



Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of the Interior (DOI) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) are committed to partnering on a nation-to-nation basis with Tribes to receive input on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking related to adding members to the Federal Subsistence Board.

(<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2024-03604>).

The Federal Subsistence Management Program is a joint effort between DOI and USDA and these regulations are located in two different titles of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): The USDA regulations are at title 36, "Parks, Forests, and Public Property," and the DOI regulations are at title 50, "Wildlife and Fisheries," at 36 CFR 242.1-28 and 50 CFR 100.1-28, respectively.

This proposed rule would revise the regulations concerning the composition of the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) by adding three public members nominated or recommended by federally recognized Tribal governments, requiring that those nominees have personal knowledge of and direct experience with subsistence uses in rural Alaska including Alaska Native subsistence uses, defining requirements used for the selection of the Board Chair, affirming the Secretaries' authority to replace members from the Board, and affirming the Secretaries' responsibility and oversight regarding Board decisions while incorporating a ratification requirement.

The DOI and USDA are conducting a Tribal consultation as listed below and will accept oral and written comments.

We are seeking input, including on the following:

1. Are federally recognized Tribal governments the only groups that should nominate/recommend public board members that possesses the qualifications identified in this proposed rule? Should Alaska Native Corporations and other entities also be included as entities to nominate/recommend public board members, so long as the nominees possess personal knowledge of and direct experience with subsistence uses in rural Alaska (including Alaska Native subsistence uses)?
2. Would it be preferable for federally recognized Tribes to nominate/recommend only two of the three new public board members?
3. How should the Secretaries solicit and receive nominations/recommendations? Should the Secretaries broadly solicit nominations or recommendations from federally recognized Tribal governments, or should the Secretaries identify as a matter of their sole discretion one or more specific federally recognized Tribal governments?
4. Is the proposed quorum of six appropriate with the addition of the three new public board members, or should it be increased?

We also invite comment on other issues relating to the proposed rule, including whether public board members should have the ability to appoint alternates and possible approaches to establishing term limits on public board members.

Please note that the Tribal consultation will be closed to the press and the public to protect confidential information that may be discussed during the sessions. We look forward to speaking with you at one or more of the following sessions:

Date	Time	Location	Notes - Connectivity
May 20, 2024	3:30pm - 5:30pm Eastern/ 11:30am-1:30pm Alaska	Virtual	Register in advance for this meeting: https://tinyurl.com/yzmdfxhb

We also welcome your written comments, which should be submitted by email to consultation@bia.gov by 11:59pm ET on **Thursday, June 20, 2024**.

If you have any questions regarding this effort, please contact Meghan Bishop, Senior Counselor to the Assistant Secretary- Indian Affairs, via email at meghan.bishop@bia.gov or 202-208-7163. We look forward to receiving your input on this matter.

Sincerely,



Dr. Homer Wilkes
Undersecretary, Natural Resources and Environment



Chad VanOrmer
Acting Regional Forester, Alaska



Bryan Newland
Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs