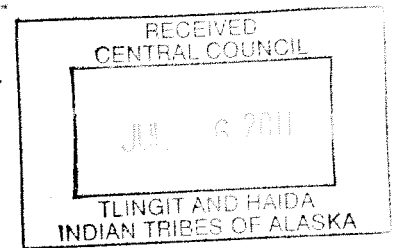




# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240



June 29, 2011

Mr. Edward Thomas  
President, Central Council, Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska  
Andrew P. Hope Building  
320 West Willoughby Avenue Suite 300  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1726

Dear Mr. ~~Thomas~~  Thomas:

Thank you for your May 4, 2011, letter to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar regarding the three subsistence resolutions passed during the recent Tribal Assembly. Secretary Salazar has asked me to respond on his behalf. He appreciates the time and thought spent on each of the resolutions.

The resolutions that dealt with the federal subsistence program, including the status of Saxman, have been shared with Tim Towarak, the new chair of the Federal Subsistence Board. The resolutions highlight some of the ongoing challenges for the Federal Subsistence Board and the Department. Each reinforces one of the most important conclusions of the subsistence review—that the robust subsistence dialogue that began last year must continue. Each resolution helps ensure that the product that was crafted after 45 meetings in all corners of the state with tribal entities and other stakeholders, and after considering more than 100 written comments received during the review, will be a living guideline and not a static one for the next decade.

Some of the changes directed by the Secretary after the initial review directly address some of the topics referenced in the three resolutions. These include directives by the Secretary that the Federal Subsistence Board: review customary and traditional use guidelines; commence a review of rural/non-rural guidelines pursuant to the 2010 census; prioritize, in budgets, more meetings in rural areas and RAC support; and review all the federal regulations adopted from the state to ensure that federal authorities are fully reflected in the subsistence program and comply with Title VIII.

Those program and budget reviews will be done with enhanced input from the Regional Advisory Councils and will be done, of course, in full compliance with the President's Executive Order on tribal consultation. Finally, final notice will soon be published in the *Federal Register* to change regulations so that two subsistence harvesters can be added to the Federal Subsistence Board, also as directed by the Secretary. We hope these two additional subsistence harvesters can be added to the board to inform these ongoing reviews before the end of this year.

We welcome further discussion and look forward to working with you and the Central Council on subsistence and other issues.

Sincerely,



Kim Elton  
Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Alaska Affairs