October 19, 2023

RE: Federally Recognized Tribal Letter and Tribal Consortium Letters in Support of Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

The Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal organizations included in the following letters support the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter “D-1 protection”) withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. This letter represents 78 Tribal Governments whose ancestral homelands encompass all of BLM’s planning areas. These Federally Recognized Tribes and Tribal organizations urge the Secretary to retain the D-1 protections.

CC
Tracy Stone-Manning, Director, Bureau of Land Management
Stephanne Harding, Senior Director for Lands, Council on Environmental Quality
Robert Anderson, Principal Deputy Solicitor
Laura Daniel Davis, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management
Nada Culver, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Land Management
Danna Jackson, Counselor to BLM Director
Janea Scott, Counselor to the Secretary
Natalie Landreth, Deputy Solicitor for Land Resources
October 19, 2023

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

The undersigned Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal organizations support the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter “D-1 protection”) withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. We urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections and finalize the D-1 decision within the next two years.

Nearly 75% of all federally recognized Tribes in Alaska are impacted by the BLM’s land management planning decisions. BLM-managed lands support important subsistence resources and serve as the breadbasket for thousands of Athabaskan, Aleut, Dena’ina, Inupiat, Yup’ik, and Tlingit peoples. For Alaska Native communities off the road system, over 80% of food consumed comes directly from the surrounding lands and waters. A tribal member from the village of Anvik on the lower Yukon River said it well, “We don’t own the land, but we belong to the land and whatever happens to the land happens to us.”

The previous administration prepared five Public Land Orders (PLOs)1 without adequately consulting the federally recognized Tribes who are most impacted by the decisions. The flawed decision to advance the PLOs was also made without any consideration of how lifting the D-1 protections and allowing extractive resource development could negatively affect cultural use areas, fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence resources, hunting, fishing, and gathering rights, and food security for hundreds of communities.

Under ANCSA, the Secretary of the Interior must evaluate whether the D-1 protection should remain in place to protect the public interest.2 We believe it is in the public interest to protect our Way-of-Life and retain the D-1 orders. Alaska is at the forefront of climate change and widespread impacts are already occurring including melting permafrost, coastal erosion, increasing air and water temperatures and the habitat displacement of fish and wildlife populations across subarctic and arctic environments. In this rapidly changing environment with so many future unknowns, it is in the public interest to adopt a precautionary action and

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1 Public Land Orders 7899-7903.
prioritize the protection of the natural environment that supports our Peoples’ subsistence resources over the industrial exploitation of intact lands and pristine waters.

We are grateful to the Biden Administration for your commitment to engage with affected Tribes and for creating the environmental review process to evaluate the true impacts that lifting the D 1 protections could have on our people, communities, and culture. Our Tribal leaders look forward to engaging with BLM and the Department of the Interior in the forthcoming two years. We also urge you to take action to protect our ancestral land so it can continue to support the diverse Ways-of-Life among Alaska Native peoples.

Thank you,

Gusty Ilutsik, Jr., President
Native Village of Aleknagik

Harding Sam, First Chief
Alatna Tribal Council

Robert Walker, First Chief
Anvik Village

Gilbert Tocktoo, President
Native Village of Brevig Mission

Percy Ballot, Sr. President
Native Village of Buckland

Janet Erik, President
Village of Chefornak

Roy Atchak, First Chief
Chevak Traditional Council

Charlie Brown, President
Chinik Eskimo Community

Jones Hotch Jr, Vice President
Chilkat Indian Village

Corina Ewan, President
Native Village of Chitina

Thomas Myomick, President
Chuloonawick Native Village

Chief Gary Harrison
Chickaloon Village Traditional Council

Betty Gardiner, President
Clarks Point Village Council

Annie Pete, President
Native Village of Eek

Robert Keith, President
Native Village of Elim

Frank Thompson, First Chief
Evansville Village

Robin Eleazer, President
Gulkana Village Council

William Painter, First Chief
Grayling IRA Tribal Council

Nancy James, First Chief
Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government

Eugene Paul, First Chief
Holy Cross Village

Norman Burgett, First Chief
Huslia Tribal Council
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wassily Alexie</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Iqugmiut Traditional Council</td>
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<td>Julia Dorris</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>Georgianna Madros</td>
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<td>Leo Lolnitz</td>
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<td>Gavin Phillip</td>
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<td>Lucy Weedman</td>
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<td>George Alexie</td>
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<td>Vernon John</td>
<td>First Chief</td>
<td>Nikolai Village</td>
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<td>Gloria Patsy</td>
<td>First Chief</td>
<td>Nulato Tribal Council</td>
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<td>Noah Wise</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Native Village of Nunapitchuk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walter Jim</td>
<td>Tribal Council President</td>
<td>Orutsararmiut Native Council</td>
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<td>Mike Wiehl</td>
<td>First Chief</td>
<td>Rampart Village</td>
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<td>Patrick McCarty</td>
<td>First Chief</td>
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<td>Lydia Raymon-Snowball</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Stebbins Community Association</td>
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<td>Thomas Abraham</td>
<td>First Chief</td>
<td>Takotna Tribal Council</td>
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<td>President</td>
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<td>Bertha Pavan-</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>Susie Walter</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Native Village of Tununak</td>
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<tr>
<td>John W. Sharp</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Twin Hills Village Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Butler</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Yakutat Tlingit Tribe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frank Katchatag, President
Native Village of Unalakleet

Davis A. Lincoln, Vice President
Native Village of White Mountain

Alannah Hurley, Director
United Tribes of Bristol Bay

RaeAnn Garnett, First Chief
Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government
Secretary Deb Haaland  
US Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240  

October 19, 2023  

RE: Alaska Indigenous Support for Maintaining ANCSA Sect. 17(D)(1) Protections  

Dear Secretary Haaland,  

The undersigned Alaska Indigenous persons, entities, and organizations support the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter “D-1 protection”) withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. We urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections and finalize the D-1 decision within the next two years.  

Most Alaska Indigenous people are impacted by the BLM’s land management planning decisions. BLM-managed lands support important subsistence resources and serve as the breadbasket for thousands of Athabaskan, Aleut, Dena’ina, Inupiat, Yup’ik, and Tlingit peoples. For Alaska Native communities off the road system, over 80% of food consumed comes directly from the surrounding lands and waters. A tribal member from the village of Anvik on the lower Yukon River said it well, “We don’t own the land, but we belong to the land and whatever happens to the land happens to us.”  

The previous administration prepared five Public Land Orders (PLOs) without engaging Indigenous people, who are most impacted by the decisions, in the decision-making process. The flawed decision to advance the PLOs was also made without any consideration of how lifting the D-1 protections and allowing extractive resource development could negatively affect cultural use areas, fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence resources, hunting, fishing, and gathering rights, and food security for hundreds of communities.  

Under ANCSA, the Secretary of the Interior must evaluate whether the D-1 protection should remain in place to protect the public interest. We believe it is in the public interest to protect our Way-of-Life and retain the D-1 orders. Alaska is at the forefront of climate change and widespread impacts are already occurring including melting permafrost, coastal and river erosion, increasing air and water temperatures and the habitat displacement of fish and wildlife populations across subarctic and arctic environments. In this rapidly changing environment with so many future unknowns, it is in the public interest to adopt a precautionary action and prioritize the protection of the natural environment that supports our subsistence resources over the industrial exploitation of intact lands and pristine waters.
We are grateful to the Biden Administration for your commitment to engage with affected Indigenous peoples while undertaking the environmental review process to evaluate the true impacts that lifting the D-1 protections could have on us, our communities, and culture. We also urge you to take action to protect our ancestral land so it can continue to support the diverse Ways-of-Life among our People.

Thank you,

Doug Katchatag, President
Norton Bay Intertribal Watershed Council
(8 Federally Recognized Tribes in Norton Bay Watershed)

Eugene Paul, Chairman
Bering Sea-Interior Tribal Commission
(38 Federally Recognized Tribes in Kawarek, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Association of Village Council Presidents Regions along the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers and Bering Sea)

Sophie Swope, Director
Mother Kuskokwim Tribal Coalition
(5 Federally Recognized Tribes in the Kuskokwim River Watershed)
Native Village of Chitina
aka Chitina Traditional Indian Village Council
PO Box 31, Chitina, Alaska 99566
(P) 907-823-2215 (F) 907-823-2285
Email: ctivc@outlook.com

April 21, 2023

Secretary Haaland
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

The undersigned Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal organizations support the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter “D-1 protection”) withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. We urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections and finalize the D-1 decision within the next two years.

Nearly 75% of all federally recognized Tribes in Alaska are impacted by the BLM’s land management planning decisions. BLM-managed lands support important subsistence resources and serve as the breadbasket for thousands of Athabaskan, Aleut, Dena’ina, Inupiat, Yup’ik, and Tlingit peoples. For Alaska Native communities off the road system, over 80% of food consumed comes directly from the surrounding lands and waters. A tribal member from the village of Anvik on the lower Yukon River said it well, “We don’t own the land, but we belong to the land and whatever happens to the land happens to us.”

The previous administration prepared five Public Land Orders (PLOs)1 without adequately consulting the federally recognized Tribes who are most impacted by the decisions. The flawed decision to advance the PLOs was also made without any consideration of how lifting the D-1 protections and allowing extractive resource development could negatively affect cultural use areas, fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence resources, hunting, fishing, and gathering rights, and food security for hundreds of communities.

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in the public interest to adopt a precautionary action and prioritize the protection of the natural environment that supports our Peoples’ subsistence resources over the industrial exploitation of intact lands and pristine waters.

We are grateful to the Biden Administration for your commitment to engage with affected Tribes and for creating the environmental review process to evaluate the true impacts that lifting the D1 protections could have on our people, communities, and culture. Our Tribal leaders look forward to engaging with BLM and the Department of the Interior in the forthcoming two years. We also urge you to take action to protect our ancestral land so it can continue to support the diverse Ways-of-Life among Alaska Native peoples.

Thank you,

Corina Ewan

Corina Ewan, President
May 1, 2023

Secretary Haaland
US Department of the Interior 1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

The undersigned Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal organizations support the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter “D-1 protection”) withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. We urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections and finalize the D-1 decision within the next two years.

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We are grateful to the Biden Administration for your commitment to engage with affected Tribes on the D-1 lands review. The federal environmental review process needs to thoroughly evaluate the vast impacts posed on us, our communities and cultures that would occur if the D-1 protections were lifted. We urge you to take action to protect ancestral lands and resources that support the diverse Ways of Life among Alaska Native Peoples.

Sincerely,

Roy Atchak
1st Chief,
Chevak Native Village,

list of tribes signed on:
Eugene Paul, First Chief, Holy Cross Tribe
Robert Walker, First Chief, Anvik Tribe
Vernon John, First Chief, Nikolai Tribe
Leo Lolnitz, First Chief, Koyukuk Tribe
Nancy James, First Chief, Gwichya Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government
Norman Burgett, First Chief, Huslia Tribe
Frank Thompson, First Chief, Evansville Tribe
RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

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Nearly 75% of all federally recognized Tribes in Alaska are impacted by the BLM’s land management planning decisions. BLM-managed lands support important subsistence resources and serve as the breadbasket for thousands of Athabaskan, Aleut, Dena’ina, Inupiat, Yup’ik, and Tlingit peoples. For Alaska Native communities off the road system, over 80% of food consumed comes directly from the surrounding lands and waters. A tribal member from the village of Anvik on the lower Yukon River said it well, “We don’t own the land, but we belong to the land and whatever happens to the land happens to us.”

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to protect our ancestral land so it can continue to support the diverse Ways-of-Life among Alaska Native peoples.

Thank you,

Roberta Eleazer

Gulkana Village Council
P.O. Box 254
Gakona, AK 99586

Gulkana Village Council
Council President Eileen Ewan
Council Vice-President Nick Jackson
Council Member Teri Nutter
Council Member Brenda Tyone
Council Member John L. Dye
Council Member Felicia Ewan
Council Member Francis Jackson
Tribal Administrator Roberta Eleazer
May 1, 2023

Secretary Haaland
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

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Sincerely,

Wassily Alexie, Iqugmiut Traditional Council President

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1 Public Land Orders 7899-7903.
Secretary Haaland
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

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Thank you,

Lucy Oquilluk, President
The Native Village of Mary’s Igloo/ Mary’s Igloo Traditional Council
March 28, 2023

Secretary Haaland
US Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

The undersigned Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal organizations support the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter "D-1 protection") withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. We urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections and finalize the D-1 decision within the next two years.

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1 Public Land Orders 7899-7903.

Thank you,

[Signature]

Mr. Walter Jim
Orutsaramiut Native Council
Tribal Council President
June 15, 2023
Secretary Haaland
US Department of the Interior 1849 C Street
NW Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland,

The undersigned Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal organizations support the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) process to review and thoughtfully consider the impacts that lifting the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(d)(1) (hereafter: “D-1 protection”) withdrawals will have on fish and wildlife populations and subsistence resources that support Indigenous Ways-of-Life. We urge BLM to maintain the D-1 protections and finalize the D-1 decision within the next two years.

Most Alaska Indigenous people are impacted by the BLM’s land management planning decisions. BLM-managed lands support important subsistence resources and serve as the breadbasket for thousands of Athabaskan, Aleut, Dena’ina, Inupiat, Yup’ik, and Tlingit peoples. For Alaska Native communities off the road system, over 80% of food consumed comes directly from the surrounding lands and waters. A tribal member from the village of Anvik on the lower Yukon River said it well, “We don’t own the land, but we belong to the land and whatever happens to the land happens to us.”

The previous administration prepared five Public Land Orders (PLOs)1 without adequately consulting the federally recognized Tribes who are most impacted by the decisions. The flawed decision to advance the PLOs was also made without any consideration of how lifting the D-1 protections and allowing extractive resource development could negatively affect cultural use areas, fish and wildlife habitat, subsistence resources, hunting, fishing, and gathering rights, and food security for hundreds of communities.

Under ANCSA, the Secretary of the Interior must evaluate whether the D-1 protection should remain in place to protect the public interest.2 We believe it is in the public interest to protect our Way-of-Life by retaining the public land orders. Alaska is at the forefront of climate change and widespread impacts are already occurring including melting permafrost, coastal and riverbank erosion, increasing air and water temperatures and the habitat displacement of fish and wildlife populations across subarctic and arctic environments. In this rapidly changing environment with so many future unknowns, it is in the public interest to adopt a precautionary
action and prioritize the protection of the natural environment that supports our subsistence resources over the industrial exploitation of intact lands and pristine waters.

We are grateful to the Biden Administration for your commitment to engage with affected Tribes on the D-1 lands review. The federal environmental review process needs to thoroughly evaluate the vast impacts posed on us, our communities and cultures that would occur if the D-1 protections were lifted. We urge you to take action to protect ancestral lands and resources that support the diverse Ways of Life among Alaska Native Peoples.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Shirley Martin, Tribal President

Eugene Paul, First Chief, Holy Cross Tribe
Robert Walker, First Chief, Anvik Tribe
Vernon John, First Chief, Nicolai Tribe
Leo Lohnitz, First Chief, Koyukuk Tribe
Nancy James, First Chief, Gwichya Zhee Gwich’in Tribal Government
Norman Burgett, First Chief, Tanana Tribe
Frank Thompson, First Chief, Evansville Tribe
Frank Katchatag, President, Native Village of Unalakleet
Richard Slats, Vice President, Chevak Traditional Council
Roseann Garnett, First Chief, Village of Venetie
Mike Weihl, First Chief, Rampart Village
Patrick McCarty, First Chief, Ruby Tribal Council
Takotna Tribal Council

P.O. Box 7529

Takotna, AK 99675

Ph. (907)298-2212 * Fax (907)298-2314
takotnatribalcouncil@gmail.com

1st Chief – Thomas Abraham * Tribal Administrator – Lynn Good

April 20, 2023

Secretary Haaland

US Department of the Interior

1849 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20240

RE: Alaska Native Tribal Support for Maintaining ANCSA D-1 Protections

Dear Secretary Haaland,

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Sincerely:

Thomas S. Abraham
1st Chief – Thomas Abraham

(List of Signing Tribe’s Leader & Title)
Eugene Paul, First Chief, Holy Cross Tribe
Robert Walker, First Chief, Arvik Tribe
Vernon John, First Chief, Nikolai Tribe
Leo Lolnitz, First Chief, Koyukuk Tribe
Nancy James, First Chief, Gwichya Ghee Gwich’In Tribal Government
Norman Burgett, First Chief, Huslia Tribe
Frank Thompson, First Chief, Elvasville Tribe
Thomas Abraham, First Chief, Takotna Tribe

1 Public Land Orders 7899-7903.