

2024 Current Fiscal Year Report: Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

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1. Department or Agency

Department of the Interior

2. Fiscal Year

2024

3. Committee or Subcommittee

Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council

3b. GSA

Committee No.

1537

4. Is this New Fiscal Year?

No

5. Current Charter

01/18/2024

6. Expected Renewal Date

01/18/2026

7. Expected Term Date

8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

No

8b. Specific Termination Authority

8c. Actual Term Date

9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Continue

10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

Not Applicable

10b. Legislation Pending?

Not Applicable

11. Establishment Authority

Statutory (Congress Created)

12. Specific Establishment Authority

16 U.S.C. 3115 (1988)

13. Effective Date

12/02/1980

14. Committee Type

Continuing

14c. Presidential?

No

15. Description of Committee

Non Scientific Program Advisory Board

16a. Total Number of Reports

No Reports for
this Fiscal Year

17a. Open Meetings and Dates

3 17b. Closed0 17c. Partially Closed0 Other Activities0 17d. Total3

Meetings and Dates

Purpose

Start

End

The purpose of this meeting was to review and develop recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) on five proposals to change wildlife regulations for Federal public lands in Alaska and two Federal closure reviews. The Council heard short summaries of the Board's 805(c) Report and the Board's FY 22 annual report reply to the Council, and identified topics for their FY 23 annual report.

10/16/2023 - 10/17/2023

The purpose of this joint, all-council meeting was to bring the ten subsistence Regional Advisory Councils together to discuss issues that are relevant to them all. Discussions and presentations included information from the Federal Subsistence Board and the Secretary of the Interior's office, the councils' regional reports, co-stewardship, and other issues affecting all of the councils, such as salmon and caribou critical decline and youth leaders in subsistence management, among other topics. Council members also received length of service awards and recognition. The all-council meeting was followed by several training sessions and administrative presentations.

03/05/2024 - 03/06/2024

Winter Council Meeting. In addition to regular Council business, the main purpose of this meeting was to make recommendations on 2 deferred subsistence wildlife proposals concerning subsistence harvest reductions of caribou for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. In addition they considered writing any fishery proposals, finalized their FY-23 annual report, formed volunteer committee to work with OSM to develop Priority Information Needs for Fishery Resource Monitoring Program, and approved to support two letters to be sent to the Board Re: Bycatch in Bering Sea, and Council member compensation that were developed by the Joint Council on March 7.

03/07/2024 - 03/07/2024

Number of Committee Meetings Listed: 3

	Current Next	
	FY	FY
18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00

18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff	\$0.00	\$0.00
18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants	\$0.00	\$0.00
18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)	\$0.00	\$0.00
18d. Total	\$0.00	\$0.00
19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)	0.00	0.00

20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?

All meetings are open to the public and provide opportunity for members of the public, Tribes, organizations, and agency representatives to participate in discussions and share information relevant to Federal subsistence management. At these public meetings the Council receives public comments and considers technical information on fish and wildlife populations and subsequently makes recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board encompassing consideration of the scientific data, local knowledge, and experience of subsistence hunters and fishers in the region. The Council drafts correspondence to the Federal Subsistence Board in the form of an Annual Report to bring awareness to subsistence and fish and wildlife conservation concerns in the region. The Council continues to track and participate in subsistence fish and wildlife management issues on the Federal lands within their region, which includes Kobuk Valley National Park, Noatak National Preserve, Cape

Krusenstern National Monument, Bering Land Bridge National Preserve, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, Selawik National Wildlife Refuge, and extensive Bureau of Land Management lands.

20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?

Members broadly represent geographic, cultural, user, and gender diversity present within the region. This is ensured through a rigorous outreach/recruitment effort and a thorough evaluation and recommendation process. Applicants are evaluated according to the following criteria: they must be a resident of the region in which they applied; have extensive knowledge of the region's fish and wildlife resources; have extensive knowledge of the region's subsistence uses, customs, and traditions; have extensive knowledge of the region's sport, commercial, and other nonsubsistence uses; and have evident leadership and communication skills. The applicants, their references, and key contacts within the region are interviewed by panels of Federal agency staff. These panels then rate and rank the applicants according to standards set by the Board. This information is considered by the Interagency Staff Committee, which makes its recommendation to the Federal Subsistence Board. The Board then meets to review the applicants and make its recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture. The Board recommendations balance points of view represented on the Council with the Council's function, which is to advise the Board on matters pertaining to subsistence. The Board also considers other factors such as geographic representation within the regions. The Secretaries

must concur regarding appointments. The entire process requires approximately 15 months to complete.

20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?

The Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council generally meets twice each calendar year. The Council's recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) are not only relevant, but have significant impact on regional residents, because, while the Board may decide not to adopt a Council recommendation regarding the taking of fish and wildlife, it can do so only if such a recommendation fails to meet one or more of the three criteria in Title VIII, Section 805(c) of ANILCA. As much as possible, meetings are held in rural communities to provide the opportunity for personal involvement by those most directly impacted by Federal subsistence management. In FY 2023, the Council held two meetings that were a mix of virtual and in person.

20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?

The Alaska National Interests Lands Conservation Act established the Regional Councils as the public forum for the expression of views and information originating from the local communities within the region, and to provide recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board regarding management of fish and wildlife resources for subsistence uses on Federal public lands. The members of the Council and the public participants provide the expertise of subsistence people to the process of forming regulations that govern their lives and to the management of Federal lands they use for subsistence purposes. The Council is a vital link between the Federal

Subsistence Board and the rural residents whose lives the Board's decisions affect.

20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?

Not applicable - all meetings are open to the public.

21. Remarks

The Council did not make any regulatory recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board in FY 2023.

Designated Federal Officer

Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough Subsistence Council Coordinator

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Armstrong, Elmer	01/15/2021	12/02/2025	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Baker, Thomas	02/25/2020	12/02/2025	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Cleveland, Verne	01/26/2022	12/02/2024	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Howarth, Wilbur	01/15/2021	12/02/2026	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Kramer, Michael	12/03/2010	12/02/2025	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Loon, Hannah	12/23/2022	12/28/2023	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Moto II, Calvin	01/15/2021	12/02/2023	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Pattee, Tristen	12/23/2022	12/02/2025	Commercial and sport user	Representative Member
Ramoth, Clyde	01/17/2024	12/02/2026	Subsistence user	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Schaeffer, Robert	01/15/2021	12/02/2025	Subsistence user	Representative Member
Shiedt, Enoch	01/17/2024	12/02/2026	subsistence user	Representative Member
Woods, Raymond	12/02/2022	12/02/2024	Subsistence user-Shungnak	Representative Member

Number of Committee Members Listed: 12

Narrative Description

Since Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980, Title VIII has provided for the continuation of subsistence uses of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands by rural residents in Alaska. Title VIII required the creation of Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils to enable rural residents to have a meaningful role in Federal subsistence management. The Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture subsequently established the Federal Subsistence Management Program. The Program is a multi-agency effort that includes the Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the USDA Forest Service. These agencies manage the Federal public lands where subsistence activities take place, including waters running through or next to Federal public lands and with limited marine jurisdiction. The Secretaries delegated management authority for subsistence uses in Alaska to the Federal Subsistence Board, which is comprised of the regional directors of the five Federal public land managers in Alaska and a representative appointed by the Secretaries to serve as Chair. The Board is the decision-making body that oversees the Federal Subsistence Management Program. The ten Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils provide recommendations and information to the Board, review policies and management plans, provide a public forum, develop regulatory proposals for subsistence use of fish and wildlife, evaluate current and anticipated subsistence needs, and perform other duties required by the Board. The Councils make recommendations to the Board regarding proposed changes to fish and wildlife regulations; management plans; policies, standards, and guidelines; determinations of rural status; subsistence use allocations; and other matters related to subsistence take of fish and wildlife. The Councils meet at least twice a year. Council chairs attend at least two Board meetings a year to present the recommendations of their Councils and provide knowledge and advice to the Board.

What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?

Checked if
Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Outcome Comments

The Regional Advisory Council provides recommendations and information to the Board, reviews policies and management plans, provides a public forum, develops proposals, evaluates current and anticipated subsistence needs, appoints members to the National Park Service subsistence resource commissions, and performs other duties required by the Board. The Council makes recommendations to the Board regarding proposed changes to fish and wildlife regulations; management plans; policies, standards, and guidelines; determinations of customary and traditional use of subsistence resources; fisheries research projects; determinations of rural status; subsistence use allocations; and other matters related to subsistence take of fish and wildlife.

What are the cost savings associated with this committee?

Checked if Applies

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cost Savings Comments

Regional Advisory Council members are all volunteers. They provide expert knowledge and advice to the Federal Subsistence Board, which the Board cannot otherwise obtain. Without the Council, the program would need to greatly increase staff and research

funding. The researchers would then need to seek information from the very people, or similar people, who now make up the Council. The Board adopts a preponderance of the Council's recommendations, which may lower resource management costs.

What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee for the life of the committee?

85

Number of Recommendations Comments

The Council did not make any recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board in FY 2023. At the Council's winter meeting March 7-8, 2023, the Council submitted one wildlife special action request for the 2023 season, and two Federal wildlife regulatory proposals for consideration, in response to the declining caribou populations and to preserve continuing subsistence opportunities as follows: 1) Wildlife special action request for the 2023 season to limit harvest in Unit 23 to 4 caribou (3 bulls and 1 cow or 4 bulls) per year. 2) Regulation proposal to limit harvest in Unit 23 to 4 caribou (3 bulls and 1 cow or 4 bulls) per year. 3) Regulation proposal to close harvest in all Federal lands in Unit 23 to non-federally qualified users during the months of August-September.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?

94%

% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments

ANILCA, Title VIII, Section 805(c) requires the Federal Subsistence Board to consider and adopt the report and recommendations of the Regional Advisory Council concerning the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within the region for subsistence uses. The Board may choose not to follow a recommendation only if it determines the recommendation is not supported by substantial evidence, violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation, or would be detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs. Under these criteria, the Board generally adopts the Council's recommendations.

What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?

1%

% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments

In some cases, the Federal Subsistence Board defers to the regulatory proposal of another Council from the region affected if there was a difference in a recommendation

made by two or more Regional Advisory Councils.

Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Agency Feedback Comments

ANILCA, Title VIII, Section 805(c) requires the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) (acting for the Secretary) to inform the Regional Advisory Council when the Board chooses not to adopt a Council recommendation concerning the taking of fish and wildlife on the public lands within the region for subsistence uses. The Board has expanded this to include reporting on those Council recommendations it does adopt and those it adopts with modification. These actions and their justifications are written in what is referred to as the "805(c) Letter." The Board considers recommendations in the Council's annual report and makes a formal reply. Board decisions regarding other matters for which the Council makes recommendations are reported to the Council in a less formal manner by the Subsistence Regional Coordinator or the Council Chair.

What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Action Comments

New subsistence wildlife regulations frequently require the managing agencies to reprioritize staff and other resources. Other recommendations accepted by the Federal Subsistence Board may also require reallocation of agency funds. The Council also makes recommendations regarding fisheries information needs within the region and for annual funding for fisheries research projects related to those needs.

Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?

No

Grant Review Comments

Not Applicable

How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Agency Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online Committee Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online GSA FACA Web Site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Publications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Access Comments

There is an extensive effort to announce the public meetings of the Regional Council via news releases, radio public service announcements, website postings, Facebook postings, and newspaper ads. The agenda, meeting materials, and meeting transcripts are available on the Federal Subsistence Management Program website and are mailed upon request to the communities within the region and interested organizations and agencies. The Regional Coordinator has an 800 number to provide easier access for the public and to disseminate the actions of the Regional Council. There are various publications produced to share the actions of the Regional Council. These include, but are not limited to, meeting booklets for their semiannual meetings, newsletters, topic-specific informational letters, brochures, and public handouts.