

Subsistence fish regs out

The Federal Subsistence Board has released draft proposed federal subsistence fisheries regulations to its ten regional advisory councils for discussion during meetings this month. The Board will consider regional council recommendation prior to publishing proposed regu-

lations for public review. It is uncertain when the Board will publish proposed regulations, however Congress has prohibited the publication and implementation of final regulations prior to October 1997.

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"While the Board is sensitive to the limitations imposed by Congress, it recognizes that any potential changes in the management of subsistence fisheries are critically important in rural Alaska," states Mitch Demientieff, chair of the Federal Subsistence Board. "The insight of regional council members will be an important contribution in the preliminary planning of a modified program to ultimately meet the Court's ruling in the Katie John case."

The Board prepared the draft regulations as a first step in preparing to assume increased jurisdiction over subsistence fisheries management in Alaska as

a result of the December 1995 Ninth Circuit Court decision in the Katie John case. This decision would extend federal subsistence management jurisdiction over certain inland navigable waters in Alaska beyond the scope of the current Federal Subsistence Management Program.

The ten regional councils of the Board were established under Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 and provide recommendations to the Board on regulations, policies, management plans and other matters affecting subsistence uses in their respective regions.

Some of the councils have already met;

other are scheduled to meet as shown below.

Feb. 18-19 Bristol Bay Region

- Naknek

Feb. 19-20 Western Interior Region

- Holy Cross

Feb. 25-26 Kodiak/Aleutian Islands
Region - Kodiak

Feb. 28 Northwest Arctic Region

- Kotzebue

If you would like more information about these public meetings or about the status of modified federal management jurisdiction of subsistence fisheries in Alaska, please call (800) 478-1456 or (907) 786-3888. Hearing-impaired individuals may telephone (907) 786-3309.