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1 YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 VOLUME I
7

8
9 Gordon Watson Conference Room
10 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
11 Anchorage, Alaska
12 October 10, 2023
13 9:22 a.m.
14
15
16

17 MEMBERS PRESENT:

18
19 Raymond Oney, Chairman
20 Wassilly Alexie
21 John Andrew
22 Jacqueline Cleveland
23 Norma Evan
24 Robert Hoffman
25 James Landlord
26 Walter Morgan
27 Henry Parks
28 Phillip Peter
29 Alissa Nadine Rogers
30 Richard Slats
31
32
33

34 Regional Council Coordinator, Brooke McDavid
35
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 10/10/2023)

(On record)

MS. McDAVID: This is the call in for the YKDelta RAC meeting. We're still waiting on one Council member, they should be here within five minutes so we'll begin shortly after they arrive.

Thanks for your patience.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, everyone. We're going to go ahead and get started here. Before we get started I'd like to start off with an invocation. As you know each day we say a prayer and that guides us each day of our lives. So at this time I'd like to call on Richard Slats to provide the invocation for us this meaning.

Richard.

MR. SLATS: Yeah. Quyana.

(Invocation)

IN UNISON: Amen.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you, Richard. I'll go ahead and call the meeting to order. The time now is 9:22 a.m. I'll call on our Secretary, Richard Slats to do a roll call.

MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those that are here or attending via Zoom, when the -- your name is called out say aye.

Henry Parks.

MR. PARKS: Present.

MR. SLATS: Norma T. Evan.

MS. EVAN: Present.

MR. SLATS: John Andrew -- John W. Andrew.

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1

MR. ANDREW: Here.

2

3

MR. SLATS: Walter A. Morgan, Sr.

4

5

MR. MORGAN: Here.

6

7

MR. SLATS: Jacqueline K. Cleveland.

8

9

MS. CLEVELAND: Here.

10

11

MR. SLATS: James C. Landlord.

12

13

MR. LANDLORD: Here.

14

15

MR. SLATS: Alissa Nadine Rogers.

16

17

MS. ROGERS: Present.

18

19

MR. SLATS: Philip K. Peter, Sr.

20

21

MR. PETER: Here.

22

23

MR. SLATS: Wassilly B. Alexie.

24

25

MR. ALEXIE: Here.

26

27

MR. SLATS: Raymond J. Oney.

28

29

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Here.

30

31

MR. SLATS: Myron P. Naneng.

32

33

(No comments)

34

35

MR. SLATS: Myron P. Naneng.

36

37

MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair, Myron is
traveling for another meeting and will be excused for
this meeting. He might be able to call in sometimes.

38

39

40

41

Thank you.

42

43

MR. SLATS: Thank you. Robert J.
Hoffman.

44

45

46

MR. HOFFMAN: Here.

47

48

MR. SLATS: Hello, Robert.

49

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1 MR. HOFFMAN: Hello.

2

3 MR. SLATS: And Richard B. Slats is
4 here. So we have 11 attending telephonically, one by
5 way of -- or one attending telephonically, 11 present
6 and one absent and excused, Mr. Chairman.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you.
9 Thank you, Richard. Now we'll go down to the next item
10 we have meeting announcement.

11

12 At this time I'll call on Brooke

13 McDavid.

14

15 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 I'll start out by going ahead and introducing myself.
17 My name is Brooke McDavid and I am the Council
18 Coordinator for the YKDelta Regional Advisory Council
19 and the designated Federal officer for this meeting.
20 Welcome to everyone here in the room in Anchorage with
21 us. And those of us who are joining the meeting on the
22 teleconference.

23

24 I just have a couple housekeeping
25 announcements to make before we get started. If you
26 are here in the room with us, if you could please sign
27 in on the sign-in sheet each day of the meeting, that
28 helps us keep track of who all is in attendance. And
29 if you're joining us on the phone you can find the
30 agenda and the meeting book online on the Federal
31 Subsistence Program website. And that internet address
32 is www.doi.gov/subsistence. So it's doi.gov as in
33 Department of Interior/subsistence. And then under the
34 regions tab you can chose Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and
35 then meeting materials. The most recent copy of the
36 agenda was updated on the 8th. It's a little bit
37 different than what's in the meeting book. There --
38 for folks in the room there are some yellow copies over
39 on the table over there.

40

41 And for folks online if you could all
42 please remember to stay muted. The court reporter has
43 muted everyone to get us started. You can unmute
44 yourself by pressing star, six if you would like to
45 speak. And then when you're finished speaking we ask
46 that you please press star, six as well. If there are
47 disruptful noises on the phone throughout the meeting
48 the court reporter might mute everyone as needed.

49

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1 Next a note about public comments. We
2 do -- the Council does welcome public comments on both
3 agenda items and any non-agenda items related to
4 subsistence. If you're here in the room with us and
5 would like to give a comment on anything that's on the
6 agenda or on a non-agenda item there are some blue
7 cards on the table in the back there, you can just fill
8 one out with your name and a note on what agenda item
9 or what topic you would like to comment on and you can
10 give those to any Staff member or just bring them up to
11 me and put them in this basket and we'll make sure the
12 Chair knows that you would like to comment. If you are
13 online and you would like to comment please first
14 address the Chair by saying Mr. Chair and then waiting
15 for him to call on you. The Chair will announce when
16 it's time for public comments on non-agenda items.
17 Each morning we'll have an opportunity for that. This
18 morning it will be a little bit later after Council
19 members give their reports, but tomorrow morning it'll
20 be the first thing on the item or first item on the
21 agenda and then the following day as well.

22
23 We are having a three day meeting here,
24 we'll be here today, tomorrow and Thursday. If we move
25 through the agenda quickly we might wrap up a little
26 bit early on Thursday, but we'll have to see how things
27 go.

28
29 Make sure -- oh, one other thing on
30 comments. If you would like to submit a written
31 comment instead of giving an oral comment that's also
32 acceptable. You -- if you're here in the room you
33 could pass written comments to me and I'll make sure
34 those get included in the record. If you're online you
35 can email those comments to subsistence@fws.gov.
36 That's subsistence@fws as in fish wildlife service.gov.

37
38 And next we do have a Council member
39 who's joining us for the first time and we'd like to
40 give him a big welcome and that's Walter Morgan. Thank
41 you for joining us Walter, and we look forward to
42 having you introduce yourself here in a little bit.

43
44 And finally the last thing I just
45 wanted to remind folks about is just general conduct.
46 If everyone could please just be respectful when you're
47 speaking, no foul language and I think we're going to
48 have a great meeting.

49
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1 So that's all I had for announcements,
2 Mr. Chair.

3
4 Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you,
7 Brooke. At this time I'll go ahead and welcome
8 everyone to our fall Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Advisory
9 Council meeting here in Anchorage. We'll go ahead and
10 introduce the people that are present during our
11 meeting and also those are online. So I don't know how
12 you want to do this, just maybe from the back or with
13 the Council, go clockwise.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go clockwise. Okay.
18 We'll start from that side, go around. Okay. If we
19 could introduce ourselves.

20
21 MS. McDAVID: Public introductions
22 first.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: The public, yeah. Who
25 might be present.

26
27 MS. McDAVID: Okay. And if folks could
28 come up to the mic too to introduce yourself.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 MS. KLEIN: Good morning members of the
33 Council. My name is Jill Klein, I work with the U.S.
34 Fish and Wildlife Service and I'm the Regional
35 Subsistence Coordinator and happy to be here at your
36 meeting.

37
38 Good morning.

39
40 MS. GREDIAGIN: Hi. I'm Lisa
41 Grediagin, the Wildlife Division Supervisor with the
42 Office of Subsistence Management.

43
44 MS. BOECK: Good morning. My name is
45 Laurie Boeck. I'm with the Yukon Delta National
46 Wildlife Refuge, I'm the Acting Refuge Manager.

47
48 MR. TULIK: Chris Tulik with the Yukon
49 Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

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1 MR. SHEPPARD: Stanislaus Sheppard,
2 Calista Corp Refuge Information Technician.

3
4 MR. NICORI: Good morning. My name is
5 Emmitt Nicori, I'm a Refuge Information Technician with
6 the Yukon Delta.

7
8 MR. ALEXIE: Good morning. I'm
9 Christian Alexie, Jr., Refuge Information Technician
10 for the Yukon Delta.

11
12 Qu yana for having me here.

13
14 MS. LITTLE: Good morning, everyone.
15 I'm Suzanne Little with the Pew Trusts and I'm also the
16 Staff Support for the Bering Sea Interior Tribal
17 Commission.

18
19 MS. BACH: Good morning. (In Native)
20 Donna Elliott Bach with the Bureau of Land Management.
21 I'm a State Native Liaison.

22
23 MS. HOOPER: Good morning. My name is
24 Jennifer Hooper. I'm here with Association of Village
25 Council Presidents.

26
27 Qu yana.

28
29 MR. MOSES: Good morning, everybody.
30 Aaron Moses, I'm the Subsistence Coordinator for Yukon
31 Delta.

32
33 MS. KENNER: Good morning. This is
34 Pippa Kenner and I'm Anthropologist here at the Office
35 of Subsistence Management and I'm Staff for this region
36 and this Council.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 MR. PATTERSON: Good morning. My name
41 is Dillon Patterson. I work with the National Park
42 Service Regional Subsistence Program here in Anchorage.

43
44 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning. I'm Cory
45 Graham. I'm a Fisheries Biologist here with OSM.

46
47 MS. WESSELS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
48 members of the Council. My name is Katya Wessels and
49 I'm Council Coordination Division Supervisor with OSM.

50

0008

1 I'm glad to welcome you here in Anchorage and see you
2 all.

3
4 Thank you for being here.

5
6 MS. MORROW: Good morning. My name is
7 Kristen Morrow. I'm the Anthropology Pathways Intern
8 with the Office of Subsistence Management.

9
10 MR. PLANK: Good morning. Tom Plank,
11 Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management.

12
13 MR. FOLEY: Mr. Chair, members of the
14 Council, good morning. My name is Kevin Foley. I'm a
15 Fish Biologist for this region. It's nice to see
16 everyone today.

17
18 MR. AYERS: Mr. Chair, members of the
19 Council, good morning. My name is Scott Ayers. I also
20 work at the Office of Subsistence Management. I'm the
21 Fisheries Division Supervisor and I'm really happy to
22 be here with you today and I hope we have a very
23 fruitful meeting.

24
25 INTERPRETER: (In Native). Cory Joseph
26 from (indiscernible) and I'm here for interpreting.

27
28 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 I'm sorry folks, I forgot to include in my
30 announcements that we do have an interpreter with us
31 today. Cory is going to be helping out with
32 Yup'ik/English and English/Yup'ik translation. There
33 are transmitters on the table in the back there.
34 You're welcome to take one. There's additional ones
35 under the table if we need more. So Cory will be doing
36 simultaneous translation if any of our Council members
37 or anyone in the room would like to speak in Yup'ik we
38 welcome that. And you can turn on your translator if
39 you're not a Yup'ik or your transmitter if you're not a
40 Yup'ik and have it set to channel one and you'll be
41 able to hear Cory's interpretation as the -- as the
42 meeting goes.

43
44 So that's all I needed to say.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you,
49 Brooks. Moving on with the agenda at this time

50

0009

1 we'll.....

2

3 MS. McDAVID: Online. People online.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Sorry. Do we
6 have anyone online that's with us this morning, can you
7 introduce yourself.

8

9 MR. SPARKS: Good morning, this is Tom
10 Sparks. I'm with the Bureau of Land Management calling
11 in from the Nome Field Station.

12

13 Thank you.

14

15 MS. CANFIELD: Good morning. My name
16 is Gabe Canfield. I'm with the Yukon River Drainage
17 Fisheries Association.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Anyone else online with
20 us this morning.

21

22 MS. McDAVID: You might have to press
23 star, six to unmute yourself.

24

25 MS. JALLEN: Good morning, can you hear
26 me?

27

28 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good morning.
29 This is (indiscernible - simultaneous speech) with the
30 Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Fairbanks.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome.

33

34 MS. JALLEN: And this is Deena Jallen
35 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game also in
36 Fairbanks, the Yukon River Summer Season Manager.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome.

39

40 MS. PATTON: Good morning. This is Eva
41 Patton with the National Park Service Subsistence
42 Program in the regional office.

43

44 Good morning, everyone.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

47

48 MS. DECKER: This is Sam Decker.....

49

50

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1 MR. RANSBURY: Good morning. This is
2 Shane Ransbury with the Alaska Department of Fish and
3 Game in Fairbanks.

4
5 MS. McDAVID: Sorry. Could you repeat
6 that. Thank you.

7
8 MR. RANSBURY: This is Shane Ransbury
9 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in
10 Fairbanks.

11
12 MS. DECKER: And this is Sam Decker
13 with Alaska Department of Fish and Game as well.

14
15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome.

16
17 MR. WUTTIG: Good morning. This is
18 Klaus Wuttig, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Sport
19 Fish Division.

20
21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Anyone else with us
22 this morning on -- online, on the phone line.

23
24 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:Alaska
25 Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial
26 Fisheries.

27
28 MR. RINALDI: This is Todd Rinaldi.
29 I'm with the Division of Wildlife Conservation out of
30 Region 4 based in Palmer.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Anyone else need to
33 introduce themselves online.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, thank you
38 all for participating in our meeting this morning. The
39 last three day of our meeting will conclude on
40 Thursday. So welcome to our YK fall meeting.

41
42 We do on number 6 review and adopt the
43 agenda. On the agenda we do have review and approve
44 previous meeting minutes, reports, service awards,
45 public and tribal comment on non-agenda items each
46 morning, old business, a number of them. And under new
47 business we do have a number of action items. And you
48 could -- we'll go through each one of them. And under
49 12, additional reports. And on -- I think on the
50

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1 second day we do have Bureau of Land Management that'll
2 be calling in afternoon, but it'll be announced. And
3 also Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, time to
4 be certain on the 12th. And all the reports. And
5 lamprey eels on the 11th which is tomorrow. And we'll
6 also have U.S. Department of Interior that'll be
7 calling in and that time will be announced. And also
8 future meetings and closing comments and adjourn.

9

10 Is there any additions to our agenda
11 this morning or deletions.

12

13 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke.

16

17 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
18 did hear from Department of Interior and they should be
19 calling in on Thursday at 11:30, just before lunch.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you.

24

25 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

28

29 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30 Through the Chair. Can we add an item on here in
31 regards to an update on the caribou population herd for
32 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa.

37

38 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

41

42 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

43 Alissa, we will be getting an update under new business
44 from Department of Fish and Game about the Intensive
45 Management Program they've been doing for predator
46 control for the Mulchatna Herd. So perhaps we could
47 combine that under agenda item if that works.

48

49 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

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1 Through the Chair. I would accept that.

2

3 Thanks.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
6 Alissa. Any more additions or deletions to our agenda.

7

8 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to
9 move to accept the agenda.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Motion on the
12 floor by Phillip Peter to accept the agenda with
13 additions. Do I hear a second.

14

15 MS. ROGERS: Second.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by Alissa. All
18 those in favor signify by saying aye.

19

20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oppose -- opposed say
23 nay.

24

25 (No opposing votes)

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motion
28 carries. We do have an agenda in front of us to
29 continue our meeting.

30

31 Next on the agenda is review and
32 approval of previous minutes and you could find them on
33 your booklet handout on Page 6. Is there any question
34 or comments to the previous meeting minutes of April 4
35 to 6, 2023.

36

37 MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, go ahead.

40

41 MR. ANDREW: On Page 7 on the top line
42 where it says Kwethluk, Inc., Nick Ayapan. I can
43 recall there was another participant, the name is
44 Father Martin Nicolai.

45

46 Quyana.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, John. So
49 noted.

50

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1 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

4

5 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can
6 we add Nadine into my name, Alissa Nadine Rogers. It
7 helps signify that it's me and not the other Alissa
8 Rogers from Bethel.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you,
13 Alissa. So noted. Any -- any more additions to the
14 agenda that's been motioned by Phillip Peter.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MS. ROGERS: Second.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by Alissa. All
21 those in favor signify by saying aye.

22

23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed say nay.

26

27 (No opposing votes)

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, the
30 motion carries. Moving on to our agenda on reports.
31 We have Council member reports. At this time I'll go
32 ahead and start from our right. So we could go ahead
33 and start with James. If you could start it off to
34 give our member reports.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MR. LANDLORD: Good morning. This is
39 James Landlord, I'm from Mountain Village. This summer
40 we were allowed to subsist, we fished for chum and we
41 used dipnets. There were a lot of people went out
42 fishing from my community, Mountain Village. We had
43 high water. There were people caught chums and we
44 caught quite a few. We're very grateful that we were
45 able to subsist. And we put away a lot of -- a lot of
46 fish, a lot of half dry which we half dry right away
47 and we hatch them for dinner as soon as we can. And
48 put away some dried fish. People were very glad that
49 we were able to subsist. Maybe we were subsist for
50

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1 about 25 years and so everybody was very -- just very
2 glad for fish. That was for the summer chums. The
3 fall chums didn't come in as in the past so we didn't
4 fish for fall chums. And for coho, didn't do that.

5
6 With the moose hunting season there
7 were also a lot of people that went out moose hunting,
8 caught their moose. But one big complaint I heard from
9 our community was there were a lot of non-residents
10 came in. First time they stayed in Mountain and from
11 there they went out hunting. We have a river called --
12 right behind Mountain Village, we call it the Clear
13 Water. And that is the first time we hear that antler
14 hunters were hunting in that -- in that area and a lot
15 of people were disappointed because we use that river
16 as a -- to hunt our moose. In the springtime we set
17 our nets, falltime we also set our nets. In wintertime
18 we (in Native) for pike, grayling and maybe trout. But
19 this summer the first time I hear complaints of antler
20 hunters were hunting there on -- because they don't
21 know our land allotments are not marked, we -- they're
22 not marked like in other -- in other communities. And
23 there were complaints that they were hunting in Native
24 land -- Native land allotments. They were
25 disappointed.

26
27 And we know that we don't have any
28 control over non-resident permits and that's done by
29 the State. So we -- but I think next time our
30 community maybe have to -- we learn from our mistake so
31 maybe in our tribal Council meeting I think we'll --
32 I'll try to put that on the agenda so the -- we have an
33 annual meeting coming up and maybe I can -- we can
34 bring that up that there were some complaints that we
35 heard.

36
37 I -- our community was very -- wanted
38 to say that they're very grateful for fishing this
39 summer. This fall the guys went out to setting nets on
40 the Yukon as well as other village -- other rivers down
41 -- down below Mountain and I heard that they were
42 catching a lot of whitefish. And they're also very --
43 they're spread out through the community of -- I know
44 we got -- we got some from our -- from my brother-in-
45 law and my wife and my family were real grateful for
46 whitefish because they're real -- they're real good to
47 make (in Native). They're real -- they're very good.

48
49 And there were a lot of salmonberries,
50

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1 a lot of people got their salmonberries from downriver
2 and even on the road, but there were not too many
3 blueberries this year. But a few got -- picked their
4 berries.

5

6 I think that's all I have.

7

8 Quyana.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, James.

11

12 Wassilly.

13

14 MR. ALEXIE: Good morning, everybody.

15 My name is Wassilly Alexie, I'm from Russian Mission.

16 I'm the tribal Council President for our tribe. And

17 I've been with the RAC for a couple years now.

18

19 And we -- to start off we had a pretty
20 hard spring because we got flooded out and pretty much
21 all the fish camps were wiped out. So there wasn't
22 very much people there. Since fishing finally opened
23 like James mentioned about the chum season, dipnets
24 only, there was very few people that got to go out
25 because they didn't have fish camps to dry their fish
26 with. So they had to struggle around to try to save or
27 put as much as they could and find a way to dry them.

28

29 Another thing is -- same thing what
30 James mentioned is moose hunting. We had a lot of
31 sport hunters that came from out of state, some of them
32 even brought their own boats out. And it was pretty
33 hard for us -- some people to go out because we're
34 competing with the sport hunters and they had their own
35 boats out there hunting on Native allotments,
36 corporation lands. So I think there's something that
37 we need to do about that. There's a couple times I
38 went out and I found a dead moose with no head on it.
39 There's a couple people that mentioned that too from
40 the lower Yukon that -- same thing they seen dead moose
41 with no head. And, you know, we're the ones that get
42 blamed for it because they think we're doing it. So
43 it's pretty getting pretty bad out there, but there's
44 -- I guess everybody had luck.

45

46 It's been pretty wet this summer
47 though, we had a lot of rain, hardly any sunshine. But
48 everybody made it through.

49

50

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1 That's all I have.

2

3 Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you Wassilly.

6

7 Norma.

8

9 MS. EVAN: Hi. My name is Norma Evan,
10 I'm from Marshall. Last year in our region we had no
11 berries at all, this year we're blessed with an
12 abundance of salmon berries, blue, red and
13 blackberries.

14

15 Due to the shut down we had in the
16 Kuskokwim Bay increased our numbers enough where only
17 summer chum in our region, lower Yukon. This year
18 there was an increase of whitefish a bunch. We're
19 setting nets and passed out to elders in our community.

20

21 This year locals have spoke about the
22 increase of bull moose more than last year in Marshall.

23

24 Every year since I was a little kid the
25 cranes came in the thousands on their yearly migration.
26 After Calista start drilling in Marshall there are less
27 cranes, seem like 75 loss. We don't even have
28 traditional area that we used to pick rhubarb, it's now
29 Calista's rock crushing quarry. And I think that
30 affect our community with Calista drilling, we can't
31 even go and pick berries there where we did for years.
32 The road is usually closed until nighttime. They work
33 all day until nighttime and now we're having to go by
34 boat or further from our community for berries. And
35 this year we just see an increase with Renfro coming
36 and bringing out of state hunters into our region.

37

38 That's my report for Marshall.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma.

43

44 Walter.

45

46 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, good morning. My
47 name is Walter Morgan and I go back and forth to
48 Aniak/Kalskag area. I pretty much grew up there. But
49 this summer's been good. I'm in several different

50

0017

1 Boards in the InterTribal Fish Commission and, you
2 know, we manage our river and first start of the year
3 and we've been seeing good things happen, you know,
4 with that front end closure. I know, you know, it was
5 hard the first time to go in a front end closure and,
6 you know, not fish when the fish are running by and we
7 call them those -- we call them the upriver fish. I'm
8 sure Mr. Peter know the correct name for that, but, you
9 know, they're fatter and so we let them go by. And,
10 you know, we sacrifice. And I see a lot of good things
11 happen now, you know, since we did that. And, you
12 know, we -- we're selling the State that we can manage
13 our river and we did, you know, and we're still doing
14 it. And I'm proud of that. So, you know, we're
15 experts in our own river, that's what I say. But, you
16 know, I'm new to this organization, but I know a lot of
17 these people, you know, they know my folks.

18
19 But fishing's been really good this
20 summer, the best I've seen in a long time. We -- we
21 get bigger kings this year, the reds were coming in
22 good, you know, finally see chum salmon because last
23 year we didn't see anything. And the silvers were low
24 last year also and it was good this year. So we had a
25 lot of pluses and good things happening around Kalskag
26 I was glad to see.

27
28 But there was a lot of berries, we had
29 a lot of blueberries. Boy, Whitefish Lake you couldn't
30 even walk there was so many berries. We had a lot of
31 abundance of salmon, red, black.

32
33 I mean, I noticed in the first part of
34 the year the river was high and now it dropped, it's
35 way down now. I don't know if that's going to affect
36 the spawning of the salmon. So that's one of my
37 concerns is I noticed the river really dropped.

38
39 And it's good to see all of you and
40 that's my report.

41
42 Thank you.

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Walter.

45
46 Alissa.

47
48 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
49 Through the Chair. (In Native). I've been on the
50

0018

1 Board for six, going on seven years. This was almost
2 our fourth year that we went without having full
3 freezers and this is the first year we actually have
4 full freezers. I'm so grateful that we were able to
5 get our abundance of moose, fish, birds and berries and
6 greens. My heart is very overwhelmed with Joy this
7 year because it was a struggle and people don't know
8 what struggle is until you really have to struggle. My
9 grandparents and elders used to tell me when things are
10 plentiful and are very abundant in those years you have
11 to prepare and gather as much as you can during those
12 years to support what's going to happen in the near
13 coming future. So for my family to actually fill both
14 our freezers this year, it's going to have to last us a
15 while and to be prepared for times that are going to be
16 tough that are coming. And I do need to hear my
17 elders' voices when knowing that just within this year
18 we were able to fill our freezers.

19

20 The weather wasn't that great this year
21 for our area in the Kuskokwim. It didn't help our
22 garden at all. We -- our garden actually did the worst
23 it ever has on record from the time that we started our
24 garden. It only produced 20 percent of its normal
25 yield and our potatoes were super small. And usually
26 we'd get roughly maybe 50 gallons worth of potatoes and
27 this year we only got 10 to 15 of potatoes.

28

29 My fishing was much the same as Mr.
30 Morgan's report of how fishing went this summer. I did
31 hear feedback from people that fishing was difficult
32 because people have to go on these back to back to back
33 to back to back to back to back fishing openers where
34 you had one day open then close, then open, then close,
35 then open. And it was rough on people who are trying
36 to go fishing and it was rough on people who had jobs,
37 it was rough on people who couldn't go fishing. It
38 didn't give an adequate opportunity for folks to go
39 fishing and there was complaints about how it was being
40 managed, that if they asked that it could be more
41 thoroughly thought out and managed better than what was
42 done to be -- instead of giving advance notices of
43 fishing in such early notifications, it did not give
44 time for people to be aware of how the fishing was
45 going to be. People went out fishing, they fished hard
46 and they got nothing. Then you wouldn't have people
47 later on when the fish actually did arrive and they
48 couldn't go fishing. So I think we need to reconsider
49 how that's being managed.

50

0019

1 And another thing was organizations who
2 collect subsistence data for the fisheries management
3 were struggling to keep up because they were putting in
4 anywhere from 16 to 18 hours each opener. And I can
5 attest to that, that my ONC crew worked throughout the
6 whole entire opening and then after they collected the
7 data it was me and my data crew who stayed up hours on
8 top of hours and putting in anywhere from 18 to 24 hour
9 work periods just to get to those openers. So I would
10 like not only the Fish Commission to work with --
11 thinking about the people, but also thinking about the
12 organizations that collect your data for you because
13 you got to think about how much work is put in to take
14 care of people who are working under you in order for
15 us to get our numbers that we need.

16
17 There was lots of geese this year, a
18 lot of little -- little bird geese that survived this
19 year. And a lot of -- a lot of ducks. Not as many
20 spooners that we normally see and there also wasn't as
21 many swans.

22
23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24
25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa.

26
27 John.

28
29 MR. ANDREW: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
30 Chair. Quyana. Starting this spring we had a pretty
31 rough year early part of the year like in May, middle
32 of May to early June. My area was flooded out, we were
33 under water for over three weeks and we had to wait for
34 a long while before our fish camps could dry out, we
35 couldn't move out until then. Some of them were too
36 muddy and too -- so we couldn't utilize our fish camp.
37 Only the ones that had their fish camps on high --
38 higher grounds did pretty good. But the thing was our
39 water level was pretty high for a long, long time.

40
41 The first openers, subsistence openers
42 were always too early in the season. When the water is
43 too high we have trouble using our set nets as too much
44 debris, too deep and I don't know sometimes we were
45 forced to go back to Kwethluk, yeah. And the trip to
46 the lakes to go for -- target pike and whitefish. It's
47 -- for some people that are -- that used -- they're not
48 used to fishing on the main stem, they had trouble
49 catching. But you have to watch the tides and incoming
50

0020

1 tide and try to time the run, the runs coming up.
2 People that just go out there, some of them did good on
3 reds. I never had a chance to go out in May and June
4 even in July because one of my grandnephews borrowed my
5 fishing boat. At least they gave me their dried fish
6 when they got done. And, you know, I've lived there
7 for a long while, I never did go out anywhere, but I
8 did go after silvers a few times. All my fish end up
9 to my neighbors and to my relatives and they were
10 pretty happy. Like others before me we have -- we have
11 -- we're all in the same boat.

12
13 Berry season was great. The people
14 that went and got -- my grandnephews got -- they went
15 out one afternoon, they got -- got about 30 gallons up
16 on the river. Because normally in other years they
17 hardly get any for a day's worth of gathering.

18
19 And on moose season all of September
20 and into early October the water was too high, they
21 forced the moose to move further back to the higher
22 grounds and hills. Some that were lucky they were
23 catching mostly young bulls, not -- not too many big
24 ones.

25
26 And there was some complaints of big
27 jet boats coming from elsewhere and some of the --
28 there were people -- planes flying and hunting,
29 probably landing on those lakes back there up -- up in
30 the upper hills. And they were complaining that when
31 there's too many jet boats they force most of the moose
32 off the river -- out of the river corridors.

33
34 I can go on, but it -- most of the ones
35 I got to think about. My neighbors on the right over
36 here for bringing them out.

37
38 Quayana.

39
40 Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, John.

43
44 Richard.

45
46 MR. SLATS: Quayana, Mr. Chair.

47
48 (In Native)

49
50

0021

1 INTERPRETER: I'm (in Native) from
2 Chevak. And (in Native) are my grand -- grandparents.
3 My ancestors are (in Native) and I'm (in Native).

4
5 MR. SLATS: I -- my given my name is
6 Richard Slats. I'm now a -- the first chief for the
7 Chevak Native Village. I've been a member of this
8 Subsistence Advisory Council for between five and six
9 years, something like that. And I had -- the past few
10 years I've been member four of the North Pacific
11 Fishery Management Council, local and traditional
12 knowledge integrating those two into the North Pacific
13 Management Council. I have to throw this on. The
14 North Pacific Fishery Management Council is here in
15 town so get a chance to go down there and support the
16 fish task force protocols and recommendations. And
17 then if you're here go down there. I went down there,
18 but I was being followed around by the bellhop.....

19
20 (Laughter)

21
22 MR. SLATS:and like and then I
23 realized why he's doing that. It was because -- well,
24 it's -- you know, they do that. And I fit the profile,
25 you know, just getting off a plane and looking -- you
26 know, just getting off the plane, didn't change or
27 anything, just went straight there, but then that was
28 going on.

29
30 We -- last time we -- I see all the --
31 all of our group we had that Merbok, those big high
32 winds, the tail end of the typhoon. My people lost all
33 of their fish camps, all our rivers. And they -- we've
34 been restricted because of the trash that's going on a
35 hundred miles from our rivers. And so we kind of --
36 you know, like we come to these things, we have our own
37 agenda and we want to add this and to make a plea about
38 what's going on in our immediate area, but then we
39 hardly ever seem to get a chance to do that. And so
40 but see I just wanted to point out that like what
41 everybody's saying it looks like we're doing good, but
42 then we're -- there's people that are out there going
43 through hardship. And being restricted and things like
44 that. And we're the ones that are out there and we're
45 not going to move, we're there to stay. Whatever fish
46 that we're able to catch, we hang them out to dry, we
47 hang them, but then it's been a wet and a damp summer,
48 you know, really thick mists and then it's almost
49 always drizzling and then -- you know, and then we get
50

0022

1 these really big high winds. Merbok was kind of like a
2 blessing in disguise because it brought in -- brought
3 up all of the driftwood right up to our -- foot of our
4 hills. So, you know, so that, you know, we don't have
5 to go down to the coast to get our firewood.

6
7 And then what those people were saying
8 before me is that I -- I'm a member of the Bering Sea
9 Elders Group, we travelled here for a meeting in
10 September. As soon as I got off the plane in Grant
11 Aviation there's people that are -- you know, off that
12 small ramp when we're waiting for our bags to run over
13 to Alaska Airlines, there were moose antlers, you know,
14 moose antlers without any boxes around them. You know
15 how we are, we shoot a moose, we're trying to transport
16 it or take it anywhere we have to -- you know, it's
17 just so -- it's -- that's all I seen was just moose
18 antlers without the meat. We seen that in Grant and
19 then I went over to Alaska Airlines to check in. Again
20 there's people checking their antlers in without any
21 other -- any other boxes to check in, you know, like
22 their -- it looked -- for a villager it looked like --
23 a lot like they're not bringing -- they're not bringing
24 the meat. And so, you know, at the Alaska Airline
25 terminal and then I've been -- I was here for a couple,
26 few days, I'm trying to mail home some stuff. So I
27 brought, you know, something that I bought here in
28 Anchorage, I brought it to Everts Air, there again just
29 moose antlers. So that whole transport, you know, I
30 could have start counting and then just to see, you
31 know, but that's the point I'm trying to make is that
32 it looks like in our meeting packet there's our numbers
33 that are being caught and being recorded for
34 subsistence people. But where are the numbers for the
35 people that are bringing home the antlers, you know.
36 So that's something that I wanted to, you know, saying
37 that they're -- somebody should be counting them too.

38
39 And then forever I'm always here
40 because of the trawling, you know, deep sea trawling.
41 I went to the Bering Sea Elders Group, we got some
42 really high numbers of fish that's just being caught or
43 being -- getting caught. Trawling is, you know, like
44 dragging a big fish trap underneath at the bottom and
45 then the bottom of the ocean and the coral is dragging
46 and then, you know, we -- the Bering Sea we only get
47 three months out of a year of sunlight if we ever get
48 any because it's not direct sunlight. It's just
49 anything that gets, you know, like scraped on the
50

0023

1 bottom of the ocean, take years to grow back. So that
2 could be one of the contributors because of the fish
3 not eating. And so there's these things that we come
4 to these things with a lot of questions and then more
5 times than not we go home with more questions.

6
7 So I'd like to -- I want to -- it's
8 good to see everyone, it's always good to see groups.
9 I just, you know, been coming to these things, making
10 me feel good because it just -- you know, we're --
11 they're going through hardships and so -- so are we.
12 And I'm here to roll up my sleeves and go to work. I
13 appreciate everybody that's being here and I -- it's
14 good to see everybody.

15
16 Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard.

19
20 Jackie.

21
22 MS. CLEVELAND: (In Native), everyone.
23 (In Native).

24
25 INTERPRETER: I'm (in Native) in
26 Quinhagak. I am sisters with (in Native) and we move
27 to Quinhagak. And I'm -- and I move there.

28
29 MS. CLEVELAND: So I'm (in Native) in
30 Yup'ik from Quinhagak. My family originally came from
31 (in Native) and moved to Quinhagak in the late '60s,
32 but I don't know how to say late '60s in Yup'ik. So if
33 I can read my notes I'll start from the most recent.

34
35 Right now Quinhagak is still hunting
36 for our moose. We're allowed to hunt until the 15th of
37 October on a special action request that was granted to
38 us last -- a couple of weeks ago I believe or a month
39 ago. I, myself even with this extension have not got a
40 moose yet. My uncle has got one, but, you know, when
41 you go hunting with others you split and then by the
42 time you split with our three homes -- either way we
43 still need one, but on our last week of hunting I'm
44 here.

45
46 People were filling tags and pretty
47 satisfied. But rafters were reported as being -- I
48 don't know, I guess I'll just use their words, a
49 nuisance to the hunting -- hunting time there. I
50

0024

1 believe currently there is like an honorary system
2 where we've asked outfits to leave for September to
3 honor our moose hunting month. And I think just little
4 by little I know at least rafters are still hunt -- or
5 rafters are still rafting into the middle of the month
6 and there has been some instances where it interrupted
7 hunting, scaring, you know, big game away right when
8 locals were about to get it. So that's been reported
9 to the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge so far. So
10 we'll see about that for next year.

11

12 We're seeing more lone Mulchatna
13 Caribou. Not in the numbers, not nearly in the numbers
14 like before of course, but it's nice to see them more
15 -- a little more of them. And that's mostly on the
16 Arolik River.

17

18 As far as fish go we had an eventual
19 year, Quinhagak had an eventful year. Some of you know
20 we had two proposals into Board of Fish, one was passed
21 which ended up being a special meeting from the
22 proposal that was last sent down. The other one did
23 not pass, but in the end they did close commercial
24 fishing either way or the State did.

25

26 Sport fish was there, they were
27 restricted to no chum and king within the Refuge and
28 then closed to chums for the rest of the waters.

29

30 And subsistence as usual we get a lot
31 of traffic in our bay when the Kuskokwim is closed.
32 And there are still reports of using more than one net
33 in our bay when we -- that proposal passed to just use
34 one net per boat. So because there's no enforcement
35 out there people are still using more than one net out
36 in our bay.

37

38 Overall it seemed as if we had just
39 more fish for all the species in general. These are
40 mostly coming from the words of, you know, my surveying
41 I do on the -- on the river itself, recreational users
42 and subsistence users. Although we have not come out
43 with our orders -- not a subsistence survey that was
44 done so I try to wait for those for a better report.

45

46 Oh, we had a quality control issue
47 although we had a lot more chum this year than the year
48 before and the year before that and a little bit more
49 kings and people were reporting to see more bigger
50

0025

1 kings which I didn't really see bigger kings, but other
2 people have been saying that. But the quality control
3 I think all across our region was moisture and rain and
4 it was especially bad for the fatter fish like the
5 kings would always get the mildew on top and we had to,
6 you know, wipe them off a bunch. And then ended up air
7 or open door smoking them in the smokehouse, not
8 outside.

9

10 Salmonberries were abundant,
11 blueberries, a little of the blackberries were in the
12 mountains this time not on the -- next to the ocean.
13 We've got both the (in Native) and (in Native) are some
14 of the other ones, med -- or edible plants we pick
15 throughout the summer. Next -- I mean, we're still
16 picking medicine plants now and next will be (in
17 Native) hunting.

18

19 We're still going -- there's a lot of
20 erosion happening along the river and the coast. This
21 was our second year not having access to our fish camp.
22 And then there was also bigger erosion that -- where we
23 lost our access to the gravel pit, but since then
24 there's been a temporary road. Okay, I've taken long
25 enough.

26

27 I did go on a Yukon trip this summer
28 for my work and I really just wanted to mention how
29 much more I appreciate the Yukon when before I felt as
30 though we were so distant geographically and, you know.
31 So I really did appreciate that, I interviewed 11
32 locals for indigenous knowledge around salmon, tried
33 dipnetting. But there -- you know, it wasn't all happy
34 of course, they had just had -- they were still
35 recovering from the flood at the time on top of, you
36 know, all the fish issues.

37

38 And just recently last week the deputy
39 for here and Crystal Leonetti the Native Liaison and
40 Stan calling from Togiak National Wildlife Refuge.
41 We're all in Quinhagak and we spent a few days together
42 there.

43

44 I'll stop here.

45

46 Thanks.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Jackie,
49 appreciate your report.

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0026

1 Mr. Phillip Peter.

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MR. PETER: My name is Phillip Peter from Akiachak. First of all I want to thank everybody to attend this meeting. And I really was excited to come to the meeting for this fish and wildlife.

And first of all about the spring we had the plentiful 2023 year. Plentiful year. We had my cousin, Phillip (ph) and I'm getting old and we don't go out to hunt for geese in spring. But in 2022 it was -- the Kuskokwim was drought, no -- no geese, only a few, but this year is plentiful year for the Kuskokwim. And plentiful geese, ducks and now I'm really grateful and I thank god for it. Those elders used to tell us a long time ago when -- you know, when they were alive they used to tell us when the -- when it's really plentiful food the starvation is coming close to us. I believe it. We had covid, the second one will be starvation is what the elders used to tell us.

And in summer coho -- I mean, chinooks, chums, salmon, chum salmon, sockeye, they're plentiful. Fourth opening, fourth opening I fill up my tote, mixed salmon. Eight hour -- eight hour opening, three and a half hours I fill up that tote with all kinds of salmon. And my wife tell me to quit, we quit. And there are -- and also I'm really grateful with the Department of Fish and Wildlife work with the InterTribal Fish Commission asking for special actions for the cohos.

My uncle used to tell me when I was young last year cohos were low. We all panic over it. They -- my uncle used to tell me not to worry about the cohos because when the cohos arrive it always rain, sometimes three weeks, almost a month. He used to tell me not to worry about those cohos, they disappear for quite a years. Quite a years, but this year when they arrive to the Kuskokwim I fish. Two drifts, I fill up that boat, real shiny, the six inch really big cohos, real shiny, really fat. That's what my uncle used to tell me, don't -- Phillip, don't panic.

You know, I was really happy, we meet with the -- we had the uniform meeting back at Tuluksak (in Native) and invited Commissioner to our meeting, the big boss. And we asked for special action for set netting the cohos. And that special action was, you

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1 know, Commissioner accept it for cohos. And we had no
2 closures for the cohos this year, we're set netting for
3 them. Cohos for some -- this -- you know, young men in
4 my community, in Unit 4 community they're raising dogs
5 for sport -- sport racing. In our community, the Kusko
6 300, 150 and now it's in the community sprint race.
7 And we had the meet to Unit 4 with the Commissioner, I
8 asked him about the special action request. I asked
9 him why are we always ask for special action request to
10 open up the subsistence fishing, you know. Our elders
11 don't ask, when they're alive they don't ask the
12 government about the special action request, they don't
13 beg for the government to open up the river. Those
14 fellows are really powerful and I respect them.

15

16 You know, and I through the resolution
17 of Tuluksak for set netting the Commissioner accepted
18 the Tuluksak resolution. That's why -- that's why we
19 -- just for cohos, just for cohos, right now we're set
20 netting for cohos only.

21

22 And moose were plentiful in the
23 Kuskokwim. And the citations for moose, I really
24 appreciated that no violations. No violations
25 including the what the -- in summer. I really
26 appreciated those community members following the
27 regulations of the Department.

28

29 And when we're at the meeting we
30 brought up the Magnuson-Stevens Act to reauthorize, to
31 look into it, look into this Magnuson-Stevens Act
32 reauthorize. And also we request -- and we also
33 discuss about the Area M. Area M. Those elders from
34 the Kuskokwim not to touch that Area M. Those salmons
35 they gather in that area where they go to -- when
36 they're going to the river and also for -- and also
37 tributary, they should go around in that Area M. They
38 call it the (in Native), a (in Native). And even
39 though -- even though we ask the State of Alaska to
40 stop commercial fishing in Area M and also bycatch, but
41 they didn't accept it as the State of Alaska. Even
42 though we hurt in our hearts, all of us, those salmons
43 they go up to Bristol Bay, Kuskokwim, Yukon, Norton
44 Sound. We need to work together with one mind. Also
45 powerful if we use our mind. One group together, all
46 56 villages group together maybe we could stop that
47 commercial fishing down there on Area M, also on
48 bycatch. If we work with the -- work with State and
49 Federal government, eye to eye. This needs to be
50

0028

1 fixed. This needs to be fixed. We follow the Fish and
2 Wildlife regulations with respect, by the State of
3 Alaska.

4

5 That's all, Mr. Chairman.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Phillip.

8

9 Henry.

10

11 MR. PARKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
12 morning to everyone. My name is Henry Parks, I'm from
13 the Native Village of Nunapitchuk, that's located
14 approximately 26 air miles from my village, they call
15 the tundra villages. Anyway I'll try and make my
16 report short, Mr. Chair.

17

18 From our last meeting we had a good --
19 well, in the past real good. This past spring we had a
20 really good spring, waterfowls coming back were plenty,
21 lots of eggs, which was good. And we had a good
22 summer, we had good fishing over there in Kuskokwim.
23 And I want to thank the Federal and State agencies for
24 giving us an opportunity to fish again this past
25 summer. And I hope down the road if it's god's will
26 again I look forward to -- you know, we look forward to
27 subsistence fish again. And I thank the Federal
28 agencies for letting us not fish on Sundays, you know,
29 thank you, because Sunday is a rest day. We -- you
30 know, we have to go to church and rest on that day, one
31 day. Anyway we had a good summer like I said. We did
32 harvest salmons and they were plentiful, returns were
33 pretty good this past summer.

34

35 Salmonberries were here and there which
36 were good to us to -- for us to gather salmonberries.
37 And I want to get back to what Alissa stated earlier
38 that when some -- something -- some are plentiful like
39 whether they're plant, berries, wild game, fish, that
40 we -- our elders used to say he -- he brought it up
41 too, that's when something's going to happen down the
42 road, who knows it can be unexpectedly be on our path.
43 So that's what our elders used to say. So right now we
44 did have plenty -- we're still going on right now, we
45 do have a lot of whitefish back home, even seals, young
46 bearded seals are really plentiful, it's really
47 surprising for me back home. In -- in our area of the
48 Kuskokwim River there's a lot of beard -- young bearded
49 seals and people are hunting all down -- downriver,

50

0029

1 even in our rivers they do catch -- they still catch
2 beard -- young bearded seals right now and they got
3 really good seal oil. Plus they got really good meat
4 too.

5
6 So people are -- weren't complaining
7 about fishing, but then some were complaining that the
8 chum at 6:00 a.m. is still too early for us, you know,
9 especially from the tundra villages kind of. We have
10 to go all the way down from my village up about 50
11 miles downriver. So we know of course to go fishing we
12 have to prep -- prepare like 4:00 a.m., you know.
13 During summer days, daylight hours are so long and some
14 of our kids, grandkids, they like to play out that late
15 and come home late because there's still daylight out
16 there. So it give us especially like us old elders, it
17 takes of course to prepare like get up in the morning,
18 early in the morning, get our stuff ready and head down
19 by boat and that's a long ways to reach our fishing
20 grounds in the Kuskokwim River. We -- we have to go
21 all the way down below mouth of Johnson. So hopefully
22 if the times are changed like to 9:00 a.m. I would
23 really be satisfied.

24
25 But anyway yeah, we had a good summer
26 and right now like I said everyone, mostly everyone,
27 back home I hope, their freezers are filled up. Like
28 my freezers are filled up right now, I got three -- a
29 total of three freezers and they're all filled up
30 because who knows down the road there might be a famine
31 coming on or something unexpected.

32
33 Quyana, Mr. Chair.

34
35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Henry,
36 appreciate your report. We also Robert Hoffman online,
37 if you want to give your report.

38
39 MR. HOFFMAN: Sure. Can you hear me?

40
41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes.

42
43 MR. HOFFMAN: Okay. I just want to let
44 (indiscernible - distortion) Mr. Chairman. I just
45 wanted to make a short statement that we can end the
46 hunting. As you well know the regulators are the State
47 of Alaska, they have the job of assuring escapement and
48 we are regulated by that escapement count by the State
49 of Alaska. If we -- if we -- if we -- I wish we had a
50

0030

1 way because of the (indiscernible - distortion). We
2 in our region depend -- depend on the Yukon, depend on
3 the fishing resources that go by and allow the State to
4 count. And if they're abundant they use that
5 escapement count to allow us or disallow us to fish for
6 subsistence. And I look in the book, the dictionary,
7 and subsistence says a time to gather for the hard
8 times that may come during the winter. And it's sad --
9 it's sad to say that we're the only ones in the entire
10 region that don't get to verify the regulators count.
11 Not -- not to be -- to make any bad things, we would
12 just like to verify the State's count of escapement in
13 the fish. Someday maybe I hope the Federal government
14 will permit us to do that, to verify because we, the
15 whole Kuskokwim and Yukon are like you heard on the
16 radio, we're just grateful to get what we got this
17 year.

18
19 As far as the moose hunting we're even
20 regulated there. They do all the county and they tell
21 us when and where and how long we're going to hunt.
22 This year, the first -- they gave us -- the Kuskokwim
23 gave us up to Unit -- District 2, eight days, eight
24 days from the 1st of November to the 8th. And there's
25 a lot of people that were kind of discouraged about
26 that because we feel that is a little too early. If we
27 had the say so which we haven't had and we don't have,
28 we'd like to move it to a little later in the year --
29 later in the month when there's better weather and the
30 moose start moving along a little bit more. This year
31 we were hunting in that part of August, the rainy
32 season from 1 to the 8th and it was -- it was
33 successful for many hunters and I'm glad for that.

34
35 As you well know in our region we have
36 the highest cost of living and the highest gas costs in
37 the region along the -- our area. And people can't go
38 very far to go subsist in the moose hunt. So I wish we
39 could just have a little say so in the matter of either
40 extending the moose hunt or moving it a little past
41 into September and then give us the eight days if
42 that's all they're going to give us.

43
44 I feel said about what I used to hear
45 about the elders having the knowledge and everything in
46 there. And it saddens me to hear nothing from the
47 elders way of life. We were told that the elders would
48 help make decisions about our subsistence, time of
49 hunt, what to hunt, everything, what to fish with and
50

0031

1 all that. And I haven't heard a thing about that.
2 elders' knowledge. I wish some day it will come back
3 and allow the elders and the State of Alaska to join --
4 to join their conversations, to make more healthier
5 region around here rather than just -- yeah, the
6 regulators telling us what to do all the time with no
7 verification of their counts. That's all we want is
8 just to verify their counts. That's all, no -- no bad
9 talk or anything, just to say that they were right or
10 no, they were wrong. That's all right.

11

12 Okay. That's all I got Mr. Chairman.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robert,
17 appreciate your report. For me, for the record my name
18 is Raymond Oney. My Yup'ik name is (in Native). I was
19 born and raised in Marshall which is about -- probably
20 about 50, 60 miles up the Yukon River. And I'm
21 currently living in Alakanuk, I've been living there
22 for the past 40 plus years, made my home there, raised
23 a family there, now I'm raising grandchildren there
24 now.

25

26 All reports that you're hearing here at
27 our YKRAC meeting are special people that come from
28 unique areas of the State of Alaska, both the Yukon and
29 Kuskokwim and coastal villages. We've lived there
30 since time immemorial. We've managed the resources
31 since time immemorial. That's the reason why you hear
32 about our elder stories. Our elder stories need to be
33 heard. Our elder stories need to be put on record for
34 you people that are managing the resources for our
35 people. You need to listen and you need to comply.
36 We've been here like I said since time immemorial and
37 we'll continue to be here, our children, our
38 grandchildren will be here.

39

40 What scares me the most is what I'm
41 seeing. I -- I've lived a semi nomadic lifestyle
42 since I was a young boy. And I was born in the
43 territorial days as many of you. And I lived a semi
44 nomadic lifestyle going from fish camp to fall camp to
45 winter camp. That was the way of life. Resources were
46 plentiful, fish were plentiful, salmon were plentiful.
47 It wasn't until we became a State things started to
48 dwindle. And here today as a majority of the people
49 that live in the villages depend on these resources to
50

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1 sustain their lives because that's the stories that
2 they heard that's been handed down. As you heard from
3 one of our elders here, if you have enough then you
4 stop or if you have too much then you share. Those are
5 the same words that we continue to hear and those are
6 some of the things that I'd like to see you start
7 tapping into, our traditional knowledge. It'll never
8 change, that's our way of life, it will always be that
9 way because that's who we are. The resources that we
10 depend on, that you people manage, are dwindling fast.

11

12 And now it's managing human resources
13 now for a little bit of fish that are supposed to be
14 coming into the spawning grounds. We'll always be
15 happy as you heard when we do get a little bit of fish
16 we're happy. Back then like I said our way of life
17 because that's how it's been. We had dog teams that we
18 had to fish for, they were part of our family, we had
19 to take care of them too because they took care of us.
20 Wherever we went our dog teams went. And I'm glad to
21 hear that dog teams are coming back to the village of
22 Kwethluk, that's probably one resource that will never
23 fail. And that's what we need to look into and start
24 learning about ourselves so we could start hearing
25 stories about our elders, what they've gone through and
26 why it's like this today.

27

28 The reason why I'm here today is
29 because our work is not done. Amounts needed for
30 subsistence is dwindling fast and yet we -- we've
31 identified some resources that contribute to the
32 declines of our salmon including environmental changes.
33 Those we cannot control, but those that are high sea
34 trawlers, interception, those we can control. And
35 that's the reason why we need to speak up, we need to
36 speak up amongst our people. Give rise to our people,
37 give rise to our elders because there's very few of
38 them left and we're just hearing what's been handed
39 down to those that want to tell that story. And we
40 have a lot of stories to tell and we need to tell that
41 story before -- before it's too late. Before it's too
42 late.

43

44 So I appreciate all you guys being here
45 at this meeting and I appreciate all your reports from
46 your areas. What little fish we got this summer, we
47 are happy. We'll all just be happy with every little
48 salmon that we got because depending on sheefish,
49 whitefish, pike, those we rely on during the winter
50

0033

1 months when -- when the salmon have gone by. As you
2 heard from one of the elders, summer is supposed to be
3 our busiest time of the year, to gather and put away
4 what we see coming in the winter. So keep that in
5 mind. Keep that in mind. Our work is never done and
6 it'll never be done until we are satisfied by everyone
7 at the table, that you heard from one of our elders.
8 If we're going to speak this, we need to speak with one
9 mind and we need to come to the table with solutions.
10 We -- we know what the problems are, we need solutions
11 to our answers.

12
13 As you heard infiltration of moose
14 hunters in our areas. As you know, we sacrificed for
15 that, putting a moratorium on that how many years ago.
16 We still need help. We still need help. We need to
17 find ways to control our resources in the area so that
18 we could be able to manage ourselves like what the Fish
19 Commission does for Kuskokwim and for the Yukon. We
20 need those experts to manage our own resources, we
21 cannot depend on outside resources, people,
22 organizations to put a thumb on us when we know what we
23 -- what we want as far as putting fish or moose or
24 resources in our freezer. So our work is never done.
25 It'll never be done until we're -- until we know for
26 sure everyone at the table comes out smiling.

27
28 So I appreciate you guys that are here,
29 appreciate all your reports, lot of good words that are
30 heard, sacrifice, experts in our own river.

31
32 Thank you. And we are the people that
33 are in the river and continue to live there. Who
34 better resources to tap into than those people that are
35 living -- living there, trying to get by with little
36 resources we have. So we need -- we need your help.
37 We need to start working together. So our work is
38 never done until we know for sure that we're all
39 satisfied on all avenues.

40
41 So again thank you for your reports,
42 thank you -- thank you for the work that you are doing
43 in your villages, continue to be stewards, continue to
44 be people that watch out for what's going on in your
45 area because things are changing. Things are changing.

46
47 So again thank you. I'll make my
48 report short too. So thank you again for being here at
49 the meeting, thank you for all your reports. Thank you
50

0034

1 very much.

2

3 At this time since our Council members
4 have reported I'll ask for maybe a 10 to 15 minute
5 break.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 (Off record)

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Attention,
everyone. I'll go ahead and call the meeting back to
order. The time now is 11:23 a.m. Continue with our
agenda. Our next agenda item is service awards. I'll
go ahead and turn this over to our Coordinator.

Brooke.

MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Helping me with this agenda item today is our Fisheries
Division Supervisor Scott Ayers. And I'll turn it over
to Scott now.

Thank you.

MR. AYERS: Thank you, Brooke. All
right. Council members, each of you volunteer on this
Council to represent users of fish and wildlife.

(Technical problems)

MR. AYERS: Thank you. Again for the
record my name is Scott Ayers and I do work here at OSM
and I'm the Fisheries Division Supervisor. And I'm
proud to be able to work on this particular item with
you all. So each of you volunteer on this Council to
represent users of fish and wildlife resources in your
communities and in your region. The time you give to
prepare for and attend these meetings is time spent
away from family, from jobs and from subsistence
activities as we've already heard today. We thank you
for dedicating your time to ensure that important
subsistence issues are addressed. We thank you for
sharing your local and indigenous knowledge, your
experience and your observations. They are invaluable
contributions to the Federal Subsistence Management
Program and we couldn't have this program without you.

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1 The Office of Subsistence Management
2 recognizes Council members for every five years served
3 on the Council. Today we're going to take a moment to
4 give recognition to four Council members for their time
5 spent volunteering here.

6
7 Our first award goes to one of our
8 Kuskokwim representatives, Mr. Phillip Peter, Sr., of
9 Akiachak in recognition of five years of service on the
10 Council.

11
12 (Applause)

13
14 MR. AYERS: Mr. Peters is a lifelong
15 subsistence user with extensive knowledge of regional
16 resources from a lifetime of hunting and fishing. In
17 the past Mr. Peter also commercial fished for salmon.
18 Mr. Peter works hard to pass on his knowledge to
19 younger generations and his elder -- as his elders
20 passed it on to him. Mr. Peter is a longtime leader in
21 his community and served as the First Chief for 40
22 years. He also served in other regional leadership
23 capacities having Chaired the local Fish and Game
24 Advisory Committee for many years and serving as a
25 Commissioner on the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish
26 Commission.

27
28 Mr. Peter, the Federal Subsistence
29 Management Program thanks you for your five years of
30 service on the Council and for the work you do for
31 subsistence users in the region.

32
33 (Applause)

34
35 MR. PETER: I'll say it in my own
36 Yup'ik language. I'm more comfortable.

37
38 INTERPRETER: First of all I am
39 thankful for this certificate. This is important for
40 us Yup'ik, our hunting is important. And to our
41 descendants here I talk about our hunting practices so
42 that it won't disappear. It's not easy, leaving my
43 wife, my children and my grandchildren to travel in
44 order to address our subsistence from this land here.
45 And the river is important, that's why we should have
46 one mind, not disparaging them on account of who they
47 are, but work together -- working together. That is
48 important. Everything on the earth is not too
49 difficult to overcome, but all of us helping each other
50

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1 like this, working together, the -- because the spirit
2 of the universe watches us. We should have our one
3 desire to be in one accord and fulfill it. That's
4 why we should work, all of us to everyone who is among
5 the many peoples of Alaska, let us work together in one
6 mind, helping each other.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 (Applause)

11

12 MR. AYERS: Thank you for that. Our
13 next award goes to one of our Yukon River
14 representatives. Mr. James Landlord of Mountain
15 Village in recognition of five years of service on the
16 Council.

17

18 (Applause)

19

20 MR. AYERS: Mr. Landlord grew up
21 subsistence fishing, hunting and trapping and is a
22 strong advocate for these traditional practices. He's
23 a longstanding leader in the community and region
24 having served as First Chief for over two decades. Mr.
25 Landlord has been extensively involved in fisheries
26 issues on the Yukon and regularly attends North Pacific
27 Fishery Management Council meetings to testify about
28 the importance of salmon to Yukon River residents. He
29 also has a long history of involvement in the Yukon
30 River InterTribal Watershed Council.

31

32 We understand that Mr. Landlord has
33 made a decision to step down from serving on the
34 Council and we want you to know how much we appreciate
35 your service and commitment to subsistence users during
36 your time as a member. You will be missed.

37

38 Mr. Landlord, the Federal Subsistence
39 Management Program thanks you for your five years of
40 service on the Council and for all the work you do for
41 subsistence users in your region.

42

43 (Applause)

44

45 MR. LANDLORD: I'll say a few words,
46 Mr. Chair. When I got selected to serve on this RAC I
47 -- I was surprised when I received a letter I think
48 that I was selected because the selections we -- it's
49 not here in Anchorage, it's up in offices up in D.C.

50

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1 So I was real surprised.

2

3

4 As a -- he said I attend a lot of
5 meetings and you mentioned Watershed Council. Back in
6 1997 we received a letter that there was going to be a
7 summit up in Galena. And we did try to -- we called
8 APA and asked if we could rebudget our grant from them,
9 that there's going to be a summit up in Galena and we
10 wanted to charter a plane up from the lower end of the
11 Yukon River. The -- they said yes, so we chartered a
12 -- this is in December. We had a three day meeting,
13 it's a new organization, never been done before and
14 gosh, oh, First Nations Yukon Territory were there, a
15 lot of people from upper Yukon, middle Yukon. They
16 gave very good speeches, some of them were loud,
17 inspiring us to try to keep our Yukon River clean. And
18 we developed our -- the preamble and it's still today.

18

19

20 So I also decided to step down from
21 there, Stan Sheppard was nominated. The last few years
22 I've been feeling a lot that I hit a wall, I just
23 couldn't attend any more meetings, I never stay home.
24 I see I got about nine grandchildren and even when I'm
25 traveling they ask their mom when is papa coming home,
26 where's papa. They call me papa. So I want to stay
27 home and even this morning when our last daughter,
28 she's in Bethel, all this time with the sonar. They
29 told her you're going to have a baby girl. And she
30 went to the hospital this morning because she thought
31 the baby was coming. Soon as she went in the hospital
32 10 minutes later she had a baby boy. She was just.....

33

34 (Laughter)

35

36 MR. LANDLORD: It really just surprised
37 everybody. It surprised everybody that the doctor say
38 you're going to have a baby girl.

39

40 (Laughter)

41

42 MR. LANDLORD: So we're glad that --
43 and I -- and I went back to -- I just even with the
44 tribal Council I think I -- because I just can't take
45 it any more, just I want to stay home. So I'm grateful
46 if I made a contribution to our -- in a RAC meeting.
47 And I really -- I really believe in our -- I'm grateful
48 for our way of life because I grew up on it. My dad
49 was a hunter, fisherman, trapper. Every spring we'd --

50

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1 he'd take us out to spring camp, get the muskrats and
2 fur because that's how he make the living. We'd come
3 back in the summertime to the Yukon River. He had a
4 brother-in-law and we had a boat, smoke -- smoke
5 signals really, that really worked.

6

7

(Laughter)

8

9

10 MR. LANDLORD: Anyway he'd go to the
11 south side, build a fire because smoke signaled
12 brother-in-law that we're here, we're ready to be
13 picked up. I don't know how long he did it, but he'd
14 come by and bring us back to a -- bring home to -- home
15 to Mountain Village. We'd stay a few -- few days and
16 he would go up to our spring camp -- no, summer camp,
17 our fish camp, and you'd just go with it all summer,
18 gather food. School time and falltime we'd come back.
19 And we had BIA school in that little one room, BIA
20 school and that's where all the grades were taught.
21 Our village wasn't very big back then so the teacher
22 had plenty of work. Anyway and I'm surprised, but I
23 maybe can thank the Federal Subsistence Board to
24 Chairing all them, but thank you for the recognition.

24

25

Quyana.

26

27

(Applause)

28

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34

(Applause)

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Mr. Slats, the Federal Subsistence
Program thanks you for your five years of service on

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1 the Council and for all the work you do for subsistence
2 users in your region.

3

4 (Applause)

5

6 MR. SLATS: Thank you. Just a couple
7 words. I -- you know, when we sign on to these things
8 it's all because of something we all believe in, how we
9 were raised and the life that we lead. And it's just
10 something that we're not going to give up. It's
11 something that was given to us by the creator and it's
12 -- I never did any of this for recognition. I would
13 have been here without -- or -- well, for per diem.

14

15 (Laughter)

16

17 MR. SLATS: But for -- you know, for
18 not -- no pay and these things because it's -- after
19 you come to these things for a couple of years you
20 develop a relationship with everybody that has that
21 same -- same theme, what's in their heart and the
22 hearts of people when you share that with them. And
23 then there's always that camaraderie, you know,
24 friendship. We develop our friendship too, that, you
25 know, these guys are -- become friends and we run into
26 each other and it's always good to see. And it's also
27 always good to see -- to be in the same room with this
28 group of people and the people that we work -- that we
29 work with. I appreciate your looking at me. I will
30 still get up and go to work tomorrow.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 (Applause)

35

36 MR. AYERS: Finally the last award we
37 have to present today is for a Yukon River
38 representative who was previously recognized for his
39 long term service on the Council via teleconference
40 during the covid-19 pandemic. We'd like to again
41 congratulate the Council Chair, Mr. Raymond Oney, for
42 reaching a major milestone of service. He has
43 volunteered on this Council for over 20 years.

44

45 (Applause)

46

47 MR. AYERS: Mr. Oney is from Alakanuk
48 and has lived in the region his entire life. Mr. Oney
49 was taught subsistence uses, customs and traditions by
50

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1 his parents and grandparents and continues to pass them
2 on to his children and grandchildren. Throughout his
3 life he has hunted wildlife and marine mammals,
4 trapped, fished and gathered plants and berries of all
5 kinds.

6
7 We have a special award to give Mr.
8 Oney today. This drawing was submitted as part of the
9 OSM children's art contest by Jathan Lyies of Tuluksak
10 which is in the YKD region. Jathan included in his
11 drawing a set net fisher person, a moose and an
12 airplane. The inscription reads, presented to Raymond
13 Oney in recognition of 20 years of service on the
14 Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory
15 Council and a lifetime of dedication to subsistence in
16 the region.

17
18 Mr. Oney, the Federal Subsistence
19 Management Program thanks you very much for your
20 service and for all the work you do for subsistence
21 users in your region.

22
23 (Applause)

24
25 MR. AYERS: Again thank you to all
26 those that we recognized today and everyone else here
27 for serving on this Council.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll say a few words
30 myself too. Thank you, appreciate the recognition.
31 Thank you for working with a bunch of good people that
32 are here that are advocating on our behalf, on your
33 behalf of why we're here. So thank you again. You
34 know, like I said earlier, our work is never done. Our
35 work is never done. Subsistence will always be our way
36 of life and that's one thing that the outside resource,
37 you need to understand where we come from. Because
38 this is who we are, we'll never change, we'll always be
39 this way.

40
41 And I accept this recognition on behalf
42 of my elders, elders that have gone before us that
43 served on this Board, elders that have gone and the
44 elders that are here with us today and also the young
45 ones that are following us behind. I think you for
46 your time and effort to sit down with us and to
47 advocate on behalf of the resources that we depend on
48 from our -- from our own back door. These are the
49 resources that we'd like to see continue for us and for
50

0041

1 our grandchildren and hopefully things that we are
2 facing today will eventually -- will come over. Like
3 we said, it's a matter of working together. I look
4 forward to that day. Probably not in my time, maybe in
5 my grandchildren's time. That tells me that we still
6 need work to do. So I can appreciation the
7 recognition.

8

9 2001 was the time that I first got on.
10 I was very -- probably the youngest one sitting amongst
11 the elders at that time. I was shy, I didn't know what
12 to say, but just listened to the elders because they're
13 the ones that were talking about concerns that they
14 have at that time. And we're still here today on their
15 behalf trying to find solutions to things that we're
16 working on. So continue your work, continue your
17 advocating on your behalf, continue to have a -- be
18 aware of your surroundings. Like the elders would say,
19 be aware. Be aware of your surroundings. So continue
20 that, continue to inspire other people to come and sit
21 on this Council because it's for our people, our people
22 that have lived here way before our time. So continue
23 to advocate on your behalf, continue to step up,
24 continue to advocate. So thank you again, appreciate
25 your support.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 (Applause)

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: At this time we'll go
32 ahead and take public and tribal comments on non-agenda
33 items at this time. At this time we have Alissa Nadine
34 Rogers.

35

36 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, through the
37 Chair. I am going to step down as a RAC member and
38 present myself as Orutsararmiut Native Council's
39 Natural Resources Director.

40

41 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Alissa.

44

45 MS. ROGERS: Good afternoon, Council of
46 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Advisory Council. I was
47 going to change and so it doesn't look like I'm me.
48 But it's okay and time saving I'll go ahead and make it
49 quick.

50

1 (In Native). I'm presenting
2 Orutsararmiut Native Council today in regards to our
3 Natural Resources Department. I'm currently their
4 Director. I've been working in that Department for 16
5 years, going on 17 years and I've recently just taken
6 the position as director in April. Before I left --
7 before then I was Acting Director.

8
9 So today I'm going to be presenting to
10 you two resolutions that came from Orutsararmiut Native
11 Council. The first one came from Councilman Sophie
12 Swope as a resolution to this Council, Regional
13 Advisory Council, to support a supplemental
14 environmental impact statement for the Donlin Gold
15 Project.

16
17 This is going to be an action item, Mr.
18 Chair.

19
20 Once I can get these printed out I'll
21 pass them around, but in -- I don't want to read the
22 whole thing because it's like two pages long, but to
23 summarize to support a supplemental environmental
24 impact statement for Donlin Gold Project. And the
25 Kuskokwim River and its respective tributaries provide
26 habitat for the -- at least 40 species of fish and is
27 vital natural resources with one of the largest
28 traditional customary fisheries providing over 50 of
29 the annual diet for the regional -- region's residents.

30
31 And whereas the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta
32 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council established under
33 authority, Title VIII of ANILCA, is tasked with
34 initiating, reviewing and evaluating proposals for
35 regulations, policies, management plans and any matters
36 that may impact subsistence uses of fish and wildlife
37 within the region.

38
39 And whereas despite legal concerns and
40 inadequacies remaining unresolved throughout the
41 permitting process -- process, excuse me, BLM granted
42 to ROD and ROW a lease for the natural gas pipeline
43 that would power the Donlin Mine.

44
45 And whereas BLM and its bureaus are
46 responsible for legally sufficiency and due process in
47 its insurance of projects ROD and association ROW
48 permit which must include NEPA and associated
49 regulations among others.

0043

1 Okay. I'm going to just skip all the
2 way down to the bottom. Be it resolved that the
3 Council shall strongly encourage the DOI, BLM and U.S.
4 Fish and Wildlife Service to engage in meaningful
5 consultations with Alaska Native tribes in accordance
6 with the Biden Administration 2021 Memorandum on Tribal
7 Consultation and Strengthening Nation to Nation
8 Relationships and to incorporate tribal concerns and
9 indigenous traditional and cultural environmental
10 knowledge into the agency's analysis, document and
11 final decision-making process.

12
13 That is the end of the first
14 resolution.

15
16 Now is the second resolution from
17 Orutsararmiut Native Council supporting the Alaska
18 Department of Fish and Game Mulchatna Caribou Predator
19 Control Program 22-28. This proposal is requesting
20 AVCP to also support the program and then forward this
21 request to AFN which is the Alaska Federation of
22 Natives. In this proposal it is to support the
23 Mulchatna Caribou Predator Program authorized in
24 regulations in Unit 9B, 17B, 17C, 18, 19A, 19B, in
25 accordance with the intensive management plans which
26 contain detailed information about the predator control
27 areas including graphic -- geographic areas that are
28 covered, background, status of wildlife populations in
29 question, objectives and management plans.

30
31 There -- 78 Native Council recognizes
32 that the Mulchatna Caribou Herd has closed to hunting
33 since fall of 2021. The population has declined to
34 12,000 from 200,000, declining by 96 percent since
35 1997. This herd used to support 4,770 food security
36 resources for Alaska communities yearly.

37
38 Now it therefore be resolved that we
39 authorize as Orutsararmiut Native Council the Alaska
40 Department of Fish and Game Mulchatna Caribou Herd
41 Predator Control Program. This proposal was taken up
42 by AVCP and they're also supporting it and forwarding
43 it onto AFN. And this would be another action item,
44 Mr. Chair.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 That concludes my presentation.

49
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0044

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa.
2 Yeah, Council, as you heard from Alissa, there's two
3 action items that she's requesting from this Council.
4 The first one is to support the supplemental EIS for
5 Donlin Gold Project and the other one is to support
6 ADF&G Predator Control Program. So there's two items
7 on the floor that the Council needs to consider at this
8 time.

9
10 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

11
12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

13
14 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. May
15 I resume my position?

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, you can.

18
19 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr.
20 Chair, would you like me to read the resolution and
21 headlines?

22
23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I believe since
24 this is an action item we do need to suspend the rules.
25 It's okay. Okay. So we could go ahead and take it up.

26
27 Go ahead, Alissa.

28
29 MS. ROGERS: I can't make the motion,
30 but I can read -- I can read the headline, but I can't
31 make the motion.

32
33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, at this time I'll
34 go ahead and have Alissa read the resolution title and
35 if we can get from the Council to motion.

36
37 MS. ROGERS: The first resolution, Mr.
38 Chair, reads, resolution number 23-09-17. A resolution
39 of the Orutsararmiut Native Council supporting the
40 Alaska Department of Fish and Game Mulchatna Caribou
41 Herd Predator Control Program 2022-2028 requesting AVCP
42 to also support the program and forward this request to
43 the Alaska Federation of Natives.

44
45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. Is
48 there a motion on the floor to accept the resolution,
49 resolution 23-09-17.

50

0045

1 MR. PETER: Mr. Chair, I'd like to make
2 a motion to accept that resolution.

3
4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Mr. Peter.
5 Motion on the floor by Phillip Peter to accept
6 resolution 23-09-17 to support supplement EIS for
7 Donlin Gold Project. Oh, sorry, my mistake. It's
8 support ADF&G Predator Control Program.

9
10 MR. ANDREW: Second.

11
12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Second by John.

13 Discussion.

14
15 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman.

16
17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Phillip.

18
19 MR. PETER: Is this a continuation for
20 predator control?

21
22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Any more
23 discussion on the resolution 20-09-17.

24
25 MR. ANDREW: Question.

26
27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: The question's been
28 called. Standby.

29
30 MS. McDAVID: I would just ask that the
31 Council have some discussion about why or why not you
32 would like to support this resolution.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any Council member wish
37 to comment at this time for the record.

38
39 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

42
43 MR. LANDLORD: I just have a question
44 on predators. Is that thing done now or by other
45 agencies?

46
47 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa.

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1 MS. ROGERS: Maybe we can call on
2 Patrick Jones with the State of Alaska to help answer
3 questions regarding the Mulchatna Caribou Herd.

4
5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah. Thank you,
6 Alissa. Patrick, I'll forward that question to you.

7
8 MR. JONES: I believe we also have Todd
9 on the line too.

10
11 REPORTER: Would you state your name,
12 please.

13
14 MR. JONES: Yeah. Patrick Jones,
15 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I'm the Area
16 Biologist in Bethel. And we conducted predator control
17 this spring in Units -- it was right where Unit 18, 19
18 and 17 all come together. We were in a really small
19 area, just happened to be the corner where all three
20 units come together is where the caribou are calving.
21 And we would like to continue predator control at least
22 two more seasons.

23
24 So I -- you guys probably saw all the
25 headlines in the newspapers this year, but we ended up
26 killing 99 bears and five wolves this effort -- in this
27 spring's effort to help the caribou calve. Most of
28 that action was in Unit 18 around Kisaralik Lake area.
29 But that's just where the caribou ended up calving this
30 year. The snow between 18 and 17 where they normally
31 calve was between deep and they got stuck on the 18
32 side.

33
34 But I would like -- yeah, the
35 Department would like your support to continue this,
36 this is an achievable project, it's just going to take
37 a couple years to do.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. Does
40 that answer your question, James.

41
42 MR. LANDLORD: Yes. Just 99 bears and
43 how many wolves?

44
45 MR. JONES: Through the Chair. We --
46 five wolves, sir.

47
48 MR. LANDLORD: All right. And this was
49 a motion to support what's going on for predator
50

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1 control?

2

3 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 Through the Chair. Yes, that's correct.

5

6 MR. LANDLORD: Okay.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any more discussion on

9 the resolution 23-09-17, Predator Control Program.

10

11 MR. SLATS: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard, go ahead.

14

15 MR. SLATS: I'd like to ask or follow
16 or I had some more questions about the same question
17 that Mr. Landlord had about this predator control. And
18 this is use of aerial -- aerial and the question -- you
19 know, use of aerial and then I understand this is
20 nothing against the resolution, Alissa, this is a
21 question that I have about -- well, I do have a problem
22 with if you're using aerial to scope or to find the
23 wolves that are predators and then if you're using
24 airplanes to shoot wolves. Are you shooting them off
25 of the plane or -- that -- that is my question because
26 I have a problem with that. I understand that there is
27 a need to control -- you know, to raise the Mulchatna
28 Caribou Herd and I -- but I also believe that wolves
29 may not be the only reason why their numbers have been
30 going down. It's also other factors like climate
31 change and, you know, lack of food and things like
32 this. But the question was if you're shooting them off
33 -- you know, from -- from -- from the air.

34

35 MR. JONES: Through the Chair. We were
36 using a helicopter to shoot as our platform. So we did
37 shoot the bears and the wolves from a helicopter and we
38 used airplanes to help us spot them. And we were doing
39 this -- we do it for a really narrow window of time,
40 we're doing it right when the caribou are actually
41 calving. So we're just trying to save those calves for
42 the first couple weeks of their life. We did mortality
43 studies on Mulchatna for years and years where we
44 caught baby -- newborn calves and most of those calves
45 are getting killed by predators in the first two weeks
46 of life. So we're just really trying to save those
47 calves for the first few weeks of life until they get
48 their legs under them. So it's just a -- it's a really
49 target area, and a really small area right around the

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1 calving grounds and it's just for a short period of
2 time when they're calving just to give those calves a
3 chance. Because it -- as everybody knows if we can't
4 protect the calves then that herd can't grow. So but
5 yeah, yeah, we were using helicopters.

6

7

MR. SLATS: Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I have one. Is
10 there any change of opening up like open season for
11 hunters to be able to help out, you know, for those
12 predators that you're targeting?

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MR. JONES: Yeah, so for predator
control programs to work and be effective it's been
shown that you have to remove 60 percent or more of the
predators at least three years in a row. So we've got
one year down where we probably removed 60 to 70
percent of the bears and half the wolves, but we need

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1 at least two more.

2

3

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Are those --
4 it's just the short amount of predators that you'll be
5 targeting, it's just a small -- small population?

6

7

MR. JONES: Yeah, Mr. Chair. So it's
8 -- because it's such a small area it is -- it is a
9 small percentage of the population. We did the math
10 and we figured it was about 2 percent of the bear
11 population at most. It's even less of the wolves.
12 It's just -- it's just the animals that are right there
13 in the predator control zone. So -- yeah.

14

15

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. Any
16 more questions or comments for Patrick at this time in
17 regards to the Predator Control Program?

18

19

Go ahead, Pat.

20

21

MR. JONES: So on your agenda actually
22 somebody else is going to speak to all this and, Todd,
23 I don't -- I don't know if you -- if he wants to fill
24 in any blanks I missed or not. But we have somebody
25 else on the agenda that was actually supposed to speak
26 to the Mulchatna plan.

27

28

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, we could -- we'll
29 wait until he makes his presentation. Okay. Do we
30 have any more questions, discussion on predator
31 control.

32

33

MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chair.

34

35

CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, go ahead.

36

37

MR. ANDREW: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
38 My name is John W. Andrew from Kewthluk. I'm familiar
39 with the program. Back in the early days, probably in
40 the territorial days, we had predator control when a
41 lot of people from Tuluksak and Johnson Creek, used to
42 go up there to spring camp up in the hills to go after
43 squirrels. At the same time they go after brown bears
44 and black bears if they can because they know how the
45 caribou in the early days too, in the days of the
46 reindeer industry. The bears -- bears all of a sudden
47 were the main predators up in the mountains when --
48 during the calving time. Recently the ones we seen in
49 our time at the peak of -- at the peak of the caribou

50

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1 that includes Mulchatna and the caribou combined
2 together were well over 230,000 at the -- at the most I
3 can remember. And some years during the winter we have
4 a lot of deep snow and during the winter it would rain
5 on them and freeze the ground solid. A lot -- a lot of
6 them died of mass starvation. And when they're in that
7 weak condition wolves prey on them, just kill them and
8 leave them. Because I remember one time I was guiding
9 some people in the tundra. We counted and -- we
10 followed one herd of wolves because those guys wanted
11 wolves and I didn't -- I just follow -- we guided them,
12 we found one after another, 18 caribou just killed and
13 none of them were eaten except the last -- the last
14 two. And those guys were -- hunted them and their eyes
15 are all (indiscernible - distortion) one caribou and go
16 home and they left them. I -- later on they told me
17 how the small pack of five wolves they -- they got two
18 of them, three got away in treeline.

19

20 And the thing is for justification we'd
21 like to see them get back to their number -- those high
22 numbers we used to see. But I don't think it'll be
23 obtainable because on a good cold year when the rivers
24 are pretty solid they're -- even though there's a lot
25 of snow coverage, they're not frozen. If they can paw
26 through that snow and eat they're not starving,
27 they're healthy. They're not stressed out by what
28 other predators are doing. And springtime's only time
29 they can do that during the calving season, it's only a
30 small percentage of the -- I know there used to be lot
31 of trappers that used to go after them, but most of
32 them are gone now. And trail -- the trail's are
33 dangerous up there because they don't freeze solid any
34 more the whole winter because half the time when it's
35 open up there some of them fall through the ice and
36 never get out of it. Same way with the moose.

37

38 Quayana, Mr. Chairman.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, John. Any
41 more discussion.

42

43 MR. MORGAN: Mr. Chair, I would like to
44 ask him, you know I did a lot of wolf hunting in my
45 life, I probably killed 70 wolves. But I notice when
46 we're heading up to the Horn Mountains there's a small
47 herd of caribou up there and they were calving. And I
48 notice even the eagles were getting them, the little
49 calves. Is there anything, you know, to help, you
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1 know, that population because the eagles are killing
2 them too.

3

4 So thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Walter.

7

8 MR. MORGAN: That was my question.

9

10 MR. JONES: Through the Chair. Yeah,
11 we witnessed golden eagles killing calves this spring,
12 there was a wolverine with a calf. But for predator
13 control it's bear and wolves is what the State has the
14 authority to do, to work with. So there's nothing to
15 do about those other animals. And all the bears that
16 we killed this year were on State land and with our
17 parameters they were all either actively eating caribou
18 or pursuing caribou. So we were only killing bears
19 that were actually mixing with the caribou. If the
20 bear was 10 miles away from the herd we left it alone.
21 So we were actively just target -- trying to target the
22 predators that were causing the problems. So.....

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James then Richard.

25

26 MR. LANDLORD: Yeah, when I first
27 became a RAC member I know they were talking about
28 wolves and bears. I think -- I think they were also
29 talking about caribou, trying to predator control. So
30 this is not a new issue. I remember two elders thought
31 -- that were there said we don't eat wolves so you're
32 -- they didn't have any, you know, pity on them. Sorry
33 about that, but that's -- he said we don't eat wolves,
34 but a lot of people eat caribou so -- hunt for caribou.
35 And there was a point of predator control. Even up in
36 our area on the Yukon we noticed that the -- as soon as
37 our moose were getting plentiful wolves start showing
38 up and the bears are showing up too. We never had too
39 many bears years ago. And this summer someone caught a
40 -- the head was huge. So they follow -- they follow
41 food, they're always hungry, they never stop eating.
42 Wolves -- some wolves kill just for the heck of it, you
43 know. I think they have to be controlled if you want
44 to increase your caribou and keep your moose continue
45 to thrive.

46

47 Quyana.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard, were you going

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1 to comment.

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MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 It -- those things that Mr. Landlord brings up, it was
5 some -- couple, three, four years ago that we were
6 bringing up the Mulchatna Caribou and at one time they
7 were plentiful and then there was a huge -- you know,
8 like a major decline. And then one of the things that
9 was brought up was brucellosis -- brucellosis, you
10 know, something that was brought up. And that was one
11 of the reasons why we were making recommendations for
12 closure on the Mulchatna Caribou Herd, but it's also
13 for safety of the users, you know. So I wonder if
14 brucellosis would ever be a factor for -- you know,
15 would it be a factor for their decline or.....

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Thank you.

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MR. JONES: Through the Chair, Mr.

Slats. You threw a lot in there so I'll -- so I'll
start with brucellosis. So every -- I think just about
every caribou in the State has brucellosis at some
detectable rate though for a couple year it was -- it
seemed like it was pretty high in the Mulchatna Herd.
Was that contributing to the low recruitment rates of
the calves because it does affect pregnancy, it will
make the cows abort the fetus early. It's one of the
-- one of the side effects of the disease. But the --

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1 I guess the short answer is we don't know. We don't
2 know if the disease was prevalent enough that it was
3 affecting the whole population or if it was just
4 something that we were -- that was new to us for
5 detecting it in this herd.

6
7 And then nutrition and range movements.
8 So in the '90s when the Mulchatna Herd was around
9 200,000 animals they had a huge range, I mean, it was
10 on the Holitna, it was over by Lake Iliamna, it was
11 coming over by Kalskag and Whitefish Lake and down to
12 Eek. And as it's declined over the year its range gets
13 smaller and smaller and smaller and so does its
14 movements. So its movements have actually changed
15 quite a lot in the last 20 some years. They're just --
16 you know, when I was a kid we used to hunt them in one
17 spot and they -- they haven't been there in a decade,
18 you know. So they -- where their movement patterns are
19 changing quite a lot though for the last -- for the
20 last decade they've really liked to -- in the
21 springtime they really like to go up to Kisaralik Lake
22 and shoot through the pass to Aniak Lake and then shoot
23 through the pass over to Unit 17. That little piece of
24 real estate seems really consistent, but if you look at
25 the whole map it's not very consistent. One of the --
26 one of our caribou research biologists said this is
27 like the 20th year of non-consecutive or non-normal
28 movement. So caribou always do what caribou do.

29
30 And then for nutrition -- so
31 nutrition's one of those things that's been batted
32 around in the headlines a lot and there's just no
33 foundation for it. The one proxy we have to judge
34 nutrition is pregnancy rates and calves and we're
35 having -- 85 to 90 percent of the cows are having
36 calves. So that would indicate to me that they're
37 actually in good shape, that's good nutrition. Those
38 are high pregnancy rates. So I -- so that's just a
39 false opinion that got -- took fire in the media.

40
41 Weather events with ice and rain. It
42 happens, it doesn't happen every year and there's
43 nothing we can do about. The weather is what the
44 weather is.

45
46 So we got to look at the factors that
47 we can. So we've cut back on things, there's no
48 hunting on caribou now. That's huge. We used to be
49 able to shoot five per person and we're down to zero.

50

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1 And we did that incrementally, we went five, three,
2 two, one and then we shut it down.

3

4

5 And the other thing we can do is
6 predator control for the calves to see if we can't get
7 those calves past their first couple weeks of life.
8 That's something we can do and where these caribou are
9 calving it's such a small area and it's wide open that
10 we can be effective at it. And I think we were really
11 effective this spring and if we just have more time I
12 think it'll show.

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So these are the things we can do and
at the end of the day that's the only thing we have to
work with.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you.

MR. JONES: And then I guess the last
question there is for bears and wolves, Mr. Chair. And
I think it's -- it's one brown bear per person in Unit
18. On the State side it's a Board of Game year also.
So on the State side there's a proposal to go to two
bears. We can support that biologically. The wolf
season's pretty long, it's pretty liberal. The wolf --
the hunting season's for 10 wolves, but the trapping
season's unlimited so you can trap as many wolves as
you want. So I don't know, I've never had anybody
shoot 10 wolves on a hunting license only. So I don't
know if increasing 10 to anything else would change
anything, but we could support that well too if that
was the Council's choice.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Jackie, go ahead.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
I had a question. So when you're conducting or when
you're in the air and shooting the predators that are
near the calves and where they're calving, is there a
lot of disturbance for them or what would you say the
level of disturbance is for the caribou and if it
affects like them -- do they move or do they just stay
there?

Thanks.

MR. JONES: So it was pretty
interesting. There was quite a bit of snow when we
showed up this year. And so we -- the caribou showed

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1 up and they were in the valley bottoms by the lakes.
2 And as we were working over the next few days they
3 started calving, we got there right as they started.
4 So normally there's a few calves and a couple days
5 later most of them all calve within like a three day
6 period. So we had some pretty big weather issues, we
7 were only able to fly like half the time this year that
8 we were supposed to be there, but when I was there we
9 saw a couple calves one day and we got back there I
10 think three days later and it was pretty clear over
11 that three day period most of them had calved. But
12 what all the cows had done is they climbed up into the
13 alpine, into the craziest looking sheep and goat rocks
14 you've ever seen, stuff I would need ropes and ice
15 cleats to climb, and they had their calf up there in
16 like two feet of snow. They were going into crazy
17 places and they were -- and they were doing that to
18 avoid the bears because the bears were pushing them out
19 of the valleys.

20
21 So we would -- obviously we had
22 collared animals that we were checking on every day
23 and, you know, we're not down there chasing the caribou
24 around, we're flying over pretty high just to see how
25 they're doing. So I don't think the disturbance from
26 our aircraft was anything at all, but it was pretty
27 clear when a predation event happened, when a bear got
28 in there, those animals moved miles overnight. So I
29 guess it depends on what event, the aircraft I don't
30 think we were doing anything, but obviously the bears
31 were really pushing them.

32
33 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks. And if I can
34 continue.

35
36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Jackie.

37
38 MS. CLEVELAND: I meant like the
39 disturbance from the gunshots as well.

40
41 Thanks.

42
43 MR. JONES: Oh, it -- I mean, we were
44 -- it was from a flying helicopter, I'm not even sure
45 they can hear the shotgun over the helicopter.

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47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. I
48 think -- I think we've got a good idea of how we want
49 to move forward with this. I think -- what is the wish
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1 of the Council at this time. We've motioned and
2 seconded, I mean, discuss and vote at this time. We
3 also have another presentation that's going to be
4 coming up later on today in regards to this Mulchatna
5 Herd. Do you wish to table this or take action now.

6

7 MR. PETER: Mr. Chair, I've got a
8 question here.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Phillip, go ahead.

11

12 MR. PETER: You -- I read about it in
13 Discovery newspaper and which unit mostly you kill a
14 bear, you kill the bear unit by unit and the wolves,
15 unit by unit?

16

17 MR. JONES: Through the Chair. I don't
18 have the numbers in front of me. I believe we killed
19 -- we killed all five wolves in Unit 18, our unit. I
20 believe we killed 60ish brown bears in our unit. We
21 killed a couple in 19 and the rest of them were in Unit
22 17. It's right where the three units come together.
23 So like -- so you could see all three units from one
24 place.

25

26 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

29

30 MR. LANDLORD: There was a motion made,
31 seconded and discussion. Is that later on, is it the
32 same subject item, predator control, a motion can be
33 delayed for later on?

34

35 MS. McDAVID: Yes, James. Todd Rinaldi
36 with Alaska Department of Fish and Game is planning to
37 call in when we do the wildlife reports under new
38 business. And it will be on the same topic, the
39 Intensive Management Program or predator control for
40 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. If the Council would like
41 to table this current motion until after receiving that
42 presentation we would just need a motion to table it
43 and a second for that. And then we could take it off
44 the table later.

45

46 MR. JONES: Mr. Chair.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Patrick, go ahead.

49

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1 MR. JONES: It sounds like -- it sounds
2 John Landsiedel, the Area Biologist in Dillingham's
3 online and he's ready to give that presentation if you
4 want to hear it now or later.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, we'll wait until
7 his time comes up.

8
9 MR. JONES: Okay.

10
11 MR. LANDLORD: Oh, Mr. Chair, is
12 there.....

13
14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James.

15
16 MR. LANDLORD:is there -- I mean,
17 Brooke, is there additional information we need before
18 we vote on -- sometime tomorrow or today?

19
20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I -- yeah, I'd
21 recommend that we hear what his presentation is in case
22 we might have missed anything from this -- from this
23 presentation.

24
25 MR. LANDLORD: Uh-huh.

26
27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I think it would be
28 appropriate that we table it until we hear that
29 presentation to give us a better understanding of some
30 things that we might be missing out on. So I'd
31 recommend we table it.

32
33 MR. LANDLORD: Okay. Definitely if
34 there's additional information later on on the caribou,
35 I mean, I can make a motion to table until tomorrow I
36 think.

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. There's a motion
39 on the floor by James Landlord to table resolution 23-
40 09-17 which is the Predator Control Program. Do I hear
41 a second.

42
43 MR. SLATS: Second. This is Richard
44 Slats, I second that.

45
46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Richard Slats
47 seconds the motion. Discussion. The discussion would
48 be to hear the other presenter make that presentation
49 on the predator control so that we could go ahead and
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0058

1 act on it then.

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MR. ANDREW: Question.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. The question's been called. All those in favor of tabling resolution 23-09-17 signify by saying aye.

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IN UNISON: AYE.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Opposed say nay.

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(No opposing votes)

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, motions carries. So we'll go ahead and table it until ADF&G makes their presentation.

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MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

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MS. ROGERS: For the record I need to abstain.

25

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: For the record Alissa abstains. Thank you.

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Okay. It's now 12:35, we could ahead and break for lunch, come back at -- make it an hour and a half lunch. I don't know what's.....

31

32

33

(Laughter)

34

35

CHAIRMAN ONEY:12:30.....

36

37

MS. McDAVID: Come back at 2:00.

38

39

40

CHAIRMAN ONEY:2:00 o'clock. Okay. 2:00 o'clock. Come back at 2:00 o'clock.

41

42

Thank you.

43

44

(Off record)

45

46

(On record)

47

48

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, good afternoon, everyone. We'll go ahead and get started on our

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0059

1 continuation of our meeting. The time now is 2:22 p.m.

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Before we get started I'd like to mention that we have a moment of silence for one of hometown lady that passed away this morning here at ANMC. If we could have maybe a moment of silence at this time before we get started.

Thank you.

(Moment of silence)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. And before we get started I'd like to see if Robert -- Robert Hoffman, are you with us this afternoon.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Robert, Robert Hoffman, are you there.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. We'll go ahead and get started. On the resolution this morning we could go ahead and wait until the ADF&G gives their report to make a final decision on the resolution 23-09-17. At this time I'll go ahead and ask that we go ahead and continue our public and tribal comment on non-agenda items. I believe we have Stanislaus Sheppard that wants to provide public comments.

Stanislaus Sheppard.

MR. SHEPPARD: Quyana, Mr. Chair, Board members. (In Native).

INTERPRETER: My Yup'ik name is (in Native) and I was born here in Mountain Village and I grew up on the Yukon. My mother, my father, my grandmother and her mother raised me how to -- about other cultures surrounding the hunting subsistence. Now they are gone. I remember those pieces of wisdom that we are supposed to use now. And so at some level I -- I speak from my hunting side. There is much for me to work, but the thing is my head. I'm speaking to you now from my heart inside about the -- about our culture, subsistence culture. It's getting worse and

0060

1 -- and these people come from outside. And I'm making
2 a struggle. I tell you the truth, I see it on the
3 Yukon and on the Kuskokwim, on the ocean. And I have
4 friends before they left to those areas, Fairbanks,
5 Nenana or to here.

6
7

8 Outside hunters up there in St. Mary's
9 at the airport. Those people are coming from different
10 areas only to -- only seeking the antlers, not the
11 meat, but the antlers. It is too much, some of us
12 would hunt in fear. Oh, my goodness. Some of those
13 outsiders may -- it's -- I brought that up earlier.
14 After I put in gas then I would travel down the river
15 from Mountain Village, I'm from that area because of
16 this important thing for us on the Yukon downriver from
17 -- not including St. Mary's, but down the river to
18 Alakanuk, and they didn't like that of course, whatever
19 it's called. We are gathered here to see if -- if
20 these caribous are harvested they will increase. These
21 people were (indiscernible - background noise) and
22 including us. Some of them would say to me who do you
23 think you are, why would you do that. I said it's not
24 only my experience. After we convened and brought that
25 up, me thinking of these villages so that the caribou
26 numbers would increase.

26
27

28 These outsiders from, you know, way
29 outside are coming to hunt moose only for their
30 antlers. That's not what we (indiscernible -
31 background noise). Only we elders and the -- and the
32 youth thinking of them and for their sake we closed
33 down that proposal in here including the fish and
34 wildlife, the Federal government liked it. And then we
35 -- and then we started it not long after in the summer.
36 We established that we must watch them carefully. And
37 so -- so many of these people, why are you thinking
38 like that. We want to hunt upriver in (indiscernible -
39 background noise) it's too far. Later the Fish and
40 Wildlife and Federal officers asked them.....

40
41

42 MR. SHEPPARD: I'm going to have to
43 break my English and Eskimo if you.....

43
44

(Laughter)

44
45

46 MR. SHEPPARD: Thank you.

46
47

48 INTERPRETER: I asked -- I said to him
49 and that's not too far. I asked him can we

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0061

1 (indiscernible - background noise) and they said yes.
2 The next year they raised the limit on us like that.
3 These young people learned that these -- that these
4 caribou are new in that area, I used to go -- travel
5 far away and I'm going even farther to the Athabascans
6 in those areas. And here Fish and Wildlife said there
7 are too many moose, too many caribou. The people from
8 out there want to come and hunt, but it's worse for us
9 now because I flew from St. Mary's airport, Lynden Air
10 Cargo so many pallets filled with -- filled with moose
11 antlers. And I went to (indiscernible - background
12 noise) they only think of the antlers, they keep them.
13 We knew that when they would go and they will throw
14 away the meat and take the antlers. The people said
15 that we want to stop that and the only thing they come
16 and they hunt for the -- the Athabascans would not --
17 after today said those things because we will start
18 doing that.....

19
20 MR. SHEPPARD: Sport hunters -- if we
21 don't look at it right then and bring the numbers down.

22
23 INTERPRETER: Some of them said this
24 cut their antlers.....

25
26 MR. SHEPPARD: They value the antlers.

27
28
29 INTERPRETER:some hunters after
30 they -- after they catch one they would take off the
31 flesh and leave the rest, only taking the meat. But
32 for us we think they're getting unmanageable today.
33 These (Indiscernible - background noise) people they
34 will think when they're a little older we will be like
35 those before, we catch -- if we catch the caribou only
36 taking the antlers and without taking the meat. We
37 can't learn that, but for us Yup'ik we don't take a
38 lot, only taking for our families one or two. That
39 they will be eaten.

40
41 And the other thing this is all kinds
42 of fish, different types of fish, all kinds of fish.
43 But the king salmon (indiscernible - background noise)
44 those species and people are thankful for this with
45 those dipnets. They didn't catch a lot, but a little
46 bit. You found out he drowned at Marshall, he -- he
47 drifted down and they found his body downriver 10 miles
48 away. And because of that they couldn't have any more
49 fish from the (indiscernible - background noise).

50

0062

1 After finding that they finally started catching a
2 little fish. It wasn't a lot, but my -- but my fish
3 rack would have a few (indiscernible - background
4 noise) and for half dried and full dried fish.

5
6 This Yup'ik wisdom for Yup'ik people
7 here on the Yukon in my village they say if I harvest
8 like this, they will return to the mountains next year.
9 That's our culture. I used to hunt in or I used to
10 hunt muskrats. And there would be so many and we would
11 travel and we would catch a lot. Only later after
12 several years (indiscernible - background noise) after
13 he stopped buying them we would stop going to get
14 those. The next year I looked to see that they were
15 gone. Elders, my grandmother used to tell me this, the
16 spirit of the universe watches us now. If I use it, it
17 will become more plentiful. It will disappear like
18 that.

19
20 MR. SHEPPARD: If we use this resource
21 the good lord will replace it by more.

22
23 MR. INTERPRETER: My grandma would say
24 that and you know that elders here will because we
25 used, now I -- is stuck in my mind because of that.
26 Even though I'm scared I stand up and speak thinking of
27 these elders and the little kids. I thought of that
28 because I had a young person with me, now it's going --
29 it's no longer in my village the people they have --
30 it's a bad thing that our culture's going to disappear.
31 We can't do that. We must stand up and speak and
32 finally use it to (indiscernible - background noise).
33 We must come together with one mind and it will come
34 true. And these Federal agencies will understand us.

35
36 Thank you very much.

37
38 If anyone has a question I will answer.

39
40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Stanislaus.
41 To continue with our meeting. Is there anyone online
42 that wants to comment on non-agenda items at this time,
43 anyone online.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If you want to comment
48 you could press star, six to unmute your phone.

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0063

1 (No comments)

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Once again do we have anyone online that would like to comment on public and tribal non-agenda items at this time. Press star, six.

MS. BROWN: Can you hear me? I do not have a comment on non-agenda items if you can hear me.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: I can hear you. Do you hear me?

MS. BROWN: Yes, it's a little faint, but I can hear you.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Are you going to comment.

MS. BROWN: No, I'm waiting for an agenda item. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. Hearing none, we could go ahead and move on with our agenda. Next on the agenda we have old business, a .805(c) report summary, Council Coordinator.

Brooke.

MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Council can find the cover letter for you .805(c) report in your supplemental binder. I think most of yours are black. It's under Tab number 1. And so for those Council members who are new or who might have forgot what the .805(c) report is because it's kind of a number that doesn't tell you much. That is a report that you get after every Federal Subsistence Board regulatory meeting and it tells you about how the Board voted on proposals in-line with your recommendations to the Board. So this year you don't actually have an .805(c) report because the Board voted in-line with everything that you recommended.

And so the last Board meeting was the Fisheries meeting and that was in January and February of this year. And at the last meeting we kind of went over those proposals. So it is a little bit of an old business item, but if anybody has any questions I could take them now.

0064

1 Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do you have any
4 questions or comments for Brooke at this time in
5 regards to .805(c) report summary.

6

7

(No comments)

8

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Once again is there any
10 questions or comments from the Council at this time
11 regarding the .805(c) report to the Federal Subsistence
12 Board.

13

14

(No comments)

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MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none.....

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MS. McDAVID: Oh, sorry.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, go ahead.

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MS. McDAVID: If I may just as a
reminder, there wasn't very many fishery proposals for
this region last time. The main one was one from
Chevak, Scammon and Hooper Bay that was hoping to get
the customary and traditional use of all the salmon
species recognized of Yukon salmon and that did pass.
So that was sort of the big one for this region just to
jog your memory a little bit because it was a while
ago.

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But yeah, if there's no other
questions.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you.
Moving on to Board work session summary.

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MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
We're jumping back to the meeting book now. There is a
summary -- a news release found on Page 20 of your
meeting book. And this just highlights some of the
actions that happened at the Federal Subsistence Board
work session this summer. And sort of the main items
that the Board did this summer was they reviewed your
annual reports and they approved the replies that are

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1 included and we'll go over the annual report in the
2 next or the annual report replies in the next agenda
3 item.

4
5 But at that meeting the Board also
6 reviewed the charter changes that you requested at the
7 last meeting. And if you recall this Council did
8 request to add a youth seat, a non-voting youth seat to
9 the Council. And so the Board forwarded that request
10 on to the Secretary because the Secretary's Office is
11 the one who ultimately makes those decisions. And so
12 we haven't heard back yet about that. The Board also
13 reviewed the applications for Council members and
14 passed on their recommendations to the Secretary. So
15 we expect to hear about the charters and the Council
16 appointments about the same time hopefully, usually by
17 the end of the year. So we'll hope to have an update
18 on that at the next meeting.

19
20 And I think that's it. I guess one
21 other thing is that as you all have raised to the Board
22 for the last several years some issues about salmon and
23 salmon management across jurisdictions. The Board has
24 heard that from -- from different Councils besides your
25 own and is hoping to speak more with the Secretary
26 about those issues. So that's something that you all
27 helped to push them to do so I just wanted to let you
28 know about that.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Brooke. Do
33 you have any questions or comments for Brooke at this
34 time in regards the Board work session summary.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, moving
39 on. We're down to Board FY2022 annual report replies
40 summary.

41
42 Brooke.

43
44 MS. McDAVID: Thanks again, Mr. Chair.
45 So if you turn over to Page 22 in your meeting books
46 you will see the Board replies to your annual report
47 topics. And maybe I could just read through the topics
48 real quick.....

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Uh-huh.

2

3 MS. McDAVID:to jog your memory
4 about what we included. And the first one was about
5 Kuskokwim River salmon management.

6

7 The second one was about typhoon Merbok
8 impacts to communities and subsistence. And we might
9 have someone from FEMA calling in on the last day of
10 the meeting to talk about that. It's still tentative.
11 If they're not able to make it this meeting we'll try
12 to get them at the next meeting. Topic three was about
13 the interception and bycatch of Alaska or Arctic Yukon
14 and Kuskokwim salmon in Area M and the Bering Sea. And
15 as you recall we also -- this Council also wrote a
16 letter to the Board asking the Board to forward that
17 issue on to the Secretary's Office which the Board did
18 or is in the process of doing. So we haven't gotten a
19 reply yet on that from the Secretary's Office.

20

21 Topic number 4 was about declines in
22 tomcod and halibut especially near Hooper Bay. And
23 they -- the Board directed us to some agencies that
24 might have more information on that that we could
25 perhaps request to present at future Council meetings.

26

27 Topic number 5 in your annual report
28 was competition between hatchery and wild salmon in the
29 Bering Sea and our Fisheries team included some good
30 information in there for you to review about hatchery
31 releases.

32

33 Topic number 6 was about Fukushima
34 radiation affects on salmon and other marine life. And
35 there is ongoing testing for radiation in seafood and
36 there hasn't been any detectable levels of concern.

37

38 Topic number 7 was about Arctic lamprey
39 declines and needed monitoring on the Yukon River. And
40 we will have some folks from ADF&G presenting about
41 Arctic lamprey and they'll be interested to hear what
42 you all have observed and if you have any
43 recommendations for research for lamprey.

44

45 Topic number 8 was about salmon fishing
46 in non-spawning streams of the Yukon. And you all were
47 hoping that it could be allowed like it is in
48 tributaries on the Kuskokwim that are non-spawning
49 streams. And there is at least one research project

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0067

1 that's put in for funding for -- as part of the
2 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program that's going to
3 try to do some surveys in some of those coastal rivers
4 where -- where we're not -- there just hasn't been good
5 documentation of whether or not salmon spawn in there.

6
7 Topic number 9 is about -- was to let
8 the Board know about increasing number of bears raiding
9 fish camps in the Kuskokwim region.

10
11 And topic number 10 was about increased
12 harvest pressure on whitefish during times of salmon
13 conservation and also concerns about impacts of four
14 inch mesh sizes.

15
16 Number 11 was about increasing northern
17 pike and declining trout numbers near Quinhagak.

18
19 And topic number 12 -- wow, you guys
20 had a lot of topics, was about Regional Advisory
21 Council member compensation. And that was another item
22 that the Council chose to write a letter to the Federal
23 Subsistence Board about and ask the Board to forward
24 that on the Secretary the request for compensation for
25 the time that you spend at meetings and representing
26 subsistence users and sharing your local and indigenous
27 knowledge. And the Board did -- is in the process of
28 forwarding that request to the Secretary. So again
29 hopefully at the next meeting we'll have a response for
30 you guys on that.

31
32 And then the last topic was topic 13
33 about Unit 18 mainland muskox. And if you recall the
34 Council did submit two Federal wildlife proposals for
35 mainland muskox, one for a customary and traditional
36 use determination and another to establish a possible
37 hunt in the future and we'll be going over those
38 proposals with a full analysis later in the meeting.

39
40 And also later in the meeting towards
41 the end we'll have an opportunity to identify new
42 topics for this year's annual report. So just keep
43 that in mind as we go throughout the meeting. So if
44 there are topics you want to flag for us to include in
45 the annual report keep a running list and we can bring
46 those up when we get to that agenda item.

47
48 That was all I had for an update on the
49 annual report replies, Mr. Chair. If the Council has
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0068

1 any questions I'd welcome them now.

2

3

Thank you.

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5

6

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you, Brooke. Do we have any questions or comments for Brooke at this time for any of the responses that we got for the annual report replies.

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10 (No comments)

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, we'll go on to the next agenda item which is summary of Council correspondence.

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Brooke.

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MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And this is the last old business update for me. I'll turn your attention to Tab 2 in your supplemental binders. And this is just -- we started including this just to keep track of all the different letters that the Council has sent and has received. And so after the last Council meeting as I just mentioned we sent two letters to the Federal Subsistence Board requesting them to elevate the issues of salmon bycatch and interception and cross boundary salmon management to the Secretary of Interior and Agriculture -- Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture and also a request for Council member compensation.

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We also sent a thank you letter to a retired OSM employee, Tom Kron, for his time or his service and dedication to subsistence users.

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We also drafted the joint Council letter about bycatch and the hard cap limits that you Council would like to see in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands groundfish fisheries. And you all had a chance to review that over email, we got some good feedback and made some changes and that letter is being presented this fall to the other Yukon Region Councils who have customary and traditional use of salmon on -- in the Yukon. And so Western Interior is meeting this week and will review it and Seward Peninsula will be meeting at the end of the month. And Eastern Interior actually reviewed it last week and they had one addition that they would be interested to add that I will run by you all for your comments if that's okay or

0069

1 for your feedback to see if it's something that you
2 would like to add. And a copy of that letter is in
3 this same tab, let's see here. So it's not really
4 numbered, but it's the one that some yellow
5 highlighting on it, it's addressed to the North Pacific
6 Fishery Management Council Chair. Kind of looks like
7 this.

8

9

10 So the suggestion that the Eastern
11 Interior Council had was -- you know, the Councils in
12 the last letter that you wrote requested for immediate
13 reductions in bycatch of both chinook and chum salmon.
14 And their suggestion was that perhaps in addition to
15 the reductions in bycatch you could also ask for a
16 reduction in the total allowable catch of the pollock
17 and the other groundfishes by 25 percent. And they
18 were thinking that it's just kind of another way at
19 getting at a reduction of bycatch since the bycatch
20 happens when they're fishing for pollock and other
21 groundfish that by actually reducing the number of
22 pollock that they were allowed to harvest by 25 percent
23 it could also reduce some of that bycatch in that
24 manner. And they were thinking maybe since you've been
25 asking for reductions in bycatch hard caps and it
26 hasn't happened that it's just another way of asking
27 for some sort of reduction.

28

29

30 So that was their suggestion and I'll
31 turn it over to you, Mr. Chair, if you all want to
32 weigh in if you think that's a reasonable addition to
33 the letter or they also suggested that if you want to
34 leave the letter as is perhaps at the All Council
35 meeting folks from the different regions could get
36 together and strategize some more about this. So that
37 -- that was the only comment we've gotten so far on the
38 joint Council letter to the North Pacific Fishery
39 Management Council.

40

41

Thank you.

42

43

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Brooke.
What is the wish of the Council at this time.

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MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

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MS. ROGERS: I appreciate having input
from other Councils and possibly adding to the current

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0070

1 written letter. The only problem I'm facing once I --
2 is if we end up adding something in there that we
3 already know they're going to shoot down it's only
4 going to decrease the value of our letter. We don't
5 want to have letters that -- that would be another
6 letter to write, not add into this one because you
7 don't want to decrease the value and the strength and
8 the potency of a letter by putting information that you
9 know is already going to be shot down. That's what I'm
10 worried about. It was a great, wonderful suggestion
11 which we could take up and create another letter. What
12 I had to do for ONC in regards to our proposals when we
13 were doing bycatch limiting, time limiting for Area M
14 is have to divide the two different types of aspects
15 that you're trying to get at because if one's shot --
16 one gets shot down there's still a chance the other one
17 will go forward.

18

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. Any
22 more comments from the Council.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Well, as for me I'll
27 comment on it. I think we address the -- tried to
28 reduce the bycatch of chum and chinook in the fisheries
29 and I think by adding the total allowable catch in the
30 pollock fishery hopefully will have an option for them
31 to consider. If they can't meet the reduction in chum
32 and chinook bycatch at least hopefully they'll be able
33 to consider the reduction in the pollock fishery. That
34 -- that's my thinking.

35

36 Anyone else want to comment.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
41 guess maybe it would be good to make the approval of
42 that addition in the form of a motion, that way we
43 could get a consensus from the whole Council if that's
44 something you think is okay to add or not. Either way
45 I think we'll still be able to -- we'll send the letter
46 either as written or with the addition and we can
47 always meet with those other Councils at the All
48 Council meeting to talk strategies about salmon.

49

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0071

1 So that would be my suggestion.

2

3 Thank you.

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5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. James, go ahead.

6

7 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, I think I agree
8 with the recommendation that we add to reduce pollock
9 fishery by 25 percent, added onto the letter by a
10 motion. Okay. I may that motion.

11

12 MS. CLEVELAND: Second.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Motion on the
15 floor by James to add the reduction by 25 percent to
16 the total allowable catch in the pollock fisheries. Am
17 I saying that right?

18

19 MS. McDAVID: Uh-huh.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Seconded by Jackie
22 Cleveland. Discussion. James, go ahead.

23

24 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, I attended the --
25 this last meeting North Pacific had here in Anchorage
26 and there was a lot of discussion on bycatch, chinook
27 and chum. So this -- all of the -- a lot of discussion
28 I just hope that they reduce some of the bycatch and it
29 was either chinook or chum.

30

31 That's just my comment.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, James. Any
34 more comments, discussion.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, call for
39 the question.

40

41 MR. LANDLORD: Call for question.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Motion's been
44 called for the question. All those in favor of the
45 added language signify by saying aye.

46

47 IN UNISON: Aye.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Those that oppose say

50

0072

1 nay.

2

3 IN UNISON: Nay.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We have one nay.

6 Motion carries. Okay. So we will add that to the
7 letter. Okay. Moving on.

8

9 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Alissa.

12

13 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 Through the Chair. Alissa Rogers. I wanted to put it
15 in a different letter because we need more information
16 about the pollock fishery and how that would impact the
17 request that we're putting forth. I feel like we
18 needed a representative here to explain and ask
19 questions in a letter format so we can get points. The
20 main points, the information and make it a very strong
21 position to include the pollock fishery because that
22 means not only are our people going to get affected,
23 but also CVRS.

24

25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa.
28 It's been voted on already. I'm sure when we get to
29 that point we could also address another letter if we
30 need to after hearing back from the other RAC Council.

31

32 Thank you, Alissa. Okay. Go ahead,
33 Brooke.

34

35 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 There's one other correspondence I wanted to bring to
37 your attention. And that is the Council -- it's the
38 last letter that's in Tab 2 in your meeting book and it
39 is a letter from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Regional
40 Director -- Alaska Regional Director Sara Boario. And
41 that was to notify the Council of a proposed land
42 exchange involving Izembek National Wildlife Refuge.
43 And we will have someone from Fish and Wildlife
44 presenting on that topic to the Council later in the
45 meeting and that will be an action item. So just to
46 let you know.

47

48 Thank you.

49

50

0073

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Moving on with
2 our agenda. We are down to special actions updates by
3 Kevin Foley, OSM Fisheries. You have the floor.

4
5 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Chairman Oney,
6 members of the Council. For the record my name is
7 Kevin Foley and I'm a Fish Biologist with the Office of
8 Subsistence Management. Today I'll present for you
9 four special action updates.

10
11 The first is a brief update on
12 fisheries temporary special action request, FSA23-01
13 found on Page 52 of your meeting booklet which was
14 submitted to OSM by the Native Village of Quinhagak and
15 requests the Federal Subsistence Board to close Federal
16 public waters of the Kanektok River to the harvest of
17 chinook and chum salmon by non-Federally-qualified
18 subsistence users -- I'm sorry, non-qualified users
19 during the month of June in 2023 and in 2024.

20
21 The request was approved with modification to
22 close the Federal public waters of the Kanektok
23 drainage to only harvests of chum salmon by non-
24 Federally-qualified subsistence users during June of
25 2023 and June of 2024. The modification did not
26 include chinook salmon.

27
28 That concludes the update on FSA23-01.
29 Are there any questions?

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any questions from the
32 Council for Kevin at this time on special action
33 updates.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, go ahead.

38
39 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Next
40 we have fisheries temporary special action request
41 FSA23-02 found on Page 54 of your meeting booklet which
42 was submitted by OSM and requested the Federal
43 Subsistence Board to close Federal public waters of the
44 Yukon River drainage to the harvest of chinook, summer
45 and fall chum and coho salmon except by Federally-
46 qualified subsistence users in 2023 and require Federal
47 subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures and
48 fishing methods be determined by the Federal Fisheries
49 Manager. The request fell within the Board delegated
50

0074

1 authority of the Federal In-Season Manager, Holly
2 Carroll, so it was transferred to her.

3
4 During the 2023 Holly actively managed
5 the fishery in coordination with her counterparts at
6 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. When there was
7 harvestable surplus for summer chum salmon Holly
8 limited participation in Federal public waters to
9 Federally-qualified subsistence users to ensure a
10 priority use during times of conservation. If the
11 Council has questions regarding this or any other
12 Federal management actions on the Yukon this season
13 please refer to Holly's written update she provided the
14 Council which may be found in the supplemental
15 materials.

16
17 That concludes my presentation for
18 FSA23-02.

19
20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. Is
21 there any question or comments for Kevin at this time
22 for the Yukon River salmon fishing special action.

23
24 (No comments)

25
26 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Brooke.

29
30 MS. McDAVID: Yeah. Just so the
31 Council knows where it's at, that summary of the Yukon
32 salmon season from Holly is in Tab 3 of your
33 supplemental binders.

34
35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any questions or
36 comments for Kevin at this time in regards to the 2023
37 preliminary Yukon River salmon fisheries review.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, go ahead,
42 continue.

43
44 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Chairman Oney,
45 members of the Council. Next up is fisheries emergency
46 special action request FSA23-03 which is found on Page
47 56 of your meeting booklet. OSM submitted this request
48 to temporarily enact the customary and traditional use
49 determination for coastal communities for salmon that
50

0075

1 was recognized by the Board during their 2023 Fisheries
2 regulatory meeting.

3
4 The request was administrative in
5 nature and intended only to ensure the coastal
6 communities of Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay and Chevak were
7 considered Federally-qualified subsistence users for
8 all species of salmon during the 2023 fishing season.
9 The Board approved this request. The C&T for these
10 communities will be formally updated to include all
11 species of salmon when the Fisheries regulatory cycle
12 final rule publishes in the Federal Register this
13 winter.

14
15 That concludes my presentation for
16 FSA23-03.

17
18 Are there any questions, please.

19
20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Kevin. Any
21 questions for Kevin at this time in regards to the
22 actions to enact a customary and traditional use
23 determination for coastal Yukon communities.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, go ahead,
28 Kevin.

29
30 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, Chairman Oney.
31 Lastly we have Fisheries temporary special action
32 request FSA23-YD-23-01 which may be found on Page 58 of
33 your meeting booklets. The Manager of the Yukon Delta
34 National Wildlife Refuge used their Board delegated
35 authority to issue the special action to close Federal
36 public waters of the Kuskokwim River drainage to the
37 harvest of chinook, chum and coho except by Federally-
38 qualified subsistence users in 2023 and require Federal
39 subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures and
40 fishing methods be determined by the Federal Fisheries
41 Manager. During the 2023 the In-Season Manager
42 actively managed the fishery in collaboration with the
43 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission and the
44 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. When chinook, chum
45 and coho salmon fishing opportunities were announced
46 the In-Season Manager participation in Federal public
47 waters to Federally- qualified subsistence users to
48 ensure a priority use during times of conservation.

49
50

0076

1 That concludes the presentation on
2 FSA23-YD-23-01.

3
4 Does the Council have any questions.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any questions for Kevin
7 at this time.

8
9 (No comments)

10
11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, go ahead
12 and continue.

13
14 MR. ANDREW: Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Sorry. John, go ahead.

17
18 MR. ANDREW: On this -- on this last
19 one under directs down there on the last slide and
20 where it says start from June 1 to 2023 at 12:01. Most
21 years it doesn't work well on the first three where I
22 live, the water's always too high. And when they have
23 openings on -- set net openings on those first couple
24 of weeks they don't work well, too much -- too much
25 high water and debris floating on the main stem.
26 That's one of the reasons why we've been -- our
27 villages in my area have been asking -- some of them
28 have been asking to have the openings at a later date
29 like a couple of weeks later or 10 days later. Because
30 last summer our -- my area was flooded all the way to
31 middle of June and the set net openings didn't produce
32 much, only a -- just enough for a taste of fish for a
33 while.

34
35 Thank you.

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, John. Any
38 more comments in regards to FSA-YD-23-01.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, thank you
43 very much, appreciate your report.

44
45 MR. FOLEY: Chairman Oney, thank you
46 for your time, members of the Council.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Moving on, down
49 to Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group
50

0077

1 representatives.

2

3 Council -- Brooke, go ahead.

4

5 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
6 got a request by the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management
7 Working Group Coordinator, Savannah Hollingsworth, to
8 just review the folks who are serving as
9 representatives from the YKDelta RAC on that group and
10 make sure that people were still okay with that role or
11 if anybody wanted to change roles we could choose new
12 representatives. And so I'll just remind you who those
13 folks are. The YKDelta RAC representative on the
14 Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group is
15 currently John Andrew. And the alternates are Alissa
16 Nadine Rogers and Robert Hoffman. So I guess we'll
17 just asking if from those members if they want to
18 confirm that they would like to remain as the
19 representatives or if you guys would like to change.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: John, John Andrew, go
24 ahead.

25

26 MR. ANDREW: I'd rather have Alissa
27 happy.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Shall I take it as the
30 word to continue?

31

32 MS. ROGERS: Yes.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you. So
35 the representatives will remain the same.

36

37 MS. McDAVID: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
38 Chair. Sure. And we'll check also with Robert Hoffman
39 when we're able to get ahold of him and make sure he's
40 okay still being the alternate. If he wants to step
41 down we could choose another alternate.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Moving on. Down
46 to 12, new business, a. wildlife reports.

47

48 REPORTER: Use your mic.

49

50

0078

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, sorry. Again we're
2 down to new business, number 12(a) wildlife reports.
3 First is Togiak National Wildlife Refuge update, Andy
4 Aderman, if you're with us.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Andy, are you online
9 with us.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, hopefully
14 he'll show up as we move along. I'll go ahead and take
15 the next agenda item which is Yukon Delta National
16 Wildlife Refuge update, Laurie Boeck and Aaron Moses.

17
18 MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 We'll start off with Laurie.

20
21 MS. BOECK: Good afternoon. My name is
22 Laurie Boeck, I am with the Yukon Delta National
23 Wildlife Refuge, I'm Acting Refuge Manager and Aaron
24 has put together a report for you today.

25
26 Thank you for having us.

27
28 MR. MOSES: Again for the record my
29 name is Aaron Moses, I'm the Subsistence Coordinator
30 for Yukon Delta Refuge. I'm here with the RITs also
31 that will be giving a short discussion on waterfowl
32 projects that went on. And so Brooke is handing out
33 the fish -- the first five pages are on fish. I'll go
34 through this very minimally because later on in the --
35 the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission will be
36 giving a more in depth presentation on the summer
37 salmon fishery.

38
39 The one thing I want to talk about is
40 the -- if you guys go to Page 5 you could see how many
41 fish were caught during the summer season and I'll talk
42 about the 12 Federal subsistence fishing opportunities
43 resulting in about 62,000 salmon harvested. And these
44 are -- come from the interviews from the Fish
45 Commission and ONC who was able to -- who are a big
46 part of our partners, help us out during the in-season
47 estimates.

48
49 This year there was quite a bit of

50

0079

1 sockeye. You can see that roughly 20 or 28,900 fish
2 were estimated to be harvested, that's about 46 percent
3 of total harvest for the -- for the summer, followed by
4 chinook salmon with 21,000 and chum salmon which came
5 back -- I can't say quite a bit, came back higher than
6 the previous year when last year was horrible. So the
7 chum salmon did bump up a little bit this year. But
8 this is just estimates from the fishing opportunities.
9 A lot of people did really well with dipnetting this
10 summer. The Fish Commission, ONC, they were lending
11 out dipnets and there's people that caught upwards of
12 30, 40 sockeye.

13

14 And so I will pass this to the RITs now
15 or I'll take any questions about the summer fishing
16 before I pass it over.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah. Thank you.
19 Thank you, Aaron. We almost missed out on BLM. I
20 believe they wanted to give a report at 3:00 o'clock.
21 So maybe if we could hold off on your report and then
22 hear BLM's report because they're scheduled to leave at
23 4:00 o'clock, less than half an hour. So we'll give
24 you enough time to.....

25

26 MR. MOSES: Yeah, it'll give me some
27 time to read my.....

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thanks for
30 understanding. At this time we'll go ahead and ask
31 BLM, Anchorage Field Office, on ANCSA D1 land
32 withdrawals.

33

34 Bruce Seppi and Jordan Vialpando. You
35 have the floor.

36

37 MR. VIALPANDO: Good afternoon.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good afternoon.

40

41 MR. VIALPANDO: So I'm Jake Vialpando,
42 I am the new Anchorage BLM Field Manager as of February
43 this year. So I've met with a few Councils, but not
44 this Council. Today it's -- we don't have any
45 materials to share regarding this subject, but I do
46 have some brief updates that I can share with the
47 Council. And then if there are any questions, specific
48 questions, regarding the details of -- of this proposal
49 BLM's working on, I do have Bruce Seppi of course for
50

0080

1 subsistence and wildlife, Donna Bock is here also from
2 the BLM State Office and then I do have Tom Sparks, the
3 Associate Field Manager in Nome who basically is more
4 of the experienced technical expert when it comes to
5 public land orders and really the actions and D17 or 17
6 D1 ANCSA withdrawals and this process.

7
8 Okay. So I think everybody is fairly
9 aware of the project BLM is working on. They're
10 completing -- we are completing an environmental impact
11 statement to consider impacts for revoking ANCSA 17 D1
12 withdrawals on lands associated with the following
13 public land orders, 7999, 7900, 7901, 7902 and 7903.
14 So we kicked off an environmental impact statement
15 process last fall to address this action. At this
16 point we are continuing to draft the environmental
17 impact -- I'll just say EIS from now on, continuing to
18 work on drafting the EIS for completion and to issue to
19 the public for public review. Right now the EIS
20 considers and includes the following alternatives. Of
21 course one alternative is a no action alternative, and
22 then three action alternatives with one of the
23 alternatives revoking withdrawals on all lands
24 described in the -- in those specific PLOs that I just
25 mentioned. And then two other action alternatives that
26 would revoke some areas of the withdrawals, but leaving
27 other areas with withdrawals in place. Portions of the
28 revocation alternatives evaluate partially revoking
29 PLOs in those area that do not conflict with certain
30 resource -- sensitive resources and other -- and the
31 other partial revocation alternative, evaluate opening
32 areas that have higher mineral potential.

33
34 At this point we're completing the EIS
35 document itself, writing the analysis for that. Still
36 internal right now, the general tentative schedule is
37 for the draft EIS to be published by mid December and
38 along with that tentatively holding .810 hearings
39 potentially starting in mid January.

40
41 Any questions at this time?

42
43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do you have any
44 questions for Aaron at this time.

45
46 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

49
50

0081

1 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Would you be
2 able to get us a written statement of what you were
3 just reading off of?

4
5 MR. VIALPANDO: My -- my notes?

6
7 MS. ROGERS: Yes.

8
9 MR. VIALPANDO: Yeah, I can give you a
10 written.....

11
12 MS. ROGERS: Okay.

13
14 MR. VIALPANDO:written statement.

15
16 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, through the
17 Chair. It's at least to have something for us to
18 understand what you're discussing and be able to look
19 into it. Can you explain the two differences between
20 the first action item being you're going to be revoking
21 some areas, but leaving other areas in place, is that
22 due to ceremonial sites, high traffic for subsistence
23 use, what is -- what was your finding between
24 identifying what areas you did want to keep and what
25 areas you want to be mined?

26
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28
29 MR. VIALPANDO: So that's all going to
30 depend on the -- on the impact analysis in the
31 environmental assessment or the EIS document. I know
32 from -- the different alternatives will look at areas
33 that have protections for wildlife species and wildlife
34 habitat, subsistence use areas, ACECs as areas that
35 would be identified as having those sensitive
36 resources. So there will be alternatives that would
37 identify not having those as areas that would be
38 revoked and areas that would keep the withdrawals in
39 place.

40
41 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, follow-up.

42
43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Alissa.

44
45 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. And who's
46 determining this, is this us knowing that all the land
47 is our subsistence land and everywhere that there is
48 resources or mineral resources not only do the ground
49 and the life and the survival of all of our lands, our
50

0082

1 waters, our wildlife, our migratory birds, our
2 fisheries, our anadromous lands and all of the --
3 pretty much the whole entire environment and ecosystem
4 that we live in relies on those minerals as they are
5 feeding our grounds. And if you take that away then
6 what's going to happen to this whole entire ecosystem
7 that we have when you take out one giant part of it.
8 So what I'm worried about is that you're going to
9 create a system that's broken and then it's going to
10 trickle down to our subsistence and it's going to
11 affect our wildlife, it's going to affect the quality
12 of our water that we're drinking, it's going to affect
13 the toxins in the air, like who's -- who's determining,
14 is it corporate people in the lower 48?

15

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17

18 MR. SEPPI: I'd like to comment. Bruce
19 Seppi, Anchorage Field Office, BLM.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead. Identify
22 yourself.

23

24 MR. SEPPI: Bruce Seppi, Anchorage
25 Field Office, BLM. This isn't completely about mining,
26 it's about relinquishing these withdrawals that will no
27 longer make it Federal land. And that's a big deal for
28 subsistence because these lands will no longer be
29 considered Federal lands under ANILCA. We realize
30 that, that's why we brought this back to do an EIS and
31 have four alternatives which goes from nothing,
32 withdraw nothing to withdraw all of them. And there
33 will be an .810 subsistence analysis done which I'll be
34 responsible for among -- with other people, to look at
35 exactly the points you're making. And, you know, all
36 of these lands, there's 28 million acres involved here,
37 but all of them aren't going to be open to mining, not
38 all of them have mineral potential. Some of them are
39 currently already open. And so this is an exercise or
40 an evaluation and impact statement showing how it will
41 affect subsistence, how it will affect wildlife,
42 recreation, everything that happens on Federal lands.

43

44 So I'm happy that this is happening
45 because under the last Administration these lands were
46 completely going to be all open and the current
47 Administration brought it back and did -- is now doing
48 an .810 analysis or doing an EIS which includes an .810
49 subsistence impact analysis. So I think we should all
50

0083

1 view this as a good thing in terms of subsistence and
2 all the use on Federal lands.

3

4 To answer some of your questions it's
5 still -- this EIS isn't out yet, it'll be out for
6 public review in -- like Jake said in mid December; is
7 that correct?

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MR. SEPPI: And so that's your time to
12 say, you know, these areas are important to us. I know
13 that there are some areas that won't make much
14 difference if the lands are revoked, if these
15 withdrawals are revoked, and other areas it will make a
16 huge difference. I know that. So that'll be reflected
17 in the EIS and it'll be reflected in the .810 analysis.

18

19 Another thing that -- to have this be
20 in public review, we don't have anything yet because
21 it's still early in the process and we don't want to --
22 we're not -- we don't have the privilege of offering it
23 to the public or to this Council right now because it's
24 not ready to be offered, but it will be on our NEPA
25 website when it's available. The -- it's called e-
26 planning and we'll provide that website to everyone so
27 they can look at what is on there so far and then when
28 it officially comes out, how the EIS and the
29 alternatives are being considered.

30

31 I know this all sounds confusing, but
32 any other questions, basic questions that we can maybe
33 answer now?

34

35 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

38

39 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
40 sorry, can you please spell your name for me.

41

42 MR. SEPPI: Seppi, Bruce Seppi, S-E-P-
43 P-I.

44

45 MS. ROGERS: S-E-P-P-I. Thank you.
46 Mr. Seppi, through the Chair. So it's going to be
47 distributed in December?

48

49 MR. SEPPI: It'll be out for public

50

0084

1 review.

2

3 MS. ROGERS: Okay. So how long exactly
4 is that public review open?

5

6 MR. VIALPANDO: So the public review
7 for the DEIS will be -- right now it's 60 days
8 according to NEPA regulations.

9

10 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

13

14 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 Brooke, how many times do we meet a year and how many
16 days in between the next time we're going to meet?

17

18 MS. McDAVID: Through the Chair, member
19 Rogers. The Council meets twice a year, once in the
20 fall and once in the later winter, early spring. I
21 don't have an exact count of the number of days between
22 meetings, but if the draft EIS came out for public
23 review in mid December and lasted for 60 days that
24 comment period would close before the Council would
25 have a chance to meet again.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 MS. ROGERS: (In Native)

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. Any
32 more questions or comments from the Council.

33

34 Go ahead, Richard.

35

36 MR. SPARKS: Mr. Chair, this is Tom
37 Sparks on the phone.

38

39 MS. BROWN: Can you hear me?

40

41 MR. SLATS: I'll wait for Bruce.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, I can hear you.
44 Go ahead.

45

46 MR. SPARKS: Yes, Mr. Chair. This is
47 Tom Sparks on the phone. I wanted to perhaps give a
48 little bit more information as well there. Some of
49 this land selections that Mr. Seppi was referring to,
50

0085

1 those are State of Alaska top files that currently
2 don't have what's called a segregated affect on public
3 lands. And areas where a public land order prevented
4 the State from making a State selection under the
5 Statehood Act, if those PLOs are revoked and the State
6 would then have an automatic selection on those lands.
7 And those lands would therefore not qualify as Federal
8 subsistence land. I think that's what Mr. Seppi was
9 trying to point out so I wanted to perhaps give some
10 clarity to that. It's only the State top file lands
11 that would apply. And there is some information on our
12 e-planning website. There's a scoping report that was
13 put out in early January of this year and there's also
14 a notice of intent that was put out in the Federal
15 Register that are currently available online.

16

17 And then I think the only thing I'd
18 like to add is that many of these public land orders go
19 back decades and the majority of them were to prevent
20 third party entry on the public lands for withdrawals
21 for the Native selections, the 11(a)(1) withdrawals for
22 ANCSA selections. And they also address five land use
23 planning areas that the BLM has completed land use
24 plans for. So it is a very large area.

25

26 And the other thing that I wanted to
27 touch base on is Mr. Seppi was correct in saying that
28 there are currently a lot of areas that are currently
29 open to what's called metalliferous minerals. And
30 that's your typical gold and silver type of assets on
31 the public land. So areas that are outside of the
32 village withdrawal areas are currently open and there's
33 going to be information on the draft environmental
34 impact statement that will identify those areas. And
35 there's also some maps available online on our e-
36 planning website.

37

38 So just wanted to add a little bit more
39 information, Mr. Chair. And I'll be happy to answer
40 any questions that folks may have.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Do we
45 have questions or comments from the Council for Tom or
46 Seppi.

47

48 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

49

50

0086

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

2

3 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 There is a -- like an overview map of those BLM lands
5 in your supplemental materials that -- I think it was
6 from that e-planning or just that -- that website that
7 -- was it Tom just mentioned. It's in Tab 8, it's just
8 a real broad overview of BLM lands in your region.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have anyone
13 online that would like to comment in regards to the
14 presentation we just heard.

15

16 MS. BROWN: Hello.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hello. I can hear you,
19 go ahead.

20

21 MS. BROWN: Yeah, can you hear me?

22

23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, go ahead.

24

25 MS. BROWN: Hi, my name is Melanie
26 Brown, I work for Salmon State. I'm the Outreach
27 Director for Salmon State. And I'm also a tribal
28 citizen of Naknek Native Village. My mother's side of
29 the family is from Bristol Bay, my father is from the
30 Bering Straits region. And I'm very concerned about
31 these potential changes to D1 land, the land use
32 definition. My understanding is that these lands were
33 thoughtfully set aside so that the people could feed
34 themselves, con -- so people could continue to feed
35 themselves throughout the State of Alaska. And
36 disrupting these lands and changing their land use
37 definition would have -- and, you know, if mining
38 claims are staked and developed there is a lot of
39 potential to interrupt migratory corridors for caribou,
40 to destroy habitat for salmon and, you know, further
41 degrade runs that people depend upon.

42

43 And I recognize that, you know, it
44 sounds like either mid December or January will be the
45 time for people to weigh in substantively on what will
46 happen to these lands, but even before that, I think
47 before comment periods open it's good to kind of get
48 ahead of things and provide input. And I actually have
49 a sample letter that I would be -- I would love to
50

0087

1 share through the Chair, if I could get some guidance
2 on the best way to share information with your RAC I
3 would really appreciate that because there is an
4 organized effort to -- you know, to get people to weigh
5 in in a substantive way about what these lands mean to
6 them and what remains of lands that people can still
7 access to feed themselves. So yeah, if you could let
8 me know the best way to direct a potential -- like some
9 draft language that your RAC might want to submit to
10 BLM regarding these D1 lands I would really appreciate
11 that.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you,
14 Melanie. Alissa, you had your hand up. Go ahead.

15

16 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 Through the Chair. Just before you came onboard we had
18 these Federal special actions that we just went over
19 that protect our rights as Natives to use the lands
20 that are protected by the Federal agency to give us our
21 rights to subsistence. Kanektok River for chums;
22 Federal subsistence fishery management for the Yukon
23 River; Federal Subsistence Board approves
24 administrative action to enact customary and
25 traditional use; Kuskokwim River Federal waters closed
26 to gillnet, protection of chinook, chum and coho.
27 These are what protect our subsistence and it's our
28 duty to protect our people and those who call our land
29 home. By taking away the Federal rights and the
30 Federal land that is currently in place, not only is it
31 being detrimental to us and our subsistence way of
32 life, but our kids and their generations after that.
33 We are a subsistence economy, we are the last remaining
34 subsistence economy. We aren't like other places like
35 Anchorage who have accessibility to Costco, Fred
36 Meyer's or in the lower 48 where things are super
37 cheap. We don't have that. And opening up these lands
38 is only going to make things worse for us.

39

40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. Any
43 more comments.

44

45 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma, go ahead.

48

49 MS. EVAN: One example I think would be

50

0088

1 the Calista rock quarry in Marshall. It already
2 disrupted the migratory for the cranes. We used to get
3 thousands that circle Marshall, now seem like there's
4 about 500 or less and they didn't stay there very long.
5 It affects migration routes and I think Marshall would
6 be a good example to set for this.

7

8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma. Any
11 questions or comments.

12

13 MR. ALEXIE: Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Wassilly, go ahead.

16

17 MR. ALEXIE: I just have a comment.
18 Would it be possible for maybe asking the RAC if they
19 can write a letter similar to what the Western, Bering,
20 Interior RACS wrote to protect the DIs?

21

22 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Brooke.

25

26 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair, through the
27 Chair, member Alexie. Yes, our Council is welcome to
28 write a letter on any topic you'd like related to
29 subsistence, impacts to subsistence. If there are
30 letters that are examples that might help you in
31 crafting a letter should you want to craft a letter. I
32 know Melanie on the phone had asked where they could
33 send those examples. If you're still listening,
34 Melanie and anyone else, you could email those to me,
35 the Council Coordinator and I'll give you my email.
36 It's brooke, B-R-O-O-K-E, underscore, McDavid, M-c-D-A-
37 V-I-D, at FWS as in Fish Wildlife Service dot gov,
38 brooke_mcdavid@fws.gov. And if those are sent to me we
39 can get a copy printed out and passed out to the
40 Council for their reference.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
45 Brooke.

46

47 MS. BROWN: Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Richard, go ahead.

50

0089

1 MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. BLM,
2 their Anchorage Field Officer/Manager, I -- I didn't
3 catch your name and I didn't catch her either. I think
4 it's maybe that if these speakers would have those name
5 tags like Kevin did then it would make a lot more
6 sense. But I had a couple questions and a couple
7 points that I would like to make.

8
9 One of the questions is who's -- is
10 this your environmental impact statement, is that --
11 who's doing that, is that your in-house or is that --
12 who's doing your ES -- environmental impact statement?

13
14 MR. VIALPANDO: So the project's being
15 led out of the Nevada State Office with a Project
16 Manager there. Excuse me, wrong State. Alaska State
17 Office Project Manager out of there, that is Rachel
18 Jones. And her information is -- it is available on
19 the website for this project.

20
21 Our Staff is supporting the effort and
22 reviewing the alternatives and the analysis for, you
23 know, just being factually correct, you know, and in
24 accordance with our land use plans and the information
25 or data that we have. And then beyond that the actual
26 record of decision would be selected and signed by the
27 Secretary of the Interior.

28
29 MR. SLATS: Okay. Thank you. Can you
30 repeat those numbers that you were mentioning, those
31 numbers about what was being approved or something.....

32
33 MR. VIALPANDO: Well, just the.....

34
35 MR. SLATS:the 901?

36
37 MR. VIALPANDO: Oh, so the public land
38 orders that are.....

39
40 MR. SLATS: Yeah.

41
42 MR. VIALPANDO:that are included
43 in this environmental impact statement. And this is
44 all available on the website too. So the public -- the
45 public land orders specifically being looked at through
46 this environmental impact statement, this EIS, are
47 7899, 7900, 7901, 7902 and 7903.

48
49 MR. SLATS: Thank you. This -- you
50

0090

1 know, like in the past we've had people coming into our
2 meetings and then telling us that they're going to be
3 opening -- you know, it was their intent and I don't
4 know if the rest of the Board will remember, but there
5 were -- there was an intent to open millions of acres
6 of -- or thousands of acres of lands for mineral and
7 oil exploration. And then at that -- during that time
8 I was telling them that there are executive orders to
9 conduct consultation with the tribes and noticing the
10 people that would be affected by open -- you know,
11 opening thousands of acres of land. But it also --
12 that thing moved ahead without any, you know. To me it
13 was inadequate consultation and it seemed to me that
14 they were doing everything backwards.

15

16 But when we were able to talk to some
17 people with the Bureau of Land Management in a summit,
18 there's this guy that came up and had -- we were asking
19 about the lands that were being opened. And then what
20 we were -- one of the questions came up about what
21 areas and how they selected their lands and what they
22 based on -- which ones they're going to open. And
23 their intent, even if there wasn't any intent, there
24 was going to be an environmental impact statement
25 without any development. But then we're asking them --
26 the question was whether or not what they based on --
27 you know, what they based on. And the -- and what they
28 did was that they mentioned that they -- the decisions
29 to select certain lands, BLM lands for mineral and oil
30 exploration were based on best available sciences
31 instead of going out and consulting with the people
32 that are out there just like she was mentioning, you
33 know, that the people will be affected by people going
34 in to explore or, you know, like development and things
35 like this on Federal lands. So and then there was -- I
36 guess what that question was was subsistence impact
37 and, you know, like what kind of impacts were going to
38 be done to subsistence. And then instead of going out
39 there and asking the people that are out there, they
40 went ahead and move on, you know.

41

42 So these are the things that we have
43 problems about, you know, at least I do because it's --
44 it seems to me that this thing is going to move forward
45 as it's done in different ways, you know, because it --
46 they would come here and then they would turn around
47 and say they consulted with the people. I can go home
48 and do a good trip report about this meeting and then
49 notice my tribe. But that is not tribal consultation.

50

0091

1 So these things that are going on, I -- you know, like
2 there are village corporations. And so if there are
3 village corporations that their sole intent is to make
4 money, you know, or at least I hope that's what they
5 do. Anyways that would hit the villages, Native on
6 Native, because the village corporations their intent
7 is to make money. And so -- and so they're going to --
8 they're going to move to try to make money. And then
9 there's that lands that were being opened. One of the
10 selections that I was told was that there were lands
11 being opened for -- that were adjacent to Donlin Gold.

12

13 So these kind of things that we -- at
14 least I have issues is about is that we come to these
15 things and this is all new to me, first time I'm
16 hearing about your -- yours and then it also sound like
17 we don't -- we won't have adequate time to make -- make
18 response or for any input, comment and things like
19 this. And they usually will, you know, like if these
20 things were going on and then you would point us out to
21 the Federal Register about the intent to do this. So
22 we don't have anything in front of us and then I don't
23 think that it's fair for anyone of these people that
24 are for subsistence to be hearing about it because I
25 think that this is something that should have been
26 brought up in one way or another before we came here
27 today.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Richard.
32 Care to respond.

33

34 MR. SEPPI: We're -- that's the reason
35 we're here. That's the reason we're here. We're not
36 just coming to this RAC, we're going to four others
37 that overlap with these lands. An environmental impact
38 statement is the reason -- is the method that the
39 Federal government uses to bring it out to the public,
40 to allow public impact. And an EIS then requires a
41 subsistence impacts analysis. So that's the very
42 reason, that's the reason we're here. And I guess this
43 is a response to member Rogers' comments also is we're
44 not deaf to what happens in subsistence, we are -- our
45 jobs -- my job is to support ANILCA. And so I know
46 it's very emotional when you find out lands aren't
47 going to be available for subsistence or it won't have
48 a subsistence priority, but that is why we are bringing
49 it to the public and that's why we're bringing it to
50

0092

1 the RACs, we're going to four other RACs during this
2 cycle. And we're asking for comments and your comments
3 count. This decision will be made far above our
4 levels, but those comments have weight and they count.

5
6 So I would urge to comment on it and
7 I'm sure you will, but we're not -- you know, we don't
8 have indefinite amounts of time to put this together
9 and that's why there's an open window for comment, that
10 60 day period. And I would urge you to find a way with
11 your Council Coordinator to get those comments in in
12 the form of a letter or on e-planning and make sure
13 your voice is heard on this. We realize how important
14 this is to subsistence and I do in particular.

15
16 Thanks.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Jackie and
19 then James.

20
21 MS. CLEVELAND: Quick question. Are
22 you required to do tribal consultations or is the
23 comment period seen as the tribal consultations in this
24 case and also if not is there plans -- are there plans
25 to conduct tribal consultations?

26
27 MR. VIALPANDO: Yeah, so there -- of
28 course there's a requirement. And we've conducting
29 tribal consultations since -- at least since I've
30 arrived through Elia Nay and Donna Bach, we've made
31 contact via phone calls, communications in emails, a
32 handful of face to face meetings. In certain cases
33 tribes have requested government to government
34 consultation and, you know, those are ongoing. But
35 we've also done consultation with outreach and
36 communicated this at least since my arrival. So to
37 hear that this is the first time this has been brought
38 forward to this RAC is surprising to me because I
39 definitely spoke to -- you know, when I arrived in
40 February I know my first RAC meeting that I attended
41 was the Western Interior and we spoke to this specific
42 subject during that meeting. I apologize I wasn't at
43 your meeting, but I do know that this has been
44 communicated. We're at the point now documents are
45 being developed to meet timelines that have been
46 established for us to follow and the documents
47 currently scheduled to go through the NEPA process and
48 the 60 day, you know, published to the public for 60
49 days for a public review in December.

50

0093

1 So we're communicating right now with
2 the tribes and having consultation. So I -- I guess
3 I'm a little shocked to hear that this is the first
4 time some of you are hearing this about this project.

5
6 MR. SEPPI: I'd also like to comment
7 that we have to bring this out to the public, we just
8 can't do it from Anchorage so we're going out with the
9 preliminary -- the draft EIS along with -- and to
10 communities that have yet to be determined, there's 122
11 communities in this 20 million acres. So we can't go
12 to all of them, but we're going to go to as many as we
13 can and bring this to as many people as we can, but at
14 that same time we're required to do a subsistence
15 hearing, an .810 subsistence hearing along with that
16 meeting to talk about impacts to subsistence and to
17 talk about the alternatives. So that will be coming up
18 this winter and we're going to make that available to
19 -- to know where we're going. The logistics of that
20 are difficult and -- as you well know, but that will be
21 made available on e-planning and publicly when we know
22 what communities we're going to go to and probably in
23 January to -- to talk about the EIS and subsistence
24 impacts. So all of the Councils will be advised of
25 that and the communities also that we're going to.

26
27 Thanks.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Does that
30 answer your question, Jackie.

31
32 MS. CLEVELAND: Thanks.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

35
36 MR. LANDLORD: You said 60 days, when
37 does it start and when does it end?

38
39 MR. VIALPANDO: So the notice of intent
40 would identify that time period for when that draft EIS
41 is published. Right now it's just tentative, sometime
42 in December that it would be ready for publishing.

43
44 MR. LANDLORD: Okay.

45
46 MR. VIALPANDO: Okay.

47
48 MR. LANDLORD: You did the tribal
49 consultation about 12 months ago I think. I think I
50

0094

1 remember this in one of our meetings that we -- that
2 our tribe received a letter from BLM, withdrawal. I
3 think they were on -- I think you were on the phone,
4 somebody was on the phone from BLM. And one of the --
5 because they were going to explore for mineral, right,
6 one of the first things that came to our mind was
7 subsistence because we -- we saw the map and there were
8 -- some of those minerals were rare, rare minerals. I
9 don't remember the others, because they were colored
10 and we couldn't see everything on the slide what
11 minerals that were there.

12

13 But we wanted to -- we wanted to have a
14 -- they said we could have a tribal -- two tribal
15 consultation with BLM. We were planning to, but it
16 just wasn't -- we forgot -- we forgot all about it. We
17 were planning to do it I think that following week, but
18 we got so busy we didn't -- we didn't have time to do
19 it. But I was just confused listening to everyone
20 here, it was you -- you got quite a -- when you brought
21 it up. And I was thinking, thinking, thinking, I try
22 to find you in my packet here and then I saw this, this
23 map that folks brought out. We would still like to do
24 a tribe consultation. I'm from Mountain Village and we
25 were supposed to do it, but we just forgot to do it
26 because we have a lot of items on our -- on our
27 meetings and agenda. We're just -- sometimes we'll get
28 busy. So we just -- we just -- we just forgot to do
29 it.

30

31 So the end of December is the last day
32 that you're going to receive comments for tribal
33 consultation?

34

35 (Inaudible response)

36

37 MR. LANDLORD: No?

38

39 MR. VIALPANDO: No. No, I -- so for --
40 when that document goes out for public review for 60
41 days, we're doing tribal consultation non-stop. And
42 it's.....

43

44 MR. LANDLORD: No.

45

46 MR. VIALPANDO:it's from the very
47 beginning and we'll continue until a ROD, a record of
48 decision, a ROD is signed at least from my perspective.
49 And there has been a number of them. I know that

50

0095

1 Marnie Graham out at the Glennallen Field Office I
2 believe has had two formal government to government
3 consultations. I apologize I don't know the names of
4 the specific tribes that she consulted with on that.
5 Donna would know that or Elia Nay would know that from
6 my office. But by all means if you are the appropriate
7 person to get in contact with, Elia will get in contact
8 with your tribe tomorrow. So myself, I've only
9 participated in -- I think I've only had one formal
10 consultation and that was with the Unalakleet Village.
11 And then others have been more informal, asking
12 questions to try and understand what this -- what this
13 action is that BLM is bestowed with carrying forward.

14
15 MR. LANDLORD: You're just on our
16 agenda and we didn't have advance notice what it was
17 and we have to really read quick and try to understand
18 the withdrawals and -- but the first thing that came to
19 our mind was we do a lot of subsistence here though and
20 minerals means digging, extracting and all that stuff.
21 We got really worried that what -- what about the
22 animals that are on there, you know, rabbits and
23 ptarmigans and fish and all that. We were -- we got
24 really concerned when -- when there was somebody on the
25 phone and she will take an effect what -- what we eat.
26 So and we was supposed to do a -- like I said before we
27 were going to do a con -- we just forgot, we just -- we
28 just forgot to do it.

29
30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you.
31 Thank you, James. Any more comments or questions.

32
33 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chair.

34
35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma, go ahead.

36
37 MS. EVAN: I have a comment. I live
38 right here in Marshall, I also know eagles are
39 protected, we do have a large eagle population between
40 our rivers all the way up to Russian Mission. This
41 area is where we do see a lot of eagles nesting and
42 feeding. I even did see one that was -- it looked
43 bigger than my seven year old nephew.

44
45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Normal Any
48 more questions or comments at this time.

49
50

0096

1 (No comments)

2

3 MS. McDAVID: Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

6

7 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 Because the Council will not be meeting during the
9 proposed open or the tentative comment period it would
10 be my suggestion if you all are interested in
11 commenting that you formulate a letter at this meeting.
12 Even though you won't be able to comment on the
13 alternatives because those happened been released yet,
14 you could still talk about your concerns about this
15 issue and the importance of these lands for
16 subsistence. And if you'd like I can earmark this as a
17 topic for the annual report and at that time we could
18 also talk about writing a letter. And I could get you
19 the draft letter that some other folks have proposed
20 as, you know, an idea of some things to think about
21 including if you would like to also write a letter.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
26 Brooke. I believe that's a route that we should take
27 at this time knowing that we will be able to be at the
28 meeting -- the spring meeting when this comes out. So
29 I'd recommend that we take any action at this time in
30 regards to the presentation from BLM, you know, for all
31 the comments that you've mentioned and also some draft
32 letters, support letters that are out there now, we
33 could be able to have access to them to see, you know,
34 how we could move forward with this to let them know
35 about that resources that we depend on these areas that
36 they're describing from BLM.

37

38 So is there any more presentation that
39 you have at this time.

40

41 MR. VIALPANDO: No, sir.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah. Thank you, I
44 appreciate your presentation and your work that you're
45 doing. So you'll be hearing from us after this.

46

47 Thank you again.

48

49 MR. VIALPANDO: Thank you.

50

0097

1 MR. SEPPI: Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Moving on. We
4 are.....

5

6 MS. McDAVID: Take a break.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, let's go ahead
9 and do a 10 minute break. Ten minute break, come back
10 at.....

11

12 MS. McDAVID: Come back at 4:20.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY:420. Thank you.

15

16 (Off record)

17

18 (On record)

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: We'll continue with our
21 reports. We had Aaron Moses and if you do a
22 presentation, if you could come up to the table again
23 and make your report.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
28 the record again my name's Aaron Moses and I'm the
29 Subsistence Coordinator. Right now Christian and
30 Emmitt are going to do a little presentation on the
31 Waterfowl Program from this summer.

32

33 MR. ALEXIE: Quyana, Mr. Chair.
34 Through the Chair. This year's summer project 2023,
35 Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Waterfowl Program.
36 The Refuge Staff participated in seven waterfowl
37 projects during the 2023 field season from May 17 to
38 August 25th, 2023. Emperor goose nesting ecology and
39 survival. This field season is the seventh year of
40 emperor goose nesting ecology research on Kikiktak
41 Island. Four crew members searched for emperor goose
42 nests in eight nest plots, 237 emperor goose nests were
43 found and monitored. Nest effort was high in 2023 and
44 apparent nest success was high at 87 percent, hatching
45 at least one egg. The crew successfully recorded 125
46 banding sites and captured and banded 61 nest --
47 nesting females to further efforts to estimate survival
48 which is calculated to be declining since 2016.

49

50 The crew assisted the Endangered

0098

1 Species Program with searching for, monitoring and
2 capturing spectacled eiders on the nest for mark
3 recapture survival analyses. Nest effort was low and
4 nest success was also low with high predation rates.

5
6 During this project we collected blood
7 and oral/cloacal swab samples from 31 adult females
8 emperor geese for avian influenza monitoring and to
9 determine current and past avian influenza infections.

10
11 Emperor goose transmitter deployment.
12 On June 10 through 15 we deployed 14 backpack
13 transmitters to determine more fine scale movements and
14 habitat use of adult females with broods and test a
15 method for future survival and fitness of emperor geese
16 as an alternative methods to internal transmitters that
17 require surgery. As of August 8, 2023 all emperor
18 geese outfitted with transmitters are still alive with
19 three in Russia molting, one in Northern Yukon Delta
20 molting and 10 raising broods near their nesting area.

21
22 MR. NICORI: Hi, my name is Emmitt
23 Nicori for the record. Quyuana for having me here. I'm
24 a Refuge Information Technician with the Yukon Delta
25 National Wildlife Refuge. I'm going to be speaking on
26 behalf of the black brant, cackling goose and emperor
27 goose banding.

28
29 The Yukon Delta National Wildlife
30 Refuge Waterfowl crew of five assisted the University
31 of Colorado (in Native) crew with the capture and
32 banding of molting and flightless families of black
33 brant from July 17 through July 26. The crew
34 participated in multiple drives that herded black brant
35 into moderate sized groups of 20 to 500 into catch
36 pens. Overall they captured approximately 1,400 black
37 brant including recaptures.

38
39 The Yukon Delta National Wildlife
40 Refuge is required by the Pacific Flyway to band a
41 minimum number of cackling geese of 500 to effectively
42 monitor their harvest and distribution. This year's
43 cackling goose banding effort was combined with the (in
44 Native) crew for multi species drives as well as a
45 helicopter effort. Over the course of nine days
46 between July 17th and July 26, 2023, the crew captured
47 542 cackling geese and between July 29 and August 3rd,
48 the Refuge captured and banded 343 cackling geese for a
49 total of 885 new bands deployed. And during this
50

0099

1 project we also collected 53 blood samples for avian
2 influenza monitoring of the cackling geese.

3

4 On August 1, 2023 a helicopter was used
5 to capture emperor goose juveniles to deploy 109 new
6 power tag bands to track juvenile movements and
7 survival.

8

9 And I'm going to be also speaking on
10 the Kavund Lake duck banding. Waterfowl banding data
11 is used to inform the annual harvest regulation setting
12 process for duck hunting season in the Pacific Flyway.
13 The banding data from the Yukon Delta Refuge is one
14 site that contributes data to determine the Statewide
15 harvest goal for the Pacific Flyway. The Pacific
16 Flyway Council uses both banding data and aerial
17 waterfowl survey data to establish duck hunting
18 frameworks each year. Since 1990 the Yukon Delta
19 National Wildlife Refuge has conducted a late summer
20 banding program at Kavund Lake. This project is
21 currently in progress. The duck banding season length
22 this year was 25 days between August 1 and August 24.
23 Only four swimming traps were set up due to high water
24 levels and low feasibility to access traditional trap
25 locations. Over the course of the season we banded a
26 total of 485 ducks. We captured six American green
27 winged teals, 19 mallards and 460 northern pintails.

28

29 The Yukon Delta National Wildlife
30 Refuge Staff are also collecting avian influenza
31 samples from 300 ducks at Kavund Lake.
32 And Christian and I got the chance to band some birds
33 at the Kavund Lake between the 18th of August through
34 the 24th. And banding birds went smoothly, we learned
35 how to collect the data and process the birds smoothly
36 and effectively. And we also worked with -- I'd like
37 to mention Randall Friendly, he's a waterfowl Biologist
38 and he has his master's degree and he is our waterfowl
39 Biologist. (In Native).

40

41 MR. MOSES: There's also one thing also
42 with the emperor goose populations. The population has
43 declined over the past six years. this last year's
44 estimate was -- is 24,300 and it's getting really close
45 to the 23,000 threshold. And so the Refuge and WCC are
46 making recommendations for management actions to
47 increase the population because once that threshold
48 gets under 23,000 the hunting will be closed for
49 emperor geese.

50

0100

1 And Chris has some -- while we fill
2 time real quick, Staff updates. Like he said, Randall
3 Friendly is our new waterfall Biologist. He's
4 originally from Tunt. We got him on this summer, he's
5 still almost done with his master's, I think he just
6 has to defend it in December. We've got a brand new
7 fish Biologist that started at the end of August,
8 Nathaniel Acres. He comes from I think Vermont and
9 North Carolina. And like a lot of you guys know, Boyd
10 left us at the end of August and so Laurie will be our
11 Acting Manager for the foreseeable future.

12

13 So I'll pass it to Chris.

14

15 MR. TULIK: Quyana, Mr. Chairman. My
16 name is Christopher Tulik, I'm the Lead Refuge
17 Information Technician for the Yukon Delta Refuge. The
18 reports that you've just heard from Chris and Emmitt
19 were -- are the summaries that our waterfowl Biologist
20 wrote up. So quyana for that.

21

22 I will speak about the lead shot used
23 here within our region or back home in our region. So
24 lead shot has always been a problem for -- from the
25 time when we've known when the shotgun shells were
26 introduced into our region a long time ago. So the
27 lead shot -- I mean, there's plenty of it and then the
28 produce or the companies that choose to use lead shot
29 they -- they take -- I mean, they take -- I mean, they
30 extract it out from the ground because it's so
31 numerous. I mean, and very easy to mold and make into
32 tiny pellets. But lead is both toxic and harmful to
33 both human, waterfowl and wildlife. And it's been
34 proven by the bird Biologists when they take dead
35 ducks, when they open their -- their tummies, you know,
36 their stomach, would be -- either be greenish,
37 purplish, that is a sign of lead poison. And not only
38 that, you know, to human it is poison to -- especially
39 to pregnant women because not only it will affect the
40 woman, it will also spread to the womb. And then what
41 it leads to is that premature birth, when they're born
42 their learning process is slow and at a later time that
43 they're -- you know, they get into all kinds of
44 troubles like getting in -- with the law and getting
45 all of that. Those are the effects of the toxic --
46 toxicity of lead.

47

48 And I would like to say that the RITs
49 back then in the early 1980s have been traveling to the

50

0101

1 villages, talking about the dangers of lead, why it's
2 toxic and harmful. But after all that time the lead
3 continued to be a problem within our region because
4 it's legal to sell and the stores, you know, can buy
5 all the time. And it continued to be a problem. So
6 what happened back in the early days particularly the
7 eider duck seems to be so numerous out there around
8 Nelson Island. I used to see great flocks a long time
9 ago. But we don't see them in that great number any
10 more, particularly the spectacled eider and the
11 steller's eider, they're pretty much gone, they moved
12 off further north.

13

14 Not only that we've learned how harmful
15 it is to the birds from the bird Biologist, we've seen
16 it for ourselves too. I mean, the sick and dying birds
17 washing ashore, come -- walking up on the beach,
18 they're -- you know, you can literally walk up to them
19 and take them. And then when you take them you can see
20 it in their mouth they're dripping with saliva or their
21 anus is oozing with green or purple stuff. That's
22 poisoning.

23

24 And so every year now and then when
25 AVCP's Waterfowl Conservation Committee was formed we,
26 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have been meeting
27 with the Committee about the bird population and
28 started including lead. AVCP Waterfowl Conservation
29 Committee have been hearing all about this, but it
30 seems like they're the only organization that have been
31 trying to deal with the lead shot problem out in the
32 Delta. And Jennifer Hooper knows all about this
33 amongst a mountain of other issues. So the -- in 2006
34 WCC requested the banning of lead shot for all birds
35 out in the Delta. And this proposal was also approved
36 by ADF&G in and it's in the regulations today that lead
37 shot cannot be used within the wetlands, mainly out
38 from where we come from. YK Delta is a huge land where
39 all of us live. I mean, it's the capital of the
40 migratory birds and we all depend on birds when the
41 come, part of our diet. And part of that diet with the
42 use of lead is being poisoned. We're also eating it.

43

44 So in addition WCC signed a petition in
45 2006 and again in 2018 opposing the sale and use of
46 lead shot within the YKDelta region. Lead is not only
47 harmful to human, wildlife or birds, it is also harmful
48 to the environment because when lead is expended and
49 the -- lands in the lake it'll fall -- you know, it
50

50

0102

1 will sink into the bottom of the lake and it will
2 remain there and it will not sink. And many of the
3 eider birds, you know, they like to dive and, you know,
4 they pick and swallow tiny pebbles and they mistake
5 lead, lead pebbles as a tiny pebble to grind up their
6 -- what they eat. And see that's how the poisonous
7 elements of lead is being passed on from the birds or
8 even the animals to humans.

9

10 So I guess it was right after the fall
11 AVCP WCC meeting, Kate Martin with Fish and Wildlife I
12 believe drafted a letter for the WCC and then Jennifer
13 was -- knows all -- knows that too. So what happened
14 was WCC wrote this letter to V.F. Grace to stop selling
15 lead to the communities throughout the Delta. And so
16 it was not only a few people that having time to
17 persuade the distributor, V.F. Grace. They're the
18 major distributor out there, they're selling lead shot.
19 What we would like to see out there is non-toxic shots
20 being sold. So V.F. Grace has finally agreed not to
21 sell lead shot, but we don't know that, do we trust
22 them. And the way it stands right now AVCP, WCC seems
23 to be the only organization, you know, working to not
24 have that toxic lead brought into our region. And I'm
25 thinking they need support. And this Council's support
26 will even -- it will make it even more stronger.

27

28 Qu yana, Mr. Chairman.

29

30 (In Native)

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Chris.

33 Go ahead, Aaron.

34

35 MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

36 Just to go back to the fishing part, our In-Season
37 Manager summary is on Page 3 and if you guys -- just
38 like Holly, it's kind of a summary of how the summer
39 went. So Page 3, 4 and 5 have pretty much all the
40 information that you need to know for the summer
41 season, but the Fish Commission on Thursday will get
42 more in depth of how the season went.

43

44 With that if you guys have any
45 questions for me or anybody else from the group.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you,
48 appreciate your report. Do we have any questions for
49 the personnel.

50

0103

1 Go ahead, Alissa.

2

3 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 Through the Chair. Do you guys have a list of all of
5 the migratory endangered birds that are on our Refuge?

6

7 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. Yeah,
8 we do. We can get a list and give it to you.

9

10 MS. ROGERS: (In Native). Thank you,
11 Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Do we have
14 any more questions or comments.

15

16 Richard, go ahead.

17

18 MR. SLATS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
19 the last couple years ago we were asking about the
20 ptarmigans when we were not getting any snow we're
21 wondering if they moved away or what the story is and
22 what the update would be on the ptarmigan. I know I
23 see some, but not as many and they don't -- in the
24 spring they don't come back as many as they were when I
25 was a kid. But yeah, I'm -- the question about the
26 ptarmigans, what the story is with them?

27

28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 MR. MOSES: The last couple years from
31 just talking with our waterfowl Biologist he's says
32 there's been really good survival of the young and
33 there have been reports that there have been more and
34 more ptarmigan. A lot of times they'll just when they
35 hatch and if it rains they don't survive. But the
36 first week if it rains and it rains hard that they will
37 -- they have low survival. But seems like the last few
38 years it's been dry and just from other reports it
39 seems like there's been very good survival of
40 ptarmigan.

41

42 MR. SLATS: Thank you. I remember that
43 we made a recommendation to reduce the har -- reduce
44 the harvest of salmon -- I mean, ptarmigans. So that's
45 one of the things that I'm asking.

46

47 MR. MOSES: Yeah, through the Chair.
48 There's -- on the State side there is a proposal to
49 increase the bag limit in Unit 18. So yeah. Right now

50

0104

1 I think the proposal on this before the Board of Game
2 is to increase it back to 50. And so we'll see where
3 that goes.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Chris and then I'll get
6 Fred and then Jackie.

7

8 Go ahead, Chris.

9

10 MR. TULIK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
11 One thing I forgot to mention is that today lead shot
12 continues to be a problem that we keep finding out in
13 the villages. And just recently we had to exchange the
14 lead shot that was in the village with what we -- the
15 non-toxic shot that we had. So about a couple weeks
16 ago 200 pounds I believe was shipped out that we --
17 that was brought to our office in Bethel where we
18 exchanged the lead with non-toxic and we continue to do
19 the right. Yeah. So you can either -- we encourage
20 people with lead shot to come and exchange what they
21 have with what we have. You can either contact Aaron
22 or myself about that.

23

24 Qu yana.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Chris.
27 Phillip and then Jackie.

28

29 MR. PETER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
30 got a question about the emperor geese, why they are
31 declining?

32

33 MR. MOSES: Yeah, they've been
34 gradually declining because I think it was four years
35 ago, some -- in the last -- I think four years ago they
36 opened up hunting for the first time in 27 years. And
37 so the population was roughly about 27,000 and they
38 opened -- they opened up hunting. And so it's been
39 slow -- gradually going down. The AMBCC in the --
40 everybody's restricted, had management actions to not
41 allow egging and some other stuff to try to keep it --
42 to bring the population back up. But it is -- the new
43 recommendations are probably to shorten it --
44 shortening the season for hunting. And I think that's
45 it.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Does that answer
48 your question.

49

50

0105

1 MR. PETER: Yeah.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay.

4

5 MR. PETER: And, Chris, you brought an
6 important message to the villages, you know, concerning
7 about the lead shot. What does -- shotgun shells are
8 changing. Me and my cousin, three of us, went and
9 steel -- steel shots introduce, we got to introduce
10 changes to shells. In spring we practice on birds,
11 birds are flying, flying with the steel shots, those
12 are really light ones, really light bullets, shotgun
13 shells, really light. Those first come out from the
14 Swanson's store, Swanson's True Value AC. I'll bet we
15 practice with them. If you hit it correctly the ducks
16 will fall. And then if you shoot them even though you
17 hit it they fly, still fly, but they fly not far and
18 they fall off. And the ones that we practice were --
19 and then those magnums, those powerful shotgun shells,
20 the new ones, the best ones are the three BB nitro
21 shotgun shells, they're really good. You could take
22 them, they fall off really fast, all dead. And then --
23 and then regular BB number 2 and number 4, they're good
24 too. And then those shotgun shells, the BB shells,
25 they're really pure aluminum, really pure, but they're
26 big one, they're big, big BB. Those are good ones.
27 Good to shoot cranes and swans, shoot one -- one shot
28 at a time. They're really good bullets. Now they're
29 selling maybe in small villages like (in Native),
30 Akiachak, Tuluksak and (in Native). They're selling
31 them kind of bullets, not the lead.

32

33 That's all I want to say.

34

35 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Phillip.

38

39 Jackie.

40

41 MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 For me I just want to commend the Yukon Delta National
43 Wildlife Refuge for all the work that you do and for --
44 especially for me for the Native or for the indigenous
45 representation that is continuing to grow under -- you
46 know, like he -- his dad's from Quinhagak, I'm so
47 proud, even more proud today of you guys.

48

49 I'm also an RIT for the Togiak National

50

0106

1 Wildlife Refuge and I just wanted you to guys to know
2 that I do outreach for the migratory bird calendar and
3 that it's some education for the kids. And then I did
4 some outreach for (indiscernible - distortion). But
5 after hearing the other RIT's presentation on waterfowl
6 I just realize I need to amp up my bird knowledge.

7

8 Thanks again. Qu yana.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Jackie.

11

12 James, go ahead.

13

14 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, regarding the lead
15 shots. How can we -- who can -- how -- who can slow
16 them down to be sale -- sold in stores in the YK?

17

18 MR. MOSES: James, that's a good
19 question. It's -- we thought that we had a handle on
20 it. We -- we're seeing less and less lead and then all
21 of a sudden there was another ammo shortage. And so a
22 lot of the stores were just buying what they could and
23 unfortunately it was lead. And there still is a
24 shortage of steel shot out on the -- on the Delta and
25 they are having trouble. But there is a bunch of lead
26 available right now.

27

28 MR. LANDLORD: Maybe your office can
29 make posters and say that lead shots are not good for
30 anything, birds, moose, humans. Especially birds
31 because they -- they don't dissolve, they just continue
32 to harm until whatever. Maybe that can be done.

33

34 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. Yeah,
35 this winter we're -- the RITs and me to a lesser extent
36 are going to be going out to a lot of the villages and
37 doing presentations. And so we'll be doing a lot of
38 outreach on a whole list of topics and lead shot is one
39 of the primary ones that we're planning on doing.

40

41 MR. LANDLORD: Okay. Mr. Chair, one
42 more.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, James.

45

46 MR. LANDLORD: How about the black
47 brants, are they -- is the population still the same,
48 are they increasing or what, black brant?

49

50

0107

1 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair, I'll have to get
2 back with you.

3

4 MR. LANDLORD: They used to -- right
5 after break up in the Yukon, I don't know when, but
6 they fly down the river, right in the middle of the
7 river and my dad used to -- he took a lot of black
8 brant. And I haven't eaten one for a long time so I
9 can't remember why he likes them. But they used to fly
10 down after the break up and there'd be a whole bunch of
11 them just going real fast down the river.

12

13 Quyana.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Any more
16 questions or comments for the YKDelta Refuge personnel.

17

18 MS. BOECK: Through the Chair, if I can
19 make a comment. This is Laurie Boeck. I just wanted
20 to point out.....

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Laurie.

23

24 MS. BOECK:we did recently enter
25 into an agreement with Calista Corp and so we've just
26 hired Stanislaus Sheppard out of Mountain Village to be
27 one of our RITs. And for Jackie we've got Randall
28 Friendly or for everybody he'll be doing a presentation
29 on October 17th about working just on the Yukon Delta
30 and waterfowl. So if you guys can tune in at 5:00 p.m.
31 it'll be zoomed or you can come into the office at
32 Bethel, we're going to have a potluck.

33

34 That's all. Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Brooke.

37

38 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
39 did pass out a flyer about Randall's presentation to
40 the Council members and there's a couple copies on the
41 public handout table back there for anyone else that
42 might be interested. And for folks that might not be
43 quite as tech savvy, this box here, this black and
44 white box, if you have a smart phone camera you can
45 hover it over this and it'll give you the link to join
46 the zoom meeting. So I noticed there wasn't a link
47 printed on here so that's how you can join.

48

49 Thank you.

50

0108

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Any more
2 questions or comments for our Yukon Delta personnel.

3

4 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

7

8 MR. LANDLORD: The birds next here in
9 Alaska and also in the lower 48, the geese or how -- is
10 there any information whether they're hunting more down
11 there or what's going on?

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MR. MOSES: Yeah, emperor geese are the
16 only birds that live and breed in Alaska. I know a lot
17 of -- a majority probably -- a big majority of the
18 cackling geese nest in Yukon Delta. I'm not sure on
19 the other ones. But there -- I know there is a lot of
20 hunting down in the States. So yeah.

21

22 MR. LANDLORD: Yeah, I -- I watch
23 outdoor channel a lot. And some of those hunters down
24 in the States, they shoot a lot of birds and they just
25 take the breasts, they don't -- I don't think they cook
26 nothing else. But they -- the ones I see they just
27 take the breast in the front, you know. I was just
28 wondering because sometimes I just watch the moose,
29 elk, bird hunting, ducks a lot and that's why I was
30 asking.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Do we have any
33 more questions or comments at this time from the
34 Council.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Brooke, go ahead.

39

40 MS. McDAVID: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
41 did note down the lead shot as a topic you might want
42 to include in the annual report and I'll just remind
43 you of that when we get there if that's something you'd
44 like to include.

45

46 Thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing no other
49 questions or comments, we appreciate your report. Is
50

0109

1 that it?

2

3

MR. MOSES: Yep.

4

5

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Thank you again.

6

Thank you for your report.

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At this time I'm going to ask that we take a break until tomorrow morning. We'll meet here at 9:00 o'clock to continue our -- day two of our three day meeting. So thank you again for being here with us today.

We'll go ahead and recess for the evening.

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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STATE OF ALASKA)

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered ___ through ___ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the 10th day of October;

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 Anchorage, Alaska, this 18th day of November 2023.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/26