

Rust, Stephani D -FS

From: Grewe, Nicole R -FS
Sent: Sunday, May 5, 2019 6:07 PM
To: Pence, Sitka - FS
Subject: AKRR - Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Meeting, 3.21.19 - Project Record Notes

Date: March 21, 2019

Time: 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Location: Nolan Center (296 Campbell Drive), Wrangell, Alaska

Attendees: Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council members, related agency staff, forest supervisor, and interested members of the public.

Context:

The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (SERAC) conducted its first public meeting of 2019 at the Nolan Center in Wrangell (March 19 – 21, 2019). This meeting was open to the public. SERAC meetings are generally intended for federal agency staff to provide updates and for the council to develop proposals to change federal subsistence hunting and trapping regulations and discuss other issues related to subsistence across Southeast Alaska. At this particular meeting, the SERAC requested a general update on the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project.

Information Provided:

While a formal presentation was not made nor were handouts circulated, Regional Economist Nicole Grewe provided the following oral comments with the support of Forest Supervisor Earl Stewart:

1. Thank You – Appreciate the opportunity to provide an update of the Alaska Roadless Rulemaking Project.
2. Outline – Provide brief overview of following content with discussion invited throughout.
3. Overview – January 2018 – August 2018 (22 month project), reallocation of 9.3 M acres, started September 2018, 3 primary rulemaking steps, scoping meetings during fall 2018, PDEIS during February, DEIS during summer 2019, and final rule decided June 2020.
4. Current Status – 7 cooperators, PDEIS to USDA, and awaiting preferred alternative.
5. Next Steps – Refining DEIS, awaiting preferred alternative selection, crafting final rule, summer DEIS public meetings and subsistence hearings, DEIS to FEIS work, and final rule during June 2020.
6. Public Engagement – G2G consult ongoing, speaker opportunities, significant resources applied to carry out engagement with stakeholder groups, and DEIS and subsistence hearings during summer 2019.
7. DEIS Notables – land management categories, half dozen alternatives, reliance on regionwide quantitative and qualitative analysis, programmatic versus project analysis, regulation oriented analysis, targeting efficiency and expediency of NEPA analysis, and focus on differentiating between alternatives to make sound decision.

SERAC Letter:

Nicole Grewe also responded to recent SERAC letter noting the following concerns. Significant discussion occurred regarding the following substantive points. The Alaska Region has since responded to the SERAC letter with another formal letter:

1. Short Timeframe Criticism – This project is occurring at a time when national priority is to find efficiencies in planning process. To focus more on delivering results than planning.
2. Public Meeting Timing – USDA has prioritized final decision during June 2020. Alaska Region encourages SERAC to schedule a special meeting during summer 2019.
3. Request for Alternatives – Alternatives not available until release to public, however, Alaska Region will continue to be as transparent as possible.

4. ANILCA 810 Determination – Was not provided for 2001 RACR, project versus programmatic decision, and not required by interpretation of ANILCA language.

Next Steps:

The SERAC established a subcommittee to closely follow the Alaska Roadless Rule project. Nicole Grewe volunteered to remain in contact with the subcommittee and SERAC staff during the intermediary months – and, also committed to providing information as soon as available. SERAC will call a special meeting as soon as DEIS release date is known.