 1	Sep. 2	Sep. 3	Sep. 4	Sep. 5
Sep. 6	Sep. 7 <b>LABOR DAY HOLIDAY</b>	Sep. 8	Sep. 9	Sep. 10	Sep. 11	Sep. 12
				<b>K/A — Cold Bay/Sand Point</b>		
Sep. 13	Sep. 14	Sep. 15	Sep. 16	Sep. 17	Sep. 18	Sep. 19
Sep. 20	Sep. 21	Sep. 22	Sep. 23	Sep. 24	Sep. 25	Sep. 26
		<b>YKD — St. Mary’s</b>				
Sep. 27	Sep. 28	Sep. 29	Sep. 30	Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3
Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6	Oct. 7	Oct. 8	Oct. 9	Oct. 10
			<b>SC — Anchorage</b>			
Oct. 11	Oct. 12 <b>COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY</b>	Oct. 13	Oct. 14	Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17
			<b>WI — Aniak</b>			
			<b>EI — Fairbanks</b>			
Oct. 18	Oct. 19	Oct. 20	Oct. 21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24
		<b>SE — Sitka</b>			<b>AFN — Anchorage</b>	
Oct. 25	Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31
			<b>SP — Nome</b>			
			<b>BB — Dillingham</b>			
Nov. 1	Nov. 2	Nov. 3	Nov. 4	Nov. 5	Nov. 6 <i>Window closes</i>	Nov. 7
		<b>NW — Kotzebue</b>				

# Winter 2021 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Feb. 14</i>	<i>Feb. 15</i> <b>PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY</b>	<i>Feb. 16</i> <i>Window Opens</i>	<i>Feb. 17</i>	<i>Feb. 18</i>	<i>Feb. 19</i>	<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>Mar. 17</i>	<i>Mar. 18</i>	<i>Mar. 19</i>	<i>Mar. 20</i>
<i>Mar. 21</i>	<i>Mar. 22</i>	<i>Mar. 23</i>	<i>Mar. 24</i>	<i>Mar. 25</i>	<i>Mar. 26</i> <i>Window Closes</i>	<i>Mar. 27</i>

## Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Correspondence Policy

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

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

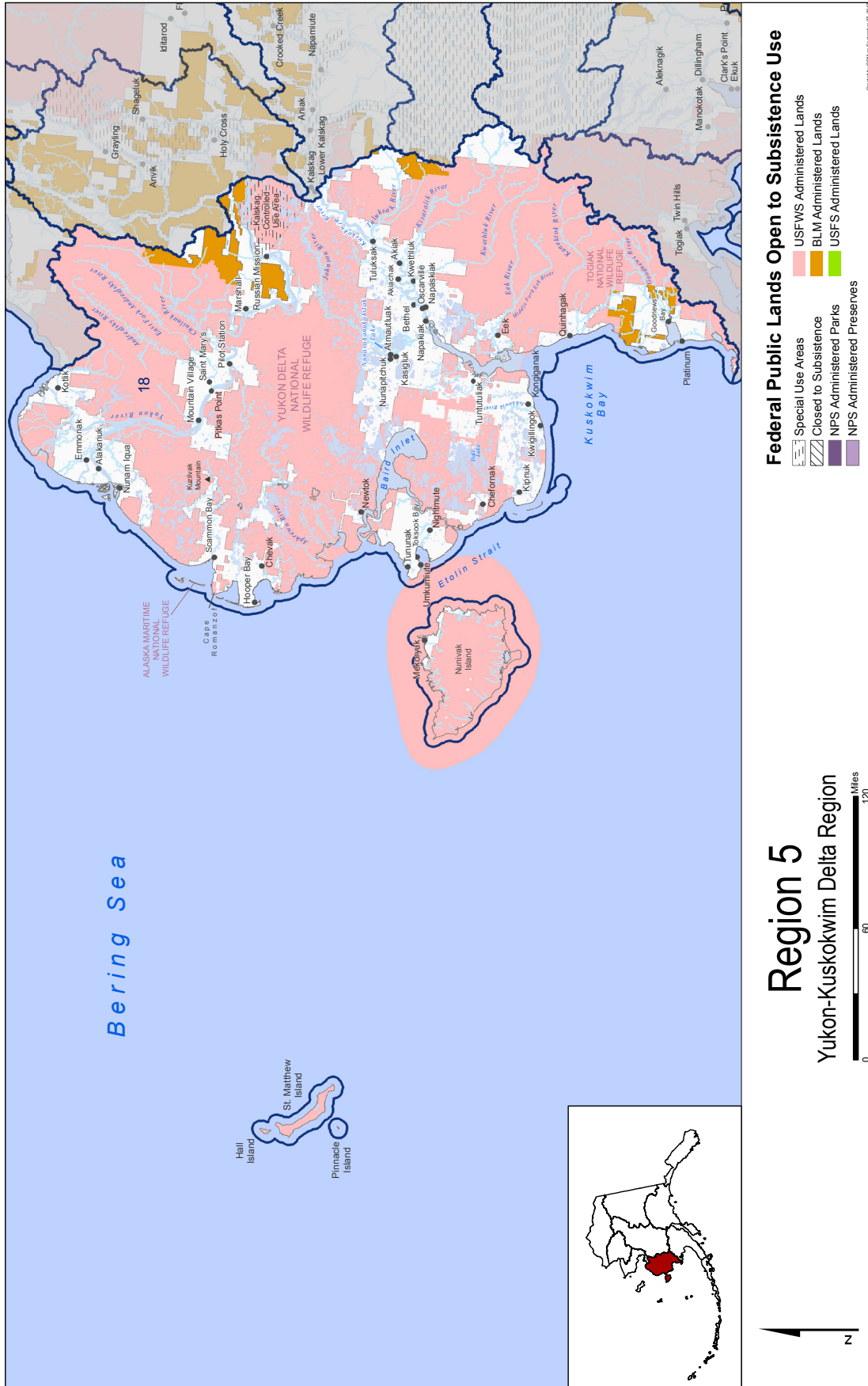
The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Title VIII required the creation of Alaska's Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils to serve as advisors to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture and to provide meaningful local participation in the management of fish and wildlife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

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

### Policy

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

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





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

**Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

**Charter**

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

- (4) Recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.
- e. Make recommendations on determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources.
- f. Make recommendations on determinations of rural status.
- g. Provide recommendations on the establishment and membership of Federal local advisory committees.
- h. Provide recommendations for implementation of Secretary's Order 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation, and Secretary's Order 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes, and Territories. Recommendations shall include, but are not limited to:
  - (1) Assessing and quantifying implementation of the Secretary's Orders, and recommendations to enhance and expand their implementation as identified;
  - (2) Policies and programs that:
    - (a) increase outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans, with a focus on engaging youth, veterans, minorities, and other communities that traditionally have low participation in outdoor recreation;
    - (b) expand access for hunting and fishing on Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service lands in a manner that respects the rights and privacy of the owners of non-public lands;
    - (c) increase energy, transmission, infrastructure, or other relevant projects while avoiding or minimizing potential negative impacts on wildlife; and
    - (d) create greater collaboration with States, Tribes, and/or Territories.
- 1. Provide recommendations for implementation of the regulatory reform initiatives and policies specified in section 2 of Executive Order 13777: Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs; Executive Order 12866: Regulatory Planning and Review, as amended; and section 6 of Executive Order 13563: Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review. Recommendations shall include, but are not limited to:
  - Identifying regulations for repeal, replacement, or modification considering, at a minimum, those regulations that:

- (1) eliminate jobs, or inhibit job creation;
- (2) are outdated, unnecessary, or ineffective;
- (3) impose costs that exceed benefits;
- (4) create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with regulatory reform initiative and policies;
- (5) rely, in part or in whole, on data or methods that are not publicly available or insufficiently transparent to meet the standard for reproducibility; or
- (6) derive from or implement Executive Orders or other Presidential and Secretarial directives that have been subsequently rescinded or substantially modified.

All current and future Executive Orders, Secretary's Orders, and Secretarial Memos should be included for discussion and recommendations as they are released. At the conclusion of each meeting or shortly thereafter, provide a detailed recommendation meeting report, including meeting minutes, to the Designated Federal Officer (DFO).

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 \$196,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.15 Federal 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 11, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DFO is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will:
  - (a) Approve or call all Council and subcommittee meetings;
  - (b) Prepare and approve all meeting agendas;
  - (c) Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings;
  - (d) Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest; and

(e) Chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the advisory committee reports.

9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Council will meet 1-2 times per year, and at such times as designated by the Federal Subsistence Board Chair or the DFO.
10. **Duration.** Continuing.
11. **Termination.** The Council will be inactive 2 years from the date the Charter is filed, unless, prior to that date, the charter is renewed in accordance with 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:

Thirteen 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 Board in their nomination recommendations to the Secretary will strive to ensure that nine of the members (70 percent) represent subsistence interests within the Region and four 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. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

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

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

Members of the Council will serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, Council and subcommittee members engaged in Council, or subcommittee business, approved by the DFO, may be allowed travel

expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in Government service under section 5703 of title 5 of the United States Code.

13. **Ethics Responsibilities of Members.** No Council or subcommittee member will participate in any Council or subcommittee deliberations or votes relating to a specific party matter before the Department or its bureaus and offices including a lease, license, permit, contract, grant, claim, agreement, or litigation in which the member or the entity the member represents has a direct financial interest.
14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFOs 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. 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, must be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records must be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).



Secretary of the Interior

DEC 12 2019

Date Signed

DEC 13 2019

Date Filed





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