SOUTHEAST ALASKA
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes

Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall
Juneau, Alaska
March 10-13, 2026

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Quorum Establishment:

The meeting was called to order Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at approximately 9:02 a.m. Council members Larry Bemis, Frank Wright, Calvin Casipit, Michael Douville[1], Ted Sandhofer, Patricia Phillips, Louie Wagner, Jr., Lewis Hiatt, and Don Hernandez were present in person. Member Albert Howard was delayed attending in person the first two days due to weather but participated by phone until he joined the Council in person on March 12, 2026, for the remainder of the meeting. Member John Smith, III was not present and was excused. Members James Slater and Harvey Kitka resigned at the Council's December 2025 meeting. With 10 out of 11 seated Council members present, the quorum was established.

Attendees:

*Asterisk * identifies if present via teleconference/Microsoft Teams.*

- U.S. Forest Service (USFS): ***Jacqueline Buchanon, Jerry Ingersoll, Monique Nelson, Chris Dowling*, DeAnna Perry, Rob Cross, Jake Musslewhite, Ashley Bolwerk, Kevin Stewart, Adam Grunwald*, Rene Hanko*, Susan Oehlers*, Marci Johnson****
- Office of Subsistence Management (OSM): ***Lisa Grediagin, Jason Roberts, Ph.D., Robbin La Vine*, Kristen Morrow, Ph.D.*, Justin Koller*, Thomas Plank*, Janel Day*, Hannah Vorhees, Ph.D.****
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA): ***Glenn Chen***
- National Park Service (NPS): ***Amber Cohen***
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS): ***George Yaska****
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G): ***Emily Doll, Steve Bethune****
- Aak'w Kwáan: ***Fran Houston, Tribal Spokesperson***
- Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes: ***Rob Sanderson, Vice-President; Heather Gatti*, Arielle Halpern****
- Craig Tribal Association: ***Clinton Cook, President; Aaron Bean,***
- Ketchikan Indian Community: ***Gloria Burns, President***
- Metlakatla Indian Community: ***Kevin Hudson***
- Organized Village of Kake: ***Joel Jackson, President***
- Organized Village of Kasaan: ***Mike Jones, President; George Nix***
- Members of the Public:

[1] Members Bemis, Wright, Casipit, and Douville participated under the continuing to serve clause of the Council's charter because at the time of the meeting new appointments had not been made.

- In Person: ***Tim Ackerman, Dillon Patterson, Kristi Tapio-Harper, Robert Miller, Anne Beaudreau, Maryann Stearns, Marissa Scott, Josh Himes, Maria Padudo, Shania Murphy, Melanie Brown, Keenan Sanderson, Wanda Culp***
- Virtually: ***Heather Bauscher, Blake Toney, Celeste Weller, Jamison Mark, Daviel (unknown last name), Karli Tyance Hassell, Kathy Hansen, Michelle Martin, Robert Miller, Barbara Schneider, Jessicca Cox, Miriam Stearns, Anna Laffrey, Michael Fiorillo, Austin Harding, Michelle Martin, Bethany Robichaud, Paulette Moreno, Jill Weits, Melenda Lekanof, Andrew Roberts, Devan Collier, Samantha Lobdell, Andrew Roberts, Norm Carson, Justna Cook***

Election of Officers:

Member Hernandez was re-elected the Council's Chair.
Member Casipit was re-elected the Council's Vice Chair.
Member Frank Wright, Jr. was re-elected the Council's Secretary.

Review and Adopt Agenda:

Motion by Member Phillips, seconded by Member Sandhofer, to adopt the agenda as a guide with the following adjustments:

- Move 'Forest Plan' from 'Reports' to a lunch presentation
- Delete 'Special Actions' from 'Reports'

The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Member Sandhofer, seconded by Member Casipit, to approve the fall 2025 meeting minutes with the following modifications:

- In Member Wagner's report, replace the word 'salmon' with 'eulachon.'
- In Member Howard's report, correct sentence to say 'with lack of ferry/barge service.'

The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Council Member and Chair Reports:

Larry Bemis of Yakutat provided a comprehensive overview of recent developments, challenges, and initiatives in Yakutat and neighboring communities. He emphasized the importance of collaboration, learning from each other, and adapting to change within the various Federal and State agencies. He reflected on traditional habitat management practices and the value of intertribal connections, especially through meetings with the Eyak Tribe. Yakutat is experiencing significant changes, including a new boat harbor plan, bridge replacement, water line improvements, and efforts to improve economic development and habitat management through joint workshops involving various local and Federal entities. The Yakutat-Tlingit Tribes Program is actively monitoring local resources and participating in food sovereignty initiatives such as community gardens and greenhouses that are providing fresh produce and promoting food preservation for all residents, including seniors. The region faces high costs for fuel and

groceries due to its remote location, with limited access to the ferry system and rising air freight expenses. Wildlife and environmental observations include unpredictable weather, moose survival concerns, a growing wolf population, and shifting deer behavior patterns affecting hunting opportunities to harvest. The Yakutat Regional Aquaculture Board YRAA Board is redirecting efforts from hatchery development to habitat restoration, funded by a local enhancement tax. The YRAA Board seeks greater involvement with ADF&G for community-led restoration and resource management, emphasizing the need to share successful initiatives across communities.

Frank Wright, Jr. of Hoonah recounted several community developments and concerns in Hoonah. He highlighted the local girls' 1A team winning the State competition. He described efforts to honor the Tlingit heritage by naming all streets in Hoonah with both Tlingit and English names, a change he finds significant and overdue. He shared environmental worries centered on drastically declining crab populations, noting fewer catches than in years past and questioning whether environmental changes or overfishing by outsiders are to blame. He also observed a surge in tourism and noted that up to 250 cruise ships are expected this coming year, which impacts both local work opportunities and traditional activities like fishing. Other community initiatives include the Tribe's greenhouse that successfully produces vegetables for residents and the purchase of a rescue boat equipped with heat-seeking technology for water emergencies. Member Wright reported the effects of harsh winter weather on deer populations, declining salmon catches, and environmental changes linked to logging and development. He urged the Council to address these environmental challenges, emphasizing the loss and hardship faced by Indigenous people in the region.

Cal Casipit of Gustavus reported that there had been significant snowfall in Gustavus, which reached up to six feet before the first thaw and was currently measuring four feet. He observed an unusually high number of moose using snow-blown trails in Gustavus, but they disappeared when temperatures dropped. He hopes the moose population can withstand the heavy snowfall, which is the most he has seen since becoming a resident. He has received inquiries about the Secretarial review and noted widespread misinformation on social media. Since December, Member Casipit has been actively involved in discussions about the Secretarial review, addressing misinformation on social media and through media interviews. He emphasized the importance of maintaining deference to Regional Advisory Councils as outlined in ANILCA Title VIII, clarifying that these Councils are the only management bodies mentioned in the law.

Michael Douville of Craig also reported that this winter was a tough one and he was looking forward to spring fish eggs. He expressed concerns about the logging of old growth forests, emphasizing that most available old growth had already been logged and that new logging threatens critical winter habitats vital for subsistence resources. He is apprehensive about State management practices, which seem to allow more destructive logging methods. Additionally, he noted a significant decline in the local deer population—harvests have dropped by 50% over the past decade—largely due to predation, stem exclusion, and loss of habitat from further old growth cutting. He also mentioned that the wolf population is being managed at levels higher than recommended, further upsetting the balance with deer populations and making subsistence hunting more difficult.

Ted Sandhofer of Petersburg provided an update noting previous concerns about deer and moose populations due to heavy snowfall in December but stated that conditions improved after the snow turned to rain in central Southeast, and he believes animal populations are stable for now. He also reported increased activity and participation during the trapping season, with fur prices holding steady and many trappers involved. The community is currently preparing for the longline fishing season, resulting in heightened activity in Petersburg. Additionally, he highlighted significant concern among rural residents regarding potential changes to the subsistence program (as a possible result of Secretarial review), emphasizing the need for further attention to this issue. He concluded by expressing eagerness for spring despite uncertainty about the weather.

Albert Howard of Angoon reported that he and Angoon community members are deeply concerned about the effects of environmental changes and Federal regulations on their subsistence resources. While deer populations were strong in the fall and winter, heavy snowfall has raised concerns about their future. The disappearance of dog salmon (Chum) from Favorite Bay has impacted traditional food practices, as these fish were once abundant. Commercial crab fishing has led to a decline in Dungeness crab stocks, making it difficult for residents to safely harvest them, especially since commercial pots far outnumber those used for subsistence. Residents feel that outside communities are exploiting Angoon's well-maintained resources, resulting in regulations that restrict local harvesting and threaten their food security. There is frustration over proposed changes to subsistence regulations and worry about potential closures for king (Chinook) salmon fishing without clear evidence of fishing impacts. With high unemployment and limited income, the community relies heavily on local resources and faces challenges due to a lack of access to major stores. Member Howard emphasized the importance of Title VIII of ANILCA in protecting subsistence rights and noted his preference for the term “traditional food” to be used over the word “subsistence.” Community advocacy, Council efforts, and learning through social media play vital roles in safeguarding Angoon’s traditions and adapting to external pressures.

Patricia Phillips of Pelican reported that since their last meeting in January, the community experienced a challenging winter with heavy snowfall, a prolonged cold spell, and severely limited transportation options. The deer hunting season continued through January, with successful harvests. Supply shortages, such as a lack of eggs due to non-laying chickens in cold weather, affected residents, forcing them to adapt. Gas prices were high and expected to rise further. The inlet saw an abundance of herring, attracting seagulls, though the herring did not enter the harbor. Environmental conditions fluctuated, with early freezes, subsequent thaws, torrential rains, and renewed snowfall—three feet in recent weeks—leading to concerns about the local deer population. The community is now eagerly awaiting the arrival of spring.

Louie Wagner of Metlakatla expressed concern about a significant decline in herring and winter king salmon, noting that he and his son could previously catch king salmon during winter, but now none are available. The remaining herring are concentrated in Annette Bay, attracting whales and sea lions, further depleting stocks. He also observed that birds are gathering, but the lack of herring threatens the ocean’s ecosystem. Last year, he saw no Coho Salmon returns, only Chum Salmon for the hatchery, and he emphasized the need to protect the remaining herring. Member Wagner lamented the absence of salmon

fry near the shore and the overall decrease in fish populations, including halibut, highlighting his concern for the ocean's changing condition. He shared reflections of a recent spring fishing trip where eulachons were plentiful in the river, reminiscent of past years.

Lewis Hiatt of Hollis expressed concerns about wolf management and the declining deer population in Hollis, noting that poor weather led to a low wolf harvest this season. He disagreed with the Alaska Board of Game's decision to raise the wolf population objective. He expressed appreciation to Heather Bauscher for her youth program on the Federal Subsistence Management Program, which was shared with the Hollis School. He mentioned his hope to visit the Unuk River some day with Member Wagner.

Don Hernandez of Point Baker described the increasing challenges his remote community on north Prince of Wales Island (POW) faces with hunting and weather. Deer hunting has become difficult due to both diminished populations and unusual weather patterns, including unseasonably warm temperatures, extreme cold, and heavy snowfall—the most he's seen in over 40 years. January brought flooding from rapid snowmelt and torrential rains, leading to concerns about wildlife and habitat, as well as windstorms that caused extensive damage to homes and forests, including the loss of dozens of trees. He attributes these events to climate change, noting that past insect outbreaks have further weakened local forests. Chair Hernandez emphasized that while the Council cannot prevent climate change, protecting old growth forests is a key action to mitigate its impacts on wildlife and habitats in Southeast Alaska.

Chair Report: Chair Hernandez reported that no one from the Council was able to attend the Alaska Board of Game meeting in Wrangell or the January public testimony meeting on the Secretarial review in Anchorage due to a lack of travel funding, so he attended by phone. He provided Council's recommendations during the Alaska Board of Game meeting and fielded questions – specifically around the Council's concerns regarding the impact of non-resident hunters on subsistence users and wolf management. He commented on how hard it is to represent the Council effectively when a member is not physically present at Alaska Board of Game/Board of Fisheries meetings. Chair Hernandez then reported that he listened to extensive testimony during the January Secretarial review session, which was informative and included participation from various Southeast Tribal presidents.

Alaska Board of Game Meeting Report:
Council Coordinator DeAnna Perry provided a quick update on the actions affecting Southeast, which were taken by the Alaska Board of Game at its meeting in January 2026[2].

Service Awards:
Member Phillips and Member Wright received their framed artwork plaques in recognition of 30 years and 20 years of service to the Council respectively.

[2] A complete summary of actions taken by Alaska Board of Game at this meeting can be found at: https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/gameboard/pdfs/2025-2026/se/soa-final.pdf

Action Items:

Recommendations on 2026-2028 Federal Wildlife Proposals and Closure Reviews:

WP26-02: Prohibit take between civil sunset and sunrise (Units 1-5)

Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Phillips, to support WP26-02, which failed by a vote of 1-9.

The Council opposed the proposal to prohibit the take of large land mammals in Units 1-5 from civil sunset until civil sunrise. The Council heard testimony from its members who also serve on Alaska Fish and Game Advisory Committees and noted that explaining 'civil twilight' to others is difficult and for some, not easy to determine. Council members recognized that hunting sometimes occurs during full moon nights but that hunting in the dark is not a common practice because if it is too dark to see an animal, it cannot be shot without creating safety concerns. However, the Council felt that the proposed action would be confusing, more restrictive than State regulations, and would unnecessarily restrict users who may have the opportunity to safely harvest animals after civil sunset or before civil sunrise. The Council also pointed out that current regulations prohibit the use of artificial light to harvest animals. They concluded there are no conservation concerns associated with this proposal, but its adoption would be detrimental to subsistence users.

WP26-03: Unit 2 Deer, close Federal public lands to non-federally qualified users

Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Howard, to support WP26-03 with modification to close all of Unit 2 from Jul. 24 – Aug. 15 to deer hunting by non-federally qualified users (NFQUs) and reduce the harvest limit for NFQUs to 1 buck (*see table below WP26-04*). Motion passed unanimously.

WP26-04: Unit 2 Deer, Conduct ANILCA §804 Subsistence User Prioritization Analysis

Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Howard, to support WP26-04 with modification to close all of Unit 2 from Jul. 24 – Jul. 31 and from Jan. 1-31 to deer hunting by federally qualified subsistence users (FQSUs) from Units 1C, 1D, 4, 5, and Ketchikan and limit harvest by these FQSUs to two bucks; and to close all of Unit 2 from Jan. 1-31 to deer hunting by FQSUs from Units 3, 1B, and the remainder of Unit 1A (including Metlakatla and Saxman) and limit harvest by these FQSUs to four bucks (*see table*). Motion passed unanimously.

Council's recommendations on WP26-03 and WP26-04 regarding Unit 2 deer:

Residency	**Limit**	**Season**	**Restriction**
NFQU	1 Buck	Aug.15-Dec. 31	Unit 2 closed from Aug. 1-14
Units 1D, 1C, 4, 5 Ketchikan	2 Bucks	Aug. 1-Dec. 31	Unit 2 closed from Jul. 24-31 and Jan. 1-31. No doe harvest
Unit 3, Metlakatla, Saxman (Unit 1B and remainder of Unit 1A)	4 Bucks	Jul. 24-Dec. 31	Unit 2 closed Jan. 1-31. No doe harvest

Unit 2	5 deer (1 may be doe)	Jul. 24-Jan. 31	None

The Council felt that harvest and season restrictions for both NFQUs and FQSUs residing outside Unit 2 were justified due to reports of declining deer populations and the difficulties many Unit 2 residents have been experiencing in harvesting sufficient deer to meet their subsistence needs. These difficulties are due to lower deer abundance as well as high competition and crowding by other user groups, such as blocking roads and preventing access to hunting areas. The Council pointed to public testimony and the OSM analysis, citing substantial increases in deer hunter numbers in Unit 2 since 1997, as well as severe habitat loss due to logging that has significantly reduced deer carrying capacity.

The Council felt that a 1-buck harvest limit would be sufficient for NFQUs given this situation because it would provide continued harvest opportunity, avoid unnecessary restrictions, and it would not greatly limit economic opportunities for POW businesses that cater to non-local hunters. The Council also noted that there are additional opportunities for NFQUs to harvest deer under state regulations on non-federal lands in Unit 2. The Council stated that restricting NFQUs was necessary given their recommended restrictions on FQSUs via the Section 804 prioritization process.

The Council carefully considered their recommendations on ANILCA Section 804 restrictions by evaluating the customary and direct dependence of each eligible rural community on Unit 2 deer as a mainstay of livelihood, local residency and proximity of each community to Unit 2 deer, and the availability of alternative resources in each community. The Council determined that residents of Units 1C, 1D, 4, and 5 do not traditionally show a high level of use or dependency on Unit 2 deer and have access to sufficient alternative resources. It was also noted that Unit 3 residents exhibit historic dependance on Unit 2 for deer harvest and lack alternative resources, in part because Unit 3 has a low deer harvest limit, and the shortest deer season in the region. The Council also considered average community income and employment indicators for evaluating the availability of alternative resources when determining restrictions to Ketchikan versus nearby communities like Saxman. They noted that Saxman has relatively high poverty levels compared to Ketchikan. The Council also noted that the Ketchikan Indian Community (KIC) recognized the need for restrictions in order to conserve Unit 2 deer and ensure the continuation of Unit 2 residents' subsistence uses of deer. KIC was supportive of the Council's proposed regulations.

The Council recognized that doe harvest is fairly limited in Unit 2, but that the harvest of does is a customary and traditional practice for many residents of Unit 2, providing an additional opportunity for FQSUs there to meet their subsistence needs. The Council voted to retain this doe harvest opportunity for Unit 2 residents, while eliminating doe harvest for FQSUs residing outside Unit 2, to reduce potential impacts to the deer population. The January deer season was also retained for Unit 2 residents only for the same reasons.

Testimony on Wildlife Proposals WP26-03/-04/-05 highlighted the high cost and limited amount of store-bought food available on POW and that many rural residents depend on securing their own protein

through hunting and fishing. The Council's actions on these proposals took this into consideration and made recommendations to restrict users based on the necessity to address conservation concerns for Unit 2 deer, and to continue the subsistence uses of deer by the rural residents of POW.

WP26-05: Restrictions to non-federally qualified users and non-POW resident federally qualified subsistence users per ANILCA §804 User prioritization analysis (Unit 2 Deer)

No action was taken on WP26-05 due to actions taken on WP26-03 and WP26-04, which addressed the actions requested under WP26-05.

WP26-06/07: Eliminating Federal doe hunt (Unit 2 Deer)

Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Sandhofer, to support WP26-06/07, which failed unanimously.

The Council acknowledged that there is a conservation concern for deer in Unit 2, but not because of the doe hunt. The Unit 2 doe harvest is minimal (about 70 does/year vs. 1,000s of bucks/year) and not likely to add to the decline of the deer population, which is caused more by habitat loss, severe weather events, and predation. The Council observed that many does are not getting bred and there seems to be a shortage of bucks in Unit 2. Furthermore, the Council considers doe harvest to be a cultural and traditional practice and a training mechanism for youth and should remain available for users who need to harvest does to meet their needs. The Council heard robust public and Tribal testimony in opposition to this proposal citing the economic challenge of affording gas and ammunition as well as how eliminating this hunt would be detrimental to subsistence users. The data presented to the Council showed that the amount of effort to harvest a deer has increased in recent years. The Council recognized that while most hunters do not target does, some may need to harvest a doe to meet their subsistence needs.

WP26-08: Eliminate January hunt (Unit 2 Deer)

Motion by Member Sandhofer, seconded by Member Casipit, to support WP26-08, which failed unanimously.

The Council noted that the January deer hunt in Unit 2 is a traditional and customary practice for subsistence harvesters. Data presented to the Council showed that the overall harvest during this time has historically been very low (~7 deer/year in January) and, therefore, the Council believes eliminating the January season would not contribute substantially to the conservation of the deer population in Unit 2. The Council heard testimony from Tribal representatives and subsistence users of Unit 2, who all opposed this proposal. The Council also noted that the January season provides a meaningful priority and additional opportunity for subsistence harvesters to address food security concerns during the winter, if needed.

WP26-09: Shorten season to open Dec. 15 (Unit 2 Wolves)

Motion by Member Douville, seconded by Member Howard, to support WP26-09, which failed unanimously.

The Council opposed this proposal to move the start date for wolf trapping in Unit 2 from Nov. 15 to Dec. 15. The Council received testimony from several Tribal members who shared local experiences and traditional knowledge; one testifier specifically noted that his Tribe is not meeting its needs for wolf for handicrafts and regalia. The Council feels that the current Unit 2 wolf trapping season start date was based on local knowledge of trapping practices and conditions as wolf pelts prime up in Nov. The proposed change in season would be detrimental to subsistence users, as it would move the trapping season later in the year when weather is worse, traps are more likely to freeze, and days are shorter. The Council felt that the current season does not restrict other uses, but supporting this proposal would shorten the trapping season in codified regulation. Additionally, shifting the opening date of the federal wolf trapping season to Dec. 15 would cause confusion by misaligning state and Federal season dates as the Alaska Board of Game recently opposed a similar State proposal. Therefore, the Council opposed this proposal, so that local residents may continue their subsistence uses of wolves.

WP26-10: Establish a 45-day guaranteed trapping season (Unit 2 Wolves)

Motion by Member Phillips, seconded by Member Howard, to support WP26-10.

Motion by Member Phillips, seconded by Member Casipit to amend WP26-10 to include a provision in the delegation of authority letter to guarantee a 47-day wolf trapping season. Motion withdrawn with consensus of the second.

Motion by Chair Hernandez, seconded by Member Casipit to modify the proposal to maintain the codified season dates, but add regulatory language that the trapping season shall not close before Dec. 31. Amendment passed unanimously.

The main motion as amended passed unanimously. (to support WP26-10 with modification to stipulate that the season may not close prior to Dec. 31).

The Council believes that the Unit 2 wolf population is healthy and this recommendation is supported by substantial evidence: traditional ecological knowledge from the public and from Council members. This 47-day season would be beneficial to subsistence users by providing more opportunity to get wolf hides needed for regalia and handicrafts without restricting other users.

Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Phillips, to write a letter requesting the Board to instruct the in-season manager to limit his special action authorities to provide at least a 47-day wolf trapping season and that any in-season action for the Unit 2 wolf **hunting** not be subject to that same closure to **trapping** for Unit 2. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Member Phillips, seconded by Member Casipit, to reconsider WP26-10. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Member Douville, seconded by Member Phillips, to amend the original motion (to guarantee a 47-day wolf trapping season) to a guarantee of a wolf trapping season of no less than 40 days and add regulatory language that the trapping season shall not close before Dec. 24. Motion passed unanimously.

This amendment came with the agreement of the maker of the proposal. The Council believes this more conservative recommendation is warranted given the sensitive situation (prior ESA petitions) and that, coupled with the non-closure of the hunting season for Unit 2 rural residents that they are requesting through a letter, this 40-day trapping season could provide opportunity for a slight increase in the harvest. The Council does not feel the 40-day season would create a conservation concern or result in overharvest. Similar to their recommendation for the previous 47-day trapping season, this recommendation was based on local knowledge of wolf populations and trapping practices from Council members, as well as from Tribal testimony during the meeting. The Council believes that subsistence needs for wolves are not being met in Unit 2, and the guaranteed 40-day season will benefit subsistence users by providing more opportunities, helping them meet their subsistence needs of wolf pelts.

WCR26-01: Closure to harvest of deer by non-federally qualified users (Unit 2 Deer)

No action was taken on WCR26-01 due to actions taken on WP26-03 and WP26-04.

Recommendations on Deferred Fisheries Proposal:

FP25-02: Unuk River – Limit Eulachon Users

Motion by Member Sandhofer, seconded by Member Casipit, to support FP25-02. Amended motion to support with OSM modification (to include waters throughout District 1) passed unanimously.

The Council supported FP25-02 as modified by OSM to close the Federal public waters throughout District 1 to the harvest of Eulachon, except by FQSUs harvesting in the Unuk River. The Council's intent in submitting the proposal was to protect subsistence use of the Eulachon population during a time of conservation concern. The proposed action, with modification, will protect the population by limiting competing non-subsistence uses. The recommendation was made using both biological information from the monitoring program and local knowledge from a long-time user on the Council. The proposed closure will be beneficial to subsistence users by providing for a limited harvest and promoting sharing amongst the community, while restricting competing non-subsistence uses. The Council believes that this action will not unnecessarily restrict other uses, as there is very little historical use by NFQUs, such as Juneau residents or non-residents.

Call for 2027-2029 Federal Fisheries Proposals:

Chair Hernandez led the call for Federal fisheries regulatory proposals. Although a working group met after the last meeting to discuss possible fish proposals to submit for this cycle, none were brought forward and the Council did not develop any Federal fisheries proposals.

Fisheries Closure Review Preview

Jake Musslewhite, fish biologist, USFS, presented a synopsis of Southeast Alaska fisheries for a variety of species, providing details for different geographic areas and then answering questions. The Council received an initial briefing on the following fisheries closure reviews, which will be up for Council action at the fall 2026 meeting:

- **FCR27-09**: Closure to NFQUs for Sockeye Salmon harvest in Neva Lake, Neva Creek, and South Creek
- **FCR27-10:** Closure to NFQUs for Sockeye Salmon harvest in Kah Sheets Creek

Review and Approve FY2025 Annual Report:

Motion by Member Howard, seconded by Member Sandhofer, to approve the FY2025 Annual Report to the Board as drafted and presented at the meeting, which passed unanimously. Items identified for report:

- the importance of continuing funding for youth engagement and student participation
- the continued concern with non-resident unguided hunting and fishing in Southeast, and the impacts these users have on subsistence resources
- the need for increased wildlife monitoring and biological capacity
- concerns about king salmon subsistence allocations, specifically restrictions without clear area specific information supporting those decisions
- the habitat impacts from past logging practices on the Tongass National Forest, specifically on POW and the need for adaptive management and habitat restoration
- a request to the Board to support subsistence education efforts with respect to encouraging the development of a curriculum focused on youth engagement and the transmission of traditional knowledge and practices.
- a request for continued coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representative to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council regarding subsistence halibut issues.

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Subsistence Resource Commission Appointment

Amber Cohen, Cultural Anthropologist and acting Subsistence Program Lead, NPS, presented information on a viable candidate for serving on the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Subsistence Resource Commission (WRST SRC).

Motion by Member Howard, seconded by Member Sandhofer, to appoint Matthew Anderstrom from Yakutat to the WRST SRC, which passed unanimously.

Correspondence:

The Council voted to send the following letters:

- **Forest Plan**: Comment letter on the USFS Notice of Initiation of the development of a proposed Forest Plan revision and Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. Upon discussing information brought to the Council by the Forest Plan workgroup, motion was made by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Phillips, to use the workgroup's input and draft a letter to the Forest Service planning team. Motion passed unanimously.

- **Steelhead (Unit 2)**:
  Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Douville, to send a letter to Craig Ranger District voicing local concerns regarding guided Steelhead fishing on POW and potential impacts to subsistence users. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Angoon Fishing Guide Permit Process:**
  Motion by Member Howard, seconded by Member Phillips to create a letter with concerns on the permitting process in the Angoon area for freshwater stream fishing. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Follow Up Correspondence: Jet Boat Nuisance / Transboundary Mining:**
  Motion by Member Casipit, seconded by Member Phillips, to (1) request response from USFS to previous letter sent to Admiralty Monument District Ranger regarding local concerns about nuisance by jet boat operations in the area near Angoon; and, (2) to resend the Council's most recent letter regarding concerns for transboundary mining in watersheds since a response has not yet been received. Motion passed unanimously.

Future Meeting Dates

The Council confirmed their Fall 2026 meeting dates and location: October 20-22, 2026, in Gustavus.
The Council selected their Winter 2027 meeting date and location: March 23-25, 2027, in Sitka.
The Council selected their Fall 2027 meeting date and location: October 19-21, 2027, on POW.

Reports:

- ADF&G – Subsistence Division Report, Southeast Data Update Presentation by Emily Doll, Southeast Subsistence Resource Specialist
- NPS: WRST report by Amber Cohen, Cultural Anthropologist
- USFS: Alaska Roadless Rule and Tongass National Forest Update by Monique Nelson, Tongass National Forest Supervisor
- OSM: Program Update by Lisa Grediagin, Supervisory Wildlife Biologist

Other Business:

Correspondence Review

Ms. Perry provided a brief review of the letters that the Council voted to send at its last meeting:

- Comment letter on the Alaska Board of Game Southeast Alaska proposals
- Comment letter on the Secretarial review of the Federal Subsistence Management Program

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Update

Mr. Musslewhite informed the Council that OSM is in the final phase of the 2026 monitoring program funding cycle. He mentioned that the Council will discuss priority information needs at its fall meeting. Three members (Howard, Sandhofer, Douville) volunteered to participate in a summer telephonic meeting to discuss development of priority information needs for Southeast to be presented to the whole Council at its fall regulatory meeting and voted upon.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m. on March 13, 2026.

Prepared Minutes /s/ Signature on File

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DeAnna Perry, Designated Federal Officer
USDA - United States Forest Service

Certified by Chair on July 2, 2026 via email

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Don Hernandez, Chair
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

This version of the meeting minutes was certified by the Chair for content on July 2, 2026. The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council approved this version at its fall 2026 meeting on October 20, 2026.

A more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcripts, and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Office of Subsistence Management at 1-800-478-1456 or Council Coordinator DeAnna Perry at 907-209-7817 or email: deanna.perry@usda.gov.