

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

36 CFR Part 242

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 100

RIN 1018-AJ25

Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska, Subpart C and Subpart D—2004–2005 Subsistence Taking of Wildlife Regulations

AGENCIES: Forest Service, Agriculture; Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule would establish regulations for hunting and trapping seasons, harvest limits, methods, and means related to taking of wildlife for subsistence uses during the 2004–2005 regulatory year. The rulemaking is necessary because Subpart D is subject to an annual public

review cycle. When final, this rulemaking would replace the wildlife taking regulations included in the “Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska, Subpart D—2003–2004 Subsistence Taking of Fish and Wildlife Regulations,” which expire on June 30, 2004. This rule would also amend the Customary and Traditional Use Determinations of the Federal Subsistence Board and the General Regulations related to the taking of wildlife.

DATES: The Federal Subsistence Board must receive your written public comments and proposals to change this proposed rule no later than October 24, 2003. Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Regional Councils) will hold public meetings to receive proposals to change this proposed rule on several dates starting from September 9, 2003–October 14, 2003. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for additional information on the public meetings including dates.

ADDRESSES: You may submit proposals electronically to Subsistence@fws.gov. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for file formats and other information about

electronic filing. You may also submit written comments and proposals to the Office of Subsistence Management, 3601 C Street, Suite 1030, Anchorage, Alaska 99503. The public meetings will be held at various locations in Alaska. See SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for additional information on locations of the public meetings.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Chair, Federal Subsistence Board, c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attention: Thomas H. Boyd, Office of Subsistence Management; (907) 786–3888. For questions specific to National Forest System lands, contact Steve Kessler, Regional Subsistence Program Manager, USDA, Forest Service, Alaska Region, (907) 786–3592.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Public Review Process—Regulation Comments, Proposals, and Public Meetings

The Federal Subsistence Board (Board), through the Regional Councils, will hold meetings on this proposed rule at the following locations and on the following dates in Alaska:

Region 1—Southeast Regional Council	Craig	October 5, 2003.
Region 2—Southcentral Regional Council	Talkeetna ..	October 7, 2003.
Region 3—Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Council	King Cove ..	September 18, 2003.
Region 4—Bristol Bay Regional Council	Dillingham ..	September 29, 2003.
Region 5—Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Council	Wasilla	October 12, 2003.
Region 6—Western Interior Regional Council	Wasilla	October 12, 2003.
Region 7—Seward Peninsula Regional Council	Nome	September 25, 2003.
Region 8—Northwest Arctic Regional Council	Kotzebue	October 2, 2003.
Region 9—Eastern Interior Regional Council	Wasilla	October 14, 2003.
Region 10—North Slope Regional Council	Barrow	September 9, 2003.

We will publish notice of specific dates, times, and meeting locations in local and statewide newspapers prior to the meetings. We may need to change locations and dates based on weather or local circumstances. The amount of work on each Regional Council’s agenda will determine the length of the Regional Council meetings. The agenda of each Regional Council meeting will include a review of wildlife issues in the Region, discussion and development of recommendations on fishery proposals for the Region, and staff briefings on matters of interest to the Council.

Electronic filing of comments (preferred method): You may submit electronic comments (proposals) and other data to Subsistence@fws.gov. Please submit as either WordPerfect or MS Word files, avoiding the use of any special characters and any form of encryption.

During November 2003, we will compile the written proposals to change Subpart D hunting and trapping regulations and customary and traditional use determinations in Subpart C and distribute them for additional public review. A 30-day public comment period will follow distribution of the compiled proposal packet. We will accept written public comments on distributed proposals during the public comment period, which is presently scheduled to end on January 5, 2004.

We will hold a second series of Regional Council meetings in February and March 2004, to assist the Regional Councils in developing recommendations to the Board. You may also present comments on published proposals to change hunting and trapping and customary and traditional use determination regulations to the Regional Councils at those winter meetings.

The Board will discuss and evaluate proposed changes to this rule during a public meeting scheduled to be held in Anchorage in May 2004. You may provide additional oral testimony on specific proposals before the Board at that time. At that public meeting, the Board will then deliberate and take final action on proposals received that request changes to this proposed rule.

Please Note: The Board will not consider proposals for changes relating to fish or shellfish regulations at this time. The Board will be calling for proposed changes to those regulations in January 2004.

The Board’s review of your comments and wildlife proposals will be facilitated by you providing the following information: (a) Your name, address, and telephone number; (b) The section and/or paragraph of the proposed rule for which you are suggesting changes; (c) A statement explaining why the change is necessary; (d) The proposed wording change; (e) Any additional