



# NORTHWEST ARCTIC SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL Meeting Materials

*October 31 - November 1, 2022  
Kotzebue*





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*On the cover...*

Upper Kobuk fish camp



USFWS photo by Susan Georgette



**NORTHWEST ARCTIC SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Kotzebue  
Nullagvik Hotel Conference Room  
October 31-November 1, 2022  
Convening at 8:30 am daily

**TELECONFERENCE:** call the number: 1-877-807-6997, then when prompted enter the passcode: 73803960.

**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 or Moment of Silence**
2. **Call to Order** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)
3. **Roll Call and Establish Quorum** (*Council Coordinator-Lisa Hutchinson*) .....4
4. **Welcome and Introductions** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)
5. **Review and Adopt Agenda\*** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*) ..... 1
6. **Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes\*** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*) .....5
7. **Reports** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)
  - Council Member Reports
  - Chair’s Report
8. **Service Awards** (*TBA*)
9. **Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items** (available each morning) (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)
10. **Old Business** (*Chair*)
  - a. 805(c) Report – summary (*Council Coordinator, Lisa Hutchinson*) ..... 14
  - b. Federal Subsistence Board FY2021 Annual Report Replies – summary (*Council Coordinator-, Lisa Hutchinson*) ..... 19
  - c. Special Actions
    - WSA21-01:** Unit 23 caribou and moose closure (*Hannah Voorhees, OSM Anthropology*)
    - WSA22-01:** Muskox Unit 22 and 23 (*Tom Plank, OSM Wildlife*)

**11. New Business** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)

- a. 2024 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP) (*OSM Fisheries Karen Hyer  
OSM Anthropology Hannah Voorhees*) .....29
- b. Priority Information Needs\* 2024-2027 (*Karen Hyer and Hannah Voorhees*) .....34
- c. Call for the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program proposals  
(*OSM Fisheries Karen Hyer*) .....41
- d. Identify Issues for FY 2022 Annual Report\* (*Council Coordinator-, Lisa Hutchinson*) .....42
- e. Fall 2022 Council Application/Nomination Open Season (*DeAnna Perry*) .....44
- f. Joint Meeting North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in  
May 2023. Nominate One Council Member to Attend\* (*Hannah Voorhees*) .....45
- g. Harvest of Wildlife for Sport Purposes in National Preserves\* (*NPS Regional Office Andee Sears*)
- h. Council Appointments to Kobuk Valley and Cape Krusenstern Subsistence Resource  
Commissions\* (*Ken Adkisson or Kim Jochum, NPS*) .....46
- i. Telephonic/Internet Expenses Related to the Council Teleconference Meetings (*Jessica Gill*) .....47

**12. Agency Reports** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)

- a. Tribal Governments
- b. National Weather Service (*Brian Brettschneider*)
- c. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Selawik National Wildlife Refuge Maritime NWR Activity Report to the Council  
(*Will Wiese/ Brittany Sweeney*)
- d. National Park Service
  - 1. Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve update (*Marcy Okada*) .....49
  - 2. Western Arctic Parklands update (*Ken Adkisson*)
  - 3. Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission (*Ken Adkisson*)
- e. Bureau of Land Management – Update (*Bruce Seppi*) .....51
- f. Alaska Department of Fish and Game
  - Division of Subsistence – Review of Arctic Area Subsistence
  - Division Projects (*Helen Cold*).....55
- g. Office of Subsistence Management (*Tom Kron*)

**13. Future Meeting Dates\*** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)

Confirm winter 2023 meeting date and location .....63  
Select fall 2023 meeting date and location .....64

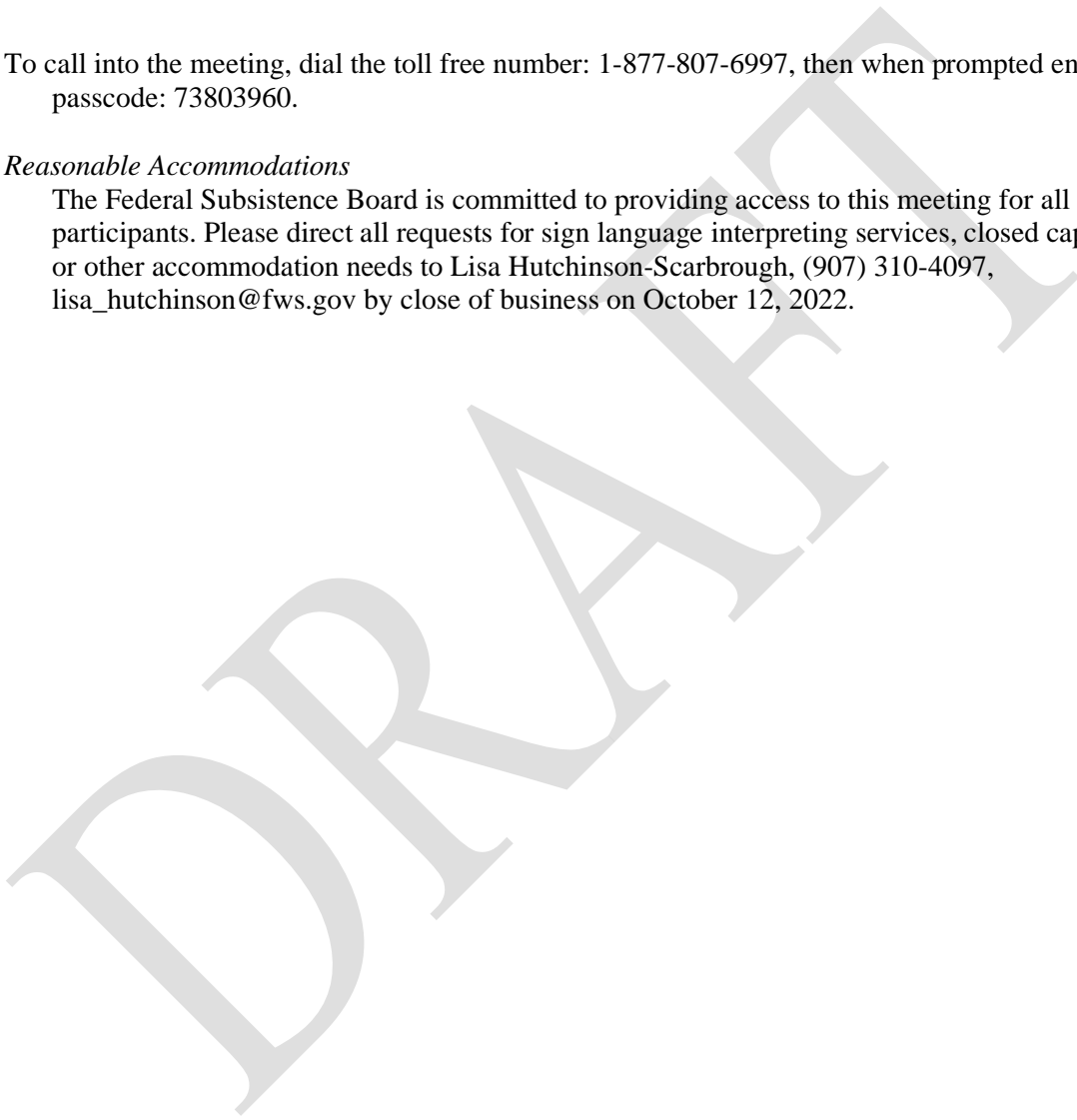
**14. Closing Comments** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)

**15. Adjourn** (*Chair, Thomas Baker*)

To call into the meeting, dial the toll free number: 1-877-807-6997, then when prompted enter the passcode: 73803960.

*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 Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough, (907) 310-4097, [lisa\\_hutchinson@fws.gov](mailto:lisa_hutchinson@fws.gov) by close of business on October 12, 2022.



**REGION 8  
Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory  
Council**

<b>Seat</b>	<b>Yr Apptd <i>Term Expires</i></b>	<b>Member Name &amp; Community</b>	<b>Represents</b>
<b>1</b>	2009 <b>2022</b>	<b>Enoch E. Shiedt, Sr.</b> Kotzebue	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>2</b>	2019 <b>2022</b>	<b>Thomas C. Baker</b> Kotzebue <span style="float: right;"><b>Chair</b></span>	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>3</b>		<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>4</b>	2010 <b>2022</b>	<b>Michael C. Kramer</b> Kotzebue <span style="float: right;"><b>Vice Chair</b></span>	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>5</b>	2013 <b>2023</b>	<b>Calvin D. Moto II</b> Deering	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>6</b>	2020 <b>2023</b>	<b>Wilbur M. Howarth, Sr.</b> Noorvik	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>7</b>	2020 <b>2023</b>	<b>Robert J. Schaeffer</b> Kotzebue	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>8</b>	2020 <b>2022</b>	<b>Elmer Armstrong, Jr.</b> Noorvik	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>9</b>	2011-2017; 2020 <b>2024</b>	<b>Vern J. Cleveland, Sr.</b> Noorvik	<b>Subsistence</b>
<b>10</b>		<b>Vacant</b>	



# NORTHWEST ARCTIC SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Meeting Minutes

Via teleconference  
February 14-15, 2022

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

The meeting was called to order Monday, February 14, 2022 at 9:00 am. Council members Thomas Baker, Barbara Atoruk, Elmer Armstrong, Vern Cleveland, Wilbur Howarth, Michael Kramer, Calvin Moto, Robert Schaeffer, Enoch Shiedt, and Hazel Smith Harris were present via teleconference. The Council has no vacant seats. A quorum was established with 10 of 10 seated Council members participating by phone.

### Attendees:

#### *Via teleconference*

Tribal Organizations: Damon Schaeffer, NANA Regional Corporation

US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):

- Jill Klein, Anchorage
- Ray Handler, Fairbanks
- Will Wiese, Kotzebue, Selawik NWR
- USFWS Genetics Lab, Anchorage: Penny Crane and Evangelize Dooc

Office of Subsistence Management (OSM), Anchorage: Karen Hyer, Orville Lind, Robbin La Vine, Lisa Grediagin, Dr. Hannah Voorhees, Tom Plank, Kendra Holman, Eva Patton

National Park Service (NPS):

- Letty Hughes, Nome
- Western Arctic National Parklands, Kotzebue: Hannah Atkinson, Raime Fronstin, Carlos Paiz, Justin Young, Marsha Fronstin, Mark Dowdle
- Nikki Braem, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve
- Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Fairbanks: Jeff Rasic, Marcy Okada, Kyle Joly

Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Anchorage: Tom Sparks, Chris McKee, and Bruce Seppi

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G):

- Mark Burch, Palmer
- Division of Wildlife Conservation, Kotzebue: Nicole Edminson and Christie Osburn
- Division of Sport Fisheries, Fairbanks: Brendan Scanlon and Joe Spencer

US Forest Service, Anchorage: Greg Risdahl

Bureau of Indian Affairs, Anchorage: Dr. Glenn Chen

Alaska State Troopers:

- Maggie Stang, Nome
- Steve Canteen, Kotzebue

Public:

- Cyrus Harris, Kotzebue
- Martin Robards, Wildlife Conservation Society

## **Review and Adopt Agenda**

Motion by Mr. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Shiedt, to adopt the agenda as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **Election of Officers**

Mr. Thomas Baker was elected the Council's Chair.

Mr. Mike Kramer was elected the Council's Vice Chair.

Ms. Hazel Smith Harris was elected the Council's Secretary.

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

Motion by Ms. Atoruk, seconded by Mr. Cleveland to approve the Fall 2021 meeting minutes with a modification to correct the spelling of Council Member Howarth's last name.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **Council Member and Chair Reports**

Enoch (Attamuk) Shiedt, Sr. of Kotzebue reported that he saw some caribou this year, but not nearly as many as past years. The caribou population is declining and there are increasing numbers of bears and wolves taking caribou. There were hardly any salmon this past summer, but there were a lot of berries.

Vern Cleveland, Sr. of Noorvik reported that no caribou were near Noorvik until freeze-up this year, which was a hardship for local people. He also stated that caribou are deflected by the Red Dog Mine road. He is concerned about the effects of climate change, weather events, and even avalanches on the caribou. At present, a lot of caribou are near Shungnak. Rain in January created crust on the snow, making it difficult for the caribou to feed. Mr. Cleveland is also concerned about people knowing when and where they can hunt, especially on National Park lands, because some subsistence hunters have been ticketed. Mr. Cleveland reported that wolves and bears are abundant. He noted that the Kobuk River has really changed due to erosion, becoming much straighter in some places. He also stated he would like information on the current location of the Teshepuk Caribou Herd.

Wilbur Howarth, Sr. of Noorvik reported that he saw on Facebook that there are a lot of caribou near Shungnak now, and some on the [Baldwin] Peninsula toward Selawik and Buckland. There are continuing problems with lots of wolves and bears. He saw a lot of moose cows with twins and considers it a good

sign. The weather has been cold this spring making it difficult to dry fish. Mr. Howarth is part of the Subsistence committee for the Ambler mining district road and provided a report on their first meeting. He also said that several people fell into creeks on snowmachines this winter because the creeks are just covered by snow [not ice].

Robert Schaeffer of Kotzebue reported that he would like to know how the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) Ambler subsistence committee was formed. He expressed many concerns about global warming, particularly the massive amounts of erosion in the Upper Kobuk and on the Baldwin Peninsula, decreasing sea ice, melting permafrost that releases methane and carbon dioxide, increasing willows, and the tremendous amounts of rain and storms last year that caused high water in rivers all summer long. Mr. Schaeffer also noted the earlier snow melt in the spring affects caribou migration as caribou are slowed down by the melting snow and water, increasing their energy expenditure and their likelihood of dying before reaching their calving grounds.

Barbara Atoruk of Kiana reported that fishing was good last year, but the river got really high and it was the first time she ever saw it go over its banks. The blueberries and salmonberries were good, but there were no cranberries. There are lots of wolves around, but they rarely come into the village. Recently there have been hardly any foxes. The caribou came really late and were stuck in the Squirrel River drainage for a while. At the last moment, the caribou started crossing the Kobuk River and hunters went up but the river froze and the hunters were barely able to make it back home. Then the river thawed out and hunters went back up and caribou were still crossing so they were able to harvest some. This is the coldest winter they ever had, and it was foggy.

Elmer Armstrong, Jr. of Noorvik reported that whitefish by Kiana were good, but some fishers missed them by the time they put out their nets. Younger kids and elders put hooks out for burbot. Some hunters got caribou on the peninsula. People are seeing more lynx, perhaps because of the high rabbit cycle. Mr. Armstrong noticed caribou foraging through crusty snow near Kotzebue.

Hazel Smith Harris of Kotzebue reported that there was too much water to harvest berries last year. Her family couldn't get caribou in freezers until last month. Ms. Harris received reports from others that the fish run was okay, but not as abundant as the past. People could not dry *oogruk* and fish because weather was either too hot or too rainy. She would like to hear more reports on beavers as they are overpopulated and causing problems. Ms. Harris is disappointed that the WACH Working Group did not support the special action (WSA21-01). She has seen on Facebook that a lot of people are hungry because they don't have caribou. Food insecurity is increasing across the region because of COVID-19 and high prices. Her family usually harvests ptarmigan and rabbits, but they have not been finding any, potentially because there are a lot of lynx.

Calvin Moto II of Deering reported that muskox are hanging out near Deering due to increasing wolf, bear, and wolverine numbers. Some control of muskox is needed because they are a nuisance, disrupting cemeteries and airplane runways. Some hunters have gone out to harvest them, but he feels the Park Service or the State should also help control them. Mr. Moto has noticed that caribou are lean due to unusual rain

in December, which froze the ground and makes it hard for caribou to reach their food. He reported that hunters have had to travel further this year to find caribou. Global warming is resulting in rain instead of snow, affecting the caribou decline. He stated that there was good fishing this year and that he is looking forward to spring bird and *oogruk* hunting.

Thomas Baker of Kotzebue reported that there were some caribou harvested this year in Kotzebue, but he did not see a big migration across Kobuk Lake like it typically occurs in November or December. This is possibly due to rain in December, which threw things out of whack. Mr. Baker has heard a couple reports of wolves near Kotzebue, even circling people when stopped on snowmachines. He stated that this is another winter when there is not much to be hunted, but there are a lot of people trying to go out and subsist. He is hopeful for spring hunting.

### **Tribal and Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

Cyrus Harris of Kotzebue commented that he thought the meeting topics were very interesting and important. He appreciated hearing discussion of Alaska Native and subsistence lifestyle, Ambler Road, and resources such as muskox and caribou.

Martin Robards, Regional Director for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), let the Council know that WCS is in the early stages of planning a project about large predators in the Arctic in which they would like to conduct focus groups in communities throughout the region with hunters and trappers. The purpose of the focus groups would be to share previous study results with community members and also to document local perspectives on predators. It would also be a chance for local people to ask questions and suggest topics that they would like more information on.

### **Old Business**

#### ***Deferred Wildlife Special Action Request WSA21-01***

Dr. Hannah Voorhees presented an updated analysis of deferred temporary Wildlife Special Action WSA21-01 to the Council. The updated analysis included a summary of additional stakeholder input that was gathered by OSM and new population data for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. The analysis was split into two parts: (a) caribou, and (b) moose.

- Motion by Ms. Atoruk, seconded by Mr. Shiedt, to **support WSA21-01(a)**. Newly available population estimates show that the Western Arctic Caribou Herd has declined significantly and the Council continues to support this special action request that they submitted in order to protect the herd. The Council is very concerned about the Western Arctic Caribou Herd's population decline because it seems to be declining much faster than it has in the past. The special action request will help protect the herd during this upcoming hunting season, and there are few other ways to meaningfully conserve the herd while also preserving the continuation of subsistence uses. The Council noted that if only Federal public lands in Unit 23 were closed, it would just push non-local

hunters to the North Slope and adjacent areas. They supported a more unified approach in the closure. The Council also acknowledged that decreasing cow harvest is important for the herd's conservation. They said that residents will need to sacrifice the amount they are able to harvest, and that more education across the region is needed to raise awareness of the status of the herd. The Council stressed that caribou are a critical subsistence resources and discussed the need for restrictions on State lands as well as possibly on Federally qualified subsistence users. They also asked that law enforcement and Federal agencies listen to the local people who live in the area year-round.

The motion passed on a unanimous vote with one member absent.

- Motion by Mr. Schaeffer, seconded by Mr. Howarth, to **support WSA21-01(b)** in order to protect the moose population and continue the opportunity for subsistence hunting of moose in the region. The Council also noted that moose experience high predation rates by wolves and bears, and deep snow exacerbates this.

The motion passed on a unanimous vote with one member absent.

## **New Business**

### ***Overview of 2021 Council Charter Changes***

Ms. Eva Patton provided an overview of 2021 Council Charter changes. Changes to the charter included:

- Addition of a clause on carryover terms in Section 12 to avoid temporary vacancies on the Council when member terms expire and Secretarial appointments have not yet been made
- Removal of two clauses in Section 4 with no relevance to the Council's duties and authorities under Title VIII of ANILCA

Ms. Patton also advised the Council that the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) did not support the addition of two more seats to the Council, as requested by the Council. The Board cited a need for further justification from the Council and increasing costs for Council travel.

### ***Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Update***

Ms. Karen Hyer presented the Council with an update on the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP) and asked if any Council Members would like to volunteer to help develop priority information needs for the next call for proposals. Mr. Schaeffer and Ms. Atoruk volunteered to help. Council members also recommended that OSM staff get in touch with the Environmental Coordinator in each Tribal Office in the region to get their input on priority information needs. The Council discussed fisheries related issues such as beavers cutting off spawning streams, increasing water temperatures affecting salmon, herring die offs, increasing rain affecting salmon and char spawning, and bycatch by commercial trawlers in marine waters.

Mr. Brendan Scanlon and Mr. Joe Spencer gave a presentation titled “Dolly Varden Life History and Mixed Stock Analysis” as an update to the Council on the FRMP Noatak Dolly Varden Char project. The Council discussed the presented results and asked follow-up questions. They expressed appreciation for being presented with information on fisheries studies and encouraged the results to also be shared with Tribal Councils.

Ms. Evangeline Dooc presented a report on Dolly Varden Char genetics research in Togiak National Wildlife Refuge.

### ***Call for Federal Fish and Shellfish Proposals***

Ms. Karen Hyer informed the Council that the Board will soon be accepting proposals to change Federal regulations for the subsistence harvest of fish and shellfish on Federal public lands and waters for the 2023-2025 regulatory years. The call for proposals will be open for a period of at least 30 days upon the publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register. The Board will consider proposals to change Federal subsistence fish and shellfish seasons, harvest limits, methods, and means related to taking of fish for subsistence uses, as well as customary and traditional use determinations. The Council did not develop any fisheries proposals for submission.

### ***Call for Non-rural Determination Proposals***

Dr. Hannah Vorhees informed the Council that the Board will soon be accepting proposals to change community statuses in Federal regulations from non-rural to rural or from rural to non-rural. The call for proposals will be open for at least 30 days. Non-rural determination proposals are accepted every other fisheries regulatory cycle (every four years). The Council did not develop any non-rural determination proposals.

### ***Review and approve FY2021 annual report***

Ms. Eva Patton provided a summary of the draft annual report to the Council and requested feedback from the Council on any changes or additions to the report.

- Motion by Mr. Cleveland, seconded by Mr. Howarth, to **approve the annual report as amended**. Amendments included:
  1. Topic 1 about caribou: add a paragraph about the recent decline of the herd, and the Council’s disappointment in the Board’s inaction on WSA22-01
  2. Topic 7 about Maniilaq food distribution programs: ask how much money Maniilaq receives from Federal grants to provide food for elders

The motion passed on a unanimous vote with 3 members absent.

***Federal Subsistence Board Annual Report Reply Process Review and Revision Discussion and Council comments and feedback***

Ms. Lisa Grediagin notified the Council that the Board is seeking feedback on the annual report reply process. She solicited input from the Council, but Council members did not feel prepared to address this topic. The Council requested revisiting this issue at their Fall 2022 meeting and that written information be included in their meeting materials so that they have time to review and think about it ahead of time. The Chair asked the Council Coordinator to summarize the Council's discussion for review at their next meeting.

The Council expressed some concerns about the annual report process being a protocol to follow without much follow-up action. They also shared concerns about a disconnect existing between the Board and the Regional Advisory Councils. There was a request to receive an overview presentation about the Board's jurisdiction and authority under ANILCA at a future meeting, as well as suggestions for more training for Board and Council members.

***Receiving Public Testimony Protocol – Guided Discussion***

Ms. Lisa Grediagin led the Council in a guided discussion about their preferences for receiving written and oral public testimony at Council meetings. The Council suggested ways to encourage public comments and engagement in meetings. One suggestion was to make Council member contact information available to the public so anyone who has a question or comment can easily find out who to contact in their community or region. Public comment periods should be advertised in several ways including social media, websites, and local radio stations. Some Council members felt that use of Facebook to let people comment or view meetings would encourage participation. The Council suggested that more outreach should be conducted with ADF&G Advisory Councils and IRA Offices.

The Council prefers to receive public comments both in writing and orally when possible. This way they can have a written reference and also hear it directly from the commenter to better understand the commenter's thoughts and feelings. The Council noted that some people may not write well and prefer just to provide oral comments. If lengthy written comments are submitted, the Council felt it would be okay for the Council Coordinator to summarize them during the meeting instead of reading them verbatim. Written public comments should try to be submitted in enough time before the meeting so that Council Members can receive copies and review prior to the meeting. The Council feels that public commenters should be accommodated as best as possible and appreciates when the Chair allows additional periods of public comment for those people who cannot call in at the start of the meeting day.

***Briefing and Council comments on proposed actions to automate Federal subsistence permits***

Ms. Lisa Grediagin briefed the Council on proposed actions to automate Federal subsistence permits. The Council had no comments about automating permits, but discussed other issues related to harvest tickets and law enforcement.

***Briefing on the Secretarial regulations proposing the inclusion of identified submerged lands in the Tongass National Forest***

Ms. Lisa Grediagin briefed the Council on Secretarial regulations proposing the inclusion of identified submerged lands in the Tongass National Forest. The Council did not discuss the topic further as the Tongass National Forest is far from their local region, but Chairman Baker asked for information on the subject be sent to Council members so they could learn more about it and comment if they want.

***Temporary Wildlife Special Action Request (WSA22-01)***

Ms. Kendra Holman presented a summary of temporary Wildlife Special Action WSA22-01, which was submitted by BLM and NPS to change the Federal muskox permit system in Units 22 and 23 from a Federal registration permit to a Federal drawing permit.

- Motion by Mr. Cleveland, seconded by Mr. Howarth, to **support WSA22-01**. The Council considered this a housekeeping request to make regulations concurrent with the way the hunt is already administered and to better reflect the land status in the region.

The motion passed on a unanimous vote with 3 members absent.

**Agency Reports:**

- *Western Arctic Caribou Herd Migration Report* presented by Kyle Joly, Wildlife Biologist, National Park Service
- *Western Arctic National Parklands Update* presented by Joe Dallemolle, District Ranger, Western Arctic National Parklands
- *Commercial Use Authorization Statistics Report* presented by Hannah Atkinson, Cultural Anthropologist, Western Arctic National Parklands
- *Western Arctic Caribou Herd Overview* presented by Nicole Edmison, Wildlife Biologist, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- *Selawik National Wildlife Refuge Update* presented by Will Wiese, Acting Manager, Selawik National Wildlife Refuge
- *Staffing and Facilities Update* presented by Mark Dowdle, Acting Superintendent, Western Arctic National Parklands
  - Motion by Mr. Kramer, seconded by Ms. Smith Harris, to write a letter to Susan Georgette congratulating her on her retirement and thanking her for her work in the region throughout her career
- *Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission Appointments* presented by Hannah Atkinson, National Park Service
- *Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve Update* presented by Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator



- *2023 North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference Announcement* presented by Kyle Joly, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
- *Bureau of Land Management Alaska Field Office Report* presented by Tom Sparks, BLM
- *Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Update* presented by Christie Osburn, Wildlife Biologist, ADF&G
- *Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commercial Fishery Update* presented by Brendon Scanlon, Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G
- *Ambler Road Update* presented by Charlene Ostbloom, Ambler Access Project
- *Office of Subsistence Management Update* presented by Lisa Grediagin, Wildlife Division Supervisor

### **Future Meeting Dates:**

Fall 2022 meeting dates confirmed for October 31-November 1, 2022 in Kotzebue.

Winter 2023 meeting dates confirmed for March 6-7, 2023 with location to be determined.

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Brooke McDavid, Council coordinator for Eva Patton, Designated Federal Officer  
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

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Thomas Baker, Chair  
Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its fall 2022 meeting, 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 Brooke McDavid at 1-800-478-1456 or (907) 891-9181, email brooke\_mc david@fws.gov.



## Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 6199



FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE  
BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOREST SERVICE

OCT 6 2022

In Reply Refer To  
OSM 22096.LHS

Thomas Baker, Chair  
Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
c/o Office of Subsistence Management  
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chairman Baker,

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) met on April 12-15, 2022 via teleconference to consider proposed changes to Federal subsistence management regulations for the harvest of wildlife on Federal Public Lands in Alaska and wildlife closure reviews. This letter is to provide a report on the actions taken by the Board on proposals and closure reviews affecting Federally qualified subsistence users.

Pursuant to section 805(c) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Federal regulations (50 CFR 100.10 (e)) the Board generally defers to the recommendations of a Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) regarding take unless, (1) the recommendation is not supported by substantial evidence, (2) the recommendation violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife management, or (3) adopting the recommendation would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs. When a Council's recommendation is not adopted, the Board is required by Secretarial regulations to set forth the factual basis and reasons for the decision.

The Board acted on 59 proposals and 16 closure reviews during the 2022-24 wildlife regulatory cycle. The Board agreed with the recommendations of the Regional Advisory Councils, in whole or with modifications, on 50 of 59 proposals. The Board deferred four proposals: WP22-07, WP22-08, WP22-10, and WP22-40 until the winter 2023 Board meeting. The Board also acted on deferred fisheries proposal FP21-10, adopting it with the Office of Subsistence Management modification. Furthermore, the Board accepted the recommendations of the Regional Advisory Councils on 15 of 16 wildlife closure reviews, voting to maintain status quo on 14 of them.

Details of these actions and the Board's deliberations are contained in the meeting transcriptions. Copies of the transcripts may be obtained by calling toll free number 1-800-478-1456, and are

available online at the Federal Subsistence Management Program website, <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence>.

The Board uses a consensus agenda on those proposals and closure reviews where there is agreement among the affected Regional Advisory Council(s), a majority of the Interagency Staff Committee, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game concerning a proposed regulatory action. These proposals and closure reviews were deemed non-controversial and did not require a separate discussion beyond that which was offered in the analysis. The consensus agenda contained one closure review affecting the Northwest Arctic Region, which the Board deferred to the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) recommendations as follows: the Board *eliminated the closure for* **WCR22-27**, which reviewed the closure to muskox hunting in Cape Krusenstern National Monument by residents of Point Hope.

The remaining proposals and closure reviews affecting the Northwest Arctic Region appeared on the non-consensus agenda. However, for four of the proposals and two of the closure reviews, the Board took action consistent with the Council's recommendations. The Board *adopted* statewide proposal **WP22-01**, which clarified who is and who is not a participant in a community harvest system and how that affects community and individual harvest limits; and statewide proposal **WP22-02**, which removed language from designated hunting regulations prohibiting the use of a designated hunter permit by a member of a community operating under a community harvest system. The Board *adopted with modification* **WP22-50**, which increased the harvest limit for beaver in Unit 23 to 'no limit'. The Board *opposed* **WP22-47**, which requested that calf harvest be permitted for caribou in Unit 22.

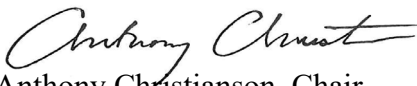
The Board also voted to *maintain status quo* on **WCR22-45**, which reviewed the closure to caribou hunting by non-Federally qualified users in a portion of Unit 23; and **WCR22-18**, which reviewed the closure to sheep hunting by non-Federally qualified users in Unit 23.

The Board's actions differed from the Council's recommendations for one other proposal on the non-consensus agenda: **WP22-45**. The Board's action on this proposal is explained in detail in the enclosed report.

The Federal Subsistence Board appreciates your Council's active involvement in and diligence with the regulatory process. The ten Regional Advisory Councils continue to be the foundation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program, and the stewardship shown by the Regional Advisory Council chairs and their representatives at the Board meeting was noteworthy.

If you have any questions regarding the summary of the Board's actions, please contact Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough, Council Coordinator, at 907-310-4097 or [lisa\\_hutchinson@fws.gov](mailto:lisa_hutchinson@fws.gov).

Sincerely,

  
Anthony Christianson, Chair  
Federal Subsistence Board

Enclosure

cc: Federal Subsistence Board  
Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council members  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Administrative Record

## FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD 805(c) REPORT

April 12-15, 2022  
via teleconference

Section 805(c) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act provides that the “Secretary ... shall consider the report and recommendations of the regional advisory councils concerning the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within their respective regions for subsistence uses.” The Secretary has delegated authority to issue regulations for the take of fish and wildlife to the Federal Subsistence Board. Pursuant to this language in Section 805(c), the Board generally defers to the Council’s recommendations. However, Section 805(c) also provides that the Board “may choose not to follow any recommendations which [it] determines is not supported by substantial evidence, violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation, or would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs.” The purpose of this report is to detail how the Board’s action differed from the Council’s recommendations based on these criteria.

### NORTHWEST ARCTIC AREA WILDLIFE PROPOSALS

#### Crossover Proposals

##### Wildlife Proposal WP22-45

DESCRIPTION: WP22-45 requested creating specific harvest regulations for Alaska hare (*Lepus othus*) in Units 18, 22, and 23. Submitted by: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

##### COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council – **Support with OSM modification**

Western Interior Council – **Defer to the affected Council(s)**

Seward Peninsula Council – **Support with OSM modification**

Northwest Arctic Council – **Support**

North Slope Council – **Support with modification** to change the harvest limit for Alaska hare to 15 per season and support the longer season as recommended by OSM.

BOARD ACTION: **Adopt as modified by OSM** to shorten the season to Aug. 1-May 31 and to modify the definition of hare.

JUSTIFICATION: The Board acknowledges that local knowledge indicates a reduction in the amount of Alaska Hares over recent years. Reducing the amount of harvest is a biologically appropriate means of aiding population recovery. The OSM modification to align federal season dates with state seasons will reduce regulatory complexity and provide subsistence harvest opportunity through the fall, winter, and spring seasons. The Board recognized the North Slope

Council's request that they make it very clear that these regulations are targeting Alaska Hare only, and not the Snowshoe Hare, which is more abundant in that region.



## Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 6199



FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE  
BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOREST SERVICE

JUL 27 2022

In Reply Refer To  
OSM 22058.KW

Thomas Baker, Chair  
Northwest Arctic Subsistence  
Regional Advisory Council  
c/o Office of Subsistence Management  
1101 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Chairman Baker:

This letter responds to the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council's (Council) Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report. The Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture have delegated to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) the responsibility to respond to these reports. The Board appreciates your effort in developing the Annual Report. Annual Reports allow the Board to become aware of the issues outside of the regulatory process that affect subsistence users in your region. We value this opportunity to review the issues concerning your region.

1. **Lack of Success in Harvesting Caribou in Unit 23 by Federally-Qualified Subsistence Users Due to Changes in Caribou Migration Patterns and the Associated Effects of Guides/Transporters and Climate Change on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd**

*Many communities across our region have been unable to successfully harvest caribou during the typical fall season when we traditionally hunt. For example, this meeting being held in the first week of November and many communities are still waiting and have not seen caribou yet. We believe this is caused in part by people coming from outside the region to hunt caribou at the same time Federally qualified subsistence users are hunting caribou in the traditional season when the caribou come through. Sport hunters are able to fly ahead of the herd and interrupt and deflect the caribou migration pattern. Climate change is also having an impact on the caribou and their migration. The longer summers, warmer winters, rain on snow events, and thin river ice seems to be having an effect on the caribou behavior and movements. Winters used to be consistently cold, well below zero, and now we don't see that anymore. This year the caribou wintered around Anaktuvuk Pass and the Noatak Valley when they used to winter around Buckland. The caribou movements seem to be hap-hazard, they are not following their usual migration timing and routes. There is also evidence of radio collared caribou being*

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*deflected by the Red Dog Mine Road. There are so many stressors on the caribou that it is imperative to protect the caribou as best possible and ensure that subsistence hunters have a priority to be able to feed their family and community.*

*The Council requests ongoing monitoring of the caribou herd and more information on permitting for guided hunts and transporters on Federal public lands in Unit 23. The Council submitted WSA21-01 to restrict hunting of caribou to only Federally qualified subsistence users on Federal lands for just the specific period of time when the fall caribou migration is essential to local communities. The circumstances are dire – many communities are not seeing caribou on their usual migratory routes as they usually do and hunters have to travel very far at great expense and may not be successful. We survive on caribou. Food insecurity is real – rural communities do not have access to other healthy foods to replace caribou. It is imperative to the health and wellbeing of rural communities that subsistence opportunity and subsistence priority is protected on Federal lands.*

*The 2021 caribou census shows a dramatic decline in the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. This confirms our worst concerns and observations of a declining population trend in recent years. The population is now so low that the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group has changed the status of the herd to “preservative declining.” The Council remains greatly concerned about the lack of action by the Board in response to our Wildlife Special Action request WSA21-01, citing a lack of substantial evidence. Now the scientific data clearly shows the herd is in critical condition and all actions must be taken to sustain it. The caribou sustains us – it is so important to our communities. The Board is accountable to and should have listened to local subsistence users and not be pressured by sportsman lobbies. The Council recommendations to the Board are to ensure the viability of the caribou herd and continuation of our subsistence way of life and subsistence priority when conservation requires harvest restrictions. Current scientific data supports our observations and request.*

*The Council is extremely concerned about the potential for continued dramatic decline of the caribou herd as was experienced back in the 1970s when subsistence caribou harvest was essentially closed. A combination of western science and local traditional knowledge is necessary to monitor and inform management of the Western Arctic Caribou herd throughout its range.*

*The Council calls for the Federal Subsistence Board to further engage with local rural communities and talk with people about their on the ground experience and observations. Incorporating traditional knowledge, both current and historic observations handed down through the generations, is essential to the sound management of this caribou herd and assuring the continuation of subsistence now and for future generations.*

**Response:**

The Board recognizes that residents of most communities in the Northwest Arctic Region have been unable to harvest caribou during their traditional fall harvest season in recent years due to changing migration patterns. There are indeed multiple stressors on the Western Arctic Caribou



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Herd, including climate change, human activity, and the Red Dog Mine road. These factors have in turn created significant hardship for local residents. Local observations, Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK), and Western science mutually reinforce our understanding of these factors, which are likely cumulative.

In many cases, ITEK indicates when a conservation issue exists before such effects are reflected by Western science. When the Board approved wildlife special action WSA21-01a with modification on March 30, 2022, it based the decision to create a targeted temporary closure both on ITEK and photocensus evidence of herd decline. Further progress can still be made in bringing these two knowledge traditions together within analyses and decisions. Furthermore, when the Board relies on ITEK in its decision-making, as it often does, it can explicitly acknowledge this use on the record.

The earlier deferral of WSA21-01 allowed the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) to gather and analyze substantial local testimony about both the herd and people's inability to continue subsistence uses of caribou in the region. Further, OSM was able to bring Federal land managers, including the National Park Service (NPS), the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, together to outline a path for better documentation and sharing of data on guide and transporter activity on Federal public lands. The National Park Service shared data on guide and transporter use of Noatak National Preserve, which was incorporated into the analysis of WSA21-01a. The Board hopes that this information will be useful to the Council.

Finally, the Board understands that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is planning another photocensus of the Western Arctic Caribou herd this summer 2022, weather permitting. Further, ADF&G and NPS put out 36 radio-collars this last April 2022 and plan on continuing this monitoring protocol indefinitely. They will pick up collars from mortalities and the camera collars, which are programmed to drop later this summer and likely share preliminary findings with your Council this fall.

## **2. Need for Arctic Grayling and Salmon Research in Unit 23**

*Arctic Grayling is a very important subsistence fish resource. However, it has been many years since any studies were conducted on Grayling in the Northwest Arctic region. The Council requests that this be pursued as a research priority for funding under the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program or other fisheries research initiatives. Similarly, salmon is an extremely important subsistence fish resource, and the Council would like to receive updated reports on the status of salmon populations in the region. Ongoing subsistence salmon monitoring programs are important.*

### **Response:**

The Board recognizes the need for research on Arctic Grayling and salmon in the Northwest Arctic Region. Very little information is available for these important fish in the region. The

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Board encourages the Council to add these research topics during the fall 2022 meeting as Priority Information Needs for the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP).

The Priority Information Needs are driven by Councils' recommendations and comments regarding concerns witnessed in their respective regions. Investigators interested in applying for funding through the FRMP use the Priority Information Needs to guide their development of research proposals. Investigators are encouraged to consider the importance of the Priority Information Needs identified by the Council and work closely with the Council and local land managers to develop research plans addressing key areas of regional interest. When reviewing proposals for FRMP funding, the Technical Review Committee, a group of scientists representing State and Federal agencies in Alaska, assesses and evaluates the extent that each addresses Priority Information Needs. This process ensures that Council recommendations and comments are prioritized when considering FRMP project funding.

Regarding salmon updates, the Board will ask staff at OSM to reach out to regional research agencies to request updates for future meetings.

### **3. Request For Updated Reports on Population Change in Moose and Beaver**

*The Council is very concerned about the decline in the moose population. Moose are a critical subsistence resource for communities especially in times when the caribou are scarce. The Council requests ongoing monitoring and population surveys for moose in Unit 23 and regular reports at the Council meetings.*

*Conversely, beaver populations are rapidly increasing and expanding. The Council requests to receive reports on the extent of beaver expansion, discuss interaction with other subsistence resources, and ensure the subsistence opportunity for the hunting and trapping of beaver is expanded as the population grows.*

#### **Response:**

The Board recognizes that the moose and beaver are two very important subsistence resources in the Northwest Arctic Region. In reply to the Council's request, we would like to provide the Council with the following information on both species.

#### **Moose**

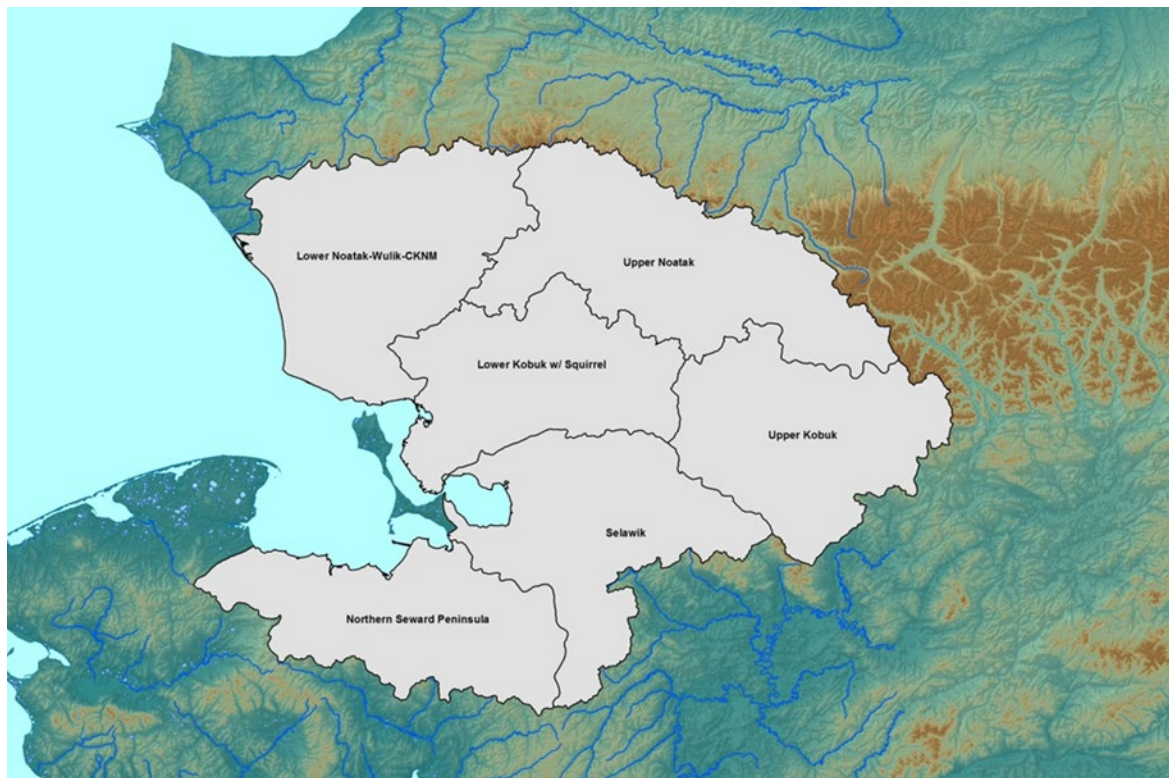
State and Federal agencies work closely with each other to monitor moose in Unit 23. The NPS partners with the ADF&G to monitor six survey areas in the Northwest Arctic region (**Figure 1**). One area is surveyed each year on a rotating basis. Each area is approximately 5,000 square miles and takes over 100 flight hours to survey (Fronstin 2022, pers. comm.). Survey related costs, severe staffing and pilot shortages, environmental and seasonal limitations, as well as a responsibility to monitor many other species in the region are all factors limiting the completion of more moose surveys. Due to the same limitations, Selawik National Wildlife Refuge supports

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and relies on ADF&G and NPS to conduct moose surveys in the region (Carter 2022, pers. comm.).

During the spring of 2022, ADF&G and NPS completed a moose count survey in the Lower Kobuk survey area (**Figure 1**). This survey took over 135 flight hours to complete. For this one survey, flight cost alone was well over \$70,000 without including other logistical costs like hazard pay for employees, transportation, group food costs if in the backcountry, etc. (Fronstin 2022, pers. comm.). The State and Federal agencies will continue to work together to monitor the Unit 23 moose population and provide regular reports on the moose population at the Council meetings.



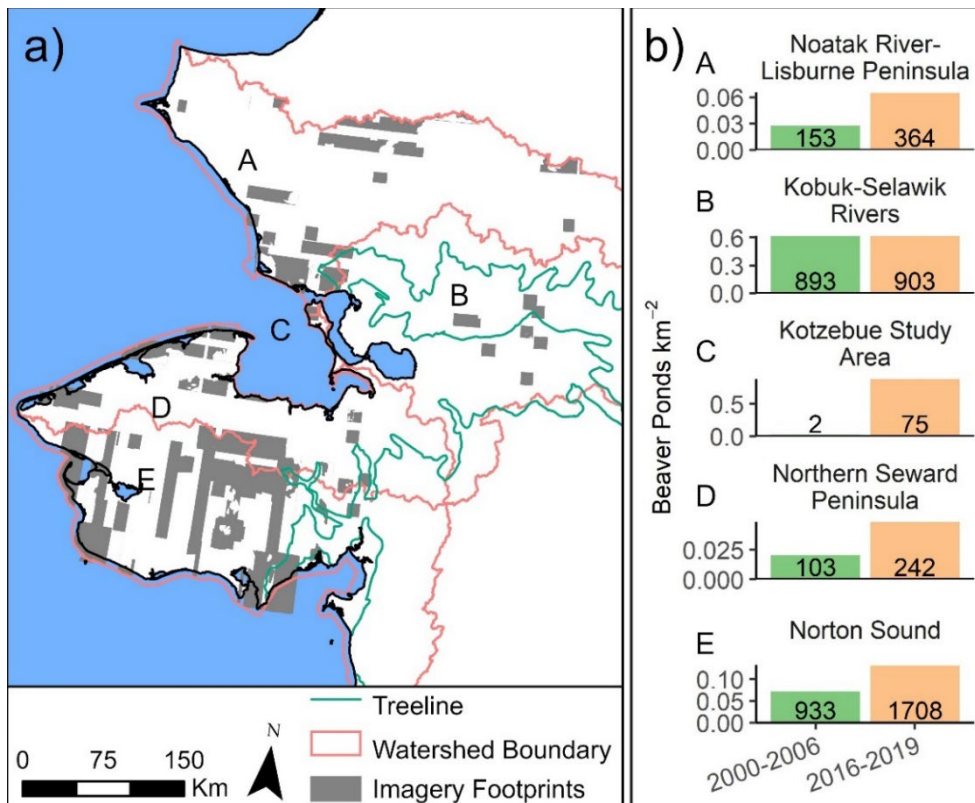
**Figure 1.** ADF&G Moose census area. (Saito 2018 in OSM 2022)

### Beaver

Beaver populations in Unit 23 are not currently surveyed. Severe staffing shortages, environmental and seasonal limitations, access to survey areas and cost are some of the many limitations for conducting beaver abundance surveys (Carter 2022, pers. comm.; Fronstin 2022, pers. comm.; Wiese 2022, pers. comm.; Tape 2022, pers. comm.). However, Jon O'Donnell with NPS has begun researching the implications of beaver range expansion in the Arctic. Recent research suggests that beaver populations in the Arctic are expanding their range due to climate change, and the population is increasing and expected to continue to increase throughout the region (O'Donnell 2022, pers. comm.; Tape et al. 2022).

Ken Tape at the University of Alaska Fairbanks recently began a 5-year project studying beaver range expansion in Arctic Alaska and the impacts it will have. This project includes mapping locations of beaver ponds and how they have changed over time in the Northwest Arctic and Seward Peninsula regions (Tape 2022, pers. comm.). Comparing the number of beaver ponds per km<sup>2</sup> that are locatable in aerial images taken from 2000-2006 to aerial images taken from 2016-2019, there has been a significant increase in four of the five watersheds studied (**Figure 2**, Tape 2022, pers. comm.). Ken Tape has also presented about beavers at previous Council meetings. The Board encourages the Council to work with their Council coordinator to invite Dr. Tape or others to their upcoming meetings to discuss beavers in the Northwest Arctic region.

Beaver harvest regulations are already extremely liberal in Unit 23. At their April 2022 meeting, the Board adopted wildlife proposal WP22-50, which increased the beaver harvest limit in Unit 23 to ‘no limit’. Currently, under State and Federal regulations, the beaver trapping season is year-round with no harvest limit. The Federal hunting season is also year-round with no harvest limit.



**Figure 2.** Beaver ponds per km<sup>2</sup> in 2000-2006 compared to Beaver ponds per km<sup>2</sup> in 2016-2019 by watershed boundary (Tape et al. 2022)

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OSM. 2022. Staff analysis WSA21-01b. Federal Subsistence Board Meeting Materials. March 30, 2022. Office of Subsistence Management, USFWS. Anchorage, AK  
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Tape, Ken. 2022. Researcher. Personal communication: email. UAF. Fairbanks, AK  
Wiese, Wilhelm. 2022. Wildlife biologist. Personal communication: email. FWS. Kotzebue, AK

#### **4. Need to Have RAC Representatives Attend the Ambler Mine Access Road Meetings**

*The Council is very concerned about the Ambler Mine Access Road and impacts the road will have on caribou and other critical subsistence resources. The Council requests comprehensive reports on the planned road development and representatives of the agencies leading the road development to address the Council at our meetings. Further the Council would like to have Council members have representation at Ambler Mine Access Road meetings.*

#### **Response:**

The Board supports the Council's desire to participate and voice their concerns regarding subsistence during this construction project. At the Council's request representatives of Ambler Access project were invited to report to the Council and Charlene Ostbloom provided the Council with an update and overview of the project and formation of the Ambler Road project Subsistence Advisory Committee (SAC). Currently Council member Wilbur Howarth of Noorvik applied for and was appointed to serve on the SAC; however, this seat is not specifically reserved for a Council representative. The Board will request that your Council Coordinator reach out to the agencies leading the road development to request comprehensive reports for one of the upcoming Council meetings.

As per the Joint Record of Decision for the Ambler Road project, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) included a design feature to establish a Subsistence Advisory Committee (SAC). AIDEA has facilitated setting up that body under the leadership of two Co-Chairs. Since development of the SAC was a voluntary design feature initiated by AIDEA for the project, the Bureau of Land Management does not play a specific role at this time in determining the makeup of the SAC. However, the NPS Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission (GAAR SRC) has successfully sought a SRC specific seat on the AIDEA-supported Ambler Road SAC, delegated an interim SRC representative to participate at the next meeting, and will formally be nominating a representative to serve in the capacity at the fall GAAR SRC meeting.

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Inclusion of Council members on the Ambler Road project SAC is currently a matter to be decided by the SAC Co-Chairs. If they have not reached out to the Councils yet, good contacts for the SAC are Charlene Ostbloom (costbloom@ambleraccess.org) and Kathy Mayo (kathy.mayo@kmayoassociates.com). Additionally, more information on the SAC and how to apply for the membership can be found at <https://ambleraccess.org/Community-Engagement/Subsistence-Advisory-Committee>

The Board believes it would be beneficial to also have strong engagement between the SAC and the Councils. The NPS Resource Program Manager at Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve made this explicit recommendation to the SAC organizers when he spoke with them.

#### **5. Request for Council Representation on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group**

*The Council requests that the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils have representation on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) Working Group. This caribou herd is one of most important subsistence resources for the Northwest Arctic region, but currently there is not a Federal subsistence seat on the WACH Working Group. In the interim the Council requests support from the Federal Subsistence Management Program so a RAC member can travel to attend the WACH Working Group meetings and have the opportunity to at least participate in the public meeting on behalf of the Council.*

#### **Response:**

The WACH Working Group is comprised of 20 members, most of whom represent communities within the range of the WACH. The Working Group set the seats when the group was formed and has never added additional seats. According to the group's bylaws, "The number of stakeholders in the Working Group is determined by the Working Group itself" (see enclosure).

While adding an additional seat to the Working Group is beyond the Board's authority, the Board suggests that the Council work with its Council Coordinator to write a letter to the WACH Working Group requesting representation from the Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils. The WACH Working Group can then consider the Council's request and respond accordingly.

Of note, the WACH Working Group intends to work with the Councils on WACH management. In its charter, the WACH Working Group states, ". . . this group collaborates and works cooperatively with all existing institutions including . . . federal subsistence advisory bodies to achieve consensus on caribou and management of the WACH."

The group's mission statement also demonstrates its commitment to subsistence uses, "*To work together to ensure the long term conservation of the Western Arctic caribou herd and the ecosystem on which it depends, and to maintain traditional and other uses for the benefit of all*

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*people now and in the future.”*

Dependent on the Program’s travel budget allowances for each fiscal year, the Federal Subsistence Management Program might be able to provide travel support for one Council member to participate in the WACH Working Group public meeting once a year. In each particular instance of travel, your Council Coordinator will need to direct a request to OSM Assistant Regional Director for approval.

**6. Concern about Current Council Membership and Need for Representation from the Upper Kobuk River Villages and From Selawik**

*The Council is very concerned about current vacancies on the Council and lack of representation from communities in the heart of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. Because of the movement of the caribou herd through these regions is essential to subsistence communities, their observations and input is critical to the Council’s effectiveness when addressing caribou management concerns. The Council requests the support of the Federal Subsistence Program to conduct outreach to these communities and encourage applications to serve on the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.*

**Response:**

The Board hears the Council’s concerns about the vacant seats and lack of representation on the Council from the Upper Kobuk River Villages and Selawik. However, Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture filled the vacant seats on the Council with newly appointed and reappointed members for the 2021 appointment year, and the Council now has one representative from Ambler.

In 2022, the Board received seven applications from new applicants and incumbents. The Board will review the applications and will make its recommendations to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture on the appointments by the end of summer 2022. If any of 2022 applications are from the Upper Kobuk River Villages and Selawik, the Board will take the Council’s request into consideration when making the appointment recommendations.

**7. Request for Engagement with Elder Support/Subsistence Programs Conducted by the Maniilaq Association**

*Maniilaq, the regional Native non-profit corporation serving 12 Federally Recognized Tribes in the Northwest Arctic region, helps support rural communities through a traditional foods program. Through this program they provide funds for gas and hunting supplies for each village in support of local hunters to provide for their community. The Council requests the Federal subsistence program engage with these local subsistence initiatives and invites Maniilaq to provide a report at our next meeting. These programs can provide important information such as traditional knowledge to inform management of caribou and moose and also have key insights*

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*into whether subsistence harvest needs are being met for each community.*

*The Council hears frequent reports of people having difficulty getting food, and store shelves are empty. Support getting healthy subsistence foods is more important now than ever. Many Elders get support through the Maniilaq healthy foods program. The Council is interested to know if Federal dollars help support these important programs.*

**Response:**

The Board appreciates the Council sharing information about Maniilaq's traditional and healthy food programs, which are an important part of supporting traditional subsistence practices in the region. The Board is happy to support engagement between the Council and these programs, and OSM will reach out to Maniilaq to request a report at an upcoming meeting.

Further, the Board acknowledges the significant hardship that local residents are experiencing as a result of difficulty harvesting traditional subsistence resources, especially caribou. Maniilaq's programs may become even more vital as climate change continues to make subsistence harvest unpredictable. Regulatory interventions can only go so far in addressing these changes. When Maniilaq makes their report, they may wish to help the Council and the OSM better understand where their funding comes from.

In closing, I want to thank you and your Council for your continued involvement and diligence in matters regarding the Federal Subsistence Management Program. I speak for the entire Board in expressing our appreciation for your efforts and am confident that the Federally qualified subsistence users of the Northwest Arctic Region are well represented through your work.

Sincerely,



Anthony Christianson  
Chair

Enclosure

cc: Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
Federal Subsistence Board  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Mark Burch, Special Project Coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Administrative Record



## Appendix 1

### WESTERN ARCTIC CARIBOU HERD WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP LIST December 2021

Working Group Seat	Primary Member	Alternate Member*
1. Anchorage Advisory Committee.....	Neil DeWitt.....	Matt Moore
2. Buckland, Deering, Selawik.....	Vida Coaltrain.....	Raymond Lee, Jr.
3. Anaktuvuk Pass, Nuiqsut .....	Eli Nukapigak .....	Mary Hugo
4. Elim, Golovin, White Mountain.....	Charles Saccheus .....	Morris Nakaruk
5. Fairbanks Hunters .....	David Kilbourn .....	John Siegfried
6. Hunting Guides .....	Jake Jacobson.....	John (Thor) Stacey
7. Kivalina, Noatak.....	Enoch Mitchell.....	Daniel Foster, Sr.
8. Kotzebue.....	Cyrus Harris (ViceChair).....	Willie Goodwin
9. Koyukuk River.....	Pollock Simon, Sr. ....	Jack Reakoff
10. Lower Kobuk River.....	Vern Cleveland, Sr (Chair).....	Kirk Sampson
11. Middle Yukon River .....	Michael Stickman .....	Arnold Demoski
12. Point Hope and Point Lay .....	Steve Oomittuk .....	Caroline Cannon
13. Nome .....	Charlie Lean.....	Jacob Martin
14. Conservationists .....	Tim Fullman .....	Alex Johnson
15. Northern Seward Peninsula.....	Elmer Seetot, Jr.....	vacant
16. Reindeer Herders Association.....	Tom Gray .....	Harry Karmun
17. Southern Seward Peninsula.....	Morris Nassuk.....	Leo Charles, Sr.
18. Transporters.....	Brad Saalsaa.....	Brian Alberts
19. Upper Kobuk River.....	William Bernhardt .....	Oscar Griest, Sr.
20. Atqasuk, Utqiagvik, Wainwright .....	Wanda Kippi.....	vacant

yellow highlight = need to be confirmed at the 2021 meeting

\* Alternate member attends when Primary member is not able to attend

**Officers** - Officers in the Working Group include a Chair and Vice-Chair elected by the membership. Each shall serve a staggered three-year term.

Current Chair and Vice Chair terms:

Chair, Vern Cleveland, Sr.	2020-2022
Vice-Chair, Cyrus Harris	2019-2021

The following communities are the geographic areas represented by the Working Group seats. (Community groupings were approved by the WACH Working Group in December 2012.)

- 9. Koyukuk River: Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket, Bettles, Wiseman
- 10. Lower Kobuk River: Noorvik, Kiana
- 11. Middle Yukon River: Galena, Koyukuk, Nulato, Kaltag
- 15. Northern Seward Peninsula: Teller, Brevig Mission, Wales, Shishmaref
- 17. Southern Seward Peninsula: Koyuk, Shaktoolik, Unalakleet, Stebbins, St. Michael, Kotlik
- 19. Upper Kobuk River: Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk

Approved on August 2, 2000 at Summer Meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska

## CHARTER

### FOR THE WESTERN ARTIC CARIBOU HERD WORKING GROUP\*

#### I. Authorities

- Public meeting laws of the United States and the State of Alaska
- Title 16 of the Alaska Statutes (management of fish and game)
- ANILCA (Section 809)

#### II. Purpose

The Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) Working Group is a permanent regional organization of representative stakeholders that meets regularly to exchange traditional and western scientific knowledge and through a process of consensual decision making, the Working Group coordinates suggested management guidelines to both the Alaska Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board.

Through these activities, the Working Group intends to ensure the conservation of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, safeguard the spiritual and cultural well being of Alaska Natives and the interests of all users of the herd and to integrate indigenous knowledge with western science.

#### III. Goals and Objectives

- G1. *To insure health and conservation of the WACH*
  - a. Emphasize protection of critical habitat (migration routes, calving grounds, winter and summer ranges).
  - b. Develop and implement a WACH management plan.
- G2. *To provide a harvest consistent with the customs, traditions and spiritual needs of all consumptive users.*
  - a. Explore opportunities for tribal self-regulation.
- G3. *To involve federally recognized tribes, State and Federal agencies and all other users in making recommendations for research, monitoring, regulation, allocation and enforcement.*
  - a. Establish communication with the reindeer industry, guides, transporters and other aircraft operators to minimize conflict.
- G4. *To respect indigenous, traditional and scientific knowledge and integrate them into management decisions.*

Approved on August 2, 2000 at Summer Meeting in Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska

*G5. To emphasize indigenous, traditional and scientific education and foster communication among all caribou users.*

- a. Provide information and educational materials concerning the WACH and this charter to users, schools, communities, agencies and media services.

**IV. Relationship to other organizations**

The Working Group is not intended to function primarily as a political or lobbying institution. Nor is the Working Group intended to replace fish and game regulatory bodies such as the Alaska Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board.

The Working Group sees itself as a body that brings together all of the knowledge and concerns that people have in northwestern Alaska concerning the care and management of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. It is a holistic approach intended to inform and educate all caribou users and to assist regulatory bodies with their work. Specifically this group collaborates and works cooperatively with all existing institutions including boroughs, land owners, regional, state, and federal subsistence advisory bodies to achieve consensus on care and management of the WACH.

\*Drafted by Ken Adkisson, Earl Kingik, Dave Spirtes, John Trent and Pius Washington with assistance from Caleb Pungowiyi on June 27 at Kotzebue. The draft charter was subsequently modified and approved by consensus of the Working Group at Anaktuvuk Pass on August 2, 2000.

###

Approved August 2, 2000; Amended May 4, 2004 and December 17, 2015

**BYLAWS**

**FOR THE WESTERN ARCTIC CARIBOU HERD WORKING GROUP\***

**ARTICLE I. Name**

The name of this organization is the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group (Working Group).

**ARTICLE II. Membership**

Membership in the Working Group consists of representatives of stakeholders with a direct interest in the care and management of the WACH. The number of stakeholders in the Working Group is determined by the Working Group itself. Each stakeholder representative, however, is selected by his own constituency and serves at the pleasure of that constituency. In the event that a stakeholder representative cannot attend a function of the Working Group, there shall be a designated alternate representative.

A quorum of the Working Group will consist of greater than fifty percent (50%) of the existing Voting Chairs.

**ARTICLE III. Voting**

Each member in the Working Group has one vote. However the preferred method of decision making is by consensus process.

In the event that consensus cannot be reached on an issue, voting by majority will carry the issue. A minority report will also be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

**ARTICLE IV. Officers**

Officers in the Working Group shall be a Chair and Vice-chair elected by the membership. Each shall serve a staggered three year term. In the event an officer cannot complete a term, a replacement will be elected by the Working Group.

**ARTICLE V. Duties of Officers**

The duties of the Chair shall consist of chairing meetings; representing the Working Group to other organizations, the public and the media; appointing special committees; consulting with and directing the resource agencies; and other duties consistent with the purpose and goals of the Working Group.

The duties of the Vice-chair are to assist the Chair and to fill in for the Chair when absent.

Approved August 2, 2000; Amended May 4, 2004 and December 17, 2015

**ARTICLE VI. Meetings**

The Chair will convene two meetings per calendar year. Meeting locations will be rotated. Meetings will follow procedures described in Roberts Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE VII. Relationship of resource management agencies to the Working Group**

Resource agencies consist at this time of the USFWS, BLM, NPS, BIA, and ADF&G. Other agencies may join at a later date. Resource agencies serve as staff to the Working Group in a non-voting capacity. An agency representative will work closely with the Working Group Chair to provide professional services and support to the Working Group.

**ARTICLE VIII. Funding**

The resource agencies will work with the Working Group Chair to secure adequate long-term funding to support activities of the Working Group.

**ARTICLE IX. Executive Committee**

The Working Group shall establish an Executive Committee to make decisions when the Working Group is not in session. The voting members of the Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, and three additional Working Group voting chairs representing diversity on the Working Group. A quorum of the Executive Committee will consist of three voting members. Non-voting members on the Executive Committee will be the Working Group Coordinator and the Working Group Agency Representative. *(Article IX adopted by unanimous vote on May 4, 2004, Girdwood, Alaska. Amended to establish a quorum for the Executive Committee by unanimous vote on December 17, 2015.)*

*\*Drafted by Ken Adkisson, Joseph Ballot, Earl Kingik, Dave Spirtes, John Trent and Pius Washington with assistance from Caleb Pungowiyi June 27, 2000 at Kotzebue. The draft was subsequently modified and approved by consensus of the Working Group at Anaktuvuk Pass August 2, 2000. Bylaws amended on May 4, 2004 and December 17, 2015.*

###

# Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP)

## 2024 Overview

### Quick Info

- Established in 2000
- Focuses on subsistence fisheries in Federal public waters in Alaska
- Solicits proposals every two years
- Projects may be awarded up to four years of funding
- See <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/frmp> for more information

### What is the FRMP?

The Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) funds research to provide information that can help manage subsistence fisheries in Federal public waters in Alaska. *Projects are required to focus on harvest monitoring, traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), and stock status and trends.* Proposals are evaluated based on strategic priority, scientific merit, investigator ability and resources, cost/benefit, and the extent to which they meaningfully involve Alaska Native and rural organizations (partnerships and capacity building). Projects may be led by Alaska Native and rural organizations, universities, government agencies, or private contractors.

### Priority Information Needs (PINs)

PINs are research needs that could be addressed through FRMP projects. Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) members help develop potential PINs throughout the summer before an FRMP cycle. Potential PINs are then discussed and finalized during the fall Council meetings. Finalized PINs are included in the FRMP project solicitations and ultimately influence the direction of the Monitoring Program.

### FRMP Timeline

March-November 2022: Council members develop potential 2024 priority information needs and finalize them at fall Council meetings

December 2022: OSM publishes Notice of Funding Opportunity

February – May 2023: OSM reviews proposals

June 2023: Technical Review Committee evaluates and scores proposals

September – November 2023: Councils and Interagency Staff Committee comment on proposals

January 2024: Federal Subsistence Board provides recommendation on the draft Monitoring Plan that includes proposals recommended for funding

February 2024: Assistant Regional Director for OSM approves Monitoring Plan and notification letters are sent to applicants

May - July 2024: Projects begin

## **Northwest Arctic FRMP projects, organized by Priority Information Needs, 2012-2022**

### Changes in Arctic Grayling, Dolly Varden, and Sheefish populations related to climate change\*

- Included in call for 2022 funding year
- \*Priority Information Need proposed by Seward Peninsula Council, but related projects conducted in Northwest Arctic region.
- Related projects:
  - FRMP 22-101: Kotzebue Sound Sheefish: Describing coastal movements, temperature preference, and potential range expansion
  - FRMP 22-104: Selawik River Inconnu spawning population age structure evaluation and spawner recruitment response to a 2004 permafrost thaw slump

### Changes in species compositions abundance, migration timing, especially of Dolly Varden, Lake Trout, and whitefish species in the Northwest Arctic to address changing availability of subsistence fishery resources

- Included in call for 2020 and 2022 funding years. Lake Trout were not included in 2020 PINs.
- Related projects:
  - FRMP 22-101: Kotzebue Sound Sheefish: Describing coastal movements, temperature preference, and potential range expansion
  - FRMP 20-101: Life history variability and mixed-stock analysis of Dolly Varden in the Noatak River
  - FRMP 20-150: Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Dolly Varden and whitefish species in Northwest Alaska

### Evaluate changing salmon distribution, abundance, migration, and timing in river drainages of Kotzebue Sound (Noatak and Kobuk river drainages)

- Included in call for 2022 funding year
- Related project:
  - FRMP 22-150: Traditional Ecological Knowledge of salmon in river drainages of Kotzebue Sound

### Identifying spawning areas, critical habitat, and range expansion in major rivers tied to subsistence for Broad Whitefish, Least Cisco, Northern Pike, salmon, Arctic Grayling, Dolly Varden and Sheefish in the Northwest Alaska Region.

- Included in call for 2022 and 2016 funding years
- Related projects:
  - FRMP 22-101: Kotzebue Sound Sheefish: Describing coastal movements, temperature preference, and potential range expansion
  - FRMP 16-105: Spawning abundance of Kobuk River Sheefish

### Genetic diversity of Dolly Varden stocks harvested for subsistence use in Northwest Alaska

- Included in call for 2018 funding year
- Related projects:
  - FRMP 18-101: Genetic diversity of Dolly Varden populations in Kobuk River
  - FRMP 16-103: Genetic diversity of Dolly Varden populations in Kobuk River

### Baseline and ongoing harvest assessment and monitoring of subsistence fisheries in the Northwest Arctic and North Slope regions to supplement available information

- Included in call for the 2014 and 2012 funding years
- Related projects:

- FRMP 12-153: Northwest Alaska key subsistence fisheries harvest monitoring program

Spawning distribution, timing, and stock structure of Selawik River whitefish species

- Included in call for the 2012 funding year
- Related projects:
  - FRMP 16-104: Selawik River Inconnu spawning population abundance and age structure evaluation
  - FRMP 14-104: Selawik River Inconnu spawning population abundance and age structure evaluation
  - FRMP 12-100: Selawik River Inconnu spawning population abundance and age structure evaluation

**Northern Alaska Region FRMP Projects Since 2000**

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Investigators</b>
<i>North Slope</i>		
00-002	Eastern NS Dolly Varden Spawning and Over-wintering Assessment	ADF&G, USFWS
01-113	Eastern NS Dolly Varden Genetic Stock ID Stock Assessment	ADF&G, USFWS
01-101	Eastern NS (Kaktovik) Subsistence Fish Harvest Assessment	AD&FG, KIC
02-050	NS (Anaktuvuk Pass) Subsistence Fish Harvest Assessment	ADF&G, NSB, AKP
03-012	SST of Arctic Cisco and Dolly Varden in Kaktovik Lagoons	USFWS
04-103	North Slope Dolly Varden Sonar Feasibility	USFWS
06-108	North Slope Dolly Varden Aerial Monitoring	ADF&G
07-105	North Slope Dolly Varden Genetic Baseline Completion	USFWS
07-107	Hulahula River Dolly Varden Sonar Enumeration	USFWS
12-154	North Slope Salmon Fishery HM/TEK	ADF&G
14-103	Beaufort Sea Dolly Varden Dispersal Patterns	UAF
16-101	Arctic Dolly Varden Telemetry	USFWS
16-106	Aerial Monitoring of Dolly Varden Overwintering Abundance	ADF&G, USFWS
16-107	Chandler Lake Trout Abundance Estimation	ADF&G
16-152	Meade River Changes in Subsistence Fisheries	ADF&G
18-100 <sup>a</sup>	Colville River Grayling Habitat and Migration	ADF&G
<i>Northwest Arctic</i>		
00-001	Northwestern Dolly Varden and Arctic Char Stock Identification	ADF&G, USFWS
00-020	Hotham Inlet Kotzebue Winter Subsistence Sheefish Harvest	ADF&G
01-136	Northwestern Alaska Dolly Varden Genetic Diversity	ADF&G, USFWS
01-137	Northwestern Alaska Dolly Varden Spawning Stock Assessment	ADF&G
02-023	Qaluich Nigingnaquuat: Fish That We Eat	AJ
02-040	Kotzebue Sound Whitefish Traditional Knowledge	ADF&G, MQ
03-016	Selawik River Harvest ID, Spring and Fall Subsistence Fisheries	USFWS
04-101	Selawik River Inconnu Spawning Abundance	USFWS
04-102	Selawik Refuge Whitefish Migration and Habitat Use	USFWS



<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Investigators</b>
04-109	Wulik River Dolly Varden Wintering Stocks	USFWS, ADF&G
04-157	Exploring Approaches to Sustainable Fisheries Harvest Assessment	ADF&G, MQ
07-151	Northwest Alaska Subsistence Fish Harvest Patterns and Trends	ADF&G, MQ
08-103	Kobuk River Sheefish Spawning and Run Timing	ADF&G, USFWS
10-100	Selawik Drainage Sheefish Winter Movement Patterns	UAF, USGS, USFWS, NVK
10-104	Hotham Inlet Kotzebue Winter Subsistence Sheefish Harvest	USFWS
10-152	Climate Change and Subsistence Fisheries in Northwest Alaska	UAF
12-100	Selawik River Sheefish Spawning Abundance and Age Structure	USFWS
12-103	Kobuk River Sheefish Spawning Frequency, Location, and Run Timing	ADF&G, USFWS
12-104	Noatak River Dolly Varden Evaluation of Overwintering Populations	ADF&G, NPS
12-153	NW AK Key Subsistence Fisheries Harvest Monitoring Program	ADF&G, MQ
14-104	Selawik R Inconnu Spawning Population Abundance	USFWS
16-103	Kobuk River Dolly Varden Genetics	ADF&G, USFWS
16-104	Selawik Sheefish Age Structure and Spawning Population	USFWS
16-105	Kobuk River Sheefish Abundance	ADF&G
18-101	Kobuk River Dolly Varden Genetic Diversity	ADF&G, USFWS
20-101 <sup>a</sup>	Life-history Variability and Mixed-stock Analysis of Dolly Varden in the Noatak River	ADF&G, UAF, USFWS
20-150 <sup>a</sup>	Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Dolly Varden and Whitefish Species in Northwest Alaska	ADF&G
22-101 <sup>a</sup>	Kotzebue Sound Sheefish – Describing Coastal Movement, Temperature Preference, and Potential Range Expansion	WCS
22-104 <sup>a</sup>	Selawik River Inconnu Spawning Population Age Structure Evaluation and Spawner Recruitment Response to a 2004 Permafrost Thaw Slump	USFWS
22-150 <sup>a</sup>	Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Salmon in River Drainages of Kotzebue Sound	ADF&G
<b><i>Seward Peninsula</i></b>		
01-224	Nome Sub-district Subsistence Salmon Survey	ADF&G, KI
02-020	Pikmiktalik River Salmon Site Surveys and Enumeration	USFWS, NPS, STB, KI
04-105	Pikmiktalik River Chum and Coho Salmon Enumeration	KI
04-151	Customary Trade of Fish in the Seward Peninsula Area	ADF&G, KI
05-101	Unalakleet River Coho Salmon Distribution and Abundance	ADF&G, NVU
06-101	Pikmiktalik River Chum and Coho Salmon Enumeration	KI
10-102	Unalakleet River Chinook Salmon Abundance Estimate	ADF&G, BLM, NSEDC
10-151	Local Ecological Knowledge of Non-Salmon Fish in the Bering Strait	KI

Project Number	Project Title	Investigators
14-101	Unalakleet River Chinook Salmon Abundance Estimate	NSEDC, NVU
18-103 <sup>a</sup>	Unalakleet River Chinook Salmon Escapement Assessment	ADF&G, BLM NSEDC, NVU ADF&G, BLM
20-100 <sup>a</sup>	Fish Assemblages and Genetic Stock Determination of Salmon in Bering Land Bridge National Preserve	NPS, ADF&G
22-103 <sup>a</sup>	Unalakleet River Chinook Salmon Escapement Assessment – Continuation	ADF&G, NSEDC, BLM

a = On-going projects.

Abbreviations used for investigators are: **ADF&G** = Alaska Department of Fish and Game, **AJ** = Anore Jones, **AKP** = City of Anaktuvuk Pass, **BLM** = Bureau of Land Management, **KI** = Kawarek Inc., **KIC** = Kaktovik Inupiat Corp., **MQ** = Maniilaq, **NSEDC** = Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation, **NVU** = Native Village of Unalakleet, **NSB** = North Slope Borough, **STB** = Stebbins IRA, **SWCA** = SWCA Environmental Consultants, **UAF** = University Alaska Fairbanks, **USFWS** = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, **USGS** = U.S. Geological Survey, and **WCS** = Wildlife Conservation Society.

#### Draft Priority Information Needs for the 2024 FRMP cycle

These draft Priority Information Needs were identified by council volunteers, summer 2022.

#### Northwest Arctic

- Inventory and baseline data of fish assemblages in major rivers tied to subsistence use in Northwest Alaska. When possible, applicants are encouraged to include fisheries proximal to the communities of Shishmaref, Buckland, Deering, Kivalina, Point Hope and villages along Kobuk and Noatak rivers.
- Evaluate changes in water temperature and resulting low oxygen in major river systems associated with subsistence fishery resources in the Northwest Arctic Region, and how these changes will affect salmon, whitefish, Northern Pike, and other fish vital for subsistence.
- The effects of expanding beaver populations and range on subsistence fisheries, including whitefish, in the Northwest Arctic Region. Include effects of dams on fish migration and effects of changes to water quality on fish health.
- Document Herring abundance, seasonal movements, and health and investigate causes of large herring mortality events in the Northwest Arctic.
- Document the effects of changing river and tributary conditions on salmon spawning in the Noatak and Kobuk river drainages, with focus on the potential effects of increased precipitation on spawning viability.
- Changes in species compositions, abundance, and migration timing, especially of Dolly Varden, Lake Trout, and whitefish species in the Northwest Arctic, to address changing availability of subsistence fishery resources.

- Identify the spawning areas, critical habitat and range expansion in major rivers tied to subsistence for Broad Whitefish, Least Cisco, Northern Pike, salmon, Grayling, and Dolly Varden in the Northwest Alaska Region.

#### North Slope

- Using Traditional Ecological Knowledge and harvest monitoring, document new fish species and changes in abundance, size, timing, and distribution of existing fish species, as well as impacts of new or expanding species on other fish that are important to subsistence in the North Slope Region.
- Document and investigate the possible causes of mold, disease, and discoloration on Broad Whitefish in the Colville River in the vicinity of Nuiqsut. Compare environmental conditions in the Colville River—including temperature—with those in the Ikpikpuk River, where whitefish are healthy and mold has not been observed to date. Investigators are encouraged to draw on both stock status and trends and Traditional Ecological Knowledge research methods.
- Document the effects of climate change, including late freeze-up, on subsistence fishing access, harvests, and preservation and the impact of these changes on community-wide harvest levels and food security on the North Slope. Research could investigate adaptations for continuing community-wide harvest levels where traditional preservation methods are impacted. Studies including Ikpikpuk River are of particular interest.
- Baseline fish habitat and water quality monitoring (especially temperature, dissolved oxygen, and silt) on the rivers and tributaries important to subsistence fishing for communities of the North Slope Region. Investigators are encouraged to include overwintering areas.

#### Seward Peninsula

- Chinook, Chum and Coho salmon abundance estimates for Boston, Fish, Paragon, and Wagonwheel rivers.
- Summer and Fall Chum salmon abundance estimates for the Agiapuk River drainage including American River and Igloo Creek.
- Chinook, Chum, and Coho salmon abundance estimates for the Pikmiktalik River, with comparison to historical counts.
- Changes in Arctic Grayling, Dolly Varden, and Sheefish populations related to climate change.
- Changes in salmon species composition and expansion of salmon species into new waters in the Seward Peninsula.
- Map traditional fishing areas in the Seward Peninsula region.

- The effects of expanding beaver range and population on subsistence fisheries in the Seward Peninsula region. Include effects of dams on fish migration and effects of changes to water quality on fish health.

## **Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program Notice of Funding Opportunity**

The Office of Subsistence Management is seeking proposals for the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program to strengthen Alaska Native and rural involvement in Federal subsistence management. The Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program is a competitive grant program that provides funding for biologist/social scientist/educator positions in Alaska Native and rural nonprofit organizations with the intent of increasing the organizations' ability to participate in Federal subsistence management. In addition, the program supports a variety of opportunities for rural students to learn about subsistence resource monitoring and management through science camps and paid internships.

More information about the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program Notice of Funding Opportunity can be found in *GrantSolutions.gov*, *Grants.gov*, or on the Office of Subsistence Management Website <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/partners>, or by contacting Karen Hyer at [Karen\\_Hyer@fws.gov](mailto:Karen_Hyer@fws.gov), 907-786-3689.



McLees Lake Weir, Unalaska Island. Photograph by Jenny Renee.

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

### **Background**

ANILCA established the Annual Reports as the way to bring regional subsistence uses and needs to the Secretaries' attention. The Secretaries delegated this responsibility to the Board. Section 805(c) deference includes matters brought forward in the Annual Report.

The Annual Report provides the Councils an opportunity to address the directors of each of the four Department of Interior agencies and the Department of Agriculture Forest Service in their capacity as members of the Federal Subsistence Board. The Board is required to discuss and reply to each issue in every Annual Report and to take action when within the Board's authority. In many cases, if the issue is outside of the Board's authority, the Board will provide information to the Council on how to contact personnel at the correct agency. As agency directors, the Board members have authority to implement most of the actions which would effect the changes recommended by the Councils, even those not covered in Section 805(c). The Councils are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

### **Report Content**

Both Title VIII Section 805 and 50 CFR §100.11 (Subpart B of the regulations) describe what may be contained in an Annual Report from the councils to the Board. This description includes issues that are not generally addressed by the normal regulatory process:

- an identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the region;
- an evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife populations from the public lands within the region;
- a recommended strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs related to the public lands; and
- recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.

Please avoid filler or fluff language that does not specifically raise an issue of concern or information to the Board.

### **Report Clarity**

In order for the Board to adequately respond to each Council's annual report, it is important for the annual report itself to state issues clearly.

- If addressing an existing Board policy, Councils should please state whether there is something unclear about the policy, if there is uncertainty about the reason for the policy, or if the Council needs information on how the policy is applied.
- Council members should discuss in detail at Council meetings the issues for the annual report and assist the Council Coordinator in understanding and stating the issues clearly.

- Council Coordinators and OSM staff should assist the Council members during the meeting in ensuring that the issue is stated clearly.

Thus, if the Councils can be clear about their issues of concern and ensure that the Council Coordinator is relaying them sufficiently, then the Board and OSM staff will endeavor to provide as concise and responsive of a reply as is possible.

### **Report Format**

While no particular format is necessary for the Annual Reports, the report must clearly state the following for each item the Council wants the Board to address:

1. Numbering of the issues,
2. A description of each issue,
3. Whether the Council seeks Board action on the matter and, if so, what action the Council recommends, and
4. As much evidence or explanation as necessary to support the Council's request or statements relating to the item of interest.



## Federal Subsistence Board News Release

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

Forest Service

**For Immediate Release:**  
September 13, 2022

**Contact:** Katerina Wessels  
Council Coordination Division Supervisor  
(907) 786-3885 or (800) 478-1456  
katerina\_wessels@fws.gov

### **Applicants Sought for Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Membership Deadline: February 21, 2023**

The Federal Subsistence Board is accepting applications through February 21, 2023 to fill seats on the 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Councils). Council membership appointments are typically for 3-year terms. There are approximately 45 seats open for appointment among all Councils.

The Councils meet at least twice a year and provide recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board on subsistence management issues. Council meetings serve as a forum for regional public involvement in Federal subsistence management. Council members must be knowledgeable about the uses of fish and wildlife resources in their region and reside in the region they wish to represent.

Individuals may apply for membership themselves, or an individual or organization may nominate someone for Council membership. The application form and information about the application process and the Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils is available on the Federal Subsistence Management Program's website: [www.doi.gov/subsistence/regions](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regions). The application form and additional information is also available by contacting Katerina Wessels, Council Coordination Division Supervisor at the Office of Subsistence Management, at (800) 478- 1456 or (907) 786-3885 or [katerina\\_wessels@fws.gov](mailto:katerina_wessels@fws.gov).

Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at [www.doi.gov/subsistence](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence) or by visiting [www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](https://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

**Missing out on the latest Federal subsistence issues?** If you'd like to receive emails and notifications on the Federal Subsistence Management Program you may subscribe for regular updates by emailing [fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov](mailto:fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov).

-###-



# 2023 NORTH AMERICAN CARIBOU WORKSHOP & ARCTIC UNGULATE CONFERENCE

Anchorage, Alaska ■ May 8-12, 2023

Come to the conference to share your knowledge and learn from others! Join an international group of managers, biologists, Indigenous and Local Knowledge holders, and others to share knowledge of caribou, muskoxen, Dall's sheep, moose, and reindeer. The meeting will provide opportunities for exchanging viewpoints, concerns, and recommendations regarding the health, stewardship, use, and study of these important species.

The theme for the joint meeting is *Crossing Boundaries*. Arctic ungulates regularly cross landscape boundaries, connecting ecosystems and peoples, necessitating partnerships and collaboration across management and political boundaries. A critical component of such partnerships involves crossing the boundaries of Western science and Indigenous knowledges to identify creative opportunities to sustain Arctic ungulate populations in a changing world. We will explore these themes across four days of research talks, storytelling, workshops and panel discussions. Join us!

For more information visit [www.nacw-auc-2023.org](http://www.nacw-auc-2023.org) or e-mail [info@nacw-auc-2023.org](mailto:info@nacw-auc-2023.org).





## United States Department of the Interior

### National Park Service

Kobuk Valley National Park, Western Arctic Parklands,  
PO Box 1029  
Kotzebue, AK 99752  
Phone (907) 442-3890



## KOBUK VALLEY SUBSISTENCE RESOURCE COMMISSION

The Kobuk Valley Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) provides local subsistence users an opportunity to inform the management of subsistence resources in Kobuk Valley and the surrounding area (Unit 23). Since the establishment of the Federal Subsistence Program in 1990, the nine-member commission has made recommendations on fish and wildlife proposals directly to Regional Advisory Councils and the Federal Subsistence Board.

The Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (RAC) appoints three members to the SRC. These members provide an important link between the SRC and the Federal Subsistence Management Program. In addition to the RAC appointments, three members of the SRC are appointed by the Governor of Alaska and three members are appointed by the Secretary of the Interior.

**At its October/November 2022 meeting, the RAC has the opportunity to take action on its appointments to the SRC.** According to ANILCA Section 808(a), members of the RAC or local Advisory Councils (AC), such as the Upper Kobuk AC, who also engage in subsistence in the monument, are eligible for this appointment. To be eligible to engage in subsistence within the monument, rural residents must make their primary permanent home in one of the monument's resident zone communities, live within the monument, or hold a subsistence permit issued pursuant to 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 13.440.

Subsistence users who have questions about or are interested in applying for a seat on the SRC should contact Ken Atkisson at [ken\\_atkisson@nps.gov](mailto:ken_atkisson@nps.gov) or Eva Patton at [eva\\_patton@nps.gov](mailto:eva_patton@nps.gov) or 907-764-5377.

### Kobuk Valley SRC Roster September 2022

Name	Community	Appointing Source	Expires*
Merle Custer	Shungnak	NWA RAC	11/4/2022
VACANT	---	NWA RAC	---
Rosa Horner	Kobuk	NWA RAC	11/4/2023
Glenn Miller	Kiana	Governor of Alaska	12/1/2021
Enoch Mitchell	Noatak	Governor of Alaska	12/1/2023
Benny Westlake	Kiana	Governor of Alaska	12/1/2024
Nellie Griest	Shungnak	Secretary of the Interior	1/15/2024
Gordon Newlin	Noorvik	Secretary of the Interior	1/15/2024
Shield Downey	Ambler	Secretary of the Interior	1/15/2024

\* All members serve three-year terms. According to 54 U.S. Code § 100906(c), members continue to serve until re-appointed or replaced. However, RAC appointees must be current members of a RAC or AC for their appointments to be valid.



## Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 6199



FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE  
BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOREST SERVICE

In Reply Refer To  
OSM 22107.BM

SEPT 15 2022

Raymond Oney, Chair  
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta  
Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
1011 East Tudor Road, M/S 121  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

Dear Mr. Oney:

Thank you for bringing to the attention of the Federal Subsistence Board the issue of Council member reimbursement for excess phone and internet expenses incurred during Council meetings held via teleconference. The Office of Subsistence Management has reviewed the policies regarding Council member reimbursement and would like to provide your Council with information on the types of expenses that may be reimbursed and the documentation necessary to receive reimbursement.

When Council meetings are held virtually, Council members may be reimbursed for internet or phone charges that are in excess of their normal bill. Council members who have internet or cellular plans that charge a flat monthly fee that they pay regardless of Council meetings cannot be reimbursed their normal charges. In order for Council members to receive reimbursement for excess charges, they need to submit a copy of their bill that covers the time period during which the virtual Council meeting took place and indicate the excess charges for attending the virtual meeting. Council members can submit this information to their Council Coordinator or mail their bills to the Office of Subsistence Management at 1011 E. Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121, Anchorage, Alaska 99503. This applies to all past meetings beginning from the winter 2020 meeting cycle that took place virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and any future meetings that may be held virtually.

The Federal Subsistence Board appreciates your Council's active involvement in the Federal Subsistence Management Program and the dedication of Council members to resource stewardship on Federal public lands in Alaska. If you have any further questions regarding Council member reimbursements, please contact Brooke McDavid, Council Coordinator, at (907) 891-9181 or [brooke\\_mcdavid@fws.gov](mailto:brooke_mcdavid@fws.gov).

Sincerely,



Anthony Christianson, Chair  
Federal Subsistence Board

cc: Federal Subsistence Board  
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Kodiak Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members  
Office of Subsistence Management  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Administrative Record



National Park Service Update  
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve  
Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
October 31 – November 1, 2022

### **Superintendent Introduction**

Mark Dowdle is the new Superintendent for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve. Mark is a 22-year veteran of the National Park Service and prior to this appointment, he served in several leadership roles including most recently as the Deputy Superintendent of the Outer Banks Group national park sites in eastern North Carolina, where he worked closely with a large variety of communities, partner groups, and surrounding federal, state, and local agencies. Mark recently served as the acting Superintendent of Western Arctic National Parklands in Alaska.

### **Subsistence**

The Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) met on April 20, 2022 via teleconference. The SRC received an update on the Ambler Access Road project and there was much discussion on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, moose survey preliminary results, Dall's sheep surveys, and law enforcement along the eastern boundary of the Park. The next SRC meeting is scheduled for either November 9-10 or November 16-17, 2022 in Fairbanks or via teleconference. At this upcoming meeting, there will be continued discussion on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, 2022 Dall's sheep survey results including age composition, law enforcement, and climate change and human impacts on low wildlife populations. For more information, contact Marcy Okada: [marcy\\_okada@nps.gov](mailto:marcy_okada@nps.gov) and (907) 455-0639

### **Western Arctic Caribou Herd**

Biologists with NPS and ADF&G worked together to deploy 36 GPS collars on adult, female caribou of the herd this spring from Dahl Creek via helicopter. We currently have 87 active collars in the herd. The next collar deployments are being planned for next spring via helicopter. Contact: [kyle\\_joly@nps.gov](mailto:kyle_joly@nps.gov)

### **Moose Survey**

We completed a moose population survey for the area in and around Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve this spring. The population estimate for the entire survey area was 1,308 moose, slightly higher than the previous estimate of 883 moose measured in 2015. The density remains low at 0.21 moose/mi<sup>2</sup> (0.08 moose/km<sup>2</sup>) and the calf ratio estimate was 10 calves:100 adults. Our results suggest that there may have been a slight increase in moose abundance in and around the Park since the previous population estimate in 2015, but deeper snow conditions this year compared to 2015 may have had an influence on our estimate. Contact: [Matthew\\_cameron@nps.gov](mailto:Matthew_cameron@nps.gov)

### **Dall's Sheep**

In July, NPS surveyed for Dall's sheep in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and in collaboration with BLM on BLM lands in the Central Brooks Range. Complete surveys were

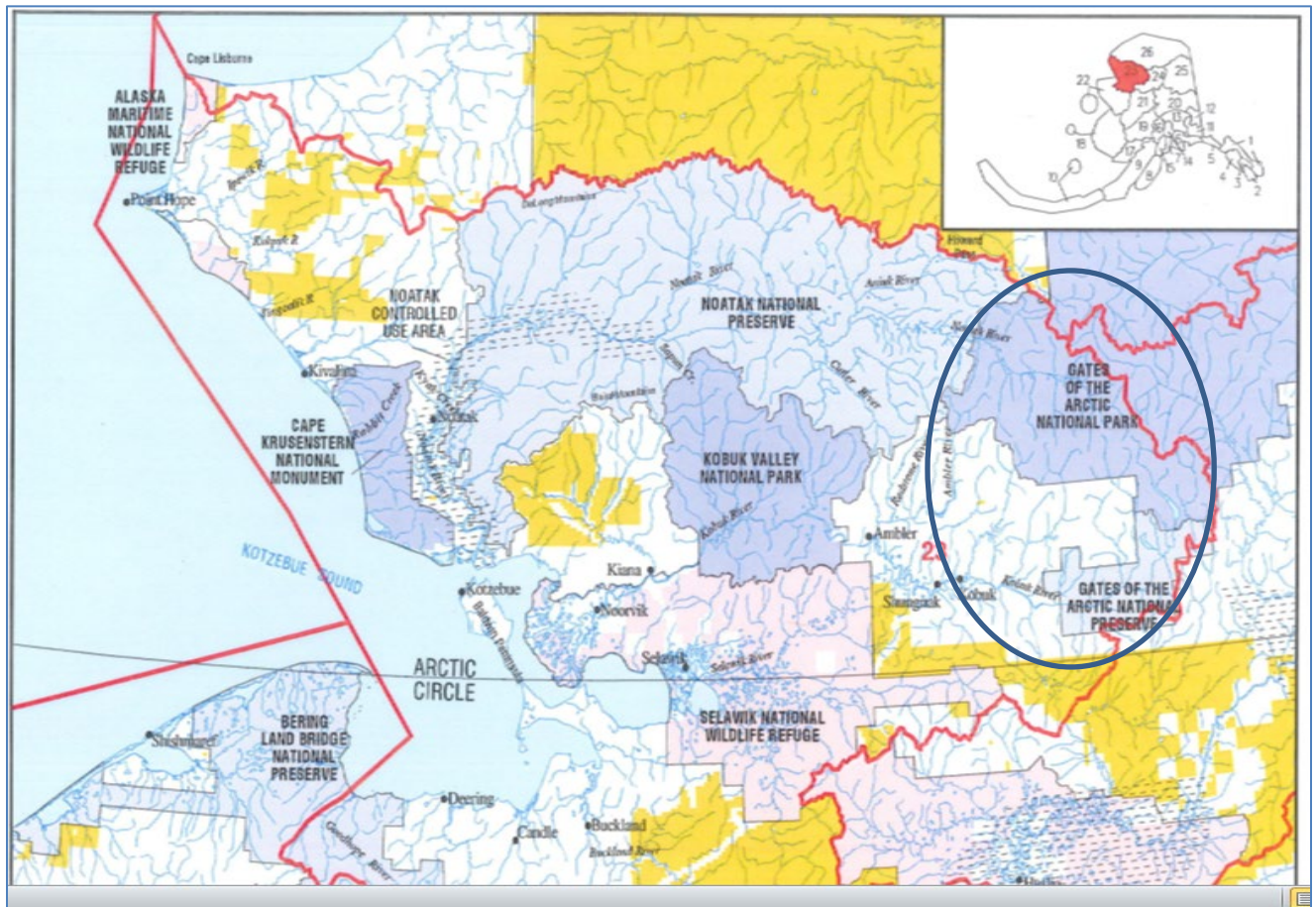


National Park Service Update  
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve  
Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council Meeting  
October 31 – November 1, 2022

flown in the Itkillik Preserve, the southeastern portion of Gates of the Arctic, and on BLM lands. NPS biologists are currently processing the survey data. Sheep estimates will be presented to the Regional Advisory Councils, if the data is ready during the October meetings. Contact: [william\\_deacy@nps.gov](mailto:william_deacy@nps.gov)

**Arctic Streams**

Arctic soils store large amounts of iron and mercury, which can be released as permafrost soils thaw. A new project, funded by the U.S. Geological Survey’s Changing Arctic Ecosystems Initiative, aims to measure the effects of iron mobilization on stream water quality and food webs, including resident fish communities. Preliminary observations suggest that orange stream reaches have higher iron concentrations, less dissolved oxygen, and more acidic water than nearby clearwater streams. Further, the conversion of streams from clear to orange water appears to reflect a considerable deterioration of habitat for benthic macroinvertebrates and fish. We are working to better characterize these effects of iron and map their occurrence across the Brooks Range. Contact: [Jonathan.Odonnell@nps.gov](mailto:Jonathan.Odonnell@nps.gov)





# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Anchorage Field Office  
4700 BLM Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507-2591  
[www.blm.gov/alaska](http://www.blm.gov/alaska)

## **Updates to Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils** **Fall 2022 Meetings**

The Anchorage Field Office completed a busy summer 2022 field operations. The summary below is an overview of priority projects by resource. We are continuing to increase in fieldwork operations, while adhering to any COVID-19 protocols and mitigations.

An overview map of the Anchorage Field Office can be found at:

[https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/documents/files/Maps\\_Alaska\\_Anchorage-Field-Office.pdf](https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/documents/files/Maps_Alaska_Anchorage-Field-Office.pdf)

BLM Alaska publicly available interactive maps are available at: <https://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MinimalGallery/index.html?appid=d2da853631fe4b60ac768f19bec4e84b>

### **Wildlife and Subsistence**

- Conducted Breeding Bird Survey routes on the Unalakleet and Anvik Rivers in June.
- Completed a peregrine falcon nesting survey on the Kuskokwim River between McGrath and Aniak in July.
- Assisted Alaska Department of Fish and Game with the release of 28 Wood Bison on the Innoko River near Kellen Creek. The bison were barged to the site and held in a temporary corral before being released on August 6<sup>th</sup> to the wild bison herd already in the area.
- BLM issued federal muskox permits for hunts in Units 22B, 22D and 23.
- BLM issued federal moose permits in Unalakleet for the fall hunt in unit 22A.
- Contributed funds in an Inter-agency Agreement with FWS Togiak Wildlife Refuge to help monitor the Mulchatna Caribou Herd.
- Contributed funds in an Interagency Agreement with NPS to help fund the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group meeting in December. The meeting is funded by BLM, NPS and FWS and ADF&G. The working Group will discuss the management of the herd and its current population status.

## **Aquatics**

- Conducted e-DNA sampling in the Kigluaik Mountains on the Seward Peninsula for BLM sensitive species Kigluaik Arctic Char.
- Completed initial aquatic habitat baseline data collection from the Seward Peninsula Planning Area based out of Kotzebue and Nome as part of the National Assessment Inventory and Monitoring Program (AIM). AIM data provides a framework to inventory and quantitatively assess the condition and trend of natural resources on public lands.
- Conducted ongoing stream gaging flow quantification efforts on Big River and Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River
- Conducted ongoing water quality monitoring work at Platinum. This is a partnership with USFWS Togiak National Refuge for installation of a Video Weir in 2023 on the Salmon River monitoring salmon escarpment numbers.

## **Ecology**

- Continued collecting Assessment Inventory and Monitoring (AIM) terrestrial and riparian and wetland plot data for the Kobuk Seward Peninsula Planning Area. In July/August 2022, 23 plots were established and sampled using this monitoring framework. Data on plant cover, invasive species, sensitive species, woody structure, phenology, pollinator activity, and soil structure were collected. In addition to these national core monitoring indicators, BLM has developed methods to collect data on lichen cover and disturbance to determine rangeland health in areas that BLM permits reindeer grazing.
- In July 2022, exclosures on the Seward Peninsula were visited and monitored. These small fenced-in areas protect vegetation from grazing, providing a baseline to learn about the long-term effects of grazing on lichens and plants. The exclosures were installed in 2011 and 2012 and baseline data was collected at that time. This is the first year that vegetation has been reassessed to determine how it has changed over the past 10 years. Data will be analyzed during the upcoming winter months.
- Re-issued four firewood harvest permits to residents on the Seward Peninsula.
- Collaborated with the United State Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (FIA) to facilitate data collection at 105 plot locations on BLM within the FIA's Southwest Inventory Unit.
- Anchorage Area: Conducted invasive species control treatments on Campbell Tract in July with another planned for August 2021. Bird vetch and orange hawkweed were targeting this year and spot treatment occurred within a 6-acre area that is assessed annually.



- Continuing to support the Anchorage Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area through an assistance agreement to partially fund meetings, public events, and chairperson coordination.

### **Archaeology**

- OTZ Telecom Cooperative has applied to the BLM for rights-of-way to construct several towers that would provide internet service to northwest Alaska. The BLM is working with the USDA Rural Utilities Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and the State of Alaska to develop a Programmatic Agreement to address potential effects to cultural resources under the National Historic Preservation Act.

### **Recreation**

- Spring 2022- conducted SRP monitoring in the Neacola Mountains and Tordrillo Mountains.
- June 2022- inspected guide and outfitter camps in GMU 19D & 19C.
- July 2022- inspected guide and outfitter camps and airstrips in GMU 23.
- August 2022- a new BLM sign will be placed at the boundary of BLM lands and Unalakleet Native Lands on the Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River.
- Issued new Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for guided bear hunts in GUA 21-03.
- Issued new Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for guided big game hunts in GUA 19-12.
- Issued new Special Recreation Permit (SRP) for guided big game hunts in GUA 21-01.

### **Iditarod Trail**

- The BLM worked with Denali National Park & Preserve personnel to rehabilitate and stabilize the Rohn Public Use Cabin. The work stabilized the condition of this National Register of Historic Places eligible cabin for decades to come.

### **Realty**

- OTZ lease application
- Mukluk Telephone fiberoptic lease application
- Private individual road right of way application


- Bristol Bay Cellular 2 ROW lease renewals
- NPS Nome lease clean-up of Hill 3870 on the Teller Road
- Seldovia Certificate Inspection and Possession Environmental Site Assessment exam

### **Hazmat**

- Kolmakoff Mine Site has been funded for FY23 remedial fieldwork.
- Three remote trespass cabin sites have been remediated and will be submitted for regulatory closure.
- RCRA HAZMAT removed and disposed of from an aircraft crash site in Squirrel River SMRA.
- Accumulated HAZMAT from AFO and GFO properly disposed of.

### **Minerals**

- Minerals staff have had a productive field inspection and are scheduled to accomplish all planned mine inspections by the end of September.
- Salmon River Fish Passage Project is undergoing NEPA review and funding options are being sought after.
- Nixon Fork experienced a severe wildfire fire event that burned much of the surface infrastructure. There continues to be multiple enforcement actions against the operator and staff are trying to bring them into compliance before the end of FY22.
- Multiple operators in Flat have made progress in their mine site reclamation.
- One operator in Nome is beginning reclamation this fall and BLM is pursuing cleanup actions for the other operator.
- Minerals staff have worked extensively in closing out legacy mineral material casefiles associated with Native Allotments.

<p><b>Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence Division</b></p>	<p><b>Review of Arctic Area Subsistence Division Projects</b></p> <p>Helen Cold ADF&amp;G Subsistence Division</p> <p>Presentation to the Northwest Arctic RAC October 31-November 1, 2022</p> 
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## Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Dolly Varden and Whitefish Species in Northwest Alaska

- **Funding Agency:** US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- **Purpose:** Identify and analyze traditional ecological knowledge of whitefish and Dolly Varden behavior, health, and abundance
- **Focus area:** communities of Deering, Kotzebue and Noatak
- **Methods:**
  - Ethnographic interviews with mapping component
  - Participant observation
- **Project timeline:**
  - Project Start 04/2020, project end 06/2023
  - Ethnographic interviews in:
    - Noatak** – Interviews March 2022, PO September 2022
    - Deering** – Interviews February 2022, PO June 2022
    - Kotzebue** – Interviews August 2022, PO Fall/Spring 2022/23



## Arctic Beaver Observation Network

- **Funding Agency:** National Science Foundation (NSF)
  - RSA with University of Alaska Fairbanks
- **Purpose:** Document indigenous knowledge of beaver ecology and impacts of beaver presence on fish, subsistence access, and Arctic communities
- **Focus area:** Shungnak, Kotzebue and Noatak
- **Methods:**
  - Ethnographic interviews with mapping component
  - Participant observation
- **Project timeline:**
  - Project Start 10/2021, project end 09/2026
  - Interviews conducted annually (2022-2025)
  - Data management plans developed with all 3 communities,
- **Future work:**
  - Planning for ethnographic interviews and participant observation underway.



## Bering Land Bridge Ethnographic Overview and Assessment

- **Funding Agency:** National Park Service (NPS)
- **Purpose:** Produce an ethnographic overview and assessment (EOA) for Bering Land Bridge National Preserve
- **Focus area:** Bering Land Bridge zone communities (**Wales, Shishmaref, Deering**)
- **Methods:**
  - Comprehensive literature review
  - Community consultations
  - Create EOA document for NPS
- **Project timeline:**
  - Project Start 09/2020, project end 09/2024
  - Literature review conducted and report writing in progress
- **Future work:**
  - Community consultations postponed due to COVID, anticipated for 2023
  - Draft report finalized and shared with communities spring 2024, report compete fall 2024



## Western Arctic Caribou Herd Harvest Assessment

- **Funding Agency:** Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
  - Research partnership among 8 study communities, ADF&G Subsistence, ADF&G Department of Wildlife Conservation
- **Purpose:** conduct household large mammal harvest surveys in 8 communities within the range of the Western Arctic caribou herd
- **Focus area:** Communities of **Golovin, White Mountain, Shishmaref, Selawik, Shungnak, Noatak, Deering** and Kobuk
- **Methods:**
  - Household surveys, ethnographic interviews with mapping, and participant observation
- **Project timeline:**
  - Project Start 03/2019, project end 06/2024
  - 4 years of surveys - each community is surveyed twice, once every 2 years
  - Spring 2022 visited Shungnak, White Mountain, Selawik and Golovin
- **Future work:**
  - Visit all study communities fall 2022-spring 2023 for ethnographic interviews and participant observation
  - Visit Deering, Kobuk, Golovin and Shishmaref spring 2023 for second round of surveys/final year of data collection



## Kiana Community Subsistence Harvest Assessment

- **Funding Agency:** National Park Service (NPS)
- **Purpose:** update baseline data on the customary and traditional uses of fish and wildlife by residents of Kiana
- **Focus area:** Kiana
- **Methods:**
  - Household Surveys
  - Ethnographic interviews with mapping component
  - Participant observation
- **Project timeline:**
  - Project Start 06/2020, project end 09/2023
  - 1 year of surveys focusing on harvests of all subsistence resources
  - Household surveys and interviews conducted in person March/April 2022
- **Future work:**
  - Additional interviews fall 2022





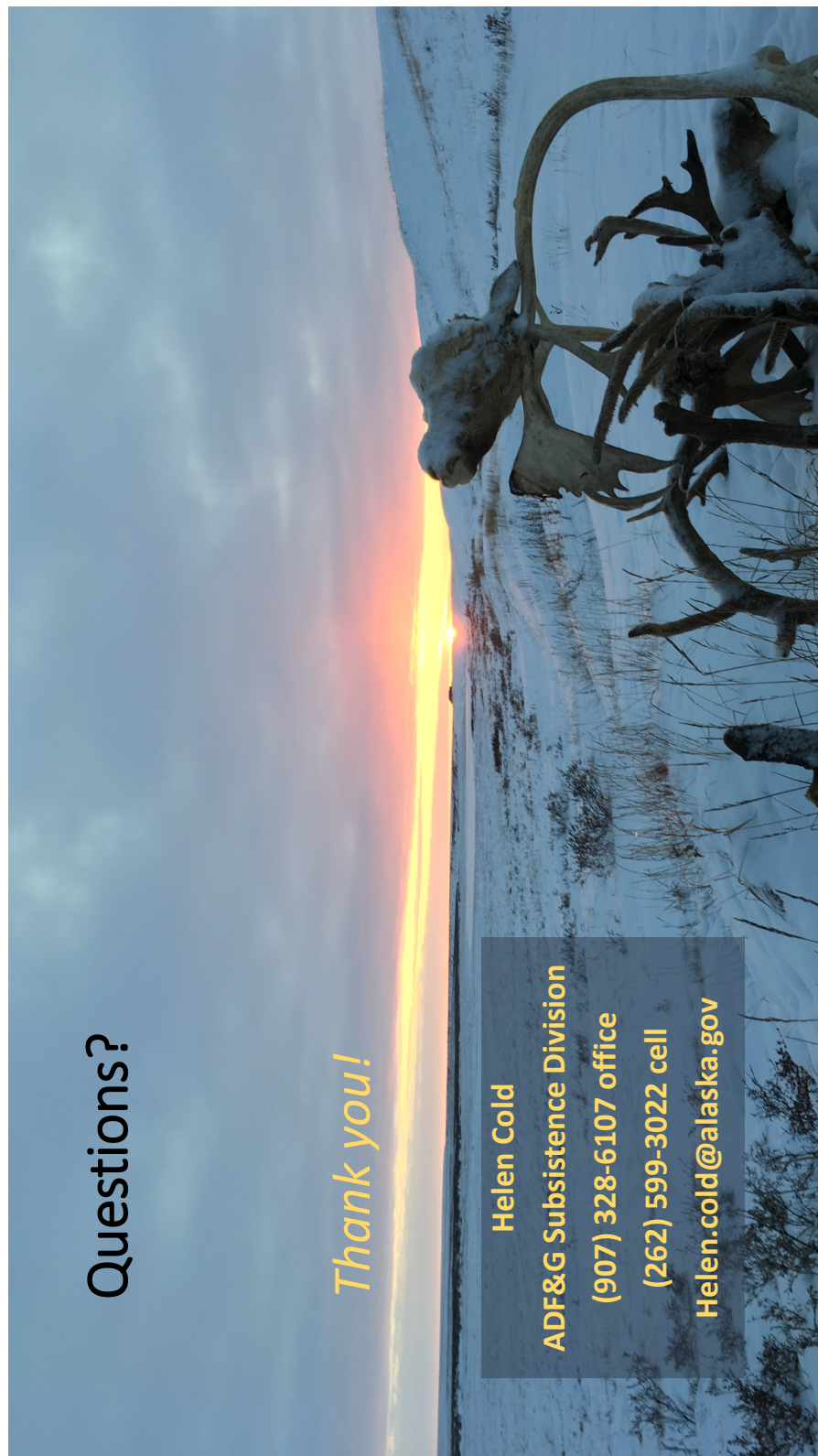
## Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Salmon in River Drainages of Kotzebue Sound

- **Funding Agency:** US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- **Purpose:** Document and describe Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) regarding changes in salmon distribution, abundance, migration, and timing in river drainages of Kotzebue Sound
- **Focus area:** Noorvik, Ambler and Kotzebue
- **Methods:**
  - Ethnographic interviews
  - Participant observation
- **Project timeline:** Start 07/2022\*, end 06/2025



\*Work for this project postponed until 07/2023





Questions?

*Thank you!*

Helen Cold  
ADF&G Subsistence Division  
(907) 328-6107 office  
(262) 599-3022 cell  
[Helen.cold@alaska.gov](mailto:Helen.cold@alaska.gov)

# Winter 2023 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

*Last updated 09/29/2022*

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. 19</i>	<b>Feb. 20 PRESIDENTS DAY HOLIDAY</b>	<i>Feb. 21</i> <i>Window Opens</i>	<i>Feb. 22</i>	<i>Feb. 23</i>	<i>Feb. 24</i>	<i>Feb. 25</i>
				<b>NSRAC (Kaktovik)</b>		
<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>
		<b>SEARAC (Juneau)</b>				
			<b>EIRAC (Arctic Village or Fairbanks)</b>			
<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>
	<b>NWARAC (TBD)</b>					
<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>
		<b>BBRAC (Dillingham)</b>		<b>SCRAC (Anchorage)</b>		
<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>
			<b>SPRAC (Nome)</b>			
<i>Mar. 26</i>	<i>Mar. 27</i>	<i>Mar. 28</i>	<i>Mar. 29</i>	<i>Mar. 30</i>	<i>Mar. 31</i>	<i>Apr. 1</i>
			<b>KARAC (Larsen Bay/Old Harbor)</b>			
<i>Apr. 2</i>	<i>Apr. 3</i>	<i>Apr. 4</i>	<i>Apr. 5</i>	<i>Apr. 6</i>	<i>Apr. 7</i>	<i>Apr. 8</i>
	<b>YKDRAC (Alakanuk)</b>				<i>Window Closes</i>	
		<b>WIRAC (Aniak)</b>				

# Fall 2023 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

*Last updated 09/29/2022*

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. 13	Aug. 14 <b>Window Opens</b>	Aug. 15	Aug. 16	Aug. 17	Aug. 18	Aug. 19
Aug. 20	Aug. 21	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24	Aug. 25	Aug. 26
Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Sep. 1	Sep. 2
Sep. 3	Sep. 4 <b>Labor Day Holiday</b>	Sep. 5	Sep. 6	Sep. 7	Sep. 8	Sep. 9
Sep. 10	Sep. 11	Sep. 12	Sep. 13	Sep. 14	Sep. 15	Sep. 16
Sep. 17	Sep. 18	Sep. 19	Sep. 20	Sep. 21	Sep. 22	Sep. 23
		<b>KARAC (King Cove)</b>				
Sep. 24	Sep. 25	Sep. 26	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 <b>Columbus Day Holiday</b>	Oct. 10	Oct. 11	Oct. 12	Oct. 13	Oct. 14
Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19	Oct. 20	Oct. 21
Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24	Oct. 25	Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28
Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 1	Nov. 2	Nov. 3 <b>Window Closes</b>	Nov. 4

## **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 (SRC) 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.

Approved by the Federal Subsistence Board on June 15, 2004.



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

**Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council**

**Charter**

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Northwest Arctic 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)) Title VIII, 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 evaluate 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; and

- (4) Recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.
  - e. Appoint three members to each of the Cape Krusenstern National Monument and the Kobuk Valley National Park Subsistence Resource Commissions and one member to the Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission in accordance with section 808 of the ANILCA.
  - f. Make recommendations on determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources.
  - g. Make recommendations on determinations of rural status.
  - h. Provide recommendations on the establishment and membership of Federal local advisory committees.
5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Council Reports.** The Council reports to the Federal Subsistence Board Chair, who is appointed by the Secretary of the Interior with the concurrence of the Secretary of Agriculture.
  6. **Support.** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will provide administrative support for the activities of the Council through the Office of Subsistence Management.
  7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the Council's functions are estimated to be \$150,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.0 staff years.
  8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The DFO is the Subsistence Council Coordinator for the 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 provisions of section 14 of the FACA. The Council will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.

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

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

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

Members will be appointed for 3-year terms. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

If appointments for a given year have not yet been announced, a member may continue to serve on the Council following the expiration of his or her term until such appointments have been made. Unless reappointed, the member's service ends on the date of announcement even if that member's specific seat remains unfilled.

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.



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