



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Fish and Game

Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Board of Game

RC 411

1255 West 8th Street  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526  
Main: 907.465.4110  
Fax: 907.465.6094

DRAFT January 23, 2018

Eugene R. Peltola Jr., Acting Assistant Regional Director  
Office of Subsistence Management  
US Fish & Wildlife Service  
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 211  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Subject: Office of Subsistence Management Funding Priorities

Dear Mr. Peltola:

The State of Alaska Boards of Fisheries and Game are in receipt of the attached January 3 letter from the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) outlining its funding plans related to attending state board meetings. Specifically, OSM does not plan to attend the remaining non-Anchorage meetings.

Those of us working within the state government in recent years are no strangers to managing in a constrained fiscal environment. While the Board's Support program sustained a 7.5% reduction in its FY15 budget, it was made clear through a directed public input process conducted in 2016 that Alaskans viewed the board process as critical and should be held status quo. Due to this input neither the Walker Administration nor the Legislature sought a reduction in the board's budget. While state government in its entirety sustained a 38% reduction in its budget from FY15 through FY18, Boards Support budget remained generally stable.

We hope this highlights the importance Alaskans put towards this process. Please understand that the OSM liaison position is a critical part of this process. Both the boards and public find significant value in having OSM at the table and available for advice. With an increasingly complex regulatory and jurisdictional environment, coordination between our regulatory systems is critical to minimizing user confusion. OSM comments on proposals prior to meetings are valuable, but cannot take the place of real time, in-person support.

Again, we recognize how difficult it can be to prioritizing budgets, but the travel cost to attend these meetings – possibly \$8,000 in total - appears well worth the cost. We ask you to reconsider this change in policy

Sincerely,

Ted Spraker, Chair  
Board of Game

John Jensen, Chair  
Board of Fisheries

cc: Sam Cotten, Commissioner/ADF&G  
Greg Siekaniec, Regional Director, Alaska Region, USF&WS  
Steve Wackowski, Senior Alaska Advisor, Department of Interior  
Anthony Christianson, Federal Subsistence Board Chair  
Charles Brower, Federal Subsistence Board Public Member  
Rhonda Pitka, Federal Subsistence Board Public Member - Beaver  
Lynn Polacca, Acting Regional Director - Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Karen Mouritsen, Acting State Director - Bureau of Land Management  
Bert Frost, Regional Director - National Park Service  
Beth Pendleton, Regional Forester - U.S. Forest Service