



Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council
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**Your Comments Requested on Proposed Regulations for
2004 Alaska Spring/Summer Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest**

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Today the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published in the Federal Register a Proposed Rule which would regulate the 2004 Alaska Spring/Summer Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest. The Rule, a product of the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council (Council), sets dates between which such harvesting could occur, lists species that could be taken, describes means and methods of take that would be prohibited, and details areas of the state where residents are eligible to participate. Below is a summary of the proposed changes from the 2003 harvest regulations:

- 1) Add the Bristol Bay region to the area affected by the airboat prohibition;
- 2) Bird Possession Provision added for scientific research and education;
- 3) Northern Hawk-owls removed from the list of bird species open to harvest;
- 4) Seabird egg gathering season added for Bristol Bay;
- 5) Kodiak roaded area closure extended to include "500 feet from the water's edge;"
- 6) New inclusion of seven Copper River Basin communities (Gulkana, Gakona, Tazlina, Copper Center, Mentasta Lake, Chitina, Chistochina);
- 7) New inclusion of four Chugach Region communities (Tatitlek, Chenega, Port Graham, Nanwalek) with the Tatitlek/Chenega harvest area designed to protect Dusky Canada Geese;
- 8) New inclusion of one Cook Inlet community (Tyonek), with seasons designed to protect Tule White-fronted Geese; and
- 9) New inclusion of one Southeast Alaska community (Hoonah) added for gull egg gathering only, with Glacier Bay National Park still closed.

The Council, which includes representatives from the Alaska Native community, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acting as equal partners, was formed with the specific purpose of developing "recommendations related to the spring/summer subsistence harvest of migratory birds."

These regulations proposed for 2004 are part of an annual process which the Council uses to refine the harvest parameters, as needed. The full text of the Proposed Rule is available on the internet at (<http://alaska.fws.gov/ambcc/index.htm>). Interested parties without access to the internet can receive a copy by calling (toll-free 1-877-229-2344, William Ostrand). Public comments on the Rule will be accepted through **February 11, 2004**. The Final Rule, as advised by comments received on the Proposed Rule, will be published upon conclusion of the 30-day comment period.

The Alaska Spring/Summer Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest is scheduled to open on April 2, 2004 in most parts of the state, but only if the Final Rule is published in the Federal Register by then. The publication of the Final Rule will be followed by a mail-out distribution of the 2004 Harvest Regulations Booklets by the Service.

Partner Members: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Bristol Bay Native Association, Association of Village Council Presidents, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes, Copper River Native Association, Chugach Regional Resources Commission, Kodiak Area Native Association, Kawerak Inc, Maniilaq Association, North Slope Borough, Tanana Chiefs Conference