



SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Materials

March 14 - 16, 2017
Craig



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On the cover...

Moonrise over Tongass National Forest

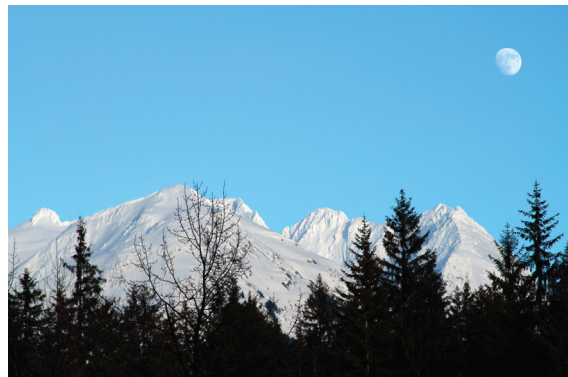


Photo by DeAnna Perry

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SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Craig Tribal Association Hall
Craig, Alaska

March 14 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
March 15 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
March 16 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

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. Invocation**
- 2. Call to Order** (*Chair*)
- 3. Roll Call and Establish Quorum** (*Secretary*)..... 4
- 4. Welcome and Introductions** (**Chair**)
- 5. Review and Adopt Agenda*** (*Chair*) 1
- 6. Election of Officers***
 - Chair (*DeAnna Perry*)
 - Vice-Chair (*New Chair*)
 - Secretary (*New Chair*)
- 7. Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes*** (*Chair*) 8
- 8. Reports**
 - Council Member Reports
 - Chair’s Report

9. Public and Tribal Comment on Non-Agenda Items (available each morning)

10. Old Business (*Chair*)

- a. Revisions to Draft MOU with State of Alaska – Update (*OSM*)
- b. Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan Update (*Terry Suminski*)
- c. Tongass Plan Amendment Update (*Forest Supervisor Earl Stewart and Matt Anderson*)
- d. Customary & Traditional Use Update (*OSM LT*) (*Jennifer Hardin*)
- e. Western Hemisphere Shorebird Network Update (*Susan Oehlers*)21

11. New Business (*Chair*)

- a. Federal Subsistence Management of Wolves in the SE Region (*Jeff Reeves*)
- b. Tongass National Forest Wolf Habitat Report (*Brie Darr or Bonnie Bennetsen*)
- c. Federal Subsistence Management of Brown Bears in the SE Region (*Justin Koller*)
- d. WCR15-02 Moose Closure Review (*OSM*).....24
- e. Call for Federal Wildlife Proposals (*Terry Suminski*)35
- f. Review and Approve FY2016 Annual Report* (*DeAnna Perry*)38
- g. Call for State Board of Fisheries Proposals (*Terry Suminski*)
 - Nonresident Sport Fishing Annual Limit for Sockeye Salmon in SE AK
- h. FRMP Monitoring Project Presentation – Hetta Lake (*Cathy Needham, Anthony Christianson*)

12. Agency Reports

(Time limit of 15 minutes unless approved in advance)

Tribal Governments

Native Organizations

Special Actions Update (*Terry Suminski*)

USFWS

USFS (*Tom Whitford*)

- Schedule of Planned Activities (NEPA summary of projects on forest)

NPS

BLM

ADF&G

- State updates on Wolf Issue (follow up from last meeting) (*Ryan Scott*)

BIA

OSM

13. Future Meeting Dates*

Confirm Fall 2017 meeting date and location (*Juneau, Oct 31 – Nov 2, 2017*)42
Select Winter 2018 meeting date and location43

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 DeAnna Perry, 907-586-7918, dlperry@fs.fed.us, or 800-877-8339 (TTY), by close of business on March 6, 2017.

REGION 1

Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Seat	Year Appointed <i>Term Expires</i>	Member Name and Community
1	2015 2019	Steve K. Reifentstahl Sitka
2	2004 2019	Frank G. Wright Jr. Hoonah
3	1993 2019	Patricia A. Phillips Pelican
4	2000 2019	Michael A. Douville Craig
5	2002 2019	Harvey Kitka Sitka Secretary
6	2014 2017	Robert F. Schroeder Juneau
7	2014 2017	Albert H. Howard Angoon
8	2002 2017	Donald C. Hernandez Point Baker
9	2013 2018	Kenneth L. Jackson Kake
10	2015 2018	Raymond D. Sensmeier Yakutat
11	2010 2017	John A. Yeager Wrangell
12	2003 2018	Michael D. Bangs Petersburg Chair
13	2009 2018	Cathy A. Needham Juneau Vice Chair



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



Forest Service

Federal Subsistence Board News Release

For Immediate Release:

**This provides corrected information to News
Release dated December 9, 2016*

Contact: Caron McKee

(907) 786-3880 or (800) 478-1456
caron_mckee@fws.gov

Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture appoint members to Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, with the concurrence of Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, has made appointments to the 10 Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils. The Councils advise the Federal Subsistence Board on subsistence management regulations and policies and serve as a forum for public involvement in Federal subsistence management in Alaska. With these appointments (shown in bold), the current membership of the Councils is:

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Steve K. Reifenstuhel, Sitka
Frank G. Wright Jr., Hoonah
Patricia A. Phillips, Pelican
Michael A. Douville, Craig
Harvey Kitka, Sitka
Robert Schroeder, Juneau

Albert H. Howard, Angoon
Donald C. Hernandez, Pt. Baker
Kenneth L. Jackson, Kake
Raymond D. Sensmeier, Yakutat
John A. Yeager, Wrangell
Michael D. Bangs, Petersburg
Cathy A. Needham, Juneau

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

Diane A. Selanoff, Valdez
Eleanor Dementi, Cantwell
R. Greg Encelewski, Ninilchik
Daniel E. Stevens, Chitina
Edward H. Holsten, Cooper Landing
Gloria Stickwan, Copper Center

James R. Showalter, Sterling
Michael V. Opheim, Seldovia
Andrew T. McLaughlin, Chenega Bay
Judith C. Caminer, Anchorage
Ingrid Peterson, Homer
Thomas M. Carpenter, Cordova
Ricky J. Gease, Kenai

KODIAK/ALEUTIANS

Antone A. Shelikoff, Akutan
Patrick B. Holmes, Kodiak
Richard Koso, Adak
Samuel I. Rohrer, Kodiak

Thomas L. Schwantes, Kodiak
Coral Chernoff, Kodiak
Rebecca Skinner, Kodiak
Della Trumble, King Cove
Speridon M. Simeonoff Sr., Akhiok
Melissa M. Berns, Old Harbor

BRISTOL BAY

Pete M. Abraham, Togiak
Dennis Andrew, Sr., New Stuyahok
Nanci A. Morris Lyon, King Salmon
Molly B. Chythlook, Dillingham
William J. Maines, Dillingham

Senafont Shugak, Jr., Pedro Bay
Dan O. Dunaway, Dillingham
Lary J. Hill, Iliamna
Victor A. Seybert, Pilot Point
Richard J. Wilson, Naknek

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM DELTA

William F. Brown, Eek
James A. Charles, Tuntutuliak
John W. Andrew, Kwethluk
Michael Peters, Marshall
Lester Wilde Sr., Hooper Bay
Dale T. Smith, Jr., Mekoryuk

Anthony Ulak, Scammon Bay
Annie C. Cleveland, Quinhagak
Dorothy G. Johnson, Mountain Village
Raymond J. Oney, Alakanuk
Greg J. Roczicka, Bethel
Robert E. Aloysius, Kalskag
David A. Bill, Sr., Toksook Bay

WESTERN INTERIOR ALASKA

Shirley J. Clark, Grayling
Donald V. Honea Jr., Ruby
Pollock Simon Sr., Allakaket
Raymond L. Collins, McGrath
Jack L. Reakoff, Wiseman

Darrel M. Vent, Sr., Huslia
Timothy P. Gervais, Ruby
Dennis R. Thomas, Sr., Crooked Creek
Jenny K. Pelkola, Galena
Fred W. Alexie, Kaltag

SEWARD PENINSULA

Theodore Katcheak, Stebbins
Brandon D. Ahmasuk, Nome
Louis H. Green Jr., Nome
Thomas L. Gray, Nome
Leland H. Oyoumick, Unalakleet

Fred D. Eningowuk, Shishmaref
Elmer K. Seetot Jr., Brevig Mission
Charles F. Saccheus, Elim
Ronald D. Kirk, Stebbins

NORTHWEST ARCTIC

Raymond Stoney, Kiana
Beverly M. Moto, Deering
Hannah P. Loon, Kotzebue
Michael C. Kramer, Kotzebue
Enoch Mitchell, Noatak

Verne J. Cleveland Sr., Noorvik
Louie A. Commack, Jr., Ambler
Enoch A. Shiedt Sr., Kotzebue
Percy C. Ballot Sr., Buckland
Calvin D. Moto, Deering

EASTERN INTERIOR ALASKA

Susan L. Entsminger, Tok Cutoff
Andrew P. Firmin, Fort Yukon
Lester C. Erhart, Tanana
William L. Glanz, Central

Andrew W. Bassich, Eagle
Will M. Koehler, Horsfeld
Donald A. Woodruff, Eagle
Virgil L. Umphenour, North Pole

NORTH SLOPE

Ester Hugo, Anaktuvuk Pass
Robert V. Shears, Wainright
Wanda T. Kippi, Atqasuk
Steve Oomituk, Point Hope

Sam Kunaknana, Nuiqsut
James M. Nageak, Anaktuvuk Pass
Gordon R. Brower, Barrow
Lee Kayotuk, Kaktovik
Rosemary Ahtaungaruak, Barrow

The Federal Subsistence Board is accepting applications for the 2017 appointment cycle until February 3, 2017. For more information, go to the Federal Subsistence Management Program website at <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/statewide>.

Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at www.doi.gov/subsistence or by visiting 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.

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MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 4-6, 2016 SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Location of Meeting:

The Alaska Native Brotherhood/Alaska Native Sisterhood John Hanson ANB Hall of Petersburg, Petersburg, Alaska

Date and Time of Meeting:

October 4-6, 2016: 9:00 a.m. starting time on October 4, adjourned around 1:30 p.m. on October 6, 2016

Call to Order: (Chair)

The Fall 2016 meeting of the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council was called to order on Tuesday, October 4th at 9:00 a.m. Secretary Harvey Kitka took role call and a quorum was established. All Council members were present and remained throughout the meeting. Staff and Public introduced themselves and Council member Kenneth Lyle Jackson, of Kake, gave the invocation for the meeting. Barry Morrison, Tribal President for Petersburg Indian Association also provided a welcome to the Council on behalf of the Tribe and thanked the members for their service to all communities in Southeast Alaska. Tongass National Forest Supervisor Earl Stewart welcomed the Council and thanked them for their service, leadership, and efforts.

Forest Supervisor Stewart then asked to speak to the council on the Tongass Forest Plan Amendment and provided a brief update on same. Responses to the Plan have been received and the Forest Service is working through the objections process. No questions from the Council.

Attendees:

The following persons attended some portion of the Southeast Alaska Council meeting, either in person or by teleconference, in addition to the Council members.

Gene Peltola Jr	Anchorage	OSM
Jennifer Hardin	Anchorage	OSM
Orville Lind	Anchorage	OSM
Earl Stewart	Ketchikan	USFS
Tom Whitford	Anchorage	USFS
Robert Larson	Petersburg	USFS
Melinda Hernandez-Burke	Juneau	USFS
DeAnna Perry	Juneau	USFS
Terry Suminski	Sitka	USFS
Jeff Reeves	Craig	USFS
Ben VanAlen	Juneau	USFS
Susan Oehlers	Yakutat	USFS
Toby Bakos	Petersburg	USFS
Patrick Fowler	Petersburg	ADF&G
Ryan Scott	Juneau	ADF&G
Maria Wessell		ADF&G
Rich Lowell	Petersburg	ADF&G

Dan Sharp	Anchorage	BLM
Jim Capra	Yakutat	NPS
Philip Hooge	Gustavus	NPS
Barbara Salarias		NPS
Rosalie Debenham		BIA
Pat Petrivelli	Anchorage	BIA
Gene Natkong	Hydaburg	Hydaburg IRA Council
Cal Casipit	Gustavus	
Heather Boucher		UAS Student
Tony Gallegos	Ketchikan	Ketchikan Indian Community
Lee Wallace	Saxman	Saxman Tribe
Aaron Angerman	Wrangell	Wrangell Cooperative Association
Brian Lynch	Petersburg	Rivers Without Borders

Review and Adopt Agenda:

The Council **approved a motion** to adopt the agenda as a guide (13-0) with the addition of the following items: Wolf Unit 2 Quota; time certain to have a public meeting on the Tongass Submerged Lands Issue pursuant to Federal Register Notice; and possibly taking the Forest Plan discussion out of order on the original Agenda so that the Forest Supervisor could speak to that before he returned to Ketchikan.

Review and Approve previous Meeting Minutes:

The Council approved a motion to accept the March 10-11, 2016 Council meeting minutes (13-0) as corrected after clarification of comments by Lee Wallace.

Council Reports:

Mr. Hernandez spoke about the importance of Stikine area. People are aware of how important a major system like the Stikine can be regarding salmon runs and there is increased concern about transboundary mining. His community sees an expansion of non-guided sports fishing having a big impact in local community and there is a consensus that chartering is a well-regulated industry but new industry (non-guided sports fishing) is growing, unchecked, and there is a concern of abuse of regulations because of the inherent loopholes of regulation. Question: Should this issue be addressed by Board of Fish and should the Council get involved with support?

Mr. Riefenstahl reported that it was a difficult fishing season and out of 17 million caught pink salmon region-wide, only 2 million were caught north of Petersburg; half of what was forecast and this stresses communities. Warmest year and earliest spring he can remember, best berry production he's ever seen. Concern that mortality was not accounted for locally in Sitka regarding the allowance of fishing with pots for sablefish by the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Deer population seems to be abundant. Goat population is rebounding and wildlife biologist is looking at opening hunting area that has been closed for last four years.

Mr. Douville expressed concern that technology needs to advance with respect to decisions being made from older data. There has been a complete turnaround with an increasing wolf population in Unit 2. We don't want to go back to 90s when there was a problem with rural/non rural with the deer takes; He was pleased with the better price of fish and run strength of Coho Salmon.

Mr. Wright reported that the dock built for tourist ships has resulted in a 20% increase of people coming into Hoonah and children can get seasonal employment, which is good for Hoonah and its economy. Tribal house in Glacier Bay was completed in August and a result of good government to government relationships. It has been the worst season as a seiner that he's seen. He commented that charter companies have clients that take hundreds of pounds of fish out of the area and there is something wrong with the system. Inexperienced/uneducated people as unguided fishermen are a concern due to excessive incidental mortalities of halibut. There is concern in Hoonah about the aggressiveness of sea lions, sea otters, and bears.

Mr. Sensmeier reported that the Sockeye run was poor; however they experience big berry harvests and this may be indicative of climate change. Moose harvest looks like it will be good. He shared a personal experience of witnesses the amount of boxes of fish that sports fishing companies are sending out and in one case, overheard these were being sold at a Seattle market. Subsistence users have to travel for halibut over treacherous waters because halibut is not in area they used to be. He reported that he saw seven moose that were not gutted, only the heads were harvested. He mentioned a request for designation of Yakutat Forelands as Tier 3 Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRW) - addressed in depth later in meeting. He has been working with First Nations in Canada on transboundary mining. He asked for support from the Council for both a designation of the Yakutat Forelands as ONRW and a habitat in the Western Hemisphere ShoreBird Reserve Network.

Ms. Phillips moved that "non-guided fisherman" be added as an agenda item which the Council unanimously approved. She addressed the extended seasons given on fishing but that it was not well communicated and there is a need to get this information out to those near these areas. The harvest of bear has not increased with the increased population of bears. People are seeing sows with two or three cubs, and sows with two and three year old cubs, and there are less fish in stream for these bears. There have been five bear maulings on ABC Islands since August. She attended dedication of Tribal house in Glacier Bay and was proud to see the resurgence of cultural identity.

Mr. Kitka reported that the herring stock is an ongoing concern for not only Sitka but all of Southeast Alaska, Canada, and Washington. Sea otters are an ongoing issue and feels there needs to be relaxing in regulations regarding protection of sea otters. Ocean warming is causing problems in Southeast and some clam beds have been declared unsafe to harvest. Thanked Council members who suggested discussion of unguided fishing.

Mr. Jackson recognizes the importance of discussing unguided fishing. Kake employment is low and price of fuel has a big impact on fishermen. Would like more information on hatchery possibilities. Climate change has had effect on everything. Berry harvests have helped economically. King Salmon was good around Kake, but not other species. Concerned about how to clean up litter from Fukushima disaster. Getting more deer and moose on Kupreanof Island. There are paralytic shellfish poisoning reports on clams around Kake. Residents of Kake are planting more gardens to supplement their food. Subsistence users have to go to other places for fishing as they are pushed out of their fishing grounds by sports users. "Unguided fishermen" has been a topic they've been talking about for years.

Mr. Howard spoke of the responsibility to consult and coordinate with local Tribes and the unintended consequences for not doing so. Unintended consequences mentioned include: Bear hunters who are allowed to take deer also; unfair competition between community and other users with unlimited funds; bears chasing children; resources vanishing. Concerns on commercial driven industry effects on crabbing, that the community is being pushed out of their fishing grounds and that a commercial-driven industry tends to have more say at the table than anyone else. Coho run was pretty much non-existent. Sockeye run has been the best this year it's ever been and attributed this success to the fact that seiners were all in the south end of Southeast Alaska and he didn't see one in Chatham all summer. Seiners are becoming

more efficient and at some point will be just as efficient as fish traps. Concerned with mine near Hawk Inlet and the testing of fish/seal in area and future impacts of mine on seal pups and salmon fry.

Mr. Schroeder expressed concerned about the toxicity of the mine affluent from Hawk Inlet. Question: How do you set standards for pollution in fish – how much is acceptable? Feels the ‘state standard’ for fish consumption by people is low. Poor fishing year in Juneau and Auke Bay. Increase in sea otter population. Seems you see more whale watching boats than people catching fish and the cruise/charter boats are having a major impact on resources. Very rapid climate change being noticed – though it was a good year for berries, it is hard to anticipate the effect on subsistence resources.

Ms. Needham reported that transboundary mining is a highly discussed topic across the region; State and Tribal groups have been productively interacting with Canada and there is some forward movement. River monitoring on Taku and Stikine Rivers is being done, but there is a need to get samples from the Unuk. Suggestion to invite Central Council of Tlingit and Haida to give a presentation of the Stikine River full year’s worth of data to the Council, as a potential future agenda topic, to see how monitoring proceeds. Cordova experienced the worst sockeye returns into Hetta and Eek, about one-fourth of what was seen in previous years. Pink Salmon runs also extremely low. In addition to commercial harvesting, there is concern that the water temperatures may be inhospitable for salmon to come in to spawn. After one and a half years, working with the community of Kassan, the rededication of the Whale House occurred at beginning of September; mention of Federal additional subsistence foods permit for these types of events provided deer and salmon for at least 700+ guests that came to Kassan for that celebration.

Mr. Yeager reported “we’re good in Wrangell.”

Chairman Bang’s Report: Most issues already covered by other members, but reiterated sea otter and sea lion impacts. Sea lions are becoming aggressive in the harbor, creating concerns about children and people fishing where sea lions are hauling out. Increase in brown bear population being seen around campgrounds as a result of the brown bear population increase on island.

Public and Tribal Comments:

Lee Wallace of Saxman, participating by phone, spoke to the vacancy for position of Chair for the Federal Subsistence Board. He stated that a number of individuals on the Southeast Regional Advisory Committee would make a good chair for the FSB. He suggested the Council consider nominating someone from the SEARAC.

Gene Natkong from Hydaberg Association of Tribal Council reported that it was very warm this summer and streams were pretty low and beaches were shut down. Reports on sea otters, wolves, less deer because of wolves; There were questions from the Council to Gene, such as:

- Are sea otters being harvested and are sea otters digging up clams/cockles? Gene reported that they are eating abalone and Dungeness crabs.
- Comment from Council on the algae testing that resulted in warnings for an area just a few miles away from where oysters were being harvested and sold.
- Regarding poor Sockeye Salmon returns there, how do people in Hydaberg fair? Gene reported that there wasn’t much Sockeye Salmon, so they were getting Coho Salmon.
- Was the water temp low or was the population returning low? Gene reported low population, last year and this year.
- Are Coho Salmon in streams where there are Sockeye Salmon? Are they lower in numbers or in other streams? Gene reported both.
- Did your people get enough fish? Gene reported that some people were pretty satisfied and that this same situation happened a few years ago.

Councilman Jackson acknowledged the sea otter problem and stated that although crab pot harvests are geared toward profit, he appreciated knowing that people are starting to supplement diet with dog salmon and humpies. He acknowledged harvests have had to change and that Halibut has been sustaining them, but that doesn't mean they stop trying to find a solution.

Brian Lynch, Staff member with Rivers Without Borders (Non-government organization with Canadian & American members), reported that his organization has been discussing the transboundary mining issue. There has been a meeting to address the Memorandum of Understanding dealing with the mining issue. He was relatively pleased with Lt. Governor Mallott's commitment for water quality issues to be addressed and wanted to know if the Southeast Council would be interested in sending a letter. Mr. Lynch drafted a letter that could be modified by the Council; the Council Coordinator clarified that the Council could write letters to the State administration.

OLD BUSINESS:

Draft Nonrural Determination Policy:

Jennifer Hardin, Acting Fisheries Division Chief for the Office of Subsistence Management, made a presentation on the drafted Nonrural Determination Policy that will outline the administrative process for future nonrural determinations in the Federal Subsistence Management Program. The Nov 2015 Final Rule stated that FSB determines which areas or communities are nonrural, all other communities are therefore rural. The new Draft Nonrural Policy states FSB will only address changes to nonrural status when requested in a proposal. Council discussion included comments that there should be deference given to the Council recommendations, clarification of the role of the Council in the overall process, and the importance of the Council being involved from the beginning; concern over the population criteria threshold.

Comment from Lee Wallace, President of Village of Saxman: Asked SEARAC to consider adding a footnote or explanation clarifying the named nonrural places; and to include another bullet point addressing when a proposal is received by the FSB, the FSB will copy the affected Federally recognized tribe immediately.

Council requested that staff put together a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board listing significant concerns about how the role of Regional Advisory Councils in the nonrural determination process is portrayed in the draft policy.

Federal Subsistence Board 805c Non-Consensus Actions Report: All of the Council's recommendations were adopted by the Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Regional Subsistence Fisheries Summaries & Review of FY16 Special Actions:

USFS Subsistence Fisheries Biologist Jeff Reeves (data steward of the Federal subsistence fish database) provided supplemental information and fielded questions from the Council. Presented PowerPoint presentation outlining State personal use and subsistence harvest data for an approximately 25-year period along with discussing the five Federal permits issued in the Southeast, and custom and traditional use in the Southeast.

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Sockeye Projects, 2001-2016:

Ben VanAlen, USFS Fisheries Biologist, provided a handout on the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program projects. He provided a rough assessment and reported that the general trend is declining escapements for the projects reviewed in this series of years. Discussion with the Council included: the sharp decline on the Hetta project, explanation of the term ‘fisheries shadowing,’ DNA sampling, the effects of climate change, the treaty with Canada, density of forage fish, possible causes of Redoubt’s low returns in 2013 and 2016, commercial fishing and sustainability, and how data is used in consultation with the State of Alaska. Concern that all data from every side needs to be looked at to do the Council’s responsibility to the resource.

Tongass National Forest Service Submerged Lands Public Meeting:

Public meeting was opened at 3 pm on October 4, 2016, for the purpose of receiving comments on the proposed rule set forth in Federal Register Vol 81, No 110. The State of Alaska objected only to the inclusion of the Makhnati Island area as described in the Federal Register, asserting that title to these lands had already passed to the State of Alaska by patent. Council felt they could not make recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board on this matter from the information presented. Council would like to see a more detailed map of the proposed areas and be informed of efforts made for Tribal consultation on this matter. Jennifer Hardin from the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) shared that she spoke with the OSM regulations specialist and the patents that the state addresses in letter do not include fill lands or adjacent lands. Council member Ms. Phillips wanted to highlight and read details from Federal Register into the record; noting how long this matter has been pending.

No comments were received during the public meeting from audience at the meeting or on the phone.

A work group was assembled to discuss key points from discussion to include in specific recommendation. Council directed Staff to draft a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board requesting information to aid in constructive discussion and ultimately, a recommendation to FSB on this matter.

Federal Fish Regulatory Proposals:

FP17-13, Clarification of Net-Prohibiting Regulation

Proposal FP17-13, submitted by the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) requests clarifying the regulation that prohibits the use of nets on the road systems associated with the communities of Wrangell, Petersburg, and Sitka.

Comments: Aaron Angerman, administrator for the Wrangell Cooperative Association, commented that the word “borough” was not in draft and since ‘borough is quite vast’, he wants to make sure it is clear that certain roads and areas are excluded. He also shared that there was a concern for how people will interpret the word “community.” Agency Comments: Rosalie Debenham with BIA: Q – clarify about Petersburg Creek and city limits of Petersburg boundary; proposal may need more information before vote, ADF&G still developing comments.

No written public comments.

Council Action (Support 7-6):

The Council **amended and approved** a motion on FP17-13 (7-6), to clarify the language of the regulation that prohibits the use of nets on the road systems associated with the communities of Wrangell, Petersburg, and Sitka.

The modified language of the proposed federal regulation approved by the Council:

§ _____.27(i)(13(ix) Nets are prohibited in streams flowing across or adjacent to the roads on Wrangell Island and Mitkof Island and in streams flowing across or adjacent to the road system connected to the community of Sitka.

Rationale: The regulatory change was thought appropriate because of the designation from ‘city limits’ to ‘boroughs.’ Before narrowly approving this motion, the Council had intense discussion regarding the definition of ‘community’ and ‘nets,’ the fact that the public didn’t have an opportunity to comment on the addition of Petersburg Creek, a question of the history of the original regulation and if the systems were a conservation concern and a question of whether conservation concern has been proven, and concern of setting a precedence. There was a clarification that nets are not allowed currently in these areas and haven’t been allowed for several years.

FP17-14, Sling Bow Request

Proposal FP17-14, submitted by David Adams of Sitka, Alaska, requests that a sling bow with a barbed fishing arrow attached by a line be added as a method to take pink salmon in the Southeastern Alaska area.

Comments: Alaska Department of Fish & Game opposed this proposal stating this gear type could create safety concerns, that a misidentified target or accidental hit on a species other than pink salmon would place the angler out of compliance, and that this proposal would increase disparity between Federal and State allowable gear. Public testimony from James Coop? and explanation of how tool is made and used. There were no Tribal Consultations, other Agency comments, State Advisory Committee comments or written public comments.

Council Action (Failed 13-0):

Rationale: Adopting this proposal will likely create a conservation concern? Safety? Images of a sling bow were found online and the Council reviewed some examples of this type of tool. Although this would increase opportunities for take for subsistence users and result in no consequences on conservation or impact other users, the motion failed as Council considered its earlier discussion on a similar gear type – bow and arrow, which was opposed due to possible mortalities associated with wounding.

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan Priority Information Needs:

Terry Suminski reminded the Council of the five criteria used to evaluate project proposals: Strategic Priority, Technical-Scientific Merit, Investigator Ability and Resources, Partnership-Capacity Building, and Cost Benefit. Comment by phone – Aaron Angerman on behalf of the Wrangell Cooperative Association spoke about importance of Virginia Lake and Mill Creek being a traditional and important resource area, and is heavily used for subsistence harvest of sockeye.

In April, 2016, the Council decided to send a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board to address the priorities chosen by the Southeast Council. The priority list was ripe for discussion and finalization.

Council Action (Support unanimously):

The Council decided on the priority of the FRMP projects and ordered staff to finalize a letter going to the Federal Subsistence Board to convey that list.

Council requested that staff get more information to the Council on this matter – there was a discussion of gathering commercial harvest information online, then a caution from the coordinator regarding specific

requests to the State of Alaska on commercial fishing harvest statistics: there are requirements about providing data in too fine a scale?

Revisions to Memorandum of Understanding with State of Alaska:

Tom Whitford reported that the Revision Working Group met in July 2016 and started the revision process using the 2013 version of the Memorandum of Understanding that incorporated all previous Regional Advisory Council edits and comments. All edits to this version contained in the meeting books should be submitted to the Mr. Whitford by November 2016. This will be presented to the Board at their Jan 2017 meeting.

Council Action (Support unanimously):

The Council **approved** a motion to accept the draft Memorandum of Understanding as written. Rationale: The Council's working group on this matter discussed the edits at break and found this version acceptable. Approving the edits will keep this moving forward. Discussion that if there were Council members who wished to take this back to communities and tribes for discussion, any additional comments should be directed to Theo Matuskowitz by November 2016.

Chair of the Federal Subsistence Board Update:

Gene Peltola, Assistant Regional Director – Office of Subsistence Management, reported that earlier this day, Public Member Tony Christianson was appointed as the Interim Federal Subsistence Board Chair by Secretary of Interior with concurrence from Secretary of Agriculture. Resumes from individuals interested in serving as permanent Chair will be accepted until October 7, 2016.

Tongass Amendment Plan Report:

Forest Supervisor Earl Stewart addressed the Council with an update on the Tongass Amendment Plan. Council expressed concern on how the Forest Service makes decisions regarding the plan and that the Forest Service did not make every effort to get out and obtain public opinion, nor to work with the Regional Advisory Council to gather comments on subsistence concerns. Several members of the Council also expressed disappointment that no one from the Southeast Council was appointed to sit on the Plan Committee to provide subsistence issue input. Mr. Stewart promised to take the feedback back and offered his appreciation of the Council. He further offered to work with the Council Coordinator to schedule a conference call during a Council meeting once the Record of Decision comes down on the Plan so that he can provide another update to the Council.

Annual Report Item Identification for 2016:

Councilman Hernandez opened the discussion for Annual Report Items by encouraging the Council to address and think about strategies to provide for subsistence needs of the area, identification of where needs aren't being met and a strategy to meet those needs, per the guidance for annual report content outlined on page 58 of the Meeting Book. The Council discussed topics to provide in its annual report for Federal Subsistence Board's review and approval during the winter meeting in March 2017:

1. Poor returns of Sockeye, need to explore causes and address.
2. Central SE Unit 3 issues with deer population & bag limits.
3. Takes from lodges (non-resident) and the effects of those takes. It is unaccountable and effects subsistence needs. This Council has made previous proposals to address this with Board of Fisheries which haven't been accepted (specifically Sockeye).
4. Appointment to committee on next Tongass Forest Plan. Someone from the Council/Board should be appointed to sit on committee for next Forest Plan.

5. Overpopulation of bears which are getting aggressive
6. Extraterritorial Jurisdiction process. The State didn't abide by process on raising/lowering amount for subsistence. What avenues are available to work with state on holding people to the standards . . . there are two standards.
7. Global warming effects. Including salmon returns.
8. Unguided fishermen. Need to address training of unguided fishermen on environment, etc. and address that the amount of fish that they take is not recorded.
9. Subsistence Users versus Other Users: Request data from all user groups to make proper and informed decisions, specifically regarding unguided fishermen:
 - a. Obtain lodge information from the State. How many lodges have unguided clients or guided clients vs unguided? Minimally, make inquiries of what information is available.
 - b. Request data on the group that stays in the Bay at Kake from the Forest Service. Only FS would know if they have a permit and there are concerns with amount of fish being taken.
 - c. State constitution says there should be equal access and the way subsistence users are limited, this isn't equal access.
10. Outstanding National Resource Water designation for Yakutat Forelands (Tier 3). There are currently no State avenues to process nominations for this designation under the Clean Water Act.

The following issues are carried over from 2015. Council would like to build dialogue on these previously identified needs and issues:

11. Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. Strategy of continued funding needs to be stressed.
12. Transboundary mining strategy.
13. Baseline water monitoring. Taku/Stikine have strategies, but need to address the issue of no access to Unuk River yet – USDA needs to facilitate monitoring.
14. Use of cabins on park lands for subsistence use.
15. Customary & Traditional Use. Presentations have been made and discussions heard, is it time for a proposal?
16. Terminal Area Escapement
17. Extraterritorial jurisdiction
18. Salmon and Halibut interception. Amounts necessary for subsistence should be reviewed. This was brought up by Federal Subsistence Board in response under the petition for extraterritorial jurisdiction matter – why was Angoon amount lowered?
19. Sea Otter – continued issue of sea otters moving into interior waters of SE Alaska

Charter Review:

The Council performed an annual review of the charter that the Southeast Regional Advisory Council operates under. Unless the Council requests to amend the charter in some way, the Charter continues. **The Council took no action** on the Charter, which is the same charter for all ten Regional Advisory Councils.

Feedback on All-Council Meeting:

Feedback on the March 2016 All-Council Meeting was solicited. For the second time since inception, there was an all-Council meeting and each Council is asked to reflect whether it was effective. Comments from the Council included:

- It was a useful meeting, but it would be more beneficial to all Councils to understand the classes that were going to be offered.
- Would like to have had a little more time to sit in on meetings; would be good to observe other Council's meetings to better understand how Councils are looking at the other Councils.

Transboundary Mining Update:

Council Coordinator Robert Larson relayed the information contained USDA briefing paper to the Council. There are seven mines that are proposed or in the process of being developed and all have the potential for introducing acid water drains into the transboundary rivers (specifically Stikine, Taku & Unuk rivers).

Council Action:

The **Council Chair moved to have staff draft a letter** to Lt Governor Byron Mallot based on information provided by Mr. Lynch for review.

Subsistence Use of Facilities in Dry Bay:

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve Superintendent Phillip Hooge and Ranger Jim Capra from the National Park Service provided a supplemental briefing to the Council on the previous presentation by Mr. Capra last year regarding cabin use. Cabins for subsistence are authorized in a different section of ANILCA than the commercial use cabins. Commercial cabins are for commercial fishing only. Subsistence cabins are authorized by looking at overall patterns of subsistence and authorized for all subsistence users. Factors are used in evaluating the need for a cabin and heavily weighted with the activity and determining if a temporary structure would serve that function. No recreational use of cabin is authorized in Dry Bay; only commercial fishing and subsistence uses. Specific incidents of use were discussed. Council wanted to know if anything had been submitted to show location of villages or sacred sites in this area and the Park Service reported that they worked with Yakutat tribe to identify sites of that sort. Councilwoman Phillips commented that she was concerned with opportunities to live a way of life in a way that she used to, pre-ANILCA, because now she has to buy a permit for the same activities and is concerned about the effects of Federal regulations.

Outstanding National Resource Waters:

The Yakutat Tlingit Tribe has submitted a nomination for Tier 3 Outstanding Natural Resource Water (ONRW) Designation for the Yakutat Forelands. Designation for Tier 3 ONRW is provided by Environmental Protection Act and has ramifications of what can be done with the land if the designated water is pristine. It is up to AK State Legislature to implement statutes that allow the State to adopt regulations to implement a Tier 3. The State Legislature hasn't done that, so there is no mechanism to move forward until legislature meets and passes regulations for DEC to move forward on a designation allowed in Federal law. Council Coordinator Robert Larson reported that a statute had been drafted and he tried to find someone in DEC to advise when it will be passed and there was no clue when the legislature would act. Some states have enacted legislation to allow their state to move forward, some states have elected not to. This is part of the Clean Water Act and is slow to be acted upon. Letter writing options were discussed amongst the Council and because this is not under Council's jurisdiction, Council wishes to forward this on. Discussion of whether the Council should request the Board to send a similar letter to the Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture. Discussion that the request from the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe should be seen as a government to government communication, but State doesn't recognize that. Council feels they should take some stand on it because it deals with subsistence and the Tribe is taking action to preserve the area. If State doesn't have anything in place to move forward, what can the Council do to move forward to protect subsistence in this area?

Council Action:

There was a request that this issue be added to the agenda for the next Council meeting and to include this item in annual report to FSB as an issue. Staff was ordered to provide known letter in opposition to this

nomination at the next meeting, to have Western Hemisphere Shorebird Network on the agenda for the next meeting as well, and to add this issue to the Annual Report.

Rationale: Any opposition to this designation also needs to be explored because it is important to look at community as a whole.

Unguided Non-Resident Sports Fishermen:

This issue was brought up by many Council members who wanted to have a discussion and formulate a direction that the Council could take to address this in an Annual Report item or letter to the Federal Subsistence Board and possibly a proposal to Board of Fish. Concerns expressed by Council members on this topic include: unknown amounts of fish taken by unguided sports fishermen; guided bag limits are more stringent so this is driving more people into the non-guided sector; the shift from guided to unguided is creating a growth in the industry resulting in a situation of more non-accountability and impact on different resources (also shellfish); ‘unguided’ hunting as businesses make it easy for fishermen to stay on and hunt as well; and safety concerns. One Council member shared specific examples of loopholes in the regulations making it possible for people to visit Kake and take their ‘friends’ fishing and another group’s claim of building a church and taking their ‘members’ out. Another comment was that unlike subsistence fishing, charter fishing is dependent on disposable income and as the charter industry is required to adapt to changing regulations, this drives clientele away. Individual companies are adapting to this by offering guided and unguided options. Council feels subsistence is threatened and sports fishermen should be limited as subsistence users are.

Council Action:

Council instructed staff to add ‘unguided fishermen’ to the Annual Report and stressed an importance to stay engaged with this issue.

Rationale: Council feels subsistence is threatened and sports fishermen should be limited as subsistence users are.

Drafted Letter Review:

The Council reviewed Staff’s initial draft on the following issues, provided input, and instructed Staff to finalize same:

- Feedback on All-Council Meeting to the Federal Subsistence Board
- Transboundary Mining Letter to Lt. Governor Mallott
- Tongass National Forest Submerged Lands issue, request for additional information, to the Federal Subsistence Board
- Recommendation letter on NonRural Draft Policy matter to the Federal Subsistence Board

AGENCY REPORTS:

Tribal Governments – The Council Coordinator received a letter from Craig Tribal Association objecting to Unit 2 Game Management, specifically the reduction in wolf quota in the area. The harvest number went from 22 to 11 wolves, a 50% reduction; and there seems to be no documented evidence to reduce quota. The Forest Service is required under EO 32175 to provide meaningful consultation yet none were done with 3 Federally recognized Tribes within this management area. State is required to provide public notice and conduct public meeting in respective areas and none were done. Councilman

Douville read an email to the Council and asked that it be referred to when the Alaska Department of Fish & Game report comes up. There was a request: Until due process & meaningful consultation, wolf quota is requested to be restored to 22.

Native Organizations – none

Forest Service – This report was provided by Forest Supervisor Earl Stewart earlier in meeting with the Tongass Plan Amendment update. Melinda Burke, new Tribal Relations Specialist called in and addressed the Council and relayed her intentions in working with the subsistence program, helping communicate program activities, increase tribal participation and strengthen Tribal voices in this program. Susan Oehlers, biologist in Yakutat; gave a brief presentation addressing the wildlife cycle coming up: A presentation/handout included these issues: moose being managed by joint State and Federal permit; low bull to cow ratios; and land status changes (Sealaska) resulting in increased amount of Federal lands. **National Park Service** - NPS reported an increase in Unit 5B for moose harvest, which tied for highest harvest (Wrangell – St. Elias). The dedication of the Tribal house in Glacier Bay was one of four celebrations for centennial for Park Service this year.

Alaska Department of Fish & Game – ADF&G made a presentation. A presentation/handout included these topics: wolves, brown bears, mountain goats, black bear, hunter education, brown bear aggressiveness; increasing population of bear feeding on deer kill off, more sows with more cubs and older cubs; small numbers of wolf quota – rebounding population quickly. The comment that people aren't happy that they were not included in the process to set these quotas was discussed.

Council Action:

The Council requested staff to provide a report at the next meeting as to why wolf quota was reduced and information on increasing bear population.

Rationale: There is a concern that information is not shared with the public; science lags behind; large non-government organization influence in the area; how to reverse trend before there is no subsistence wolf hunts.

Office of Subsistence Management – OSM provided a quick staffing update

Future Meeting Dates:

WINTER MEETING: Based on the discussions regarding wolf quotas, the Council decided to change the expected location of the next meeting from Saxman to one of the nine rural communities on Prince of Wales Island. Staff will prepare cost analysis and find a location on POW for the Winter meeting.

DATES: MARCH 14-16, 2017

FALL MEETING: The Council chose to have its Fall 2017 meeting in Juneau some time during the last week of October.

DATES: Oct 30th week, 2017 (three days between Oct 30 – Nov 3)

There was intent to close the meeting with the movie made by the Niniilchik Tribe: “A Day on the Kenai River;” however, the meeting went longer than intended and most participants had to leave for the airport so the movie was not shown.

Closing Comments:

The Council asked if this was Council Coordinator Robert Larson's last meeting. Mr. Larson said that it was but he would be around for a few more months. Many Council members expressed their appreciation to Mr. Larson for his service to the Council for many years. DeAnna Perry, a Forest Service employee based in Juneau, will be the new Council Coordinator for the Southeast Council.

Meeting Adjourned.

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

/s/ Robert Larson
Robert Larson, DFO
USFS Subsistence Management Program

/s/ DeAnna Perry *December 16, 2016*
DeAnna Perry, Incoming Council Coordinator

Mike Bangs, Chair
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

December ____, 2016



WHSRN: An international strategy for saving SHOREBIRDS and their habitats.

Shorebirds are among nature's most ambitious and amazing long-distance migrants. But their numbers are dropping rapidly, with some species projected to go extinct within our lifetime. Protecting these birds is a high international conservation priority—and one that requires proactive, coordinated efforts within and between the countries these birds fly through during their vast pole-to-pole migrations.

What is WHSRN, and why was it created?



By the mid-1980s, scientists throughout the Americas were documenting serious population declines in shorebirds. Shorebirds' seasonal migrations are perfectly

timed to occur just as their food resources become available at very specific locations across the hemisphere during a very short window of time.

Understanding this, in 1985 the science community developed the framework for a site-specific, hemisphere-scale shorebird conservation strategy—the **Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN)**.

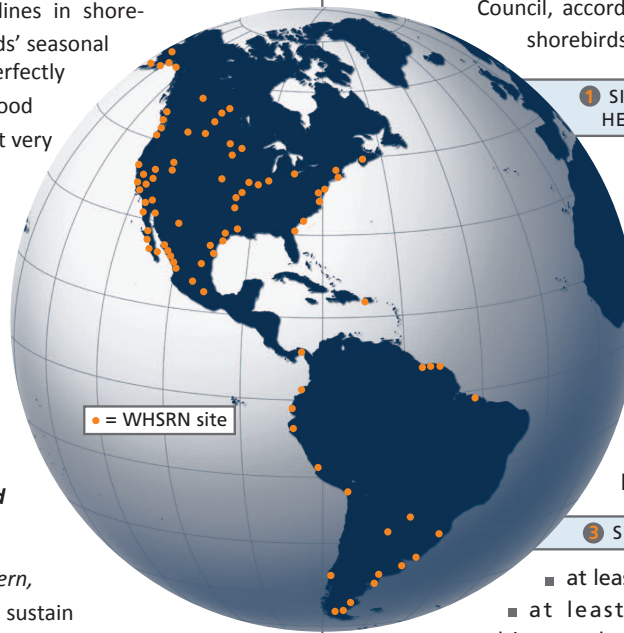
This strategy, pronounced *wiss-ern*, follows the simple idea that to sustain healthy populations of shorebirds, we must maintain the ecological integrity of key sites—those specific locations—that provide the habitats and nourishment they need for survival.

How extensive is WHSRN, to date?

There are currently 95 sites in 15 countries, from Alaska in the northernmost United States to Tierra del Fuego in southernmost South America. More than 33 million acres (over 13 million hectares) of shorebird habitat have been designated and are being conserved by WHSRN partners.

How does it work?

A partner or landowner nominates an area for one of three categories of designation by the WHSRN Hemispheric Council, according to its importance for shorebirds:



1 SITES/LANDSCAPES OF HEMISPHERIC IMPORTANCE:

- at least 500,000 shorebirds annually, or
- at least 30% of a species' biogeographic population

2 SITES OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE:

- at least 100,000 shorebirds annually, or
- at least 10% of a species' biogeographic population

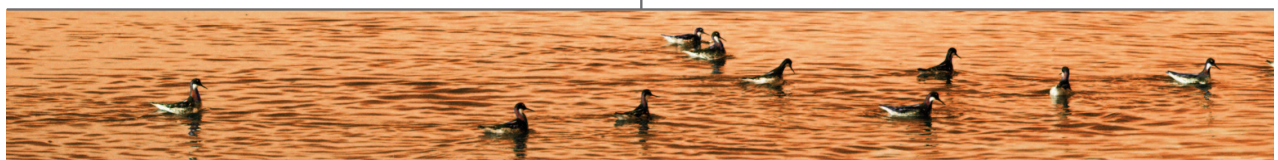
3 SITES OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE:

- at least 20,000 shorebirds annually, or
- at least 1% of a species' biogeographic population

Additionally, to qualify for a WHSRN designation, the site's landowner(s) must agree to:

1. make shorebird conservation a priority;
2. protect and manage shorebird habitat; and
3. keep WHSRN informed of any changes at the site.

Many site partners choose to display the certificate of designation, post WHSRN signage, host a dedication ceremony, and/or develop educational material and programs to raise local awareness about the site's importance.



©Jerry Monkman, EcoPhotography

www.whsrn.org

Who can participate in WHSRN?

Site landowners and stewards include government agencies, non-profit organizations, indigenous peoples, academic centers, businesses, and any other individual or entity committed to advancing WHSRN's mission.

Who administers WHSRN?



Administrative and technical support is provided by the WHSRN Executive Office, a program of Manomet.

Manomet, based in Massachusetts, USA, has a long and respected history of initiating collaborative, science-based conservation. For three decades, its senior scientists have been pioneers and steady leaders in deepening our understanding of shorebirds' needs and in guiding conservation actions.

A Red Knot may fly the same distance as the Earth to the Moon before its 13th birthday—provided it overcomes natural and human-imposed threats to its survival each year.



©Art Morris, Birds as Art

The Strength of Partnerships

From the Arctic tundra to the tip of Tierra del Fuego, WHSRN sites are more than just dots on a map. Each makes up the overall constellation of willing partners across the hemisphere committed to doing their part to help sustain healthy shorebird populations.

An effort of WHSRN's magnitude cannot be accomplished solely by the talent of any one group. WHSRN's leadership finds win-win intersections with the goals and agendas of other local, national, and international entities and individuals, from all sectors of society. In business terms, by conducting highly leveraged activities like helping other groups incorporate shorebird-conservation needs into their work or practices, WHSRN achieves a very large return on investment.

The Power of Science

The combination of biological and environmental factors at play in the annual lifecycle of a shorebird is very complex; in turn, so is the work of scientists in determining if or how a natural or human-induced impact to any one factor may be causing or contributing to a population's decline. This we do know: nine shorebird species have rates of decline so sharp that their total population sizes will be half what they are today in just 10 to 20 years (Bart *et al.*, 2007). If not reversed in time, they will become extinct.

Science informs and empowers our actions within WHSRN. As research continues to refine our understanding of shorebirds, we are simultaneously adjusting the scientific questions asked and the conservation actions taken.



©Tim Bowman, USFWS

The Bar-tailed Godwit breeds in Alaska and "winters" some 7,150 miles away in New Zealand—and gets there by flying non-stop for up to 9 days.

The Importance of Your Support

As a site partner, researcher, donor, business owner, educator, birdwatcher, landowner, or resource manager, your support for WHSRN—in whatever shape it may take—helps to advance our shorebird conservation goals. If you have questions, or want ideas on how you can best contribute, visit www.whsrn.org or contact us at:

**WHSRN Executive Office
P.O. Box 1770
Manomet, MA 02345
(508) 224-6521
whsrn@manomet.org**



May 2016

WILDLIFE CLOSURE REVIEW BRIEFING

As called for in the Closure Policy, the Office of Subsistence Management is reviewing existing wildlife closures to determine whether the original justifications for closure continue to apply. These reviews are being conducted in accordance with guidance found in the Federal Subsistence Board's Policy on Closures to Hunting, Trapping and Fishing on Federal Public Lands and Waters in Alaska, which was adopted in 2007. According to the policy, existing closures will be reviewed at least every three years, and are typically completed on a three-year rotational schedule. Most of the closures being reviewed this cycle were last reviewed by the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) in 2012. A summary of the current closure reviews which are applicable to your Regional Advisory Council (RAC) are provided.

Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) establishes a priority for the taking of fish and wildlife on Federal public lands and waters for non-wasteful subsistence uses over the taking of fish and wildlife for other purposes (ANILCA Section 804). The Federal Subsistence Board is authorized to restrict or close the taking of fish and wildlife by subsistence and non-subsistence users on Federal public lands and waters (ANILCA Section 804 and 815(3)) when necessary for: 1) the conservation of healthy populations of fish and wildlife; or 2) to continue subsistence users of such populations. In addition, the Board may also close Federal public lands and waters to any taking of fish and wildlife for reasons of public safety, administration, or to assure the continued viability of such population (ANILCA Section 816(b)).

Distribution and abundance of fish and wildlife populations are known to fluctuate based upon a variety of factors such as weather patterns, management actions, habitat changes, predation, harvest activities, and disease. Subsistence use patterns are also known to change over time in response to many factors including resource abundance, human population changes, among others. It is for these reasons that the Board decided in 2007 to conduct reviews every 3 years or earlier if new information becomes available that would potentially allow the closure to be lifted.

A Wildlife Closure Review contains a brief history of why a closure was implemented, along with a summary of the current resource condition and the OSM recommendation as to whether the closure should be continued or lifted.

Councils are asked to consider the OSM recommendation and share their views on the issue. Input from the Councils is critical to the development of regulatory proposals needed to address adjustments to regulations. After the Council reviews the closure review, they have three options, which should be in the form of an **action item**. They can recommend to:

- maintain the status quo
- modify or eliminate the closure
- other recommendation

If the Council recommends to modify or rescind, they should submit a proposal (**a separate action item**) at this time. Councils may choose to work with OSM staff to develop a proposal; however, proposals addressing these issues can be submitted by other individuals or organizations as well.

Regardless of the Council recommendation, closures remain in effect until changed by the Federal Subsistence Board, and any regulatory proposals that may result from this review process will be considered through the normal regulatory cycle.

**Federal Wildlife Closure Review
WCR15-02**

Closure Location: Unit 5A-Moose

Current Federal Regulation

Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench—1 bull by joint State/Federal registration permit only. From Oct. 8– Oct. 21, Federal public lands will be closed to taking of moose, except by residents of Unit 5A. Oct 8–Nov 15

Closure Dates: October 8– 21

Current State Regulations:

Species and Bag limits – Moose	Permit/Ticket Required	Open Season
<i>Unit 5A Remainder: One bull by permit, available in Douglas or Yakutat or by mail from Douglas beginning Aug 17</i>	<i>RM061</i>	<i>Oct 15–Nov 15</i>

Regulatory Year Initiated: 1991

Regulatory History: (initial proposal number not known)

Moose hunting in Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench has been managed using a registration permit system since 1978. In 1990, the Federal government began managing subsistence hunting, fishing, and trapping on Alaska’s Federal public lands. On October 5, 1990 the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) closed Federal lands in Unit 5A to moose hunting from Oct. 15–21, except for Yakutat residents (FSB 1990). Additionally, the harvest quota for Unit 5A except the Nunatak Bench was set at 60 bulls, and the quota for the area west of the Dangerous River was set at 30 bulls (OSM 2015). In 1992, the list of communities with customary and traditional use determination (C&T) was expanded to include all the residents of Unit 5 and not just the residents of Yakutat (P92-012A). The Board used an emergency special action (S92-10) to close the moose season in Unit 5A west of the Dangerous River in 1992 because the harvest quota had been reached. In 1994, the Board adopted proposal P94-17 for Unit 5A, which allowed a community-based harvest of 10 additional moose for community potlatches and ceremonial uses from Aug. 1 to Dec. 31.

In 1996, to allow for increased opportunity by Federally qualified subsistence users, the Board adopted proposal P96-014, which extended the Federal season by one week, from a beginning

date of Oct. 15 to Oct. 8. The regulatory dates for the closure of Federal public lands to non-Federally qualified subsistence users were changed in 2000 from Oct. 15 – Oct. 21 to October 8 – October 21 (P00-010), to reflect the change in the Federal moose season start date of October 8. In 2004, the Board adopted proposal WP04-20, which established a joint State/Federal registration permit for subsistence hunting of moose in Unit 5A (RM061), that allowed for more efficient management and harvest monitoring of the hunt. The State issued Emergency Orders in 2004 (01-02-04) and 2007 (01-08-07) to close the portion of Unit 5A west of the Dangerous River when the number of moose harvested reached 28 to prevent the harvest from exceeding the quota of 30 bulls. In 2008, in response to continued low bull:cow ratios in Unit 5A, the Board adopted WSA08-05, which reduced the total harvest quota from 60 to 50 bulls for Unit 5A except the Nunatak Bench and from 30 to 20 bulls for Unit 5A west of Dangerous River. In October 2008, the State issued an Emergency Order (01-07-08) closing the portion of Unit 5A west of the Dangerous River when the harvest reached 20 bull moose. In 2009, the State raised the harvest quota from 50 to 55 bull moose in Unit 5A except the Nunatak Bench, and from 20 to 25 bull limit for the area west of Dangerous River. This change was based on surveys conducted during the winter of 2008, which indicated improved bull:cow ratios.

In 2009, the harvest quota for moose in Unit 5A except the Nunatak Bench was set by the Board at 55 bulls and for Unit 5A west of Dangerous River at 25 bulls. In 2010, the Board adopted Special Action WSA09-04, which delegated the U.S. Forest Service Yakutat District Ranger, temporary authority to establish a quota and close the moose season for Unit 5A. In 2010, the Board adopted proposal WP10-22, which removed from regulation the delegation of authority to the Yakutat Ranger District. In March of 2011, the board issued a letter of delegation to the Yakutat District Ranger to set Federal subsistence harvest quotas, close, reopen or adjust seasons, and adjust harvest and possession limits for moose (as well as deer and mountain goats).

In 2009, 2010, and 2011, the Yakutat District Ranger, via delegated authority, reduced the moose harvest quota in the fall for Unit 5A except the Nunatak Bench from 60 to 55 bulls with no more than 25 of those bulls to be taken in the area west of the Dangerous River from October 8 to November 15 (SA7-MO-06-09, SA7-MO-06-10, and SA13-MO-09-11). The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) also reduced the yearly moose harvest quota for the State season in Unit 5A remainder, except for Nunatak Bench, from 60 to 55 bulls and from 30 to 25 bulls west of the Dangerous River during the period between 2009 and 2011.

In 2012, Federal public lands remained closed to hunting moose from Oct. 8 – Oct. 21 due to conservation concerns (WCR12-02), except for residents of Unit 5A. The moose population was below the recommended State management goals for the population and the minimum bull:cow ratio.

In 2015, the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council submitted proposal WP16-06, requesting that a definition of “Nunatak Bench” be added to the Federal subsistence regulations for Unit 5. The Board supported the proposal and the definition of Nunatak Bench

was added to the 2016-2018 Federal Subsistence Regulations. The definition is as follows: “In Unit 5A, Nunatak Bench is defined as that area east of the Hubbard Glacier, north of Nunatak Fiord, and north and east of the East Nunatak Glacier to the Canadian Border.”

Closure last reviewed: 2012 - WCR12-02

Justification for original closure (Section 815(3) criteria):

Section §815(3) of ANILCA states:

Nothing in this title shall be construed as – (3) authorizing a restriction on the taking of fish and wildlife for nonsubsistence uses on the public lands (other than national parks and monuments) unless necessary for the conservation of healthy populations of fish and wildlife, for the reasons set forth in 816, to continue subsistence uses of such populations, or pursuant to other applicable law; or

The Board closed Federal public lands in Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench from Oct. 8– Oct. 21, to taking of moose, except by residents of Unit 5A to assure a preferential subsistence opportunity of rural Alaska residents with C&T.

Council recommendation for original closure:

The Southeast Regional Advisory Council (Council) had not been established prior to the original closure, and thus there was no recommendation at that time. Since the establishment of the Council, the Council has supported the closure because it has provided opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest moose in an area that typically receives relatively high hunting pressure. Moose populations in Unit 5A also experience periodic population declines due to predation and severe winters in addition to hunting pressure (Scott 2012).

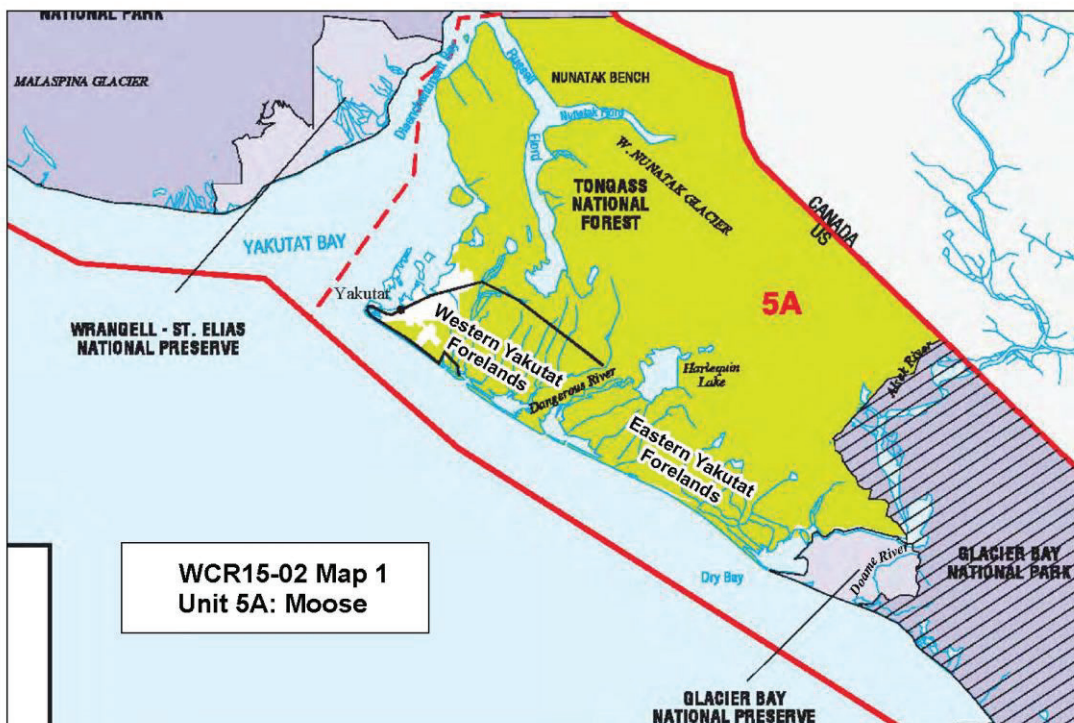
State recommendation for original closure:

The State recommendation for the original closure was not found in 1990 Federal Subsistence Board Meeting Book or in the archives.

Biological Background:

Moose were first sighted along lower Alsek River drainage in the eastern section of Unit 5A in the late 1920s and early 1930s. By the 1950s the moose population had expanded its range westward to the Malaspina Forelands west of Yakutat Bay (**Map 1**). The population grew rapidly and by the 1960s was estimated to be over 2,000, which was likely above the carrying capacity of the range (Barten 2006). During the 1960s and early 1970s the population declined due to both liberal harvest seasons, including cow hunts designed to protect the moose habitat, and severe winters in 1970 and 1972 that reduced the survival and recruitment (Scott 2010).

In 1974, the moose population in Unit 5A was estimated to be approximately 300 animals (FWS 1996). Concern over low population numbers resulted in a hunting closure of Unit 5A from 1974–1977. Following these closures, the Yakutat Forelands moose population slowly recovered to a high of approximately 685 moose (unadjusted) in 2007 (**Figure 1**). A complete survey of the Yakutat Forelands herd conducted in December 2011, under good survey conditions, and December 2012 which resulted in unadjusted counts of 229 and 197 moose, respectively (Sell 2014). Some of the moose in December 2012 had started to move inland to the dense spruce forests where moose are more difficult to see and thus may have contributed to a lower count. The unadjusted 2011 count was lower than the 2010 count (301) and considerably lower than the 685 counted in 2007. Following the 2007 survey, there were several severe winters, which probably reduced survival and recruitment and caused a decline in the moose population (Barten 2012 pers. comm.). Calves and large bulls usually suffer the greatest mortality during the high snowfall winters.



Large bulls often enter winter in poorer condition due to stress from the breeding season. Calves, due to their small size, have difficulty surviving during the winter because they have less energy reserves at the beginning of winter and have to expend more energy moving through deep snow than the larger animals.

In 1989, the State developed a management plan (ADF&G 1990) for Unit 5A Yakutat Forelands with three objectives: 1) to maintain a moose population of 1000 animals post-hunt; 2) to sustain an annual harvest of 70 moose; and 3) to provide a hunter success rate of 28%. Population counts conducted in the 1970s and 1980s were based on annual winter moose surveys that had been adjusted using a 50% sightability correction factor which is used to account for animals not seen during the survey (Smith and Franzman 1979). However, more recent data from a sightability study on the Yakutat Forelands during winter aerial moose surveys suggest that a 70% sightability correction factor is more appropriate (Oehlers 2007). It should be noted that the 70% correction factor reflects good snow cover, which does not always occur during the population surveys. Ideally, a sightability logistic regression model would include covariates such as snow coverage, habitat type, and group size in addition to population data so that more accurate annual estimates were obtained. However, due to variation in survey conditions such as timing, survey routes, survey conditions, number of trained personnel and snow conditions, these criteria have not been consistently recorded and so only the raw survey data is used for abundance trend information (Barten 2006, Barten 2008, Scott 2010, Scott 2011a). The abundance estimates using the 50% and 70% correction factors presented for comparison in **Figure 1** provide only a rough population estimates.

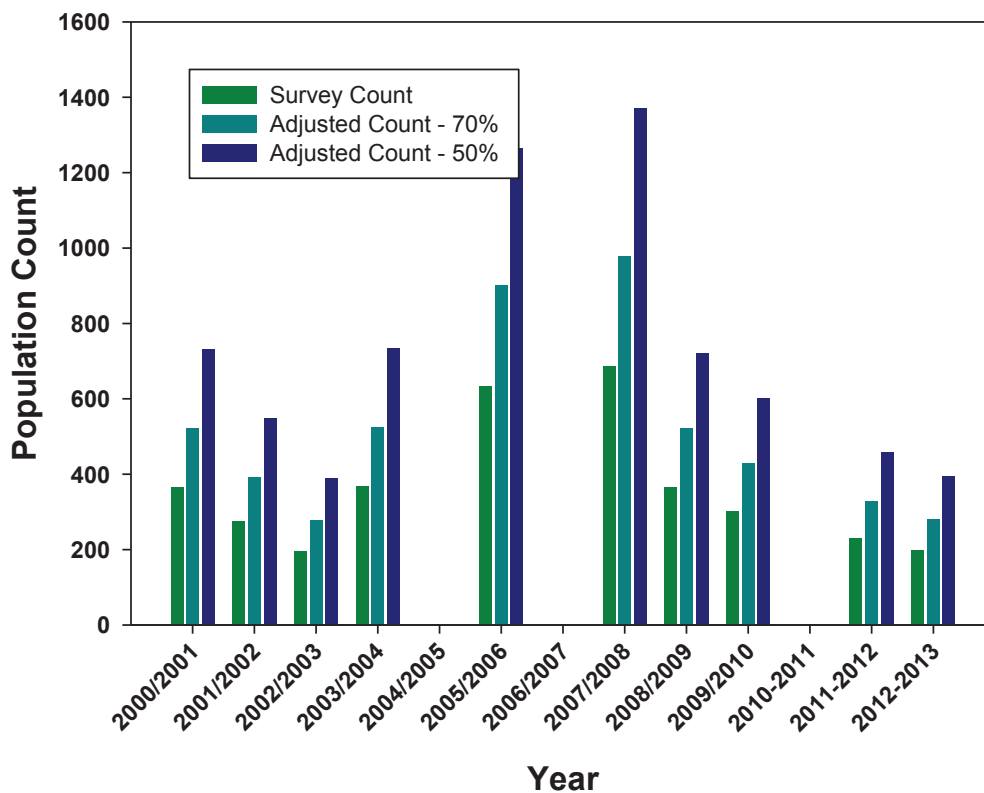


Figure 1. Estimated fall moose population in Unit 5A Yakutat Forelands from aerial survey counts adjusted with a 50% and 70% sightability correction factor. In 2005 systematic line transect surveys were initiated.

The adjusted moose population, using the 70% sightability correction factor, has been relatively stable (mean = 483, range 278–978, n = 10) since 2000 and appears to be near the carrying capacity of the habitat (Scott 2010, Barten 2012 pers. comm.). It should be noted that an estimate of 600–800 moose may be a more realistic population goal for Unit 5A, because the population seems to fluctuating around this level during the past 10 years (Barten 2012 pers. comm.).

Between 2000 and 2008, complete surveys of the Unit 5A Yakutat Forelands have been conducted yearly. However, some surveys have been limited to a smaller area to obtain herd composition data. Prior to 2005, the surveys were conducted in open areas where concentrations of moose were known to occur. The distribution and movements of moose in addition to the observer's ability to detect moose during aerial surveys are highly variable and dependent on the weather conditions, timing, and amount of snow cover in the late fall. Thus, population counts prior to 2005 may have missed large segments of the moose population and are probably not very reliable for detecting population trends (Barten 2008). In 2005, a more rigorous systematic survey design was developed using line transects which allowed for increased survey coverage, increased reliability of population estimates, reduced bias in the areas selected, and consistency between years. Despite the new survey design, weather conditions often prevented surveys being conducted at the same time, in the same area, and snow cover conditions also vary each year. The counts from these more systematic surveys, however, should be expected to result in more accurate population counts that can be used to detect population trends. It should be noted that the change in the sightability correction factor from 50% to 70% coincided with the change in survey design in 2005.

Although no formal habitat studies have been conducted to assess the quality of the moose habitat in Unit 5A, the relatively stable population numbers, relatively good body condition, and high pregnancy and twinning rates indicate that the quality and quantity of forage habitat is good (ADF&G 2005, Oehlers 2007).

In 2005, separate surveys were conducted in the eastern Yakutat Forelands (east bank of Dangerous River to the Doame River; Barten 2005) and the western Yakutat Forelands (west bank of Dangerous River to Yakutat airport; Barten 2006) (**Figure 1**). Yakutat moose surveys are usually conducted in November and December. Bull:cow estimates from December surveys should be considered minimum ratios as bull moose typically have begun to shed their antlers. Based on data from November/December moose composition surveys in the Western and Eastern Yakutat Forelands between 2005 and 2013, the bull:cow ratio averaged 20:100 (n = 13, range 10:100–46:100) (**Table 1**) (Scott 2010, Scott 2011b, Oehlers 2012). In October 2013, a herd composition survey was conducted prior to the opening of the Federal subsistence moose hunt in the Yakutat Forelands. Although the bull:cow ratio was 41:100 cows (total moose = 98), which is above the ADF&G management objective of a minimum bull:cow ratio of 25: 100 cows, survey conditions were marginal due to trees and shrubs still having leaves, lack of snow coverage which increases the visibility of moose, and intermittent rain squalls (Scott 2013a). Due to the survey conditions, only the open areas where the visibility was good were surveyed, and

thus many animals may have not been counted (Scott 2013a). In December 2013, surveys were conducted in the Western Yakutat Forelands when many of the bulls had lost their antlers. The minimum bull:cow ratio from the December 2013 survey was 12:100 cows (Scott 2013b). The

Table 1. Moose composition survey results for the Yakutat Forelands, 2005-2008 (Barten 2002, 2005, 2006, 2008; Oehlers 2008a, b, c; Oehlers 2012; Scott 2011b, 2013a,b).

Month	Year	Survey Area	# Bulls	# Cows	# Calves	# Unknown	Total	Bull:cow
March	2002	Yakutat Forelands	28	146	21	0	195	19:100
November	2005	Eastern Forelands	33	166	17	0	216	20:100
November	2006	Western Forelands	12	119	11	0	142	10:100
December	2007	Western Forelands	24	21	21	200	266	11:100 ¹
December	2007	Eastern Forelands	55	49	53	262	419	18:100 ¹
November	2008	Western Forelands	23	67	4	0	94	34:100
December	2008	Western Forelands	24	166	31	0	221	14:100
December	2008	Eastern Forelands	23	100	4	2	139	23:100
November	2011	Western Forelands	28	141	60	0	229	20:100
December	2012	Western Forelands	3	12	14	168	197	²
October	2013	Western Forelands	13	35	4	2	54	37:100
October	2013	Eastern Forelands	12	26	6	0	44	46:100
October	2013	Yakutat Forelands	25	61	10	2	98	41:100
December	2013	Western Forelands	18	36 ³	41	117	212	12:100 ^{1,4}

¹ Minimum estimate

² Unable to determine bull:cow ratio as many of the bulls had dropped their antlers

³ Cows with calves only

⁴ Minimum estimate (assumes all unknowns are female) (Scott 2013b)

lower bull:cow ratios in the western Yakutat forelands relative to the eastern Yakutat forelands of Unit 5A may be due in part to the greater impact of hunting in this area as a result of increased accessibility. The survey data from October 2013 suggests that the bull:cow ratio in both Eastern and Western Yakutat Forelands may have exceeded the ADF&G management objectives of a minimum bull:cow ratio of 25:100. However, the most recent minimum bull:cow ratio from December 2013, which is during the normal period when Yakutat surveys are usually conducted, was 12:100 cows (Scott 2010, Scott 2011b, Barten 2012, pers. comm., Scott 2013a, b).

Harvest History:

The annual moose harvest ranged from 25 to 48 during 2001–2014, with an average of 38 (OSM 2015) (**Table 2**). A joint State and Federal permit was implemented for Unit 5A in 2004 to allow for better tracking of hunting effort and harvest and to simplify the permit application and reporting process for the hunters. The average annual harvest, following implementation of the joint State/Federal registration permit in 2004 was 36.

Table 2. Number of reported moose harvested in Unit 5A between 2001/2002–2010/2011 from both State and Federal permits (OSM 2015, ADF&G 2015).

Year	Number of Moose Harvested
2001/2002	38
2002/2003	45
2003/2004	30
2004/2005 ^a	40
2005/2006	37
2006/2007	33
2007/2008	48
2008/2009	35
2009/2010	38
2010/2011	37
2011/2012	38
2012/2013	40
2013/2014	33
2014/2015	44

^a Implementation of the Joint State/Federal permit

The majority of the moose harvest occurs during the first two weeks (October 8-21) of the season in the western forelands by local residents. Only residents of Unit 5A are allowed to hunt bull moose during the first week of the season beginning October 8 and Federal public lands are closed to non-Federally qualified users until October 22, thus creating a two week period where there is no competition on Federal public lands from hunters that live outside of Unit 5A. The residents of Unit 5A have taken approximately 65% of the harvest annually since 2004 (FWS 2010). Overall hunter success averaged 27% between 2001 and 2013, which is below the ADF&G management objective of 28%.

OSM Recommendation

- maintain status quo**
 initiate proposal to modify or eliminate the closure
 other recommendation

Justification for the OSM recommendation:

The Federal closure for Unit 5A moose remains important to the residents of Unit 5A as it provides a subsistence priority under Section 802–Title VIII of ANILCA. None of the State’s biological or management objectives for the moose population in Unit 5A have been met. Under the current harvest regime, the moose population has remained stable at approximately 483 since 2000, but is still below current State management objective of 1000. The current minimum bull:cow moose ratio (20:100 cows) is below the State recommended minimum bull:cow ratio of 25:100, which is needed to ensure timely breeding of cows and to maximize productivity. The majority of the moose harvested are taken by Federally qualified users during the first two weeks of the season. The annual hunt by the Federally-qualified subsistence users takes place primarily in the western Yakutat Forelands where accessibility by boat or vehicle is much greater than in the eastern Yakutat Forelands. Typically, it is much more expensive to hunt in the eastern Yakutat Forelands. Without the closure, it is very likely that non-Federally qualified hunters would hunt early in the season as Yakutat is easily accessible by commercial airlines on a daily basis. The number of moose available for harvest is limited as moose numbers are currently low. Maintaining the status quo is consistent with sound management principles and the conservation of healthy populations while providing a priority for subsistence uses over other consumptive uses as provided in Section 815(3) of ANILCA. The status quo is necessary to continue subsistence uses under Section 815(3) of ANILCA and does not violate the prohibitions (public safety, administration, and the continued viability of a particular fish and wildlife population) outlined in ANILCA Section 816(b). The closure to moose harvest on Federal public lands in the affected area will be reassessed in three years, per the Federal Subsistence Board Closure Policy (FSB 2007), or sooner if additional survey data suggest the closure should be lifted.

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

Federal Subsistence Board Informational Flyer



Forest Service

Contact: Theo Matuskowitz
(907) 786-3867 or (800) 478-1456
theo_matuskowitz@fws.gov

How to Submit a Proposal to Change Federal Subsistence Regulations

Alaska residents and subsistence users are an integral part of the Federal regulatory process. Any person or group can submit proposals to change Federal subsistence regulations, comment on proposals, or testify at meetings. By becoming involved in the process, subsistence users assist with effective management of subsistence activities and ensure consideration of traditional and local knowledge in subsistence management decisions. Subsistence users also provide valuable wildlife harvest information.

A call for proposals to change Federal subsistence fishing regulations is issued in January of even-numbered years and odd-numbered years for wildlife. The period during which proposals are accepted is no less than 30 calendar days. Proposals must be submitted in writing within this time frame.

You may propose changes to Federal subsistence season dates, harvest limits, methods and means of harvest, and customary and traditional use determinations.

What your proposal should contain:

There is no form to submit your proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations. Include the following information in your proposal submission (you may submit as many as you like):

- Your name and contact information (address, phone, fax, or E-mail address)
- Your organization (if applicable).
- What regulations you wish to change. Include management unit number and species. Quote the current regulation if known. If you are proposing a new regulation, please state, “new regulation.”
- Write the regulation the way you would like to see it written in the regulations.
- Explain why this regulation change should be made.
- You should provide any additional information that you believe will help the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) in evaluating the proposed change.

You may submit your proposals by:

1. By mail or hand delivery to:
Federal Subsistence Board
Office of Subsistence Management
Attn: Theo Matuskowitz
1011 E. Tudor Rd., MS-121
Anchorage, AK 99503
2. At any Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meeting (A schedule will be published in the Federal Register and be announced statewide, bi-annually, prior to the meeting cycles)
3. On the Web at <http://www.regulations.gov>

Submit a separate proposal for each proposed change; however, do not submit the same proposal by different accepted methods listed above. To cite which regulation(s) you want to change, you may reference [50 CFR 100](#) or [36 CFR 242](#) or the proposed regulations published in the Federal Register: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>. All proposals and comments, including personal information, are posted on the Web at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

For the proposal processing timeline and additional information contact the Office of Subsistence Management at (800) 478-1456/ (907) 786-3888 or go to <http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/proposal/submit.cfm>.

How a proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations is processed:

1. Once a proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations is received by the Board, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) validates the proposal, assigns a proposal number and lead analyst.
2. The proposals are compiled into a book for statewide distribution and posted online at the Program website. The proposals are also sent out the applicable Councils and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Interagency Staff Committee (ISC) for review. The period during which comments are accepted is no less than 45 calendar days. Comments must be submitted within this time frame.
3. The lead analyst works with appropriate agencies and proponents to develop an analysis on the proposal.
4. The analysis is sent to the Councils, ADF&G and the ISC for comments and recommendations to the Board. The public is welcome and encouraged to provide comments directly to the Councils and the Board at their meetings. The final analysis contains all of the comments and recommendations received by interested/affected parties. This packet of information is then presented to the Board for action.
5. The decision to adopt, adopt with modification, defer or reject the proposal is then made by the Board. The public is provided the opportunity to provide comment directly to the Board prior to the Board's final decision.
6. The final rule is published in the Federal Register and a public regulations booklet is created and distributed statewide and on the Program's website.

A step-by-step guide to submitting your proposal on www.regulations.gov:

1. Connect to www.regulations.gov – there is no password or username required.
2. In the white space provided in the large blue box, type in the document number listed in the news release or available on the program webpage, (for example: FWS-R7-SM2014-0062) and select the light blue “Search” button to the right.

3. Search results will populate and may have more than one result. Make sure the Proposed Rule you select is by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and **not** by the U.S. Forest Service (FS).
4. Select the proposed rule and in the upper right select the blue box that says, “Comment Now!”
5. Enter your comments in the “Comment” box.
6. Upload your files by selecting “Choose files” (this is optional).
7. Enter your first and last name in the spaces provided.
8. Select the appropriate checkbox stating whether or not you are providing the information directly or submitting on behalf of a third party.
9. Fill out the contact information in the drop down section as requested.
10. Select, “Continue.” You will be given an opportunity to review your submission.
11. If everything appears correct, click the box at the bottom that states, “I read and understand the statement above,” and select the box, “Submit Comment.” A receipt will be provided to you. Keep this as proof of submission.
12. If everything does not appear as you would like it to, select, “Edit” to make any necessary changes and then go through the previous step again to “Submit Comment.”

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. Additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program may be found on the web at www.doi.gov/subsistence/index.cfm or by visiting www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.



***Southeast Alaska
Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council***

**Michael Bangs, Chairman
P.O. Box 1733
Petersburg, Alaska 99833**

RAC SE17002.DP

Mr. Anthony Christianson, Chair
Federal Subsistence Board
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Dear Chairman Christianson:

The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) submits this FY2016 annual report to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) under the provisions of Section 805(a)(3)(D) of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). At its fall 2016 public meeting in Petersburg, the Council identified concerns and recommendations for this report, approving it at its winter 2017 public meeting in Craig. 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 Southeast Region.

In 2016, the Council met in March 10-11, 2016, with the other regional advisory councils in an All-Council Meeting in Anchorage. They also met separately in Petersburg, October 4-6, 2016. During the March meeting, the Council submitted a letter to the National Park Service (NPS) supporting the collection of plants and non-edible fish and wildlife parts for use as handicrafts. The Council also submitted a letter to the Pacific Salmon Commission restating the Council's position regarding the directed fishery status for Chinook Salmon and removing the guideline harvest levels for Chinook, Sockeye, and Coho Salmon from the U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty language. The Council also drafted a proposed regulatory change for the fishery regulatory cycle, amending the prohibition on the use of nets on the road systems connected to Sitka, Wrangell and Petersburg.

The Council drafted a letter to the U.S. Forest Service to address its concern with the process used to contact subsistence users for the Section 810 hearings regarding the Tongass National Forest plan revision.

During the October meeting, the Council drafted a letter to the Board listing significant concerns about how the role of Regional Advisory Councils in the nonrural determination process is portrayed in the draft policy. The Council held a public meeting on October 4, 2016, pursuant to a proposed rule set forth in Federal Register Vol 81, No 110, to take public comment on the matter of identification of submerged lands in the Tongass National Forest. A work group was formed to discuss a specific recommendation; however, the group could not provide a recommendation without more information. The Council drafted a letter to the Board requesting information to aid in constructive discussion and ultimately, a recommendation to the Board on this matter. The Council took action on two fisheries proposals: adopted the Clarification of Net-Prohibiting Regulation (FP17-13) and failed to adopt the Sling Bow Request (FP17-14). The Council finalized the letter on the priority information needs of the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Plan. The Council also supported the revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding with the State of Alaska.

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

1. Poor Returns of Sockeye Salmon

The Council is concerned about poor returns of Sockeye salmon throughout Southeast Alaska and feels there is a need to explore the causes of poor returns and find strategic ways to address those causes. The Council would appreciate information on the effects global warming is having on salmon returns.

2. Unguided Fishermen: Subsistence Users versus Other Users

Council members have noted an increase in “unguided fishermen” throughout Southeast Alaska. The Council has identified the need to address training of unguided fishermen on the environment and safety. There is also a need to address that the amount of fish that they take is not recorded. There are also takes from lodges (from non-resident fishermen) that are unaccountable and there are effects of those takes on subsistence users. This Council has made previous proposals to address this with Board of Fisheries which haven't been accepted (specifically Sockeye salmon) and the Council would like the Board to suggest a way forward to address this issue.

The Council would like to know if it is appropriate for the Board or the Office of Subsistence Management to request data from all user groups to make proper and informed decisions, specifically regarding unguided fishermen:

- Obtain lodge information from the State. How many lodges have unguided clients or guided clients vs unguided? Minimally, make inquiries of what information is available
- Request data on the group that stays in the bay at Kake from the Forest Service (FS). Only FS would know if they have a permit and there are concerns with amount of fish being taken.

3. Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Process

The Council remains interested in how the petition for extraterritorial jurisdiction for the marine waters in Chatham Strait is being resolved as the Alaska Board of Fisheries lowered the Amounts Necessary for Subsistence. The Council would like the Board to advise what avenues are available to work with the State on ensuring actions are taken within standards.

4. Outstanding National Resource Water Designation

The Council received a request for the Yakutat Forelands to be deemed an Outstanding National Resource Water Designation (ONRWD) as a Tier 3 area. This designation is provided by the Environmental Protection Act, but it is up to the State Legislature to implement statutes that allow the State to adopt regulations to implement a Tier 3 designation. There are currently no State avenues to process nominations for this designation. The Council would like to request the Board to send a letter to the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture requesting that they communicate a request to the Governor of Alaska to seek legislation that would allow the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation to pass regulations and move forward on a designation allowed in federal law.

5. Overpopulation of Bears

The Council feels it is imperative that the Board be aware of the increasing population of bears in Southeast Alaska. Bears have shown an increase in aggressive behavior recently which have resulted in more human-bear contact and, in some instances, maulings. It is the intention of the Council to obtain further information on this matter and to identify the causes of increased bear population so that the issue can be appropriately addressed.

6. Central SE Game Unit 3 issues with deer population & bag limits

The Council recognizes that there is a problem with the Sitka black-tail deer population and bag limits in Game Unit 3 and would seek the Board's support in identifying where subsistence needs are not being met in Unit 3 and a strategy to meet that need.

7. Continuing Dialogue

Lastly, the following issues are carried over from 2015, and the Council would like to build dialogue on these previously identified needs and issues:

Chairman Christianson

4

- Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, with stress on a strategy of continued funding.
- Transboundary mining strategy.
- Baseline water monitoring. Taku/Stikine have strategies, but we need to address the issue of no access to Unuk River. The U.S. Department of Agriculture needs to facilitate monitoring.
- Use of cabins on National Park Service lands for subsistence use.
- Customary & Traditional Use. Presentations have been made and discussions heard, and the Council would like to continue discussions with Office of Subsistence Management staff in potential consideration of a proposal.
- Terminal Area Escapement
- Salmon and halibut interception. Sea Otter – continued issue of sea otters moving into interior waters of SE Alaska

Thank you for considering the management and program issues of concern to the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Please address any questions regarding this letter directly to DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator, P.O. Box 21628, Room 561D, Juneau, AK 99802, 907-586-7918, dlperry@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,

Michael Bangs
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Eugene R. Peltola, Jr., Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management
Stewart Cogswell, Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Director,
Office of Subsistence Management
Jennifer Hardin, Acting Fisheries Division Chief, Office of Subsistence Management
Carl Johnson, Office of Subsistence Management
Tom Whitford, U.S. Forest Service
Interagency Staff Committee
Administrative Record

Fall 2017 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

August - November 2017

Meeting dates and locations are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug. 20	Aug. 21 Window Opens	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24 NS — Wainwright	Aug. 25	Aug. 26
Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31	Sept. 1	Sept. 2
Sept. 3	Sept. 4 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY	Sept. 5	Sept. 6	Sept. 7	Sept. 8	Sept. 9
Sept. 10	Sept. 11	Sept. 12	Sept. 13	Sept. 14	Sept. 15	Sept. 16
Sept. 17	Sept. 18	Sept. 19 K/A - Cold Bay	Sept. 20	Sept. 21	Sept. 22	Sept. 23
Sept. 24	Sept. 25	Sept. 26	Sept. 27	Sept. 28	Sept. 29	Sept. 30
Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5	Oct. 6	Oct. 7
Oct. 8	Oct. 9 COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY	Oct. 10 WI - Galena	Oct. 11 YKD — Bethel	Oct. 12	Oct. 13	Oct. 14
Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19 AFN - Anchorage	Oct. 20	Oct. 21
Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24 SP — Nome	Oct. 25 NW - Shungnak	Oct. 26	Oct. 27	Oct. 28
Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31 SE - Juneau	Nov. 1 BB — Dillingham	Nov. 2	Nov. 3	Nov. 4
Nov. 5	Nov. 6 SC — Seldovia/Soldotna	Nov. 7	Nov. 8 EI — Tanana	Nov. 9	Nov. 10 Window Closes VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY	Nov. 11

Winter 2018 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

February-March 2018

Meeting dates and locations are subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Feb. 4</i>	<i>Feb. 5</i> <i>Window Opens</i>	<i>Feb. 6</i>	<i>Feb. 7</i>	<i>Feb. 8</i>	<i>Feb. 9</i>	<i>Feb. 10</i>
<i>Feb. 11</i>	<i>Feb. 12</i>	<i>Feb. 13</i>	<i>Feb. 14</i>	<i>Feb. 15</i>	<i>Feb. 16</i>	<i>Feb. 17</i>
<i>Feb. 18</i>	<i>Feb. 19</i> PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY	<i>Feb. 20</i>	<i>Feb. 21</i>	<i>Feb. 22</i>	<i>Feb. 23</i>	<i>Feb. 24</i>
<i>Feb. 25</i>	<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>	<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>	<i>Mar. 12</i>	<i>Mar. 13</i>	<i>Mar. 14</i>	<i>Mar. 15</i>	<i>Mar. 16</i> <i>Window Closes</i>	<i>Mar. 17</i>

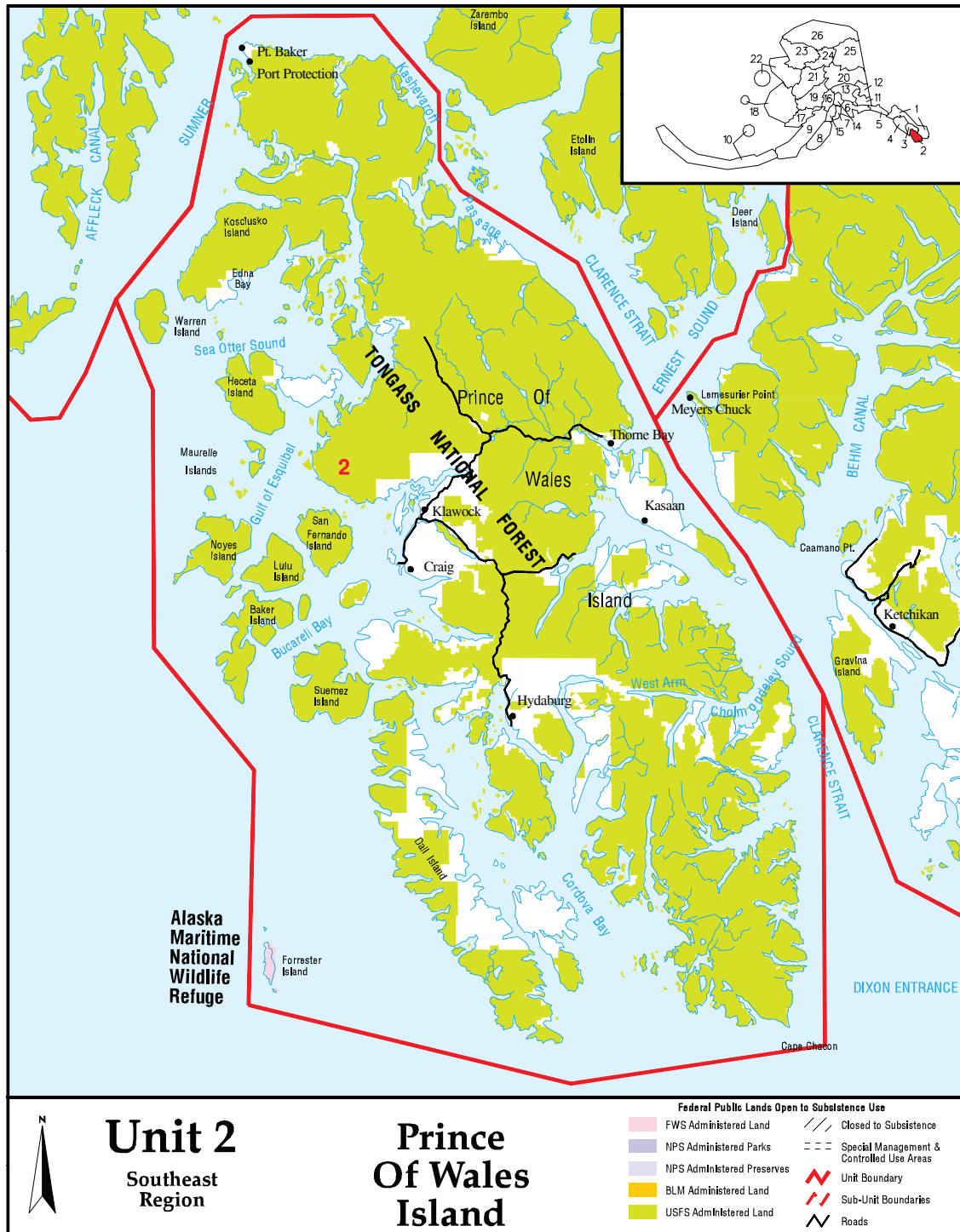
Hunting / Unit I

Southeast Mainland



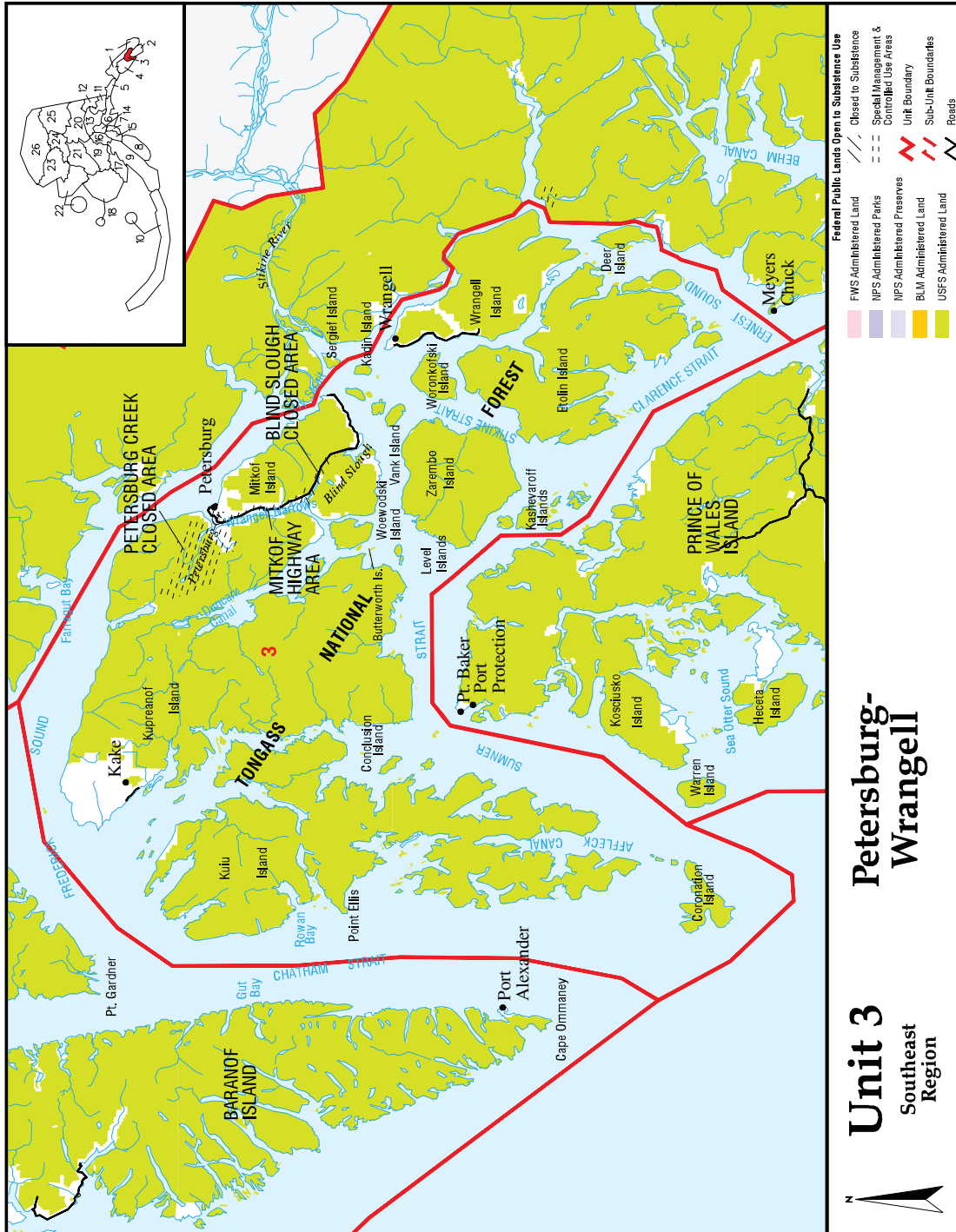
Hunting / Unit 2

Southeast Mainland



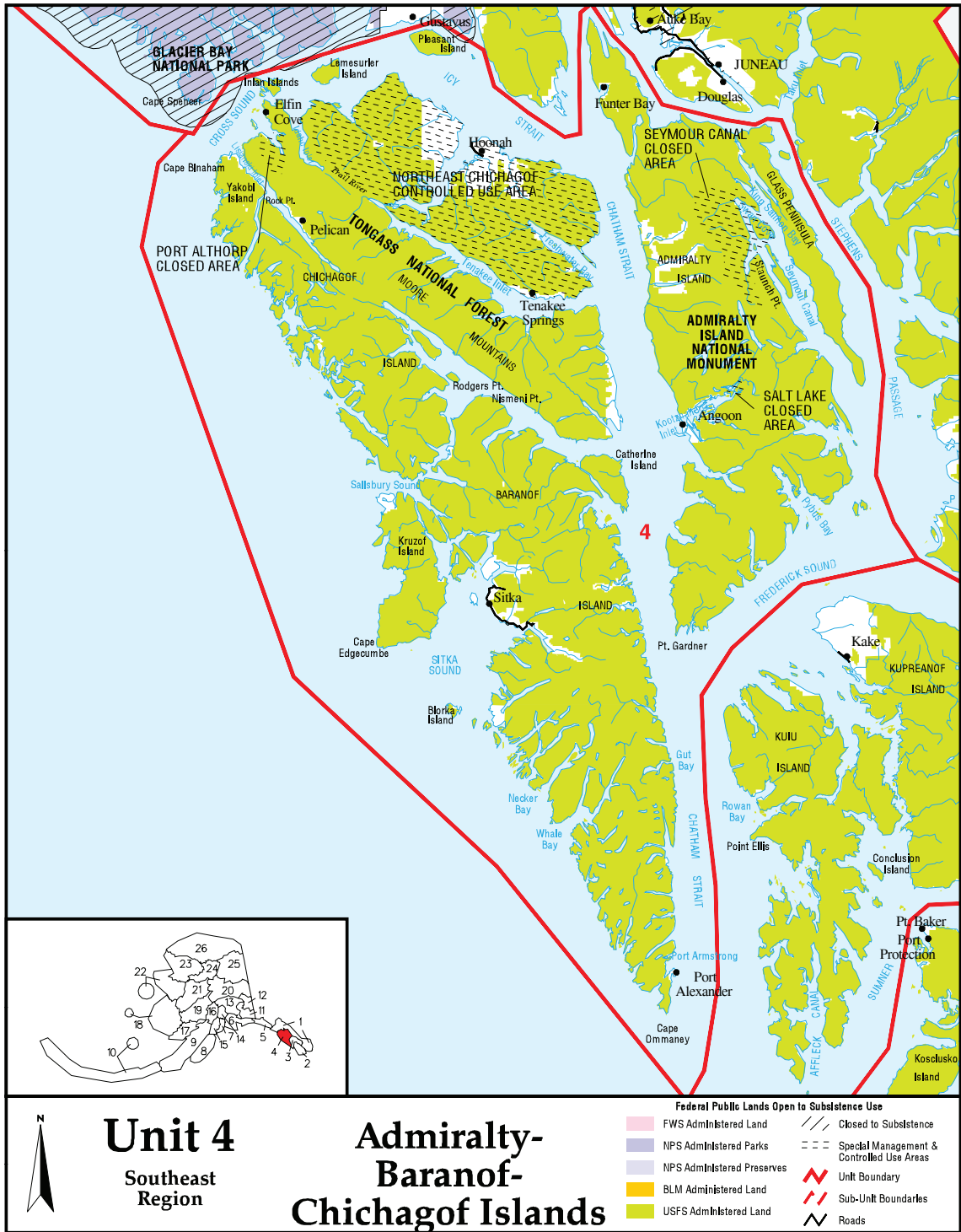
Petersburg-Wrangell

Unit 3 / Hunting



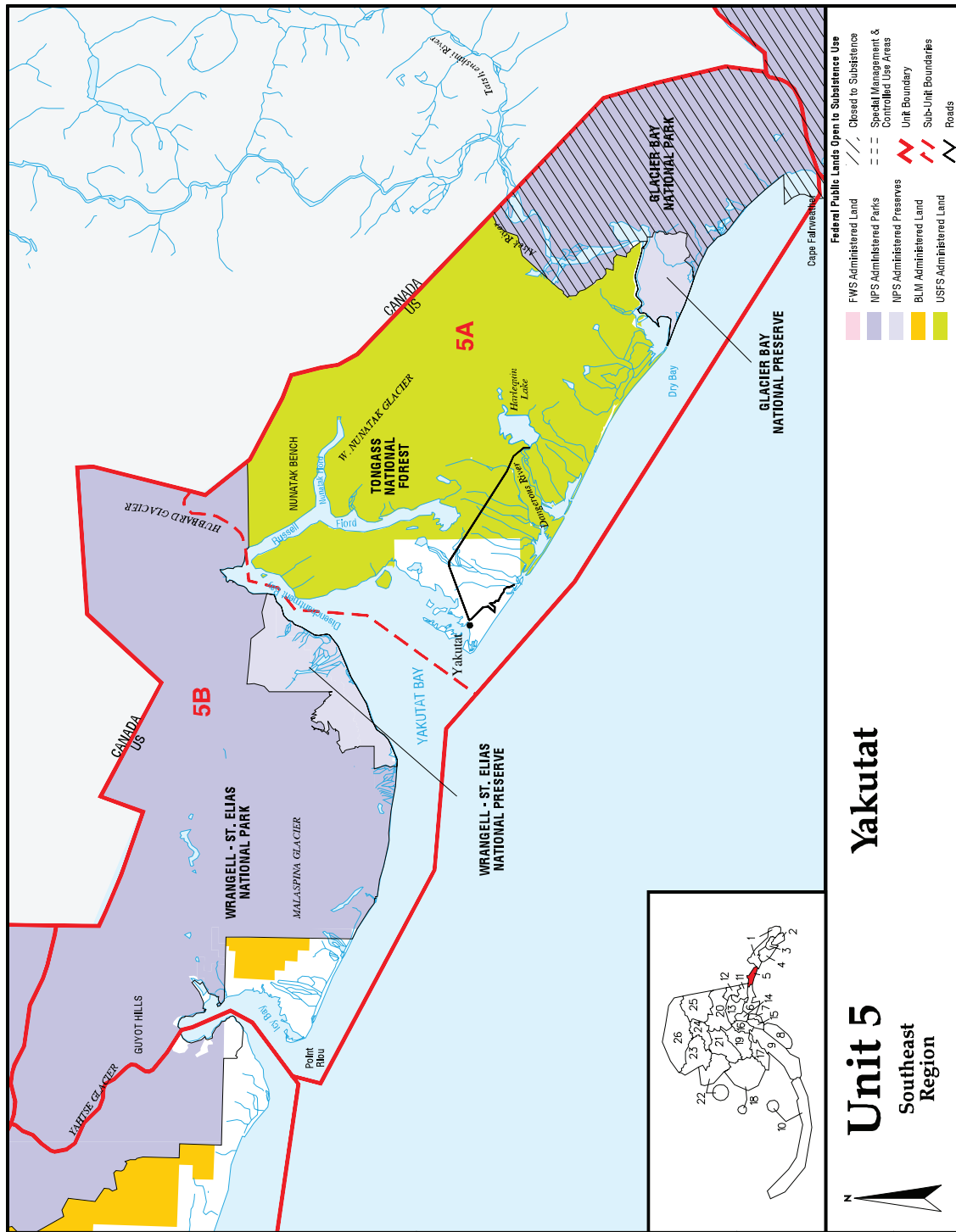
Hunting / Unit 4

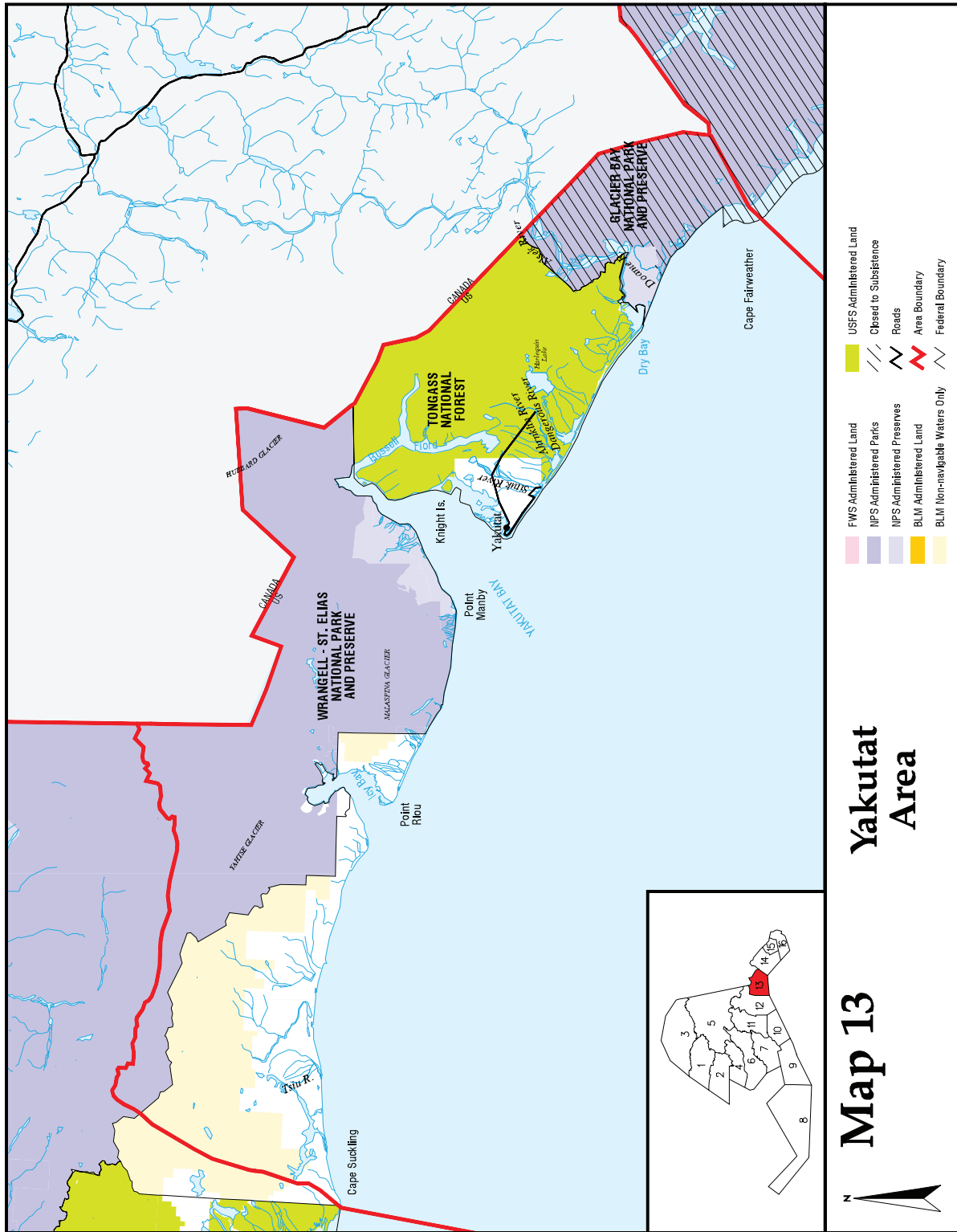
Admiralty-Baranof-Chichagof



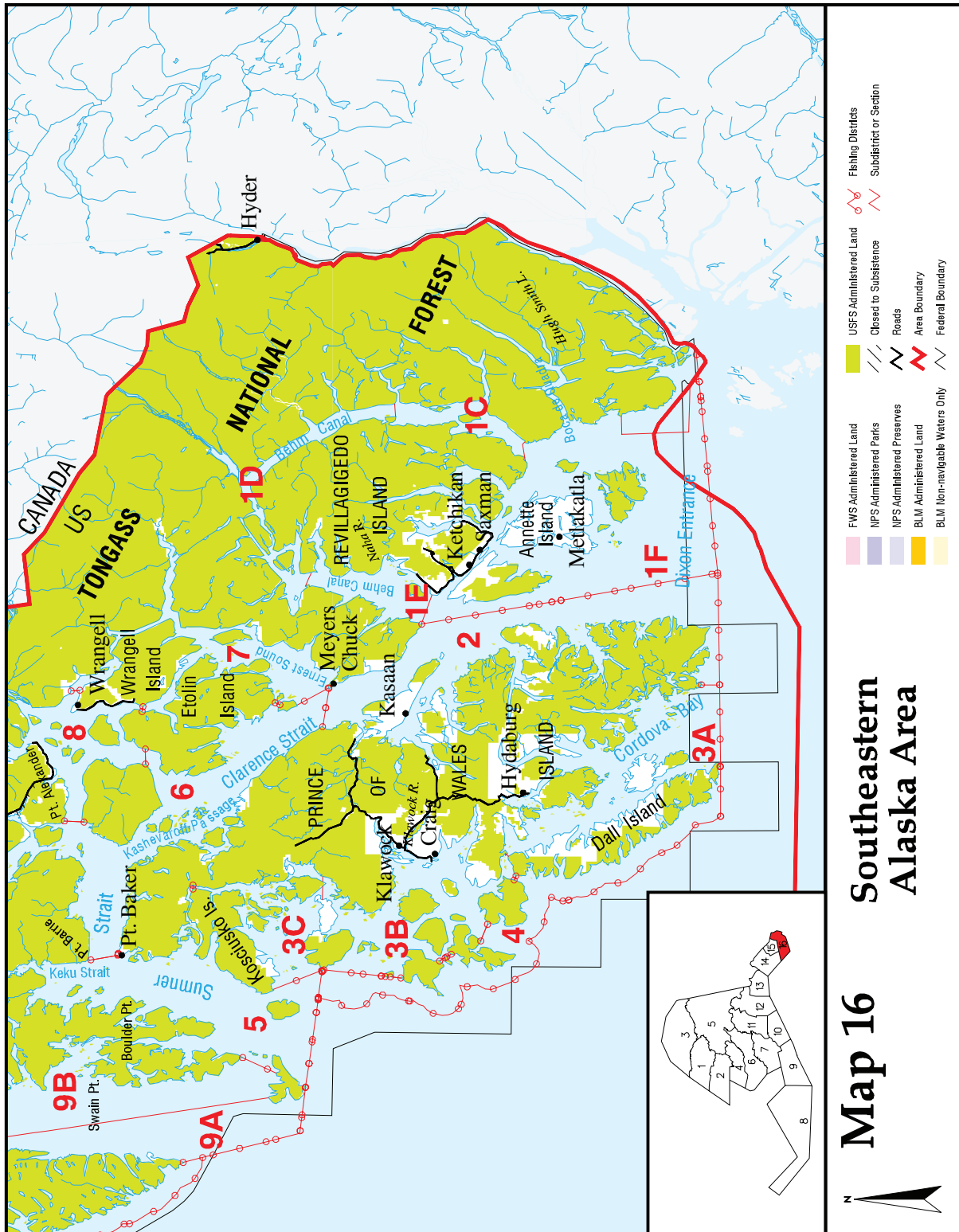
Yakutat

Unit 5 / Hunting









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

Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Charter

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The Council's official designation is the Southeast Alaska 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. Appoint one member to the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission in accordance with Section 808 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (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 \$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 Federal Subsistence 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.

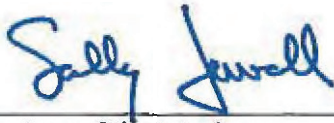
Council members will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary for a 1-year term.

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

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