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YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME III

YUPIIT PICIRYARAIT CULTURAL CENTER
Bethel, Alaska
August 23, 2024

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jacqueline Cleveland, Acting Chair
Alissa Nadine Rogers, Acting Chair
Henry Parks
Norma Evan
John Andrew
Myron Naneng
Phillip Peter
Robert Hoffman
Wassily Alexie

Regional Council Coordinator, Brooke McDavid

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Bethel, Alaska - 8/23/24)

(On record)

ACTING CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Good morning, Council. My name is Jacqueline Cleveland, I am just acting Chair for a little bit this morning. I want to call the meeting to order at 9:06 am. And Brooke, would you do roll call, please?

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you. Acting Chair Cleveland. Henry Parks.

MR. PARKS: Here.

MS. MCAVID: Norma Evan.

MS. EVAN: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: John Andrew.

MR. ANDREW: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Walter Morgan. Walter is excused. Jacqueline Cleveland.

MS. CLEVELAND: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Alyssa Nadine Rogers. Melissa is having some vehicle trouble this morning. She should be joining us shortly. Phillip Peter.

MR. PETER: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Wassil Alexie, were you able to join us online today? Wassily might be able to join us later. If not, he's excused. He's having a family emergency. Raymond Oney is also excused. Myron Naneng.

MR. NANENG: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: Robert Hoffman.

MR. HOFFMAN: Here.

MS. MCDAVID: The seven of eleven Council members. We have a quorum.

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank
2 you, Brooke. Do you have any announcements before we
3 start?
4

5 MS. MCDAVID: Yes, thank you. This
6 morning, I just wanted to let everybody know that we
7 don't have our translator with us today. So,
8 unfortunately, we won't have Patrick services. So, if
9 we ever need to pause and you all need to converse,
10 that's okay, we can do that. I also wanted to remind
11 folks that we have after these announcements, we'll
12 first thing on the agenda is the public and tribal
13 comments on non-agenda items. And then we have a
14 scheduled presentation from Alaska Department of Fish
15 and Game, Todd Rinaldi is going to talk about the
16 Mulchatna Caribou Intensive Management update. And then
17 following that, we have Ms. Karma Olviq scheduled to
18 present on behalf of the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish
19 Commission. So, thank you.
20

21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank
22 you, Brooke. I'm stepping down from Chair now, and
23 Allison Nadine Rogers is here, so Alyssa.
24

25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
26 Ms. Cleveland. I apologize for the delay. My battery
27 died, and I had to get jump started. We're going to go
28 ahead and go to our first public comment from Ms.
29 Therese. You have the floor.
30

31 MS. VICENTE: Thanks, Madam Chair. Good
32 morning, everybody. For the record, my name is Therese
33 Vicente with the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish
34 Commission. I am returning to give you all information
35 about that chum salmon bycatch environmental impact
36 statement that I mentioned yesterday in our organization
37 report. And I've just handed you a two-page document.
38 It's kind of a summary of what's going on and what the
39 issue is. I neglected to print out the full motion with
40 all the language of the alternatives so I can come back
41 with some hard copies of that if anybody would like. But
42 essentially - oh, and there's more of these copies in
43 the back of the room for anybody in the room. I can send
44 it to Brooke for folks online if they'd like. But so,
45 what's going on is currently, as many of you probably
46 know, chum salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea happens every
47 year with the groundfish fisheries out there, especially
48 the pollock trawlers, they're responsible for about 90,
49 I think it's like 98% of all chum salmon bycatch happens
50 in the pollock trawl fisheries. So, there's a movement

1 going on right now at the North Pacific Fishery
2 Management Council, which is the advisory body to the
3 Federal government, NOAA Fisheries to reevaluate how
4 chum salmon bycatch is managed, and with the goal to
5 reduce chum salmon bycatch, specifically of Western and
6 Interior Alaska chum, which are about every year 12 to
7 20% of all the chum salmon bycatch that's caught. The
8 Kuskokwim Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, alongside Tanana
9 Chiefs Conference and Alaska Department of Fish and
10 Game, are cooperating agencies with NOAA Fisheries to
11 develop this analysis.

12
13 But what I'll talk about is what the
14 next stage of the analysis is, is going to be looking
15 like. So, this past April, maybe some of you were at the
16 North Pacific Council meeting in Anchorage when they
17 discussed this issue. The North Pacific Council revised
18 the alternatives and created a series of five
19 alternatives. And so, these are the options on the table
20 for them to choose from at their next meeting, which
21 will be in February. At their next meeting, they're going
22 to choose what they call their preliminary preferred
23 alternative, which could be a handful of them. They can
24 kind of mix and match. But there's five options for them
25 to choose from. So, at the top of your page, this slide
26 or that graphic is a summary of what these alternatives
27 are, and I'll just walk through those quickly. So, the
28 first alternative and this is the same for every
29 environmental impact statement that's developed is no
30 action. It would just be leave things as they are and
31 things as they are right now for chum salmon bycatch,
32 there's no cap. And the way it's managed to try to be
33 reduced is within these agreements that the pollock
34 industry develops. They're called Incentive Plan
35 Agreements. So, it's the industry itself that's
36 responsible for reducing chum salmon bycatch. So, if the
37 Council chooses alternative one, just be to leave things
38 that way. Alternative two would be to set an overall
39 cap, they call it a prohibited species limit, catch limit
40 or PSC limit, that just means a cap. So, with alternative
41 two well, alternative two and three would both be to
42 look at caps but based on different things. Alternative
43 two would be to look at historical bycatch levels, and
44 they would look at a range of caps between 100,000 and
45 550,000 chum salmon. So, if the pollock fleet, the level
46 of bycatch hit whatever that cap is during the summer,
47 they'd be shut down. Alternative three would set a cap,
48 but it would be based on how many chum salmon came back
49 to Western and Interior Alaska the previous year, and
50 they have some options in there to either look at, like

1 a combined abundance of Yukon summer and Yukon fall chum,
2 Kuskokwim chum and Norton Sound chum; or they would just
3 look at the Yukon which some data they've pulled together
4 seems to indicate how the rest of the region is doing.
5 And they would set like from those levels, find kind of
6 a threshold line where they would say, oh, there's high
7 chum abundance, or there's low chum abundance. And if
8 there's high chum abundance in the region, they wouldn't
9 have a cap. So, I think that's really critical to know
10 that under that alternative, there is a way that there
11 won't be a cap. Alternative four would be changes to the
12 industry's Incentive Plan Agreements. They would --
13 those -- there's regulation for their Incentive Plan
14 Agreements, their IPAs. But outside of that, it's as I
15 understand, it's pretty much the pollock industry
16 leaders getting together kind of behind closed doors,
17 figuring things out. Go ahead, Alyssa.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
20 Ms. Therese. Can you define IPAs, please, for us?

21
22 MS. VICENTE Yep. Incentive Plan
23 Agreement. Yeah, sorry, I didn't have that on the slide.
24 But they're looking at adding some new requirements to
25 their Incentive Plan Agreements. Like using salmon
26 excluders, which are kind of little holes in their big
27 trawl nets that salmon can swim out of, and pollock
28 can't swim out of. They're looking at new ways to report
29 their data to salmon users in our region. Effectively,
30 though, from my read and from some people I've been
31 consulting with, it would be about the same as status
32 quo. Alternative five is a new one, and it's really
33 interesting. It would be to establish what they're
34 calling an in-season corridor cap. And if you look at
35 the maps below that slide, there's two of them. The one
36 on the left is just showing you the region where I mean,
37 you all know where the Bering Sea is and what it looks
38 like, but these areas above the Alaska Peninsula,
39 there's numbers like 517, 518, 509, 521, that's where
40 most of the pollock trawling is happening. And in this
41 other map that has this orange one, this teal two, green
42 three and purple four, these are their genetic sampling
43 cluster areas. Most Western Alaska chum salmon are
44 caught in the orange one and the blue teal two. So, it's
45 right above, really it's right above Area M, which makes
46 sense when you think about how chum salmon migrate. You
47 know, we all know they're coming from the Gulf of Alaska
48 going through Area M, where many are intercepted and
49 going through the North Alaska Peninsula back to the
50 Yukon, the Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay, Kotzebue. So, this

1 this last alternative, which is a new one from April,
2 would be in that north of the Alaska Peninsula, where
3 the trawling is happening, to set up some time and area
4 closures and caps specific to those areas. With the
5 understanding that that's where most of the Western
6 Alaska chum salmon are being caught. So, I there's some
7 more nuance within that but they would be looking at
8 specific areas between the months of June and August,
9 which is when most chum are caught as bycatch every
10 year. And then setting some caps in those different areas
11 and if they hit that cap in that area, they'd be shut
12 down. However, there wouldn't be an overall cap for the
13 other trawling and bycatch that happens in some of these
14 other areas, which tends to be less Western Alaska fish.
15 But a lot of things have been changing, you know, with
16 climate change and the different ocean temperatures and
17 things. So, those are the alternatives. At this time, I
18 don't have a ton of guidance to give you on which ones
19 would be best. My gut and what I've been hearing from,
20 I mean, what tribes and perhaps you all have been asking
21 for many years now is a cap on chum salmon. And I think
22 that makes sense to me to set a ceiling where they
23 couldn't go over it. I do think having some of these
24 like the time area closures, creating a -- like knowing
25 that chum salmon have this corridor through the Alaska
26 Peninsula and protecting them there, that makes a lot
27 of sense to me too. So, my initial reaction is there
28 could be a combination of these alternatives that would
29 do a lot of good for chum salmon from our region and for
30 the people in our region. But we're still, we're working
31 on the analysis now. It's scheduled to come out just
32 before Christmas, December 20th. They're hoping to have
33 everything posted online, and then they'll meet about
34 this again starting February 3rd in Anchorage and also
35 on online. So, I put my contact information at the bottom
36 of this first page. You can get in touch with us, your
37 tribe can get in touch with me and the Fish Commission.
38 We're happy to help develop public testimony, written
39 comments, give you more information, we can come talk
40 with your tribe. We're happy to do any of this, answer
41 questions, and we'll definitely know more in the coming
42 months and then once we see that full document. On this
43 back page, I just have some timelines for this. So,
44 right now, as I said, they're doing all the analysis.
45 In February they're going to discuss this issue. I really
46 encourage you and your tribes to participate. Because
47 it's I think there's been a lot more participation and
48 engagement and pressure from people in our regions. And
49 it's I think it's helping this action move along. So,
50 it's really good when people show up who are salmon

1 fishers and impacted by this issue. And then there's
2 supposed to be concluding this action by July of next
3 year. I have been told that end-date is subject to change
4 because this issue is pretty complex. But if it were to
5 wrap up by July of next year, they'd have chosen their
6 final action, it would get implemented in regulation,
7 and then, as I understand it, applied the following year.
8 So, 2026 is probably the soonest we'd see any changes
9 to chum salmon bycatch management if they choose to make
10 any changes. And this last bit just has some other
11 timelines, other meetings with the North Pacific
12 Council. They have a meeting coming up this October.
13 There's nothing about chum salmon bycatch. But every
14 year that's when they review Chinook salmon abundance
15 and set their chinook salmon caps -- bycatch caps for
16 the following year. So, that might be of interest to
17 folks. They meet again in December, the first week of
18 December. They have these really interesting ecosystem
19 status reports at that December meeting. Those are
20 supposed to inform the catch limits that they set for
21 pollock and other groundfish species the following year.
22 Then their February chum salmon bycatch special meeting,
23 and then they meet again in in the beginning of April.

24
25 So, lots of ways to engage. You can get
26 in touch with us at any time. This is what I tend to do
27 day to day is track this Council. So, I'm happy to
28 provide information. And I do have one other quick thing
29 to address, it's something Myron Naneng said yesterday
30 about the coho salmon in Area M. I did take a look at
31 the numbers and I -- they have data catches in Area M
32 going back to 1908. And like you said, Mr. Naneng, or
33 like you said, your friend said in 2019 it does look
34 like the Area M commercial fisheries caught their record
35 high coho salmon numbers 521,000, little over that,
36 521,000 coho salmon. I don't know what Kuskokwim coho
37 salmon migrations look like. Like, I know for chum salmon
38 they go to the Gulf of Alaska and then come back up
39 through Area M. I've asked our team, so hopefully we can
40 do some digging and get back. I don't know if it'll be
41 today, but I can. We can pass it along through Brooke
42 or something, or I can find you. But it is interesting
43 that in 2019, they caught a lot of coho salmon and that's
44 as you said, you know, three seasons, four seasons later,
45 we hit rock bottom here with silvers on the Kuskokwim.
46 So, but I, it makes me really want to know more about
47 what their migration looks like and maybe, you know, but
48 I just wanted to address that. Quyana.

49
50

1 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
2 Therese. (Simultaneous speech) Mr. Manning.
3

4 MR. NANENG: Yeah, thank you, Therese.
5 But one information, that historical information that
6 was done back in the 19 -- late 1980s, about that
7 timeframe, there was a tagging study of salmon that were
8 tagged at Area M and migrating. They found a few of them
9 on the Yukon, they found some on the coast, some here
10 on the Kuskokwim. But the state biologists stated that
11 that wasn't scientific enough. But the fact that they
12 showed up here with tags, showed that they there is
13 salmon that is found for the Yukon-Kuskokwim and Western
14 Alaska streams and villages. Some of them were caught
15 in Bristol Bay. Which name? Harris Sparks, working at
16 (In Native) worked on that study to implement it and
17 worked with the area fishermen to get some salmon are
18 tagged on there. I don't recall how many they tagged,
19 but definitely some of those tagged salmon showed up
20 here in the Kuskokwim, Yukon and Western Alaska. And the
21 other thing too, regarding the in-season cap, I don't
22 trust the trawl fleet to have what they in -- their
23 excluders or, you know, status quo that they currently
24 have because they're still have a large high bycatch.
25 But if we have a cap from 50,000 to 20,000 or 200,000,
26 that might be good. However, I'm concerned that there
27 might be a lot of chum chucking. And if you don't know
28 what chum chucking is, it' chums that are being caught,
29 and then they throw them overboard and they reduce the
30 number of salmon numbers related to that species. And
31 we know that has happened in the past down in Area M,
32 because chums down there are not as -- don't give as
33 much money in return as what they call red salmon or
34 sockeye. So, that was observed that was reported by some
35 of the people in Chinook area, even some of the crew
36 members that worked with some of those harvesters or
37 what they called seiners. And because we tried that chum
38 cap with Area M, but they always threw overboard that
39 chum so that the numbers that are being caught would be
40 a lot lower than what they actually were. So, my question
41 would be -- we need full monitoring of the by -- trawl
42 fleets so that we can have true numbers that they're
43 catching and use that as a way to limit them and make
44 sure that they have a cap that they're abiding to. So,
45 I know that the feds have had monitoring of trawl fleets,
46 but more often than not, the trawl fleets have treated
47 them with such meanness that some of them don't want to
48 go back or threaten to be part of that chucked humans,
49 who worked as observers on the boats. So that's something
50 that I think will need to be discussed and raised at the

1 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council when they
2 talk about that. Thank you.

3

4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Go ahead,
5 Therese.

6

7 MS. VICENTE: Thanks to the Chair. Just
8 the last comment you made. I'm in no way defending the
9 trawlers or anything, but I think there's a lot of
10 confusion about this. They do -- all the trawl vessels
11 in the Bering Sea; this is not the same for the Gulf of
12 Alaska, they don't have good observer coverage in the
13 Gulf; but in the Bering Sea, they do have two outside
14 observers on board. And those are the people responsible
15 for catching all the bycatch, which is salmon, but also
16 sharks, birds, halibut, things like that. As you said,
17 Mr. Naneng, though I -- I've heard anecdotally and it
18 comes up in, in their reports at the Council that the,
19 those observers are often harassed and mistreated. So,
20 it is interesting all these numbers that they report are
21 just the ones that are reported. So, I agree with you
22 that it's something to keep an eye on. I'm glad you're
23 bringing it up.

24

25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Naneng.

26

27 MR. NANENG: Yeah. Thank you, Therese.
28 You just said a word that the scientists are usually to
29 using whenever we talk about resources, when an elder
30 makes a comment based on their observations and years
31 of knowledge, because it has not been studied by someone
32 who has had piled higher and deeper, whatever degree
33 that they have, or years of observation, and noted on
34 the books that somebody can read, an elder's testimony
35 is always called anecdotal. So that's a buzzword, that
36 is that always comes up at the Board of Fisheries and
37 many of the Federal agencies that do resource studies.
38 And we are the most studied group of people in the world,
39 as well as the most restricted people in resource
40 management, because all that we provide is considered
41 to be anecdotal, unless somebody from some school
42 decides to say that they're going to do Master's work
43 on it. And that's not fair to our people.

44

45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Hoffman.

46

47 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, Mr. Maneng I think
48 you hit the nail right on the head. I had a question
49 that's been bothering me for many years now. Is the
50 reason why we're gathering here and hearing and

1 listening to caps that these other fishermen, whether
2 it be salmon or whatever they fish, with the numbers
3 that they are showing, it indicates to me that they do
4 harm the salmon that are headed wherever. And what we
5 heard was -- why we're here discussing, we're here
6 discussing what kind of caps they should have. I don't
7 understand that and to further strengthen that, they'll
8 even put observers on these ships. That's what I'm
9 hearing, they'll even put observers on their fish [sic]
10 to help them with their caps. When they reach their
11 caps, do they stop? I don't know, but I'll tell you what
12 I believe. Why is it that we up the Yukon and the
13 Kuskokwim go have to go - have to go on moratoriums and
14 regulated fishing periods when them [sic] guys down
15 there, we're making a plan for them to continue to fish?
16 I say that because we're figuring out how to fix their
17 caps. You know, I'm not too smart like Myron says, but
18 I think a lot, you know, what -- why do they continue
19 to fish even though they are actually involved in hurting
20 our salmon by what we call bycatch? And then we put
21 observers on these fish [sic]. You know what I heard by
22 a phone call from around the Dillingham area over and
23 over again, that these observers, they're not harassed,
24 they're paid off. And maybe that's what they call --
25 Myron calls anecdotal. It saddens me to listen to the
26 language going on when it's so simple. If they stop us
27 in the Yukon and the Kuskokwim, why don't they just stop
28 down there in the ocean for a while anyway? To let them
29 pass. Simple mathematics. I -- it saddens me to hear
30 that we are going to make a plan so that they could
31 continue to fish and figure out the bycatch. You know,
32 like I said, the bycatch system is not a true system
33 because of what we heard from the phone call from
34 Dillingham, these observers on these ships are paid off
35 And they're not actually thrown over, they keep them and
36 they sell them. I wouldn't sell a king, I wouldn't throw
37 away a king salmon, the most precious fish that come up
38 the Kuskokwim and Yukon. They must sell them. I don't
39 know, but who would be stupid enough to throw away gold?
40 Goldfish, real goldfish, you know. But that's what they
41 tell us anecdotal stuff. I'm learning that big word. Now
42 I'm going to use it wherever I go. Okay, thank you.
43 That's all.

44
45 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
46 Mr. Hoffman. Any further comments or questions? Go
47 ahead, Mr. Andrew.

48
49 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Madam Chair. My
50 name is John Andrew from Kwethluk. Back between 1980 and

1 to '87, I worked with I worked under (indiscernible)
2 Harris Sparks was the director. He used to assign Greg
3 Risdahl and myself to do help them to do the research.
4 We were -- we had our hands tied too, we spent like
5 seven years trying to work with Fish and Game and trying
6 to find out how much they caught down. They have the
7 records of their catches down there, starting somewhere
8 around 1976, earlier than that. In those years, we used
9 to ask them to put a observers, try to put a limit on
10 their catches. In one of the years that the trawlers got
11 over a million immature chums, they were ready to turn
12 in salmon. And I have talked -- I used to go fish down
13 in Bristol Bay and I did one summer down Kodiak. I used
14 to talk to people that fished down False Pass
15 (indiscernible) umiaq area and they said they used to
16 see people or the people that go fishing in that area,
17 the fishermen do what they call chum chucking. So, the
18 chums overboard, only try to keep the reds cus [sic]
19 they're the money fish and other species to -- that in
20 the trawlers where they get the by -- get the millions,
21 millions and millions and pounds of pinks, reds, mostly
22 is chum, because their biggest hauls were mostly chum
23 some years they say they caught over million chums in
24 some years. But if they get a whole trawl, football
25 field size of a trawl catch of untargeted Species, even
26 sea mammals, he'll just dumped them overboard because
27 it's not their targeted fish. They're the biggest
28 destroyer out of -- they catch them out there before
29 they get to -- back to their river of origins, over
30 Bristol Bay, Kuskokwim, Yukon, Norton Sound. I met a lot
31 of people in those early years and those early years in
32 my work with AVCP, and he knows that, and we used to
33 have very few people go over there. The native people
34 are easily ignored, and they had nobody to represent
35 them in their Board of Fish or even at the North Pacific
36 Management Council in those days. At that time, they
37 will just ask us who we are, but they never allow us to
38 testify on our behalf of our own people. With very few
39 proposals that we bring up, it is usually that nine out
40 of ten, they were shot down. It is very depressing. And
41 starting from around 1976, year after year, we see less
42 and less salmon coming up our rivers. The other thing
43 we observed was that they get smaller in size year after
44 year, to all of us know that. And especially this summer,
45 it was very, very strict. Not very many people got there
46 (indiscernible) for subsistence. They are hurting out
47 there, everywhere, all the whole Western Alaska. In the
48 last two summers, especially during the last two
49 summers, it has been cold and wet and windy, and at
50 times it's not an ideal drying season for us. We have

1 to figure out other ways to preserve what we catch; jar
2 them, freeze them, pickle them, salt them. And then when
3 they don't give us enough time to catch enough for our
4 other relatives in which we share practically a whole
5 village, or to your whole fish camp. Using my fish camp
6 as an example, we should have seven households and seven
7 smokehouses. Every year we fill them with mostly chums,
8 a little bit of chinook and reds; and it's pretty sad.
9 Thank you, Madam Chair.

10
11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
12 Mr. Andrew. And how many of those fish camps are left
13 now?

14
15 MR. ANDREW: Huh?

16
17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: How many fish
18 camps are left now?

19
20 MR. ANDREW: Oh, some of those fish camp
21 sites that are just -- there's nobody in them. Like in
22 my fish camp, there's only two families all summer. And
23 I go down for a day trip and come back and overnight no
24 more. In the early years, we stay used to stay from
25 sometime in May all the way to October, only coming up
26 for weekends. And earlier, our parents used to stay all
27 summer long, he said they only come into the village for
28 Sunday services. Thank you.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
31 Mr. Andrew. A testimony from the heart. Any further
32 comments, question? Mr. Parks.

33
34 Mr. SPARKS: Quayana, Chair. First, I
35 want to thank you for your presentation. Now, my question
36 may not be applied to your, to what you presented. But
37 anyway, my concern here is you know, here in our region
38 and up riven, up in the Yukon area and up north, we are
39 all impacted our salmon returns, it seems like, what, 5
40 or 6 years now, maybe more. But anyways, my -- it's just
41 needed. I always have concerns regarding these pollocks
42 down there in Bering Sea, do -- how's their numbers? Do
43 they ever decline in numbers or overall status of their,
44 you know, down there at Bering Sea? Thank you.

45
46 MS. VICENTE: Quayana for the
47 question. Through the Chair. This is Teresa Vicente
48 again, for the record. That's a really excellent
49 question, and it's something they report on every
50 December in their ecosystem status reports. I need to

1 go back through and look through the decades. But if I
2 remember correctly, last year or in recent years, there
3 have been a lot more skinny and younger pollock. There
4 was a heat wave in the Bering Sea from about 2016 to
5 2019 that really impacted our salmon, for sure. But it
6 also impacted the pollock because they're all eating
7 kind of similar things, and the heat just did away with
8 all the little, itty [sic], bitty phytoplankton and
9 things that they eat. So, if I remember right, in recent
10 years, the pollock have been a lot younger and smaller,
11 which, as we know, I mean, our salmon are coming back
12 younger and smaller, it doesn't bode well for future
13 generations, but that's something I'll look into more.
14 We should pay more attention to that.

15

16 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Any further
17 comments or questions? I have a couple comments or, not
18 comments but questions for you. Going back to your
19 alternatives, you said you would like to see a
20 combination of the alternatives for the best interest
21 of the Western area. Can you please elaborate a little
22 bit more in the combination that would best fit the
23 Western AYK.

24

25 MS. VICENTE: Thanks for the question. I
26 feel -- it still feels a little premature for me at this
27 time because I haven't seen the full analysis yet, so
28 I'll have more information in the next couple months.
29 But just my gut is like it makes sense to have an overall
30 cap, but if there can be something done to, like the
31 areas where we know that Western Alaska chum salmon are
32 swimming through, that makes sense too. So, I'm guessing
33 just the way the Councils, the North Pacific Council's
34 conversations have gone, they'll choose some sort of mix
35 and match of all of them. But we'll have to see. Thank
36 you.

37

38 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
39 Therese. So, after looking at this and we can see that
40 area three, one through three is the highest catch of
41 Western salmon that are coming through. And thinking
42 about the times so, we want for the first thing, we're
43 going to need to find out the time frame of when their
44 highest catches are. So, we can close that fishery for
45 that time period and put it into regulation. And then
46 the second thing is that we're going to have to put a
47 closure on areas one through three. Do you have any
48 insight in regards to a time frame of when the most AYK
49 fish are being caught in that time, besides just June

1 through August, because they're not going to close from
2 June from [sic] August.

3
4 MS. VICENTE: Yeah, through the Chair.
5 It's so, these the circles in this map are overall
6 bycatch, not just Western Alaska. So, area three or
7 cluster zone three, where there's that biggest circle
8 in there. That's, if I remember correctly, it's mostly
9 hatchery fish from like Japan, Korea, Russia. Western
10 Alaska chum are mostly caught in area one and two. My
11 recommendation is June through August, and I don't think
12 they're going to shut it down for that entire time. They
13 would not let that fly. So, what I think we'll see in
14 the analysis and if the Council leans towards this
15 alternative, but I think we'll see is having I mean,
16 they'll set a cap within that time and if they do meet
17 or exceed that cap, then they'll be shut down for the
18 remainder of that time period. So, like right now as
19 I've been tracking the bycatch numbers, they're lower
20 than we've seen in a lot of years, I think, because
21 there's a lot of pressure on the trawlers to do better.
22 But they've been increasing by about like for or five
23 thousand chum salmon each week. It's been like it was
24 kind of trickling up and now it's really climbing because
25 we're in this August period. So, I think what they would
26 do is set a cap within this time and then shut it down
27 till the end of August, then open them back up. And
28 there's some conversation that -- how it relates to
29 chinook salmon bycatch, which about half of all the king
30 salmon they catch as bycatch are coming back to our
31 region. It's a bigger impact in that way. They usually
32 catch king salmon in like March and April and then
33 sometimes again in September and October, if they
34 haven't met their pollock quota and they're fishing into
35 the fall season so, they like to kind of wield that and
36 be like, oh, you want us to reduce chum salmon bycatch,
37 but it'll affect king salmon. So, I kind of think there
38 needs to be a bigger conversation too, about how much
39 pollocks they're allowed to catch and that gets at
40 (silence - distortion) pollocks are doing too. But yeah,
41 it really is that June to August time that they're
42 catching a lot of Western Alaska chum salmon as I
43 understand it. So, and then the areas, I don't know what
44 they'll do with that yet, but we could talk more about
45 kind of which zones they're choosing to have the caps
46 apply to and things like that. Thank you.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
49 Ms. Therese. So, your -- just for clarification. Each
50 of these zones, one through four, are going to have

1 their own specific caps on them or is it a whole in
2 general?

3
4 MS. VICENTE: Yeah. Thanks for the
5 question. It's actually not the zones. So, these the
6 colored cluster zones one, two, three, and four, that's
7 where they have their genetic sampling that they do after
8 the season. They look more at the regions on the left,
9 which are their statistical areas. So, that's like 518,
10 517, 509, 519; that's where a lot of Western Alaska chum
11 are caught. What alternative five would do is just look
12 at those like specific areas and set caps there. What
13 alternatives two and three would do is set a cap on the
14 whole Bering Sea. So, you have like this overall cap and
15 alternative two and alternative three. And what the cap
16 number would be, would be linked to kind of different
17 things (silence - distortion) Alaska or north of the
18 Alaska Peninsula.

19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you for
21 the clarification. I was trying to write notes down, and
22 so, it's a lot to take in and a lot to try to understand.
23 I have been keeping an eye on it. But your in depth
24 knowledge in this, has brought more questions to my
25 thoughts. And so, thank you for your presentation. Any
26 more further comments or questions for Ms. Therese? I'm
27 going to pick your brain later. Thank you so much.

28
29 MS. VICENTE: Quyana.

30
31 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All right,
32 we're going to go to Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
33 Mr. Randali, are you currently online? Sorry, Rinaldi,
34 I always get your name mixed up.

35
36 MR. RINALDI: Good morning. This is Todd
37 Rinaldi. Can you hear me?

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Yes, sir. We
40 can hear you loud and clear. You have the floor.

41
42 MR. RINALDI: Okay, thank you. Good
43 morning, everyone. Thank you for providing me an
44 opportunity to speak to you. I've been asked to speak
45 about predation control and intensive management
46 efforts, but I'll also touch on the latest Mulchatna
47 caribou population information from this summer as well.
48 So, this is the second year of active predation control
49 where the department has gone in and removed animals
50 from the Western Mulchatna calving grounds. This year

1 in April, we went out and removed wolves prior to calving
2 season, mostly from Unit 19A; one second; mostly from
3 19B around Aniak drainage and we identified two packs.
4 We took out 11 animals during that time period. And we
5 only worked for just about a week in April towards the
6 end of the snow season, when May rolled around following
7 the caribou as they were migrating from west to east,
8 they settled in an area of 530mi². And I believe that
9 was mostly around Units 18 and 19B so, almost all the
10 animals -- so, the area was considerably smaller than
11 last year. So, last year there, as you recall, there
12 were two areas, one area further east that was over 17B
13 and portions of 19B that might -- caribou migration did
14 not travel that far, that's on the eastern side of the
15 Wood-Tikchik. The majority of the animals calved in Unit
16 18 last year, which is where the majority of predation
17 control work was done and that was the same case this
18 year in Unit 18 and in Unit 19. So, the May removal
19 period crews were out from about May 10th through the
20 first week of June. And this year we removed 63 adult
21 brown bears. Let's see; no, I take that back. This year,
22 we removed six brown bears in 17B, three brown bears in
23 19B and 72 bears in Unit 18. And these were all bears
24 that were on the calving ground, actively engaging in
25 hunting or consuming calves or stocking calves. And the
26 program finished on June 5th. We had a bunch of weather
27 days this year which hampered efforts. There were a
28 number of days that we couldn't get out much like last
29 year. Let's see so, that's where we're at. It cost the
30 state \$470,000, this is not Federal money, this is state
31 money. There's no Federal money provided in predation
32 control activities. The area was reduced to the half the
33 size of the past year, and we removed similar numbers
34 of animals with more wolves removed this year as a result
35 of the activities, removal activities in April. So,
36 before I move on to caribou population assessments and
37 stuff, are there any questions or anything that you'd
38 like me to speak on regarding predator removal in Units
39 18 and 19 be?

40

41 (No response)

42

43 Okay, I'll go on to.....

44

45 MR. NANEG: Yeah.

46

47 MR. RINALDI: Oh. Go ahead.

48

49 Mr. NANENG: I have a question. Can you
50 define removal?

1
2 MR. RINALDI: Yes. So, yes. So, all these
3 -- all the animals that are that have been talking about
4 that I say have been removed. They've been mortally
5 wounded, they've been taken by shotguns and helicopters,
6 by department staff. So, they're basically removed from
7 the population or removed, from the landscape. They were
8 killed quickly and humanely. The hides and the skulls
9 were salvaged, and no one was interested in the meat
10 this year. So, we didn't salvage really any of the brown
11 bear meat. We had no black bears taken this year, but
12 the skulls and the hides were salvaged, and those are
13 available for educational ceremonial purposes. And those
14 that aren't provided to -- those that want them locally
15 will send those to the hide and horn auction. But you
16 did -- removal is take or killed. It's mortally wounded.
17 We're removing these animals from the population. Does
18 that answer your question?

19
20 Mr. NANEG: Yes.

21
22 MR. RINALDI: Okay. So on to some pretty
23 good news, I would think. So last year, I don't think -
24 - I don't know if we've spoken since last fall or this
25 early this spring, but -- so last year, we saw a
26 considerable increase in the number of calves that were
27 on the ground outside of well, on the ground in October.
28 It was the highest calf to cow ratio that we've seen in
29 the West and well over ten years. I believe I don't have
30 the exact number on me, but I believe we went from a low
31 20s to into the 30s there. And that showed a considerable
32 survival through the first two weeks of life and through
33 the summer. So, one of the big tests that we're doing
34 now is, it really more important as to whether or not
35 the calves survive and get recruited into the
36 population, have the potential of reproducing. So, we've
37 been collaring calves out there for -- this is the --
38 it's the second year, but it's the first year that we've
39 had considerable effort. We were able to put out at
40 least 50 collars out on calves that are running around
41 out there. We'll replace those collars in the fall, and
42 we'll get an estimate of health as well as an estimate
43 of survival. And then we're going to follow these calves
44 through the first year of life. And so, we'll have a
45 better understanding next spring as to how many calves
46 are actually being recruited into the population. So
47 that's, that's some of the efforts that we're doing as
48 a result of intensive management and collaring and our
49 population survey information. The minimum count for the
50 core group of the Mulchatna, which is the Eastern and

1 the Western group, the big -- the bigger groups, it
2 increased by 26% from last year's survey. Probably
3 primarily driven by a substantial increase in caribou
4 counted in the Eastern Mulchatna, which is, you know,
5 counter to what we were understanding. But, both core
6 Mulchatna groups had higher minimum counts. The Eastern
7 Mulchatna minimum count increased by as I mentioned, by
8 29%. So, it went from 5,294 last year to 6,811. And then
9 the Western group, which is part of the group you guys
10 are most interested in, increased approximately 15% from
11 4,850 last year to just over 5,500 this year. And those
12 are minimum counts. So overall, the -- there was a 16%
13 increase to the population estimate of 14,498 caribou.
14 So, that's during that same time frame, the Mulchatna
15 females, the cows, 11 months, which is a short yearling
16 to 47 months of age, which is four years, had a higher-
17 than-average annual survival of 92% in the West. So,
18 that's very good news. And the Eastern Mulchatna had a
19 survival rate of about 88%. Additionally, the Western
20 Mulchatna had a higher percent of calf survival, as I
21 mentioned, between 2011 and 2021, with 72% and 59%
22 survival. The Eastern Mulchatna higher count, could be
23 contributed to higher aggregations this year as the
24 largest group the largest group was less than 6,000, and
25 they were only in six groups compared to when they were
26 more scattered. Survey pilots that we use out there have
27 been flying these herds for most of them, well over ten,
28 fifteen years. And they commented that this year was
29 some of the best aggregations that they've seen for the
30 Western Mulchatna caribou. And so, we're pretty
31 confident that we're getting more accurate in our, in
32 our enumeration. So, the final population estimate for
33 the Mulchatna is 14,498 plus or minus 600 animals, give
34 or take. That comes down to about 7,400 in the west and
35 6007, I'm sorry, 7,400 in the east and 6,700 in the
36 west. So, we have indications that IM has been successful
37 in helping calves to survive, at least through summer
38 and through the fall of the first year of life. We're
39 investigating and trying to get more complete answers
40 over the long term on how those calves do. But we've
41 also seen growth in both segments of the herd, the east
42 and the west. Now, there are some additional satellite
43 groups that we associate with the Mulchatna group. And
44 the one of most concern to you is the is the Cape
45 Goodnews group, which we counted this this spring. It's
46 not included in the total count of caribou, it's 466
47 caribou in that group. So, there you have it. We've got
48 some positive news. Our staff and Dillingham and Bethel
49 have been busy with intensive management. And we've got
50 some exciting research projects going on. In addition

1 to collaring calves, we're still looking at nutrition,
2 we're still looking at brucellosis. I guess one
3 important piece is we found 16 calves dead on the Tundra.
4 That's a little bit higher than usual. And, you know,
5 one of the reasons why it might be higher than usual,
6 as we removed all the predators from the calving grounds
7 that would normally scavenge on some of these ones that
8 may have died from drowning or may have died because mom
9 sat on it or may have died because it just wasn't in
10 good nutritional condition to start off. We sent all
11 those 16 or 17 carcasses to the lab. None of them came
12 up with brucellosis. So, that's a really positive sign
13 as to where brucellosis is in the herd. And right now,
14 the evidence is suggesting that brucellosis is not
15 affecting the growth of the herd. So, that's another
16 positive that's come out of the last year and the work
17 that we've been doing. And I'll leave it right there. I
18 can get into more detail if you'd like but thank you for
19 your time. I'm available to answer your questions.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
22 Please go into more detail.

23
24 MR. RINALDI: Well, what would you like
25 to know specifically? Because it's pretty broad. We're
26 going to continue the program next year. We do have our
27 Board of Game meeting this year, so the program is run
28 out of Dillingham and region 4. You guys are in region
29 5, but we work very closely and region 5, is particularly
30 the Bethel office participates in our program, but our
31 central southwest region Board of Game for region four
32 is this winter. We'll be providing more updates,
33 overviews, and reports. There are a couple of Board of
34 Game proposals that are addressing moratoriums on the
35 Mulchatna as well as moratoriums and creating different
36 hunt zones as well as changing the population
37 objectives, etc. So, that'll be coming up. So, the RAC
38 and the AC meetings will be -- at least the AC meetings
39 will be speaking about those proposals. That might be
40 stuff that you might want to be interested in. As I
41 mentioned, we plan on doing this again next year. We
42 think that three years would be a good place to obviously
43 reevaluate everything that we do every year. But three
44 years would be a good place to pause and examine where
45 we're at and to see if we need to move forward. We can
46 also be very directly directed to do one a year for --
47 so we plan to do the April effort if the weather
48 cooperates and try to remove some wolves before denning
49 and before calving season, and then we'll go back out
50 and follow the caribou and find out where they end up

1 next spring and try to remove some more bears, some more
2 predators.

3
4 So, the bear, the number of bears hasn't
5 really decreased. So, these bears are probably coming
6 from a pretty good distance. There's also a really good
7 density of bears where you guys are at, and the area
8 that we've been focused. The tremendous seasonal food
9 source for these bears at the beginning of the season
10 before fish run, is well worth the journey. There's been
11 some conversation in the media and amongst critics about
12 whether or not we're removing coastal brown bears,
13 trophy brown bears or brown bears associated with McNeil
14 River State Wildlife Sanctuary or Katmai National Park,
15 and famous Brookes, Brookes Falls and Brookes Camp. We
16 are -- we were 135 to a miles away from McNeil last
17 year. I might have this backwards and 150 miles away
18 from Katmai. We are 170 miles away from McNeil this year
19 and 190 miles away from Katmai. That's quite a distance.
20 Yes, Brown bears can travel 200, 300 miles even more.
21 But not when there's a lot of food around. There's no
22 need for them to travel that far. The supposition that
23 these brown bears are coming from the brown bears at
24 Katmai, the coastal giant -- coastal brown bears at
25 Katmai and McNeil are coming from 200 miles inland is
26 it's not really realistic considering the plethora of
27 fish resources that are available. Obviously, later,
28 later in the season, these bears would have had to cross
29 4 or 5 major salmon rivers in addition to creeks before
30 they even got to Katmai or McNeil. So, we have no
31 evidence, and it doesn't make a lot of sense from a
32 biological standpoint or an ecological standpoint that
33 the bears that we're seeing, the bears that were moving
34 are coastal brown bears. They also, they're not the same
35 size. We don't have any bears that we've removed that
36 even come close to coastal brown bear size. So, these
37 are definitely more interior bears. Nothing in nature
38 is hard and steadfast. So, there could be exceptions to
39 this, but this is kind of the premise that we're
40 operating under.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.

43
44 MR. RINALDI: What else would you like
45 to talk about?

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: The U.S. Fish
48 and Wildlife Service management plan. I know they had
49 opened up an area for caribou, and the word in the wind

1 is that they're going to start a caribou hunt in the
2 Bristol Bay area.

3
4 MR. RINALDI: Yeah.

5
6 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Do you know
7 any updates on that?

8
9 MR. RINALDI: Well, I hope they've done
10 their diligence and have population survey inventory
11 information. I hope they've done some modeling and come
12 up with a harvestable surplus models, calf to cow ratios
13 and composition. Because we don't willy nilly open up
14 hunts on caribou herds or hunts on anything. If we don't
15 have information to support, why there should be or what
16 the number of surplus harvestable animals can be. And I
17 don't think we're quite there yet, but the state has
18 deployed collars out on -- satellite collars out on these
19 group of animals. There seems to be I think there's
20 about there's about 450 animals over there at Iliamna.
21 You know, they were completely absorbed when the
22 Mulchatna came through. But the area that they're now
23 in is as our research has found is that they are
24 historically in the NAP, the Northern Alaska Peninsula
25 wintering area. So, the Park Service has reached out to
26 us, they told us that they weren't going to hold a hunt
27 until they had the necessary information to be -- to
28 manage the herd correctly and appropriately. But it
29 sounds like they want to move ahead. They've requested
30 a meeting with us and have requested a bunch of our
31 population and movement information. So, it sounds like
32 they're wanting to move ahead on this hunt, despite
33 assurances from the Park Service that they weren't going
34 to do it in the first year. I'm pretty sure that the
35 state has most of the information on that herd. And you
36 know, if they're going to want to open up that hunt,
37 they're going to need the information that we have. We're
38 looking to manage that segment as a portion of the NAP.
39 The complication there is that we currently have a tier
40 hunt on the NAP. It's an undersubscribed tier hunt, and
41 we're not getting a lot of harvest on portions of the
42 NAP. However, if we employ -- if we use the same tier
43 permit and included this group of animals, there would
44 be no way to regulate how many animals are taken out of
45 this group. And so, for us to offer a state -- a
46 responsible and state hunt, we would need to come up
47 with a new hunt structure in addition to evaluate the
48 information that we've been collecting, including the
49 census information and the movement information. It's
50 my feeling and the feeling of the king salmon area

1 biologist, who manages the Northern Alaska Peninsula,
2 that we probably need another year of information from
3 these caribou collars that we just put out last year.
4 So, yes. There is a lot going on there. There hasn't
5 been a date set for this for this meeting. The Park
6 Service hasn't gotten back to me after I responded. But
7 that seems to be the direction that they're going, and
8 I just hope that they are able to make sound conservation
9 decisions in the absence of data.

10
11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
12 Ms. Cleveland.

13
14 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you. Through the
15 Chair. Thank you for your report. I was wondering if
16 there's evidence of food shortage with the Mulchatna
17 Herd, like, are they looking healthy? And the reason why
18 I'm asking is how much they migrate out of their other
19 spaces they were in before, I guess. I know they migrate
20 constantly, but because of the rain freeze effect on
21 their lichen. Is there any study on their diet if it's
22 in shortage or not, if that makes sense. Thanks.

23
24 MR. RINALDI: Yes, it does. Thanks for
25 the question. Yeah. So, we're looking at nutrition as
26 it -- of the animals and obviously that's an indication
27 of what the habitat is doing. We don't have a lot of red
28 flags with nutrition, but we understand that with
29 200,000 animals on the landscape, some of that habitat
30 got pretty hammered. I was living in Port Alsworth during
31 a portion of that time, and that habitat got hammered.
32 When those caribou went through, it looked like, yeah,
33 it looked like the bison trails from long ago. So yes,
34 there's probably been some detrimental effects on the
35 habitat. We haven't secured the funding and the
36 resources to conduct a landscape -- a basically
37 Mulchatna range habitat assessment because it's like
38 40,000mi². So, we'd have to come up with a different
39 approach. We were approached by Togiak National Wildlife
40 Refuge, it was about four or five years ago. They had
41 some money and they're keen on doing this too. And so,
42 we started moving in that direction to do a habitat
43 assessment. And they lost their funding, they've had a
44 turnover staff. We've lost a bunch of research staff
45 right now. So, really what we're limited by is staff,
46 money I don't think will necessarily be an issue, but
47 it's the ability for staff to get out there. It doesn't
48 negate the possibility of us hiring a university or a
49 contractor to go out and do that work, but we're still
50 talking about that right now. We are doing some pretty

1 impressive -- we have a nutrition lab here in Palmer
2 that can run all sorts of types of analyses on nutrition
3 and health of animals. So, we're pretty excited to be
4 able to do that. And we've got two or three projects
5 that are joined closely together to look at the
6 reproduction and survival as well as overall fitness.
7 So, the short answer is no, we don't have anything going
8 on specifically for habitat, but we do evaluate the
9 animals based on their physical condition and their
10 healthy state as an indication of what the habitat is
11 doing. We would like to do a habitat assessment. It's a
12 really big range. And so, we'd have to come up with a,
13 a very appropriate and doable approach to that project.

14

15 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you for that.

16

17 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Naneng.

18

19 MR. NANENG: Thank you, Madam Chair.
20 Myron Naneng. I know that some of the villages on the
21 Yukon and as well as along the coast, hunt for caribou
22 that up north, and it would be good to at least try and
23 get some information regarding that, because one of the
24 things that we've heard is that some of these animals
25 have tried to migrate south. However, the hunter
26 seriously killed the first migrators, which kind of
27 caused them to back away from moving south from the
28 northern areas. Is there -- since it's part of the
29 subsistence resource for people on the Yukon River. It
30 would be good information to know as well. Thank you.

31

32 MR. RINALDI: Yes, and that's -- and
33 thank you for the comment. I don't know if there was a
34 question in there, but those animals on the north side
35 of the Kuskokwim, I don't know, is there a Patrick Jones
36 on the call or Keith Oster on the call? I would be able
37 to address the caribou north of the Yukon River. So,
38 that does fall in the traditional historic range of the
39 Mulchatna. Obviously, the Killbuck herd was up in that
40 area, well, not exactly in that area, but generally in
41 that area. But I don't know which animals -- if those
42 are perceivably Mulchatna animals or if they're
43 stragglers from northern herds. But yeah, if there's any
44 Bethel Fish and Game staff on Board, they could answer
45 that. I'd appreciate that, but I don't know. I do know
46 that I hear talking around the state and, you know, we
47 manage, I think, nine caribou herds in our region. The
48 premise, the thought that hunters taking the first
49 animals to pass, disrupting the rest of the migration
50 is a common theme that I hear in rural communities.

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ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Naneng.

MR. NANENG: Yeah. Thank you, Madam Chair. I think that we ought to request Fish and Game Bethel to make a report at the next meeting regarding caribou herd migration or potential migration at north of the Yukon because I know people from Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay, Saint Mary's, they go north to go caribou hunting. So, you know, it impacts their subsistence use of caribou.

MR. RINALDI: Yeah. And I believe there's a state moratorium on caribou in Unit 18. So, and that was really targeted for the Mulchatna. But if that has inadvertent consequences, like it's preventing people in the northern portions of 18 to -- well, I guess we're not even that set up in 22 and 23. But yeah. So, there is that moratorium in 18. And so, if you guys feel that that having consequential inadvertent effects on hunt north of the Yukon or north of the Kuskokwim, let us know or let the Bethel office know.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: I put that proposal in to put a moratorium on the whole entire Mulchatna Caribou Herd in the migration, but because of the significance of it, it was geared just directly to Unit 18. But right now, I put in another proposal to put a moratorium closure on the whole Mulchatna Caribou Migration route, including the Alaska Peninsula and Bristol Bay area, where all the migration routes of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd so we can increase our population. And regardless of what the National Park Service is opening to try to get a geared opening on the caribou, it was a very frustrating meeting at the Federal Subsistence Board because they passed to have a opening on the Mulchatna Caribou Herd down in Katmai area. And one of the biggest things that threw the whole entire meeting off is Bristol Bay folks, if they say that they're going to have an opening in Katmai, that they want an opening and they're going to fight like hell to have a hunting in their area because they want to feed their families. Now that's a ripple effect that's going to go through not only from that region and Bristol Bay and those folks down there. It's going to have a ripple effect all the way through up to Unit 18 and everywhere else where the Mulchatna Caribou Herd migrates and they're going to fight like heck. And I'm not joking. We had huge discussions and it was a huge topic, and I spent six hours talking with these folks on how we're

1 going to do this, how are we going to fix this, what are
2 we going to do because of the fact that they're going
3 to open up a caribou hunt. They said if they get to go
4 hunting, we want to go hunting too. And we can't have
5 that if we're trying to rebuild a population so, the
6 whole entire regions of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd
7 migration area can go hunting for caribou. It is unfair,
8 it is unjust. Thank you.

9
10 MR. RINALDI: Yes. That's the fourth
11 Board of Game proposal. I forgot about that, thank you
12 Nadine. That's the fourth one for the Mulchatna. My
13 understanding again, but I've been told multiple
14 different things from the Park Service is that they would
15 only be opening this hunt up for a couple of animals and
16 for one community, which. Yeah. I'm.....

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Sorry to
19 interrupt you, but like I said, you open one hunt in one
20 area. Everyone else is going to want to go hunting
21 because they're going to say, why do these people get
22 to go hunting and they're going to close us? Just like
23 with our fishery, why do they commercial area fish get
24 to go fishing and we are restricted like heck? It is the
25 same concept. If we're closed, they need to be closed
26 too. There is no ins and outs about it. Just like if
27 we're restricted here on the Kuskokwim for fisheries,
28 Area M needs to be shut down too. Thank you. Any further
29 comments or questions at this time?

30
31 (No answer)

32
33 All right. Thank you, Mr. Rinaldi.

34
35 MR. RINALDI: Thank you. And we're
36 available to answer any questions here in Palmer or reach
37 out to the Bethel office or the Dillingham office. Thank
38 you.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: I had one
41 more question for you, Mr. Rinaldi. Do you need letter
42 of support from our RAC in regards to the predator
43 control program so we can continue on. I know we put one
44 in this past year. Do you need another one for the
45 following 2025-2026?

46
47 MR. RINALDI: Yea, you know I'll talk
48 with leadership, but I'm, you know, we really appreciate
49 that letter of support. You actually started the ball
50 rolling for a lot of other people providing letters of

1 support. So, we appreciate that. I'll check in with them,
2 but I think your original letter still suffices, and we
3 appreciate that.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
6 We'll go ahead and get the ball rolling on additional
7 letter of support for the following years. Thank you.
8 All right, we're going to move to Mr. Stanislaus
9 Sheppard. Quyana, you have the floor.

10
11 MR. SHEPPARD: Good morning, Madam Chair,
12 Board members. My name is Stanislaus Sheppard, Mountain
13 Village Lower Yukon, I'll be speaking representing
14 myself. (In Native) restriction (In Native) four-inch,
15 sixty feet. (In Native) restriction (In Native) maybe
16 15, 20 years, 15 years. (In Native) moratorium. (In
17 Native) make it more.

18
19 So, I'll put it in English. I made --
20 Mr. Phillip understand majority of my -- I just wanted
21 the RAC to really try to enforce the sports hunting
22 issue in the Lower Yukon and, number two, that the study
23 of whitefish not only the interior, we need to start
24 bringing down to the lower end, the coast, because we're,
25 you know, we have three different main sloughs that every
26 community from Saint Mary's to Kotlik to Chevak-Hooper
27 depend on when they go moose hunting or bird hunting,
28 they said in Muddy Lakes, Five Finger Lake, Hamilton,
29 (In Native) Innoko River, where I have camped, and then
30 the other one is inside 30 mile. We call that Inviktuk.
31 It goes up to the flattop mountain north, north of
32 Kusilvak, the one closer to the Yukon. So those are the
33 three main subsistence areas. They hunt for whitefish
34 and the four-inch mesh just won't -- it's like, when you
35 go butcher a moose, when you go butcher a moose, the
36 state law will say you need to use this size knife to
37 butcher the moose, qituk instead of (In Native) So that's
38 what, you know, all I ask is that they -- we need help
39 on that, sports hunters and the whitefish. With the four-
40 inch mesh it ten times as much to harvest, work on, put
41 away, store, whereas you use five-inch, six-inch, you
42 get half the amount that you would get with the four-
43 inch and five and a half. Because I do it every year. I
44 put away at least forty to fifty whitefish to year for
45 uqsruk or fermenting. I put away fifteen to twenty in
46 the freezer during breakup. We can't go out there and
47 sit on it or anything. And then when I look at my stock
48 of subsistence, whitefish or sheefish during the winter
49 months, making trips to the coastline, my relatives
50 expect me to bring fermented fish delicacy (In Native)

1 Thank you. So, in all essence, I'm just asking that
2 sports fishing be addressed, maybe a Special Action
3 later to make sure that enforcement is out there. We
4 don't want -- I number one, I don't want to see moose -
5 - headless moose. There was one above my camp,
6 enforcement never came around and took any action, three
7 years ago. No enforcement come, although it was
8 mentioned and it was -- I let Departments know, nobody
9 came out and enforced the regulations. So, those are the
10 two. Thank you very much. (In Native). Quyana.

11
12 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana, Mr.
13 Sheppard. Any questions or comments? Mr. Naneng.

14
15 MR. NANENG: Yeah. Thank you. Stan, first
16 of all, I want that fermented fish sometime. But they -
17 - nowadays everybody carries a phone that can take
18 pictures. And I think that taking photographs of some
19 of these things that we find out in the field, like
20 headless moose or moose that are just lying on the
21 ground, take them and send them by email or by text
22 message to someone that can follow up on the action like
23 I suggested maybe yesterday or day before. RIT should
24 not only be working on migratory birds, you're working
25 within the refuge area, so it should also be your
26 responsibility to notify enforcement and let them know
27 that these things that are happening and provide a
28 photograph of what you see on the ground. That would be
29 my suggestion to you.

30
31 MR. SHEPPARD: Thank you very much Board
32 member Naneng.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Go ahead, Ms.
35 Brooke.

36
37 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
38 Stan, I just wanted to ask you a question, if that's
39 okay, because you were saying that the four-inch mesh
40 nets in the fall time when your moose hunting and trying
41 to fish for whitefish at the same time, they're too
42 small. What size would you be hoping to be able to use
43 at that time? What size net? Thank you.

44
45 MR. SHEPPARD: So, Madam Chair. Thank
46 you, Brooke, for the question. Everybody is used to
47 either five and a half or six-inch, and I didn't really
48 think about it. But when I was telling these elders
49 here, when the use of restricted to four-inches in front
50 of my camp off the mainstream of the Yukon River, about

1 80 miles, 75 to 80 miles up the Yukon coast, up the
2 Yukon River. I set my four-inch when we got restricted
3 June 3rd, hoping to catch little whitefish. But when I
4 set it bobbing around and the float sink, I said there
5 must be lots of whitefish or sheefish out there. But
6 when I went to go check it, not sure how many hours
7 later. There's nothing but pike fish, northern pike and
8 we don't put we don't handle northern pike during the
9 summer. All our focus is on the agiukliq summer chum,
10 king salmon, all salmon species. When we used to have -
11 - when we were able to harvest king salmon, you know,
12 so that four-inch, it also, you know, making us work
13 overtime. We have to deal with these little whitefish,
14 sheefish, on top of that, the pike fish, you know, and
15 the average normal size for whitefish and sheefish is
16 five and a half or six-inches. Thank you.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
19 Any further questions. Mr. Parks.

20
21 Mr. PARKS: Quayana, Chair. First, I want
22 to thank you for your very important concerns regarding
23 the issues that you presented. So, I may be wrong, but
24 I -- correct me if I'm wrong Council members. Since you
25 stated it's been an issue to especially to the sports
26 hunters here and there. So, my suggestion, correct me
27 if I'm wrong, wouldn't you, in your community as a tribe,
28 in your area, make a proposal regarding closures of
29 sports hunters in your area? Not the whole Unit 18 or
30 19 or wherever you are, but in your area. Thank you.

31
32 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr.
33 Stanislaus.

34
35 MR. SHEPPARD: Thank you, Madam Chair,
36 through the Chair. (In Native) We thought about that. I
37 sit on the tribal Council also back home. We thought
38 about that, but the state and the Federal majority -- a
39 majority of the state, they won't allow that to happen
40 because of the navigable waters. (In Native) sorry. We
41 were stuck on the navigable waters because state and
42 Federal (In Native). In the past, before the population
43 of moose in the Lower Yukon or we ever -- before we ever
44 had moose moratorium; five years moose moratorium, my
45 dad, myself, my brothers and our cousin, the late Roy
46 Henry (In Native), used to come up from Scammon Bay, and
47 we -- during the summer, we'd save up money to purchase
48 gas to go out in Oko River, all the way up to Iditarod,
49 to the Yentna River. (In Native) After about five or six
50 years, (In Native). They start putting up signs, private

1 property, no hunting, (indiscernible). So, I've seen
2 maybe two signs up (indiscernible) Mountain Village,
3 private property, no hunting, trespassing, (In Native).
4 But you know, (In Native) directly. Even if I want, I
5 can't give them a direct answer. Thank you, Madam Chair.

6
7 MR. SPARKS: Chair.

8
9 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Go ahead, Mr.
10 Parks.

11
12 MR. PARKS: One more comment. Navigable
13 waters, okay. But the land belongs to the corporation,
14 right? So, in this case, you, anyone can cooperate
15 through your river systems. But if he gets off to your
16 corporation land, then he can. If there's no
17 restrictions on your land, it makes sense because what
18 I'm trying -- my point here is like, yeah, we can go
19 through navigable waters, we can ride our boats up
20 wherever we want to. But in -- my point here is the
21 landowners of the corporations back home, your home, my
22 home. So, in this case, I'm somewhat -- you stated that
23 you cannot make a proposal because of the navigable
24 waters. But the land belongs to the corporation. Thank
25 you.

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr.
28 Stanislaus.

29
30 MR. SHEPPARD: Thank you, Madam Chair.
31 Through the Chair. (In Native) In our area, Unit 18, the
32 lower part of the Yukon River. It's like a checkerboard,
33 we got Calista, we got Azachorok Corporation, we got --
34 but they call those lands, Native Allotments (In
35 Native), they were more confused of -- since we're on
36 the refuge, the Federal land, state land and the
37 corporation and Native allotments. Or it's really
38 confusing that we need a real expert lawyer to draft up
39 some kind of proposal in regards to putting restrictions
40 on hunting on those some different lands. But it is
41 possible, Qu yana. (In Native).

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Any further
44 comments or questions for Mr. Stanislaus? Qu yana cakneq.

45
46 MR. ROGERS: Thank you very much.

47
48 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Let's go
49 ahead and take a ten-minute break. Yeah, I know I'm

1 trying to push us to get us through so we can be done
2 at 12:00, but we need a break.

3
4 (Off record)

5
6 (On record)

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Folks let's
9 go ahead and get our seats, please.

10
11 (Pause)

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All right,
14 folks, we're going to go ahead and resume our meeting.
15 We're next on the floor is Ms. Karma. Please forgive me
16 if I butcher your last name, Olvig, with the Yukon River
17 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission.

18
19 MS: OLVIG: Good morning, everyone. Are
20 we leaving our -- I mean, the video is off, all. Is that
21 -- I just noticed that it has on.

22
23 (Simultaneous speech)

24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Go ahead,
26 Brooke.

27
28 MS. MCDAVID: Hi, Carmen, this is Brooke.
29 We don't have a camera in the room, but we do have the
30 screen up where we could see people online if you turn
31 on your video. So, it's up to you. I'm sorry that we
32 don't have a two-way video at this meeting.

33
34 MS. OLVIG: Oh, no, that's fine. I just
35 wasn't sure. Hi, good morning. Thank you for having me
36 here today, Madam Chair and RAC members. My name is
37 Chief Karma Olvig, I'm from the Native village of Eagle,
38 and I also sit as the Chair of the Yukon River Inter-
39 Tribal Fish Commission. So, I'm just going to give you
40 a brief update of what we've been doing. The Fish
41 Commission is going through a lot of changes right now.
42 We just filed 501-C3 and are forming our own organization
43 and so, that has taken a lot of our attention. And we
44 will -- and so, in the next few months, we're working
45 really hard to get -- we have an Executive Board and
46 then a full this last May, we had a full commission,
47 Board of Commissioners at our meeting and it was it was
48 pretty nice to see. We -- so, we submitted our 501-C3,
49 we have just put all of our foundational documents
50 together. As some of you know, it's -- the Fish

1 Commission has been housed under Tanana Chiefs for a
2 long time, and they did a great job at getting it moving
3 and going. But many of the Commissioners throughout the
4 region wanted to have its own entity. And so, we are
5 moving out of Tanana Chiefs and but working very closely
6 with them still. So, we are busy right now working also
7 on the -- we're working with TCC and the Kuskokwim River
8 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission on the Chum EIS and getting
9 ready for that for the North Pacific. Eva Dawn Burk is
10 a contractor with the Fish Commission, our policy
11 analyst, and she is also an AP member on the North
12 Pacific, she sits on the AP for the North Pacific
13 Fisheries Management Council. So, we are gearing up to
14 work on a strategic plan and then we're going to - a
15 strategic plan -- that is the direction that the Fish
16 Commission will be going. We are really excited. We're
17 -- we received a gravel-to-gravel grant to build
18 capacity for the Fish Commission. And so, we're just
19 taking care of all the organizational setup right now.
20 We are also working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Gweek
21 and Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. They
22 have -- the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
23 has really been helping us in restructuring and kind of
24 being mentors for us and so, I really appreciate that.
25 We are working on a project through the US Fish and
26 Wildlife on gravel-to-gravel with the (indiscernible)
27 and Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to
28 start a baseline data project that will be kind of the
29 same throughout the whole region. And that's pretty
30 exciting to collect data, the same kind of data
31 throughout the region. We are -- Eva is working on a
32 salmon situation report, and that will be coming out in
33 the next few months. And that's just basically to let
34 us have a great or a good idea of where we are on the
35 river, how our people have been affected. And then coming
36 up soon for the North Pacific Fisheries Management
37 Council, Eva will also be working on strategy, and we
38 work on strategy before the North Pacific, and then we
39 have a training for all of our advocates to go to. We
40 train them up in the issues that we're facing and then
41 help with talking points and stuff for our commissioners
42 to go and Executive Council to go to the North Pacific
43 and testify. We are -- our Executive Board has been
44 working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. We are in the
45 very beginning stages of co-stewardship with -- we don't
46 quite have an MOU or formal agreement, but we have been
47 working with Holly Carroll on the Yukon in giving and
48 just giving our point of view on how management is done
49 and how we feel about her management strategies and
50 stuff. And so that's really been nice, the dialogue and

1 starting that, we set up our Executive Council as a
2 management -- co-stewardship management team. And so,
3 things are coming along for us, some really, really happy
4 with where we're at. We - yeah, so right now, we're
5 busy, there's only two employees for us right now because
6 we've moved out of Tanana of Chiefs. But we're hoping
7 to post for an Executive Director here soon, and an
8 Admin Assistant and then a Biologist, and we really feel
9 like things will start moving along now that we have our
10 501-C3 submitted.

11
12 So, it's been a lot of work and getting
13 all of our foundational stuff set. But we're building
14 the Fish Commission, and I feel like it's going to be
15 very successful. I'm really excited. So, is there --
16 it's pretty short today, like I said, we've been really
17 focusing on our attention on moving this forward. But
18 we'll have more strategy and stuff on salmon and that
19 for in these next few months. Any questions?

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
22 Thank you. I greatly appreciate your presentation. Yes,
23 we do have questions. How is your representation on the
24 Yukon River? And can you please elaborate a little more
25 on how you get your representatives from the villages
26 to have full river representation?

27
28 MS. OLVIG: Okay. So, right now we have
29 forty commissioners, and we've set up territories. So,
30 we have forty villages that have signed on, and the
31 Councils of the villages have to elect a commissioner,
32 not elect, appoint I will say and by resolution. So,
33 we're tribally driven, and those commissioners sit on a
34 full Executive Board, and then we've broken up into nine
35 territories, the whole Yukon River. And two of those
36 territories are in the lower mouth of the Yukon, in the
37 lower region. And so, what we do is we have one person
38 that sits on the Executive Board from each territory.
39 And so, the Executive Board meets more frequently, like
40 every few months. And we work on policy, all of our
41 documents, things like that, strategy for like, say,
42 North Pacific or what's coming up and get leadership --
43 get advice from leadership there. And then we come
44 together every two -- twice a year for an annual and bi-
45 annual meeting usually in April or May and November and
46 then we update all the commissioners and then they go
47 back to their communities and let them know kind of
48 what's happening and the support and stuff that we need.
49 And we're really -- we had a huge turnout in May and
50 elected and filled some seats for the Executive Council.

1 So, we're really excited to have such a diverse group
2 from Eagle all the way to the mouth. So, does that answer
3 your question.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana, it
6 does. Any further comments or questions? Hearing, seeing
7 none. Thank you so much for your presentation and greatly
8 appreciate your patience in waiting on us.

9
10 MS. OLVIG: Thank you. Thanks for having
11 me.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Yes, no
14 problem and please come to our future meetings if you
15 can.

16
17 MS. OLVIG: Okay. And I'm sure we'll be
18 -- yeah, moving along by then. So, thank you and have a
19 great meeting you all.

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
22 We're going to Alaska Department of Fish and Game on the
23 Mulchatna Caribou Herd.

24
25 (Pause)

26
27 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Keith and
28 Phil, are you still online with us?

29
30 MR. PERRY: I am Alyssa, can you hear me
31 now?

32
33 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Yes, I can
34 hear you loud and clear. You have the floor.

35
36 MR. PERRY: Okay, so, I guess I would ask
37 or restate the -- you had a couple questions. Correct?

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: That is
40 correct. We had a question in regards to caribou going
41 north into the areas of 18 in the Yukon area. Oh, could
42 you please state your first and last name and introduce
43 yourself, you and Keith?

44
45 MR. PERRY: Yeah. So, my name is Phillip
46 Perry. I'm the Management Coordinator for region five
47 for Wildlife for the state of Alaska Department of Fish
48 and Game. I think Keith Osher is also on the line. He's
49 the Assistant Manager here in Bethel. So, the -- let me
50 let me ensure I have the question correct. The question

1 was about the northern part of Unit 18 and 22. When it
2 comes to caribou regulations, is that correct?
3

4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Naneng.
5

6 MR. NANENG: Yeah. Thank you, Madam
7 Chair. Thank you, Phillip Perry, son of a former Refuge
8 Manager of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service here in Bethel.
9 So, my question, Phillip, is Lower Yukon villages and
10 some of the coastal villages go hunt caribou up north
11 of the Yukon River. I know in the past, there's been
12 reports that some of the caribou have been trying to
13 move south, but usually the first group of caribou that
14 tried to migrate south have been shot at and killed and
15 so, they end up moving back north. So, we just want to
16 find out the status of the caribou numbers up there,
17 because that's also been used by people along the coast,
18 as well as Lower Yukon to go hunt for subsistence
19 purposes. So, we just want to get an idea of what the
20 numbers are.
21

22 MR. PERRY: So, normally when the area
23 you're talking about, you know, there have been years
24 in the past and I don't know the last year that we had
25 any significant numbers of Western Arctic Caribou Herd
26 go into southern Unit 22, but it's been a while. And
27 obviously with any herd, there can be small groups in
28 places that we don't detect, but most of the Western
29 Arctic Herd in the last decade or so, has wintered quite
30 a bit north of that area. They've been a little bit on
31 the kind of Eastern Seward Peninsula and in kind of
32 Nulato Hills and then up around the Kobuk River. So,
33 quite a ways north of Unit 22, and Unit 22 right now --
34 the season is if people travel north or I guess at least
35 east of Kotlik or north of the Andreafsky, that's a --
36 to be announced winter season or maybe announced. And
37 the reason we would announce a season is if we detected
38 -- either we see from radio collared animals, or we get
39 enough reports from people that that there caribou
40 around. But like I said, that really hasn't happened for
41 a little while. That herd is declined from a high of,
42 oh, I think it was just under a half a million in the
43 early 2000s. It's a little -- it's right around 150,000
44 right now. So, it's a third of its former size. So, it
45 doesn't move as far and we don't see like I said, we
46 haven't seen many caribou that far south for a while.
47 And when we hear about people harvesting caribou in that
48 area, I actually, I guess, never talked to somebody who
49 did it. It's always you know, somebody who knew somebody
50 who knew somebody so, it's always second or third or

1 fourth hand. So, we're always interested in hearing
2 about it. But like I said, we don't hear of it very
3 often, and it's never -- I can't remember a time where
4 it was somebody that had done it themselves so, I don't
5 know if that's helpful or not, but that's kind of what
6 we know about caribou in that part of the Unit or in
7 southern 22A.

8
9 MR. NANENG: I've talked to people that
10 have gone caribou hunting from Saint Mary's, and they've
11 headed out around, what's -- the Andraefsky River that
12 goes further in quite a bit along the source of
13 Andraefsky River. So, I know that people from Saint
14 Mary's have gone up there. I know my brother-in-law used
15 to go up there and hunt, but he's no longer with us. He
16 passed away a few years ago. So, that's why I'm
17 questioning what the numbers are and what the range of
18 that caribou is, because our people travel far, and I
19 know my nephew from Scammon Bay has traveled to go
20 caribou hunting up there too as well. So, it's like you
21 say, I've heard it from other people, but I know that
22 they've done it. So, I'm just asking that question about
23 the status of the caribou herd and also the range.

24
25 MR. PERRY: Yeah, yeah. And like I said,
26 it's -- we don't suspect that it's large numbers of
27 caribou that are there, but it's if anybody's traveled
28 in that part of the state, it's a long way from anywhere.
29 And it's not somewhere that we get to very often, the
30 northern part of the Andraefsky to go look to see if,
31 you know, there are animals around. I know one of our
32 biologists here a few years ago did see a few caribou
33 or reindeer, it's kind of hard to tell. Basically, just
34 on the crest that would go towards from the upper
35 Andraefsky down into the Norton Sound. I think it was a
36 few hundred animals and I think that was five or six
37 years ago. So, I don't doubt that people can go find
38 caribou. I just don't think there's very many. And like
39 I said, we don't see collared animals or we don't -- we
40 don't have collared animals show up there very often.
41 And I think it's been probably over a decade since we
42 know of any.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
45 Phil, if there's any further questions, they can get a
46 hold of you. Do you have a phone number for people to
47 call you?

48
49 MR. PERRY: Yeah, sure. If they'd like
50 to call us here at the Bethel Office. My direct line is

1 5432979 or you can call the front desk, that's 5432433
2 and ask for any of the wildlife people and we're happy
3 to help. We're happy to talk to people.

4
5 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you. I
6 greatly appreciate it. Thank you for calling in and
7 chiming in and helping us with our questions. We're going
8 to go on to Boyd with Gravel-to-Gravel Initiative. Are
9 you currently online?

10
11
12 MR. BLIHOVDE: Yes, Madam Chair. Can you
13 hear me, okay?

14
15 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Yes, sir. You
16 have the floor. loud and clear.

17
18 MR. BLIHOVDE: Madam Chair, thank you,
19 Other RAC members, thank you for the chance to provide
20 an update. My name is Boyd Blihovde, and I'm a Senior
21 Advisor for the Fish and Wildlife Service in the
22 Anchorage Regional Office. I'm also the Gravel-to-Gravel
23 Coordinator for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and I
24 work in partnership with Becky Shaftel, the Gravel-to-
25 Gravel Coordinator from the BLM. Becky had a conflict
26 at this time, so, I'll share one announcement from the
27 BLM and I'll actually try to put a link to an opportunity
28 in the chat that everyone could hopefully see, or at
29 least get from Brooke at a later time but I'll talk
30 about that in a little bit. I'll be quick, but I wanted
31 to share some important updates. And just for those who
32 maybe don't know the history, I'll just go over the
33 history a little bit on gravel-to-gravel. Gravel-to -
34 Gravel was created because of feedback from folks like
35 you to the Department of Interior and the Department of
36 Commerce at hearings, like the salmon crisis of -- the
37 salmon summit that occurred in in Anchorage in 2022,
38 from talking circles and a direct consultation that
39 occurred, including the ones that occurred in Bethel but
40 across the state the agencies heard from folks like you
41 that you didn't want the agencies to just keep focusing
42 on one part of the salmon crisis and the salmon life
43 cycle. You wanted the agencies to focus and to start
44 working together on the whole life cycle of salmon. And
45 that's why Gravel-to-Gravel was created, and that's why
46 it's called gravel-to-gravel. It refers to the whole
47 life cycle of salmon, and obviously includes the very
48 important part of the life cycle out in the Bering Sea.
49 And so that's how gravel-to-gravel came about. And so,
50 we appreciate all your input and the efforts that you've

1 made in RAC meetings and at consultations and other
2 forums to provide input. So, it's one of nine keystone
3 initiatives that were created in late 2022 so, it's
4 fairly recent. And it's an effort that is Department of
5 Interior led. But as I mentioned, we're trying to involve
6 NOAA and the State Alaska Department of Fish and Game
7 and others to make sure we can really capture the entire
8 life cycle of salmon. And what's bringing people
9 together right now, currently? As often happens, is that
10 there's funding available. Partisan infrastructure law
11 and partly through the Inflation Reduction Act. So, to
12 date, gravel-to-gravel agencies have received
13 approximately thirty million in bill funds. And so, most
14 of the money is coming from bill, and that money has
15 supported approximately 40 projects across different
16 agencies; the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of
17 Land Management, National Park Service, the Bureau of
18 Indian Affairs and USGS. So, all those agencies working
19 together have partnered with, with outside the agency
20 groups like tribes and NGOs to get those 40 projects
21 started. Now, I'm proud to share that most of the 40
22 projects have direct tribal involvement or are being led
23 directly by tribes. And some of those funds have gone
24 directly to tribes, like, for instance, the Fish and
25 Wildlife Service, as Karma had just previously
26 mentioned. We're working together with tribes like the
27 Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Kuskokwim
28 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to distribute funds for
29 tribal capacity. And so, through the direction of the
30 Regional Director, Sara Boario, the Fish and Wildlife
31 Service has transferred \$5 million in funds for tribal
32 capacity building across gravel-to-gravel landscape.
33 Those \$5 million were recently distributed to the two
34 Fish Commissions on the Kuskokwim and the Yukon, and
35 then to the Nome Eskimo community and (indiscernible).
36 That's not the only project that has direct tribal
37 involvement. I just wanted to give you an example of one
38 project, or those three with the \$5 million that were
39 split evenly across the region. So, as far as future
40 direction and just to maybe see if there's any questions
41 about this plan for future direction, I wanted to share
42 that our next phase of funding for gravel-to-gravel is
43 set to include up to a maximum of \$4.34 million in funds
44 that will help strengthen the Gravel-to-Gravel
45 Initiative and help tribes become more direct managers
46 of the projects that are needed to restore salmon habitat
47 and populations in the region. We expect to get this
48 next round of funding in November of 2024 at the
49 earliest. When the agencies receive that funding, we
50 plan to, and we will be working with tribes to identify

1 the priority projects in the gravel-to-gravel landscape
2 and work directly with tribes to get the work done by
3 transferring funds directly to tribes and other
4 partners. So, other news is that in July, the tribes
5 that are currently working with the Gravel-to-Gravel
6 Partnership some of which I mentioned earlier, requested
7 us to directly invite all 110 tribes to the Gravel-to-
8 Gravel Initiative effort. So, based on that request, the
9 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land
10 Management just recently sent out letters through this
11 ABCP, TCC or Tanana Chiefs Conference and then [IU
12 2:12:00] to all the tribes. So, if you or your tribal
13 representative leadership have not seen this invitation,
14 please reach out to me by email or phone call, I can
15 share my email with you. We also, I see, have Dona Bach
16 on the phone too, or on the call, and she could help
17 with that as well. But we definitely want to reach out
18 to all tribes to make sure they're invited, as long as
19 they're in the gravel-to-gravel landscape, which is my
20 background that you might see behind me, then we want
21 everyone to be invited to the table in Gravel-to-Gravel.

22
23 And then lastly, there is an in-person
24 meeting for the Gravel-to-Gravel Partnership Group in
25 Anchorage on the dates of October 10th and 11th. This
26 invite should be coming out to everyone, but if you
27 haven't seen it yet, we can forward it. An official
28 invite will come out before August 30th from our
29 facilitators that are hired. This in-person meeting will
30 be to coordinate on research, restoration and assessment
31 projects, especially as they relate to salmon and to
32 help collaborate between agencies and tribes. So, we are
33 excited about these updates and hope that all the
34 conversation about salmon that I heard during this RAC
35 meeting will motivate folks to come and want to be part
36 of this gravel-to-gravel effort, because we don't think
37 it's the only solution or the only way forward, but it
38 is one of the solutions to help us get salmon back to
39 the headwaters and spawning, and to address some of these
40 concerns in the Bering Sea as well. So, like I mentioned,
41 I did put in the chat a link to an opportunity for
42 funding that is offered up, especially the tribal
43 organizations. It's from the BLM, it's called the Good
44 Neighbor Authority. And that link will get you directly
45 to the notice of funding opportunity that you could apply
46 for. So, that's just one other example of funds that are
47 available, that one happens to be with BLM and there
48 will be other funding opportunities through multiple
49 agencies in the future and that is the end of my report.
50 Thank you.

1
2 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Boyd. Our Chair
3 stepped away for just a moment. Do any Council members
4 have questions. Ms. Cleveland.

5
6 MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana and through the
7 Chair. Hi, Boyd. My question was for the next round of
8 funding, would that happen to include something that
9 Kwethluk has been trying to do, is set up escapement
10 again? So, yeah, that's my question with the next round
11 of funding, include something like that.

12
13 MR. BLOHOVDE: Yes, definitely. The
14 funding that we have is going to be split up amongst the
15 agencies. We hope to get the full 4.3 roughly million,
16 we don't know exactly how much we'll get, but obviously
17 that's a pretty good chunk of money. We plan to have BLM
18 continue to administer the Good Neighbor Authority funds
19 so, you could apply through that route, and you could
20 even apply through this current opening, which I'm glad
21 Dona shared the deadline, is not till October 18th for
22 the current round, and so I think it would qualify there.
23 It also would qualify for the next round, which is \$1
24 million additional money coming to BLM for Good Neighbor
25 Authority, we hope. And then the rest would be 3.34
26 million of mostly tribal capacity building funds that
27 the Fish and Wildlife Service will administer. So, Thank
28 you.

29
30 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks, but I had a
31 follow up. And when tribes do apply, is it encouraged
32 to go through the Fish Commission or another through
33 another entity, I guess, or can we apply directly from
34 the tribe?

35
36 MR. BLIHOVDE: So, there's different
37 funding activity levels or, or pots of money. You could
38 apply directly is the short answer, but it always helps
39 to have some discussions. Jackie, as you know, there are
40 the phone calls that we're having with the larger group
41 of tribes and agencies. And when we get to November of
42 2024 and we get this money, we will have some planning
43 calls to kind of discuss priorities and where we need
44 to really set priorities for the whole gravel-to-gravel
45 region. But other than that, I would say directly
46 applying is totally fine. The BLM opportunity that's in
47 the chat, Dona's putting some great extra information
48 in there, but it's open now and there, I know that just
49 talking to Becky from the BLM, they're really working
50 hard to get more folks to apply for those funds, and

1 they've had some difficulty finding tribes that are
2 interested. So, I think that's a great opportunity right
3 now to apply for. And Dona may have something to add on
4 that topic.

5
6 MS. BACH: Well, if I may, through the
7 Chair. And just to pepper off of you, Boyd, I'm sorry
8 Becky isn't able to make it, but my name is Dona Bach.
9 (In Native) I recognize a lot of the distinguished
10 members and thank you RAC members, for allowing me a
11 brief opportunity on behalf of the Bureau of Land
12 Management. I think this opportunity is very exciting.
13 My heart really goes out to a lot of the coastal villages
14 in the refuge that have experienced some devastating
15 flooding. So, my heart is with you as various habitats
16 are -- have certainly been compromised in the wake of
17 this unusual fall storm. But just to add Becky Shaftel
18 did send out a Dear Tribal Leader Memo that should have
19 pinged all of the tribes that are eligible on August
20 6th. And October 18th already feels like tomorrow, we
21 understand that you know, these funding opportunities
22 are very plentiful, not just across Department of
23 Interior, but with other agencies, you know, Broadband
24 and EPA and NOAA funding. But I think what is really
25 exciting about this, when I contemplate growing up on
26 the Kuskokwim myself, is just taking inventory of
27 historic plaster disturbances within the Yukon or the
28 Kuskokwim River corridors and the proximity of tribes
29 to you know, historic, you know, ground disturbances,
30 whether it's places like Platinum or Nyack and the
31 proximity of tribes to leverage this funding opportunity
32 to build capacity within the region. I remember spending
33 time with Phillip Perry as a Fish and Game Technician
34 back in the day. And I know that area biologists worked
35 really hard to you know, hire and vet local staff to
36 work in the river areas that you are all most familiar
37 with. So, if there are any questions, I just want to
38 serve as a resource. Maybe a common face and someone
39 that can just speak any tribal members or at invitations
40 at Council meetings to make that connection for Becky
41 and Boyd, because it does feel like, you know, this is
42 a great opportunity, and we don't want to pass it by
43 because we know that there are needs within the region.
44 And we know that some of these restoration needs are
45 really occurring. They're very expensive when they get
46 off road systems. But to build capacity is something I
47 think the region, particularly in the YK Delta, can
48 afford with our young people coming up the ranks wanting
49 to pursue you know degrees or credentials in these

1 ecological, biological, hydrology types of fields. So,
2 quyana, appreciate your time.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
5 Ms. Bach. Any further comments or questions? Hearing
6 none. Quyana cakneq to both of you. It's good to see you
7 both. We miss you very much.

8
9 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thank you, Alyssa.

10
11 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All right,
12 that brings us to item number 14, other business. We're
13 going to go into our supplemental. It's going to be the
14 805C Report. Ms. Brooke, you have the floor.

15
16 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
17 Council members in addition to your meeting book, you
18 were sent one of these little supplemental materials,
19 just a couple pages stapled together in the mail. In
20 that is on page five of your little packet is what we
21 call an 805C report, which doesn't really tell you much
22 by that name, but what that is, as a reminder section
23 805 of ANILCA requires that the Board let you know about
24 any decisions that they made, actions that they took
25 that didn't quite align with your Council
26 recommendations. And so, there is a cover letter that
27 explains how the Board voted on all the proposals that
28 your Council took up at the Wildlife Regulatory meeting
29 this past April, and there's an attached report with
30 three proposals that didn't quite align with what your
31 recommendation was. And I took the liberty of creating
32 a table that you see on the screen here, just summarizing
33 all of these proposals in table form, because it is a
34 lot to read here in these letters and reports. So, I'll
35 just go through it real quickly for you and let me see
36 real quick if I can make this a little bigger.

37
38 (Pause)

39
40 Okay so, yeah, these are all the
41 proposals that last year during the wildlife cycle that
42 you all made recommendations on. There's also a couple
43 closer reviews. And the first one was a statewide
44 proposal to allow the sale of brown bear hides, and your
45 Council opposed it. The Board deferred this proposal to
46 their summer work session, which was just a couple weeks
47 ago. But they still did not take action on it because
48 they're still in discussions with the State and with the
49 solicitor. Because the cites applies to this, and
50 they're trying to work out the details. So, we'll look

1 forward to hearing at a future meeting about the final
2 action on WP24-01 about the sale of brown bear hides.
3 The next several proposals were in your region. The first
4 one listed here was about Unit 18 moves to extend the
5 season to October 15th, and that was put in by native
6 village of Kwinhagak for the hunt in their area, and
7 this Council supported it. The Board did adopt it and
8 had an administrative modification that they made to
9 allow to align the boundaries of the Federal hunt area
10 and the state hunt area so it would be less confusing
11 for local people. The next one, WCR24-38, that was a
12 closure in the Kuskokwim hunt area to all these
13 communities listed and you all voted to retain the
14 status-quo, or the closure is to non-federally qualified
15 users so only residents of these communities can hunt
16 under federal regulations in this area so the Board kept
17 that closure in place. And then the next one, WP24-21,
18 you all put in and that was to add Kwig-Kong and
19 Kwinhagak to the list of communities eligible to hunt
20 in that previous hunt area that we were talking about.
21 And you all at your meeting supported it with the
22 modification to also add Kipnuk, and the Board did adopt
23 that as with your modification. So, those four
24 communities were added to the list of communities
25 eligible to hunt. WP 24-20 was to expand the delegated
26 authority for the winter moose hunt, and you all
27 supported that, and the Board adopted it, 24-22 was to
28 establish customary and traditional use for mainland
29 muskox and you all supported it and put that proposal
30 in, and the Board did adopt that. But the next one, you
31 all had put in a proposal to put a hunt on the books for
32 muskox to just to have it on the books not yet opened.
33 But you did decide to oppose that because there isn't a
34 harvestable surplus of muskox in Unit 18 yet and the
35 Board went along with your recommendation, and they
36 rejected it. So, you could always -- if the population
37 reaches some more sustainable harvestable levels in the
38 future, you could always put in a proposal at that time.
39 There was a crossover proposal or closure with the
40 Western Interior in the upper part of the Kuskokwim.
41 That was a Unit 19A remainder, and hunting was closed
42 to users except residents of the listed communities, and
43 you all voted to keep that closure in place and the
44 Board voted in the same way. And lastly was the watch
45 caribou proposals that we heard last year and you all
46 supported those closures that would limit the number of
47 caribou able to be harvested. And you supported that
48 with the OSM modification. And then during the All
49 Council meeting that we had last winter, the four
50 Councils that mainly utilize the Western Arctic Caribou

1 Herd, Western Interior, Seward Peninsula, Northwest
2 Arctic and the North Slope, they all met together, and
3 they talked about how to modify the proposal and what
4 would be best for the people in their area, and they
5 made a new recommendation to the Board, as the four
6 joint Councils and the Board adopted those four
7 Council's recommendation. So, that.....

8
9 ACTING CHAIR ROGERS: Sorry, Brooke. What
10 was the recommendation?

11
12 MS. MCDAVID: I believe Tom Plank is on
13 the line and could probably speak to that because he
14 worked on that proposal. I can't recall off the top of
15 my head what the final.

16
17 ACTING ROGERS: Thank you, Brooke. Mr.
18 Plank, are you online?

19
20 MR. PLANK: Yes, Madam Chair. I am
21 online. What was yours -- if you don't mind, could you
22 repeat the question?

23
24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: So, the
25 question was, what was the modification on WP 24, 28,29
26 that the four RACs had came [sic] together? Because I
27 know our biggest concern was that we didn't want -- we
28 wanted to support them in regards to overharvesting the
29 caribou herd, because we didn't want them to end up like
30 us.

31
32 MR. PRANK: Right, okay. Yeah, that one
33 there if you recall, at the -- through the Chair, I'm
34 sorry. If you recall, at the All Council meeting, the
35 four of them got together and they kind of hashed out
36 their ideas and their differences on which direction to
37 go with that. And then they all ended up agreeing upon
38 lowering the limit -- restricting the harvest limit down
39 to fifty caribou per year, only one which may be a cow,
40 and that is for the entire Western Arctic Caribou Herd
41 range.

42
43 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
44 Any further questions? All right, hearing none. We're
45 going to go ahead and move on to item number B 2025
46 Council application nomination open season, Brooke.

47
48 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. And
49 I don't have any materials for this item. I did want to
50 let you know that there will be a call for applications

1 for Council members like we have every fall. We're not
2 sure about the exact date yet. This move from U.S. Fish
3 and Wildlife into the Department of Interior has given
4 us an opportunity to reevaluate some of our processes
5 and try to make them more efficient. So, we're hoping
6 you know, because that application process takes a
7 really long time for people to get appointed to the
8 Council. We're working on ways to make it make it a
9 little bit quicker and easier for folks. But that said
10 anytime you can put in an application, and we can hold
11 on to it for you until that period opens. So, if you
12 know of people that want to apply to be on the RAC,
13 especially in areas that we don't currently have
14 representation please encourage them to apply. They can
15 reach out to me, and I can mail them hard copies, I can
16 email them, fax them, whatever they need. We also have
17 some copies of Council applications on the back table.
18 And I did want to remind we have four Council members
19 whose terms are coming up for renewal next year. And so
20 that means this winter you need to put in your incumbent
21 application. And I already passed those out to our
22 members that need to re-apply if they would like to. And
23 just to let you know, that is Walter Morgan, John Andrew,
24 Norma Evan and Henry Parks. So, John and Norma already
25 got me their applications, thank you, guys. And Henry's
26 working on his and I'll get one sent out to Walter so,
27 that's all I had currently for this item. The only other
28 thing is about the youth seat that was added. They're
29 still working out the details of how that's going to
30 work as far as applications. So, hopefully by the next
31 meeting, we'll have a little more to present about that.
32 Thank you, Madam Chair.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you.
35 We're going to go to item number C, correspondence
36 update. Brooke.

37
38 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair,
39 Council members. I put copies of all the letters from
40 your Council and the joint Councils that you signed on
41 -- joint Council letters that you signed onto into your
42 meeting book. So, there are copies of the four letters
43 or all those letters, there's more than four, way more
44 than four. But on page 109, there's a table, 109, and
45 it just summarizes all the letters that you sent and the
46 joint Council letters and letters that you received. So,
47 I'll just read through that real quick. And if you want
48 to ask any more detailed questions, we can talk about
49 the -- those letters. So, the two letters that this
50 Council sent individually after your last meeting was -

1 - you submitted comments on the proposed rule to add
2 three additional public members to the Federal
3 Subsistence Board, and those were submitted on time. And
4 you sent a letter to the Governor recommending Jean
5 Sandon to Board of Fish. And at the joint Council
6 meeting, you signed on to six letters and those letters
7 topics were about bycatch and salmon management. Myron
8 spoke again to many of these issues at this meeting and
9 the need for inter-jurisdictional management of salmon
10 and coordination. Council member compensation was
11 another letter that you signed on to, and you signed on
12 to a letter about correspondence issues and not
13 receiving timely replies from the Board or not receiving
14 any replies at all from Department of Interior or
15 Department of Agriculture. You also asked the Federal
16 Subsistence Board to elevate a letter about ANSCA D1
17 lands and the importance of keeping the protections in
18 place. You and Eastern Interior Council signed on to a
19 letter about the need to revise the Magnuson-Stevens
20 Fishery Management Conservation Act. And also, you
21 signed on to a letter with several other Councils about
22 caribou concerns statewide. You also received responses
23 from BLM for your Donlin Gold letter and your ANSCA D1
24 letter, and those are attached to your annua report, and
25 they're also attached in this correspondence update. So,
26 if you have any questions about any of these letters,
27 please let me know. Thanks.

28
29 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
30 Brooke. We're going to go ahead and go on to item number
31 D, partners for fisheries monitoring update. OSM
32 Fisheries go ahead. You have the floor.

33
34 MR. NANENG: Madam Chair on that
35 correspondence I'd like to request that those letters
36 that have not been responded to be rewritten again and
37 sent back, sent again and demand a response. I move.

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Can we get a
40 second?

41
42 MR. HOOFFMAN: Second.

43
44 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: The second by
45 Mr. Hoffman. Can I get a question on the floor? Question.

46
47 MR. NANENG: Question.

48
49 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Question has
50 been called. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

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IN UNISON: Aye.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All those opposed signify by saying nay.

(No response)

We are on a motion, passes. Oops, sorry. You have the floor.

MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the Council. For the record, this is Kevin Foley, fisheries biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. The Office of Subsistence Management will soon post a notice of funding opportunity for the partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program later this year or in early 2025. This is a competitive grant for Alaska Native and rural nonprofit organizations. The intent of the program is to strengthen Alaska Native and rural involvement in federal subsistence management by providing salary funds to organizations so they can hire a professional biologist, social scientist, or educator. The grant also provides funds for a science and culture camps and paid student internships. More information on this funding opportunity is available on grants.gov and grant solutions. You may also contact OSM staff Karen Hyer by way of email or phone, and Karen's contact information is on the partners web page at www.doi.gov/subsistence/partners or if anyone's interested, please come see me at any other time during this meeting. Thank you, Madam Chair. This concludes the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program update. I'm here for any questions.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Questions? Thank you. We're going to go ahead and move on to Council member declining balance card discussion. Brooke, sweet and simple.

MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have just something to bring to your attention. Like I mentioned, we're reconsidering the way we do things now that we have an opportunity to try to make things more efficient. And we wanted to get some Council member feedback on the idea of possibly giving Council members debit cards, bank cards instead of your paper checks, and they would deposit the per diem onto your card and then you could use it at the restaurant, you could use

1 it to get groceries or whatever you needed during the
2 Council meeting. And then after the meeting, they would
3 -- anything that you don't use or in the remainder of
4 your per diem because you don't get it all, you get
5 about 60% at the start of the meeting, and then they
6 deposit the rest, and they just do that in case your
7 travel changes. But it would get deposited directly to
8 your bank account instead of mailing you a check in the
9 mail. And so, that would require you to fill out some
10 forms with your banking information, and like Social
11 Security, that would be kept confidential just for
12 administrative purposes. But we wanted to see what you
13 guys thought about the idea of moving in that direction.
14 It might take us -- it might be next fall or so before
15 we could actually implement that. But we didn't want to
16 just make that change without talking to you guys first
17 and seeing if you had any thoughts or concerns. If
18 there's anything we're not thinking about, you could
19 also, I didn't mention this withdraw cash at the ATM if
20 you wanted cash instead. So, any comments or questions?

21
22 CAHIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Hoffman.

23
24 MR. HOFFMAN: A lot about this machine.
25 You know, the way it sounds to me that this debit card
26 that's going to be issued, is that only specifically for
27 food when -- while we're here or is it an overall
28 compensation for our gatherings, and which is it for our
29 food or for our gatherings or for both? Because if you
30 do it with a food, I saw your food checks. They're pretty
31 tiny, you know, I heard you could barely eat on them.
32 I'm glad we from Bethel we don't get any because I'd be
33 ashamed to go to the bank with my little check and say,
34 this is what they feed us.

35
36 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Mr. Hoffman,
37 it's per diem.

38
39 MR. HOFFMAN: Oh, what's per diem?

40
41 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: The card that
42 are going to be issued are per diem for people who are
43 traveling. Yes.

44
45 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, that's what I meant.
46 The people that are traveling. Is it not fair for the
47 rest of the Board to get per diem? You know, give one,
48 give all, you know.

49
50

1 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Hoffman. So
2 currently, if we have a meeting in the home community,
3 like, I know you and Mr. Maneng and Mrs. Rogers are from
4 Bethel. So, you don't receive per diem during meetings
5 that we have in Bethel and I'm not saying that I think
6 that's fair, but currently we're unable to pay per diem
7 because of that, because you're not in travel status.
8 The Council has written to request compensation
9 regardless -- additional above and beyond per diem.
10 Because per diem isn't compensation, it just covers your
11 incidentals. But you could also, if you wanted to request
12 payment for or per diem, you could request it. I'm not
13 sure if they could make a modification to the policy,
14 but it doesn't hurt to ask, I guess.

15
16 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, it may not hurt to
17 ask. I'm talking about fairness, you know, why is it
18 that these people that are traveling get to go and eat
19 at where you took them the other day? Kusko Inn? And us
20 people we got to go home and eat dry fish, you know?

21
22 (Simultaneous speech)

23
24 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
25 Mr. Hoffman.....

26
27 (Simultaneous speech)

28
29We're trying to get out of here by
30 12:00. If you want to be done.

31
32 MR. HOFFMAN: Let's get going.

33
34 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All right.
35 We're going to go ahead and move. Oh, Scott. Go ahead.

36
37 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I
38 just wanted to let you know that, as I mentioned
39 yesterday with our move and the conversations that were
40 happening up the line, one of the discussions that's
41 been going on is this a request from the Council on
42 compensation for your time at these meetings. And I did
43 want to let the Council know that that discussion is
44 happening at the Secretarial level right now. So,
45 they're definitely, I think, trying to find ways to make
46 that happen. Obviously, no decision has been made at
47 this point in time, but I wanted to update the Council
48 because that is something that you all have very been
49 very specific about been thinking that it's appropriate
50 to compensate you for your time when you're

1 volunteering, well you've been volunteering, but like
2 providing the amazing amount of information and
3 knowledge and time that you do for these meetings. And
4 so that's being heard, it's being discussed, and
5 hopefully we'll have some very positive news about that
6 in the near future. Thanks.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
9 Scott. Myron, I'm sorry. We're going to move on.

10
11 MR. NANENG: I just want to make a
12 comment, Madam Chair.

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Make it
15 really, really fast.

16
17 MR. NANENG: Really short.

18
19 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Really
20 short, five words.

21
22 MR. NANENG: For every information that
23 I provide. I should be paid \$100 because biologists,
24 anthropologist and other people want to be compensated
25 for gathering information. So, that's the fairness
26 question.

27
28 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana,
29 Myron. Okay so, we're going to -- sorry Brooke, we're
30 moving on. So, we're going to go ahead and move on to
31 item number one, in addition to other business. It was
32 put on the floor that we were going to send two
33 representatives to the North Pacific Fisheries
34 Management regarding the chum, and I need a motion on
35 the floor to approve for two representatives to be sent
36 to this meeting. Someone make a motion.

37
38 MR. NANENG: I so move.

39
40 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Can I get a
41 second? Second by Mr. Hoffman. Discussion, further
42 discussion. Can I get a question -- question has been
43 called. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

44
45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46
47 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All those
48 opposed signify by saying nay.

49
50 (No response)

1
2 We're on a motion, passes. Item number
3 two under other business is to approve topics to the
4 Federal Subsistence Board. Brooke, I have a list for
5 you. So, this is for the 2024 annual report. I'm going
6 to go over the ones that we already had discussed. The
7 first item on the agenda is to the representation of
8 different regions and a geographic representation to
9 include Nelson Island, Mekoryuk and one more Yukon seat.
10 Item number two is the Yukon Delta highest is subsistence
11 here, and it should be acknowledged by the Federal
12 Subsistence Board when making decisions. Item number
13 three is the Federal Subsistence Board to be sent a seat
14 on the Federal Subsistence Board by the YK Delta region
15 -- a seat on the Federal Subsistence Board from the YK
16 Delta region. Item number four is to review the charter
17 sooner than later. And this is going to be the new item
18 number five, can continue on BLM lands, that we continue
19 to revoice our opinions for the protection of
20 subsistence on BLM lands. Item number six is to continue
21 our push on Donlin Gold and the importance of
22 subsistence, and how the effects of Donlin Gold will be
23 on our subsistence and toxic to our people who live out
24 here. Next item would be to continue the caribou concerns
25 of the Mulchatna caribou and to continue to press the
26 issues of rebuilding the caribou population. Next item
27 is to bring forth the concern of the fall chum, which
28 is a record low, and we need to reemphasize this to the
29 Federal Subsistence Board that it is very important that
30 we rebuild these populations because they're so heavily
31 utilized by the people of both the Yukon and the
32 Kuskokwim Rivers and including the coastal villages.
33 Next item on the Board is to put in a support from the
34 YKRAC to the Federal Subsistence Board of the Yukon Fish
35 Commission. Next item on the Board is prioritize
36 capacity of tribes and organizations to have seats at
37 the table when making decisions. Next item on is the
38 chum salmon cap, which is a combination of chum salmon
39 and the alternatives of the December 2024 EIS that will
40 be released. We need to emphasize the importance of chum
41 salmon in our subsistence diet, our health, our elders,
42 our culture, our traditions, and the importance of our
43 youth learning to who they are. The next item is the
44 concerns about halibut population size and bycatch of
45 halibut. The next item is in regards to the concerns of
46 coho, starting in 1908 through 2019, and where Area M
47 had the record highest of 251,000 coho that were taken,
48 which crashed our fishery in 2019, which also includes
49 the full monitoring of two observers on Board, which
50 also should include the anecdotal of elders calling

1 their information anecdotal. We want to let the Federal
2 Subsistence Board to quit using that term to identify
3 us. It is not anecdotal knowledge; it is our scientific
4 knowledge. In the harms to salmon equal restrictions of
5 1976 decline. As Mr. Andrew stated, his fish camp had a
6 total of seven fish camps, and now currently, after all
7 the restrictions and decline of salmon, there's only two
8 left. In the overall cap areas are high in catches and
9 area three in the international meetings to discuss
10 hatchery fish of Japan and Korea that might be addressing
11 food shortage for Alaska fisheries, and also in the
12 concern of how much pollock by Mr. Parks and the cap on
13 pollock in regards to a fishery. And then what we what
14 our main goal in this is to have a shared trust
15 responsibility between the Department of Agriculture,
16 Department of Interior, NOAA Fisheries and Department
17 of Commerce with the tribes and the RACs of the regions.
18 The next item on the Board is predation control. We want
19 to ensure that the Mulchatna Caribou Herd is being
20 protected and on regulations or sorry requirements four
21 and five, that we continue this for the next three to
22 four years. The first one is to support the 2025 Predator
23 Control program and include the next three to four years
24 from this date forward. The next item on the agenda is
25 the ADF&G Caribou Herd Mitigation of the Upper Yukon to
26 go north to go hunting. We want to find more information
27 about the caribou herd, and not only using radio collars,
28 but using hunter and harvest information as well. One
29 more, or two more. The next item on is to enforce the
30 sport hunting in the Lower Yukon area to reduce sports
31 hunter's conflict with user groups on the Yukon River.
32 And the last item is we need more study of whitefish
33 using mesh sizes, because a four-inch you get all the
34 smaller ones but what we put away and what we use as
35 bait fish, we usually catch with a five half to six-
36 inch. And typical harvest, thank you Mr. Stanislaus is
37 40 to 50 throughout the year. And I'll just give this
38 to you.

39
40 MS. MCDAVID: Thank you, Madam Chair.
41 There are a few things on the list that are not within
42 the jurisdiction of the Federal Subsistence Board. I'm
43 only saying that because we can still notify them that
44 these are major concerns, but I might suggest that you
45 also choose, you know, once we approve the annual report
46 to send a letter again to North Pacific, and that can
47 be submitted as a public comment at the meeting. And our
48 attendees, our representatives from this RAC can talk
49 more about that during the time for public comments at
50 that meeting. And those items are regarding the Chum EIS

1 bycatch, the halibut population and bycatch and the
2 pollock and the cap on the pollock fishery. Because those
3 would be dealt -- those are regulatory decisions made
4 by North Pacific and not Federal Subsistence Board. So,
5 just wanted to make that suggestion. Thank you. Thank
6 you, Ms. Brooke.

7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROERS: We'll go ahead
9 and keep him on the annual report. So, we have more
10 oomph to our letter. All right, can I get a motion on
11 the floor if there's no other comments, questions or
12 additions that we need to put on the annual report?

13
14 MR. NANENG: I think we need to laugh
15 every once in a while. And I think at the annual report,
16 I would ask Stan Sheppard to make sure that he sends
17 fermented fish to all of us.

18
19 (Pause)

20
21 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All right,
22 can we go ahead and get a motion on the floor to approve
23 the annual report topics? Moved by Mr. Naneng. Can I get
24 a second? Second by Mr. Hoffman. Further discussion?
25 Question has been called. All those in favor signify by
26 saying aye.

27
28 IN UNISON: Aye.

29
30 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All those
31 opposed say nay. Signify by saying nay.

32
33 MR. NANENG: It's not fair, I said yes
34 (indiscernible).

35
36 MS. MCDAVID: Can I say nay, so I don't
37 have to write the report then?

38
39 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Oh, man, we
40 get so much business done at these meetings. Okay, so
41 the next topic on the letter we I'm going to just
42 bulletin these points out. And we can make a full entire
43 motion to approve these letters of support. For the first
44 letter of support, it is a letter to the politicians of
45 the International Wild Fish and Wildlife Association,
46 Department of Interior, State Department, Department of
47 Agriculture, ADF&G, Federal Subsistence Board to find
48 ways to coordinate and support the way the as they work
49 together to request the region and leadership to rebuild
50 the stocks of salmon stocks within the restrictions of

1 1916 through 1969 and also into include involving Rural,
2 Cap, Tanana Chiefs, etc. and other organizations that
3 have common interests, which also includes the
4 communities of the Upper North Region RACs, including
5 Unalakleet; impacting trawling and intercept fishery and
6 regional uses, and addressed by coordination to get it
7 started and also to lead this movement by the Federal
8 Subsistence Board to get it started in coordination with
9 meetings and common interest use with Canada and the US.
10 That's the first letter. The second letter is to comment
11 -- to send a comment letter from the RAC regarding the
12 North Pacific Management Council, which is going to be
13 due on the Friday before the meeting at 12 pm, and also,
14 to include the Alaska Migratory Code Council and the AVP
15 watershe-- or sorry, that's for the next one. Sorry, let
16 me restate that. The second letter is the comment letter
17 to our comments that we had made here at the RAC meeting
18 to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, which
19 will be due the Friday before the meeting on at 12:00
20 pm noon. The third letter is requesting the Migratory
21 Waterfowl Committee, Alaska Migratory Co-Council and the
22 AVP Waterfowl Conservation in regards to closure of
23 emperor geese, cackling geese, emperor geese and brant
24 eggng enclosure a 30 day closure to be put in place, a
25 black duck closure and to consider having meetings with
26 the Lower 48 of Oregon and Washington since the 1987
27 declining -- sorry, declining populations that we need
28 to revisit that. And then also for the mortality in
29 regards to the avian influenza and the mortality and
30 decrease of shorebirds. Myron, do you want to add to
31 that?

32
33 MR. NANENG: At one point, we tried to
34 raise this issue to the Federal Subsistence Board.
35 However, they wanted to keep it at the Alaska Migratory
36 Co-management Council. So, even if we bring it up to the
37 Federal Subsistence Board, they'll send it over to the
38 Co-management Council. So, I would request that that's
39 an issue that's already been dealt with and not include
40 that.

41
42 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: It's okay.
43 They need to hear our voice. It's an issue. And I also
44 want to include mir, it is a murre, seabirds, murre?
45 Because I know we had a huge issue when Mr. Bill used
46 to be on our Council before he passed away. It was one
47 of the really big issues that he brought up. The fourth
48 letter is a RAC to comment on the North Pacific Fisheries
49 Management Council on regards to the chum bycatch. The
50 fifth letter is to support the 2025-2026 Predator

1 Control on the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. Kitty, do we have
2 any more letters we need to write, or Brooke is going
3 to write?

4
5 MS. MCDAVID: Madam Chair, you also make
6 comments about the halibut and the pollock. Would you
7 like two letters sent to North Pacific; one, including
8 the comments on the Chum EIS as a specific letter, and
9 then addressing the additional issues of the halibut and
10 the pollock cap and another letter, or combine them into
11 a single letter.

12
13 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you for
14 that clarification. We're going to send out two letters,
15 because if we combine them all and there's too much
16 information, they're just going to skim through it and
17 put it aside. So, we want to make sure sweet simple to
18 the point letters that they can read through and actually
19 digest. any further letters at this time. Hearing none.
20 Can I get a motion on the floor to approve the letters
21 of support that I had listed? Go ahead, Mr. Andrew.

22
23 MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Madam Chair and
24 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd moratorium, long as we have
25 that moratorium, we should have the Peril Strait
26 controls in place. And if they ever lifted there, it
27 should be end of it. If our Board accepts it because the
28 last two winters we've been having more and more snow
29 in our background, in this area only -- has been -- not
30 just the caribou the (indiscernible) are killing up.
31 It's happening, they're killing off our moose too,
32 because there's a few, very few trappers left when they
33 go out trapping for wolves and wolverine. I would say
34 they find moose kills and caribou kills in our
35 (indiscernible) out in our backyard. And last winter,
36 right near village when they reported the wolf kills are
37 close to the airport and near fishcamp, I went out to
38 check it. There weren't wolf killed, they were killed
39 by dogs, feral dogs. And these guys we're saying no,
40 those are wolf kills. Well guys, they don't have little,
41 tiny footprints, those are dogs. And that's something
42 that they need to -- because sometimes the other
43 observers, they think what they say and they always say
44 Mulchatna Herd our own Kilbuk caribou come down. The
45 Mulchatna Herd was certainly looking caribou and skinny
46 and sick, but there are local caribou are much healthier
47 because they don't migrate all the way back. They'll end
48 up calving up in our mountains back here between the
49 Bristol Bay and Tikchik Lakes and the Kuskokwim. Thank
50 you.

1
2 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana. And
3 did we get a motion on the floor. Someone needs to make
4 a motion to approve the letters or.....
5
6 MR. ANDREW: We did.
7
8 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: No. We
9 didn't. Hurry up. Make a motion. Motion by Mr. Hoffman,
10 can we get a second.
11
12 MR. PARKS: Second.
13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON: Second, by Mr.
15 Parks.
16
17 UNIDENTIFIED: (Whispers) Call for a
18 question.
19
20 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Question has
21 been called. All those in favor signify by saying aye.
22
23 IN UNISON: Aye.
24
25 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: All those
26 opposed signify by saying nay. Brooke? Motion has
27 passed. Closing comments. You want to start us off, Mr.
28 Hoffman, for closing comments? Your mic.
29
30 MR. HOFFMAN: You know, I love this
31 subsistence. I just -- I didn't hear anything about the
32 moose subsistence harvest that we have. I'm just
33 wondering, with all the moratoriums and all our
34 regulated hunting times, how come we only get eight days
35 to hunt in a whole region? And who said we get eight
36 days? Tell me who. Who told you we get eight?
37
38 MR. ANDREW: You should know.
39
40 MR. HOFFMAN: I don't know.
41
42 MR. ANDREW: No, you should know that.
43 Listen, the State sets the State regulations, and then
44 they're on those regulations apply on even on Federal
45 lands.....
46
47 (Simultaneous speech)
48
49 that's why they say you hunt until
50 you get.....

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(Simultaneous speech)

MR. HOFFMAN: I got only eight days. I got no time to be talking.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana, to Mr. Hoffman. Mr. Parks closing comments.

Mr. PARKS: Quyana Chair, I would like to thank all the agencies here and to -- gave us their all their information regarding hunting issues and whatnot, subsistence use issues. And I thank all the Council members and our Coordinator, and I hope if it's God's will down the road, we will surely get meet again and get our information from our agencies. Quyana.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana. Mr. Peter, closing comments.

MR. PETER: Yeah, I would like to thank all the Federal workers for helping us. Thank you very much. You guys are doing a good job by -- to helping us and also the Federal Advisory Board. Quyana.

And It's really hard to accept the August meeting for me because there are a lot of berries in this area to pick, all berries and also for the subsistence cohos. But anyway, I wish Bobby, Henry, John, Myron, good luck on the moose hunting. And, oh, yeah, Jackie, I am sorry about that. Good luck moose hunting season. It's going to be in the eight days hunt. It's really strange. It used to be a ten-day hunt, but I really don't know about the quota. Nobody telling us how much we're going to kill bull moose or -- quyana.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Ms. Cleveland.

MS. CLEVELAND: Quyana (In Native) Thank you, everyone who showed up to this meeting. And beard with my Chairing the first day. I feel very honored to be in such a highly knowledgeable group and elders and representation from the whole region. It's good to learn, I mean, I'm on the southern tip, so I don't hear much of, you know, I don't know too much on the Interior part of our region or the north. So, it's always good to hear from different parts. I'm glad we're all together here. I'm looking forward to the subsistence season

1 ahead, the moose, the (indiscernible), the berries. And
2 looking forward to seeing you guys' next time. Quyana.

3
4 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana. Mr.
5 Andrew.

6
7 MR. ANDREW: Yeah. Thank you, Madam
8 Chair. I'd like to thank everybody, people that showed
9 up over here, our Council members. Even though sometimes
10 we don't agree with each other. And I'm pretty happy for
11 this meeting because I was watching all these young
12 ladies there Chairing [sic] the meetings. I kept
13 thinking, no, they just took over, their learning and
14 and it makes the meeting much easier, especially our
15 coordinated taking the coordinating this minor step
16 providing a support and staffing Anchorage. We
17 appreciate the support for this meeting, even the refuge
18 staff. Sometimes there were -- I can think of a starting
19 way back in 92 when we used to first start out, when we
20 had our first, the very first Board meeting was properly
21 over here in 92. And sometimes they -- we'd meet in
22 there at church or a bigger building. ABCP housing office
23 up there.

24
25 UNIDENTIFIED: Long house.

26
27 MR. ANDREW: Yeah. You know that first
28 meeting I remember was down at Old Cave in a building
29 outside of the Swanton store. Small little place. There
30 was one of the public came up. He was not well versed
31 in speaking English. He was talking to -- he was
32 testifying about when they first started, about from
33 moose moratorium. This guy from I believe he was from
34 Napakiak. A guy by the name of Billy McCann. Yeah. And
35 he said, I told this story a few times all over it.
36 Billy, when the Biologist was saying, if we get too many
37 of the too many of the cows, we'll be losing out on all
38 our moose. And Billy McCann was when he testimony he
39 said, it was a little embarrassing to listen to him
40 testifying. He said if you kill all the bull moose, the
41 cow moose will have nobody to fuck them. These are the...

42
43 MS MCDAVID: Point of order.

44
45 MR. ANDREW: Sitting up there. He pointed
46 to them. He said, maybe you guys should go fuck yourself.

47
48 MS. MCDAVID: John, you can't use
49 profanity on the record, please. Point of order.

50

1
2 MR. ANDREW: Oh, they (indiscernible) I
3 think a lot of us, they were bilingual we turned crimson
4 red. Okay.

5
6 MS. MCDAVID: There's no controlling an
7 80-year-old man. Sorry.

8
9 MR. ANDREW: From then on, we try to be
10 careful about -- trying to monitor them, they try to do
11 a better -- how to make their presentations. But we
12 learned from those first elders that even though all the
13 meetings were done in Yup'ik, (indiscernible), AVCP
14 sometimes AVCP and the refugees to provide translators
15 and we appreciate it. Yeah, I'm pretty happy you guys
16 laughed.

17
18 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana. Mr.
19 Nanneng.

20
21 MR. NANENG: It's hard to follow up with
22 some of that. I just wanted to share that I think over
23 the years, we've seen a lot of changes from the time
24 that we used to have conflicts out here working with
25 Fish and Wildlife Service. At times, we were the
26 criminals that were just trying to live off the land and
27 off the resources. But over the years, I've seen a lot
28 of changes. We have our IRTs working at Fish and Wildlife
29 Service now, and there used to be some real scary things
30 that happen in the past where our own hunters out in the
31 field would be shooting at law enforcement airplanes.
32 And so, but some of our leaders in the past decided
33 that, you know, if we want to live in harmony, we got
34 to work together. So, that was the thing that started
35 everyone working together. Establishment of the Inter-
36 Tribal Fish Commission, as well as the Federal
37 Subsistence Board and the RACs to give them advice.
38 However, I still think that we need our own person to
39 sit down the Federal Subsistence Board. But you know,
40 we've come a long ways. We've provided information
41 that's not anecdotal to the managers so, but, like, I
42 could have said what John said when someone has mentioned
43 it, I don't know. But I leave it at that. Thank you very
44 much.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Thank you,
47 Mr. Naneng. MS. Evan.

48
49 MS. EVAN: I'd like to thank Brooke the
50 staff for their hard work. I always think about you guys

1 when I'm home thinking, I wonder if those guys are
2 picking berries. I hope they pick lots of berries and I
3 hope they're catching fish because we're not fishing on
4 the Yukon. But I'll pray for you guys to have a safe
5 year and bountiful with subsistence. Thank you.

6
7 ACTING CHAIRPERSON CLEVELAND: Thank
8 you, Ms. Evan. We have Mr. Wassily online. Can you please
9 give your subsistence report and your closing comments?

10
11 MR. ALEXIE: Good afternoon. Can you hear
12 me?

13
14 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Yeah, loud
15 and clear. You have VHF six eight. Go ahead.

16
17 MR. ALEXEI: Okay. Thank you, Madam
18 President. This is Wassily Alexie, I'm sorry I didn't
19 make it into the meeting. I had a little emergency, but
20 anyways, I heard a lot of good comments and concerns
21 about subsistence. Just like what Stanislaus brought up
22 about the four-inch nets. I'm trying to push for us to
23 quit using those because those are -- ever since they
24 restricted us to four-inch. I notice those are killing
25 off all of our future stock fish, the smaller fish that
26 we don't really use. You know, we try to get the bigger
27 ones. And I've been pushing them to try to let us use
28 our six-inch nets, especially in their sloughs, where
29 we get the big whitefish and the big pike and sheefish.
30 There's some good comments about that. So, I'm hoping
31 that's pulled through. And it was kind of hard summer.
32 We had only maybe a week of good sun shining weather.
33 Some people were able to get out to get some chums. Not
34 very much, though. Not everybody went out or had the
35 ability to go out and get chums. Then after that it's
36 nothing but rain, rain, rain. They opened us for cohos,
37 but hardly anybody's been going out due to the rain and
38 wind. But now that the weather's getting better and the
39 cohos are starting to run and they're going to shut us
40 down completely on Monday. So, that's another big
41 concern to us. But I hope everybody have good luck in
42 moose hunting season and hope the weather gets good. And
43 my condolences go out to Mr. Slats' family. He was a
44 real good person to know. Thank you all.

45
46 ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Quyana,
47 Wassily. Alright, now that he's given his subsistence
48 report and closing and comments, I'm going to go ahead
49 and give him mine. I'm going to talk super-fast. So, for
50 my subsistence report starting from April the ptarmigans

1 this year were very plentiful, and they were very
2 abundant. This year after breakup, before the smelts
3 came, we had sticklebacks that were about three to four
4 inches in about two inches wide just big as smelts,
5 small smelts. And at first, I was really confused because
6 we never have those on our river, you know, we never
7 have sticklebacks that huge. We only catch them out in
8 like in Hooper Bay, Toksook Bay, usually those are ocean
9 fish, sticklebacks. But this year they came into the
10 river, and we had an actual run. I was so surprised. I
11 got almost five gallons worth of sticklebacks that I
12 dried. And then the smelts came in and they were big,
13 they were fat, and they were juicy and they were very
14 oily, very, very oily. Then when the migration came
15 through, we saw black brants, the most black brants that
16 I've ever seen in years, and they don't typically migrate
17 in my backyard. But we had so many black brants in the
18 backyard, it was astonishing. So, it was very, very
19 unusual to hear that the black brant population was
20 declining. We also saw an increase in cranes as well.
21 And a lot of very, very young, healthy cranes that are
22 coming back this fall. Here in Bethel, we've been seeing
23 a lot more moose, which has increased in moose charging.
24 In my neighborhood, we have a young bull that charged
25 my mother-in-law. She was walking down the street and
26 the moose came and charged at her and then veered off
27 right before it got in front of her because she screamed
28 super loud and it was like - so, it ran off into the
29 trees. But there's been an increase in moose charging,
30 moose charging dogs, moose charging children and my
31 mother-in-law. The odonox this year, we had lots of
32 lots and lots of odonox this year. Really nice, juicy
33 and healthy and they were very, very sweet this year.
34 As for the weather, we had a long winter spring which
35 decreased the growth of spring greens. We had a pick
36 super-fast because they were already starting to bloom.
37 They came in late and bloomed really fast, so we had to
38 pick them really fast. That includes our sprouts as well.
39 As for the swallows, they arrived late, they left early,
40 which was a short season. I usually have coffee with my
41 favorite swallow in the morning. But I only had like
42 three or four weeks before they ended up leaving. So,
43 the swallows had arrived late. We had an increase in
44 earthworms. There are larger, more plentiful, a lot
45 bigger, usually there are less than an inch. This year
46 they were about 2.5 inches. We also have seen an increase
47 in ants, they're usually super tiny, and the one that
48 we've, the anthill that we have next to our house are
49 about an inch long now. There is a decrease in
50 bumblebees. As much as I love bumblebees, I run from

1 bumblebees. After the ice breakup, we had an increase
2 of juvenile smolt that went out with the ice breakup.
3 And that unidentified fry going out with the ice. I
4 couldn't figure out what kind of fish they were, but
5 there was a whole bunch of them, and they would come in
6 pulses headed out to with the ice. As for my greenhouse
7 we had bolting greens from seed. They bolted really fast
8 within two weeks, and I try to keep track of them, but
9 they just bolted really fast. Usually, they'll take
10 their time to grow, but we had such a hot spring and
11 early cold summer that they bolted. It was bad weather
12 this year for seedlings for cauliflower, broccoli, head
13 lettuce and all top vegetables, but all the ground
14 vegetables had survived good this year. It was slow
15 growth due to the hot and cold and snowing in summertime.
16 And due to the heavy rain and moisture, a lot of our top
17 plants had molded and died. This year is going to be
18 late harvesting due to the weather conditions, and it
19 was a very short season for our rhubarbs. Due to the
20 weather, they started to spot early right after they
21 came up. As in regards to Leave No Trace, there's more
22 trash on the Tundra. We usually go backpacking behind
23 my house and go out into the Tundra. I picked up roughly
24 about two large black trash bags of trash just behind
25 Hoffman's sub. There were shell casings, beer cans,
26 trash bags, and we found a place right behind trailer
27 court that had honey buckets and whole garbage bags,
28 which I reported. So, we need to get more education and
29 outreach and teach people and our youth to pick up their
30 trash and leave it cleaner than how you found it.

31
32 A couple more, I promise. As for salmon
33 fishing, this year it had improved, in regards to our
34 chinook salmon and chum salmon, yet it's still not good
35 enough for an opening -- for complete opening, we still
36 have to be under conservation restrictions. There has
37 been an increase in ichthyophonous this year, 25 to 75%
38 on both Kuskokwim and Yukon, and people have been sending
39 me pictures of white pale meat with spots. And they're
40 super, super skinny, like, like maybe about this big
41 skinny, about five inches around. Super skinny and it
42 was really unusual. As for berries, the salmon berries
43 were hard to find this year, they were dried out and
44 sunburnt. Blueberries are very plentiful and very big.
45 We're going to have lots of cranberries this year. And
46 blackberries are fairly small this year, but they're
47 still growing. And, if we could take a moment of silence
48 for Mr. Slats.

49
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(Pause)

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Thank you all for being here. Yeah, like he always said, coming to these meetings is like a family reunion. And I truly feel that with all of you. You're all my family. It's always a family reunion with all of you. And thank you all for being here and sticking through us and hearing us out and hearing our voices being heard. It's very important that you help us get our voices amplified. Thank you and thank you to Ms. Brooke for coordinating our meetings and writing all the letters and all the topics of our annual report. Thank you, quyanaqpak. Can we get a motion to adjourn?

MR. NANENG: I move to adjourn, Madam Chair.

ACTING CHAIRPERSON ROGERS: Motion by Mr. Naneng. Second by Mr. Hoffman. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

UNIDENTIFIED: Aye.

All those opposed signify by saying nay.

(No response)

Quyanaqpak. Before we leave, can we all take a picture really fast. Oh, sorry. The timing of adjourning is 12:36.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDING)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Rafael Morel, for Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 1_ through 62 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME III recorded on the 23rd day of August 2024;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Isabela, Puerto Rico this 16th day of Sept 2024.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager - Transcriptions