



Federal Subsistence Board News Release



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

Forest Service

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Contact: Katerina (Katya) Wessels
(907) 786-3885 or (800) 478-1456
katerina_wessels@fws.gov

Federal Subsistence Board approves changes to subsistence fishing regulations

**This news release is corrected from the version originally released January 29, 2021, to reflect the specific area closed under the second bullet under Subsistence Fisheries Closure Reviews, Yukon-Northern Area on the next page. The corrected text is underlined.*

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) met January 26-29, 2021 via teleconference to consider 13 proposed changes to Federal subsistence fisheries regulations, one nonrural determination proposal, 12 fisheries closure reviews, the individual customary and traditional use determination process, and Temporary Wildlife Special Action WSA20-07 (regarding the framework for the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission administered community harvest system for moose and caribou in Units 11, 12, and 13). The Board also heard status updates on deferred wildlife proposal WP20-26 and Regional Advisory Council (RAC) appointments, and conducted Tribal and Alaska Native Corporation consultations.

Changes to the Subsistence Fishing Regulations

The Board adopted six proposals to change the Federal subsistence fisheries regulations. Some of the changes approved by the Board include:

Kuskokwim Area

- The Board repealed the closure to subsistence fishing prior to, during and after State commercial fishing periods in Kuskokwim Districts 1 and 2, for salmon.
- Language will be modified to clarify set gillnet orientation in tributaries of the Kuskokwim River for all fish.

Bristol Bay Area

- Federal subsistence language referring to State commercial districts in the Bristol Bay Area for salmon is repealed.
- Time restrictions for harvesting salmon in the Egegik River for salmon are repealed.

Cook Inlet Area

- Naming conventions of early-run and late-run Kenai River Chinook Salmon will be modified with specific date ranges.

Prince William Sound Area

- Use of fish finders while subsistence fishing from a boat in the upper Copper River (for all fish) is prohibited; removal of the equipment is not required.

The Board deferred proposal FP21-10, which requested implementation of a salmon subsistence fishery in the lower Copper River, to allow for further discussion by Regional Advisory Councils.

Subsistence Fisheries Closure Reviews

The Board maintained status quo on four closures, eliminated one closure, and deferred seven closure reviews:

Norton Sound-Port Clarence Area:

- Closure to Federally qualified subsistence users in the Unalakleet Drainage (Chinook Salmon) is maintained.

Yukon-Northern Area:

- Closure to the harvest of Arctic Grayling in Nome Creek of the Yukon River drainage by Federally qualified subsistence users is maintained.
- Closure to the harvest of all fish in the Jim River drainage by Federally qualified subsistence users is maintained.
- Closure to Federally qualified subsistence users in the Toklat River for all fish is eliminated, opening this fishery to Federally qualified subsistence users.

Southeastern Alaska Area:

- Closure to all except Federally qualified subsistence users in the Makhnati Island Federal public waters for Herring and spawn is maintained.

Kodiak/Aleutians Areas:

The Board deferred seven Kodiak/Aleutians area fisheries closure reviews until the next fisheries regulatory cycle, in deference to the Kodiak/Aleutian RAC. Deferral of these closure reviews (FCR21-08, FCR21-09, FCR21-11, FCR21-13, FCR21-16, FCR21-18, and FCR21-19) will give the Kodiak/Aleutians RAC more time to gather local community input that is important to the formulation of Council recommendations for these closures.

Rural/Nonrural Determination

The Board adopted Nonrural Proposal RP19-01 (Moose Pass), with the Office of Subsistence Management's modification to encompass the Moose Pass, Crown Point, and Primrose Census Designated Places. All of these communities will now be defined as rural, and independent of the greater Seward area.

The Federal subsistence fisheries and rural determinations regulations, effective upon publication in the Federal Register, are expected to be available statewide in the March/April timeframe. The regulations will be posted on the Federal Subsistence Management Program website, www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries.

The Board approved Temporary Wildlife Special Action WSA20-07 (regarding the Ahtna Inter-Tribal Resource Commission (AITRC) administered community harvest system for moose and caribou in Units 11, 12, and 13, and its framework). Harvests by those opting to participate in the AITRC-administered community harvest system will not count toward the harvest limits of any individuals who do not opt to participate in that community harvest system. This allows AITRC to effectually implement their community harvest system as approved by the Board without impacting residents of these communities who choose not to participate in the community harvest system. The Board adopted AITRC's framework as submitted.

The Board adopted, with modification, the individual customary and traditional use determination process proposed by the National Park Service (NPS). The modification included allowing recommendations from affected Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils to the process, and eliminating steps associated with the Delegation of Authority to the NPS Regional Director. This will streamline the process and clarify the requirements of 13,440 permit requests.

The Board will next meet at a summer work session, August 4-5, 2021, to discuss 2021 RAC appointments and fiscal year 2020 Annual Report Replies. The next regulatory meeting will be the wildlife public regulatory meeting, April 12-15, 2022. Exact times and locations of the upcoming meetings are to be determined.

Information about the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at www.doi.gov/subsistence or by visiting www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

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