



Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Meeting Materials

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Egan Center
Anchorage, Alaska
March 9, 2016
8:30 a.m.

TELECONFERENCE: call the toll free number: 1 (866) 560-5984 then when prompted enter the passcode: 12960066

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. **Roll Call and Establish Quorum** (*Secretary*)..... YK-3
- 2. **Invocation**
- 3. **Call to Order** (*Chair*)
- 4. **Welcome and Introductions** (*Chair*)
- 5. **Review and Adopt Agenda*** (*Chair*) YK-1
- 6. **Election of Officers**
 - Chair (*DFO*)
 - Vice-Chair (*New Chair*)
 - Secretary (*New Chair*)
- 7. **Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes*** (*Chair*) YK-4
- 8. **Reports**
 - Council Member Reports
 - Chair’s Report
- 9. **Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items**
- 10. **Old Business** (*Chair*)
 - a. Refuges Proposed Rule on Hunting – Update 210

11. New Business (Chair)

- a. Call for Federal Fish and Shellfish Regulatory Proposals * (*OSM Fisheries*).....225
- b. Identify Priority Information Needs for FRMP* (*OSM Fisheries*)
- c. Approve FY2015 Annual Report* (*Council Coordinator*)YK-12

12. Agency Reports

Unless a special report is requested by the Council, all agencies should be prepared to only provide written reports for this meeting.....YK-14

13. Future Meeting Dates*

- Confirm date and location of Fall 2016 meeting235
- Select date and location for Winter 2017 meeting236

14. Closing Comments

15. Adjourn (Chair)

To teleconference into the meeting, call the toll free number: 1 (866) 560-5984 then when prompted enter the passcode: 12960066

Reasonable Accommodations

The Federal Subsistence Board is committed to providing access to this meeting for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, closed captioning, or other accommodation needs to Eva Patton, (907) 786-3358, eva_patton@fws.gov, or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on February 20, 2016.

REGION 5 Yukon Kuskokwim-Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Seat	Year Apptd <i>Term Expires</i>	Member Name Community
1	2004 2016	William Brown Eek
2	1997 2016	James Charles Tuntutuliak
3	2014 2016	John Andrew Kwethluk
4	2014 2016	Michael Peters Marshall
5	1996 2017	Lester Wilde, Sr. Hooper Bay Chair
6	2014 2017	Dale Smith, Jr. Mekoryuk
7	2014 2017	Anthony Ulak Scammon Bay
8	2014 2017	Annie Cleveland Quinhagak
9	2014 2017	Dorothy Johnson Mountain Village
10	2013 2017	Raymond Oney Alakanuk Secretary
11	2003 2018	Greg Roczicka Bethel Vice Chair
12	2003 2018	Robert Aloysius Kalskag
13	2012 2018	David Bill, Sr. Toksook Bay

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

October 7-8, 2015

Meeting Minutes

Location of Meeting:

Yupit Piciryarait Cultural Center, Bethel, AK

Time and Date of Meeting:

Wednesday October 7, 2015, 10:00 a.m. – Thursday October 8, 2015, 4:37 p.m.

Call to Order:

The fall meeting of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council was called to order Wednesday, October 7 at 10:00 a.m. All Council members were present except James Charles and Dale Smith, each of whom had an excused absence. Robert Aloysius provided an invocation.

Review and Adopt Agenda:

The Council approved a motion (11-0) to accept the Agenda as a guide with the following changes: the Office of Subsistence Management will provide an update on the Kuskokwim Partnership Project and the Fish and Wildlife Service will provide a summary of 2015 activities on the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. Proposal WP16-36 will be discussed ahead of Proposal WP16-33.

Attendees:

The following persons attended some portion of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council meeting either in person or by teleconference, in addition to the Council members.

Alex Nick	Bethel	public
Andy Aderman	Bethel	FWS
Bill Alstrom	Andeleski	Public
Carl Johnson	Anchorage	OSM
Catherine Moncrieff	Anchorage	YRDFA
Charles Eperock	Kwethluk	Kwethluk Inc.
Charlton Ispchook	Bethel	Public
Cheryl Graves	Bethel	FWS
Dan C. Nicholai	Atmanthuk	Translator
Dan Sharp	Anchorage	BLM
David Phillips	Aniak	FWS
David Therchik	Bethel	FWS

Drew Crawford	Anchorage	ADF&G
Fred Bue	Anchorage	FWS
Gerald Maschmann	Fairbanks	FWS
Glenn Chen	Homer	BIA
Heather Abbey Tonneson	Anchorage	FWS
Jason Nimi	Kwethluk	Kwethluk IRA
Jeff Estensen	Fairbanks	ADF&G
Jennifer Tonalin	Anchorage	FWS
Jill Klein	Anchorage	YRDFA
John W Archer	Kwethluk	YKPAC
Karen Clark	Anchorage	FWS
Kevin Bartley	Bethel	AVCP
Martin Nicolai	Kwethluk	Kwethluk Inc.
Mary Nanuwak		Public
Mike Williams	Bethel	KIFC
Patrick Jones	Bethel	ADF&G
Patrick Snow	Bethel	FWS
Phillip Perry	Bethel	ADF&G
Pippa Kenner	Anchorage	OSM
Ray Born	Bethel	FWS
Robert Larson	Petersburg	USFS
Sabrina Garcia	Anchorage	ADF&G
Spencer Rearden	Bethel	FWS
Suzanne Workman	Anchorage	OSM
Taylor Belsford	Anchorage	Donlin Gold
Wayne Jenkins	Homer	YRDFA

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:

The Council supported a motion (11-0) to approve the winter meeting minutes as presented in the council book.

Council Reports:

There were no council member reports or a report from the chair.

Public and Tribal Comments

Alex Nick provided the Council insights on moose hunting in Unit 18. He testified that although he is willing to share resources with other users, there should be a plan to minimize conflicts between user groups. There have been complaints regarding sport hunting off of the approved transporter and outfitter sites. The local communities should be aware of the locations of these approved sites and staff should make a greater effort to coordinate the moose hunt between the different user groups. Because of the importance of the moose hunt, the Council should have hunting management issues on all future agendas. Mr. Nick supports the local State Fish and Game Advisory Committee system and the Federal Subsistence Council program but cautioned against supporting new or competing organizations or committees. He

recommended the definition of Unit 18 remainder as downriver from Pianmute Slough and north of the Johnson River (aka Crooked Creek).

Mr. Isphook is concerned that current regulations allow fishing for Chinook Salmon in non-spawning rivers while spawning tributaries are closed. Fishing for Chinook Salmon should be closed everywhere if there is a conservation concern. He is also concerned that hunting and fishing activities under State of Alaska rules within the boundary of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta National Wildlife Refuge are interfering with subsistence uses of those resources.

Martin Nicolai testified that the moose hunt in his area was only open 8 days with a 72 hour reporting requirement. Some folks have difficulty meeting the reporting requirement and he recommends the length of the season be determined pre-season.

James Nicolai testified that there is too much competition for moose around Kalskag. A harvest of 150 moose is too small for this area and he recommended establishing targeted seasons or a split season. Areas open to subsistence fishing last season were too small because they included considerable amounts of un-fishable water.

Old Business:

Rural Determination: Steward Cogswell reported that the direct final rule for changes to the rural determination process is in Washington DC now and will be published in the Federal Register soon. The Board will meet in January, 2016 to look at options for how to make non-rural determinations.

Refuges Proposed Rule on Hunting: Patrick Snow provided an overview of proposed changes to hunting regulations on National Wildlife Refuges with a clarification by Heather Tonneson that the prohibition on trapping refers to all species of bears. Mr. Roczicka commented that these proposed changes do not seem to be in the best interest of subsistence users and wondered why the USFWS looking for comments if the decisions have already been made. Motion approved (11-0) to write a letter to the USFWS asking that the proposed changes not be implemented until there is a companion plan that provides for the continuation of subsistence uses on refuge lands.

New Business:

Federal Subsistence Wildlife Proposals

The council took the following actions on Federal wildlife proposals:

Regional Proposals

WP16-36: Revise unit boundary descriptions for Unit 18

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, or written public comments. Alex Nick was in favor of revising the boundary to north and west of the Johnson River, locally known as Crooked Creek. James Nicori was concerned with whether this regulatory change would have any effect on the practice of using aircraft to spot moose prior to the season.

ADF&G: Drew Crawford testified in support of this proposal as it would align State and Federal regulations.

Council Action: Support WP16-36 (11-0)

Rationale: Adopting this proposal would align unit boundaries with State of Alaska regulations, reduce complexity of regulations and reduce opportunity for enforcement issues. The Council was assured that there would be no loss of subsistence opportunity for residents of Kalskag due to changing the Unit 18 boundary.

WP16-33: Add Lower Kalskag to current customary and traditional use determinations for moose in Unit 18

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, or written public comments. Alex Nick supports this proposal and believes the long term pattern of use should be the primary determining factor for customary and traditional determinations, not the eight factors. He also supports a customary and traditional determination that is inclusive of all communities within the geographic area.

ADF&G: Support

Council Action: Support WP16-33 (11-0)

Rationale: There is clearly a long term and consistency pattern of use of caribou and moose in Unit 18 by residents of this community. The community of Lower Kalskag is closely associated with the community of Kalskag, which has a positive customary and traditional use determination for harvest of caribou and moose in Unit 18.

WP16-34: Close Federal lands in a portion of Unit 18 to harvest of all big game by non-Federally qualified users

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, written public comments or public testimony.

ADF&G: Oppose

Council Action: Oppose WP16-34 (2-9).

Rationale: There is no conservation concern with moose in this area and unless there is increased harvest there could be significant habitat degradation due to exceeding carrying capacity. Subsistence users are satisfying their subsistence needs. There is a concern regarding the continuation of subsistence uses if the moose population is allowed to increase to the point where habitat is impacted and productivity of moose is decreased.

WP16-35: Allow use of artificial light to harvest bears at den sites in Unit 18

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments or written public comments. Martin Andrew supported this proposal and testified the practice is traditional and should be allowed and protected.

ADF&G: Support

Council Action: Support WP16-35 (11-0).

Rationale: There are few residents that participate in harvesting bears from their dens but it is an important subsistence activity for those individuals. There are no conservation concerns and the use of artificial light provides a measure of safety to hunters. The modified language suggested by OSM does not provide clarity and is unnecessary.

Crossover Proposals

WP16-27/28: Change in season and harvest limit for moose in Unit 17A

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, written public comments or public testimony.

ADF&G: Support WP16-27 with the proposed modification then take no action on WP16-28.

Council Action: **Support WP16-27 (11-0) with the modification suggested by OSM.**

Rationale: The local State Fish and Game Advisory Committees are composed of Federally qualified subsistence users and have the detailed local knowledge necessary to propose regulations that meet local subsistence needs. There is no conservation concern and the proposal will benefit subsistence users. Because of action on WP16-27, the Council took no action on WP16-28.

WP16-29/30: Change in methods and means and season date for caribou

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, written public comments or public testimony.

ADF&G: Support WP16-29 with the proposed modification then take no action on WP16-30.

Council Action: **Support WP16-29 (11-0) with the modification suggested by OSM.**

Rationale: This proposal would provide for increased subsistence opportunity. The local State Fish and Game Advisory Committees are composed of Federally qualified subsistence users and have the detailed local knowledge necessary to propose regulations that meet local subsistence needs. There is no conservation concern and the proposal will benefit subsistence users. Because of action on WP16-29, the Council took no action on WP16-30.

WP16-38: Remove half-mile corridors along the Innoko and Yukon Rivers

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, written public comments or public testimony.

ADF&G: Recommendation is to oppose because adopting this proposal will result in unacceptable disturbance of moose on their wintering grounds.

Council Action: **Oppose WP16-38 (2-9).**

Rationale: There would be almost no benefit to Federally qualified subsistence users because there is very little Federal land within the corridor. Adopting this proposal would result in increased enforcement concerns for local residents. The original closure was requested by the local communities and unless there is support from those same communities, there is no reason to change the regulation.

WP16-43: Change hunt area and descriptor, close hunt for caribou

Comments: There were no Tribal Consultations, Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments, or public testimony. There was one written public comment from the Kawerak Corporation in support of a modified description of the area “GMU 22A South of the Golsovia River” to minimize the harvest of reindeer during an open caribou season.

ADF&G: Recommended opposing this proposal due to increased regulatory complexity

Council Action: **Take No Action on Proposal WP16-43 (11-0).**

Rationale: The Council determined this proposal was outside the authority of the Subsistence Board and took no action

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program: Stewart Cogswell provided a history of the FRMP, the changes to the process of awarding research funds and the 2016 Monitoring Plan. The Council had no comments on any of the Kuskokwim Region projects although Council member Greg Roczicka stated that both multi-regional projects looked like good projects. Mr. Roczicka commented that people of the region are "... being surveyed to death, and people are just getting tired of it." The Council appreciates the information obtained through this program and considers the FRMP and Partners programs as important tools to build capacity within the Tribes and local communities.

2015 Annual Report Topics

The Council identified the following topics for inclusion in the 2015 draft Annual Report. The Annual Report will be approved during the winter meeting.

Issue 1: Dip Nets

The use of a dip net on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers is not a traditional subsistence gear type and does not allow users to meet subsistence needs. Subsistence users should be able to use any of the usual harvest methods for subsistence harvest. The Council recommends that the Board provide that dip nets should not be the only gear type allowed during open subsistence fisheries on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

Issue 2: Accountability for In-season Managers

The Council is concerned with how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife in-season managers are held accountable for ensuring that there are fish and wildlife available to harvest for subsistence uses. Subsistence has the highest priority use but there are several examples of recent policies and actions that are being implemented that do not provide the continuation of subsistence use. The Council recommends the Board be vigilant in providing guidance to other Federal Agencies regarding their obligations under ANILCA to provide for the continuation of subsistence uses.

Issue 3: Communication Challenges

There must be two way communication and education between local residents and agency staff regarding what constitutes a "traditional way of life". This concept is not easily explained or understood. The Council requests the Board provide direction and staff training in methods to incorporate this concept into management plans and policies of all Federal land management Agencies.

Kuskokwim River Partnership Project: Stewart Cogswell provided an update on the partnership project and recommended that the Council consider establishing a standing subcommittee with the Western Interior Subsistence Regional Advisory Council as part of this project. The subcommittee will allow the councils to have a presence on the partnership between meetings. Mike Williams, Chair of the Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fisheries Commission, informed the council there were 33 Tribal governments involved and the memorandum of understanding with the USF&WS is in the final drafting stage. Greg Roczicka suggested that Tribes must be part of the solution to deal with a huge capacity to harvest fish on such a limited resource. Participation by ADF&G is critical and appreciated. Martin Nicolai reported that negotiations between KIFC and the USF&WS are ongoing he supports the use of permits as necessary to enforce harvest quotas. Kevin Bartley has been conducting interviews with local residents to identify impediments for stakeholders to work together. Mary Nanuwak commented that this project is an important way to share knowledge between subsistence users and managers. The Council approved a motion (11-0) to support the

formation of a Kuskokwim River Fisheries joint subcommittee with the Western Interior Subsistence Regional Advisory Council to enhance the Kuskokwim Partnership Project. The Council also supports the formation of a memorandum of understanding between the Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fisheries Commission and the USF&WS.

Agency Reports:

Yukon River Fisheries: Gerald Maschmann and Sabrina Garcia provided a review of the 2015 season fishery for the Yukon River. Escapement goals were reached in all the major spawning tributaries for Chinook Salmon this year.

Kuskokwim River Fisheries: Robert Sundown provided an update on the 2015 season salmon fisheries on the Kuskokwim River. There were significant restrictions on commercial, sport and subsistence fisheries but these actions were necessary and resulted in escapement goals for Chinook Salmon being met in all major spawning tributaries.

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association: Wayne Jenkins and Catherine Montcrief updated the Council on successes in coordinating management of salmon on the Yukon River by their group and ongoing projects.

Togiak National Wildlife Refuge: Andy Aderman updated the Council on activities occurring on the Togiak Refuge this year. A summary report was included in the Council book.

Kuskokwim River Area Moose: Spencer Rearden and Patrick Jones reported that the moose population in the Kuskokwim River drainage was healthy and increasing in most areas. The quota is increasing and there is a good working relationship between the State and Federal managers.

Donlin Mine EIS: Taylor Belsford provided the Council a power point presentation and supplemental written materials concerning the Donlin Gold Project Environmental Impact Statement. The EIS (approximately 6,500 pages) will be posted on-line by the end of November and there will be a series of public meetings scheduled in local communities during the winter.

Final Comments:

- Productive meeting
- Hopeful the Kuskokwim Partnership Project is a success
- The subsistence way of life uses all resources to sustain life
- We all need to be good stewards of the resources
- The staff are knowledgeable and the reports informative and helpful
- We all need to remember why we are here

Future Meeting Dates

The Council approved the fall 2016 meeting for October 12-13, 2016 in Bethel.

Father Martin Nicolai provided a benediction and the Council meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m. October 8, 2015.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

|s| *Robert Larson*

October 8, 2015

Robert Larson, DFO, USFS Subsistence Management Program

|s| *Lester Wilde*

October 8, 2015

Lester Wilde, Chair, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

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

DRAFT

**Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Office of Subsistence Management
1011 E. Tudor Road M/S 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503**

RAC YKD15054.CJ

Mr. Tim Towarak, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Office of Subsistence Management
1011 E. Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Greetings Chairman Towarak:

This is the fiscal year 2015 annual report of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) as authorized under Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Section 805(a)(3)(D). The Council wishes to share information and raise a number of concerns dealing with implementation of Title VIII of ANILCA and the continuation of subsistence uses in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region.

In 2015, the Council met in Bethel, February 25-26, and in Bethel, October 7-8. During the February meeting, the Council heard public comments regarding changes to Unit boundaries, salmon interceptions, rural determinations, customary and traditional use determinations, the reintroduction of wood bison, and the proposed Kuskokwim River Fisheries Partnership Project. The Council supported a 60% reduction in salmon by-catch in the Bering Sea Pollock fishery and the formation of the Kuskokwim Fisheries Partnership Project. During the October 7-8 meeting, the Council heard testimony on salmon and moose management concerns, and the proposed rule on hunting in refuges. The Council provided recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) on 10 proposals to change subsistence hunting regulations and wrote two letters to the Board; the first letter supporting the formation of a joint partnership project subcommittee with the Western Interior Council and the second letter requesting the proposed hunting regulations for refuges include a provision for subsistence uses of wildlife.

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

1. Dip Nets

The use of a dip net on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers is not a traditional subsistence gear type for most of the region and does not allow users to meet subsistence needs. Subsistence users should be able to use any of the usual harvest methods for subsistence harvest. The

Council recommends that the Board determine that dip nets should not be the only gear type allowed during open subsistence fisheries on the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

2. Accountability for In-Season Managers

The Council is concerned with how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in-season managers are held accountable for ensuring that there are fish and wildlife available to harvest for subsistence uses. Subsistence use is required to have the highest priority in management, but there are several examples of recent policies and actions that are being implemented that do not provide the continuation of subsistence use. The Council recommends the Board be vigilant in providing guidance to other Federal agencies regarding their obligations under Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act to provide for the continuation of subsistence uses.

3. Communication Challenges

Two-way communication and an education process between local residents and Federal agency staff regarding what constitutes a “traditional way of life” are needed. This concept is not easily explained or understood. The Council requests the Board provide direction and staff training in methods to incorporate this concept into management plans and policies of all Federal land management agencies.

Thank you for considering the management and program issues of concern to the Council. Please address any questions with this letter directly to Eva Patton, Subsistence Council Coordinator, Office of Subsistence Management, at (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3676 if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

Lester Wilde
Chair

cc. Federal Subsistence Board
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Eugene R. Peltola, Jr., Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management
Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management
Carl Johnson, Council Coordination Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Administrative Record



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 346
Bethel, Alaska 99559



Biological Activities Report – February 2016

YDNWR Fish Weirs

Kwethluk Weir

Both chinook and coho salmon escapement goals were met in 2015 at the Kwethluk weir. For Chinook, this is the first time escapement has been met since 2007. For sockeye, 8,998 salmon passed the weir, which is the most ever recorded. A smolt screw trap was in operation for the first time. This equipment allows us to study outmigrating smolts. Little information is known about this life stage of salmon and plans are in place for further studies using this new sampling equipment on the Kwethluk River.

Tuluksak Weir

There were more chinook counted in 2015 since 2006. However, it is still below the 18 year average. As for chum salmon, the lowest number ever recorded was in 2015.

Lower Kuskokwim Moose Population Survey

Two aerial surveys were conducted in late winter to estimate the moose population size in the Lower Kuskokwim River watershed. One survey was completed in cooperation with the ADF&G along the main stem of the Kuskokwim River using fixed-wing aircraft in mid-February. Data from the surveyed produced a density estimate of 1.11 moose/ mi², which was considerably more than the density estimate of 0.77 moose/ mi² in 2011. A second survey was flown along the tributaries of the Kuskokwim River by Refuge staff using an R-44 helicopter in March. Data from this surveyed produced a density estimate of 1.80 moose/ mi². The estimated moose population in the Kuskokwim tributaries has increased by 44% since 2010. Both surveys indicated a sufficient increase in the moose population to increase hunting opportunities.

Mulchatna Caribou Herd

ADF&G conducts an aerial population survey of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd during the summer. Refuge staff assisted with this effort in 2015 by counting caribou and listening for radio collared animals in the Kilbuck Mountains region of the Refuge during late June. The animals with radio collars assist in finding groups of caribou and also can be used to indicate what proportion of the herd was not located during the survey. The 2015 estimate is 30,736 caribou (ADF&G memo).

ADF&G conducts composition counts of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd during the fall. On October 14, Refuge staff conducted a radio telemetry flight to locate collared caribou in the Kilbuck Mountains. This information is provided to ADF&G to assist them in locating herds for their annual fall composition count. The 2015 ratios are 34.7 bulls: 100 cows and 29.1 calves: 100 cows (ADF&G memo).

Waterfowl

Spectacled Eider Nesting Ecology

This field season marked the 24th year of spectacled eider nesting ecology research on Kigigak Island. Three crew members searched for eider nests on 35 of 48 nest plots. 71 spectacled eider and 49 common eider nests were



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found and monitored. Clutch size, hatch date, and final nest status were collected for each nest to estimate nesting success. 25 adult spectacled eider females were re-sighted, and 13 were captured and banded to estimate annual survival.

Coastal Waterbird Nest Plot Surveys

Waterbird nest plot surveys, coordinated by Julian Fischer of Migratory Bird Management – Anchorage, were surveyed for the 31st field season on the central coast of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. These nest surveys provide annual information on phenology, egg production, nesting effort, habitat use, and predation for waterfowl, cranes, loons, gulls, and terns. The Spectacled Eider Recovery Team has also identified annual nest surveys as the primary method to assess the population status for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta subpopulation of spectacled eiders. In 2015, the refuge waterfowl crew surveyed three plots on Kigigak Island.

Environmental Monitoring on Kigigak Island

Baseline environmental monitoring began on Kigigak Island in 2013 as a Western Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperative project. Data logger devices were set up to monitor water levels, salinity, and tidal dynamics of ponds used by waterfowl. This season, 13 conductivity and 9 water level Hobo dataloggers were collected, downloaded, and re-deployed. Due to equipment malfunctions, not all loggers could be redeployed during the nesting season. Some were brought back to Bethel to be downloaded and were re-deployed during the late brood-rearing period.

Habitat Sampling on Kigigak Island

The Alaska Sea Life Center is conducting environmental sampling at several potential reintroduction sites for the Steller's eider to determine if a site is suitable for the reintroduction of Steller's Eiders. This sampling includes assessment of salinity levels and habitat. The refuge waterfowl crew conducted three rounds of sampling at Kigigak Island.

Cackling Goose Banding

A crew of eight people attempted to capture non-breeding adult cackling geese along the Aknerkochik River utilizing a helicopter. A total of 117 birds were banded of which 115 were sampled by Andy Ramey (USGS) for the avian influenza virus. All samples came back negative for influenza A virus. Further sample testing is ongoing. Low capture numbers was attributed to early nesting phenology of the geese and late timing of captures.

Tule Goose Telemetry

A flight from Bethel to the Muddy Lakes region of the Refuge occurred where 19 VHF Tule Goose frequencies were located and approximately 4,400 geese observed, which were assumed to be primarily Tule Geese.

Kigigak Waterfowl Brood Captures

In cooperation with Alaska Sea Life Centre (ASLC) staff, the refuge waterfowl crew conducted brood captures on Kigigak Island from July 20-25 and along the Kashnuk River from July 28 to August 1. A total of 61 birds from 24 broods were captured on Kigigak Island, including eight common eiders (3 adult, 5 juvenile), three greater



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scaup (2 adult, 1 juvenile), seven northern pintails (all juvenile), and 43 spectacled eiders (11 adult, 32 juvenile). In addition, 9 marked adult female spectacled eiders were resighted. Brood density along the Kashunuk River seemed to be low. A total of 22 birds were captured, including 12 spectacled eiders (4 adult, 8 juvenile) and 10 northern pintails (2 adult, 8 juvenile). Of the pintails captured, two were molting adults rather than known local breeders and eight juveniles were from the captive-reared brood at River Camp. All unmarked birds were banded at both sites. Adult female spectacled eiders from Kigigak Island were fitted with yellow alphanumeric tarsal bands. Blood was drawn from most of the captured birds to test for lead contaminants as part of the Steller's eider reintroduction project.

Kgun Lake Duck Banding

Waterfowl banding data is used to inform the annual harvest regulation-setting process for duck hunting seasons in the Pacific Flyway. Banding data from the Yukon Delta Refuge is one site that contributes data to determine the statewide harvest goal for the Pacific Flyway. The Pacific Flyway Council uses both banding data and aerial waterfowl survey data to establish duck hunting frameworks each year. Since 1990, YDNWR has conducted a late summer banding program at Kgun Lake. Target species are northern pintail and mallard with American green-winged teal considered a secondary target species. The waterfowl crew set up and ran five baited swim-in traps from August 13 - 26. A Total of 1630 birds were captured and handled, including recaptures and returns. A total of 820 new ducks were banded in 2015, including 392 northern pintail, 403 green-winged teal, 24 mallards, and 1 northern shoveler.

Shorebirds

PRISM Shorebird Surveys

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta hosts some of the highest densities of breeding shorebirds in the world and provides post-breeding habitat for millions of shorebirds. In 2015, refuge staff and a group of cooperators implemented shorebird surveys on the Yukon Delta National Wildlife under the Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring (PRISM). The data will be used to estimate size and trends for breeding populations of shorebirds as well as describe the distribution, abundance, and habitat relationships of shorebirds. We will conduct a second year of surveys in May 2016 and we will continue to access plots by helicopter.

Black Turnstone Migration Project

Thirty geolocators were attached to black turnstones in 2013 and 18 were retrieved from those birds in 2014. Data from these devices showed that black turnstones typically depart on their southward migration in mid-July and take 1-2 weeks to reach their wintering areas. They wintered along the coast from southeast Alaska to Vancouver Island, with one bird wintering as far south as southern Oregon. Northbound migration occurred in late April and early May. Birds took twice as long as the southward migration with the birds stopping more often. They have shifted away from their historical spring stopover area at northern Montague Island in Prince William Sound, possibly due to the reduced availability of herring spawn.

Red Knot Migration Project

Fifty red knots were captured and fitted with very small radio transmitters at a roost site in Grays Harbor in early May. Eighteen radio tracking flights were conducted at the CRD and 11 were conducted over the YKD between May 10 and June 1 to listen for these birds. Forty-seven tagged birds were detected at CRD and 34 were detected



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on the YKD. The greatest number of detections occurred on May 11 at CRD and May 19 on YKD. All tagged birds had departed from both staging areas by May 27. The main staging areas on the YKD were near the mouth of the Kashunuk River, a known staging area, and near the mouth of the Kolavinarak River, a previously unknown staging area. A small group also detected on the coast near Kipnuk. Additional radio transmitters were attached to adults and juveniles during the breeding season on the Seward Peninsula in order to track fall migration. Only three telemetry flights were conducted on the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta due to poor weather and limited pilot and observer availability. A single bird was detected near the mouth of the Kashunuk River on July 28.



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INFORMATION BULLETIN - January 2016

Cooperative Salmon Escapement Monitoring Projects. Contact: Mark Lisac

In 2014 the Federal Subsistence Board cancelled the funding for the salmon escapement monitoring projects (weirs) on the Kanektok (KRW) and Middle Fork Goodnews (MFGRW) Rivers. ADF&G and Coastal Villages Seafood provided the bulk of the funding to operate both projects although counting for the coho salmon spawning season was cancelled due to the lack of Federal funding.

On the Middle Fork Goodnews River, ADF&G has monitored Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon escapement since 1980. Escapement goals and management of the commercial fishery are based on salmon escapement at the weir. Togiak Refuge has worked with ADF&G since 1992 to include the coho salmon and Dolly Varden runs in the project operation. ADF&G funds the project operation. Togiak Refuge provided staff support; one intern from the Careers Discovery Internship Program (CDIP) for the MFGRW. The MFGRW began operation June 25.

On the Kanektok River, ADF&G, Native Village of Kwinhagak, Coastal Villages and Togiak Refuge have worked cooperatively to monitor salmon and Dolly Varden runs since 2001. This project is currently funded by Coastal Villages Region Fund and ADF&G. Escapement goal ranges have not been established for the Kanektok River because the weir has not been operational for enough years. This weir began operation June 25.

Preliminary escapement counts (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts>) for the MFGRW and KRW thru August 18, 2015 are:

	Chinook	Sockeye	Chum	Coho	Pink	Dolly V.
MFGRW	1,398	54,383	10,885	15,084	1,025	5,565
KRW	10,416	106,751	62,170	na	1,058	35,456

na=not available

Arctic Char Population Inventory Contact: Mark Lisac

Togiak Refuge has developed a multi-year study to inventory Arctic char populations throughout the Refuge. This species was previously confirmed to occur in 27 lakes. In 2014 and 2015 we visited 21 lakes and documented Arctic char occurrence in 13 new lakes. We have collected size and genetic information from 355 fish and provided the UAF museum with voucher specimens. If you have any first hand knowledge of small or unique Arctic char populations and would be willing to share that information please contact Mark Lisac at the Refuge office.

Mulchatna Caribou Contact: Andy Aderman

Togiak Refuge assisted ADF&G with telemetry monitoring flights, radiocollar deployment, satellite data acquisition, data entry and database management. A photocensus conducted June 25, 2015 estimated 30,736 (± 7456) caribou (Nick Demma, ADF&G, personal communication). A fall 2015 composition survey estimated 29 calves:100 cows and 35 bulls:100 cows. The calf:cow ratio was just below the 30:100 recorded in 2014, but is higher than all but three years since 1998. The bull:cow ratio was equal to that of 2014; these two years are the highest recorded since 2000 (Neil Barten, ADF&G, personal communication).

Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Contact: Andy Aderman

For the 2015 fall hunt, 328 permits were made available and hunters reported harvesting 42 caribou (37 bulls and 5 cows). Permits issued for the fall hunt (Aug 1-Sep 30) are also valid for the winter hunt (Dec 1–Mar 31). A fall 2015 composition survey estimated 46.3 calves:100 cows and 65.1 bulls:100 cows. The calf:cow ratio is slightly above the previous 5-year average of 45.4 calves:100 cows. The bull:cow ratio is the highest recorded since 1994. The Nushagak Peninsula Caribou Planning Committee met on December 16, 2015 to review herd status and make recommendations on harvest management. The Committee agreed to submit a Special Action to the Federal Subsistence Board to increase the harvest limit to “up to 3 caribou” for the current hunt. At a follow-up meeting on January 13, 2016 the Committee submitted 3 more Special Actions that would 1) open federal public lands for other users to harvest caribou, 2) extend the season to April 15, and 3) allow same-day-airborne hunting of caribou. These Special Actions, if approved, would be in effect for the remainder of the 2015-2016 season. As of January 28, 2016 there has been no caribou reported harvested during the winter hunt.

Moose Contact: Andy Aderman

During the January 1-February 28, 2015 winter hunt in Unit 17A, 17 moose (12 cows, 4 bulls, and 1 unknown sex) were reported harvested (Neil Barten, ADF&G, personal communication). A teleconference was held in June to discuss how Togiak Refuge and others might incorporate changes to moose survey protocols during winters with low, incomplete, or no snow cover. Participants included staff from the Alaska Department of Fish, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and University of Alaska-Fairbanks. In October, we deployed radiocollars on 19 bulls spread out over the refuge. These collared bulls, along with previously collared cows, will be used in developing sightability correction factors during moose population surveys. Population surveys on the Togiak Refuge are planned for March 2016.

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

In summer 2014, Togiak Refuge, the USFWS Conservation Genetics Lab, ADF&G, and BLM initiated a study to understand the effects of wolf and brown bear predation in regulating the population dynamics of moose on Togiak Refuge, BLM Goodnews Block, and adjacent areas. The study relies on radio telemetry and stable isotope analysis. Our approach will be to relate the predation impact by wolves and bears on moose at varying levels of moose population density. We will use existing population estimates for brown bears, and through the use of radio telemetry, we will estimate the number and composition of wolf packs on the Refuge. We will model wolf and bear predation on moose based on the quantity of wolves and bears and diet composition of both species determined through analysis of carbon and nitrogen stable isotopes occurring in bear and wolf hair. Hair will be collected from wolves when captured during radio collaring operations, and will be collected from brown bears using break-away hair snares. We captured and radioed four wolves from two packs in March 2015. During summer 2014 and 2015, we deployed approximately 400 snares, and collected approximately 200 hair samples. We will collect hair samples in summer 2016 as well, and commence laboratory analysis of samples.

Walrus Contact: Pat Walsh

The Togiak Refuge has annually monitored the number of Pacific walrus at haul-outs since 1985, using ground counts (1985-2008), aerial surveys (2003-2011) and time lapse photography (2010-2015). The objectives of the surveys are to monitor the number and timing of haul-outs and to estimate the peak haul-out at Cape Peirce, Hagemeister Island and Cape Newenham. The use of Reconyx remote cameras has improved the understanding of haul-out timing, capturing an image every hour during the day, throughout the year. Using these survey methods, the number of walrus hauling out at Cape Peirce has declined from 1985 through 2011, while no significant trend was detected at Hagemeister Island from 2005 through 2011. Walrus using haul-outs in Bristol Bay are typically recorded from late spring to late fall but have been observed at Cape Newenham every month since cameras were deployed in fall of 2014.

Seabirds Contact: Pat Walsh

The abundance and reproductive success of black-legged kittiwakes, common murre, and pelagic cormorants was monitored annually at Cape Peirce from 1990-2014, and intermittently at Cape Newenham from 1990-2009. During this period, the estimated number of kittiwakes and murre at Cape Peirce decreased, while the number of pelagic cormorants remained relatively constant. From 1991-2009, the number of kittiwakes counted at Cape Newenham averaged 2,132 birds (range 1,676-2,424), the mean number of murre was 5,815 (range 4,964-6,790), and the mean number of cormorants was 15 birds (range = 5-30). The long-term productivity of kittiwakes, murre, and cormorants at Cape Peirce averaged 24%, 42%, and 53% respectively between 1990 and 2014. No seabird monitoring was conducted in 2015. We lost the position of our seabird biologist, so we have currently suspended seabird investigations. We will commence seabird studies when we're able to refill the position.

Water Temperature Monitoring Contact: Pat Walsh

Stream temperature was monitored at 18 sites on 14 rivers in Togiak Refuge between 2001 and 2015. Temperature was recorded on an hourly basis using Onset TidbiT dataloggers and the data were successfully recovered from the field ~75% of the time. Over 1.8 million hourly temperature records have been collected, quality-graded, and entered into a relational database.

Maximum daily mean temperature readings varied from 11.5—19.6° C between sites, with the Kukaktlim Lake outlet site being the warmest and the Weary River the coldest.

Quantifying River Discharge Contact: Mark Lisac

Togiak Refuge and the USFWS Water Resources Branch have worked cooperatively since 1999 to acquire baseline hydrologic data of the flow regime (magnitude, duration, timing, frequency, and rate of change) and water quality. A network of stream discharge gages collected stream flow data from 1999-2005 at 20 locations. A subset of five of these stations continued to collect data through fall 2009, after which three of the five stations were removed. We will monitor discharge in the Togiak and Kulukak Rivers indefinitely. Each gage is instrumented with pressure sensors that measure water level every 15 minutes. On-grounds discharge measurements are made 3 to 6 times a year. In 2014, satellite transmitters were added to the stream gages that allow remote monitoring of the equipment.

Education and Outreach Contact: Terry Fuller

Togiak Refuge has an active education and outreach program including the Migratory Bird Calendar; National Wildlife Refuge Week; career fairs; production of Bristol Bay Field Notes (a new episode airs several times a week on KDLG); and numerous teacher requested classroom presentations in 12 villages in the Southwest Region, Lower Kuskokwim, Dillingham City school districts and the Dillingham 7th Day Adventist School. Field trips with area students for the 2014-2015 school year included bird walks, animal tracks and ID, archery, salmon life cycles, aquatic resources and bear safety. The refuge website is also a valuable education tool and is available at <http://togiak.fws.gov>. Togiak Refuge has a very active Facebook page which disseminates information on a daily basis to a rapidly growing global audience. Also, the refuge partners with others to conduct three environmental education camps described below:

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

July 2015 saw an enthusiastic group of eight area junior high students representing three villages travel to Cape Peirce for this camp. Students at this camp were able to observe seabirds, marine mammals and learn how field studies are conducted, as well as learning about food webs and ecological relationships. Students and agency staff also learned about traditional Yup'ik uses of animals and plants and about Native survival skills. This camp is designed to help students gain a better understanding of the biological diversity of a marine ecosystem. It also strengthens their sense of stewardship for local natural resources. Other topics at this camp included tide pools, wilderness survival skills, archery, bear safety, Leave No Trace camping practices and careers with USFWS. Traditional councils and school districts from throughout western Bristol Bay are cooperators with this camp.

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

This past June and July (2015), Togiak Refuge helped with the 14th year of a summer camp aimed at teaching middle and high school students about fisheries science and the importance of salmon to our ecosystem. Students were selected from the Bristol Bay region. During the camp students worked in the field alongside fisheries professionals. Cooperators with the refuge on this project included the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, Bristol Bay Science and Research Institute, University of Alaska, University of Washington School of Fisheries, the Dillingham City and Southwest Region school districts, and the Alaska Department of Fish and

Game. This year Togiak Staff were able to share with camp students about the following: identifying the different species of Pacific salmon at various stages in their development, the salmon life cycle, jobs associated with the fishing industry, salmon in art (fish taxidermy) and archery.

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

The 2015 Float Camp took place on the Pungokepuk River. At this camp, students learned about river ecosystems and how to enjoy them safely and responsibly while taking part in a float trip conducted on a refuge river. Students observed and learned about the many fish, wildlife and plant species found on the Pungokepuk. Rafting skills, water safety, different angling practices (Catch and Release), Leave No Trace camping practices and bear safety were topics during the trip. Students also participated in other outdoor activities such as animal tracking (plaster casting tracks, with several nice bear tracks cast) and wilderness survival skills. This camp helps students understand the biological diversity of riparian ecosystems and the importance of salmon as a nutrient source, while developing a deeper sense of stewardship for local natural resources. Traditional councils and school districts from throughout western Bristol Bay are cooperators with this camp.

River Ranger Program Contact: Allen Miller

The Refuge River Ranger Program was conceived during the public use management planning process and was first implemented in 1991. The program serves many purposes. River Rangers are the main contact source for sport fishermen and local residents. Information distributed to the public includes Service policies, regulations, resource management practices, State sport fish regulations, bear safety, wilderness ethics, Leave-No-Trace camping and information about private lands to prevent trespass. Rangers document public use occurring on the river along with the location and timing of activities, conflicts between users, and sport fish catch/harvest per unit effort. Rangers also assist Refuge and ADF&G staff at the Kanektok River weir and assist Refuge staff with biological studies. In addition, Rangers patrol campsites for litter, monitor compliance of sport fishing guides and offer assistance as needed. Quinhagak Resident Charlie Roberts was hired for summer 2015 to work as a River Ranger on the Kanektok River with Refuge Information Technician (RIT) John Mark. Togiak Resident Keemuel Kenrud was hired as well (last year he worked with the refuge as an intern through the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation) and was assigned to the Togiak River to work with RIT Pete Abraham.

Staff Changes

In January, Wildlife Biologist Roger “Doug” Holt was hired. Doug will take over the marine mammal and water monitoring projects on Togiak Refuge.

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

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Charter

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory (Council).
2. **Authority.** The Council is renewed by virtue of the authority set out in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 3115 (1988)), and under the authority of the Secretary of the Interior, in furtherance of 16 U.S.C. 410hh-2. The Council is regulated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2.
3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The objective of the Council is to provide a forum for the residents of the Region with personal knowledge of local conditions and resource requirements to have a meaningful role in the subsistence management of fish and wildlife on Federal lands and waters in the Region.
4. **Description of Duties.** The Council has authority to perform the following duties:
 - a. Recommend the initiation of, review, and evaluate 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 decisionmaking process affecting the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within the Region for subsistence uses.
 - d. Prepare an annual report to the Secretary containing the following:
 - (1) An identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the Region.
 - (2) An evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife populations within the Region.
 - (3) A recommended strategy for the management of fish and wildlife populations within the Region to accommodate such subsistence uses and needs.

- (4) **Recommendations concerning policies, standards, guidelines, and regulations to implement the strategy.**
 - e. **Make recommendations on determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources.**
 - f. **Make recommendations on determinations of rural status.**
 - g. **Provide recommendations on the establishment and membership of Federal local advisory committees.**
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 \$175,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and 1.15 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 7, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DFO is a full-time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will:
 - Approve or call all of the advisory committee's and subcommittees' meetings,
 - Prepare and approve all meeting agendas,
 - Attend all committee and subcommittee meetings,
 - Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and
 - 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 it is renewed in accordance with the provisions of Section 14 of the FACA. The Council will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.

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

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

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

Members will be appointed for 3-year terms. A vacancy on the Council will be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. Members serve at the discretion of the Secretary.

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

Members of the Council will serve without compensation. However, while away from their homes or regular places of business, Council and subcommittee members engaged in Council, or subcommittee business, approved by the DFO, may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in Government service under Section 5703 of Title 5 of the United States Code.

13. **Ethics Responsibilities of Members.** No Council or subcommittee member will participate in any specific party matter in which the member has a direct financial interest in a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, agreement, or related litigation with the Department.
14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purpose of compiling information and conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full Council for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency. The Council Chair, with the approval of the DFO, will appoint subcommittee members. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.

- 15. Recordkeeping.** Records of the Council, and formally and informally established subcommittees or other subgroups of the Council, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2, and other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.



Secretary of the Interior

NOV 20 2015

Date Signed

DEC 03 2015

Date Filed