

DECISION

VI. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

The development of a subsistence management program for Federal public lands in Alaska is considered a "major Federal action having a significant impact on the quality of the human environment" under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For this reason, the Board concluded that an EIS on Federal subsistence management should be published. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register on October 25, 1990. Interagency teams from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management conducted 58 public scoping meetings during October and November, 1991.

Based on the information gathered in the scoping process, the major issues to be addressed in the EIS were identified and are analyzed in the draft EIS published in October 1991. A 60 day public comment period followed the release of the EIS (this was later extended through December 31, 1991). During this period, 42 public hearings were held, and oral and written comments were requested from the public. Specific dates and locations for the public hearings were announced in the Federal Register. The final EIS incorporated public comments and revisions and modifications made to the EIS. Specific comments and their responses were included in Chapter V of the final EIS. The draft programmatic regulations were included as Appendix A of the EIS.