

D. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

As required by The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538), the Coast Guard certifies that this rule will not result in an annual expenditure of \$100,000,000 or more (adjusted for inflation) by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector.

E. Environment

We have analyzed this rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023–01, Rev. 1, associated implementing instructions, and Environmental Planning COMDTINST 5090.1 (series), which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), and have determined that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment.

This rule is a special local regulation. It is categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L61 of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 1.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 100

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard amends 33 CFR part 100 as follows:

PART 100—SAFETY OF LIFE ON NAVIGABLE WATERS

■ 1. The authority citation for part 100 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 46 U.S.C. 70041; 33 CFR 1.05–1.

■ 2. Add § 100.T07–1221 to read as follows:

§ 100.T07–1221 Special Local Regulation; Ponce Harbor, Ponce, PR.

(a) *Location.* This special local regulation applies to all waters Bahia de Ponce, from surface to bottom, as follows: Race area 1: within the box from Point 1 at 17° 58'17.05" N, –66°37'28.42" W, thence north to Point 2 at 17°58'36.69" N, –66°37'25.53" W, thence west to Point 3 at 17°58'34.22" N, –66°39'6.06" W, thence southwest to Point 4 at 17°58'19.80" N, –66°39'16.43" W, and along the shoreline back to the beginning Point 1. Race Area 2: within a radius of 1,200 yards from Point 17°57'2.56" N, –66°36'56.99" W.

(b) *Definitions.* As used in this section, *designated representative*

means a Coast Guard Patrol Commander, including a Coast Guard coxswain, petty officer, or other officer operating a Coast Guard vessel and a Federal, State, and local officer designated by or assisting the Captain of the Port Sector San Juan (COTP) in the enforcement of the regulated area. *Participant* means all persons and vessels registered with the event sponsor as a participant in the race.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) All non-participants are prohibited from entering, transiting through, anchoring in, or remaining within the regulated areas described in paragraph (a) of this section unless authorized by the COTP or their designated representative.

(2) To seek permission to enter, contact the COTP or the COTP's representative on VHF–FM channel 16 or by telephone at (787) 729–2380. Those in the regulated area must comply with all lawful orders or directions given to them by the COTP or the COTP's designated representative.

(d) *Enforcement periods.* This section will be enforced on October 30, 2026, through November 1, 2026, and on November 14, 2026, through November 15, 2026, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. daily.

Luis J. Rodríguez,

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port Sector San Juan.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

36 CFR Part 13

[NPS–AKRO–NPS0043368; PPAKAKROD0–PPMPSAS1Y.Y00000–PX.XAKRO27C8.00.1]

RIN 1024–AE96

Alaska; Wildlife, Harvest, and Access

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The National Park Service (NPS) amends its regulations for hunting, fishing, trapping, and other harvest-related activities in Alaska and the procedures used to restrict public use and access in Alaska park areas, including for subsistence. This rule restores the regulatory framework adopted to implement the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA) in 1981 that guided management for more than three decades, with targeted updates to that framework in response to public comments and further agency review. The restored framework recognizes the

complementary and distinct roles of the State of Alaska, the Federal Subsistence Management Program, and the NPS in managing public uses and resources in Alaska park areas. The rule removes regulatory changes made in 2015, 2017, and 2024 that departed from that framework. These amendments are consistent with Executive Orders 14153 and 14192 and Secretary of the Interior's Orders 3422 and 3447.

DATES: This rule is effective November 18, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Comments received on the proposed rule are available on <https://www.regulations.gov> in Docket No. NPS–2026–0034.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Don Striker, Regional Director, Alaska Regional Office, 240 West 5th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501; phone (907) 227–6163; email: AKR_Regulations@nps.gov. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This final rule updates and restores regulations for Alaska park areas to the framework in place from 1981 through amendments beginning in 2015. A table summarizing this restoration is included in the “Final Rule” section below. Detailed explanations are included in that section and in the “Background” and “Summary and Responses to Public Comments” sections below.

This rule does not alter the federal subsistence priority established in ANILCA. Federal Subsistence Management Program regulations and the rural preference for qualified users on federal public lands in ANILCA Title VIII are unchanged. What this rule means for subsistence users:

- Permit requirements for collecting animal parts for handicrafts—removed. The 2017 changes added a mandatory permit for collecting antlers, bones, and similar materials to create handicrafts for barter and customary trade. This rule removes the permit requirement; collection for these purposes remains allowed.

- Restrictions for harvesting bears over bait for subsistence uses—removed. Bait and other restrictions added in 2017, which limited subsistence users to using natural or legally harvested remains, are removed; regulations issued by state and federal boards govern these uses unless the statutory

criteria and procedures in ANILCA are met for a closure.

- Public hearings before closures affecting fish and wildlife harvest—restored. The requirement to hold a hearing in the affected vicinity before closures affecting the harvest of fish and wildlife was removed in 2015. This rule restores that local hearing requirement.

- Notice requirements for local rural residents—restored and updated. The requirement to post signs and/or provide notice in local newspapers, radio broadcasts, posted maps, and post office notifications was eliminated in 2015. The final rule restores these locally focused notice requirements, which remain essential tools for reaching remote communities with limited connectivity, and updates the regulatory text to ensure posted signs are required in addition to (not in the place of) published notice.

This rule does not expand or restrict NPS closure authorities beyond what Congress has provided for Alaska. It does not affect state management authority over Alaska's fish and wildlife resources or affect the authority of the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture under Title VIII of ANILCA, including the authority that the Secretaries delegated to the Federal Subsistence Board. The rule does not reopen areas closed to harvest by statute.

Background

In 1980, ANILCA established 10 national preserves, two national monuments, and eight new or expanded national parks across Alaska. Since enactment, the NPS has managed these units of the National Park System (System) under a regulatory framework that recognizes multiple, complementary state and federal authorities. The State of Alaska manages fish and wildlife populations on all lands under state regulations and requirements in the Alaska Constitution; the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture (through the Federal Subsistence Management Program) currently administer the subsistence taking and uses of fish and wildlife on federal public lands, as set forth in ANILCA Title VIII; and the NPS manages park areas in Alaska according to ANILCA provisions that expressly allow subsistence and sport hunting, fishing, and trapping in national preserves and subsistence harvest in certain specified parks and monuments according to applicable state and federal law. As part of its management of these areas, the NPS may close areas or restrict activities according to Alaska-specific criteria and procedures,

including consultation and public participation requirements. See ANILCA Titles II, VIII, and XIII; see also *Alaska Dep't of Fish & Game v. Fed. Subsistence Bd.*, 139 F.4th 773, 779, 783–84 (9th Cir. 2025).

These provisions reflect Congress's comprehensive and intentionally negotiated balance among competing uses, authorities, interests, and values. In enacting ANILCA, Congress affirmed the State of Alaska's existing authorities to manage Alaska's fish and wildlife resources and the NPS's authority to manage for specific unit purposes, with constraints on the discretion each manager has to close or restrict uses authorized in ANILCA.

Implementing regulations adopted in 1981 (46 FR 31836), 1983 (48 FR 30252), and 1986 (51 FR 31619) reflected this structure and governed Alaska park areas for more than three decades, recognizing state management authorities, the Secretary of the Interior's (Secretary) responsibilities in ANILCA Title VIII, including in parks and monuments that are closed to hunting except for subsistence, and NPS's authority to close areas and restrict activities in accordance with Alaska-specific criteria and procedures, one of numerous unique management directives for NPS in ANILCA. This final rule restores the regulatory framework that governed Alaska park areas from ANILCA's passage until the discretionary shift in 2015 to advance administration policy goals. The rule reinstates regulations that reflect ANILCA's balanced compromise and were designed to implement this unique, Alaska-specific approach.

Legal Authority

The proposed rule outlined the legal authorities supporting this action. See, e.g., 91 FR 11483, 11484 (Mar. 10, 2026). In short, ANILCA established a clear, Alaska-specific framework in which national preserves are managed as units of the System while expressly allowing the harvest of fish and wildlife resources under applicable state and federal law. Congress affirmed the State of Alaska's responsibility for managing fish and wildlife resources except as provided in Title VIII, limited the NPS's involvement in regulations implementing Title VIII, and set out the statutory criteria and procedures for closures and restrictions in Alaska park areas, particularly for subsistence uses and other authorized harvest activities.

This framework guided the regulations adopted in the 1980s that successfully carried out ANILCA's unique requirements for more than three decades, until policy-driven

interpretations in 2015 and 2017 departed from its balanced mandates for Alaska. This framework continues to guide NPS in restoring that proven regulatory approach and is the baseline for evaluating each of the amendments.

Regulatory Development

The proposed rule explores the history that led to this rule in significant detail. See, e.g., 91 FR 11484–87. In short, ANILCA expanded or established park areas in Alaska within an overarching framework for managing federal lands and interests that differs from more general and nationwide frameworks in important respects. This means System units in Alaska have a unique management structure for preserving nationally significant natural, cultural, scenic, and wildlife resources as well as continuation of the Alaska way of life, including harvesting renewable natural resources for food, clothing, shelter, familial and cultural ties; access and transportation for traditional activities and connecting communities; long-term use, occupancy, and storage; and other uses Congress determined should continue in Alaska subject to the provisions in ANILCA.

Since ANILCA, the Department of the Interior (DOI) and NPS have implemented these provisions in regulations at 36 CFR part 13, 43 CFR part 36, and 43 CFR part 51 (formerly at 50 CFR part 100) as follows.

1981–2014 (the established framework): NPS regulations adopted shortly after ANILCA's passage included Alaska-specific provisions for hunting, fishing, trapping, subsistence, access, and public participation. Regulations recognized complementary state and federal authorities and provided transparent criteria and procedures for closures affecting authorized uses.

2015: Starting with a proposed rule in 2014, NPS regulations for Alaska were amended to depart from the established framework. The 2015 amendments introduced narrower interpretations of ANILCA's provisions to support broader application of System-wide prohibitions; recharacterized statutory closure criteria as broader “factors”; reduced public engagement requirements; altered notice and consultation procedures; and removed cross-references to applicable state and DOI authorities. These changes marked a shift toward greater consistency with management practices outside Alaska and broader discretion for unit managers, rather than the Alaska-specific approach required by ANILCA.

Public comments on the 2015 changes included significant opposition from Alaska Native Tribes, villages,

corporations, and organizations. The Alaska Federation of Natives adopted Resolution 14–42 finding the rulemaking “overreaching, vague, and indiscriminate” noting it “would further criminalize Alaska Native traditional resource management practices.” Tanana Chiefs Conference also opposed the rule for its potential impacts on subsistence, member Tribes, and traditional homelands. Many commenters observed there was no consultation or notice before publication and procedural amendments received sparse attention.

2017: The NPS made additional revisions to its Alaska-specific regulations to address subsistence uses of renewable natural resources. Among other things, these changes added a permit requirement for collecting nonedible animal parts for handicrafts; restricted methods and types of bait used in harvesting bears for subsistence; and prohibited collection of live raptor chicks under a falconry permit (preempting state regulation at 5 AAC 92.037).

2020: In a 2020 rulemaking, NPS removed most of the 2015 prohibitions on state-authorized activities including harvesting bears over bait, which was allowed from 2020 through 2024 after being prohibited in 2015; it has been limited for federally qualified subsistence users since 2017. In a lawsuit challenging the 2020 rulemaking, the U.S. District Court noted the 2020 rulemaking principally concerned the relationship between the federal and state management systems and the scope of NPS’s regulatory authority, while the administrative record reflected limited evidence of population-level impacts under state management and the specific harvest practices at issue. *Alaska Wildlife Alliance v. Haaland*, 632 F. Supp. 3d 974, 996–1002 (D. Alaska 2022). The court affirmed the NPS’s decision that the practices reauthorized in 2020, including bear baiting, would not adversely impact populations or interfere with NPS’s statutory obligations. *Id.* at 1002. The 2020 changes did not address the procedural, interpretive, and administrative changes made in 2015 and 2017.

2024: NPS reinstated the prohibition on bear baiting in preserves, attempted to further define “trapping” in ways that are unnecessarily duplicative of the State’s trapping regulations, and added an unnecessary severability provision.

Now: Executive Order 14153 Sec. 3(b)(ix) directed rescission of the 2024 changes and restoration of the regulations adopted in 2020. This rule implements that direction and goes

further to address the changes in 2015 and 2017 that the 2020 rulemaking did not consider.

This rule restores the established Alaska-specific framework, regulatory language, decision criteria, public procedures, and underlying interpretations that implemented Congress’s direction for Alaska park areas from their establishment until the changes in 2015 and 2017. The NPS believes a return to this proven framework more closely reflects Congress’s direction by preserving subsistence uses, local participation, and government coordination, and by providing greater consistency, clarity, and predictability in park administration.

Administrative Direction

As recognized in the proposed rule, 91 FR 11486, this rule’s comprehensive and updated restoration of the pre-2015 regulations is also consistent with current Executive and Departmental policy direction concerning Alaska, regulatory reform, public access, subsistence uses, hunting and fishing, and coordination with state and local partners in managing public lands.

Executive Order 14153 directs federal agencies to review and revise actions affecting Alaska and specifically directs DOI bureaus to consider the cultural significance of hunting and fishing in Alaska, the priority for subsistence in ANILCA, meaningful consultation with state resource agencies, and consistency between hunting and fishing opportunities on federal and state lands. Secretary’s Order 3422 guides implementation through directed actions affecting Alaska and the administration of federal lands and resources. Executive Order 14192 and Secretary’s Order 3447 direct agencies to remove unnecessary regulatory burdens, improve regulatory clarity, and strengthen coordination with state, tribal, territorial, and local partners. The directives in Secretary’s Order 3447 are specific to hunting and fishing on DOI-managed public lands. Restoring the established Alaska-specific framework directly advances all of these directives.

Requests for Action

The proposed rule details the history of requests for action related to the changes in the final rule. See 91 FR 11487. In short, since the 2015 and 2017 changes, stakeholders have consistently raised concerns about those amendments affecting the closure process, public participation, consultation requirements, subsistence uses, permitting requirements, and the relationship between Alaska-specific

regulations and System-wide regulations under ANILCA. Questions regarding the consistency of these amendments with ANILCA and its unique roles for federal and state managers have remained at the forefront of public comments, letters, petitions, and litigation since 2015.

The final rule responds to these concerns through a comprehensive review of the procedural, interpretive, and administrative amendments adopted in 2015 and 2017 that were not reconsidered in the 2020 or 2024 rulemakings. In addition to implementing the direction in Executive Order 14153 to rescind the 2024 rule and restore the 2020 rule, NPS considered, among other things, the May 19, 2025, letter from Safari Club International and the October 10, 2025, Petition for Rulemaking submitted by the Alaska Outdoor Council, which both requested a broader review of the changes that began in 2015 and restoration of the established Alaska-specific provisions that endured for decades before those changes.

Consistent with NPS’s review of ANILCA’s requirements for Alaska, regulatory implementation from 1981 to 2015, the operation of NPS regulations under subsequent amendments, public comments on the proposed rule, and the potential environmental impacts from adopting it, the final rule restores the established regulatory provisions that implemented Congress’s unique direction for Alaska park areas for more than three decades, addressing issues previous rulemakings left unresolved, with updates and clarifications in response to public comments and NPS’s further review.

Finalized Changes

By rescinding these new and modified regulations, the NPS restores the Alaska-specific procedures for restricting activities and closing park areas to public use, entry, and access to the language and procedures in 36 CFR part 13 in effect before the changes made in 2015, which further restores alignments with the Alaska-specific procedures for access in 43 CFR part 36. This rule removes the changes made through the 2015, 2017, and 2024 rulemakings that ultimately reduced public engagement, omitted required consultation with the State, and allowed for discretionary closures without the unique criteria and procedures previously established in the DOI and NPS regulations for Alaska park areas to comply with ANILCA. This rule maintains the NPS’s authority to limit use, entry, and access through those criteria and procedures.

Consistent with *FCC v. Fox Television Stations, Inc.*, 556 U.S. 502, 515–16 (2009), NPS acknowledges its awareness this rule represents a change in position from that taken in the 2015, 2017, and 2024 rules. For the reasons discussed here and in detail in the proposed rule, 91 FR 11489, the NPS concludes this rule: (1) is permissible under ANILCA and the NPS Organic Act, which allow for the state-regulated harvest activities and procedural protections this rule restores; (2) is better than the 2015, 2017, and 2024 rules because it returns to the fixed durational limits, consultation requirements, locally targeted notice and hearing requirements, and other longstanding, Alaska-specific criteria and procedures rather than relying on System-wide standards and electronic notifications; and (3) is supported by good reasons, including public comments from subsistence users and Alaska Native organizations supporting removal of the 2017 permit requirements. The NPS has finalized these conclusions after reviewing public comments and preparing the final rule.

With specified exceptions for unrelated changes, the NPS restores its long-standing Alaska-specific regulations at 36 CFR part 13 by rescinding:

- changes made in 2015 that were not changed in 2020, including,
 - changes to the Alaska-specific closure process, including reduced public engagement, discretionary timelines, and subjective new “factors” beyond the specified criteria for closure in ANILCA,
 - narrowed interpretations of Congress’s balanced mandates for Alaska to support broader application of System-wide prohibitions and policies,
 - removal of references to applicable state and federal authorities, and
 - revisions to § 13.490 that facilitated the 2017 preemption of subsistence uses regulated through state and federal board processes that are open to the public and NPS participation in decision-making, not merely for consultation prior to preemptive action of unlimited duration;
- most changes made in 2017, unless it provides relevant clarification that advances implementation of ANILCA’s balanced mandates for Alaska, including,
 - a more appropriately detailed definition of “customary trade”, and,
 - a definition for “handicraft” as a term used in the definition of “customary trade” with distinguishing features from the referenced definition in DOI regulations; and

- changes made in 2024, in their entirety.

Based on a review of the full record, including comments on the proposed rule, the NPS has determined that reverting to its pre-2015 regulations is a substantial improvement over the changes that began in 2015 that fundamentally altered the unique management framework Alaskans relied on following ANILCA. For the reasons stated above and in the proposed rule, 91 FR 11483, the NPS rescinds the regulatory changes made in 2015 that were not rescinded in 2020; changes made in 2017, with the exception of the definitions for “customary trade” and “handicraft”, which are retained; and the changes made in 2024. The rule also makes targeted updates to reflect subsequent developments, like the relocation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program to the Office of the Secretary and its regulations from 50 CFR part 100 to 43 CFR part 51, and incorporates clarifying revisions in response to public comments.

I. Hunting and Trapping—§ 13.40 (Restored) and § 13.42 (Removed)

The rule restores pre-2015 language governing the harvest of fish and wildlife in national preserves, including the requirement that non-emergency closures to non-subsistence uses become effective only after the superintendent consults with the appropriate state agency and representatives of affected users. Section 13.42, added in 2015 and amended in 2017 and 2024, is deleted in its entirety.

II. Harvesting Bears Over Bait—Restrictions Removed for All Users

NPS acknowledges this aspect of the rule represents a change in position from the 2015, 2017, and 2024 rules, which prohibited or limited using bait to harvest bears. Consistent with *FCC v. Fox Television Stations, Inc.*, 556 at 515–16, NPS provides the following analysis.

(a) *Authority.* Allowing the harvest of bears over bait under state regulations in effect since 1982 is permissible under ANILCA and the NPS Organic Act. ANILCA expressly allows hunting in national preserves under applicable state and federal law. The district court confirmed NPS’s conclusion that the 2020 allowance would not adversely impact wildlife populations or contravene NPS’s statutory duties. *Alaska Wildlife Alliance*, 632 F. Supp. 3d at 993. No new data has emerged since that decision indicating this regulated harvest activity will have population-level effects. The NPS maintains management authority,

including closure authority under the Alaska-specific criteria and procedures restored in this rule, consistent with ANILCA to address any issues that might arise.

(b) *Improvements.* The 2015 and 2024 prohibitions were based primarily on public safety concerns and NPS policy favoring natural wildlife behaviors and ecosystem dynamics. On review, neither basis supports categorical prohibition. Regarding public safety, NPS estimates no more than 10 bears per year (2 black bears, up to 8 brown bears) will be harvested over bait across all national preserves, consistent with historical levels from 1982 through 2015 and from 2020 through 2024. State regulations require permits; minimum setbacks from roads, trails, dwellings, and public facilities; registration of bait stations with the State; and completion of a bear baiting clinic. 5 AAC 92.044. The Alaska Board of Game has stated it has no information on bear baiting causing public safety concerns and found no fact-based support for that concern in any state that allows the practice. The one study cited in the 2024 rule (Herrero 2018) is, on further review, relevant only to human-bear conflicts at campgrounds and other congregation points, not remote bait stations. NPS is not aware of safety incidents from bait stations established in unauthorized locations within Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve. NPS Management Policies § 8.2.5 recognizes that not all hazards in areas managed as natural environments can be eliminated; a categorical prohibition is not required to manage residual risk. Regarding natural conditions, the district court’s 2022 decision confirmed that bear baiting does not contravene NPS’s statutory duties. The Alaska Board of Game has stated that bear baiting tends to focus harvest on mature bears while avoiding female and immature bears, making it compatible with sustainable population management.

(c) *Reliance interests.* The 2015 prohibition was in effect from 2015 to 2020, lifted from 2020 to 2024, and reimposed from 2024 to the present. This demonstrates that reliance on any particular rule was limited after 2015. Conservation interests supporting the 2015 and 2024 prohibitions do not have a sufficient reliance interest to override the analysis above. The NPS will continue to monitor harvest and visitor safety and retains full authority to, among other things, close specific areas if a documented concern arises meeting the criteria in § 13.50 and § 13.490.

(d) *Factual findings.* To the extent the 2015 amendments expressed concern that state regulations do not adequately

address public safety risks from bear baiting, state requirements for permits, setbacks, and educational clinics partially mitigate those risks. To the extent the 2024 rule relied on the Herrero study and an informal survey of bear biologists, the NPS does not rely on those findings because: (1) the study is inapplicable to remote bait stations; (2) the biologist survey addressed theoretical risks without reference to actual documented incidents in Alaska; and (3) the State of Alaska's decades of operational experience without documented public safety incidents are more probative than speculation without context or data.

III. Definition of Trapping—§ 13.1 (Restored)

The definition of “trapping” in § 13.1 was amended in 2024 to define the circumstances where individuals may use firearms to take similarly redefined “furbearers” under a state trapping license. State regulations at 5 AAC 92.075(d) and 92.095(a)(8) already address these circumstances and no basis exists for NPS to impose a duplicative and unnecessary regulation. The rule restores the former definition for “trapping” and removes the definition of “furbearer” as unnecessary under the restoration. This change eliminates a regulatory burden that lacks a corresponding management benefit, and is consistent with direction in Executive Order 14192 to remove unnecessary regulations and in Executive Order 14153 to maximize consistency in harvest opportunities across public lands.

IV. Live Wildlife Collection/Falconry—§ 13.42(j) (Removed)

The 2017 rule added § 13.42(j) which prohibited the regulated collection of live raptor chicks in national preserves on the basis that such activities are not “hunting or trapping” and are therefore subject to System-wide prohibition at 36 CFR 2.2(a)(2). This conclusion is not consistent with Congress's direction for national preserves in Alaska. The State of Alaska manages falconry under 5 AAC 92.037, which requires permits and applies on all public lands in Alaska. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages migratory raptors under 50 CFR 21.82 and 21.85, which authorize chick collection under state permits. Removing § 13.42(j) restores the pre-2017 framework and recognizes the adequate management of falconry activities by the State and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The NPS requested input on any documented management need for this prohibition, and public

comments did not identify impacts or concerns to justify retaining it.

V. Subsistence Collection—§ 13.482 (Removed) and § 13.485 (Revised)

As noted before and elsewhere, this rule does not alter the federal subsistence priority established in ANILCA, Federal Subsistence Management Program regulations, or ANILCA's rural preference for qualified users on federal public lands. The 2017 rule added § 13.482, which created a mandatory permit system for collecting nonedible animal parts for use in handicrafts for barter and customary trade. This permit requirement was opposed by nearly every commenter representing subsistence users and Alaska Native organizations in the 2017 rulemaking, who noted the activity was already authorized under ANILCA, the permit added burdens for subsistence users who already must hold federally qualified status, the most common collection method is opportunistic gathering and is incompatible with a permit system requiring advance authorization, and subsistence users had been engaged for nearly a decade in good faith in the regulatory process only to receive additional restrictions rather than the clarification they sought.

Removing § 13.482 does not prohibit the uses it addressed; collection of animal parts for handicrafts remains authorized under ANILCA Title VIII and applicable federal regulations. The permit requirement and any conditions attached to it are removed. The removal of this permit requirement is a deregulatory action that will benefit subsistence users by removing unnecessary administrative burdens. The definition of “animal parts” in § 13.420 is likewise removed as unnecessary, while the definitions of “customary trade” and “handicraft” are retained with minor technical edits to align with federal regulations at 43 CFR part 51, with NPS-specific modifications including products made from plant materials and excluding trophies or European mounts of horns or antlers. Section 13.485(b) is revised to restore pre-2017 language authorizing noncommercial gathering of plant materials and dead or downed timber for firewood without a permit.

VI. Closure and Restriction Procedures—§ 13.50 (Restored)

The 2015 rule significantly revised closure procedures in ways that reduced public engagement, eliminated durational requirements, removed specific notice methods essential to local rural residents, and recharacterized statutory “criteria” as

discretionary “factors.” This rule restores the pre-2015 procedures, as follows.

(a) *Emergency closures*: 30-day maximum; may not be extended. Emergency closures affecting harvest of fish and wildlife resources require notice and hearing before taking effect. Other emergency closures take effect on notice.

(b) *Temporary closures*: affecting fish or wildlife harvest requires notice and hearing in the affected vicinity and other appropriate locations before taking effect. Other temporary closures take effect on notice. Maximum duration of 12 months may not be extended.

(c) *Permanent closures*: published as rulemaking in the **Federal Register** with a minimum 60-day public comment period and public hearings in the affected area and other appropriate locations.

(d) *Notice requirements*: all closures and restrictions shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the state and at least one local newspaper where available; posted at community post offices in the affected vicinity; made available for broadcast on local radio stations in a manner reasonably calculated to inform residents in the affected vicinity; and designated on a map available for public inspection at the superintendent's office and other convenient locations. The proposed rule language has been revised slightly (replacing an “or” with “and”) to confirm that all of these notice methods must be utilized in addition to the posting of appropriate signs.

(e) *Openings*: **Federal Register** notice required with hearings on request in the affected vicinity and other appropriate locations before a final determination.

(f) *Facility closures and restrictions*: restored as a distinct category with defined criteria (public health, safety, and protection of public property), duration (limited to the circumstance requiring closure), and notice requirements.

These restorations directly respond to concerns from rural Alaska residents and communities that the changes in 2015 to rely on website postings and discretionary notice were inadequate to inform residents of changes affecting subsistence and harvest activities in remote areas. Fixed durations and defined criteria provide predictability, consultation requirements restore meaningful government engagement, and hearing requirements restore opportunities to engage decision-makers before closures take effect.

VII. Subsistence Provisions —§§ 13.400, 13.470, 13.480, 13.490 (Restored)

As stated elsewhere, this rule does not alter the federal subsistence priority established in ANILCA, Federal Subsistence Management Program regulations, or ANILCA’s rural preference for qualified users on federal public lands. Section 13.400 is revised to add clarifying language confirming that the regulations in subpart F governing subsistence uses apply to local rural residents and others authorized to conduct those activities, and recognizing that Alaska laws relating to the taking of fish and wildlife apply within park areas to the extent consistent with applicable federal law, including ANILCA and 43 CFR part 51.

The rule restores references to applicable state law in §§ 13.470 (subsistence fishing) and 13.480 (subsistence hunting and trapping) to ensure subsistence users can conduct these activities in compliance with applicable state and federal law, as was the case under regulations in effect from 1981 through 2015 for park areas.

Section 13.490 is revised to restore the requirement for adequate notice and public hearing in the affected vicinity and other appropriate locations before the superintendent temporarily closes a

park area to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife. Consultation with the Federal Subsistence Board and provisions for temporary closures are retained, including the duration standard (“only so long as reasonably necessary to achieve the purposes of the closure”).

Section 13.1902(d), which imposed bait restrictions on subsistence bear harvest at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, is removed.

VIII. Clarifications in Response to Comments—§§ 13.35 and 13.400 (Revised)

Minor clarifying language is added to structural provisions at §§ 13.35 and 13.400 to confirm that limitations generally applicable to park visitors do not generally apply to subsistence users. Alaska park areas operate under ANILCA’s balanced mandates in addition to System-wide direction. These revisions respond to concerns about confusion over which rules apply to subsistence users as they cross jurisdictional boundaries.

IX. Severability—§ 13.42(k) (Removed)

The 2024 Rule added a severability provision the NPS has determined is unnecessary and it is not retained in this rule. Notwithstanding the NPS

having determined that a stand-alone severability provision is unnecessary to include in the 36 CFR part 13 regulations, the NPS intends the provisions of this final rule to be severable. If any provision of this rule, or the application of any provision to any person or circumstance, is held invalid, the NPS intends that the remainder of the rule and its application to other persons or circumstances remain in effect to the fullest extent permitted by law.

Final Rule

For the reasons stated above, the NPS rescinds the regulatory changes in 2015 that were not rescinded in 2020, the changes in 2017 except the definitions for “customary trade” and “handicraft” in 36 CFR 13.420, and the changes in 2024 in their entirety, and makes other minor improvements. Rescinding the changes restores management of Alaska park areas to the framework in effect since passage of ANILCA and restores the Congressionally directed state and federal authorities for management of hunting, fishing, and trapping as practiced in Alaska since statehood. The following table illustrates these changes and how the final rule compares to the established and modified frameworks.

TABLE 1—SUMMARY OF KEY REGULATORY CHANGES

Regarding	Former framework (before 2015)	2015/2017/2024 changes	2026 final rule
Hunting and trapping in national preserves.	Allowed under applicable federal and non-conflicting state law and regulations.	Added prohibitions on specific state-authorized harvest activities.	Restores pre-2015 framework; removes prohibition not rescinded in 2020.
Bear baiting	Allowed for all user groups under state law (since 1982).	Prohibited (2015); limits for subsistence (2017); allowed (2020); prohibited (2024).	Allowed for all user groups under state law.
Emergency closures or restrictions—duration.	30-day maximum duration; not extendable.	Extended to 60 days for fish/wildlife harvest closures; no maximum for other emergencies.	30-day maximum duration; not extendable.
Emergency closures or restrictions—hearing.	Required before closures affecting fish/wildlife harvest.	Removed	Required before closures affecting fish/wildlife harvest.
Temporary closures or restrictions—duration.	12-month maximum duration; not extendable.	No identified maximum duration ...	12-month maximum duration; not extendable.
Temporary closures or restrictions—hearing.	Required in affected vicinity and other appropriate locations.	Removed	Required in affected vicinity and other appropriate locations.
Closure or restriction notice—local news.	Required notice in state and regional newspaper, if available, and on local radio stations.	Optional	Required notice in state and regional newspaper, if available, and on local radio stations.
Closure or restriction notice—post offices.	Required posting in local post offices.	Optional; Provided when reasonably likely to inform residents in the affected vicinity.	Required posting in local post offices.
Closure or restriction notice—map	Required publicly available map ..	Optional	Required publicly available map.
Closure or restriction notice—NPS website.	Optional	Required written determination posted on NPS website.	Optional.
Permanent closures or restrictions—public comment.	Federal Register notice, 60-day minimum public comment period, hearings on request.	Federal Register notice if specific criteria are met, no required minimum public comment period length.	Federal Register notice, 60-day minimum public comment period, hearings on request.
Openings	Federal Register notice, hearings on request.	Federal Register notice if specific criteria are met.	Federal Register notice, hearings on request.
Facility closures	Separate process with criteria, duration, notice.	Removed	Separate process with criteria, duration, notice.

TABLE 1—SUMMARY OF KEY REGULATORY CHANGES—Continued

Regarding	Former framework (before 2015)	2015/2017/2024 changes	2026 final rule
Subsistence collection of animal parts.	Allowed without a permit	Allowed with a permit, defined “animal parts” (2017).	Allowed without a permit; no regulatory definition of “animal parts”.
Falconry/live raptor collection	Allowed under state and federal permits.	Prohibited (2017)	Allowed under state and federal permits.
Definition of “Trapping”	Based on taking furbearers under a trapping license.	Based on taking furbearers under a trapping license; firearm use during trapping defined (2024).	Based on taking furbearers under a trapping license.
Subsistence fishing—methods	Must comply with state and federal law.	Removed references to state law and applied nationwide regulatory prohibitions.	Must comply with state and federal law.
Subsistence hunting/trapping	Must comply with state and federal law.	Removed references to state law	Must comply with state and federal law.
Definitions of “subsistence uses”, “customary trade”, and “handicraft”.	Defined “subsistence uses”, including “customary trade”.	Revised definitions and added definition of “handicraft” (2017).	No changes to pre-2015 definition of “subsistence uses” or 2017 definitions of “customary trade” and “handicraft”.
Subsistence closures—consultation.	Consult with State before closures take effect.	Consult with State and Federal Subsistence Board before closures take effect.	Consult with State and Federal Subsistence Board before closures take effect.

Language has been added to address changes in circumstances, like relocation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program into the Office of the Secretary, and to respond to public comments, including concerns from subsistence users about which rules apply to which user groups. Ministerial edits have been made to the regulatory text that is being restored to conform to current **Federal Register** drafting standards.

Summary and Responses to Public Comments.

On March 10, 2026, the NPS published the proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (91 FR 11483). The proposed rule was open for an initial 30-day public comment period. The NPS extended the comment period on April 10, 2026, (91 FR 18340) in response to several requests for more time to review the proposal. In total, the comment period was open for 46 days. The comment period closed on April 24, 2026. The NPS invited comments through the mail, hand delivery, and through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>.

The NPS received 5,172 comments on the proposed rule, including submissions from organizations representing more than 48,000 collective signatories. A summary of the pertinent issues raised in the comments received and NPS responses are provided below.

Statutory Consistency and Priorities

1. *Comment:* Several commenters stated the proposed rule and its approach to management are inconsistent with NPS’s obligations

under the law, including the NPS Organic Act, Wilderness Act, and ANILCA, arguing that National Park System units must be managed to prioritize conservation and natural processes over consumptive uses.

NPS Response: Through ANILCA, Congress mandated that consumptive uses such as subsistence and sport hunting, fishing, and trapping be allowed in Alaska’s national preserves under applicable state and federal law and that certain parks and monuments be available for subsistence uses. ANILCA §§ 203, 1313, and 1314. The continuation of these activities is one of the intrinsic values Congress saw in establishing preserves in Alaska as distinct from parks and monuments, where hunting would only continue for federally qualified users in specified areas. In its report on the language that became ANILCA through a negotiated compromise with the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate Committee for Energy and Natural Resources explained this intentional approach:

Like the House-passed bill, the Committee amendment directs that a preserve be managed as a national park except that all forms of hunting be permitted to continue. This includes sport, subsistence, and guided hunting The Committee also adopted an amendment clarifying that trapping shall be allowed in national preserves and that the statutory requirement that the taking of fish and wildlife be allowed does not deprive the Secretary of his traditional authority to close public lands located within conservation system units to the taking of fish and wildlife under statutory criteria. In allowing trapping to continue within preserves, it was not the intent of the Committee to allow exploitative forms of commercial trapping to occur. The intent of the committee is to allow individual

Alaskans to continue to operate their own trap lines within the preserves, even though those individuals might not qualify as subsistence users The Secretary, through the National Park Service, is expected to monitor trapping operations within the preserves and the associated wildlife populations and issue appropriate regulations to insure that exploitative forms of trapping do not take place and that there is no substantial or permanent harm to the wildlife populations. S. Rep. 96–413, 96th Cong. 1st Sess. 1979, at 307–308.

Some concerns with accommodating these and other consumptive use mandates rest on the premise that managing for natural processes under the NPS Organic Act and Wilderness Act is an exclusive, independent standard from other applicable laws. That premise does not hold for the areas established and expanded under ANILCA, which referenced both laws in specifying which uses are allowed, grounds for restricting them, and procedures to enact those restrictions. Regulatory expectations discussed by the committee, such as allowing activities necessary to conduct consumptive uses and limits only where monitoring shows exploitation or substantial harm, are the ways Congress defined resource protection for these areas given the unique Alaska context. In implementing those expectations, the final rule is not deprioritizing a natural processes standard in favor of consumptive uses, it is applying the standards Congress wrote for Alaska park areas.

2. *Comment:* In Title VIII of ANILCA, Congress established a federal priority for customary and traditional uses of fish and wildlife resources by rural residents on federal public lands and

certain waters in Alaska. Commenters raised concerns that proposed changes would diminish the federal subsistence priority by allowing state-regulated harvest activities in national preserves, potentially increasing competition for subsistence resources with insufficient attention to subsistence users and their expertise, perspective, and needs.

NPS Response: The federal subsistence priority for rural Alaska residents cannot be diminished or overridden by state law or NPS regulation. ANILCA Title VIII and Federal Subsistence Board regulations are unchanged and addressed in this rulemaking through the restored and updated language. The final rule acknowledges subsistence opportunities and preferences are available in certain Alaska park areas under both federal and state regulations, and that NPS's authority is contingent on the Alaska-specific criteria and procedures in ANILCA.

While the State cannot implement ANILCA's rural preference under the state constitution, it remains an important manager of Alaska's fish and wildlife resources on federal lands, including harvest seasons, methods, means, limits, and other regulations. This authority was affirmed in the Alaska Statehood Act, again in section 1314 of ANILCA, and is recognized in implementing regulations for wildlife refuges at 50 CFR 36.11. On all lands, Alaska law requires that, if a portion of a stock or population can be harvested consistent with sustained yield principles, a reasonable opportunity will be provided with a preference for subsistence uses that applies to all Alaska residents.

The Federal Subsistence Board, in cooperation with Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils, Subsistence Resource Commissions, the NPS, the public, local experts, Tribes, other federal land managers, and the State of Alaska carries out the Secretary's responsibilities under Title VIII of ANILCA, which include ensuring: the continuation of subsistence uses by rural residents on federal public lands; rural residents with personal knowledge of local conditions and requirements have a meaningful role in the management of fish and wildlife and of subsistence uses on the public lands in Alaska; and rural residents engaged in subsistence uses have reasonable access to subsistence resources on the public lands. The NPS has the authority to preempt state law where necessary to implement the NPS Organic Act, Wilderness Act, ANILCA, and other statutory direction. The NPS has not

found it necessary to exercise that authority in issuing this rule.

The Secretary's delegation of authority to the Federal Subsistence Board is to administer the subsistence taking and uses of fish and wildlife on public lands and the related promulgation and signature authority for regulations in subparts C and D of 43 CFR part 51 and 36 CFR part 242. The Board is empowered, to the extent necessary, to implement Title VIII of ANILCA, to undertake various actions as set forth in 43 CFR 51.10(d)(4) and 36 CFR 242.10(d)(4), including the following:

- issue regulations for the management of subsistence taking and uses of fish and wildlife on public lands;
- allocate subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations on public lands;
- ensure that the taking on public lands of fish and wildlife for nonwasteful subsistence uses shall be accorded priority over the taking on such lands of fish and wildlife for other purposes;
- restrict the taking of fish and wildlife on public lands for nonsubsistence uses or closing public lands to the take of fish and wildlife for nonsubsistence uses when necessary for the conservation of healthy populations of fish or wildlife, to continue subsistence uses of fish or wildlife, or for reasons of public safety or administration;
- restrict the taking of a particular fish or wildlife population on public lands for subsistence uses, closing public lands to the take of fish and wildlife for subsistence uses, or otherwise modifying the requirements for take from a particular fish or wildlife population on public lands for subsistence uses when necessary to ensure the continued viability of a fish or wildlife population, or for reasons of public safety or administration;
- establish priorities for the subsistence taking of fish and wildlife on public lands among rural Alaska residents;
- restrict or eliminate taking of fish and wildlife on public lands; and
- determine what types and forms of trade of fish and wildlife taken for subsistence uses constitute allowable customary trade.

Of note, however, the Federal Subsistence Board's regulations do not authorize subsistence uses in Glacier Bay National Park, Kenai Fjords National Park, Katmai National Park, and that portion of Denali National Park established as Mt. McKinley National Park prior to passage of ANILCA, where subsistence taking and uses are

prohibited. 43 CFR 51.3(a); 36 CFR 242.3(a). Also, the subsistence regulations in 43 CFR part 51 do not supersede agency-specific regulations. *Id.* State and federal regulations can be in effect in the same area unless the Federal Subsistence Board or the NPS have closed or restricted use of the area by non-federally qualified users or to all harvest or entry.

Changes made to NPS regulations in 2015 to support the preemption of state law in national preserves removed language recognizing this unique partnership of authorities and procedures. The restored and updated language in the final rule clarifies that federally qualified users can continue subsistence uses of fish and wildlife regulated by state and federal boards consistent with NPS regulations, including Alaska-specific procedures for area closures and user restrictions. Under the final rule, Alaskans and others can continue making board proposals and guide the management of customary and traditional uses without encountering the discretionary permissions and automatic preemptions added for certain park areas in 2015 and 2017. Public use will continue to be managed in Alaska park areas in accordance with federal law and, under the final rule, more specifically in accordance with the criteria and procedures in ANILCA.

To ensure federally qualified subsistence users are unaffected or benefited by these changes, the final rule adds clarifying revisions to 36 CFR 13.35 and 13.400. These revisions confirm general limitations for park visitors do not apply to federally qualified users engaged in subsistence, including those defined as "local rural residents" in § 13.420 and other authorized users (*e.g.*, those with a federal harvest permit from another bureau or agency). The rule restores the regulatory framework adopted immediately after ANILCA's passage, when, as now, the State did not have a program to implement the mandates in Title VIII, see 46 FR 31836, 31839, 31860–62 (June 17, 1981). The text is updated as needed to reflect the development of a federal program to carry out those mandates.

3. Comment: A number of commenters opposed deferring to the State of Alaska in managing fish and wildlife resources, noting authorized practices may conflict with federal mandates for the NPS. Conversely, comments were received asserting the State is the appropriate and legal administrator of fish and wildlife resources on all lands in Alaska, with exceptions that do not apply in this

rulemaking, and that direction to align federal and state regulations will have positive effects.

NPS Response: The NPS does not “defer” to the State of Alaska in implementing federal mandates. As explained above, the State manages fish and wildlife on all lands in Alaska except as specifically modified by Congress, and the NPS manages System units consistent with the Alaska-specific criteria, procedures, and priorities outlined in ANILCA. In adopting the clarifying amendment that became ANILCA § 1314, the Senate Committee stated:

This Section, adopted as a Committee Amendment, preserves the status quo with regard to the responsibility and authority of the State to manage fish and wildlife, and reconciles this authority with the Act, including the subsistence title. At the same time, the Section confirms the status quo with regard to the authority of the Secretary to manage the wildlife habitat on federal lands. The Section also clarifies that fishing shall be permitted in national parks and monuments and that subsistence uses shall be permitted where specifically provided by the Act. S. Rep. 96–413, at 308.

The “status quo” division of state-federal authorities in § 1314 is primarily about resource management and not about implementing Title VIII. It was in effect when the final rule language was initially adopted in 1981, a few months after ANILCA’s passage; in 1982, when the Secretary approved the State’s program to administer the federal subsistence priority; in 1985, when the Secretary intervened during the program’s compliance issues (outside of parks and monuments); in 1989, when a state court found the State’s program violated the Alaska Constitution; and in 1990, when the Federal Subsistence Management Program was established to administer the priority. Despite these shifts, the state-federal authorities Congress established for Alaska did not change, including NPS’s limited role and responsibilities under ANILCA. The final rule acknowledges establishment of the federal program, updates references to its newly relocated regulations in 43 CFR part 51, and restores the “status quo” language that provided decades of stability for all park users.

The final rule also improves consistency for hunting and fishing across DOI-administered lands in Alaska, as directed in Secretary’s Order 3447 § 4(b)(3), while preserving the distinctions for National Park System units outlined in ANILCA and other laws. In enacting a single, comprehensive law governing all the federal lands in one state, Congress was

able to build consistencies into jurisdictional landscapes in Alaska, and, shortly after ANILCA’s passage, similar regulatory language was adopted for managing public uses in Alaska’s national preserves and wildlife refuges based on similar or the same provisions. See 46 FR 31818, 31819 (June 17, 1981); 46 FR 31836. With the Congressionally directed restoration of regulations for wildlife refuges in 2017, this final rule solidifies the long-standing alignments in Congress’ design. Revisions in the final rule will simplify compliance and enforcement by making it easier for eligible users to cross jurisdictional boundaries while harvesting under state or federal regulations in Alaska’s wildlife refuges and preserves and under federal regulations in other park areas (as noted above, Klondike Gold Rush and Sitka national historical parks, Katmai and Kenai Fjords national parks, and parts of Denali National Park are closed to harvest by law).

Conservation and Public Use

4. *Comment:* Several commenters expressed concern the proposed rule would harm tourism, asserting that hunting and trapping can reduce opportunities for non-consumptive uses and damage Alaska’s reputation as a destination for wildlife viewing and photography.

NPS Response: Section 1313 of ANILCA recognizes that, for national preserves in Alaska, “the Secretary may designate zones where and periods when no hunting, fishing, trapping, or entry may be permitted for reasons of public safety, administration, floral and faunal protection, or public use and enjoyment.” Understanding that all of these reasons have implications for tourism, and using the best available information, including diverse and meaningful experiences shared by park users in their comments on the proposed rule, the NPS has not found evidence that regulated harvest impairs or is likely to impair opportunities for non-consumptive uses in Alaska’s park areas.

Most areas where harvest occurs are highly remote, with few if any overlapping uses. A number of factors affect successful wildlife viewing for all user groups in all areas where animals largely dictate the encounter. Populations in Alaska park areas have been targeted by hunters and trappers for millennia and demonstrate significant variations in tolerance levels for humans regardless of their activity. Environmental analyses prepared for the 2015, 2020, and 2024 Alaska-specific rulemakings did not identify a correlation between harvest activities

addressed in those rules and measurable impacts in wildlife viewing opportunities across Alaska park areas. To the extent harvest activities affect visitor experiences, those effects are more likely to be location-specific rather than indicative of a broader reduction in non-consumptive recreational opportunities across Alaska park areas. Limiting one user group without impacting other user experiences could contribute to the problem those limits are looking to resolve (e.g., reducing user conflicts and barriers for allowed uses). The final rule maintains ANILCA’s balanced mandates for federal public lands in Alaska.

5. *Comment:* Commenters expressed concerns that harvest methods authorized by the State of Alaska and available under state law will impact natural ecosystem dynamics, like predator-prey relationships and pack formations. A smaller number of commenters opposed all state-regulated harvest opportunities as potentially incompatible with or a violation of conservation purposes and values.

NPS Response: As explained in the response to Comment 3, Congress restricted the NPS’s general management authority over hunting, fishing, or trapping in Alaska park areas; it affirmed the State’s existing authority; and it provided that, when NPS uses its management authority to close areas to allowed uses, it must meet certain requirements, including “consultation with the appropriate State agency having responsibility over hunting, fishing, and trapping activities.” ANILCA § 1313 (cross-referencing § 816, where unit manager discretion to restrict regulated harvest by federally qualified subsistence users is further restricted).

State and federal managers have defined roles and enforcement obligations that work together for the safe, responsible management of Alaska’s public lands. Under the final rule, NPS continues to steward habitats, protect resources, and implement closures when statutory criteria and procedures are met, in consultation with the State, which continues to establish harvest methods and other regulations in managing populations for sustainability under the Alaska Constitution. When the State and NPS work together to meet these interconnected obligations, the Federal Subsistence Management Program is more effective in exercising its delegated authority to regulate subsistence uses under ANILCA Title VIII, including necessary closures. Directing comments, proposals, and information on harvest activities to state

officials and established processes, including the Alaska Boards of Fisheries and Game, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the Alaska State Legislature, or to the Federal Subsistence Board, will ensure that input is considered in the venues where population management decisions and policies are made for Alaska.

Some commenters view this intersectional management collaboration using each organization's respective authorities as a prohibited form of deference, as noted in Comment 3, or as an abdication of NPS's duty to allow for natural processes and ecosystem dynamics and to protect fish and wildlife resources for future generations, as noted in Comment 1. Many argued NPS should take a stronger position in shaping harvest regulations that affect Alaska park areas, including through discretionary preemption based on administrative criteria and values, which the restored and updated language in the final rule would not support. The NPS has the authority to preempt state law where necessary to implement the NPS Organic Act, Wilderness Act, ANILCA, and other statutory direction. The NPS has not found it necessary to exercise that authority in issuing this rule.

As explained in the detailed preamble for changes to NPS regulations in 2020, 85 FR 35181 (June 9, 2020), regulated harvest in Alaska cannot legally function as a predator control program, which can only be conducted under specific requirements in federal and state law and have not been authorized in Alaska park areas. The NPS believes the final rule language is more consistent with balanced statutory mandates for Alaska, for the reasons explained in this rulemaking and based on decades of proven workability and cooperation toward science-based, user-informed conservation objectives.

6. Comment: Regarding the NPS's closure authorities, a large number of comments specifically opposed the use of bait in harvesting bears, sharing ethical concerns and potential risks to wildlife populations and public safety.

NPS Response: Harvest methods are established under applicable state and federal regulations that are continuously refined through regional input and monitoring. These regulations, and the publicly accountable processes that create and rigorously maintain them, define ethical practices from a management standpoint. The NPS is committed to its ongoing participation in these defined regulatory processes, as a stakeholder and a resource manager with independent authorities, and to continuing to work collaboratively with

the public, subsistence users, gateway communities, Alaska Native Tribes and corporations, other federal agencies, and the State in executing distinct and shared responsibilities in a transparent and consistent manner based on our respective authorities.

Harvesting bears over bait has been regulated across Alaska since 1982 with no evidence of notable public safety incidents or population-level impacts. To the contrary, this harvest method can be effective at targeting animals with an established tolerance for human activities, which are more likely to be involved in an incident, and to close the distance and expand the time available for targeting a particular sex or age class, which is a key consideration in managing populations for sustainability. Analysis supporting the rule's determinations is set out in detail in Section II of the "Finalized Changes" section above. The NPS will continue to monitor and may close areas if a specific concern arises using the appropriate criteria and procedures in ANILCA. Comments submitted on the proposed rule and in previous rulemakings provide detailed data and analyses that support NPS's conclusion this state-authorized activity is not detrimental to wildlife conservation and public safety at current levels.

Procedural Issues

7. Comment: Commenters questioned whether the rulemaking process meets the procedural requirements in the Administrative Procedure Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and section 810 of ANILCA, sharing concerns about sufficiency, rationale, and transparency.

NPS Response: With this final rule and associated decision-making materials, including an environmental assessment and section 810 of ANILCA analysis, the NPS has fully complied with all applicable procedural requirements. The rule is supported by a detailed administrative record, including the above-referenced analyses, public notice and comment and consultations with state officials, tribal governments, and Alaska Native corporations. This is not to imply that input provided during the comment period and consultations is uniformly supportive of the final rule, from a substantive perspective, only that, from a procedural perspective, that input was fully considered in developing the final rule.

8. Comment: Some commenters found the proposed rule unclear and potentially misleading without more information, with recurring concerns that certain provisions could lead to unintentional loopholes, inconsistent

application in the field, and challenges in determining where rules apply. Commenters did not find the proposed rule made it clear what is changing for Alaska park areas.

NPS Response: The NPS recognizes that confusion can occur in any rulemaking process and has endeavored in its outreach efforts to focus on providing accurate and detailed information in open dialogue, and comments expressing confusion have influenced NPS's approach to modifications and explanations in this final rule.

One area of confusion revolves around the amount of language being changed, with a rulemaking format that makes it hard to compare versions of the regulation, and which appears to be inconsistent with NPS's statement it is making minor changes. Although the proposed and final rules contain substantial text showing edits, much of this language is not new, not all of it represents a change to current language and most of it reflects long-standing regulations in place for more than 30 years. The main goal is to make a single change across multiple provisions: a return to the framework that more closely adheres to ANILCA's requirements in implementing its mandates for Alaska park areas. Changes to the restored regulations reflect changes in the governing situation, like the creation of the Federal Subsistence Board and its relocation into the Office of the Secretary, or respond to comments on the proposed rule, which made several requests for specific information and ideas for reform. See 91 FR 11483, 11486, 11488, 11491, and 11492.

Another identified area of confusion relates to changes in definitions, specifically modifying established terms like "subsistence uses" and "customary trade" and more recent terms like "handicraft", leading to questions about what activities are allowed, who qualifies, and how enforcement will work. Clear definitions can help public land users and enforcement officials better understand compliance with unique laws like ANILCA.

One of the requests made in the proposed rule for specific reform ideas involves NPS's definition of "customary trade". 91 FR 11483, 11491. Reverting to the pre-2015 language does not seem to cover the breadth of activities implicated by this term, and if the current definition does or could do that better, retaining or reforming it would be an improvement over pre-2015 regulations. One alternative to retention would be to adopt the definition used by the Federal Subsistence Management

Program at 43 CFR 51.4, which is very similar to the current NPS definition, or to include a cross-reference to that definition in 36 CFR 13.420 along with any differences, similar to the definition for “handicraft”. Without a clear expression of a need for reform in the comments, the final rule retains the current definitions of “customary trade” and “handicraft” (a term used in NPS’s definition of “customary trade”) to provide consistency for subsistence users and law enforcement. This change from the proposed rule also reduces the amount of edited text in the final rule, addressing the source of confusion described earlier.

The final rule does not retain the recently added definition for “animal parts”. As noted above and in the proposed rule, 91 FR 11491, this does not mean subsistence use and gathering of animal parts is not allowed in Alaska park areas. This definition was added when NPS began regulating these activities, primarily due to concerns that general rules and policies prohibiting visitors from removing natural objects may be interpreted to prohibit subsistence uses. See 82 FR 3626, 3627 (January 12, 2017). Reflecting on these stated concerns, the definition’s decade in use addressing them, comments encouraging removal of unnecessary barriers to subsistence, and statutory direction and guidance in ANILCA Title VIII, NPS does not see the same value in retaining the definition for “animal parts” as it does for “customary trade” and “handicraft”. A basic understanding of the term should suffice for compliance and enforcement purposes.

To make the relationship between nationwide rules, administrative policies, and ANILCA easier to understand in practice moving forward, the final rule adds minor wording changes in 36 CFR 13.35 and 13.400. These adjustments are intended to reduce confusion about how System-wide prohibitions apply to local residents and others authorized to conduct subsistence activities. They also clarify that subsistence uses are not treated or managed the same way as general public uses, and that Alaska park areas operate under ANILCA’s balanced mandates rather than System-wide direction alone, unless Congress states otherwise. These edits and the final rule’s restoration of Alaska-specific closure procedures in the sections they address (36 CFR part 13, subparts B and F) also respond to comments expressing confusion about which authorities apply in a given situation and concerns about how closures are administered and communicated.

Several commenters cautioned that greater alignment between state and federal regulations in Alaska park areas could unintentionally give state managers too much authority over subsistence uses on federal public lands. Many expressed frustration about the overlapping state and federal systems in park areas and conflicting priorities, even with specific roles assigned to each manager. As in Comment 2, commenters noted state management actions do not always support customary and traditional uses by prioritizing opportunities for all Alaskans, marginalizing regional input, and increasing competition and harvest pressure on struggling stocks and populations, and that obscure phrasing in the proposed rule could expand the reach of those actions. Comments frequently referred to direction in ANILCA to ensure rural residents are advising in management decisions and prioritized among consumptive users of Alaska’s fish and wildlife resources.

Alaska’s system of “dual management” is a measured and complex approach to these overlapping systems to meet constitutional and statutory mandates, and commenters are correct that federal and state priorities are not always aligned, an issue of particular concern for communities that rely heavily on wild food resources. To be clear, this rule does not change ANILCA’s rural subsistence priority or the intent, priorities, or structure of the Federal Subsistence Management Program. Under dual management, the State manages fish and wildlife populations according to sustained yield principles on all lands and waters unless Congress modifies that authority, like in ANILCA Title VIII, and federal agencies have their own responsibilities and authorities on federal lands to protect public safety, meet statutory purposes, and fulfill federal mandates, like the rural subsistence priority. This structure is explicitly recognized in ANILCA and the rules and land use plans that guide managers and decision-makers in Alaska. As discussed in the response to Comment 2, this rule does not change that division of authorities. State law will continue to govern harvest activities on all lands to the extent permissible under federal law. However, so long as the State cannot implement the rural subsistence priority required in ANILCA, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture are responsible for administering ANILCA’s framework for the subsistence taking and uses of fish and wildlife on public lands and have delegated most of their responsibilities to the Federal

Subsistence Board. The NPS will carry out its respective duties to manage park areas, including consultation with the Federal Subsistence Board under the 2015 revisions to § 13.490, which is retained in the final rule. State and federal managers will carry out their respective duties, and the revisions in this rulemaking will better equip unit managers in Alaska to meet NPS’s obligations within this shared system consistent with the balanced mandates in ANILCA. The NPS has the authority to preempt state law where necessary to implement the NPS Organic Act, Wilderness Act, ANILCA, and other statutory direction. The NPS has not found it necessary to exercise that authority in issuing this rule.

To help limit the potential for other misunderstandings, now or in the future, a table is included in the section entitled “Final Rule” above to show which regulations are changing in a substantive way with a short summary explaining the change.

9. Comment: Some comments supported or opposed changes beyond those in the proposed rule. Several urged the NPS to expand the scope of the rule by reinstating restrictions removed in 2020, by adding more restrictions, or by adding more harvest opportunities and improved access. Commenters also requested more definitions (e.g., “sport” hunting) and expanded policy-based explanations on the circumstances where regulated harvest might conflict with National Park System purposes and values.

NPS Response: The NPS has decided that the final rule should closely adhere to the proposed rule and the framework that implemented ANILCA’s balanced mandates for more than three decades. Many comments advocating broader changes, whether to restrict or expand harvest opportunities and access, reflect competing interests similar to those Congress weighed in enacting ANILCA’s balanced compromise, where the type of protected area and scope of permitted uses were calibrated to accommodate Alaska-specific needs and interests within a single comprehensive statute. See, e.g., 126 Cong. Rec. S11052, S11116, (Aug. 18, 1980) (statement of Sen. Tsongas) (describing the “compromise worked out during many hours of debate and discussions on these issues” in “trying to protect in a balanced way the legitimate concerns of numerous interest groups”, including the State of Alaska, noting “91.4 percent of Alaska is open to sport hunting” under the compromise); S. Rep. 95–64, pt. 2, 95th Cong. 2d Sess. 1978, 487 (statement of Sen. Andrus) (“We have designated national park preserves

where hunting would still be permitted; we don't do that in the lower 48. Subsistence hunting would be permitted in areas where it would not in the lower 48."); S. Rep. 96–413, at 145 (describing the amendment to designate Cape Krusenstern “as a national monument rather than a preserve” to reduce the potential for user conflicts, noting “there is little sport hunting in the area at this time while this is one of the most important and concentrated subsistence use areas in the State”). Given the purpose of this rulemaking, NPS has concluded that revisiting these broader policy questions would not be warranted without a substantial basis for departing from the time-honored, Alaska-specific framework the final rule restores, addressed through a separate rulemaking process with that objective.

Adhering closely to the proposed rule, and its close adherence to the regulations that guided management of Alaska park areas from ANILCA's passage until 2015, will minimize disruption for users and managers and restore the Alaska-specific procedures they long relied on for responsible and cooperative resource management. The NPS has considered the comments encouraging additional or different action and determined that changes in the final rule must meet an exacting standard with a compelling reason, like the creation of the Federal Subsistence Management Program, or make important clarifications, like the definition for “customary trade” and other reforms to facilitate allowed uses and the continuation of subsistence uses. Many comments included valuable recommendations for improvements to the framework beyond the scope of this rulemaking, which would require or benefit from consultation, notice and comment, and environmental analysis in a separate rulemaking process.

In the final rule, definitions are aligned with state and federal regulations to the greatest extent practicable to promote consistency across jurisdictional boundaries and simplify compliance in the places where people hunt, fish, and trap in Alaska. Congress intended for all forms of regulated hunting to be allowed in national preserves under applicable state and federal law, where relevant distinctions between subsistence and “sport” hunting are made and enforced in Alaska park areas. Consistent with that direction, this rule restores the roles, responsibilities, and limitations that governed wildlife management in Alaska park areas for decades following their establishment in ANILCA. While commenters expressed differing views

regarding wildlife conservation and access to harvest opportunities, the restored regulations reflect the balance Congress directed for Alaska and the framework that successfully implemented that balance for decades. The NPS has concluded that departures from this long-standing framework, whether to expand or restrict authorities, should be supported by substantial justification, thoughtful analysis, meaningful public engagement, and a demonstrated basis in law for improving upon this proven management approach for Alaska park areas.

10. Comment: Community leaders, tribal governments, Alaska-based organizations, and others shared concerns and frustration with the rulemaking process, public engagement, and government-to-government consultation, highlighting the limited amount of time for outreach and meaningful contributions.

NPS Response: The NPS takes these concerns seriously and acknowledges that 46 days is a shorter comment period than some stakeholders requested for this rule. A 15-day extension was provided in direct response to requests for more time, recognizing that extension did not fully address the concerns from affected communities. As noted above, the NPS received 5,172 comments during the public comment period for the proposed rule, including submissions from organizations representing more than 48,000 collective signatories. The NPS carefully considered all of these comments in finalizing this rule.

The NPS undertook the following steps to engage on this rulemaking. In April and May 2025, NPS sent letters to federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native corporations with interests in Alaska park areas inviting pre-consultation on the proposed rule, following up on each letter with direct calls and emails. The letter described the proposed action at that time as rescission of the 2024 Rule and reinstatement of the 2020 Rule. The NPS met in person or virtually, as indicated in the request, with every Tribal entity that requested a meeting. Following publication of the proposed rule on March 10, 2026, with an expanded proposed action, NPS presented the rule at Alaska Board of Game meetings, Subsistence Resource Commission meetings, and Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meetings across the state. A second consultation letter sent in April 2026 included information on the expanded proposed action. Formal consultation commenced following publication of the proposed rule for

public comment and continued for the life of the project. The NPS followed these letters with calls and emails, and met with every entity that requested a meeting in the venue and format of their choosing to best facilitate their meaningful engagement. DOI and NPS leadership met with the Alaska Federation of Natives on April 8, 2026. NPS leadership met with the Alaska Congressional Delegation on multiple occasions during the comment period. NPS consulted directly with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at the staff and leadership level.

NPS acknowledges some affected communities, particularly in rural areas with limited connectivity and without a regular NPS presence, may have had less opportunity to engage than those in more accessible locations. Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils formally requested an extension to the public comment period, stating the initial 30-day window was unreasonably short and insufficient to analyze the complex proposed changes encompassing four separate rulemakings over the last decade. Comments noted the timing prevented most advisory bodies from reviewing and convening to discuss the rule during their scheduled meetings and emphasized the importance of meaningful and informed participation from the communities represented on the councils. The Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission was the only commission with a scheduled meeting during the comment period that had time to review the proposed rule and prepare recommendations and was the only commission that commented on the proposed rule.

NPS has attempted to account for this in its review of the record, giving particular weight to comments from advisory bodies and entities whose mandates are specifically designed to represent the interests of rural communities. The concerns those groups have expressed, including opposition to permits, support for the rural subsistence priority, and requests for clear and accessible procedures, are reflected in the final rule.

The NPS is committed to improving government-to-government consultation processes for Alaska-specific rulemakings, including providing earlier notice of proposed actions, meaningful accommodation of advisory body meeting schedules whenever practicable, and more time for intergovernmental review prior to the publication of a proposal.

Changes From the Proposed Rule

Based on public comments received and NPS's further review, the final rule makes the following changes to the proposed rule:

1. The title of this rule has been changed to reflect its scope that addresses hunting and trapping in national preserves, but also subsistence harvest of live wildlife and plant materials, and procedures used to restrict public use and access to Alaska park areas, including for subsistence.

2. § 13.50(f), *notice methods*: The proposed rule and pre-2015 regulations could be interpreted to allow for public notice through the posting of appropriate signs, instead of or in addition to newspaper publications, radio broadcasts, post office flyers, available maps, and other methods likely to inform affected users. The final rule replaces “or” with “and” to confirm that all the listed notice methods are required, where available, rather than having an option to close areas to harvest through the posting of signs alone.

3. §§ 13.35(g) and 13.400(e), *authorized users*: In response to comments and further agency review, the final rule adds language to clarify that generally applicable limitations on park visitors do not generally apply to those authorized to harvest renewable resources for subsistence uses in park areas in Alaska, including local rural residents, as defined in § 13.420, and other federally qualified users engaged in authorized harvest activities (e.g., subsistence permits issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act).

4. § 13.400(e), *new citation*: A cross-reference to the Federal Subsistence Board regulations at 43 CFR part 51 was added in response to comments, including from the Alaska Federation of Natives, seeking greater specificity for subsistence users than a general reference to ANILCA as applicable federal law.

5. § 13.420, *definitions*: The proposed rule solicited comment on revising the definition of “customary trade.” No submissions included specific reforms that would improve upon any particular definition. Rather than reverting to the pre-2015 language, the final rule retains the current definitions of “customary trade” and “handicraft” to provide continuity and reduce confusion for subsistence users and enforcement personnel.

6. § 13.420, *revised citation*: The final rule updates the cross-reference in the definition of “handicraft” to Federal Subsistence Board regulations formerly

located at 50 CFR part 100 which were transferred to 43 CFR part 51 to align with the transfer of the Office of Subsistence Management to the Office of the Secretary of the Interior. See 90 FR 34142 (July 18, 2025).

7. § 13.490, *consultation*: In response to comments and agency review, the requirement to consult with the Federal Subsistence Board before temporarily closing a park area to harvest for subsistence uses is retained in the final rule as an important update for ensuring rural Alaska residents have a meaningful role in the management of fish and wildlife and subsistence uses on all public lands in Alaska.

Compliance With Other Laws, Executive Orders and Department Policy

Regulatory Planning and Review Executive Orders 12866 and 14192

This rule has been determined to be significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866 and has been submitted for review by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) within the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This rule is a deregulatory action under Executive Order 14192. It removes the 2017 permit requirement for collecting animal parts for handicrafts, removes restrictions for all user groups on hunting bears over bait, and removes the 2024 firearm-related definition of “trapping” and its associated compliance burdens, without imposing any new permit, reporting, or recordkeeping requirements on regulated entities. The rule also restores fixed procedural requirements (e.g., durational limits, consultation obligations, and notice requirements) that constrain agency discretion and reduce regulatory uncertainty for the public, which the 2015 and 2017 rules had displaced with greater focus on System-wide standards and less focus on affected areas and users. Because this rule aligns federal and state requirements, rather than adding or maintaining conflicting layers of regulation, NPS does not consider it a new regulatory burden for purposes of this classification.

Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

This final rule will not have a significant economic effect on a substantial number of small entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act. This certification is based on information contained in the economic analyses found in the report entitled “Benefit-Cost and Regulatory Flexibility Analyses: Alaska Wildlife, Harvest, and

Access Regulations (RIN 1024–AE96).” The report may be viewed in the docket for this rulemaking action by visiting <https://www.regulations.gov/> and searching for “RIN 1024–AE96”.

Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.)

This rule does not impose an unfunded mandate on State, local, or Tribal governments or the private sector of more than \$100 million per year. The rule does not have a significant or unique effect on State, local or Tribal governments or the private sector. It addresses public use of lands and waters administered by the NPS and imposes no requirements on other agencies or governments. A statement containing the information required by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (2 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) is not required.

Takings—Executive Order 12630

This rule will not affect a taking of private property or otherwise have takings implications under Executive Order 12630. A takings implication assessment is not required.

Federalism—Executive Order 13132

Under the criteria in section 1 of Executive Order 13132, this rule does not have sufficient federalism implications to warrant the preparation of a federalism summary impact statement. This rule only affects use of federally administered lands and waters. It has no direct effects on other areas. A federalism summary impact statement is not required.

Civil Justice Reform—Executive Order 12988

This rule complies with the requirements of Executive Order 12988. This rule:

(a) Meets the criteria of section 3(a) requiring that all regulations be reviewed to eliminate errors and ambiguity and be written to minimize litigation; and

(b) Meets the criteria of section 3(b)(2) requiring that all regulations be written in clear language and contain clear legal standards.

Consultation With Indian Tribes and ANCSA Corporations—Executive Order 13175 and Department Policy

The DOI strives to strengthen its government-to-government relationship with Indian Tribes through a commitment to consultation with Indian Tribes and recognition of their right to self-governance and Tribal sovereignty. This rule was informed by feedback from Tribal entities. In April 2025, the NPS invited Alaska Native Tribes and

corporations organized under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) to participate in pre-consultation regarding NPS's wildlife management practices in Alaska. The NPS incorporated feedback received and met with all Tribal entities that requested a meeting. The NPS has evaluated this rule under the criteria in Executive Order 13175 and under the Department's Tribal consultation and ANCSA Corporation policies. Because the rule does not restrict Title VIII subsistence harvest, the rule will not have a substantial direct effect on federally recognized Tribes or ANCSA Corporation lands, water areas, or resources. Consultation and communication with Tribes and ANCSA Corporations was considered by the NPS throughout the rulemaking process.

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.)

This rule does not contain information collection requirements, and a submission to the OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act is not required. The NPS may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond, to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)

The NPS has prepared a Wildlife, Harvest, and Access in National Parks and Preserves in Alaska Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine whether this rule will have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment under the NEPA. The EA included appropriate available information and an analysis of impacts for public safety, wildlife, federal subsistence use, and public use and experience resource issues. The EA incorporated feedback received during the public comment period on the proposed rule and during consultation with Tribes and ANCSA Corporations and with the State of Alaska. On September 28, 2026, the Regional Director, Alaska Region, signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) that identified the preferred alternative in the EA as the selected action. This rule is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. A detailed statement under the NEPA is not required because of the FONSI. A copy of the EA and FONSI are available online at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/akro> by clicking the link entitled "<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/AlaskaWildlifeRule2026>" and then

clicking the link entitled "Document List."

Energy Supply, Distribution or Use—Executive Order 13211

This rule is not a significant energy action under the definition in Executive Order 13211; the rule is not likely to have a significant adverse effect on the supply, distribution, or use of energy, and the rule has not otherwise been designated by the Administrator of OIRA as a significant energy action. A statement of energy effects is not required.

List of Subjects in 36 CFR Part 13

Alaska, National Parks, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

In consideration of the foregoing, the National Park Service amends 36 CFR part 13 as set forth below:

PART 13—NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM UNITS IN ALASKA

- 1. The authority citation for part 13 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 3101 *et seq.*; 54 U.S.C. 100101, 100751, 320102; Sec. 13.1204 also issued under Pub. L. 104–333, Sec. 1035, 110 Stat. 4240, November 12, 1996.

- 2. In § 13.1:
 - a. Remove the definition of "Furbearer"; and
 - b. Revise the definition of "Trapping".
 The revision to read as follows:

§ 13.1 Definitions.

* * * * *

Trapping means taking furbearers under a trapping license.

* * * * *

- 3. In § 13.35, revise paragraph (g) to read as follows:

§ 13.35 Preservation of natural features.

* * * * *

(g) Nothing in this section shall apply to local rural residents or others authorized to take renewable resources for subsistence uses.

- 4. In § 13.40 revise the section heading and paragraphs (d) and (e) to read as follows:

§ 13.40 Taking of fish and wildlife.

* * * * *

(d) *Hunting and trapping.* (1) Hunting and trapping are allowed in national preserves in accordance with applicable Federal and non-conflicting State law and regulations.

(2) Violating a provision of either Federal or non-conflicting State law or regulation is prohibited.

(3) Engaging in trapping activities as the employee of another person is prohibited.

(4) It shall be unlawful for a person having been airborne to use a firearm or any other weapon to take or assist in taking any species of bear, caribou, Sitka black-tailed deer, elk, coyote, arctic and red fox, mountain goat, moose, Dall sheep, lynx, bison, musk ox, wolf and wolverine until after 3 a.m. on the day following the day in which the flying occurred. This prohibition does not apply to flights on regularly scheduled commercial airlines between regularly maintained public airports.

(5) Persons transporting wildlife through park areas must identify themselves and the location where the wildlife was taken when requested by an NPS employee or other authorized person.

(e) *Closures and restrictions.* The Superintendent may prohibit or restrict the non-subsistence taking of fish or wildlife in accordance with the provisions of § 13.50. Except in emergency conditions, such restrictions shall take effect only after the Superintendent has consulted with the appropriate State agency having responsibility over fishing, hunting, or trapping and representatives of affected users.

§ 13.42 [Removed]

- 5. Remove § 13.42.
- 6. Revise § 13.50 to read as follows:

§ 13.50 Closure and restriction procedures.

(a) *Authority.* The Superintendent may close an area or restrict an activity on an emergency, temporary, or permanent basis.

(b) *Criteria.* In determining whether to close an area or restrict an activity on an emergency basis, the Superintendent shall be guided by factors such as public health and safety, resource protection, protection of cultural or scientific values, subsistence uses, endangered or threatened species conservation, and other management considerations necessary to ensure that the activity or area is being managed in a manner compatible with the purposes for which the park area was established.

(c) *Emergency Closures.* (1) Emergency closures or restrictions relating to the taking of fish and wildlife shall be accomplished by notice and hearing.

(2) Other emergency closures shall become effective upon notice as prescribed in paragraph (f) of this section; and

(3) No emergency closure or restriction shall extend for a period exceeding 30 days, nor may it be extended.

(d) *Temporary closures or restrictions.* (1) Temporary closures or restrictions relating to the taking of fish and wildlife, shall not be effective prior to notice and hearing in the vicinity of the area(s) directly affected by such closures or restrictions, and other locations as appropriate;

(2) Temporary closures shall be effective upon notice as prescribed in paragraph (f) of this section; and

(3) Temporary closures or restrictions shall not extend for a period exceeding 12 months and may not be extended.

(e) *Permanent closures or restrictions.* Permanent closures or restrictions shall be published as rulemaking in the **Federal Register** with a minimum public comment period of 60 days and shall be accompanied by public hearings in the area affected and other locations as appropriate.

(f) *Notice.* Emergency, temporary, and permanent closures or restrictions shall be:

(1) Published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in the state and in at least one local newspaper if available, posted at community post offices within the vicinity affected, made available for broadcast on local radio stations in a manner reasonably calculated to inform residents in the affected vicinity, and designated on a map which shall be available for public inspection at the office of the Superintendent and other places convenient to the public; and

(2) Designated by the posting of appropriate signs.

(g) *Openings.* In determining whether to open an area to public use or activity otherwise prohibited, the Superintendent shall provide notice in the **Federal Register** and shall, upon request, hold a hearing in the affected vicinity and other locations as appropriate prior to making a final determination.

(h) *Facility closures and restrictions.* The Superintendent may close or restrict specific facilities for reasons of public health, safety, and protection of public property for the duration of the circumstance requiring the closure or restriction. Notice of facility closures and restrictions will be available for inspection at the park visitor center. Notice will also be posted near or within the facility, published in a newspaper of general circulation in the affected vicinity, or made available to the public by such other means as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Violating facilities closures or restrictions is prohibited.

(i) *Prohibitions.* Except as otherwise specifically permitted under the provisions of this part, entry into closed

areas or failure to abide by restrictions established under this section is prohibited.

■ 7. In § 13.400, redesignate paragraph (e) as paragraph (f) and add a new paragraph (e) to read as follows:

§ 13.400 Purpose and policy.

* * * * *

(e) The regulations in this subpart apply to local rural residents and other Alaskan individuals authorized to take renewable resources for subsistence uses. The State of Alaska is authorized to regulate the taking of fish and wildlife for subsistence uses within park areas to the extent such regulation is consistent with applicable Federal law, including but not limited to ANILCA, and Department of the Interior regulations at 43 CFR Part 51.

* * * * *

■ 8. In § 13.420:

■ a. Remove the definition for “Animal parts”; and

■ b. Revise the definitions for “Handicraft”; and “Subsistence uses”.

The revisions read as follows:

§ 13.420 Definitions.

* * * * *

Handicraft. As used in this part, the term has the same meaning as used in federal subsistence regulations (43 CFR part 51) except that:

(1) The term also includes products made from plant materials; and

(2) The term does not include a trophy or European mount of horns or antlers.

* * * * *

Subsistence uses. As used in this part, the term “subsistence uses” shall mean the customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources for direct personal or family consumption as food, shelter, fuel, clothing, tools or transportation; for the making and selling of handicraft articles out of nonedible byproducts of fish and wildlife resources taken for personal or family consumption; for barter or sharing for personal or family consumption; and for customary trade. For the purposes of this paragraph, the terms—

* * * * *

■ 9. Revise § 13.470 to read as follows:

§ 13.470 Subsistence fishing.

Fish may be taken by local rural residents for subsistence uses in park areas where subsistence uses are allowed in compliance with applicable State and Federal law, including the provisions of § 2.3 of this chapter and § 13.40. Local rural residents in park areas where subsistence uses are

allowed may fish with methods and means permitted under applicable State and Federal law.

■ 10. Revise § 13.480 to read as follows:

§ 13.480 Subsistence hunting and trapping.

Local rural residents may hunt and trap wildlife for subsistence uses in park areas where subsistence uses are allowed in compliance with applicable State and Federal law.

§ 13.482 [Removed]

■ 11. Remove § 13.482.

■ 12. Revise and republish § 13.485 to read as follows:

■ a. Revise paragraph (b);

■ b. Remove paragraphs (c) through (e); and

■ c. Redesignate paragraph (f) as paragraph (c).

The revision reads as follows:

§ 13.485 Subsistence use of timber and plant material.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, the non-commercial cutting of standing timber by local rural residents for appropriate subsistence uses, such as firewood or house logs, may be permitted in park areas where subsistence uses are allowed as follows:

(1) For standing timber of diameter greater than three inches at ground height, the Superintendent may permit cutting in accordance with the specifications of a permit if such cutting is determined to be compatible with the purposes for which the park area was established; and

(2) For standing timber of diameter less than three inches at ground height, cutting is authorized unless restricted by the Superintendent.

(b) The noncommercial gathering by local rural residents of fruits, berries, mushrooms, and other plant materials for subsistence uses, and the noncommercial gathering of dead or downed timber for firewood, shall be allowed without a permit in park areas where subsistence uses are allowed.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, the Superintendent, after notice and public hearing in the affected vicinity and other locations as appropriate, may temporarily close all or any portion of a park area to subsistence uses of a particular plant population. The Superintendent may make a closure under this paragraph only if necessary for reasons of public safety, administration, resource protection, protection of historic or scientific values, conservation of endangered or threatened species, or the purposes for

which the park area was established, or to ensure the continued viability of the plant population. For purposes of this section, the term “temporarily” shall mean only so long as reasonably necessary to achieve the purposes of the closure.

(1) If the Superintendent determines that an emergency situation exists and that extraordinary measures must be taken for public safety or to assure the continued viability of a particular plant population, the Superintendent may immediately close all or any portion of a park area to the subsistence uses of such population. Such emergency closure shall be effective when made, shall be for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days, and may not subsequently be extended unless the Superintendent establishes, after notice and public hearing in the affected vicinity and other locations as appropriate, that such closure should be extended.

(2) Notice of administrative actions taken pursuant to this section, and the reasons justifying such actions, shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation within the State and at least one local newspaper if available, and information about such actions and reasons also shall be made available for broadcast on local radio stations in a manner reasonably calculated to inform local rural residents in the affected vicinity. All closures shall be designated on a map which shall be available for public inspection at the office of the Superintendent of the affected park area and the post office or postal authority of every affected community within or near the park area, or by the posting of signs in the vicinity of the restrictions, or both.

■ 13. In § 13.490, revise paragraph (a) to read as follows:

§ 13.490 Closure to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, the Superintendent, after consultation with the State and the Federal Subsistence Board, and after adequate notice and public hearing in the affected vicinity and other locations as appropriate, may temporarily close all or any portion of a park area to subsistence uses of a particular fish or wildlife population only if necessary for reasons of public safety, administration, or to assure the continued viability of such population. For purposes of this section, the term “temporarily” shall mean only so long as reasonably necessary to achieve the purposes of the closure.

* * * * *

§ 13.1902 [Amended]

■ 14. In § 13.1902, remove paragraph (d).

Kevin J. Lilly,

Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

[FR Doc. 2026–21299 Filed 10–16–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4312–52–P

POSTAL SERVICE

39 CFR Part 20

Customs Requirements and Payment Procedures for Certain Customs Charges

AGENCY: Postal Service.

ACTION: Interim final rule.

SUMMARY: The Postal Service is revising *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, International Mail Manual (IMM®), in various sections, to update mailer responsibilities with respect to customs requirements and to establish procedures for the payment, or reimbursement, of any customs charges that are assessed, including after the purchase of postage.

DATES: *Effective:* October 19, 2026.

Comments must be received by November 18, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Mail or deliver comments to the manager of Product Classification, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L’Enfant Plaza SW, RM 4446, Washington, DC 20260–5015. You may inspect and photocopy all written comments at USPS Headquarters Library, 475 L’Enfant Plaza SW, 11th Floor N, Washington, DC by appointment only between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, by calling (202) 268–2906 in advance. Email comments, including the name and address of the commenter, to: PCFederalRegister@usps.gov, with a subject line of “Customs Requirements and Payment Procedures.” Faxed comments will not be accepted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michelle Lassiter at (202) 268–2914.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As of July 1, 2026, the European Commission eliminated the *de minimis* exemption for most low-value goods destined to the European Union customs territory. In addition, the European Commission established a new hierarchical system for determining who is responsible for paying applicable duties, taxes, and import fees for such low-value goods. In response, many postal operators within the European Union have established, and continue to adjust, their own requirements in order to implement

these changes. For example, some destination postal operators within the European Union require that certain items, be sent using an approved *delivered duty paid* (DDP) solution pursuant to which applicable duties, taxes, and import fees must be paid by the mailer. Certain postal operators have adopted consequences such as fees and other charges that apply in certain situations, such as if inaccurate customs information is provided by the mailer. Additionally, when an item is sent on a *delivered duty unpaid* basis and duties, taxes, or import fees cannot be recovered from the addressee, the destination postal operator may seek to collect unpaid amounts from the mailer. Accordingly, the Postal Service is updating the mailer’s responsibilities with respect to customs requirements and is establishing procedures for mailers to pay, or reimburse the Postal Service, for duties, taxes, import fees, and other charges assessed on a mailpiece, where applicable. Duties, taxes, import fees, and other related charges are not included in the postage paid by the mailer; therefore, the Postal Service may invoice the mailer for such applicable amounts when they have not been paid in full using USPS Delivered Duty Paid service.

The Postal Service adopts the described changes to *Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service*, International Mail Manual (IMM), which is incorporated by reference in the Code of Federal Regulations. We will publish an appropriate amendment to 39 CFR part 20 to reflect these changes.

List of Subjects in 39 CFR Part 20

Foreign relations, International postal services.

Accordingly, 39 CFR part 20 is amended as follows:

PART 20—[AMENDED]

■ 1. The authority citation for 39 CFR Part 20 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552(a); 13 U.S.C. 301–307; 18 U.S.C. 1692–1737; 39 U.S.C. 101, 401, 403, 404, 407, 414, 416, 3001–3011, 3201–3219, 3403–3406, 3621, 3622, 3626, 3632, 3633, and 5001.

■ 2. Revise the following sections of the IMM as follows:

Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, International Mail Manual (IMM)

* * * * *

1 International Mail Services

110 General Information

* * * * *