

From LAND *and* WATER

THE FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Office of Subsistence Management • 3601 C Street, Suite 1030 • Anchorage, Alaska 99503 SUMMER 2004

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The Federal Subsistence Management Program is a multi-agency effort that emphasizes cooperation and consensus building with rural Alaskans. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and USDA Forest Service manage the Federal public lands and waters where subsistence activities take place.

Beyond Salmon

Study examines importance of non-salmon species to the Koyukuk region

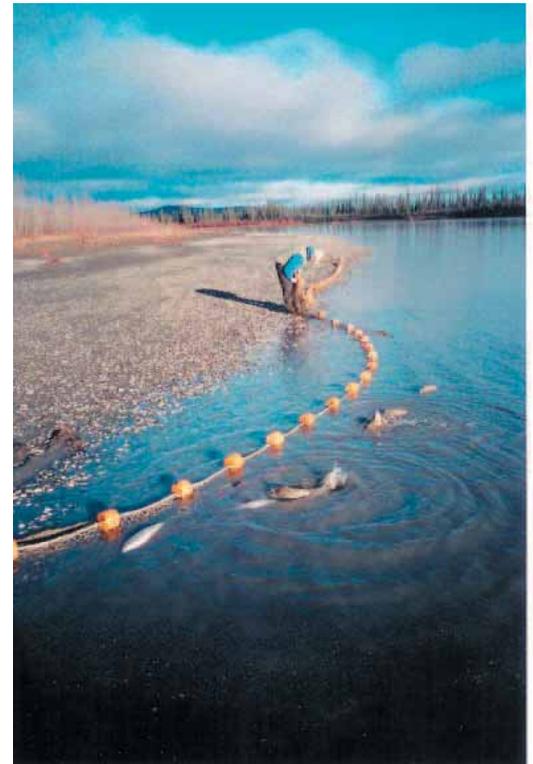
Salmon is a fundamental part of life for many rural Alaskans. The arrival of salmon in spring sets in motion a cycle of activity that lasts through summer and into fall. Salmon is the fish of choice, a source of sustenance and a foundation of many cultures.

But there are regions throughout Alaska where salmon is scarce, if available at all. In these regions, other fish may play a more important role in the subsistence harvest.

A newly published report, funded by the Fisheries Monitoring Program, examines the importance of non-salmon species to the people of the Koyukuk River region. In the middle and upper reaches of the Koyukuk drainage, Arctic grayling, burbot, northern pike, sheefish and seasonal species of whitefish—not salmon—are the primary subsistence resources.

The project was a cooperative effort by David Andersen of Research North^o in Fairbanks, Caroline Brown and Robert Walker of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Subsistence Division, and Kimberly Elkin of the Tanana Chiefs Conference. It was designed to provide baseline and background information on the harvest and use of non-salmon species in Koyukuk River villages.

The study consisted of a survey of 242 households in Koyukuk, Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket, Alatna and Bettles/Evansville to gather 2002 harvest data. In addition, researchers tapped into the rich body of local knowledge through interviews with 29 residents of the region, most of them elders and all of them known for their expertise in fish and fishing in their re-



An Allakaket fisherman uses a seine net to harvest spawning whitefish on the Alatna River

gion. These local experts possess a wealth of insights into the habits, seasonal movements, and availability of various fish species. Their knowledge is based on lifetimes of firsthand observation and on the knowledge passed down from previous generations.

The Fisheries Monitoring Program funds studies to collect and analyze harvest data and traditional knowledge because this information can provide for sound management of subsistence fisheries. Harvest surveys document the level of use and the importance of particular species to subsistence users. Traditional knowledge can also help resource managers understand what areas, seasons, fishing methods, and gear types are used in a particular region, so that customary and traditional practices can be sustained. Traditional knowledge can also provide valuable biological insights into fish species, especially those about which little is known, and can also provide the foundation for important



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Letter from the Chair

By this time of year you've probably gathered your fill of Alaska's summer bounty. My family is enjoying salmon and whitefish after a robust fishing season. I picked raspberries



Mitch Demientieff of Nenana has served as chairman of the Federal Subsistence Board since 1995.

and highbush cranberries with my grandchildren, and I am looking forward to spending time at my hunting camp. It's a busy time, but we will enjoy the results of our labors throughout the coming months.

When we've met our needs for the winter we can look forward to the future and to next year's hunting and fishing. We can think of what we might do differently and how we might

make our efforts more productive.

Perhaps you have some ideas about how to make Federal subsistence fishing, hunting and trapping regulations work better for you and your community. The Federal Subsistence Board considers proposals to change regulations every year for all regions of the state. On page 11 of this newsletter, you will find a chart that outlines how Federal subsistence regulations are made. Whether you choose to propose a change to the regulations, comment on a proposal, attend a Regional Advisory Council meeting, or attend a Federal Subsistence Board meeting, I encourage you to participate in this process. Share your knowledge and opinions.

Also in this edition of our newsletter (page 7), you can read about two people who participated in this regulatory process and are now enjoying the results of their efforts. This summer, Richard

Stokes of Wrangell celebrated the establishment of a subsistence fishery on the Stikine River while Teri Rofkar of Sitka has been busy working with mountain goat wool obtained from a Special Action hunt to teach traditional Tlingit weaving.

The work of changing regulations isn't always easy but, like fishing, hunting, and putting food by for the months ahead, the results are well worth it.

Sincerely,



Mitch Demientieff
Chairman,
Federal Subsistence Board

MEETING CALENDAR

Fall 2004 Regional Advisory Councils

SEPTEMBER

- 8-9 North Slope — *Barrow*
- 22-23 Seward Peninsula — *Nome*
- 27-28 Bristol Bay — *Dillingham*
- 27-30 Southeast — *Juneau*

OCTOBER

- 5 Kodiak/Aleutians — *King Cove*
- 5-6 Eastern Interior — *Eagle*
- 8 Northwest Arctic — *Kotzebue*
- 10-11 Western Interior — *Anvik*
- 12-13 Southcentral — *Soldotna*
- 14-15 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta — *Bethel*



Federal Subsistence Board Meeting:

JANUARY 11-13, 2005 — *Anchorage*
Egan Civic and Convention Center

Meeting dates and locations are subject to change.

Unit 2 deer subcommittee formed

The Southeast Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, with the consent of the Federal Subsistence Board, has formed a subcommittee to address deer management issues in Unit 2 in Southeast Alaska. Prince of Wales Island makes up most of Unit 2.



The purpose of the subcommittee is to develop a management approach that ensures the long-term conservation of Unit 2 deer, maintains the rural subsistence priority on Federal public lands, and minimizes adverse effects on non-subsistence hunters who also rely on Unit 2 deer.

There is evidence that the deer population within Unit 2 has declined and it appears competition for deer from non-subsistence hunters has increased in recent years. As a result the Federal Subsistence Board approved regulations providing for a Federally-qualified rural subsistence hunt prior to the regular State season. This was consistent with the advice of the Regional Advisory Council. However, there are still concerns that rural residents are not meeting their needs and that non-subsistence hunters are unable to continue their traditional Unit 2 deer harvest practices. This cooperative deer management planning effort is intended to help find a workable solution to these problems.

The subcommittee is chaired by Don Hernandez of Point Baker and will consist of 11 members and one alternate. Included are three members of the Southeast Regional Advisory Council, a Tribal representative from Prince of Wales Island, a Ketchikan hunting guide and a sport hunter, and subsistence hunters from Wrangell, Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island. Alaska Department of Fish and Game and USDA Forest Service staff will provide support to the planning process and will serve as non-voting members of the subcommittee.

The subcommittee plans to hold five meetings, from November through April, and will report on its progress

at the Southeast Council meeting in February 2005. The meetings will be held in various communities throughout the affected region to ensure that all interests will be heard during the planning process.

Among the topics the subcommittee will examine are deer population data, including distribution and trends within Unit 2; harvest data; regulatory enforcement; changes in patterns of use; changes in access to deer; changes in the local economies; changes in the ecosystem brought about by second growth in logged areas; predator-prey relationships; and the subsistence provisions in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The subcommittee also will identify what additional information is needed for long-term management of the deer population within Unit 2.

Any regulatory proposals to come out of the cooperative planning process would be available for public comment during the winter of 2006 and would be presented to the Federal Subsistence Board for a decision in May 2006. Changes may also be considered to State regulations by the Alaska Board of Game. ■

Federal Subsistence Board takes action on wildlife regulatory proposals

The Federal Subsistence Board took action on more than 80 proposals to change subsistence hunting and trapping regulations on Federal lands in Alaska during its May 18-20 meeting in Anchorage. Among the changes approved by the Board:

Handicraft regulations

The Board adopted a proposal to allow the sale of handicrafts made with brown bear fur and/or claws from bears taken for subsistence use in Southeast Alaska, the Eastern Interior and Bristol Bay regions. It also clarified its intent to continue to allow the sale of handicrafts made with black bear fur and/or claws taken for subsistence statewide, as has been allowed under Federal regulations since July 1, 2002. An informational flier provides further details on what is allowed under these regulations. It is available from the Office of Subsistence Management and from Federal field offices.

Moose hunting moratorium

The Board approved a five-year moratorium on moose

[continued on page 4]

NEWS IN BRIEF *(Continued from page 3)*

hunting in the lower Kuskokwim River drainage, in order to boost the moose population there (see page 5). This was similar to action taken by the Alaska Board of Game.

Central Kuskokwim moose conservation

The Board approved three proposals aimed at reducing the moose harvest in the central Kuskokwim region to help conserve declining moose populations there. These proposals were the result of a local planning effort. The new regulations implement key provisions of the Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Plan.

Among the changes approved by the Board are the elimination of the winter moose hunting seasons in Unit 19(A), harvest restrictions, and the shortening of the fall season in Unit 19(B). Managers say elimination of the winter hunts was necessary because this is when cow moose are most often taken. Reducing the harvest of cows is expected to help increase the number of calves born within the Central Kuskokwim moose population.

It is hoped that this action by the Board, in combination with other State proposed reductions in resident and nonresident hunting will help stem the decline and boost the moose population in the region.



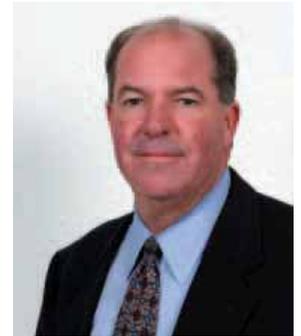
Predator management policy

The Board adopted a predator management policy. The policy recognizes the impact that predators can have on animals valued by subsistence users. It also recognizes that predator control may be an appropriate management tool to provide for subsistence needs.

However, the policy notes that, under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), the Federal Subsistence Board regulates subsistence uses of fish and wildlife. ANILCA also defines subsistence uses as "...for direct personal or family consumption..." As a result, activities such as predator control or habitat management are not within the authority of the Federal Subsistence Board and are the responsibility of the individual Federal land management agencies. ■

Secretary approves appointment of State Liaison

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Agriculture, has approved the appointment of Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Kevin Duffy, or his designee, to serve as a liaison to the Federal Subsistence Board.



ADF&G Commissioner Kevin Duffy

"I appreciate the State's participation on the Board at a policy level," Secretary Norton said in announcing the decision last April. "The important contributions by the State Liaison will assist in the successful resolution of the challenging issues facing the members of the Board."

Duffy is a graduate of the University of Washington and holds a master's degree in Public Administration. He joined ADF&G in 1981 to work on salmon issues. He represented Alaska in Pacific Salmon Treaty negotiations and serves as a member of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

The appointment follows Gov. Frank Murkowski's request that a representative of the State be appointed as a nonvoting member of the Board. The 1992 Record of Decision that established the structure of the Federal Subsistence Management Program allows for a State liaison to the Board.

The Chairs of the 10 Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils also serve as liaisons to the Board, providing recommendations on subsistence regulations and policies. ■

Lower Kuskokwim moose hunting moratorium begins

Managers say local support is critical to its success

Moose hunting in the lower Kuskokwim River drainage is closed for the next five years, in an effort to boost the moose population in the region.

The moose hunting moratorium, which took effect July 1, is the result of action by both the Federal Subsistence Board and the Alaska Board of Game. The moratorium will remain in effect for five years, or until the population grows to 1,000 moose.

Population dwindled, despite good habitat

Wildlife managers say moose habitat along the lower Kuskokwim River drainage is capable of supporting considerably more moose than currently reside there. A 2002 survey estimated there were 94 moose in the region. Managers say the harvest of moose out of season, particularly cow moose, is the primary reason that a moose population has never become established.

When the moose population grows to 1,000, a bulls-only season will be opened. There will be no cow hunt unless habitat degradation occurs from excessive moose browsing. Managers think the moose population in the lower Kuskokwim will grow to at least 2,000 moose if residents abide by the new regulations.

Villages give their support

Local support is critical to the success of the moratorium, say managers. The Lower Kuskokwim Fish and Game Advisory Committee has worked for several years with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and area villages on this issue. A dozen lower Kuskokwim River villages have passed resolutions supporting the moratorium.

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council member Robert Nick of Nunapitchuk is among those encouraging residents to abide by the moratorium.

"I hope all the hunters respect the closure and don't hunt the moose as we rebuild," Nick said. He compares the effort to rebuild the moose population with efforts to rebuild the salmon population. Abiding by the moratorium will mean greater hunting success in the future, he said.

"The last few years many hunters have been unsuccessful in the tundra villages," he noted. "They spent a considerable amount of time and money on prepara-



tion, gas, and outboard repair and very few hunters got a moose."

Caribou available as a substitute

The effect of the lower Kuskokwim moose moratorium on subsistence users is expected to be minimal, because a large number of caribou have been wintering in the Kuskokwim River drainage in recent years, providing an alternate source of meat.

"We have an excellent substitute in the caribou and there's still plenty of beaver," said Nick.

Lower Yukon moratorium serves as model

Residents of the Lower Kuskokwim need only look to their neighbors to the north for proof that a moratorium can be successful in boosting the moose population. A five-year moratorium on the Lower

Yukon, downriver from Mountain village, resulted in a substantial increase in the moose population and in hunting success there. Hunters say they no longer need to travel far from their villages to find a moose. As a result of the moratorium, the moose population on the Lower Yukon no longer requires separate management from the rest of the Yukon River drainage and the moose hunting season there has been extended to the full month of September. ■

"I hope all the hunters respect the closure and don't hunt the moose as we rebuild."

-Robert Nick

Bridging the divide

Visits aimed at finding common ground between regions

The community of King Cove hosted two Western Alaska subsistence fishermen and Federal subsistence staff in June, while Federal Subsistence Board

chairman Mitch Demientieff visited the Nome area in August. The visits were intended to help promote a greater understanding of the issues that have sometimes divided Western Alaska subsistence fishermen and those who fish commercially in the Area M region of the North Pacific.

Interior Secretary declines to intervene

In May, Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced that she would not extend Federal jurisdiction to intervene in the Area M commercial fisheries. The Federal Subsistence Board had received petitions seeking the intervention after the Alaska Board of Fisheries liberalized regulations for the Area M commercial salmon fisheries. The petitioners expressed concern that the State's action would hurt subsistence salmon fisheries in Western Alaska and the Bristol Bay region. In announcing her decision, the Secretary said the Board's April public meeting on the issue marked a milestone in the dispute in that both sides agreed on the need for more information and on the need to work together to better manage salmon runs.

"We encourage seizing this moment of opportunity in an otherwise long and divisive resource conflict," she said.

Subsistence, commercial fishermen meet

Della Trumble, who chairs the Kodiak/Aleutians Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, was one of the organizers of the visit to King Cove. Trumble said she thinks those who made the trip got a better understanding of the region.

"I think it opened their eyes to how we survive out here. We spent a lot of time in the harbor talking to a lot of the boat owners. The majority of them are local," she said. "The visit was a positive step forward for the people in our region. A lot of people were thrilled that it happened. It's

something we've been wanting for a long time."

Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council member Raymond Stoney of Kiana and Seward Peninsula Council member Peter Buck of White Mountain were among those who made the trip to King Cove. They toured the community, visited the cannery, attended the Firemen's Ball and went out to the fishing grounds with commercial fishermen. Stoney said he learned more about those who live along the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutians and said he hoped the visit would be followed by more.

"This is the beginning. I certainly hope our trip was not the only one. It

probably would be good for other areas, especially Bristol Bay," Stoney said.

Chairman visits Nome

At the Federal Subsistence Board's public meeting on the Area M issue in April, Chairman Mitch Demientieff said he would visit the Seward Peninsula region to hear local concerns about the strength of salmon runs there.

While the waters on much of the Seward Peninsula region are under State jurisdiction, the Federal government has an interest in working with the State to make sure subsistence needs are being met, Demientieff said.



Northwest Arctic Council member Raymond Stoney of Kiana talks with fisherman Vernon Wilson of the F/V Aleutian Star as he loads his catch onto the tender American Way.



Chairman Mitch Demientieff meets with residents of the Nome area.

The visit included a public meeting at the Nome Eskimo Community Hall and visits to fishery projects operated by Kawerak Inc. on the Snake and Eldorado rivers. ■

Celebrating success in Southeast



Special hunt yields two goats for weaver

Freda Lang, Alice Titell and Irene Jimmy comb the wool of a goat harvested under a Special Action permit.

—By Melinda Hernandez
USDA Forest Service

Teri Rofkar calls them her “dream goats” and the soft, dense wool from the hides makes it easy to see why.

Rofkar, whose Tlingit name is Chas’ Koowu Tla’a, recently received two hides laden with wool from goats harvested under a Special Action permit issued by the Federal Subsistence Board. Rofkar is a weaver of Ravens Tail robes and is one of the few weavers creating new regalia. She passes on the traditional techniques to beginning weavers at the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center.

In cooperation with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, Rofkar sought the Special Action permit for a spring goat hunt. The regular mountain goat season is from August through December. But it is in spring that goat wool is easiest to work with because it detaches from the hide in preparation for shedding when warm weather arrives. This makes it easier to separate the wool from the guard hairs, which must be removed before spinning.

Ben Johnson, Erin Kitka and Jack Lorrigan of the Sitka Tribe served as the designated hunters. The two goats were harvested from central Baranof Island in the Tongass National Forest. The meat was distributed through the traditional foods program at Sitka Tribe of Alaska. The horns will go to local artists, the hooves to dance groups for ceremonial regalia, and the hides will be made into drums.

Rofkar’s 12 students were able to take much more wool from the

two billies than initially anticipated and the group was pleasantly surprised with the quality of the wool. They have begun what Rofkar calls the “humbling hard work” of processing the raw wool for use in traditional weaving. ■

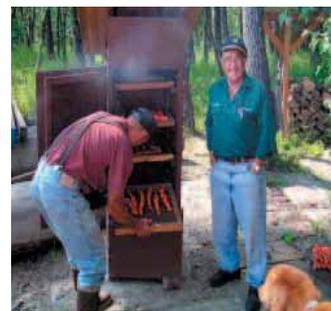


Sitka District Ranger Carol Goularte presents the Special Action permit to Teri Rofkar and Sitka Tribe Councilman Gerry Hope. Also present were Ken Coffin of the Forest Service and Jack Lorrigan of the Sitka Tribe.

Stikine River fishery

Southeast Regional Advisory Council member Richard Stokes of Wrangell welcomed visitors from the Forest Service to the Stikine River on July 9 to celebrate the new Stikine River subsistence sockeye fishery. Among those who attended was the Forest Service Regional Forester and Federal Subsistence Board member, Denny Bschor.

Because the Stikine River begins in Canada and flows into Southeast Alaska, Stikine River salmon are managed under provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The Pacific Salmon Commission reached agreement on a subsistence sockeye fishery in February. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game was instrumental in gaining the Commission’s support for the fishery. ADF&G is continuing its efforts to gain approval for subsistence



Richard Stokes at the Stikine celebration.

coho and chinook fisheries on the Stikine.

Stokes first submitted a proposal for a Federal subsistence fishery on the Stikine more than six years ago. He said he

was pleased to see his efforts pay off and was happy to welcome those who helped make it possible.

“It was great. We really enjoyed it. We looked forward to it for so long,” Stokes said.

He gave visitors a historical and cultural overview of fishing on the river and the group enjoyed freshly smoked salmon prepared by a local subsistence fisherman.

Residents of Wrangell, Petersburg, Meyers Chuck and outlying areas are eligible to harvest sockeye under the new Federal subsistence regulations. Forty permits were issued for the fishery. Final numbers are not yet available, but the harvest is believed to be fewer than 200 fish.

Stokes says he is already looking ahead and preparing his nets for next year. ■

Experience is the best teacher

Partners Program interns gain knowledge, skills

Ask the interns with the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program about how they spent their summer and you will hear about salmon surveys, sampling techniques, stream ecology, fish genetics and harvest calendars. They can tell you about the workings of weirs, counting towers, sonar, aerial surveys, radio telemetry and archaeological excavation. And when they mention their training in note taking, cultural awareness, ATV safety, first aid, bear safety, watercraft safety and outboard motor repair you realize they have had a very full summer, indeed.

Every year, the biologists and anthropologists who work with the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring program mentor interns to promote understanding of fisheries biology, fisheries management, the importance of subsistence in rural Alaska, and the role of traditional ecological knowledge in fisheries management. The internships also provide these young people with a chance to explore careers.

This summer, six students participated in the program, serving as interns with the Tanana Chiefs Conference,



Front: Theresa Woldstad, Kay Larson-Blair, Simon Thomas, Amy Askoak
Back: Valli Peterson, Terina Trefon, Amy Lindsley, Tim Dyasuk, Not pictured: Demitri Gust, Peter Kaiser.

Bristol Bay Native Association, Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments, Kuskokwim Native Association and Native Village of Eyak. Four additional interns with the Bristol Bay Native Association were jointly funded by the Partners Program and the Tribal Colleges and Universities Program.

They brought their enthusiasm and curiosity to their work at field projects and, by the end of the summer, they had gained knowledge and skills that will serve them well in their careers.

“This summer has been a great learning experience,” said Kay Larson-Blair, a student at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Valli Peterson, a student at the University of Alaska Southeast, agrees and credits those who mentored her. “Each one of the people that you work with, they kind of take you under their wing.” ■



Peter Kaiser



Theresa Woldstad



Simon Thomas



Tim Dyasuk

2004 Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Interns

Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments—Simon Thomas
Tanana Chiefs Conference—Valli Peterson
Kuskokwim Native Association—Pete Kaiser
Native Village of Eyak—Amy Lindsley
Bristol Bay Native Association—Kay Larson-Blair
and Tim Dyasuk
Partners/Tribal College and Universities Interns—Amy Askoak,
Theresa Woldstad, Terina Trefon and Demitri Gust.



Kay Larson-Blair

For more information about the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring internship program, contact Beth Spangler at (907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456 or by e-mail, beth_spangler@fws.gov.

Volunteers Needed

Would you or someone you know like to serve on a Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council? The Federal Subsistence Board is accepting nominations and applications from those interested in serving on one of the 10 Regional Advisory Councils that advise the Board on subsistence fishing, hunting and trapping regulations.

- Each appointment is a 3-year term.
- Each Council meets at least twice a year.
- Seats are open to subsistence, commercial and sport users.
- Membership is open statewide.



Members of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council, 2003

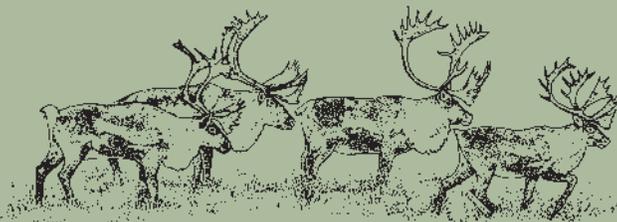
Deadline: January 2, 2005

For an application packet or more information, contact Ann Wilkinson at (907) 786-3676 or (800) 478-1456 or by e-mail at ann_wilkinson@fws.gov.

Wildlife Proposal Deadline

Proposals to change Federal Subsistence hunting and trapping regulations will be accepted through October 22, 2004.

The Federal Subsistence Board will consider changes to seasons, harvest limits, methods of harvest, and customary and traditional use determinations for the harvest of wildlife at its May 2005 meeting.



For more information on submitting proposals, contact the Office of Subsistence Management at (907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456.

Subsistence Student Art Contest

The Federal Subsistence Management Program is sponsoring a subsistence art contest for students in grades K-12. The two grand prize winners' artwork will be published on the covers of the 2005-2006 Federal subsistence fisheries and wildlife regulation books.

Entries must be postmarked no later than November 12, 2004. Winning entries will be selected by the Chairs of the Regional Advisory Councils in January 2005.

For guidelines, entry forms and more information, contact Maureen Clark at the Office of Subsistence Management at (907) 786-3953 or (800) 478-1456.

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Beyond Salmon *continued from page 1*

research questions.

In several instances, researchers found that the people of the Koyukuk drainage had a very different, and possibly more detailed, understanding of fish species than does western science. As an example, the Native systems for classifying fish take into account the particular size of the fish, its condition, or the time of year it is available. Researchers identified five different terms for Alaskan blackfish. As lead author Dave Andersen notes in the report, "These five terms, and there may be others, point to a very rich Native taxonomy for a fish that Western science knows by a single name."

The interviews with these local experts also provided information on topics such as when and where whitefish are ripe with eggs; what month burbot livers swell with oil; when black fish congregate at lake ice openings; and how and when whitefish move through local streams, sloughs, and lake systems. These practical insights can help biologists learn more about aspects of spawning biology, fat metabolism and the seasonal movement of fish.

Andersen writes, "The viewpoint of the traditional Koyukon fisherman (as harvester) and the modern biologist (as scientist) may appear dramatically different at first glance, but the utilization of fish for food has everything to do with understanding fish behavior, anatomy, biology and life history." ■

For a copy of "Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Contemporary Subsistence Harvest of Non-Salmon Fish in the Koyukuk River Drainage, Alaska," contact Polly Wheeler, Ph.D, at (907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456, or by e-mail at polly_wheeler@fws.gov.



The community burbot trap near Hughes, January 2002



Photos by
Dave
Andersen

Fresh Koyukuk River sheefish are piled in an Allakaket smokehouse to freeze.



Jack Reakoff (left) of Wiseman maps important fish habitat and fishing locations for researcher David Andersen.

Photo by Barb Andersen



A fisherman pulls pike from his gillnet set in an ice-free channel of the Koyukuk River.

How Federal Subsistence Regulations Are Made

Every year the Federal Subsistence Board receives dozens of proposals to change subsistence fishing, hunting and trapping regulations on Federal public lands and waters. These proposals may include requests to change season dates, harvest limits or methods of harvest. Some rural residents may seek a customary and traditional use determination, which grants a priority for taking a particular species of fish or wildlife in a specific area. The Board considers proposals to change regulations for all regions of the state each year and anyone may submit a proposal. Here is how the process works:

Call for Proposals:

Twice each year, the Federal Subsistence Board issues a call for proposals to change regulations. The deadline for making proposals to change wildlife regulations occurs in late October, while the deadline for fisheries proposals comes in late March. Deadline dates vary from year to year. For the exact dates, contact the Office of Subsistence Management at (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3888 or by e-mail at subsistence@fws.gov.

Regional Advisory Councils Meet:

Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils meet and develop proposals for their region.

Proposals Published, Comments Accepted:

Proposals developed by the Regional Advisory Councils, and those submitted by the public and agencies, are published for review and comment.

Staff Analysis:

Proposals are analyzed by Federal regional teams to examine the biological and socio-cultural effects of each proposal.

Regional Councils Develop Recommendations:

Regional Councils meet, review the analyses and public comments on proposals for their region and develop recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board. The Councils may support, oppose, modify or defer each proposal, based on the staff analyses, public testimony and their knowledge of subsistence resources and uses.

Interagency Staff Committee Review:

The Interagency Staff Committee makes recommendations to the Board on the proposals. The Staff Committee is made up of senior staff from the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management and USDA Forest Service. Regional Advisory Council chairs and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game also participate in this process.

Federal Subsistence Board Meeting:

The Board meets in January to take action on fisheries proposals and in May to take action on hunting and trapping proposals. For each proposal, the Board considers the Council recommendations, staff analysis, Interagency Staff Committee recommendation, comments from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and public comments. The Board can decide to adopt, oppose, modify or defer action on any proposal. The Board may choose to reject a Council recommendation if it is not supported by substantial evidence, violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation, or would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs.

New Regulations are Published and Distributed to the Public:

Fishing regulations take effect April 1. Hunting and trapping regulations take effect July 1.

From LAND *and* WATER

THE FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

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From Land and Water can also be found on the Web at:

<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/home.html>

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