

**Denby Lloyd**

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## Press Release

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COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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### **STATE REQUESTS EXTENSION OF FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REVIEW DEADLINE TO ALLOW MORE ALASKANS TO PARTICIPATE**

(Juneau) - The Alaska Department of Fish and Game requested an extension today of the deadline for comments to the Department of the Interior (DOI) on the Federal Subsistence Program Review. The request for additional time is based on the significant importance of the review to Alaskans.

"We believe that providing little more than a month before the holidays is not sufficient." said Denby Lloyd, ADF&G Commissioner. Although a DOI website to submit comments went online November 12, and Interior is requesting comments before the holidays, Lloyd explained that department staff has received numerous complaints from the public that there is not enough time to prepare comments.

In a letter sent today to DOI Director of Alaska Affairs, the commissioner requested an extension of the deadline through February 2010. The letter also specifically requests more involvement of rural residents and called for more direct consultation with a broader base of affected individuals, organizations, and communities. The department urges DOI to conduct more traditional public meetings and to consult with members of Regional Advisory Councils as well as local fish and game Advisory Committees at their upcoming meetings.

The state also requested a second phase of the review be established providing an opportunity for the public and state to evaluate and comment on any potential consequences of specific changes the Secretaries may be contemplating.

The request for comment extension cited the need to provide sufficient time to conduct a systematic, documented evaluation of the federal subsistence program that assures direct consultation with the wide variety of stakeholders. "The greater opportunity for participation by all parties the better this process will meet the needs of subsistence users and others affected by any changes." said the commissioner.

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