

**Wrangell-St. Elias National Park
Subsistence Resource Commission
Meeting Materials**

Spring 2024

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve
PO Box 439/Mile 106.8 Richardson Highway
Copper Center AK 99573
wrst_subsistence@nps.gov
(907) 822-5234

**Wrangell-St. Elias National Park
Subsistence Resource Commission**

Meeting Materials

Spring 2024

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Procedure for Consideration of Proposals¹

1. Introduction and presentation of proposal/analysis

- SRC members can ask questions, but discussion comes later (after a motion).

2. Summary of any written public/SRC/RAC/AC comments

3. Public/advisory group/agency testimony

4. SRC recommendation

- A. A motion is required for the SRC to take up a proposal for formal recommendation:
 - Motion should be stated in the positive to avoid confusion (“I move to support ____.”)
 - If the choice exists, the motion should specify whether support is for the proposal “as written” or “as modified by OSM.”
 - The main motion could be to support a modified version of the proposal (“I move to support Proposal ## with modification to _____.”)
 - Motion must be seconded before discussion takes place.
- B. Any modifications/amendments to the main motion – even friendly ones – also need to be in the form of a motion and follow the same process of a second and a vote.
 - Voting on friendly amendments can take place by unanimous consent².
- C. SRC Discussion/Justification – the Chair states: “It has been moved and seconded to [restate motion]. Is there any discussion?”
 - Only SRC members may participate in the discussion once a motion is on the floor.
 - Discussion should include a justification for supporting/opposing the motion/proposal:
 - Is there a conservation concern? How will the recommendation address the concern?
 - Is the recommendation supported by substantial evidence such as biological information and traditional ecological knowledge?
 - Will the recommendation be beneficial or detrimental to subsistence needs and users?

5. Final action

- An SRC member calls for the question. In which case, the Chair should confirm that there are no objections or unanswered questions before moving on to the vote.
 - Or the Chair can say: “If there is no further discussion, the question is in order.”
- The Chair restates the final motion, then holds the vote – “The motion before us is [state motion]. All in favor say I (or raise hand). All opposed, same sign (or say nay). Are there any abstentions³?”
 - Votes can be done by roll call if the vote appears close.
 - A simple majority vote (more than half) of those voting is required for a motion to pass.
 - Tied votes fail.
 - Abstentions do not factor into the vote count.

¹ The same general principles of motion, second, discussion, and voting also apply to other SRC actions.

² Unanimous Consent: On routine matters such as “friendly amendments,” adopting an agenda or an election with a single candidate, voting can take place through “unanimous consent.” In this case, the Chair may state “I am going to ask for unanimous consent. If there is no objection, the motion will be adopted.” [Followed by a pause to allow anyone to object.] If there is no objection, the Chair then states “Since there is no objection, the motion is adopted.” Silence signals agreement. If someone objects, they only need to state, “I object,” and a vote will be held.

³ Abstentions: To abstain is to refrain from voting. For example, if someone lacks knowledge of the topic (e.g., minutes from a prior meeting the member did not attend) or has a conflict of interest.

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK SUBSISTENCE RESOURCE COMMISSION MEETING

AGENDA

March 14-15, 2024
Buster Gene Memorial Hall in Gakona, Alaska,
and by Teleconference

Teleconference information:

- Toll free number: (866) 541-9494
- Participant Code: 7848787#

- Please mute your phone when not speaking. If your phone doesn't have a mute button, you can mute and unmute yourself using “*6”.
- Please do not put your phone on hold while called into the teleconference. The hold music is highly disruptive. If you need to take another call, please hang up and then call back in.
- If you get disconnected or have a bad connection, please hang up and call back in.

Public Comments: Public comments are welcome on action items under Old and New Business as well as during the general Public Comment period at the end of the meeting. The Commission appreciates hearing your concerns and knowledge. Please wait to be recognized by the SRC Chair before speaking. Time limits may be set to provide opportunity for all to testify and keep the meeting on schedule.

The meeting will be recorded for the official record.

The Superintendent of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and the Chair of the Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) announce a forthcoming meeting of the Commission.

*Asterisk identifies action item.

The following agenda items will be discussed:

- 1) Call to order (Chair)
- 2) SRC roll call and confirmation of quorum (Coordinator)
- 3) Introduction of Commission members, staff, and guests (Chair)
- 4) Housekeeping announcements (Coordinator)
- 5) Review and adoption of agenda* (Chair)
- 6) Review and approval of minutes from September 27-28, 2023, meeting* (Chair)

- 7) Superintendent's welcome and review of the Commission purpose (Superintendent)
- 8) Commission membership status (Coordinator)
- 9) Election of officers*
 - a) Chair (Coordinator)
 - b) Vice Chair (Chair)
- 10) SRC Chair and Members' reports
 - a) Chair's report
 - b) SRC member reports
- 11) Superintendent's report (Superintendent)
- 12) Old business
 - a) Report on SRC Chairs workshop (Chair)
 - b) Superintendent's Compendium entry regarding resident zone boundaries*
 - i) Introduction (Coordinator)
 - ii) Report from working group on resident zone boundaries
 - iii) Opportunity for public input
 - iv) SRC discussion and recommendation
 - c) Report from working group on Subsistence Log Harvest Policy and use of small bridges for subsistence access
 - d) Update regarding for SRC research and management priorities
 - i) Discussion of next steps (Pister)
 - ii) Report on NPS Fire Management Program (Devcich)
 - e) Update on caribou working group (Pister)
 - f) Wildlife special action discussion (Coordinator)
 - i) Timely wildlife updates applicable to Nelchina Caribou and Unit 12 Moose
 - ii) Season extension or delegation of authority to Refuge Manager to extend fall moose hunt in Unit 12 – that portion within the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge and those lands within the Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve north and east of the Pickerel Lake Winter Trail
 - iii) Combine Nelchina caribou herd proposal with request for ANILCA 804 analysis
- 13) New business
 - a) Timely fisheries updates
 - i) Wrangell-St. Elias (Sarafin)
 - ii) ADF&G (Somerville)
 - b) Call for proposals to change federal subsistence fishing regulations*
 - i) Introduction (Sarafin)
 - ii) Opportunity for public input
 - iii) SRC discussion of potential proposal submissions
 - c) Call for proposals to change State of Alaska fishing regulations for the Prince William Sound Area*

- i) Introduction (Miller)
 - ii) Opportunity for public input
 - iii) SRC discussion of potential proposal submissions
 - d) New project funding to address critical food security needs*
 - i) Project overview (Cellarius)
 - ii) Opportunity for public input
 - iii) SRC discussion of project ideas
 - e) Resident zone community request from Tolsona
- 14) Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and NPS Alaska Regional Office staff reports
- a) Resource Stewardship and Science report (Pister)
 - b) Copper River salmon fisheries research report (Miller)
 - c) Wildlife report (Cutting)
 - d) Subsistence/anthropology report (Cohen)
 - e) NPS Alaska Region Subsistence Program report
 - f) Interpretation and Education report (Wittmer/Scribner)
- 15) Public comments on non-agenda items
- 16) Other reports (*Time limit of 10 minutes unless approved in advance*)
- a) Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission
 - b) Alaska Department of Fish and Game
 - c) Bureau of Land Management
 - d) Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge
- 17) Letter of recommendation to Governor and Secretary* (Chair)
- 18) Work session (comment on issues, prepare letters, etc.) (Chair)
- 19) Set tentative date and location for next SRC meeting* (Coordinator)
- 20) Adjourn meeting* (Chair)

DATE: March 14-15, 2024.

TIME: 9 AM to 5 PM (or until business is completed) on March 14 and 9 AM until business is completed on March 15. If the SRC completes its business on March 14, no meeting will take place on March 15.

LOCATION: Buster Gene Memorial Hall, Mile 4.8, Tok Cutoff, Gakona, Alaska and by teleconference.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Barbara Cellarius, Subsistence Coordinator, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, P.O. Box 439, Copper Center, Alaska 99573. Phone (907) 822-7236. WRST_subsistence@nps.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Subsistence Resource Commission is authorized under Title VIII, Section 808, of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, Pub. L. 96-487, and operates in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

Disclaimer: These minutes of the Subsistence Resource Commission for Wrangell-St. Elias National Park are NOT an official transcript of the Commission proceedings. Rather, the minutes serve as a summary of the topics discussed and actions taken by the Commission and as an index to the audio recording of the meeting. The official record of the Commission proceedings is the audio recording.

DRAFT MINUTES

Certified for accuracy by SRC Chair Sue Entsminger

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS SUBSISTENCE RESOURCE COMMISSION

September 27-28, 2023

Copper Center, Alaska

With additional teleconference

- 1) Call to order:** Sue Entsminger, the SRC chair, called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.
- 2) SRC roll call and confirmation of quorum:** Present were Dan Stevens, Sue Entsminger, Suzanne McCarthy, Mike Cronk, Kaleb Rowland, Gloria Stickwan, and Clint Marshall. Absent: Daryl James. The coordinator reported that Don Horrell had resigned as of 9/26/23. A quorum of members was present.

3) Introduction of Commission members, staff, and guests:

SRC members: Dan Stevens, Sue Entsminger, Gloria Stickwan, Suzanne McCarthy, Kaleb Rowland, Mike Cronk, Clint Marshall

NPS staff: Victoria Florey (AKRO), Eva Patton (AKRO), Ben Bobowski, Dave Sarafin, Kyle Cutting, Mark Miller, Barbara Cellarius, Amber Cohen, Russ Scribner, Ann Crow, Jan Maslen (all from WRST)

Other state or federal agency staff: Heidi Hatcher (ADF&G-Glennallen), Jeff Gross (ADF&G-Tok) Mark Sommerville (ADF&G-Glennallen), Caroline Ketron (BLM-Glennallen), Leanne McDonald (BLM-Glennallen), Brent Jamison (FWS-Tetlin Refuge)

Tribal government or tribal organization representatives: Kelsey Stanbro (AITRC), David Hooper (AITRC), Deanna Kosbruk (AITRC), Jim Simon (AITRC), Dan Gorze (AITRC), Sterling Spilinek (AITRC), Sarah Devins (Native Village of Kluti-Kaah), Edward GreyBear (Ahtna, Inc.)

Members of the public: Craig and Ellen Cutting (Iowa), Faye Ewan (Copper Center), Becky Schwanke (Tazlina), Michael Rego (Nabesna), Jeremy Mischler (Chitina)

- 4) Housekeeping announcements:** Barbara Cellarius gave instructions for participating in the teleconference and the in-person meeting. She reminded the SRC about the procedure for making motions and voting. AK Geographic, a nonprofit, provided funding for food at the meeting.

- 5) **Review and adoption of agenda:** Kaleb Rowland moved to adopt the agenda as written, which was seconded by Dan Stevens. Sue Entsminger mentioned a caribou working group, but did not add it to the agenda. Sue Entsminger asked for unanimous consent. Hearing no objections, the motion passed by unanimous consent.
- 6) **Review and approval of minutes from February 23, 2023 meeting:** Kaleb Rowland moved to adopt the minutes as written, which was seconded by Dan Stevens. Sue Entsminger asked for unanimous consent. Hearing no objections, the motion passed by unanimous consent.
- 7) **Superintendent's welcome and review of the Commission purpose:** Superintendent Ben Bobowski reviewed the commission purpose. He welcomed the commission members, thanked them for their time and attendance, and welcomed staff and other colleagues to the meeting.

8) **Commission membership status:**

<u>Member Name:</u>	<u>Community:</u>	<u>Appointing Source:</u>	<u>Term Expires:</u>
Mike Cronk	Tok	Secretary of Interior	1/15/2024
Clint Marshall	Tazlina	Secretary of Interior	6/28/2026
Dan Stevens	Chitina	Secretary of Interior	3/28/2026
Kaleb Rowland	McCarthy	Governor	12/01/2023
Suzanne McCarthy	Gakona	Governor	12/01/2024
VACANT	N/A	Governor	N/A
Gloria Stickwan	Tazlina	Southcentral RAC	11/04/2023
Daryl James	Yakutat	Southeast RAC	10/27/2025
Sue Entsminger	Mentasta Pass	Eastern Interior RAC	11/04/2024

As of 9/26/23, Don Horrell resigned from the SRC.

9) **SRC Chair and Members' reports**

a) **SRC member reports:**

Suzanne McCarthy recommended that the SRC and the park commemorate Don Horrell's long service on the SRC. She mentioned that she heard things were changing, especially during moose season, and that hunting areas were empty since the caribou closed.

Mike Cronk stated that not many people harvested moose the past couple of years. Only two people in Northway shot a moose last or this year. He is going to suggest extending the moose season in Tetlin Refuge to September 30. Although Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge issued an emergency opening that went into October, he did not want to shoot moose that late in the year.

Gloria Stickwan said that fishing was good towards the end of the season. Not many people were harvesting moose. Some people went out every day and did not find anything shootable. She will attend the Southcentral RAC meeting, pending a government shutdown.

Kaleb Rowland stated there had an explosion in the grizzly population in the McCarthy area. A local pilot said they saw sows with two or three cubs each, but almost no bears with one cub. Harsh winters impacted the moose and bison populations up the Chitina River.

Dan Stevens recommended that the SRC and the park commemorate Don Horrell. He reported the Copper River was really high in the Chitina area, which made fishing difficult. There was no wild game in the Chitina area.

Clint Marshall said that moose hunting was occurring later than usual. He reported that he lost his fish wheel last year and was in the process of building a new one. It had been difficult to maintain a fish wheel with the high water.

Sue Entsminger went out sheep and moose hunting. She noted the sheep population was down in the Tok area. She estimated about 20 percent of the population that might had been there. She guided hunters in bear hunting and had no issue getting a bear over bait. She noticed that frost came on September 1st and prolonged the end of fall. Bad winters had been affecting the wildlife.

10) Superintendent's report: Ben Bobowski thanked the outgoing SRC members on their years of service. He shared an overview of the visits from the Director and Associate Directors of the National Park Service that included an emphasis on subsistence and food security. He updated the SRC on staffing changes. Mark Miller will serve as the park's ecologist and Benjamin Pister is the new Team Lead for Resource Stewardship and Science. He also reported on Inflation Reduction Act funding that the park received.

Gloria Stickwan mentioned Robert Marshall as a highly respected Ahtna elder and SRC member. Suzanne McCarthy and Dan Stevens agreed on the importance of recognizing Robert Marshall.

11) Old business

a) Report on 2023 Joint North American Caribou Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in Anchorage, May 8-12, 2023: Barbara explained then when none of the SRC members were available to attend the conference, the park reached out to a couple of local residents who regularly participate in SRC meetings about attending, and Edward GreyBear accepted the invitation. Edward gave the report on his experience in which he highlighted topics of interest, including population estimates and monitoring, seasonal diets of moose, habitat restoration, harvest management, diseases and parasites, and co-management strategies. At the conference's poster session, there were 80 posters. He thanked Maniilaq and the Subsistence Advisory Council for funding his travel.

b) Compendium update: Barbara Cellarius gave an update on the Superintendent's Compendium, which is a written compilation of closures, permit requirements, and other authorizations and restrictions adopted under discretionary authority found in federal regulations. Because the spring SRC meeting typically takes place after the comment period for the compendium, a preview of possible changes is provided at the fall SRC meeting. The only subsistence-related change being considered would clarify the external borders of the park's resident zone in three locations. The resident zone is used to

establish eligibility to harvest subsistence resources in the national park, and the proposed change would clarify the boundaries for the communities of Gakona/Gakona Junction, Tonsina, and Glennallen. Having the external boundaries in writing would improve transparency in terms of subsistence eligibility for the public and for the park staff who issue permits. The proposed compendium entry would clarify the northern boundary of Gakona/Gakona Junction, the southern boundary of Tonsina, and the western boundary of Glennallen. The park is proposing to use the census designated place (CDP) boundaries. Tolsona, a community west of Glennallen, submitted a request for resident zone community status in 1999 but did not provide the information that was requested in response to its initial request, so the issue was never resolved. The option is still open for other communities to apply for resident zone community status.

Suzanne McCarthy did not support excluding community members from places nearby, such as Tolsona Lake, and asked if there was a biological concern. Barbara Cellarius clarified it was an eligibility issue. Suzanne McCarthy proposed establishing a working group to give the SRC more time to look into resident zone boundaries. Gloria Stickwan recommended including a representative from AITRC on the working group.

Suzanne McCarthy made a motion to create a working group to look at the external boundaries. Mike Cronk seconded the motion. Gloria Stickwan reiterated having AITRC involved, which Dan Stevens supported. Sue Entsminger asked for unanimous consent. Hearing no objections, the motion passed by unanimous consent.

The working group members are Clint Marshall, Suzanne McCarthy, Dan Stevens, Sue Entsminger, and a representative from AITRC.

- b) Update regarding working group on Subsistence Log Harvest Policy and use of small bridges for subsistence access:** Barbara Cellarius gave a brief update on the working group. It met via teleconference to develop recommendations. The group planned to meet a second time directly after this SRC meeting. Working group members are Suzanne McCarthy, Kaleb Rowland, Gloria Stickwan, and Sue Entsminger.
- c) RFR22-01: Reconsideration of FP21-10, Lower Copper River Fishery:** Dave Sarafin gave a summary of the OSM analysis of the request for reconsideration. The Lower Copper River Fishery, at the time of the SRC meeting, had 70 permits issued with 176 sockeye and 4 Chinook salmon harvested. At their February meeting, the Federal Subsistence Board voted to move forward with a full analysis under claim 4.1, that there may have been an erroneous interpretation of information regarding the estimated impact and popularity of/ participation in a new Federal subsistence fishery. OSM recommended opposing the request to reconsider FP21-10. Dave noted that the OSM staff analysis used the best available information about current harvest levels, harvest practices, and potential participants to estimate the possible harvest from this fishery. OSM staff presented this information at meetings and were available to answer questions.

Questions were asked about gear for fishery, number of fish harvested, and how many people participated. Gloria Stickwan asked about customary and traditional use (C&T) determination. The concern was the public meeting process did not include clear

information that the C&T was for all of the Prince William Sound area and not just Cordova. Dave Sarafin explained that due to the distance and logistics needed to fish, primarily Cordova residents would use the fishery. The OSM analysis estimated that 2,000 fish would be harvested annually, and after the past season, the number was far below the estimate.

Suzanne McCarthy asked what the proponents had thought about the RFR. Dave suspected that they would believe the harvest opportunity was needed for Cordova residents. Kaleb Rowland asked how the fishery was under federal jurisdiction. Dave Sarafin explained the park had a delegation of authority of in-season management of the drainage because they manage the Copper River run as a whole in-river. Barbara Cellarius added that the Sturgeon decision would not interfere with federal subsistence and so the harvest area was considered federal waters in terms of having a federal subsistence fishery because they are within Chugach National Forest. Dan Stevens mentioned that he had been to Cordova and that due to the effort required to get to the fishery location, he did not anticipate many people trying to fish in that fishery. Mike Cronk said the management problem in Alaska was determining who managed what. Clint Marshall was opposed to the fishery due to concern upriver about the salmon runs and that Cordova residents had other means for harvesting fish.

Jim Simon, a consultant with AITRC, clarified that the question being considered by the Federal Subsistence Board was whether it should reconsider its decision to establish the new fishery. He then explained that the request for reconsideration had been submitted by an AITRC-member and outlined several technical concerns with the original proposal analysis. The only claim that this current analysis addresses is the continued characterization that only Cordova residents have C&T, which is not correct. The C&T is for all areas of Prince William Sound. The request for reconsideration wanted to make sure that people knew exactly what they were voting on, and it was unclear that this fishery would also be open to other community residents.

Clint Marshall made a motion to support RFR22-01. Dan Stevens seconded the motion. Clint expressed concerns about fishing opportunities further upstream plus people in the Cordova area have other fishing opportunities. He also referenced AITRC's comments. Mike Cronk agreed that getting fish up the river was important and supported the reconsideration. Suzanne McCarthy opposed the motion because the low numbers of participants and fish harvested did not impact resources. Kaleb Rowland agreed with Suzanne McCarthy that harvesters were catching a small percentage of what was forecasted.

The motion passed with a 4-2 vote and one abstention by a roll call vote. Gloria Stickwan abstained because she had questions about the C&T, in particular, whether a place such as Whittier had C&T, and if it would mean more fishing in the fishery.

- d) Revised delegation of authority letter to Wrangell St. Elias Superintendent for Copper River drainage fisheries:** Dave Sarafin summarized the revised delegation of authority which was received on August 2. The most significant change was the authority to issue temporary special actions. Previously, the Superintendent had authority for emergency special actions that were limited to 60 days. Temporary special actions may

exceed 60 days and may continue through the current regulatory cycle. In addition, the revised scope of authority limited the Superintendent's ability to set permit conditions for taking freshwater fish. Setting those conditions would have to go through the Federal Subsistence Board.

Suzanne McCarthy asked about the Gulkana River. Dave Sarafin explained the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River corridor was under the in-season authority delegated to park superintendent. Issuing subsistence permits for freshwater fish is on a rare, case-by-case basis. A past park staff member used to request grayling permits to take youth subsistence fishing, but in general, these requests were rare.

Dave Sarafin said that if specific permits conditions were not set, it would be open to any gear type and any harvest limit. Federal subsistence regulations allow for subsistence harvests of freshwater fish in the park, but because state sport fishing is allowed in the park, there was not much incentive for harvesters to request a subsistence permit. He was working with the Office of Subsistence Management to understand the park's ability to issue permits for freshwater fish, and this agenda item was to put the revised letter on the SRC's radar.

- e) **Chisana Caribou Herd Management Plan update:** Barbara Cellarius explained that the Chisana herd is primarily in the northeast portion of the park on Unit 12. The herd ranges across international boundaries and multiple jurisdictions. A working group comprised of entities with management authorities in their respective jurisdiction is currently in the process of renewing and updating the plan which was finalized in 2012. The primary changes were a strengthened commitment to monitoring, a new decision-making framework for harvest management that retained a cautious approach to allow for harvest opportunity as well as a clarified harvest decision-making process, a new strategy to avoid incidental harvest of the Chisana caribou herd if targeting other herds and consolidated content regarding commitments to increasing knowledge about habitat, climate, and predator influences. The management objectives included regularly monitoring the herd size, composition, and location, and cooperatively managing harvest to maintain a stable or increasing population.

Gloria Stickwan asked whether AITRC was involved. Barbara Cellarius said that the Yukon management agencies were working on the draft, but AITRC will be included in the outreach once the draft was ready to review. Gloria Stickwan said that because of AITRC's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Interior, AITRC should be part of the group working on the draft. Barbara Cellarius explained that the working group members are government bodies with management authority over the herd.

There was a conversation about predator control. Barbara Cellarius explained each agency had their own policy on predator management, and the goal for the plan was to share knowledge.

Gloria Stickwan made a motion to support the harvest-management related changes to the plan: a strengthened commitment to monitoring, a new decision-making framework for

harvest management and a new strategy to avoid incidental harvest of Chisana caribou when targeting other herds. Kaleb Rowland seconded. Kaleb Rowland asked about the renewed commitment to monitoring. Mark Miller responded that it would provide more details around methodology and develop an analytical framework to determine herd trend. Mike Cronk commented he supported the changes in the plan, but was concerned that without predator control, they would just monitor the herd. Sue Entsminger said managers should come up with new ideas to target predators, such as trapping.

Jim Simon, a consultant with AITRC, gave a public comment that the MOA between AITRC and DOI identified wildlife management planning as one of the partnership opportunities. AITRC would fully engage in reviewing the draft plan and bring comments to the Board of Game and the Federal Subsistence Board.

The motion passed by unanimous consent.

12) New Business:

a) Timely wildlife updates

- i. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve:** Kyle Cutting, the wildlife biologist for WRST, gave the wildlife report. The previous fall, staff deployed seventeen new GPS collars on Mentasta caribou. Combined with four collared from prior years, a total of twenty-one total caribou had been collared. Population surveys were conducted in June to count group size and to help inform discussions about the may-be announced hunt. Due to weather conditions, staff only was able to go out for two half days. From the June survey, they counted 45 percent fewer adult Mentasta caribou from 2021 survey, which was 38 percent fewer caribou than from the previous five years. This decline matched the trend of other neighboring caribou herds. Some of the Mentasta individuals moved west to the Nelchina caribou herd.

For the Chisana caribou herd, the first population survey in ten years was conducted, which revealed the herd was relatively stable. There were fourteen GPS collared animals and eighteen animals with VHF collars. Those marked individuals were used to perform composition and population surveys. There was a discussion with Jeff Gross in Tok and counterparts in the Yukon about doing a composition survey in the first part of October. The Chisana calf-cow ratio and bull-cow ratios were above the management objectives for allowing harvest.

Dall sheep survey work was conducted in the summer 2023. They collaborated with ADFG and other Park Service staff in two survey techniques in July. The first was a minimum count survey in the eastern Mentasta Mountains. Ten full curl legal rams were counted, roughly a 73 percent drop since previous survey in 2018. There was a 43 percent decline in sublegal rams, and ewe-like sheep and lambs were down 50 to 60 percent. The second technique was distance sampling where they survived 170 km of transects. The survey revealed a 40 to 60 percent drop in adult sheep. An upcoming moose survey will cover the Nabesna Road area in GMU 12.

Sue Entsminger asked about the length of time between surveys. Kyle said the last sheep survey had been in 2018. Mike Cronk emphasized the importance of good survey work to understand the populations of subsistence resources.

- ii. **Alaska Fish and Game:** Heidi Hatcher, the wildlife biologist for ADF&G in Glennallen, reported that winters had been tough on the Nelchina caribou herd. During the winter of 2021-2022, a third of the collared cows had died. In the winter of 2022-2023, the remaining collared cows died. Only 2 of the 15 collared calves survived. The Nelchina caribou herd has three missing cohorts: 2021, 2022, and 2023, which will affect herd recovery. During summer 2023, ADF&G counted by two different techniques: traditional count via airplane and photo count via photo plane. The photo count revealed a minimum count of 7,384 caribou. The summer bull to cow ratio was 23:100, but the fall bull to cow ratio was predicted to be higher. The summer calf to cow ratio was 13:100. Due to the low counts, all state hunts were closed. The Federal Subsistence Board closed the fall Nelchina caribou hunt. There will be no state hunting opportunity next season.

The moose season had been reported as slow. Of the collared cows in Unit 13, there was a 9 percent mortality (out of 43 cows), which was a typical mortality rate for adult cows. The deceased cows had been between 13 and 18 years old. The parturition rate for moose was 70 percent and the twinning rate at 30 percent with a 12 percent calf survival rate through mid-June. Sheep harvest numbers were not yet in, though Glennallen office had sealed 33 sheep during the season. ADF&G flew sheep surveys in the Wrangells and saw fewer than 20 lambs per 100 ewes. Some areas were higher and others lower, but overall, a decrease in the sheep population. The Chitina River bison herd was also severely impacted by the winters and were now down to 18 adults and no calves. No permits would be issued for next year for that herd. The Copper River herd decreased to 98 adults. Fewer permits will be issued for that herd as well.

Kaleb Rowland asked about bison mortality. Heidi responded it appeared to result from an early winter overflow event. Mike Cronk asked about the mortality rate of moose calves. Heidi explained in some cases, the evidence did not exist, but more often it was bears than wolves preying on calves. Other times, calves starved to death due to the mothers being in poor condition. Mike then asked about wolf predator control. Heidi explained they have an objective of 135 wolves in the spring, so ADF&G opens and closes subunits based on the abundance objectives for moose. This year, ADF&G opened 13D and will likely open 13A. A similar program for caribou would have to go through the Board of Game process.

There was a discussion about the Nelchina caribou. Heidi explained the herd peaked at 53,000 in 2019 and that ADF&G intentionally reduced the herd before the first deep snow, severe winter event occurred. Most deceased caribou were winter mortalities. Clint Marshall asked about the recovery of the herd and whether herd objectives would change. Heidi said the current numbers were similar to ones in the 1970s, and they could expect a 15-year recovery period. The

herd had usually been within or above management objectives, but the number could change after looking at the range data.

- iii. Bureau of Land Management:** Caroline Ketron, the anthropologist for BLM Glennallen Field Office, presented information on the Unit 13 subsistence hunts. After consulting with ADF&G on the numbers for the Nelchina caribou herd, BLM went to bulls only for caribou in Unit 13A and B, as determining the sex to be taken in those subunits was the only delegated authority BLM had. When issuing caribou permits, BLM informed users the hunt might be closed due to conservation concerns. The harvest reported for moose was 33. This was a preliminary number since the season closed on September 20. On average, the moose harvest was around 70. So far, it has been a low year for harvesting moose. The Glennallen Field Office submitted Wildlife Proposal 24-09 to expand their delegated authority for caribou.
 - iv. Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge:** Barbara Cellarius explained that Brent Jamison had provided three written reports, which were distributed with the meeting materials, and was available on the phone to answer questions.
- c) Update on Wildlife Special Action WSA23-01/03: Nelchina caribou fall season closure:** Barbara Cellarius reported that the Federal Subsistence Board had closed the fall season for Nelchina caribou due to the population decline described earlier in the meeting.
 - d) Temporary Wildlife Special Action WSA23-02/04: Nelchina caribou winter season closure:** Kyle Cutting summarized an analysis for a temporary wildlife special action to close the Nelchina caribou hunt. The OSM analysis for the winter closure was not available at the time of the meeting, so the information came from the analysis for the fall closure. Proposed by both the Board of Game and ADFG, the special action request was to close the caribou hunt for any users in Unit 11, 12, and 13 for the 2023-2024 regulatory year. Mike Cronk asked about the annual harvest in Unit 12 for Nelchina caribou, to which Brent Jamison responded 22 caribou in 2022, and an average of 31 caribou annually over a span of ten years.

Faye Ewan provided a public comment about her frustration with the closure of the Nelchina caribou herd hunt. She emphasized that managers should listen to the Ahtna people, as they had asked for a moratorium on the Nelchina caribou herd three years ago. She also said tribal consultation was needed. She is worried the moose were next and that the next generation would not taste caribou or moose or fish, all of which were part of the Ahtna customary and traditional way of life.

Clint Marshall recommended that the framework listed in the revised draft Chisana Caribou Herd Management Plan could be replicated for the Nelchina caribou herd and asked for opportunity to harvest to maintain cultural traditions. Mike Cronk mentioned that the same situation occurred on the Yukon with salmon. He wanted to avoid shutting the hunts completely and losing cultural knowledge.

Jim Simon provided a statement that AITRC and Ahtna, Incorporated gave to the Board of Game meeting in March, which focused on the frustration of the state and federal dual management. He also asked the SRC to consider requesting from OSM an ANILCA 804 subsistence user prioritization analysis using both state and federal harvest data to determine which communities had the most direct customary and traditional use for the herd.

Other public comments were heard. Tazlina resident Becky Schwanke supported the OSM staff recommendation to close the Nelchina winter hunt and agreed that OSM needed to start an 804 analysis. Copper Center resident Faye Ewan said that due to Article 12 of the Alaska Constitution, Natives should have the right to hunt and fish. Caribou was sacred to the Ahtna and it only took sixty years to wipe them out. Not being able to hunt caribou undermined her sovereignty as an Ahtna person. She asked for one hunt per village. Nabesna resident Michael Rego commented it was sad to see the low caribou numbers and said that he believes it will take more than fifteen years for the herd to recover. He also agreed with the need for an 804 analysis and emphasized that the management of the caribou needed to change. Sarah Devins, the environmental coordinator and tribal citizen of the Native Village of Kluti-Kaah, agreed with the closure but asked when the hunt reopened, tribes be given a priority. She also requested an AITRC representative be at the table for management decisions.

Gloria made a motion to support WSA23-02/04 and request that OSM immediately begins a section 804 subsistence user analysis that includes state and federal harvest data. Kaleb Rowland seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent. The commission supported the closure due to low numbers of caribou. The 804 is needed for when the herd reaches a point where it can be hunted.

d) Review and comment on proposals to change federal subsistence wildlife regulations:

- i. WP24-01: Allow sale of brown bear hides (statewide):** Barbara Cellarius presented the draft OSM staff analysis. The proponent states that federally qualified subsistence users must salvage the hides of brown bears, however, the hides must not be sold. The hides of other big game species may be sold, and the proponent requests that brown bears be added. She focused on the policy issues detailed in the analysis, especially those related to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, commonly known as CITES. Another topic discussed in the analysis is customary trade, which is the cash sale of fish and wildlife resources. Earlier federal subsistence proposals on brown bear hide sales had generally failed. The preliminary OSM recommendation is to support the proposal with the modification to allow the sale of brown bear hides with claws attached in areas where the Federal harvest limit is two bears every regulatory year and after first obtaining a permit available at the time of sealing from an ADF&G sealing officer.

Mike Cronk said there was no shortage of bears, but a shortage of moose and caribou. Dan Stevens agreed that there were more bears.

In response to a question about the brown bear population in Unit 11, Barbara replied that there isn't unit-specific population information in the analysis, although Alaska has an estimated 30,000 brown bears statewide and they range over most of the state.

In Units 11, 12, and 13 the harvest limit is one bear. The two-bear harvest limit exists in Units 16B, 17, 19A, 19D, 20E, 21, 22A, 22B, 22D, 22E, 23, 24B, 25D, and 26A.

Kaleb Rowland made a motion to support the proposal as written. Dan Stevens seconded. Kaleb explained that his intent was for the proposal to effect Unit 11, but he was okay with a statewide proposal. Mike Cronk said he would support the proposal as written, but if there was a need to limit the scope, he would like to see the change in Units 11, 12, and 13.

After discussion, the motion became to support WP24-01 as written but if a limitation was needed for geographic scope, to support the proposal in Units 11, 12, and 13. The SRC opposed the OSM recommendation to limit the proposal to areas with two bear harvest limits. Gloria Stickwan mentioned the hides could be used for sewing and making handicrafts.

The motion passed by unanimous consent.

- ii. WP24-09: Expand delegated authority for Nelchina caribou herd (Units 13A&B):** Barbara Cellarius presented the draft OSM analysis of the proposal submitted by the BLM Glennallen Field Office. It requested delegating authority to the BLM Field Office Manager to close, reopen, and adjust season dates, set harvest limits including sex restrictions, and set permit conditions for caribou in Units 13A and 13B via delegation of authority letter; consulting with AITRC on in-season management decisions; and changing the harvest limit from two to "up to two caribou." Currently, BLM can only determine the sex of the caribou to be harvested. The proponents stated that the proposal would allow for better and more flexible management of the Nelchina caribou herd. The OSM preliminary conclusion was to support WP24-09 as written. AITRC also wrote a letter in support of the proposal. Mike Cronk made the motion to support WP24-09 as written. Kaleb Rowland seconded. The proposed changes would provide additional flexibility for managing the herd. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- iii. WP24-32: Expand marten trapping season to March 15 (Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24 and 25):** Kyle Cutting presented the draft OSM analysis of the proposal to extend the marten trapping season to March 15. The proposal was submitted by the Eastern Interior RAC. The proponent stated that changing the closing date of the marten season would account for changes in the climate. There had been no changes in marten season since 1990. A similar proposal has been submitted to the Board of Game. There was biological concern about road access in Units 12 and 20 that could increase harvest of marten. Harvest numbers for marten

fluctuated since 2011 due to trapping effort, marten abundance, and fur prices. There was concern about exploitation of female marten due to the denning season overlapping with the proposed extension. In Unit 12, the season extension will align marten and lynx seasons. The OSM preliminary conclusion was to support WP24-32 as written. Sue Entsminger commented that the proponent intended the proposal for Unit 25.

Mike Cronk made a motion to support WP24-32 as written. Suzanne McCarthy seconded. The proposal would provide additional subsistence opportunity. It is a good proposal which aligns the marten season with the lynx season and extends the overlap with the wolverine season. Sue Entsminger was concerned about incidental take of marten and the poor fur quality at that time of year. The motion passed 4-3 by roll call vote.

e) SRC Chairs Workshop discussion: Barbara Cellarius explained that the annual SRC chairs workshop was scheduled for December 6, 2023. She asked the SRC to identify an alternate in the case the SRC Chair could not attend the meeting and for topics of concern to share at the meeting. Kaleb Rowland mentioned the high bear numbers and low bison and moose numbers. Sue Entsminger said the Nelchina caribou were a concern. Mike Cronk agreed about the bears and added wolves and added a concern about a later rut for the moose. Gloria Stickwan asked about having multiple members attend the meeting as well. Dan Stevens was concerned about sheep in Chitina. Clint Marshall echoed Mike Cronk's concern about wolves and added that the number of people coming to hunt in the area needed to be controlled. Gloria Stickwan added discussing the external boundaries of the resident zone communities.

Suzanne McCarthy, Kaleb Rowland, and Gloria Stickwan volunteered to attend the meeting as alternates, although Gloria's term on the SRC might be over by then.

f) Review and comment on relevant proposals to the Alaska Boards of Fish and Game: The SRC discussed several proposals to the Board of Game for the Interior Region. They made four recommendations regarding these proposals, in two cases bundling similar proposals.

Mike Cronk made a motion to support Proposal 52, to allow the use of night vision goggles and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers with a trapping license in multiple Interior units, which Kaleb Rowland seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent. An authorization to use night vision goggles would provide the opportunity to hunt predators at night.

Mike Cronk made a motion to support Proposal 111, to add an archery-only, five-day moose season for residents and nonresidents in Unit 12, which Kaleb Rowland seconded. The motion failed 0-7 by voice vote. Concerns about this proposal included extending the season into a period of time when the animals are more susceptible to harvest along with the potential to wound rather than kill an animal. Archery doesn't guarantee a kill.

Mike Cronk made a motion to support proposals 120 and 121, to increase the brown/grizzly bear harvest limit for residents in a portion of Unit 12, with modification to include all of Unit 12. Kaleb Rowland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 7-0 by voice vote. There is no shortage of bears in Unit 12. Adoption of the proposals would provide additional harvest opportunity.

Mike Cronk made a motion to support proposals 122 and 123, to lengthen the wolf hunting season in Units 12 and 20E, which Kaleb Rowland seconded. Adoption of the proposals will provide additional opportunity to harvest wolves. For example, people who bait bears could harvest wolves that come into their bait stations. It was also noted that the fur quality of wolves is still good in June.

13) Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve and NPS Alaska Regional Office staff reports

a) **Resource Stewardship and Science Report:** Benjamin Pister, Team Lead for Resource Stewardship and Science, introduced himself and explained that Mark Miller has transitioned into a position as an ecologist working on issues relating to subsistence. Fieldwork on three biologically oriented salmon projects took place in summer 2023 and updates will be provided at the next meeting. The NPS had an opportunity to submit project proposals for Inflation Reduction Act funding. The park received funding in FY23 to help with Mentasta caribou collaring and we hope to get FY24 funding in time to use for moose surveys in the Nabesna area. He also discussed contaminant issues in Kennecott and Nabesna. The NPS will enter into a cooperative agreement with the Wildlife Conservation Society to study the socioecological considerations of wood bison in the Upper Tanana region in FY24. The project will take around two and a half years and will involve extensive outreach and consultation with stakeholders. Finally, he recommended revitalizing the caribou working group. Sue Entsminger volunteered to be on the working group.

b) **Fisheries report:** Dave Sarafin, the fisheries biologist for WRST, gave the report. There was a successful season of operating Tanada Creek weir at Batzulnetas. 9,250 sockeye salmon came through the weir. It was a slow start to the beginning of the season with a strong pulse of fish in early September. The 2023 count was well below the historic average count of 18,000 fish. Overall, the Copper River salmon run was similar to many of the recent years. It may have been beneficial for the Copper River run to start weak and then improve, because the commercial fishery was curtailed initially. Coming in strong later helped the run meet escapement goals. If the run had come in strong initially and the commercial fishery had fished hard, followed by a weak end of the run, it could have been a problem for escapement. The park issued 200 Chitina subdistrict permits, 291 Glennallen subdistrict permits, and 2 Batzulnetas permits. The 2022 harvest was 10 percent below recent averages. The Lower Copper River subsistence fishery opened June 1, 70 permits were issued, and harvest thus far reported was 176 sockeye salmon and 4 Chinook salmon. NPS Director Sams visited the weir in August.

Gloria Stickwan asked about developing a sustainable escapement goal for Tanada Creek. Due to environmental changes such as the creek flooding or drying up entirely, Dave said it would be difficult to develop an escapement goal, however we have seasonal averages

and ranges. Mike Cronk asked about major tributaries of the Copper, and Dave replied that Tanada was the largest producer of salmon for upper river stocks, as well as Mentasta and Suslota Lakes, among others.

- c) **Subsistence Coordinator's report:** Amber Cohen, cultural anthropologist for WRST, reported that 201 federal subsistence hunting permits had been issued so far. There were 140 permits issued, 18 individuals who hunted, and 7 moose reported harvested thus far for the FM1106 fall moose hunt. For the FM1107, there were fifteen permits issued. The FS1104 elder sheep hunt had four individuals hunting and three sheep harvested. The FS1205 Chisana caribou hunt had two individuals reporting hunting and two caribou harvested. Staff at the Slana Ranger Station additionally issued 21 Unit 13 moose permits and 26 Unit 13 caribou permits. Updated harvest information will be provided in the spring meeting. There were several updates to the traditional knowledge and ethnographic projects. The Ahtna Ethnographic Overview and Assessment is scheduled for completion in late spring 2024. The caribou TEK project is also scheduled for completion in spring 2024. The first phase of the Upper Copper River harvest assessment was completed in spring 2023 with a second phase in Slana and along the Nabesna Road scheduled for spring 2024. A new project focuses on local knowledge of Dall sheep with interviews of local long-time hunters and residents with a long history of observing sheep in Wrangell-St. Elias. One interview was completed during the summer and others were being scheduled.

- d) **NPS Alaska Region Subsistence Program report:** Victoria Florey, Subsistence Program Analyst in the NPS Alaska Region Office, reported that public comment period for the wildlife rule was extended for 2 weeks for 77 days of comment. The draft final rule was under ongoing review in DC. The public, SRCs, and RACs will be notified as soon it is published. The Arctic ungulate conference in May drew much interest. The NPS hosted six interns from the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) last summer, four from the Summer Bridge program and two older students from University of Alaska Anchorage. Director Sams visited in August with goals to confront the climate crisis using science and traditional ecological knowledge and stewarding our resources. He wanted to respect and strengthen indigenous connections, enhance our nation-to-nation relationships, and fully uphold our trust and treaty responsibilities.

- e) **Interpretation and Education (I&E) Report:** Carrie Wittmer, Team Lead for Interpretation and Education, reported that fifteen out of twenty-seven I&E employees were local hires. Visitation went up to 50,000 contacts, which was around 2019 numbers of 52,000. Alaska Geographic sales went up to \$268,000. Carrie thanked the efforts of bookstore manager Lynn Grams who retired at the end of the season. AK Geo funding supported research projects and hiring efforts. The Ahtna Youth Internship Program had three interns this summer who learned ethnobotany, moose hide tanning, drum making, and other cultural and ecological knowledge. The internship program recently received \$560,000 in Bureau of Indian Affairs funding. Russ Scribner and Diane Ellsworth received the Regional Excellence in Education award.

Russ Scribner gave the Education update. There were seven Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) members this past summer. For next summer, the park is looking for sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds who can work longer hours. The YCCs learned about outdoor leadership, held a junior angler event, had a full canoeing day at Tolsona Lake, built an award-winning float, worked on Bonanza trail, and maintained the Chitina Ranger Station. The park also partnered with WISE for several events. There were education events in Tetlin, Mentasta, and Chistochina. Carrie added that six previous YCCs now work in other jobs at the park.

Faye Ewan commented that she was proud of the young people that participated in the NPS funded youth programs and would like to see tribes involved when the park writes grants so that activities with villages can be included.

14) Emergency Special Action WSA23-06: Barbara Cellarius introduced an emergency special action that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game had just submitted to close winter hunts of the Nelchina herd due to the potential shutdown for the federal government. Although emergency special actions did not have a requirement for consultation due to the fast timeline, the SRC had the opportunity to comment due to the timing of today's meeting. Barbara added that the SRC could also submit a special action request for the ANILCA section 804 analysis for the Nelchina caribou herd. Mike Cronk made the motion to support WSA23-06. Kaleb Rowland seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent with six SRC members present.

Mike Cronk made a motion to submit a special action request for the ANILCA section 804 analysis by OSM for Nelchina caribou. Kaleb Rowland seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent with six SRC members present.

15) Public comments on non-agenda items: In a previous item, Faye Ewan had asked whether people are compensated when they share traditional knowledge. Russ Scribner explained that sometimes elders received stipends, while at other times, the elders and knowledge holders were paid employees. Gloria Stickwan appreciated the YCC program as her great nephew worked for the program that past summer. Faye Ewan said she was disappointed to not see pictures of Ahtna ancestors on the walls. She wanted the exhibits to tell the Native side of the story.

16) Reports from other organizations and agencies

a) **Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission:** Sterling Spilinek, the wildlife biologist and research coordinator for AITRC, reported on their activities during the last year. There was a huge spike at the end of the season at the Klutina Sonar, bringing the count to 80,000 salmon. The sonar project will continue through 2027. AITRC would like to get a sonar for the south bank of the river as well. Nineteen moose health samples were collected in 2023, compared to nine in 2022. He asked that people who harvest or receive salvaged moose consider providing samples to AITRC for the moose health project. For salmon health projects, AITRC staff collected 150 salmon samples from Chitina and Glennallen subdistricts. They analyzed 64 sockeye and 11 Chinook heart cultures and plan to continue the project for several years. They partnered with Alaska Center for Conservation Science to analyze caribou fecal pellets. He asked the SRC to bring back its

list of research priorities as it gives AITRC and the park an idea of what research should be done. AITRC submitted two grant proposals, one to increase the number of collars on Mentasta and Nelchina caribou herds and the other to look at range distribution and diet of wolves in Unit 11. They will hear back in December and hoped to start work in 2024.

- b) **ADF&G Fisheries Updates:** Mark Sommerville, the area management biologist for sports fisheries, reported that more than 900,000 salmon made it up the Copper River, which was above the in-river goal for this year. Similar to 2022, the run was very late, which had significant effects on fishery's performance upriver. He provided preliminary estimates for harvest in the river. For the Chitina dipnet fishery, there were around 170,000-190,000 sockeye salmon and 3,500-4,000 king salmon harvested. The average for kings was 2,500, so the run was stronger this year. This increase was due to a conservatively managed commercial fishery for king salmon. He predicted 36,000 spawning salmon will be calculated.

For the Glennallen subdistrict, there were 51,000-61,000 sockeye salmon and 4,000-4,500 king salmon harvested. The subsistence fishery underperformed again as in 2022. The runs were late and high-water issues affected fish wheels. He expected to see harvest of 70,000-80,000 sockeye salmon based on the sonar count.

Mark is trying to analyze the impacts of the commercial fishery management on the number of fish coming up the river early in the season, in an effort to identify suggestions for getting more fish upriver early on. The Gulkana hatchery was doing well with eighteen million eggs collected thus far out of a goal of thirty-five million eggs. By the end of the season, he predicted they should be near 20 to 25 million eggs. Fish came through the Gulkana very late.

Mike Cronk asked about the stability of the Copper River Chinook. Mark Sommerville explained the Copper River had a period of low king salmon but since the fishery was heavily restricted in 2009, there had been good returns with great spawning potential. There might be a downturn next year due to a weaker parent stock, but after those, the runs should increase. He discussed the productivity and salmon survival in the ocean and said the Gulf of Alaska operated on long cycles. Mike Cronk was concerned about low fish numbers in other areas bringing more people to the Copper River. Mark Sommerville said that in the early 2000s, the Department would issue 10,000 permits for dipnetting, and now it was 7,000 permits. 10,000 people used to harvest and now it was 5,000 to 6,000 people in the Chitina subdistrict. As long as escapement goals are met, there will be a sustainable population in the Copper River. The rivers to watch were the Gulkana, the Klutina, and the Tonsina. He also commended the Tanada weir for showing that there were 9,000 fish spawning up Tanada Creek.

- 17) **Letter of recommendation to Governor and Secretary:** Mike Cronk made a motion to write letters to the Governor and Secretary of Interior about the immediate concerns about food security. Kaleb Rowland seconded the motion and the motion passed by unanimous consent. The letter should mention the impacts of two severe winters, concerns about rapidly declining populations of subsistence resources in Units 11, 12, and 13 such as Nelchina caribou, moose, and sheep, difficulties with getting moose, and the need for collaboration in

the context of extreme changes. The situation is on a par with the Yukon River, where people can't put food in their freezers.

18) Work session (comment on issues, prepare letters, etc.): Mike Cronk made a motion to create a list of management priorities, which was seconded by Kaleb Rowland. The priorities identified are as follows:

Food Security:

- Thinking outside the box to protect and increase populations of important foods resources, in the following order of importance:
 1. Nelchina caribou
 2. moose
 3. sheep and goats
 4. Copper River sockeye and Chinook salmon
 5. game birds
- Decrease wolf, bear and coyote populations
- Introduce other food species, such as wood bison reintroduction
- Manage fires to benefit wildlife
 - Prescribed burns to benefit wildlife habitat
 - Consider wildlife habitat benefits in wildfire management decisions, i.e., let it burn when feasible.
 - Provide local communities with firewood, or at least subsistence firewood harvest opportunities, as part of hazard fuel reduction efforts (e.g., beetle killed trees) near communities.

Additions to the research priorities list:

- Impacts of eagle predation on harvested species (for example, sheep lambs, caribou calves, salmon).
- Effects of environmental change on subsistence resources and uses, for example:
 - Interaction between changes in migration patterns and access.
 - Changing river conditions (debris, high water levels) and impacts to fish wheel use and productivity

The motion to create the list of management priorities passed unanimously by voice vote with 6 SRC members present.

SRC members also discussed a possible delegation of authority to the Wrangell-St. Elias Superintendent for moose in Units 11 and 12 to provide additional flexibility in light of environmental changes (e.g., to change season dates beyond those currently in regulation), initially as a special action and then potentially via a regulatory change proposal in 2025. Or alternatively, developing a proposal to directly extend the season dates. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

19) Set tentative date and location for next SRC meeting: Kaleb Rowland made a motion for the primary meeting dates to be February 29 and March 1 with March 14-15 as alternate dates, and for the meeting to be held in Gakona. Suzanne McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

20) Adjourn meeting: Gloria Stickwan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kaleb Rowland seconded the motion, and it passed by unanimous consent. Meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m. on Thursday, September 28, 2023.

**WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK
SUBSISTENCE RESOURCE COMMISSION
ROSTER**

As of January 2024

NAME	COMMUNITY	APPMT SOURCE	TERM EXPIRES*
Bruce L. Ervin	Tok	Secretary of Interior	1/17/2027
Clint Marshall	Tazlina	Secretary of Interior	6/28/2026
Daniel E. Stevens	Chitina	Secretary of Interior	3/28/2026
Edward GreyBear (alternate)**	Copper Center	Secretary of Interior	9/27/2026
Kaleb Rowland	McCarthy	Governor	12/01/2023
Suzanne McCarthy	Gakona	Governor	12/01/2024
Vacant		Governor	
Starr Knighten	Glennallen	Southcentral RAC	11/04/2026
Daryl James	Yakutat	Southeast RAC	10/27/2025
Sue Entsminger	Mentasta Pass	Eastern Interior RAC	11/04/2024

* All members serve for three-year terms. According to 54 U.S. Code § 100906(c), members continue to serve until re-appointed or replaced. However, RAC appointees must be current members of a RAC or AC for their appointments to be valid.

** Edward GreyBear serves as an alternate for Clint Marshall and Daniel Stevens.

**PROPOSED CHANGES
SUPERINTENDENT'S COMPENDIUM
2024
WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE**

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve is seeking comment on proposed changes to the Superintendent's Compendium. A compendium is a written compilation of designations, closures, permit requirements and other restrictions adopted under the Superintendent's discretionary authority.

Information on how to submit comments is available at:
<https://www.nps.gov/locations/alaska/proposed-compendiums.htm>

After review and consideration of the need for annual updates, the following changes are proposed.

WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS SPECIAL REGULATIONS

13.1902(b) Subsistence resident zone boundaries.

The external boundaries of the Wrangell-St. Elias Resident Zone along the Glenn and Richardson Highways are described as follows:

- The western boundary of Glennallen along the Glenn Highway is Tolsona Creek, which crosses the highway at approximately Mile 173.
- The southern boundary of Tonsina is the Little Tonsina River, which crosses the Richardson Highway at approximately Mile 65.
- The northern boundary of Gakona/Gakona Junction is Mile 138 on the Richardson Highway.

The NPS is adding language to the compendium that would define the external boundaries of the resident zones for subsistence purposes.

The purpose of this proposed compendium entry is to clarify the external boundaries of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Resident Zone in three locations. The resident zone is used to establish eligibility to harvest subsistence resources in the National Park under federal regulations. The lack of clarity of a boundary has caused considerable confusion and frustration. Clarifying the boundaries in these three locations in writing will improve transparency and customer service regarding eligibility for both the public and park staff issuing permits.

Because the park's resident zone communities are largely adjacent to one another, there is no need to define the boundaries between adjacent communities. And a formal process has already defined the resident zone community boundaries along the Alaska Highway, with maps on file in the Superintendent's office and available on the park website.

This proposed compendium entry would clarify the northern boundary of Gakona on the Richardson Highway, the southern boundary of Tonsina on the Richardson Highway, and the western boundary of Glennallen on the Glenn Highway. The proposed basis of the boundaries is the Census Designated Place Boundaries used by the U.S. Census Bureau for the 2020 Census.

Proposed Changes-Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Compendium
Last Modified January 22nd, 2024

36 CFR 13.1902(b), although the recommendation for the Compendium is to identify a specific geographic feature, highway mile marker, or both. (Mile markers were identified by comparing the CDP maps from Alaska Department of Labor with the Alaska Department of Transportation mile markers on the 511 website.)

- The western boundary of Glennallen along the Glenn Highway would be Tolsona Creek, which crosses the highway at approximately Mile 173. (The 2020 CDP map can be seen here: [28740.pdf \(alaska.gov\).](#))
- The southern boundary of Tonsina would be the Little Tonsina River, which crosses the Richardson Highway at approximately Mile 65. (CDP map: [78350.pdf \(alaska.gov\).](#))
- The northern boundary of Gakona/Gakona Junction would be Mile 138 on the Richardson. (CDP map [27420.pdf \(alaska.gov\).](#)) There isn't a good geographic feature at this location, although it appears that it might be a section line.

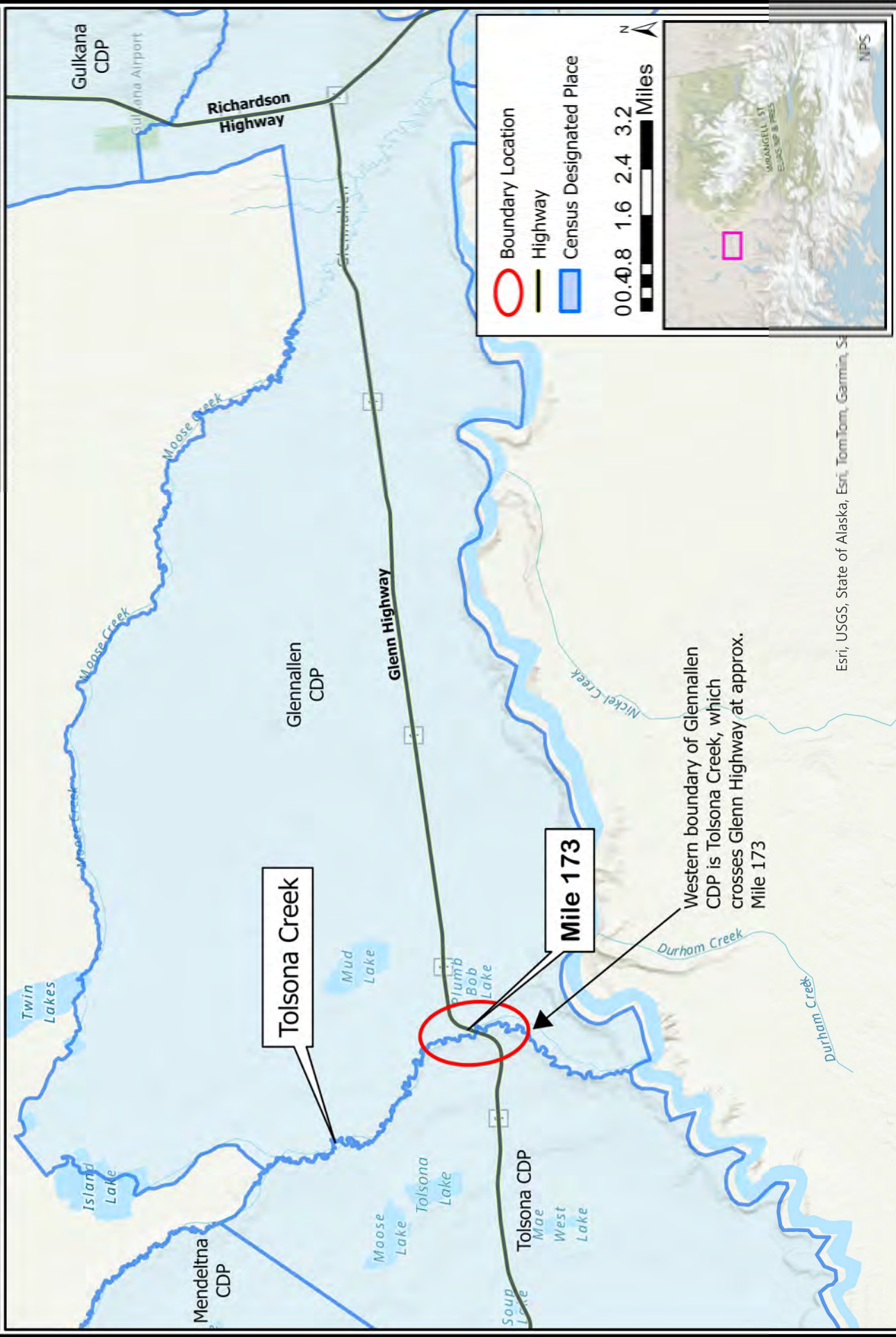
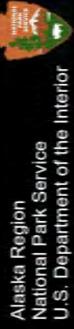
A bit more information: Glennallen is bordered on the west by Tolsona (which is where our most recent eligibility questions have come from). Tolsona has a community association that receives funding from the state and is identified by the Alaska Department of Transportation with signs along the road as well as labels on its Alaska511 online road map. South of Tonsina and north of Gakona there are areas that are outside of census designated places, although there may be people living scattered along the roads and there is a new community (established around 2000). at Mile 46 on the Richardson heading south towards Valdez. (For a map of the Census Designated Places in the Copper River Census area: [066.pdf \(alaska.gov\).](#))



Superintendent

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Resident Zone: Glenn Highway West Boundary

Compendium Map



Tolsona Creek

Mile 173

Western boundary of Glennallen CDP is Tolsona Creek, which crosses Glenn Highway at approx. Mile 173

Esri, USGS, State of Alaska, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, S



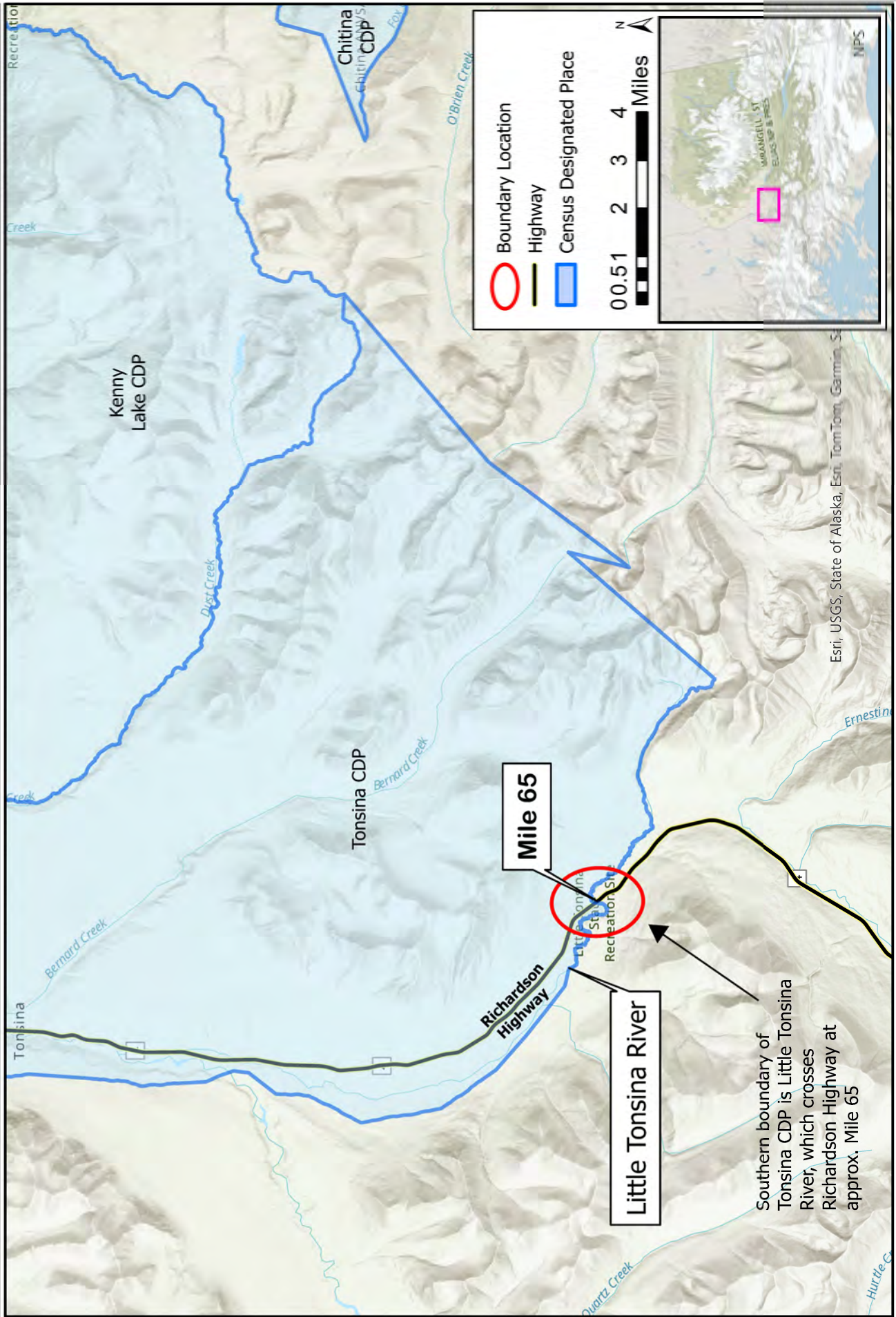
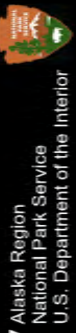
Alaska Region
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Resident Zone: Richardson Highway North Boundary

Compendium Map



Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Resident Zone: Richardson Highway South Boundary
 Compendium Map



Esri, USGS, State of Alaska, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, S

Date: 2/1/2024

Southern boundary of Tonsina CDP is Little Tonsina River, which crosses Richardson Highway at approx. Mile 65

Appendix I

SRC Research Priorities

[Under development]

DRAFT of 2/26/2016

- Mentasta Caribou—how to rebuild the herd to have a hunt-able population, food/habitat, impacts of predation, weather
- Chisana Caribou – how to grow the population
- Climate change – what is happening? How it impacts everything.
- Sheep -- same thing, why are sheep numbers declining. How do we turn the decline around?
- Moose – how to increase population. Survival rates. Population parameters, food source
- Furbearer populations: numbers, trends
- Migratory birds
- Fish
- Interaction between changes in migration patterns, access rules, also weather/climate changes
- Predators: bears, wolves, coyotes. Populations. What impact are they having.
- Habitat – is there enough food for the caribou, moose browse, do we need to do something to increase food source, what habitat needs protection, include mapping
- Vegetation – map, protect lichens (need to know for fire protection)
- Digitizing historical use maps, also historical interviews – transcribing in a searchable format
- Developing partnerships
- Use of new technology in research – e.g., drones
- Declining Chinook Salmon populations



Federal Subsistence Board Informational Flyer



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

Forest Service

Contact: Subsistence Policy Coordinator
(907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456
subsistence@fws.gov

How to submit a Special Action Request to the Federal Subsistence Board

The regulatory cycle for changes to fish/shellfish and wildlife regulations takes place every two years. A call for proposals to change fishing regulations is issued in January of even numbered years and odd numbered years for wildlife. A Special Action Request is an out-of-cycle change of a season, harvest limit, or method of harvest. Special Actions are taken when unusual situations arise, such as a significant change in resource abundance that could not reasonably have been anticipated. The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) may take a Special Action to restrict, close, open, or reopen the taking of fish and wildlife on Federal public lands and waters. Such actions are taken to ensure the conservation of healthy populations of fish or wildlife, ensure the continued viability of a particular fish or wildlife population, to ensure continued subsistence use, or for reasons of public safety. These guidelines and requirements can be found in [36 CFR 242.19](#) and [50 CFR 100.19](#).

To submit a Special Action request, please provide the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Fax number (if applicable)
- E-mail address
- Organization (if applicable)
- Describe the action you are requesting; reference the current regulations you wish to change
- List if there have been unusual or significant changes in resource abundance or unusual conditions affecting harvest opportunities that could not reasonably have been anticipated and that potentially could have significant adverse effects on the health of fish and wildlife populations or subsistence users
- State if requested action is to ensure the conservation of healthy populations of fish or wildlife, ensure continued viability of a fish or wildlife population, to continue subsistence uses of fish or wildlife, or for public safety reasons
- State the extenuating circumstances that necessitate a regulatory change before the next regulatory review

How a Special Action request is processed:

1. In an emergency, the Federal Subsistence Board can issue a special action that is 60 days or less in duration without a public hearing.
2. A special action lasting 61 days or more is a temporary special action.

3. If the request is a temporary special action, a public hearing is held in the affected area(s) to allow for public comment and the Federal Subsistence Board will consult with the Chair(s) of affected Regional Advisory Council(s) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
4. Special Action Requests are assigned to an analyst who works with the requestor and field staff to develop an analysis of the request for the Federal Subsistence Board.
5. If the timing of a regularly scheduled Regional Advisory Council meeting permits without incurring undue delay, the Board *may* seek Council recommendations on proposed Emergency Special Actions.
6. If timing of a regularly scheduled Regional Advisory Council meeting permits without incurring undue delay, the Board *will* seek Council recommendations on proposed Temporary Special Actions.
7. Once a decision is made by the Board, a response letter and a copy of the complete analysis and recommendations are sent to the requesting proponent with a copy sent to the affected Council Chair(s), State Federal Liaison Team Lead and Federal and State law enforcement.
8. If needed, the OSM subsistence outreach coordinator or the Federal agency requesting the Special Action will publish a news release.

Submit your request to the Federal Subsistence Board by:

Mail:

Office of Subsistence Management
Attn: Subsistence Policy Coordinator
1011 East Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Fax: (907) 786-3898

E-mail: subsistence@fws.gov

The Federal Subsistence Management Program website link to information on submitted special actions is found at:

Wildlife special actions:
<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/wildlife-special-actions>

Fisheries special actions:
<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>

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.



Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503 - 6199



FISH and WILDLIFE SERVICE
BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BUREAU of INDIAN AFFAIRS

FOREST SERVICE

OCT 26 2023

In Reply Refer To:
OSM 23127

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission
PO Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573

Dear Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission:

This letter responds to the special action request you submitted on September 27, 2023, requesting the Office of Subsistence Management conduct an ANILCA §804 subsistence user prioritization analysis for the Nelchina Caribou Herd, but indicating support for a full closure this season.

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board) has determined that this request does not meet the criteria for special actions. Under Federal Subsistence Regulations (36 CFR 242.19c and 50 CFR 100.19c), the Board may reject a request for a special action if there are no time-sensitive circumstances necessitating a regulatory change before the next regulatory proposal cycle. Your request is not time-sensitive for the 2023/24 regulatory year. Additionally, §804 analyses are not conducted preemptively. However, you can submit another special action request for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 regulatory years to restrict take of Nelchina Caribou on Federal public lands and request a §804 analysis be conducted. A proposal requesting these changes in codified Federal regulations can be submitted during the next call for wildlife proposals in spring 2025.

Thank you for your participation in the Federal Subsistence Management Program. We look forward to continuing to work with you. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Grediagin, Wildlife Division Supervisor, Office of Subsistence Management, at (907) 786-3357 or lisa_grediagin@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Anthony Christianson
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board

Office of Subsistence Management

Chair, Southcentral Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Chair, Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

Superintendent, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Special Projects Coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Interagency Staff Committee

Administrative Record

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439
907 822 5234

Spring 2024 Fisheries Report
Dave Sarafin, Fisheries Biologist

SUMMARY OF KEY UPDATES

- 2024 Copper River ADFG salmon forecast the return for both total Sockeye Salmon and Chinook Salmon to be average, based on recent 10-year returns.
- During the recent 2023 season, the Copper River salmon run began weak, then increased in strength as the season progressed. ADFG Miles Lake sonar reported an estimated season total passage of 991,740 salmon, which is 71% above the management objective of 581,172 salmon. Harvest opportunities continued throughout the season and assessments indicate sustainable escapement goals were achieved.
- Historical Federal subsistence harvests and number of permits issued in the Upper Copper River through 2023 are provided in Tables 1-4.
- In the Federal subsistence fishery in the Lower Copper River, 71 permits are on record as issued; total in-season reported harvest was 176 Sockeye Salmon and 4 Chinook Salmon. Assessment of post-season harvest reports is in process.
- Tanada Creek weir at Batzulnetas documented passage of 9,254 Sockeye Salmon, which is roughly 50% of the historical season total count average of approximately 18,000.
- Copper River salmon research project continued this season; designed to evaluate the potential use of genetic stock identification (GSI) for in-season management decision making.

UPPER COPPER RIVER FISHERIES

2024 Preseason Copper River Salmon Forecast:

The ADFG has forecast a return of 47,000 Copper River Chinook Salmon. This is 2% below the recent 10-year average of 48,000 fish. Their forecast for wild stock Sockeye Salmon is 1,965,000 fish, which is 13% above the recent 10-year average wild stock return of 1,740,000 fish. The Gulkana Hatchery is forecast to contribute an additional 36,000 Sockeye Salmon. Their 2024 pre-season forecast for the total Copper River Sockeye Salmon return is 2,001,000 fish. The in-season management of State fisheries is anticipated to be based on the strength of salmon abundance indices; primarily sonar estimates and fishery performance.

2024 Early Season Management Strategy for Federal Subsistence Fisheries

Unless in-season run abundance indices prompt concerns of not meeting salmon escapement goals or subsistence needs, we anticipate all Federal subsistence salmon fisheries of the Upper Copper River to be open continuously from May 15 through September 30 during the 2024 season.

2023 Copper River Salmon Run Strength and Management Actions

The 2023 Copper River salmon run began in low numbers relative to date in season. The return then increased in strength as the season progressed. A similar pattern of delayed run timing for these stocks has been observed in other recent years. Post-season assessment of the 2023 season return indicate that sustainable escapement goals were achieved. Harvest opportunities continued throughout the season.

Federal managers monitored run strength indices throughout the season to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions in the Federal waters of the Copper River Drainage. No Federal Special Action was issued by the in-season manager in the fisheries of the Upper Copper River.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) estimated the passage of 991,740 salmon migrating upstream for the season, with the seasonal operation ending on July 28. The cumulative passage is 410,568 salmon more than (71% above) the management objective of 581,172 salmon for this date of the season.

Commercial fishing opportunities in the Copper River District were limited during the early season in response to low numbers of returning salmon at the start of the season. As the run developed, fishing opportunities were expanded during the season. The season total commercial harvest for the Copper River District through August 29 is reported to include 855,100 Sockeye Salmon and 10,400 Chinook Salmon

2023 Upper Copper River Federal Subsistence Fishing Season, Permits, and Historical Harvests

The Federal subsistence salmon fisheries of the Upper Copper River were open from May 15 through September 30. During 2023, we issued 196 Chitina Subdistrict, 290 Glennallen Subdistrict, and 2 Batzulnetas permits. Tables 1 through 4 show historical reported and expanded harvests for the Federal subsistence fisheries in each subdistrict through the 2022 season, with preliminary harvest estimates for 2023.

2023 Lower Copper River Federal Subsistence Fishery

The Federal subsistence salmon fishery in the Lower Copper River near Cordova is open from June 1 through September 30. There are 71 permits on record as issued through the OSM database. A total harvest of 176 Sockeye Salmon and 4 Chinook Salmon were reported in-season. Assessment of post-season reports is in process.

FISHERIES RESEARCH AND MONITORING PROJECTS

Tanada Creek Salmon Weir

The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) Fisheries Program operated the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas (funded through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP)). Weir installation was completed on June 22. The first salmon was documented passing the weir on June 23. We documented passage of 9,254 Sockeye Salmon and 8 Chinook Salmon for the season. The Sockeye Salmon count was approximately 50% below the historical season total count average of approximately 18,000 fish. The abundance and timing of these stocks passing the weir was very similar to that of the predominant total-age parent year of 2018. The weir is operated through September 21.

On Saturday August 26, the project and crew were pleased to host a visit by National Park Service Director Chuck Sams, Regional Director Sarah Creachbaum, and staff. During the visit, the weir crew delivered a presentation that described the project and its importance to management, the park, and local stakeholders.



NPS Director Sams and Regional Director Creachbaum visit Tanada Creek Salmon Weir and Crew, August 26, 2023

Upper Yukon Burbot Assessments

With FRMP funding for Burbot population assessments in lakes of the Upper Yukon River Drainage, we collaborated with staff of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) to perform the final year of field sampling. Objectives for 2023 were to estimate the Burbot population in Ptarmigan Lake. Sampling efforts revealed fewer fish than anticipated and catch was not of sufficient number to obtain a population abundance estimate. In addition, to gain data suitable for assessing habitat conditions, the lake bottoms of both Ptarmigan Lake and nearby Rock Lake were surveyed to produce bathymetry maps for each lake.

Tracing Mercury in Lake Trout Food Webs

As part of a collaborative project between NPS and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), researchers performed field sampling in Chelle Lake in late June; analysis is in process. This study intends to trace Mercury (Hg) in Lake Trout food webs and was prompted by findings of elevated Hg levels in muscle tissue of Lake Trout residing in certain lakes of Alaska parks.

Copper River Sockeye Salmon Research Projects

WRST is collaborating with researchers of other agencies in projects seeking to gain information which may be applied to management decision making for long-term sustainability. Some of this work was performed in 2023 with the collection of genetic tissue samples from harvested Sockeye Salmon, which were analyzed for stock composition.

Table 1. Federal Subsistence Fish Harvest in All Upper Copper River Fisheries, including Harvest by Gear Type¹

Year	Expanded Harvest Estimates ²										All Species, Approximate Harvest by Gear Type					
	Steelhead					Fish					Dip Net		Rod and Reel			
	Sockeye	Chinook	Coho	Trout	Rainbow	Other Species	Total Harvest	Fish Wheel %	Fish Wheel Total	Dip Net %	Dip Net Total	Rod and Reel %	Rod and Reel Total			
2002	10,852	745	100	77	N.A.	11,775										
2003	17,384	687	268	16	N.A.	18,355										
2004	24,217	815	216	15	N.A.	25,264										
2005	24,781	412	55	7	37	25,292										
2006	20,737	507	55	17	37	21,353										
2007	19,108	704	85	7	25	19,929										
2008	14,865	892	268	21	54	16,100										
2009	14,821	590	52	22	36	15,521										
2010	17,156	362	111	46	25	17,700										
2011	18,214	814	70	6	283	19,387										
2012	17,297	410	93	45	113	17,958	90.3%	15,978	9.6%	1,697	0.1%	25				
2013	20,850	396	36	8	93	21,382	88.4%	17,142	11.4%	2,206	0.2%	39				
2014	25,659	456	97	14	57	26,284	90.4%	16,228	9.4%	1,684	0.3%	45				
2015	29,157	430	29	15	218	29,849	85.9%	18,369	14.1%	3,013	0.0%	0				
2016	21,106	465	52	6	406	22,035	89.3%	23,458	10.8%	2,825	0.0%	3				
2017	20,497	485	10	8	549	21,550	90.1%	26,900	9.7%	2,883	0.2%	66				
2018	20,634	2,763	31	4	45	23,476	90.0%	19,820	10.0%	2,197	0.1%	18				
2019	22,302	1,025	22	3	59	23,411	96.2%	20,724	3.7%	804	0.1%	19				
2020	16,337	837	26	7	60	17,266	83.4%	19,579	16.5%	3,878	0.1%	19				
2021	20,481	610	3	6	32	21,132	79.0%	18,485	21.0%	4,909	0.1%	16				
2022	17,489	994	45	16	60	18,603	75.9%	13,098	24.1%	4,159	0.1%	9				
2023	20,640	791	6	11	19	21,468	70.8%	14,951	29.2%	6,175	0.0%	6				
5-yr. Avg. 2018-2022	19,448	1,246	25	7	51	20,778	80.2%	14,919	19.8%	3,676	0.0%	7				
10-yr. Avg. 2013-2022	21,451	846	35	9	158	22,499	69.0%	14,813	31.0%	6,655	0.0%	1				
							77.8%	16,207	22.1%	4,560	0.1%	12				
							84.1%	19,031	15.9%	3,452	0.1%	16				

¹This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through **1/22/2024**. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 2. Glennallen Subdistrict Federal Reported and Expanded Subsistence Fishery Harvests¹

Year	Percentage		Sockeye		Chinook		Coho		Steelhead/Rainbow Trout		Other Species		All Species Total		
	Permits Issued	Reported	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²
2002	201	80.6	7,944	9,856	564	700	81	100	62	77	35	43	10,777		
2003	221	83.3	13,616	16,346	554	665	152	182	13	16	20	24	17,233		
2004	261	78.9	17,704	22,439	636	806	152	193	12	15	12	15	23,468		
2005	267	85.8	19,973	23,279	331	386	47	55	6	7	32	37	23,763		
2006	254	87.4	16,711	19,120	430	492	28	32	15	17	32	37	19,698		
2007	281	84.3	15,225	18,060	569	675	34	40	6	7	21	25	18,808		
2008	269	81.4	11,347	13,940	705	866	148	182	17	21	44	54	15,063		
2009	274	85.0	11,836	13,925	494	581	34	40	19	22	31	36	14,605		
2010	269	87.7	12,849	14,651	300	342	64	73	39	44	22	25	15,136		
2011	277	87.7	14,163	16,145	701	799	53	60	5	6	248	283	17,293		
2012	275	92.0	14,461	15,718	371	403	78	85	40	43	104	113	16,363		
2013	273	89.0	15,834	17,789	331	372	24	27	6	7	62	70	18,264		
2014	315	90.5	21,603	23,877	399	441	23	25	10	11	52	57	24,412		
2015	325	92.3	24,695	26,753	384	416	13	14	7	8	201	218	27,408		
2016	320	82.8	15,884	19,181	369	446	9	11	5	6	332	401	20,044		
2017	338	85.2	15,691	18,415	399	468	1	1	7	8	468	549	19,442		
2018	335	91.3	15,287	16,736	2,432	2,662	0	0	4	4	41	45	19,448		
2019	343	90.1	15,873	17,620	849	942	0	0	3	3	53	59	18,624		
2020	376	90.7	11,456	12,632	682	752	0	0	6	7	54	60	13,450		
2021	355	86.5	13,117	15,168	434	502	0	0	5	6	28	32	15,708		
2022	297	83.5	12,133	14,530	743	890	2	2	13	16	48	57	15,495		
2023	290	78.6	11,291	14,361	500	636	0	0	9	11	15	19	15,028		
5-yr. Avg. 2018-2022	341	88	13,573	15,337	1,028	1,150	0	0	6	7	45	51	16,545		
10-yr. Avg. 2013-2022	328	88	16,157	18,270	702	789	7	8	7	8	134	155	19,230		

¹ This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through 1/22/2024. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 3. Chitina Subdistrict Federal Reported and Expanded Subsistence Fishery Harvests¹

Year	Percentage of Permits Reported		Sockeye			Chinook			Coho			Steelhead/Rainbow Trout			Other Species			All Species		
	Issued	Reported	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Harvest Estimate ²	
																				Harvest
2002	122	73.0	575	788	33	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N.A.	N.A.	833	
2003	100	82.0	717	874	18	22	70	85	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N.A.	N.A.	982	
2004	109	76.1	1,215	1,597	7	9	18	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N.A.	N.A.	1,629	
2005	76	84.2	1,265	1,502	22	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,529	
2006	75	85.3	1,379	1,617	13	15	20	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,655	
2007	98	88.8	929	1,046	26	29	40	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,120	
2008	82	85.4	789	924	22	26	74	87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,036	
2009	68	91.2	817	896	8	9	11	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	917	
2010	92	85.9	2,061	2,399	17	20	33	38	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,459	
2011	85	85.9	1,766	2,056	13	15	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,081	
2012	89	93.3	1,332	1,427	6	6	8	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,443	
2013	99	90.9	1,999	2,199	17	19	8	9	1	1	1	1	1	10	11	0	0	0	2,239	
2014	113	94.7	1,549	1,636	14	15	68	72	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,726	
2015	111	92.8	2,231	2,404	13	14	14	15	7	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,441	
2016	128	80.5	1,549	1,925	16	20	33	41	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	0	0	0	1,991	
2017	132	79.5	1,454	1,828	12	15	7	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,852	
2018	132	91.7	3,144	3,430	92	100	28	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,561	
2019	181	90.6	4,053	4,473	75	83	20	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,578	
2020	215	89.3	3,249	3,638	76	85	23	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,749	
2021	194	91.8	4,765	5,193	99	108	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,304	
2022	177	87.6	2,555	2,918	91	104	37	42	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	3,066	
2023	196	83.7	5,077	6,068	130	155	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,229	
5-yr. Avg. 2018-2022	180	90	3,553	3,930	87	96	22	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,052	
10-yr. Avg. 2013-2022	148	89	2,655	2,964	51	56	24	27	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	3,051	

¹This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through 1/22/2024. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.

Table 4. Batzulnetas Federal Reported and Expanded Subsistence Fishery Harvests¹

Year	Percentage		Sockeye		Chinook		Other Species	
	Permits Issued	of Permits Reported	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²	Reported Harvest	Harvest Estimate ²
	2002	1	100.0	208	208	0	0	0
2003	1	100.0	164	164	0	0	0	0
2004	1	100.0	182	182	0	0	0	0
2005	1	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2006	0	N.A.	0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	1	100.0	1	1	0	0	0	0
2008	1	100.0	1	1	0	0	0	0
2009	0	N.A.	0	0	0	0	0	0
2010	3	100.0	106	106	0	0	0	0
2011	3	66.7	9	14	0	0	0	0
2012	3	66.7	101	152	0	0	0	0
2013	3	100.0	862	862	5	5	12	12
2014	2	100.0	146	146	0	0	0	0
2015	4	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2016	0	N.A.	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017	1	100.0	254	254	2	2	0	0
2018	1	100.0	468	468	0	0	0	0
2019	1	100.0	209	209	0	0	0	0
2020	1	100.0	67	67	0	0	0	0
2021	1	100.0	120	120	0	0	0	0
2022	2	100.0	41	41	0	0	0	0
2023	2	100.0	211	211	0	0	0	0
5-yr. Avg. 2018-2022	1	100.0	181	181	0	0	0	0
10-yr. Avg. 2013-2022	2	100.0	217	217	1	1	1	1

¹ This table reflects entries to the online database from 2011 through **1/22/2024**. Data prior to 2011 relies on NPS records. Data for all years subject to changes resulting from entry error corrections.

² Expanded Harvest estimate derived from a basic, direct ratio expansion based on the percentage of permits that reported.



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: Regulatory Affairs Division Chief
(907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456
subsistence@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.

1011 East Tudor Road MS-121 • Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199 • subsistence@fws.gov • (800) 478-1456 / (907) 786-3888
This document has been cleared for public release #0605132015.

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.

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This document has been cleared for public release #0605132015.

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.

Boards Support Section
Board of Fisheries
Art Nelson, Executive Director
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
(907) 465-4110



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Alaska Board of Fisheries

**THE ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES CALLS FOR PROPOSED CHANGES
IN THE SUBSISTENCE, PERSONAL USE, SPORT, GUIDED SPORT, AND COMMERCIAL
FISHING REGULATIONS FOR
SOUTHEAST AND YAKUTAT FINFISH AND SHELLFISH, PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
FINFISH AND SHELLFISH, AND ALL OTHER SHELLFISH STATEWIDE.**

PROPOSAL DEADLINE – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2024

The Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) is accepting proposed changes to the subsistence, personal use, sport, guided sport, and commercial fishing regulations for Southeast and Yakutat finfish and shellfish, Prince William Sound finfish and shellfish (including the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River), and all other shellfish statewide for consideration by the board in its 2024–25 meeting cycle. The board may also consider subsistence proposals for other topics (including other areas) under the subsistence proposal policy, 5 AAC 96.615, if proposals are submitted within this deadline and the board determines they meet the criteria in either 5 AAC 96.615(a)(1) or (2).

To ensure the proposal book is finished in advance of the board meetings, the board sets Wednesday, April 10, 2024, as the proposal deadline.

Proposals may be submitted online, email, mail or fax at:

Online: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.forms>

Mail: ADF&G, Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Fax: (907) 465-6094

Proposals must be received by Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at the Boards Support Section office in Juneau. A postmark is **NOT sufficient for timely receipt.**

Interested parties are encouraged to submit proposals at the earliest possible date. The Board of Fisheries proposal form, including the on-line proposal form, is available at the Boards Support website, <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.forms>. Proposal forms are also available at any Boards Support office. Proposals must be submitted on the current approved form. Any additional information provided with the form, such as tables, Internet web links, photos, or charts, will not be included in the proposal book.

Boards Support Section
Board of Fisheries
Art Nelson, Executive Director
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
(907) 465-4110



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner
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www.adfg.alaska.gov

The completed proposal form must contain a contact telephone number and address. Email addresses are appreciated. Please print or type the individual's or organization's name as appropriate.

The board encourages individuals or organizations to communicate and coordinate with others in the development of proposals. Local Advisory Committees (AC) are an excellent resource and the collective knowledge and experience within ACs may help improve proposals, increasing their chances of success. Here is a link to ACs across the state <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.acregion>. You can also work with area staff from the Department of Fish and Game to better understand the current regulations, and what the effect(s) of your proposed change may be. Area staff contact information can be found on the ADF&G website here: <https://adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=contacts.main>.

All proposals are reviewed prior to publication. Language that is emotionally charged detracts from the substance of the proposal and may draw opposition not germane to the element(s) of the proposal. Such language may be edited or deleted prior to publication. **Proposals that do not meet the call will not be accepted.** Proposals must pertain to the region, species, and uses in this call. If duplicative proposals are received by the same individual or group only one will be included in the proposal book.

Proposals published in the proposal book will be referenced with the appropriate Alaska Administrative Code citation and include a brief description of the action requested.

Proposal books are sent to advisory committees and the public for review and comment. Proposals are online at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.proposalbook>. Those submitting proposals are encouraged to review the proposal book at their earliest convenience to ensure proposals are included and accurate. Noted errors and omissions should be reported to Boards Support immediately. The public is encouraged to visit the Board of Fisheries website frequently for news and information regarding the upcoming cycle.

Responsive proposals received by the proposal deadline will be considered by the Board of Fisheries during the October 2024 through March 2025 meeting schedule.

For more information, please contact the Alaska Board of Fisheries Executive Director, Art Nelson, at (907) 267-2292.



United States Department of the Interior NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439
907 822 5234 Fax 907 822 3281
<http://www.nps.gov/wrst>



WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE COPPER RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON RESEARCH UPDATE FEBRUARY 2024

Mark Miller, Ecologist and Research Coordinator
(907) 302-1373 or memiller@nps.gov

OVERVIEW

- Due to concerns triggered by recent low returns and subsistence harvests of Copper River (CR) sockeye salmon, Wrangell-St. Elias and several collaborators have initiated research projects to investigate (1) factors that may be affecting the status of CR sockeye salmon stocks, (2) recent patterns in Upper CR subsistence harvests, and (3) potential assessment tools and management strategies for ensuring resilience of CR sockeye salmon stocks and subsistence harvests to changing environmental conditions. Collaborators include the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), Prince William Sound Science Center (PWSSC), the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC), and the Native Village of Eyak (NVE).

PROJECT SUMMARIES

- **Project 1: Evaluating Genetic Analysis of Copper River Sockeye Salmon Stocks for In-Season Decision Making (NPS funding \$440k; leveraged ADF&G funding \$347k).** The 2022 fishing season marked the first year of a 3-year (2022-2024) research project that will evaluate (1) the use of in-season genetic analysis as a tool for estimating the genetic stock identification (GSI) of sockeye salmon harvests in Copper River fisheries, and (2) the potential for in-season GSI estimates to inform real-time fisheries management decisions designed to ensure long-term health and sustainability of Copper River salmon stocks and associated fisheries. In-season stock composition information has the potential to aid fishery managers in

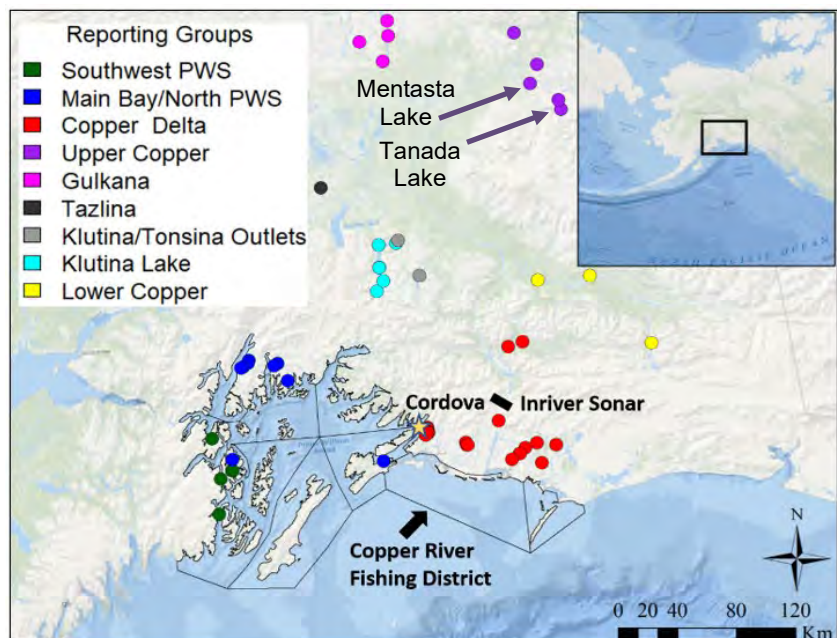


Figure 1. Prince William Sound and the Copper River watershed located in southcentral Alaska. Points indicate sockeye salmon populations in the genetic baseline and associated stock reporting groups. (Figure courtesy of Kyle Shedd and Stormy Haight, ADF&G.)

minimizing the risk of fishery management decisions to small and/or sensitive stocks while maximizing sustainable harvest of abundant stocks. This research project was developed in partnership with ADF&G and in 2022 was implemented by ADF&G collaborators from the Gene Conservation Laboratory, Division of Commercial Fisheries, and Division of Sport Fish. AITRC contributed to the project in 2023 by assisting ADF&G with the collection of samples from fisheries in the Chitina and Glennallen subdistricts. In 2024, AITRC will contribute in the same way with funding support from NPS. Although the funding for this project only covers the genetic analysis of 2022–2024 harvests, the State of Alaska is looking into securing federal disaster relief funds to continue GSI analyses of Copper River sockeye salmon harvests in 2025–2027.

2022-2023 Sampling, Analysis, & Reporting.

Samples collected in 2022 were analyzed postseason and a summary report of the GSI estimates was submitted to the NPS in March 2023. The 2022 GSI estimates also were presented at AITRC’s annual meeting at the Buster Gene Memorial Hall in Gakona Village on April 28, 2023.

2023-2024 Sampling, Analysis, & Reporting.

In 2023, a total of 3,886 genetic tissue samples were collected from sockeye salmon harvested in the Copper River District commercial, Chitina

Subdistrict personal use, and Glenallen Subdistrict subsistence fisheries. For the commercial fishery, 1,936 samples were collected during 11 fishing periods from May 15 (period 1) to July 19 (period 16), with period sample sizes ranging from 59 to 200 fish. Harvest samples from the first six weeks of the fishery were analyzed in season to produce GSI estimates representing each statistical week’s harvest. Weekly inseason estimates were provided to ADF&G and NPS staff within less than one week of sample collection. Harvest samples from weeks 26–29 will be analyzed postseason to produce 4 sets of GSI estimates representing the harvest from each statistical week. For the personal use fishery (902 samples collected from June 15 to August 19) and subsistence fishery (1,048 samples collected from June 9 to August 18), monthly GSI estimates were provided inseason to ADF&G and NPS staff. Postseason analyses of samples collected from the commercial fishery after week six are on track to be completed by February 28, 2024. A summary report of all 2023 preliminary GSI results will be provided to ADF&G and Wrangell-St. Elias fisheries managers in March, 2024, and a summary of 2023 results also will be presented at the AITRC annual meeting in Gakona Village in April 2024. Again in 2024, this project will include a public education component



Figure 2. A. AITRC fisheries technician clipping the axillary fin (source of genetic material) from a sockeye salmon harvested in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery, 6/18/2022. B. ADF&G Fishery Biologist Andy Barclay clipping the axillary fin from a sockeye salmon harvested in the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery, 6/18/2022. C. Axillary fins sampled from sockeye salmon harvested in the personal use fishery.

focusing on the development and use of scientific information for fisheries decision making. The final estimates for all three years of this study will be published in an ADF&G Fishery Manuscript Report by the fall of 2025.

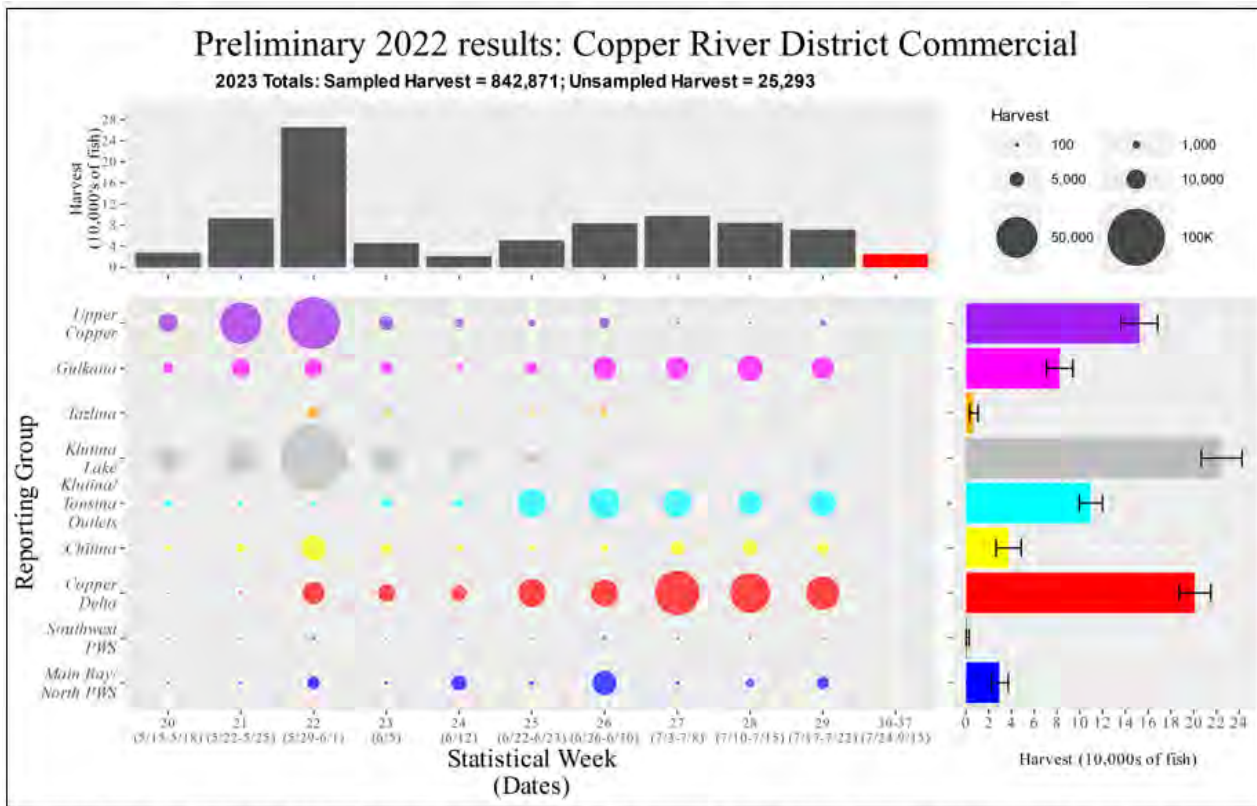


Figure 3. Preliminary 2022 Copper River District commercial sockeye salmon harvest estimates by reporting group and statistical week as presented during the April 2023 AITRC meeting. Key: The bubble plot shows stock-specific harvest estimates (means) of sockeye salmon for all statistical weeks (x-axis) and 9 reporting groups (y-axis). Circle sizes represent the stock-specific harvest for a statistical week (see legend, top right of figure), with reporting groups denoted by color. The top bar plot shows the total harvest during each week, with unsampled weeks in red. The right bar plot shows the stock-specific harvest and 90% credibility intervals for the entire year across all sampled weeks.

- Project 2: Describing and Modeling Factors Affecting Migratory Success of Copper River Sockeye Salmon (NPS funding \$140k).** In August of 2022, collaborators from PWSSC and UAF began a 3-year project (2022-2024) that aims to develop a better understanding of how environmental changes in the Gulf of Alaska and the Copper River watershed may impact spawning migration success by sockeye salmon under future ecological scenarios. Supported by NPS funding, NVE collaborators joined the project in 2023 and will contribute data from 2005-2009 telemetry studies and additional subject-matter expertise. The research team is working to integrate prior radio-telemetry data on Copper River sockeye salmon spawning migration with several long-term ADF&G data sets to develop forecasting models for sockeye salmon that will incorporate new information from a recently available hydrological model developed by the U.S. Geological Survey. Preliminary results from this project also will be presented at the AITRC annual meeting in Gakona Village in April 2024. In addition to PWSSC, UAF, and NVE, collaborators include ADF&G and Wrangell-St. Elias.
- Project 3: Assessing Subsistence Harvests in Upper Copper River Communities (NPS funding \$371k).** Field work for this 3-year project (2023-2025) began in March 2023 and involves the collection of baseline information on the harvest and use of subsistence resources in four communities

on the upper Copper River through implementation of comprehensive household surveys and a smaller number of ethnographic interviews. Residents of Chistochina and Mentasta were surveyed in early 2023, and Slana and Nabesna Road residents will be surveyed in 2024. Communities included in this project were most recently surveyed in either 2009 or 2010, and periodic repetition of the same survey methods provides important data for informing subsistence management. As part of the baseline community harvest assessment, interviewers ask questions designed to assess whether residents of these communities are meeting their subsistence needs, especially for salmon, and the severity of the impacts if needs are not being met. If Copper River salmon resources are *not* meeting their needs, the ethnographic interviews explore the impacts this has had on individual households and the community at large. Recent Tribal consultations suggest that up-river communities may not be meeting their subsistence needs, and the federal in-season manager for the Copper River fishery needs additional information for considering potential management decisions. Collaborators include ADF&G, AITRC, and Wrangell-St. Elias. (For more information, see the **SUBSISTENCE AND ANTHROPOLOGY REPORT**.)

- **Project 4: Examining Health Metrics of Copper River Sockeye Salmon Stocks to Inform Management Decision Making (NPS funding \$318k; other leveraged funding from ADF&G, UAF, PWSSC, and NPS projects \$1,364k).** Also in 2023, a fourth project was begun by UAF and PWSSC in partnership with ADF&G, building upon the stock composition project (no. 1, above) and other ongoing research projects conducted by UAF and PWSSC. This 3-year project (2023-2025) will characterize the health and energetic status of genetically determined sockeye salmon stocks (based on genetic stock reporting groups, Fig. 1) to develop a better understanding of *escapement quality*. Aspects of escapement quality include body size and energy content (important factors that affect migratory success), diversity and loads of pathogens, sex ratio, and the distribution of spawners among different stocks in the watershed. Differential survival of Copper River sockeye salmon stocks due to changes in body size, energy content, physiological quality, migration difficulty, and harvest pressure may leave some stocks more vulnerable to environmental changes than others, potentially increasing mortality risk. A better understanding of health metrics that correlate with stock-specific vulnerability and mortality risk can help fishery managers mitigate these issues by adjusting gear size, run timing closures, or harvest limits to ensure all stocks achieve sustainable escapement levels, while also providing adequate harvest opportunities. In addition to UAF, PWSSC, and ADF&G, collaborators include Wrangell-St. Elias and AITRC. This project also includes an interpretive component that builds upon the educational outreach associated with the stock composition project.



Figure 4. ADF&G fisheries technician using a “fish fat meter” to non-destructively measure fat content of a sockeye salmon harvested in the Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fishery, 7/7/2023.

- **Project 5: Managing Harvest of Salmon in a Changing Copper River, Alaska (NPS funding \$419k).** A fifth Copper River project will be implemented in 2025-2026 as part of a larger project made possible by \$6.2M of Inflation Reduction Act funding awarded to the NPS Alaska Region. The

Alaska-wide NPS project aims to mitigate environmental uncertainties and improve subsistence food security through co-stewardship arrangements with subsistence users and enhanced NPS technical capacity for understanding changing ungulate and salmon populations. The associated Copper River sockeye salmon project, “Managing Harvest of Salmon in a Changing Copper River,” will be led by PWSSC and UAF in partnership with Wrangell-St. Elias. These partners will convene a diverse group of subject matter specialists to envision the future of Copper River sockeye salmon harvest opportunities and their biological, ecological, and social implications. Other working group participants are expected to include ADF&G, AITRC, NVE, academic institutions in addition to UAF, the U.S. Geological Survey, and other subject matter experts. Working group sessions will be held in the Copper River Basin and Cordova to facilitate engagement with stakeholders in both locations. Project participants will synthesize existing data and build a predictive model that considers the full life-cycle of Copper River sockeye salmon and includes combined effects of changing ocean and river conditions resulting from climate change. The model will be structured in a way that will enable assessments of biological, economic, and social consequences of potential management decisions relating to harvest (Fig. 5.).

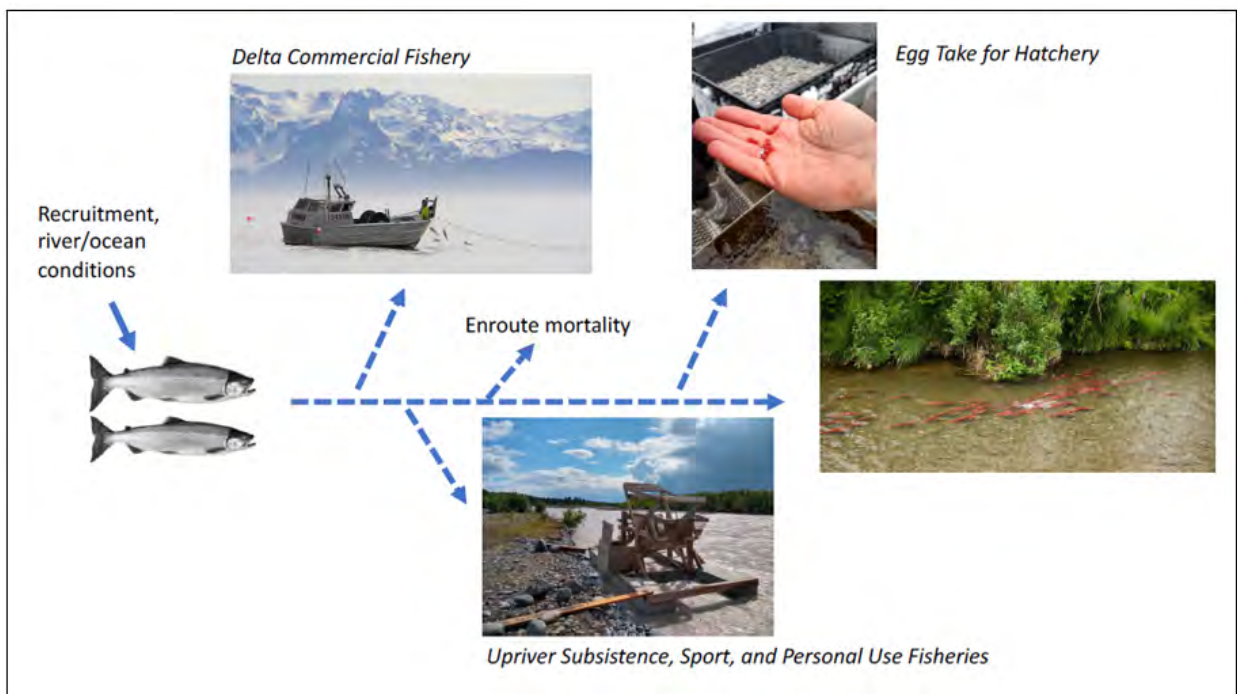


Figure 5. A simple illustration of the various fates of Copper River sockeye salmon during their spawning migration.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439



WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK & PRESERVE WILDLIFE REPORT

Winter 2024

Kyle Cutting, Wildlife Biologist, 907.379.0252, kyle_cutting@nps.gov

2023 UPDATES AND 2024 FIELD SEASON

Mentasta Caribou Herd

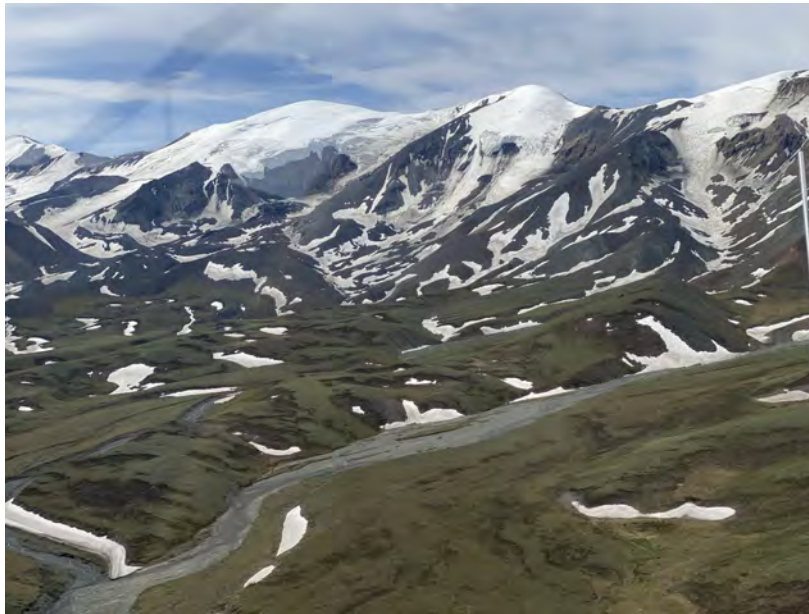
- From a June-2023 population survey, survey results indicate the Mentasta caribou herd is between 200 and 375 adults, lower than the 2021 estimate of 390 to 630 adults.
- In September 2023, NPS deployed 17 new GPS collars on female caribou. A total of 24 collared remain on living female caribou – 8 females remain within the park while 16 migrated primarily to the north out of the park boundary.
- In June 2024, we will conduct a post-calving population survey, and will retrieve collars from previously deceased animals.
- In September 2024, we will deploy at least 10 additional collars on female caribou from the Mentasta herd that will help with management decision making.



NPS/Matt Cameron: A small band of caribou in the Mentasta Herd, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve, 2023.

Chisana Caribou Herd

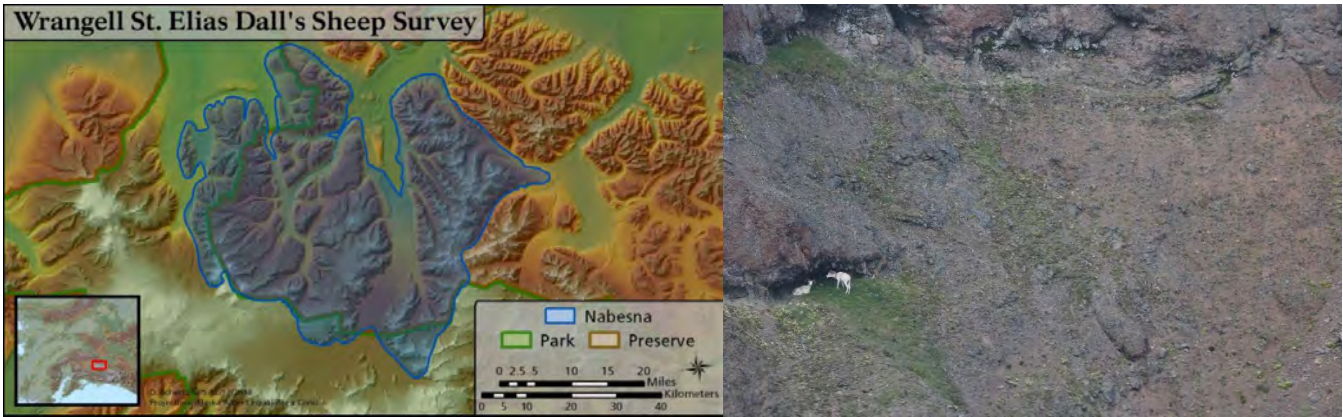
- From an October-2023 composition survey of the Chisana caribou herd, results indicate a calf/100 cow ratio of 24.7 and a bull/100 cow ratio of 37.0.
- The 3-year running calf/100 cow is 19.2, while the bull/100 cow ratio is 44.3.
- In February and May 2024, we will conduct a mortality flight of Chisana caribou equipped with a VHF transmitter to determine if any collared animals died during the fall and early-winter seasons.
- In September 2024, we will deploy 20 additional collars on Chisana caribou.
- Twelve of the currently 15 (80%) GPS collared individuals are wintering in Alaska, which is opposite from last winter where 82% of the same individuals wintered in Yukon.
- We recently submitted a proposal for NPS funding to evaluate spatial/temporal overlap, distribution, and abundance of 3 caribou herds that co-occur during the federal hunt (when open) within the park. If successful that work would be conducted no sooner than 2026.



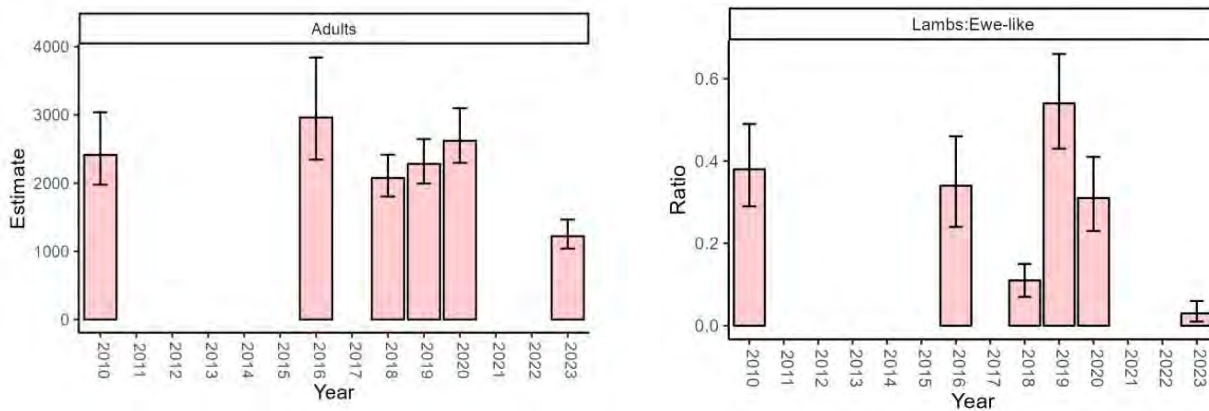
NPS/Kyle Cutting: Photo showing melting permafrost in caribou summer range. Melting permafrost can be seen by the bare soil and subsiding ground surface in the lower half of the photo, Chisana, Wrangell-St. Elias.

Dall's Sheep

- NPS surveyed sheep populations in the northern Wrangell between July 20-22nd, 2023.
- A total of fifty-eight 9.3-mile long transects were surveyed in sheep habitat.
- The provisional estimate for adult sheep is 1,221 (95% Credible Interval: 1040-1465), indicating a 40-60% decline in adult sheep since 2021 in the northern Wrangell Mountains (see map below).
- The lamb to ewe-like ratio is the lowest since 2010 (see figure below).
- A proposal was recently submitted for NPS funding to compare changes in sheep abundances across a pronounced south-to-north snow gradient across the park to investigate how snow, and other environmental factors, are contributing to changes in spatial patterns in Dall's sheep abundance. If successful that work would be conducted no sooner than 2026.



NPS/Kyle Cutting: Nabesna sheep survey area on the north side of Mt. Wrangell (left figure), and Dall's sheep rams bedded under an overhanging cliff, Cone Ridge, Wrangell-St. Elias.



Total adult Dall's sheep (left figure) and reproductive success (right figure) from distance sampling estimates, 2010-2023, Nabesna study area (3,303 km²), Wrangell-St. Elias. Error bars indicate level of certainty in population estimates of sheep (displayed as 95% Bayesian statistical credible intervals).

Moose

- NPS and ADF&G surveyed moose populations across a 2.5 million acre area from Chisana River to McCarthy (see below figure of survey area) between November 14-29th, 2023.
- Preliminary population estimates will be discussed at the SRC meeting.
- A spatial model was built to describe moose abundance which found a positive influence of shrubs and mid-elevation areas and a negative influence of steep slopes and amount of shaded area on northerly and easterly areas.

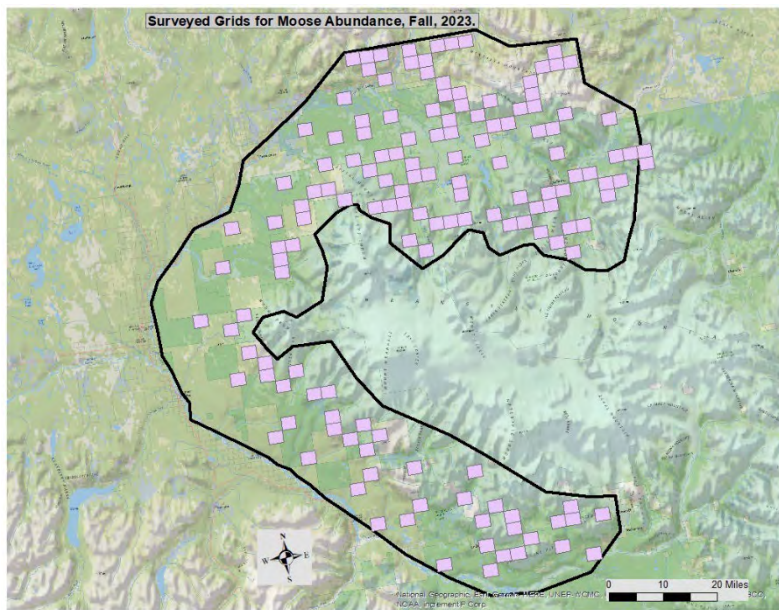


Figure. Grids where moose were counted using airplanes, fall, 2023, Wrangell-St. Elias. Each grid is roughly 2.5 mi² and survey followed the Geospatial Population Estimator (GSPE) protocol.



NPS/Kyle Cutting: Bull moose sparring, November, 2023, Wrangell-St. Elias.

Golden and Bald Eagles

- Golden Eagle Field surveys began in mid-March (2023) to evaluate the population status of migrating golden eagles on northern Wrangell Mountains (led by biologists from Denali).
- 1,400 golden eagles were counted from mid-March to early-April, 2023.
- Golden eagle field surveys will occur in 2024 during late-March and early-April to record migration numbers, and to capture birds to test for HPAI (bird flu).
- Bald Eagle monitoring occurred for the 19th year on the Copper and Chitina Rivers. A total of 330 nests were visited of which 125 were occupied by nesting adults.

- Long-term data have shown that nests in the upper Copper River are more successful than nests further downriver.
- In 2024, Bald eagle nest site surveys will occur to evaluate dietary patterns in response to access to salmon and water turbidity in the Copper River.



NPS/Kyle Cutting: Photo of adult golden eagle male following capture, Mentasta Mountains, March, 2023, Wrangell-St. Elias.



United States Department of the Interior

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WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE SUBSISTENCE AND ANTHROPOLOGY REPORT SPRING 2024

Barbara Cellarius, Cultural Anthropologist and Subsistence Coordinator
(907) 822-7236 or barbara_cellarius@nps.gov

Amber Cohen, Cultural Anthropologist, (907) 822-7284 or amber_cohen@nps.gov

Federal subsistence harvest reports for Wrangell-St. Elias in 2023

In 2023, Wrangell-St. Elias and Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge staff issued a total of 208 federal subsistence hunting permits for moose, goat, and sheep for Wrangell St. Elias lands in Units 11 and 12. The most frequently issued permit was for the fall moose hunt in Unit 11 Remainder (FM1106). A total of 140 permits were issued for this hunt in 2023, 59 people hunted, and 10 moose were harvested. (See Table 1 for additional details).

Wrangell St. Elias and the Alaska Department for Fish and Game both issue a joint state/federal permit (RM291) for the moose hunt for portions of Unit 11 and 12 in the northern part of the park. For the 2023 season, a total of 297 permits were issued, 72 people hunted, and 10 moose were harvested—all by federally qualified subsistence users (see Table 2).

Upper Copper River communities surveyed about subsistence harvests

In February 2024, Slana and Nabesna Road residents were surveyed about their harvest and use of wild fish, wildlife and plant resources. A data review meeting was held for Mentasta in December 2023, and data review meetings will be held for Chistochina and Slana in 2024. Once data from all communities has been analyzed, a technical paper will be produced. These surveys are conducted in collaboration with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission.

New project funding to address critical food security needs

The National Park Service Alaska Region has been awarded approximately \$6.2M of Inflation Reduction Act funding for a project that aims to mitigate environmental uncertainties and improve subsistence food security through co-stewardship arrangements with subsistence users and enhanced NPS technical capacity for understanding changing salmon and ungulate populations. Approximately \$1.3M will be allocated to Wrangell-St. Elias. Examples of partnership activities or projects include (1) subsistence fish and wildlife monitoring projects and/or harvest monitoring and reporting; (2) enhancing the capacity of rural communities to engage effectively with federal and state regulatory programs and advocate for regulatory changes that ensure stability of access to subsistence foods; (3) Indigenous knowledge projects for documenting and incorporating in management decision making; (4) subsistence-related Tribal-NPS liaison programs; and (5) youth and elder programs for transmission of knowledge across generations.

Table 1. Federal Subsistence Registration Permits in Wrangell-St. Elias NPP, 2013-2023

Unit 11 Goat (FG1101)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	30	31	29	22	26	30	27	27	20	8	6
Individuals Hunting	7	10	6	4	3	8	8	4	2	1	2
Animals Harvested	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Success Rate (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Unit 11 Remainder Moose -- Fall Hunt in part of unit outside of the RM291 hunt area (FM1106)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	146	123	128	138	132	144	107	156	140	139	140
Individuals Hunting	78	70	70	75	72	85	45	68	71	66	59
Animals Harvested	12	10	13	16	13	12	10	15	11	15	10
Success Rate (%)	15.4	14.3	18.6	21.3	18.1	14.1	22.2	22.1	15.5	22.7	16.9

Unit 11 Moose -- Winter Hunt in southern part of unit (FM1107) (Began in 2014)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	n/a	32	17	20	14	11	8	8	7	10	21
Individuals Hunting	n/a	3	3	4	4	2	2	1	2	4	1
Animals Harvested	n/a	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Success Rate (%)	n/a	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0	25.0	100.0

Unit 11 Elder Sheep (FS1104)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	20	25	25	32	34	38	34	38	26	25	22
Individuals Hunting	5	10	8	12	13	18	14	12	12	10	11
Animals Harvested	0	1	3	3	4	1	1	1	3	2	3
Success Rate (%)	0.0	10.0	37.5	25.0	30.8	5.6	7.1	8.3	25.0	20.0	27.3

Unit 11 Elder/Junior Sheep (FS1103)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	1	2	1
Individuals Hunting	-	-	-	1	2	0	-	0	0	0	0
Animals Harvested	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Success Rate (%)	-	-	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-

Unit 12 Caribou -- Chisana (FC1205) -- Closed in 2022 due to conservation concerns

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	9	11	11	8	8	6	4	7	5	n/a	6
Individuals Hunting	7	8	7	8	3	3	3	4	1	n/a	4
Animals Harvested	3	2	0	1	0	2	1	3	0	n/a	2
Success Rate (%)	42.9	25.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	66.7	33.3	75.0	0.0	n/a	50.0

Table 1. Federal Subsistence Registration Permits in Wrangell-St. Elias NPP, 2013-2023 (cont.)

Unit 12 Elder Sheep (FS1201)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	9	9	7	11	12	14	14	12	13	8	11
Individuals Hunting	3	5	3	6	4	8	6	4	6	4	5
Animals Harvested	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Success Rate (%)	0.0	20.0	0.0	16.7	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Unit 12 Elder/Junior Sheep (FS1204)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Individuals Hunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Animals Harvested	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Success Rate (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Federal Subsistence Permit Database.

* 2023 data are as of 1/16/2024.

Note: Success rate is calculated based on the number of individuals hunting, not total permits issued.

Table 2. Joint State-Federal Permits for the Fall Moose Hunt in Portions of Units 11 and 12 (RM291), 2013-2023

All Hunters

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	246	246	250	277	244	250	277	314	282	340	297
Individuals Hunting	151	191	142	179	145	155	158	187	162	197	153
Animals Harvested	19	20	20	23	19	23	21	27	24	16	10
Unit 11 Harvest	10	11	9	17	15	17	14	12	16	12	5
Unit 12 Harvest	9	9	11	6	4	6	7	15	8	4	5
Success Rate (%)	12.6	10.5	14.1	12.8	13.1	14.8	13.3	14.4	14.8	8.1	6.5

Federally Qualified Subsistence Users

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
Permits Issued	135	154	168	176	155	171	173	173	167	175	169
Individuals Hunting	74	92	89	106	88	108	102	107	93	88	72
Animals Harvested	15	15	14	18	15	19	21	14	16	10	10
Success Rate (%)	20.3	16.3	15.7	17.0	17.0	17.6	20.6	13.1	17.2	11.4	13.9

Source: Email from ADF&G Tok on 1/12/2024

* 2023 data are as of 1/12/2024.

Note: Success rate is calculated based on the number of individuals hunting, not total permits issued.

Data for Federally Qualified Subsistence Users excludes records with ambiguous residency (e.g., urban mailing address and rural resident community or local mailing address and non-local resident community).

Traditional Knowledge, Ethnographic, and Subsistence Projects:

Work is underway on several traditional knowledge, ethnographic and subsistence projects, with most of the work being carried out by project partners through cooperative agreements.

Ahtna Ethnographic Overview and Assessment (EOA): This baseline cultural anthropology study includes an annotated inventory of ethnographic and related materials relevant to the Ahtna Athabascans; a narrative synopsis of our current understanding of these materials, with a focus on connections to Wrangell-St. Elias; and a discussion of data gaps and additional research needs. It is being carried out through a cooperative agreement with the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission and is now scheduled for completion in late summer or early fall 2024.

Documenting Traditional Ecological Knowledge about Historic Dynamics of Caribou Herds Associated with Wrangell-St. Elias: This project includes a literature review/data mining regarding traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and historic information (e.g., seasonal movement patterns; and herd sizes, interactions, and habitat relations) of the three caribou herds (Chisana, Mentasta and Nelchina) that spend time in Wrangell-St. Elias as well along with new traditional knowledge interviews about caribou with knowledgeable long-term residents. Topics covered in the new interviews include long-term knowledge about seasonal movement patterns, herd sizes, and observations regarding caribou in relation to the larger ecosystem and the other caribou herds. The information will be summarized in a report designed to inform management decisions about caribou. This project is being carried out through a cooperative agreement with the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission and is scheduled for completion in late spring 2024.

Quantify Changing Environmental Conditions to Inform Decisions about Allowed Means of Winter Access to Subsistence Resources: This project quantifies temporal and spatial patterns of river freeze-up, winter ice conditions, and break-up using remote sensing data and evaluates the implications of changing environmental conditions for temporal and spatial patterns of winter subsistence access in the park. The analysis focuses on the Copper and Chitina Rivers. In addition to a recently published peer-reviewed journal article, an interpretive product for the general public will be produced. This project is being completed through a cooperative agreement with the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) and is scheduled for completion in 2024. An outreach project is currently being discussed.

Dall Sheep Local Knowledge Interviews: Anthropology and wildlife staff at Wrangell-St. Elias are working on a series of local knowledge interviews about Dall sheep with long-time hunters and others with a long history of observing sheep in Wrangell-St. Elias. One interview took place in summer 2023 and additional interviews are planned for this spring. A summary report will be prepared once the interviews are complete. Funding for this work comes from the NPS Alaska Subsistence Advisory Council and Alaska Geographic.

Report updated 1/22/2024

Spring 2024 SRC Update from Interpretation, Education, and Public Affairs

For more information, contact Carrie Wittmer, Public Affairs Officer and Team Lead for Interpretation and Education, carrie_wittmer@nps.gov or 907-822-7255.

Youth Opportunities, Jobs, and Visitor Services for 2024

The Division of Interpretation, Education, and Public Affairs received \$600,000 of external funding to provide quality customer service to visitors and local residents in addition to delivering meaningful programs for local youth.

Ahtna Youth Interns Learn Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Welcome Visitors to the Ahtna Cultural Center

This project, funded through the federal Indian Youth Services Program and Bureau of Indian Affairs was a success in 2022 and 2023 and is back for 2024! Four internship positions and a program coordinator position will soon be open on the Ahtna Inc. employment website. Interns work at the Ahtna Cultural Center, attend traditional ecological knowledge culture camps, and learn customary and traditional uses of the landscape.



Youth Conservation Corps 2024

7 youth between the ages of 16-18 can participate in Wrangell's Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) trail maintenance program. The YCC position announcement will be out soon. Information on how to apply is available on the website at [Youth Conservation Corps \(YCC\) - Wrangell - St Elias National Park & Preserve \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/youth-conservation-corps-ycc-wrangell-st-elias-national-park-preserve). YCC participants complete building and grounds maintenance projects; help at Junior Angler events; and work on trail projects. (YCC Alumni Alice and Zach join Ranger Diane for local festival fun. Photo Credit: NPS.

Other Youth Programs in 2024!

118 community members joined Wrangell Institute for Science and the Environment (WISE), NPS, and other agency staff for the 2024 Winter Fun Day in January. More opportunities to engage youth are coming this spring and summer. Chosen Frozen activities will be held in March; and Junior Ranger tables will be available at local summer events, including the Yakutat Tern Festival; Earth Discovery Day, Copper River Stewardship Program, and the Youth Environmental Summit.

(Children build survival shelters and learn about the park at Winter Fun Day. Photo Credit: NPS.)



Visitor Services 2024

- Copper Center Visitor Center opens May 10th; last day Sept. 15th, 7 days/week 9-5; Theater and Exhibit Hall open, ranger services, and Alaska Geographic sales
- Kennecott Visitor Services begin May 24th; last day Sept. 6th; service days and times to-be-determined; ranger services and Alaska Geographic sales
- Slana Ranger Station opens May 24th; last day September 21st; 7 days/week 9-5; ranger services and Alaska Geographic sales
- Chitina Ranger service days and times to-be-determined



Still Looking for Locals for the Interpretation and Education Staff in 2024

Many of the seasonal employees, interns, volunteers and youth conservation corps staff this coming summer will be from the local area – help us hire locally! Local staff provide visitors with first-hand knowledge of the area and have unique perspectives and insights into life in Alaska. We still have Student Conservation Association and Volunteer opportunities open for this summer. (Amber and Diane work at a job fair to recruit locally for summer employment. Photo Credit: NPS/Cohen.)

Get Up-to-date Information about WRST

Join the “Locals Listserv!” Request a subscription by emailing wrst_public_affairs@nps.gov and putting “Locals Listserv” in the subject line. Members receive timely news releases, Cultural Heritage Highlights, Research in the Park information, Photos from the Field, and Community Newsletters. Members can unsubscribe at any time.

Interested in knowing what’s going on in the park? Follow us on our digital media platforms:



Park Website
www.nps.gov/wrst



Facebook
facebook.com/WrangellStEliasNPP



Twitter
twitter.com/WrangellStENPS



Instagram
instagram.com/wrangellstenps

[Flickr](https://www.flickr.com/photos/wrst/) ([flickr.com/photos/wrst/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/wrst/))

[YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/WrangellNPS/) ([youtube.com/user/WrangellNPS/](https://www.youtube.com/user/WrangellNPS/))

Fall 2024 Regional Advisory Council Meeting Calendar

Last updated 11/6/2023

Due to travel budget limitations placed by Department of the Interior on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of Subsistence Management, the dates and locations of these meetings will be subject to change.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug. 18	Aug. 19 Window Opens	Aug. 20	Aug. 21	Aug. 22	Aug. 23	Aug. 24
	NSRAC (Utqiagvik)					
Aug. 25	Aug. 26	Aug. 27	Aug. 28	Aug. 29	Aug. 30	Aug. 31
		YKDRAC (Bethel)				
Sep. 1	Sep. 2 Labor Day Holiday	Sep. 3	Sep. 4	Sep. 5	Sep. 6	Sep. 7
		KARAC (Unalaska)				
Sep. 8	Sep. 9	Sep. 10	Sep. 11	Sep. 12	Sep. 13	Sep. 14
Sep. 15	Sep. 16	Sep. 17	Sep. 18	Sep. 19	Sep. 20	Sep. 21
Sep. 22	Sep. 23	Sep. 24	Sep. 25	Sep. 26	Sep. 27	Sep. 28
Sep. 29	Sep. 30	Oct. 1	Oct. 2	Oct. 3	Oct. 4	Oct. 5
		WIRAC (Galena)				
Oct. 6	Oct. 7	Oct. 8	Oct. 9	Oct. 10	Oct. 11	Oct. 12
		EIRAC (Tanana)				
				SCRAC (Anchorage)		
Oct. 13	Oct. 14 Columbus Day Holiday	Oct. 15	Oct. 16	Oct. 17	Oct. 18	Oct. 19
Oct. 20	Oct. 21	Oct. 22	Oct. 23	Oct. 24	Oct. 25	Oct. 26
		SEARAC (Ketchikan)			SPRAC (Nome)	
Oct. 27	Oct. 28	Oct. 29	Oct. 30	Oct. 31	Nov. 1 Window Closes	Nov. 2
		BBRAC (Dillingham)				
	NWRAC (Ketchikan)					