



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

# Federal Subsistence Board News Release



Forest Service

**For Immediate Release**  
 January 28, 2015

**Contact:**  
 Deborah Coble  
 (907) 786-3880 or (800) 478-1456  
[Deborah\\_Coble@fws.gov](mailto:Deborah_Coble@fws.gov)

## Comments Sought on Proposal to Improve Rural Determination Process

*Draft regulatory change would increase flexibility and recognize unique nature of Alaskan communities*

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board), acting for the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture (Secretaries), is seeking comment on a proposed regulatory change to the rural determination process for the Federal Subsistence Program in Alaska. Under current regulations, the Board determines which community or area of Alaska is rural using guidelines and characteristics defined by the Secretaries. In response to robust stakeholder input and Tribal consultation, the new, simplified process identified will enable the Board to be more flexible in making decisions and take into account the regional differences found throughout the State.

The Secretaries, through the Board, will hold public meetings in conjunction with the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Councils) to receive comments on this proposed rule on several dates between February 10 and March 19, 2015. The Councils, which play an important role in providing recommendations and information to the Board on a range of issues, will discuss the proposed rule change and make their recommendations to the Board. Tribal consultations will also be held. The Board will review the Councils' recommendations, Tribal input, and public comments, and then provide recommendations for potential changes to the proposed rule to the Secretaries.

The following is the schedule of public meetings in Alaska:

REGION	TIME	DATE	LOCATION	TELECONFERENCE
Kodiak/Aleutians Region	7-9 p.m.	Feb. 10, 2015	Kodiak Best Western Hotel; Kodiak	Telephone: 1-866-560-5984 Passcode:12960066
Southcentral Region	7-9 p.m.	Feb. 18, 2015	Dimond Hotel; Anchorage	Telephone: 1-866-916-7020 Passcode: 37311548

REGION	TIME	DATE	LOCATION	TELECONFERENCE
Seward Peninsula Region	7-9 p.m.	Feb. 18, 2015	Old St. Joe's Hall; Nome	Telephone: 1-866-560-5984 Passcode:12960066
Bristol Bay Region	7-9 p.m.	Feb. 24, 2015	Naknek Native Village Council Hall; Naknek	Telephone: 1-866-916-7020 Passcode:37311548
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region	7-9 p.m.	Feb. 25, 2015	Yupit Piciryarit Cultural Center; Bethel	Telephone: 1-866-560-5984 Passcode: 12960066
Western Interior Region	7-9 p.m.	Mar. 4, 2015	Pike's Waterfront Lodge; Fairbanks	Telephone: 1-877-638-8165 Passcode: 9060609
Eastern Interior Region	7-9 p.m.	Mar. 4, 2015	Pike's Waterfront Lodge; Fairbanks	Telephone: 1-877-638-8165 Passcode: 9060609
Northwest Arctic Region	7-9 p.m.	Mar. 9, 2015	Northwest Arctic Borough Chambers; Kotzebue	Telephone: 1-877-638-8165 Passcode: 9060609
Southeast Region	7-9 p.m.	Mar. 17, 2015	Sitka Tribal Community House; Sitka	Telephone: 1-866-560-5984 Passcode: 12960066
Southeast Region	11 a.m. - 2 p.m.	March 16, 2015	Saxman Community Center, Saxman	Telephone: 1-866-560-5984 Passcode: 12960066
North Slope Region	7-9 p.m.	Mar. 17, 2015	Inupiat Heritage Center; Barrow	Telephone: 1-877-638-8165 Passcode: 9060609

A notice will be published of specific dates, times, and meeting locations in local and statewide newspapers prior to these meetings. Locations and dates may change based on weather or local circumstances.

**Comments on the proposed rule may be submitted by one of the following methods:**

- *Electronically:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and search for FWS-R7-SM-2014-0063, which is the docket number for this rulemaking.

*By hard copy:* U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: USFWS, Office of Subsistence Management, 1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121, Attn: Theo Matuskowitz, Anchorage, AK 99503–6199, or hand delivery to the Designated Federal Official attending any of the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils' public meetings.

*In person:* At any of the above listed public meetings.

All public comments must be received by: April 1, 2015.

All comments received will be posted on <http://www.regulations.gov>.

The Federal Subsistence Board is committed to providing access to these meetings for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, closed captioning, or other accommodation needs to the Office of Subsistence Management by calling <http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/general/nr12-16-14.cfm> (800) 478-1456, by emailing [subsistence@fws.gov](mailto:subsistence@fws.gov), or (800)-877-8339 (TTY), seven business days prior to the meeting you would like to participate in.

For further information please contact: Chair, Federal Subsistence Board, c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attention: Eugene R. Peltola, Jr., Office of Subsistence Management; (907) 786-3888 or [subsistence@fws.gov](mailto:subsistence@fws.gov). For questions specific to National Forest System lands, contact Tom Whitford, Regional Subsistence Program Leader, USDA, Forest Service, Alaska Region; (907) 743-9461 or [twhitford@fs.fed.us](mailto:twhitford@fs.fed.us).

Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program can be found at [www.doi.gov/subsistence/index.cfm](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/index.cfm) or [www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](http://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska)

###