

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Forest Service****36 CFR Part 242****DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR****Fish and Wildlife Service****50 CFR Part 100****RIN 1018-A189****Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska, Subpart C and Subpart D—2004–05 Subsistence Taking of Fish and Shellfish Regulations****AGENCIES:** Forest Service, Agriculture; Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule would establish regulations for fishing seasons, harvest limits, methods, and means related to taking of fish and shellfish for subsistence uses during the 2004–05 regulatory year. The rulemaking is necessary because Subpart D is subject

to an annual public review cycle. When final, this rulemaking would replace the fish and shellfish taking regulations included in the “Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska, Subpart D—2003–04 Subsistence Taking of Fish and Wildlife Regulations,” which expire on February 29, 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 fish and shellfish.

DATES: The Federal Subsistence Board must receive your written public comments and proposals to change this proposed rule no later than March 28, 2003. Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Regional Councils) will hold public meetings to receive proposals to change this proposed rule from February 11, 2003–March 20, 2003. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for additional information on the public meetings.

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 Ken Thompson, 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) will hold meetings on this proposed rule at the following locations in Alaska:

Region 1—Southeast Regional Council	Ketchikan	February 25, 2003.
Region 2—Southcentral Regional Council	Anchorage	March 4, 2003.
Region 3—Kodiak/Aleutians Regional Council	Old Harbor	March 19, 2003.
Region 4—Bristol Bay Regional Council	Dillingham	February 27, 2003.
Region 5—Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Regional Council	Chevak	March 6, 2003.
Region 6—Western Interior Regional Council	Aniak	March 18, 2003.
Region 7—Seward Peninsula Regional Council	Unalakleet	February 11, 2003.
Region 8—Northwest Arctic Regional Council	Kotzebue	February 26, 2003.
Region 9—Eastern Interior Regional Council	Nenana	March 11, 2003.
Region 10—North Slope Regional Council	Barrow	February 19, 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.

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.

We will compile and distribute for additional public review during May 2003 the written proposals to change Subpart D fishing regulations and customary and traditional use determinations in Subpart C. 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 June 11, 2003.

We will hold a second series of Regional Council meetings in September and October 2003, to assist the Regional Councils in developing recommendations to the Board. You may also present comments on published proposals to change fishing and customary and traditional use determination regulations to the Regional Councils at those fall meetings.

The Board will discuss and evaluate proposed changes to this rule during a public meeting scheduled to be held in Anchorage, December 2003. You may provide additional oral testimony on specific proposals before the Board at that time. The Board will then deliberate and take final action on proposals received that request changes to this proposed rule at that public meeting.

Please Note: The Board will not consider proposals for changes relating to hunting or trapping regulations at this time. The Board will be calling for proposed changes to those regulations in August 2003.

The Board’s review of your comments and fish and shellfish 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 your change is being suggested; (c) A statement explaining why the change is necessary; (d) The proposed wording change; (e) Any additional information you believe will help the Board in evaluating your proposal. Proposals that fail to include the above information, or proposals that are beyond the scope of authorities in § __.24, Subpart C and §§ __.25, __.27, or __.28, Subpart D, may be rejected. The Board may defer review and action on some proposals if workload exceeds work capacity of staff, Regional Councils, or Board. These deferrals will be based on recommendations of the affected Regional Council, staff members, and on the basis of least harm to the subsistence user and the resource involved. Proposals should be specific to customary and traditional use