

0001

1 WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

3  
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5  
6  
7 VOLUME II

8  
9 LARSON CHARLIE COMMUNITY HALL

10 Galena, Alaska

11 October 3, 2024

12 9:00 am  
13  
14  
15

16 COUNCIL MEMBERS' PRESENT:

17 Jack Reakoff

18 Jenny Pelkola

19 Tommy Kriska

20 Don Honea

21 Robert Walker

22 Timothy Gervais

23 Darrell Vent  
24  
25  
26  
27

28 Regional Council Coordinator, Nissa Pilcher  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35

36 Recorded and transcribed by:

37  
38 Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp

39 877-261-2495

40 Info.@lighthouseonline.com  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Galena, Alaska - 10/03/2024)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're going to come back to order again. We've been trying to get other Council members on the phone, and we had a Council member call in and then drop out. Are you on here? Don, are you on the phone? Or Darryl or Tim? If you're there Don, you got a star six. You're muted if you're trying to talk, Don. Is that Don?

MS. PILCHER: That might have been.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Who is that?

MR. HONEA: Hey, this is Don, Jack.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Don. Well, good. All right, we're bringing the meeting back to order. We're on evening break. So, good morning. So, we were in the agenda, we were on the PINs or the Priority Information Needs for the Kuskokwim River. We were actually in vote, and then Tim Gervais dropped out. We went into recess for evening. Tim texted that he actually was in favor, and he was -- he had dropped out. So, he texted that he actually was voting for that. So, that would have given us quorum. That vote will stand. And so, the Kuskokwim priority needs, we covered all that. And were you listening to that part Don? The Kuskokwim priority needs those Yukon.

MR. HONEA: I don't know when that was. I had a Tribal Council meeting yesterday afternoon, so I was pretty busy.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's fine. So, we're finished with that. That vote will stand Timothy Gervais registered that he was affirmative on on those Priority Information Needs and the and the discussion that we had. So, where are we going to go here now that we have quorum? Nissa.

MS. PILCHER: Good morning, everyone. This is Nissa Pilcher for the record, I guess we should open the floor up to -- unless you wanted to get through the action items before we open it up to non-agenda topics.

0003

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah I prefer to do any of the action items that we need to do while we have quorum.

MS. PILCHER: Okay so, then we can launch in and we would start on number. Oh, that's right, yes. We should do a roll call. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah.

MS. PILCHER: So, we'll start right now with the roll call. And then we will start after the roll call of Council members, on number 13C the Annual Report.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, you want to call roll, Nissa.

MS. PILCHER: Sure can. So, first on the phone we have Don Honea.

MR. HONEA: Don Honea, here.

MS. PILCHER: Oh, I'm sorry. For some reason, I started mispronouncing your name a little bit ago, and I can't seem to make myself stop. It also looks like we also have Council member Vent.

MR. VENT: Yes. I'm here.

MS. PILCHER: Are you on? All right.

MR. VENT: I'm here, yes.

MS. PILCHER: Thank you, Darryl. And just one more double check. Do we have Timothy Gervais on? All right, and then in the room. Robert Walker.

MR. WALKER: Yes.

MS. PILCHER: Tommy Kriska.

MR. KRISKA: Yes.

MS. PILCHER: Jenny Pelkola.

MS. PERKOLA: Yes.

MS. PILCHER: And Jack Reakoff.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Here.

MS. PILCHER: So, with the -- what is that? Two, four, six members out of eight, we do have quorum. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. So, we're going to move into Annual Report item C on the agenda and Board FY23 Annual Report Replies. Nissa Pilcher.

MS. PILCHER: All right. So, very quickly Mr. Chair, members of the Council, for the record, my name is Nissa Pilcher and I wanted to draw your attention to the Federal Subsistence Board F3 Annual Report Reply to the Council, which starts on page 23 of your supplemental materials book. This is also found by navigating to the Supplemental Materials tab on the Western Interiors Meeting Materials website that was given previously, which is [www.doi.gov/subsistence](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence). Under the regions tab choose Western Interior and then the meeting materials tab. So, once again.

So, this is not an action item. We will start with action items. Next this was just drawing your attention to the Annual Report reply. And the Board does appreciate your effort to communicate through this Annual Report to the Board issues outside of the regulatory process that affect Subsistence users in your region. And once again, this is not an action item, but we will launch right into an action item, which is identifying issues for your next annual report. So, the FY 24 Annual Report.

So, this is the time that the Council is to decide what issues to include in this Annual Report. For your information, there is a briefly or there is an updated version of the guidelines for this report can be found on page 93 of your supplemental materials book. That's the one bound with the ring instead of the comb binding. So, ANILCA established the Annual Report as a way to inform the Federal Subsistence Board of regional subsistence issues and needs, and to provide recommendations for regional Fish and Wildlife management strategies, policies, standards, guidelines and proposed regulation. Section 805-A3D of ANILCA stipulates that your annual reply could contain identification of current and anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife populations within the region,

1 and evaluation of current and anticipated subsistence  
2 needs for fish and wildlife populations within the  
3 region. A recommended strategy for the management of  
4 fish and wildlife populations within the region to  
5 accommodate such subsistence uses and needs, and  
6 recommendations concerning policies, standards,  
7 guidelines and regulations to implement the strategy.  
8 So, in order for the Board to adequately understand and  
9 respond if needed to Council's Annual Report topics  
10 Council members should discuss in detail on the record  
11 the issues that they would like to include in the report.  
12 Some issues might be better communicated through letter  
13 writing. Council should indicate whether topics are  
14 informational only or if they would like a response from  
15 the Board. If a response is requested, the Council should  
16 clearly articulate what they are asking for, such as the  
17 Council's requesting a Board action. To make the Annual  
18 Report process more productive consider the Board's  
19 authority under Title 8 of ANILCA when formulating your  
20 Annual Report replies. So, as a brief summary of that,  
21 you guys already do identify in your Annual Report what  
22 is informational and what you would like the actions  
23 you'd like the Board to take. But if you would like to  
24 extrapolate that more on the record, that would be  
25 helpful. And then your Annual Report ensures that the  
26 Board has the most up to date awareness of issues,  
27 concerns, and current events that impacts your  
28 Subsistence way of life. With your report and  
29 recommendations, the Board can make informed decisions  
30 on regulatory and policy actions. Items shared today  
31 will be drafted into topics of your Annual Report based  
32 on the information that is provided today, and the  
33 Council will review it -- the draft at your next meeting  
34 winter 2025 in order to provide edits and approve it.  
35 And if you cannot think of topics right now, we can do  
36 so after like, throughout today. Like, if something else  
37 comes up, it can be added. But that is all, Mr. Chair.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, is any Council  
40 members have topics that they would like to put into the  
41 Annual Report to inform the Federal Subsistence Board  
42 about various issues that are affecting our region. Any?  
43 Go ahead, Robert.

44  
45 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
46 members of the Board and staff here. We, down to Lower  
47 Yukon subregion, what we call for the Tanana Chief area  
48 or the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross and our  
49 regular annual meeting that we have for villages that  
50 Area M came up more than once. So, this is a discussion

1 where -- and I did explain to them, a lot of them didn't  
2 know what it was because we don't have a government-to-  
3 government relationship with anybody. Nobody is sending  
4 us info on what is going on with Area M, and I asked for  
5 this time and time again in the past when I was on the  
6 Board, and it never ever happened to us. Even -- I was  
7 off the RAC for -- we never, never ever got anything  
8 from OSM. The only people that we got some stuff was  
9 from the BLM, the Park Service and that's it. But we  
10 never ever hear from OSM on talking about high seas  
11 fisheries, NOAA. And unless I went to a meeting where I  
12 could hear this but other than that, no correspondence.  
13 And I am very dissatisfied with how this function. And,  
14 Jack, you know, we did talk about this numerous times,  
15 having a government-government relationship because we  
16 are a federally recognized tribes [sic] and we all are  
17 a federally recognized tribes [sic] for that. So,  
18 somewhere along the line, I think that it's going to be  
19 -- have to be readdressed to all the tribes again. Thank  
20 you, Mr. Chair.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, this Council  
23 has submitted an agenda change request to the Board of  
24 Fish to restrict some of the gear types, the sein depths  
25 and so forth for the commercial fishery and in Area M.  
26 So, we've submitted the -- that agenda change request.  
27 We have not gotten -- we have not gotten any current  
28 data at -- about the bycatch of chum salmon and so forth.  
29 And so that might be available later on when we get into  
30 ADF&G reports and so forth. Go ahead, Robert.

31  
32 MR. WALKER: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair,  
33 members of the Board. That being on the YRDFA Board  
34 also, you know, we asked that somehow we would  
35 communicate with the other RACs and other agencies that  
36 how could we be informed of -- if there's any kind of  
37 investigations into dumping fish over board down in  
38 Area M or False Pass or have there been any kind of  
39 wildlife troopers boarding ships and investigating into  
40 their catches or all of these incidents? And -- YRDFA  
41 did come out at the very beginning of their meetings,  
42 and they were reporting this. And toward the summer they  
43 stopped reporting it. And I asked, why did you stop  
44 reporting it and the biologist -- the State biologists  
45 and the State Fish Manager and even the Federal Fish  
46 Manager never said a word. So, and that's something that  
47 I asked that we put on the agenda for. So, when they  
48 reported that we know that the State is doing their job,  
49 but apparently maybe the State told your YRDFA since  
50 YRDFA is the State functioned organization. So, I don't

1 know if this is being hushed up, or this is being shut  
2 off to all the answers that they're doing. And the really  
3 good example is that last spring we had a meeting with  
4 the biologist and this and that from the Tribal function,  
5 I was invited to the Hilton to do this, and I did discuss  
6 this right out openly. I said, how could you represent  
7 the State when they are mismanaging the fish? And the  
8 lady who was in charge didn't bother to answer that  
9 question.

10  
11 I said, I'm -- and I said it again. And  
12 a friend of mine, Maurice McGinty, he did State that he  
13 ate his last jar of fish from the year before from their  
14 fishing. And the next day's newspaper that came out on  
15 my phone, you know, you have that fish report and it  
16 didn't say anything about me saying, why is the State  
17 mismanaging? Why is it money is more important? They  
18 didn't say that, but they did mention Maurice McGinty  
19 ate his last jar of fish. And that is how -- when you  
20 look at it, the newspaper, the news people, how do they  
21 function? Do they fall in favor with the State? Does the  
22 State tell them what to print? Does the State say, well,  
23 you delete Walker's comment but put Mr. McGinty's  
24 comment into the newspaper. So, and I asked that  
25 question, and I asked the lady that was in charge, and  
26 she says, I don't know anything about it. So, it just  
27 kind of blew me away because is there a cover up for the  
28 State on all these functions that goes on? You know, I  
29 mean, is there somebody going to their reports and  
30 deleting all the stuff that's going to be telling the  
31 truth or what? So, that was -- just kind of blew me  
32 away. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Robert.  
35 Yeah, we're going to have ADF&G and the Yukon -- and in-  
36 season manager later on reporting. And we can ask, you  
37 know, questions about bycatch effects on the returns  
38 this year, the abysmal returns that happened. And but  
39 we -- the Annual Report, this -- the subject before us  
40 right now we have a sheep management strategy that we  
41 have been working on for -- this will be the -- we  
42 started working on that in the spring of 2023, April  
43 meeting of 23. And so, we should need to add that on the  
44 Annual Report that sheep management strategy, it is  
45 going to move forward. We want other Regional Councils  
46 to be involved with at least going over what the  
47 management strategy -- a lot of Councils have the same  
48 problem, sheep throughout all of Alaska.

49  
50 MR. VENT: Jack, this is Darrell.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

MR. VENT: Yeah, I have some concerns with what you guys are -- I have the same concerns with what you guys are talking about there. But I think the key thing here is that when, you know, when they went in agreement with ANILCA, they were saying that subsistence was a priority. The Federal Government needs to make sure that the State complies with, you know, our food management, I mean, our subsistence, they call it. But we need to hold them to the fire on how they manage our food resources because it's not for our food resources and they don't want to -- they don't want to document anything. And that's what Robert was talking about there. We need to make sure that they comply with that food resource for subsistence people. And they don't want to put that on paper because they're saying, oh, there's nothing wrong. The people are not complaining about it when it goes to the Federal Government, because we're not down there sitting down in Washington D.C., you know, saying that, you know, they're complying with anything or they're not complying with anything. So, we're getting left out of the loop because we're advisory only. I just, you know, I had to, you know, bring that point up because Robert started talking about our subsistence priorities. And I just want you to know, hopefully, that we can, you know, address that problem there with the State. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, I want to get to that. That issue is out in front of us. We haven't even gotten to those reports yet. So, I want to -- I would like to do this Annual Report or at least work on this Annual Report. And when we get into the reports from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the in-season manager, we'll talk about the Fisheries parameters of what occurred, and we can ask them what bycatch influence were from -- the area South Alaska Peninsula, Shumigan Fishery, the Area M issue. And so, we're going to be asking that. But we're basically shooting in the dark until we got them on the phone and can actually talk to them. So, we're -- that's in a future agenda item here. So, we'll get to that after this. But we can add.....

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF Yes, go ahead.



1 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Mr. Chair, this is  
2 Don. I completely agree with -- I like the Area M, I  
3 completely agree with -- I think we ought to have our  
4 priorities, and the members of the Board are well aware  
5 of all of our, all of our problems. And I think, you  
6 know, I would be happy with whatever -- every request  
7 in fishing, disasters, fishing. I mean, something to  
8 bring our fish back. I've been out of kind of out of the  
9 loop there. I don't know when they had the controversy  
10 of meeting at AFN about the Area M, I don't know like -  
11 - for instance, how long that was going to be in effect  
12 or what did, I mean, the stations and everything on  
13 that, but I just wanted just as a member of the -- to  
14 say that I would agree with you guys on with Robert,  
15 everybody else to make the whatever we put in the Annual  
16 Report to be -- make fishing a priority. Thank you.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We can -- well, we  
19 can start the topic of Area M and Nissa, did you have a  
20 comment?

21  
22 MS. PILCHER: I did. I am trying to find  
23 it looks like my version doesn't have what it needed.  
24 You guys did have a part of your Annual Report from last  
25 year that had concerns over the State and the Federal  
26 Government not meeting your subsistence or not being  
27 able to meet your subsistence needs. Yeah, that's the -  
28 - it's the -- that's the -- what's the word, that's the  
29 guidance on how to write the Annual Report. So, it's  
30 right after that or it should be. So, starting on --  
31 there it is.

32  
33 So, action item or excuse me, on your  
34 Annual Report from last year, number one and this starts  
35 on page 23, looks like number one was the North Pacific  
36 Fishery Management Council's recent conservation  
37 measures are lacking, leaving the burden of conservation  
38 on subsistence users. And item number two was the Alaska  
39 Board of Fisheries recent conservation measures are  
40 lacking, leaving the burden on conservation on  
41 subsistence users. And number three was loss of faith  
42 in regulatory process due to continual subsistence  
43 fishing closures in the Kuskokwim and Yukon rivers. And  
44 item number four, continue to encourage Federal agencies  
45 to assist in salmon recovery. So, this Council has  
46 already and I'm not saying that means you don't have to  
47 continue to do so. You have definitely been expressing  
48 your concern in the way that this Council can about  
49 these issues. Typically, Robert, we have had someone  
50 from (pause) the -- I'm blanking right now, but Julie

00010

1 with -- I can't remember she's with NOAA or the National  
2 (indiscernible), but she normally does a presentation  
3 to us. I didn't arrange it this time. And that's on the  
4 -- that's on the trawling. I didn't arrange it this time  
5 because I wasn't quite sure how Galena was going to work  
6 out with it not being in Fairbanks, but we can definitely  
7 invite her to the winter meeting and make sure or --  
8 yeah, the winter meeting. And I can also extend an  
9 invitation to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
10 the Area M biologists. That's -- I am not quite sure the  
11 Kuskokwim staff or the Yukon staff are going to be able  
12 to give you the information that you want because they  
13 manage, and I am not speaking for the State, but what  
14 they have said previously is they manage their areas and  
15 they don't -- they can't necessarily give you  
16 information about other areas, but we can request the  
17 State have somebody come to your winter meeting to  
18 discuss these issues with you. It is up to the State  
19 whether or not they do attend and they do provide that  
20 information.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Robert, go  
23 ahead.

24

25 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
26 understand that Nissa, you know, I like to -- and another  
27 issue that with this program that's going on there, I'd  
28 like to see a report from the Department of Fish and  
29 Game, the Wildlife Protection Agency, to see what has  
30 been going on down there. Has there been investigations  
31 into other alleged actions that have been done down  
32 there? And I believe the OSM should step into that too,  
33 because I think, you know, they represent us, and they  
34 should be looking into that for us. You know, we  
35 shouldn't be doing that ourselves, because if we're  
36 going to have an investigation into something that we  
37 have, the people who work for us should be doing this  
38 for us. Am I wrong here?

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: There's -- the  
41 authority for management of Area M is the state of Alaska  
42 and they enforcement has been the state of Alaska. And  
43 last year they actually busted ten boats that were  
44 throwing chums overboard. So, there was reports of that.  
45 That was that big Fisheries meeting where everybody  
46 attended and was supporting -- I forget what the proposal  
47 number was, but the Board failed. But the discussion  
48 revolved around this chum chucking problem, and the  
49 State enforcement actually busted those boats doing  
50 that. And so, they -- the state of Alaska -- that's what

00011

1 our Annual Report here is -- the Board of State or the  
2 Federal Subsistence Board is telling us. We're pointing  
3 out that Alaska Board of Fisheries conservation measures  
4 are lacking. Our Annual Report from last year is telling  
5 the Board that. But the response is, as previously  
6 mentioned, the Board shares your concerns about bycatch  
7 and so forth. The waters outside the three-mile limit  
8 are managed by NOAA Fisheries or known as the Marine  
9 Fisheries Service's. Three-mile boundary in that area -  
10 - and in that area is long established, and any changes  
11 in the boundary is a matter between the State and the  
12 Department of Commerce. They -- we do need to get  
13 information; we do need information about what's going  
14 on down in the South Alaska Peninsula, Shumigan, Area M  
15 Fishery which is impacting the returns to the Yukon River  
16 drainage and the Kuskokwim River drainages. The state  
17 of Alaska is not taking genetic samples off of that  
18 bycatch. They don't want to know where those fish are  
19 going to and there's some real issues. And so, there's  
20 a need but it should -- well it can be an Annual Report  
21 topic that we feel that their management lacks in the  
22 Area M Fishery. And there's a whole bunch of -- we could  
23 just have a laundry list of things that the State needs  
24 to address. And they -- and the Federal Subsistence Board  
25 needs to step up to the plate and go, the State is --  
26 you're affecting the fishery resources for  
27 sustainability on the entire drainage. The in-season  
28 managers on the Yukon are doing all they can. State and  
29 Federal managers are doing all they can to try and get  
30 these runs back. But if they're extra territorial,  
31 waters are open to interception, there's hatchery  
32 releases in the billions of salmon, smolt going out onto  
33 the static releases, continuing to release billions of  
34 fish into a marine crash or got dead birds all over the  
35 beaches and stuff. The state of Alaska is doing things  
36 that are -- they should not be doing, and the Federal  
37 Subsistence Board needs to point it out that this is  
38 highly affecting the sustained yield management of  
39 Alaska, the Yukon River fisheries and the in-season  
40 managers here cannot protect the salmon unless they have  
41 salmon coming into the river. So, it is a topic we can  
42 put it down as the fisheries issues topic. It's not just  
43 Area M. Area M is just one of the bycatch problems.  
44 We've got area M, we've got the static release of 1.2  
45 billion pink and chum salmon smolt onto the onto the  
46 high seas annually just from Alaska alone, which are  
47 basically they eat those pink salmon. We eat everything  
48 that comes into the ocean. And a lot of -- that's why  
49 we need to have genetic sampling at Area M, that's for  
50 the stocks from the Yukon River, chum and coho and

00012

1 chinook stocks, many of them will go into the North  
2 Pacific.

3  
4 They're in direct contact with that  
5 competition from hatchery fish. There's a bunch of  
6 issues going on that needs to be continuously brought  
7 up before the Federal Subsistence Board. Yeah, they  
8 can't do anything about it, but they need to get into  
9 discussion with the state of Alaska about what they need  
10 to do to address this severe management declines. We're  
11 losing these populations of salmon not only from the  
12 trawl fishery, but we're also losing them from, you know,  
13 mismanagement. All this caught flat out, say what it is.  
14 You cannot release that kind of hatchery release into  
15 the -- into a marine system that's in decline. That just  
16 cannot happen. And they refuse, the trawling industry,  
17 the hatchery associations have a huge influence on the  
18 Board of Game, because the Board of Game is made up of  
19 predominantly seiners and stuff. There are -- in the --  
20 and state of Alaska benefits from that cost recovery.  
21 The state of Alaska actually has 11 hatcheries that they  
22 actually have paid themselves. Cost recovery, they catch  
23 the -- their hatchery fish that have taken the food out  
24 of the wild stocks mouth. So, this is a topic, but I  
25 would -- we can put it under the list. Yes, we'll have  
26 it on the list. But I also want to talk to the State in-  
27 season managers before we move past this by as one --  
28 as a completed topic. We will complete this topic after  
29 we have discussions later on today. Go ahead, Robert.

30  
31 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes,  
32 I understand all that, you know, too. And it just kind  
33 of like we're sitting here talking, I think the third  
34 or fourth, even -- we're talking about food, that's what  
35 we're talking about. And a lot of people who are in our  
36 tribe and Lower Yukon subregion, you know, and the Yukon-  
37 Koyukuk subregion and, you move up in a TCC area and  
38 that's only us two. That's over in (In Native), AVCP,  
39 Bristol Bay. But I just can't believe that, why is the  
40 State censoring so many newspapers and so many meetings  
41 that come out and are telling the newspapers what they  
42 could or could not print? I'm not too sure if they're  
43 doing that, but I am going to say that they are. I mean,  
44 I'll put my name on the line for that. And another thing  
45 too, I'd like to have OSM start a fish commission to  
46 investigate into this because I think that we have a  
47 right to know on what's going on. And all this time in  
48 these last couple of years, we've just been sitting dark  
49 and we've been talking the same thing over and over and  
50 over again. And this is getting to be coming back to

00013

1 where we started. And I feel -- I think the Federal  
2 Government, the OSM Should stand up for us because they  
3 work for us, we don't work for them. They should go and  
4 do an investigation into the State fisheries. And one  
5 other thing too watching Deadliest Catch. Why are they  
6 up on the Russian line? Because there's no more crab,  
7 no more brown crab, no more red crab, where is it? I  
8 mean, why? And the State let this go on because it's  
9 money. And I'm going to ask Brent if he could form a  
10 fish commission to look into all these things with the  
11 State, because I think we have the right to know on what  
12 is going on. Mr. Chair, thank you.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Does OSM want to  
15 respond to that?

16

17 BRENT VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
18 Council member Walker. For one thing, that I -- crosses  
19 my mind is that when we are developing these Annual  
20 Reports, we do -- it will be very helpful for each item  
21 to have the specific ask, exactly what are you asking  
22 of the Board? Are you informing them? Do you want  
23 information? Do you want a letter written by the Board  
24 or OSM? Do you want us to invite speakers at the next  
25 meeting? It seems like we're going in that direction,  
26 so, that's great and I just want you to think about that  
27 with each of these -- for items. But in regards to this  
28 request for OSM to form a fish commission, I well -- I  
29 -- one question I have is what is this fish commission  
30 look like, who is part of this commission? As far as OSM  
31 doing an investigation on -- it seems like quite a bit  
32 what is happening in Area M and what is going on with  
33 other things. I will say that OSM does have very limited  
34 resources. We don't have a lot of staff that we could  
35 put into doing -- we don't do independent research. We  
36 don't have the resources for that. We don't have the  
37 resources to have fisheries biologists, etc., dedicating  
38 their time to doing a research. We don't have the money  
39 to do research. We are basically have just enough staff  
40 to write these analyses to try to get -- collect  
41 information that's readily available, to request  
42 information for the State, and to pull those into  
43 analyses and to try to get everything we can prepared  
44 for you at these meetings. So, I don't know what we can  
45 do about an investigation, but I am curious to know more  
46 what your thoughts on this fish commission and how OSM  
47 might be able to help in organizing such a thing. And  
48 what would be the goal of the fishery -- of this fish  
49 commission? Thank you.

50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, the Council  
2 is the commission. The Council is -- we're the liaison  
3 between the Federal Subsistence Board, OSM assists us.  
4 We can't order them to do stuff like that. So, Federal  
5 Subsistence Board -- we can request a report from the  
6 Alaska Department of Public Safety, the troopers, what  
7 was their enforcement this last year in 2024 in Area M.  
8 We can ask NOAA enforcement to give us a report in this  
9 -- at our next meeting about what their enforcements  
10 were and in regards to outside the three-mile limit and  
11 their Federal waters, what's going on in the North  
12 Pacific? There was enforcement actions done in the North  
13 Pacific trawlers. All we talk about is the Bering Sea  
14 but our fish -- what I keep saying is our fish from the  
15 Yukon River go into the North Pacific. There's a bunch  
16 of them going to the North Pacific. And that's what the  
17 problem is. There's not enough -- what our Annual Reports  
18 needs to be talking about is the lack of biological  
19 information for that -- for the stocks that move through  
20 the Area M area that go into that rear in the North  
21 Pacific, and the effects of interception at Area M and  
22 in the Shelikof Strait Interception fisheries along the  
23 South Alaska Peninsula up through Kodiak Island. There's  
24 a whole bunch of stuff going on in the North Pacific,  
25 and we want to highlight those to the Federal Subsistence  
26 Board. And we need a report back from the state of Alaska  
27 about how they're going -- how the Board of Fish -- we  
28 should write to the State Board of Fish how they're  
29 going to address the marine crash that's very apparent  
30 by the size of the salmon of all species of salmon in  
31 all of Alaska now, and how they are going to reduce that  
32 hatchery release. The State Board of Fish has been  
33 sitting on their hands, not wanting to talk about the  
34 elephant in the room, that the hatchery release is eating  
35 the food right out of the wild stock's mouth. And we  
36 need to have the state of Alaska -- we need to write a  
37 letter to the state of Alaska Board of Fish, the State  
38 enforcement, how they're going to address this issue,  
39 because they're exceeding sustainability of the entire  
40 state of Alaska's fisheries, statewide. And the Federal  
41 Subsistence Board, it has to be in the annual report  
42 that we're really super concerned about the lack -- this  
43 let's just see what happens aspect. It's like we've got  
44 to stop that kind -- that's not management. We need to  
45 start. The state of Alaska needs to step up to the plate.  
46 The Board of Fish has got to do their job, their  
47 constitutional job for sustained yield management. And  
48 they're not doing it. They don't have run returns in  
49 many areas. But OSM there, they assist these Councils.  
50 They don't set up Boards. They don't have that kind of

1 management authority. The Board of -- the Federal  
2 Subsistence Board would have to direct them, but they  
3 don't have -- that gets into exterior, you know, the  
4 state of Alaska and other, NOAA one gets into a whole  
5 bunch of other stuff. But the Federal Subsistence Board  
6 can talk to the other agencies and to the state of  
7 Alaska. They want they sometimes even have State-Federal  
8 Board meetings or discussions. This has to start  
9 happening, this by guess and by golly, let's see what's  
10 going to happen. We've been waiting way too long. Now  
11 we're looking at a declining populations to the point  
12 where I don't know that they can actually recover when  
13 they get to this low a level. Are these spawning  
14 escapements so low that we may never actually see them  
15 return? And the state of Alaska has got to look  
16 themselves in the mirror and say, why did we continue?  
17 If you look from 1974, where there were no hatcheries,  
18 none and moving up to 1.9 billion salmon smolt released  
19 into the North Pacific and we watch our salmon declines  
20 at the same rate. You can look at the look at a graph  
21 and it's apparent, but the state of Alaska is not doing  
22 anything.

23  
24 This OSM is an agency to assist the  
25 Councils. They don't do -- they can't set up  
26 investigatory commissions. That's not what they do.  
27 That's not what this agency does. We are an advisory to  
28 the Federal Subsistence Board, we can write letters to  
29 Federal and other agencies. We can write to the Federal  
30 Subsistence Board, but we can't make this agency go make  
31 an investigative [sic] that's like -- or they're not  
32 even in -- they don't even have an enforcement. Do you  
33 have anybody in (indiscernible) [43:00] on your staff?  
34 They don't have enforcement people. They don't have that  
35 kind of people. This is not what this agency does. But  
36 I'm super concerned about what's going on. And our Annual  
37 Report should reiterate all of the various aspects, it's  
38 not just one topic, not just Area M, it's catch and  
39 release, Area M interception, other interceptions in the  
40 North Pacific and the lack of return into the systems.  
41 There's [sic] many aspects of this whole issue. And Area  
42 M is a very concerning issue because there were a lot  
43 of fish getting caught incidentally, that every last one  
44 of them is precious on spawning grounds this year. We're  
45 looking at returns at 10% for some drainages on the  
46 Yukon River. So, yes, that's a -- that's an Annual Report  
47 topic. We need to put that out. But we can't get this  
48 agency. We can say that we can say stuff, but that's not  
49 going to happen. That's just not the way this works. The

1 Federal Subsistence Board can't even make OSM do that.  
2 They don't even have that ability to do that.

3  
4 What we do need -- the Federal  
5 Subsistence Board needs to step up to the plate and flat  
6 out say it to the state of Alaska. You are going to  
7 start getting these runs under control. You are going  
8 to start doing -- reduce this hatchery release, because  
9 you're going to cause these fish to be under endangered  
10 species status. That's what's going to happen with  
11 chinook if they keep it up. I'm super frustrated, I'm  
12 sorry I talked too long, but we can't make OSM set up a  
13 commission to investigate this. That's not going to  
14 happen. That just cannot happen. That's not the way this  
15 agency works. I've been with this Council for 31 years,  
16 I've never heard of anything like that. They can interact  
17 with other processes like the Board of Fish process. But  
18 the Board of fish doesn't even do what they're supposed  
19 to be doing. They don't listen to the advisory  
20 committees. I can tell you flat out, as an advisory  
21 committee member, the State Board of Fish and the State  
22 Board of Game rarely listens to the Advisory Committees,  
23 rarely. I'm getting super concerned about that because  
24 they're under statutory requirement to -- Nissa used to  
25 be a Coordinator for them. They're under statutory  
26 requirement to listen to those Advisory Committees.  
27 They're not doing it. Well, who's going to sue them  
28 about that? Right. I'm frustrated with that. Go ahead,  
29 Robert.

30  
31 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
32 understand that you are frustrated too, also. And I read  
33 everything that I come across what I can get my hands  
34 on. I do read to make sure that I am speaking with  
35 something that it's not -- I'm making up, but like the  
36 Fish commissioner came to our meeting, he didn't even  
37 give us a forewarning that he's going to give it to a  
38 seven-year moratorium. Why? On the Yukon River, AYK. And  
39 when you look at this and say why -- I asked him right  
40 out in the YDRFA meeting, I said, why is Area M and all  
41 these other fishing boats out there fishing for salmon,  
42 and we can't fish on Yukon River, because you're going  
43 to protect the fish. Us protect them. We don't take more  
44 than, I would say, 10 to 15,000 chinook salmon on the  
45 Yukon River for food. And they're dumping you look at  
46 their bycatch, I mean, good grief, that bycatch is like  
47 three times the fish that we need, but we have to suffer  
48 for it so they can make money. And I think that the  
49 state of Alaska has been censuring the tribal people. I  
50 will say that, and I will put my name on that line, and



1 I will tell the State people that you guys have an  
2 organization, I did mention it to them in their meeting.  
3 Nobody answered my question. I said, you guys work 8 to  
4 5, we don't work at all, and you have money to buy food.  
5 We don't have that kind of money to buy food. All our  
6 food comes from the river and the land, and we never  
7 said a word. But that's true because when you hear people  
8 talking, even on the street, they're talking about fish,  
9 this, that, you know, because that's our food and we  
10 have to suffer for something that money has taken a  
11 priority for the State. So, Mr. Chairman, I would like  
12 to end this, but I am going to say that I believe the  
13 state of Alaska censoring a lot more things than we  
14 know. And OSM, maybe they should too take a look at this  
15 and come back and report in February, see if they could  
16 do a fish commission, if they could form a budget, if  
17 they have money to do that. I'm going to ask that right  
18 now. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brent.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Jenny. Go ahead.

21  
22 MS. PELKOLA: Jenny Pelkola. I don't  
23 know. I know there's a fish commission out there  
24 somewhere, but I don't know who runs that. Is that TCC  
25 or Ben Stevens? And I know there's a group of them, but  
26 I don't know what they're doing.

27  
28 MR. WALKER: We have a lady here from TCC  
29 who could come. Probably could answer that for you,  
30 Jenny. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: State your name for  
33 the record.

34  
35 MS. ERICKSON: Good morning, Diloolo  
36 Erickson. Tribal resource stewardship with TCC. There  
37 is a Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. It was  
38 previously a program under TCC, they're filing for 501  
39 C3 status and there breaking off. Currently in the  
40 process of breaking off from TCC and becoming their own  
41 established fish commission independent of us. And  
42 that's chaired by Karma Ulvi, Chief Ulvi of Eagle. And  
43 I think, Tommy, are you a commissioner? Are you also  
44 Robert? Yeah. And I think they have 40 commissioners of  
45 the, like, 100 and something, and they're working on  
46 filling out their commissioner's seat so that they have  
47 representation -- tribal representation from the mouth  
48 to the headwaters. This last meeting they had in July  
49 of this year, they had representation from First Nations  
50 up in Yukon, and they're filling out the Lower Yukon

00018

1 seats. The next meeting, I think, is tentatively set for  
2 January 2025, and I could send out an invite to this  
3 Board. Ask Karma to send out an invite to that meeting  
4 if you guys would like. Thank you.

5

6

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. Nissa.

7

8 MS. PILCHER: I would also like to say  
9 that over the course of (distortion) just give me one  
10 second, over the course of this discussion, staff has  
11 been sending me links to different pieces of information  
12 that you guys have been asking for. Genetics, hatchery  
13 information that's available online. I don't have a way  
14 of printing it. They're also not small documents, so I  
15 wouldn't expect you guys to be able to read them. But  
16 what I will do is when I get back to Fairbanks, I will  
17 print them and mail them to you guys so, you can have  
18 them, and then also include where I got them from. So,  
19 you guys can trace that information back to where it  
20 came from. I'm not saying all of your questions were  
21 answered, but some genetics, both Federal and State and  
22 hatchery information was sent to me.

23

24

25

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Enforcement  
actions.

26

27

28

MS. PILCHER: Not that, but I have it in  
my notes to follow up on a report about that. Okay.

29

30

31

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, that was you,  
Don or Darryl on the phone?

32

33

34

MR. VENT: Yeah, this is Darrell.

35

36

(Simultaneous speech)

37

38

MR. HONEA: No, Mr. Chairman.

39

40

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, okay. Let's go  
with Don first, Don.

41

42

43

MR. HONEA: All right. No, I did not have  
a comment. Thank you.

44

45

46

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, okay. I'm.  
You're getting crossovers there. Go -- Darryl, go ahead.

47

48

49

MR. VENT: Yeah. I'm also on the fish  
commission for our Koyukuk River area.

50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, I think  
2 the Fish Commission is actually the avenue to address  
3 this issue. That Fish Commission would have a lot of  
4 authority with because of tribal statuses, would  
5 actually have a lot of authority to ask the hard  
6 questions from the state of Alaska, that fish commission  
7 can ask, what are you going to do about Area M, and the  
8 interception. What is the genetic makeup of those stocks  
9 moving through there? What are you going to do about  
10 this whole hatchery release thing, which is the  
11 completely the elephant in the room? Why are those fish  
12 so small? Because they're a hatchery fish are even really  
13 small. They're less than half the size that they should  
14 be. It's showing they have a nutrient problem in the  
15 ocean, and they keep dumping them out there. They don't  
16 stop, they keep dumping the same amount. You're going  
17 to get the State's report on hatcheries. Your commission  
18 needs to get those hatchery reports. I got one, it gives  
19 graphs of showing this rocketing hatchery release year  
20 after year going higher and higher. (Distortion)  
21 sustainability of hatchery release on the ocean. They're  
22 affecting all, even their own stocks are not even now.  
23 And so, the that your commission can actually ask those  
24 hard questions and you can ask the hard question is the  
25 State manipulating the public perception? Of course they  
26 are. They're in the -- their current Fish and Wildlife  
27 Management with the state of Alaska is public. It's  
28 called political science. They manipulate the perception  
29 of the public about caribou eat themselves out of house.  
30 Everybody seems to think Caribou eat themselves out of  
31 house and home. No, they don't. Caribou don't eat  
32 themselves out of house and home. That's a fallacy. But  
33 they say it enough. It's a mantra. And the hatchery fish  
34 aren't doing anything. It's a marine climate. Yeah, it's  
35 the marine climate. But when you keep dumping the same  
36 amount of hatchery fish, they don't want to address the  
37 issue. So, they manipulate the public opinion, and the  
38 news media just laps it all up because they don't know  
39 anything about fish or anything. So, the news media are  
40 easily manipulated by public science. That's not hard  
41 to do. That happens constantly. So, the Yukon River  
42 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission actually can ask those  
43 super hard questions with your tribal status. That's  
44 what OSM -- that's just a brick wall. I -- there's not  
45 that's not going to happen, it can't happen. But they  
46 don't have that authority.

47

48                   MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

49

50

1

2

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead. Who's that. Say your name.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don, Mr. Chair, members of the Board. You brought up a interesting thing there. The most of us are on that on the Board, and you're exactly right that, you know, that we should be we should be bringing those concerns through that forum, and I agree with Diloolala for mentioning that and I'd just like to -- I guess we could only as a RAC do so much in certain areas. That particular topic, I believe that we should bring in a foremost to the on our prioritizing that to Karma. Karma does a wonderful job you know, working on our behalf for that organization. And I think, you know, instead of talking a lot, I mean, I know this is a priority, but you know, if we could kind of like I said, all of these things that we're bringing up are concerted efforts at one organization, to me is not going to be able to unless we all join forces on that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Don. Yes, we want to include this topic in our Annual Report again. But these are -- we want to lay out what the parameters are of our concern. It's not we're going to scatter them all over all in various topics. This topic is going to be the extreme concern for continuation of salmon on the -- in within our region. And we want to lay out we're extremely concerned about hatchery release, we're extremely concerned about vast reductions as necessary for the marine -- the NOAA takes marine inventories. They know for a fact that those marine inventories are going to show really low numbers of marine nutrients for these salmon. We're really concerned about this interception of the few salmon that actually survive on the marines systems and getting through the fisheries, the interception fisheries that especially that are taking components of various other stocks that aren't even -- they don't even the South Alaska Peninsula has very few indigenous salmon that are actually going to spawn in their in their district. And then, you know, the Bering Sea trawl fishery and the North Pacific trawl fisheries, those are also deep concerns because, you know, we just talk about the Bering Sea chinook interception. Well, we've got a chinook that are out in the in the North Pacific, and there was 5,000 chinook salmon that were caught. And, you know, just the other day, well, I bet if you took genetic samples, some of them were from the Yukon River fish. That's where

1 they go. Everybody knows that because the way the  
2 current, the Japan current flows along the South Alaska  
3 Peninsula in the southeast Alaska, that's where all the  
4 nutrients are. That's where the salmon go. That's where  
5 they get fat. And so, we have a whole bunch of issues  
6 that we feel that the Federal Subsistence Board needs  
7 to be looking at, and they have to interact with the  
8 state of Alaska. What are you going to do about that?  
9 Because the subsistence priority for Alaskan residents  
10 and the rural residents, especially for the Federal  
11 process, are lacking in food resources, and our security  
12 is almost in a crisis situation at this point. So, that's  
13 a discussion topic. We should write a letter to the  
14 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission laying out what the various  
15 things that we -- that they should also be looking at  
16 too. YRDEFA should be looking at that, they talk to them,  
17 YDRFA talks to them, we've seen Serena down there in  
18 Fairbanks when we were coming over here. Yeah, they talk  
19 about hatchery release. The Board of Board of Fish has  
20 got to step up to the plate and do something about it.  
21 So, it's a discussion topic, but that's what the response  
22 is. Our response in -- from our last Annual Report  
23 discussed these various things, and they keep saying,  
24 well, we can only deal with the fisheries that are  
25 inshore. That's what they're telling us. That's what  
26 this program -- this is the only thing this program can  
27 do. But this -- the Federal Subsistence Board can talk  
28 to other entities in the Federal Government. Go ahead,  
29 Robert.

30  
31 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And  
32 my final thing is that, you know, on the Yukon River  
33 here, and we have wildlife troopers who are patrolling  
34 Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4, 5. And the reason why I brought the  
35 first part up is when happened out in Area M, you know,  
36 the wildlife troopers out there working with their boats  
37 and everything, are they pursuing the illegal fisheries  
38 or whatever is happening out there with the fisheries  
39 like concern to the Yukon River as a good example that,  
40 you know, we had some people fishing in Nulato, and I  
41 think the wildlife troopers went there. I think Tom could  
42 probably tell more about it. I'm just going to use that  
43 as one example. And it was a concern because people went  
44 there for food, they went out to get fish for food. And  
45 this is something that really struck me because the  
46 wildlife trooper went right to the smokehouse of the  
47 elder person and asked and looked, and I was told that  
48 she wouldn't let the wildlife trooper in. Correct me,  
49 Tom.  
50

1 MR. KRISKA: But I wasn't around in  
2 Nulato at the time.

3  
4 MR. WALKER: Okay, well, and you know,  
5 how often do you see a wildlife trooper board one of  
6 their fishing vessels? I understand they're 56ft long,  
7 24ft wide, and they're made for waters up to 16 to 20ft.  
8 So, and their purse seine is like a three quarters of a  
9 mile and 700ft deep. So, and these people were fishing  
10 with a four-inch net, and what is the difference why we  
11 have to shut down completely and they can still do that.  
12 This is racist, I think. And I could see that it is  
13 racist because we've been here for 10,000 years, it's  
14 been recorded, and we never had an issue like this once  
15 ever, to our tribal people in the AYK region, North and  
16 (indiscernible) and the southeast. So, this is kind of  
17 like a slap in our face. I really feel -- I just can't  
18 see how this is happening to us because this is some  
19 like a cruel joke and we have to wake up and it's going  
20 to be still there. And OSM has been created for us to  
21 do this and as a RAC Board, we are supposed to advise  
22 them and ask them. You know, to form a fish commission,  
23 you don't need 50 people or so. All you need is probably  
24 an anthropologist, probably 4 or 5 biologists and some  
25 staff people do the writing. I mean, Jack, don't you  
26 know? I mean, you want to answer that, but we already  
27 went through that. And we will let Brent, you know, give  
28 us a report back in February, see what could happen.  
29 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Brent.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: OSM can report back  
32 on that at our winter meeting but -- regarding the  
33 commission. But we need to move along here and we're  
34 getting all bogged down on this issue. This is an  
35 important issue and we're very impassioned. And I  
36 apologize for my deep concern and compassion for things  
37 that should -- it's very apparent what has to happen.  
38 And when you're you -- it's like watching a train wreck.  
39 There's a tree across the train tracks and you're trying  
40 to flag down the train, it's going to hit that and it's  
41 going to derail the train. It's like watching a train  
42 wreck, but no one wants to even address the issue. The  
43 Board of Fish doesn't want to deal with it. They don't  
44 -- the Board of Fish is the main responsible party for  
45 this problem on the Yukon River and the entire salmon  
46 fisheries of the Alaska. The State Board of Fish should  
47 be sued for doing what they're doing to these fisheries,  
48 by not pulling back, they had opportunity to pull those  
49 hatchery releases back, and they refused to do it. They  
50 keep refusing to do it because the Seinners Association

1 has a stranglehold on that Board. They have members on  
2 that Board, and so they refuse to even cut a little bit  
3 back, even though they got -- they know they got salmon  
4 sizes declining like a like a stone. Tommy.

5  
6 MR. KRISKA: Do I have a few things that  
7 -- Tom Kriska. Anyway, I've been going to a lot of these  
8 meetings for a lot of my years. And you know, the  
9 problems we're about the fishing is getting worse. And  
10 we're saying that, you know, the Board of Fish is the  
11 problem in a lot of this. And, you know, when you work  
12 on a job, you're starting your labor, you're starting  
13 your carpenters, you're starting up the chain there, and  
14 it all goes back to who's paying the bill. And I, you  
15 know, for me, in all the hunting, fishing and all this  
16 baloney that's happening it all goes back to the Federal  
17 Government or the State or whoever is funding all of  
18 these hatcheries, because I -- back in 1990, the  
19 hatcheries borrowed \$90 million from the State and was  
20 supposed to pay it back. Never got paid back, it didn't  
21 have to be, because now I'm finding out that that's  
22 who's running all these hatcheries, this -- the State,  
23 the Government. And so, I think the Board of Fish is  
24 just a cover for the Government, a way to use this tool,  
25 as you know, because they need the fish. The whole world  
26 needs fish. The United States, everyone in it, it's not  
27 a, I mean, you know, for me, it seemed like it's just a  
28 cover up for that name to cover for someone else that's  
29 paying the bill. So, I think, you know that a lot of the  
30 things like the guy going to the smokehouse and all this  
31 stuff that's happening for the Natives out here. And he  
32 was right about the racist part. I'm pretty sure that's  
33 happening because there's been so much money trying to  
34 patrol and do all this baloney, and they're doing it in  
35 the wrong place. They should be out there doing it with  
36 the fish. But I don't know how that's going to happen.  
37 Like yesterday, I said for all the agencies that are  
38 here, all the departments that are here, and we're  
39 sitting here and like, they're all on that side, they  
40 know damn well what's going on throughout everything  
41 that's being said here and done here. It's kind of a --  
42 we're not going to ever win anything. It's a win-win  
43 situation on their side. So, I was asking yesterday that  
44 you guys need to, you know, try to help out. What, who  
45 are you, you know, what is it benefiting for us is  
46 nothing. Benefiting for you, you got your bread and  
47 butter on the table and we have nothing. So, no matter  
48 what you do in any departments that you're working on,  
49 you're going to do your job. And we're on the last, you  
50 know, the bad end of the stick here. So, I don't know

1 how this is ever going to come about. You know, we could  
2 talk all day, talk forever on our part and nothing will  
3 never happen because you guys have the tools to do  
4 anything you want, it seems to me. So, I think that  
5 there's going to have to turn around and start taking  
6 care of this problem. We can't do it, I think that it  
7 goes all the way back to maybe the White House. I don't  
8 know, he doesn't really know what's going on, but the  
9 managers do. And for their benefits what they have to  
10 do. But anyway, I'm just kind of -- I could talk all day  
11 on that subject, but I'm kind of really upset like the  
12 rest of us and get frustrated about things. When you've  
13 been sitting here for -- going to meetings way back in  
14 the Sydney Huntington days, Lester Hart, a lot of those  
15 guys were more meaningful than anyone, anybody in those  
16 departments for what they managed all their days and  
17 what they were taught, and from what it would have been  
18 done then. I mean, nothing been done then, nothing been  
19 done now. So, how can we ever get anything done when we  
20 had stronger people in front of us in, you know, in the  
21 past. It's kind of really frustrating to even sit here  
22 and listen to all these little areas and everything that  
23 you have to cover to make it happen, you know, back  
24 wherever -- whoever's paying the bill. I'll put it that  
25 way, because I don't know who and who you work for or  
26 what you're here for or seem like nothing for us this  
27 last 40 years I've been on this going to these meetings.  
28 And it's very frustrating, and I understand these people  
29 that get frustrated. And I would back that grandma, I  
30 wish I was there when the State trooper went to that  
31 smokehouse, because she's only trying to feed her kids  
32 as well as you guys have your own grandchildren and  
33 everything in that -- it bust your heart if you can't  
34 feed them, and it damn well broke hers. And I would  
35 probably say something or did something and it's getting  
36 out of hand. So, I would advise you to, you know, go  
37 back to wherever you were working and whatever you do,  
38 and try to make things right. That you all believe in  
39 the Lord, and I think that's where it should start. And  
40 that, you know, if you believe in that guy, maybe you  
41 got something in your heart to do something about it.  
42 I'm sorry to talk like this, but I don't -- I'm kind of  
43 in the corner. And sometimes you back the wrong people  
44 into a corner and bad things come out of it, so, I don't  
45 know. I'm not threatening anybody, it's just that, you  
46 know, we're going to come down the road in somewhere  
47 where we're not dummies, we're we got very smart people.  
48 And we'll figure it out if you can't. So, I can talk all  
49 day. Thank you.  
50



1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay so, I think  
2 we've this is a topic, we're going to have more fisheries  
3 discussions later on in this meeting. We can add to this  
4 topic. And later on, we're going to move through that  
5 topic, the sheep management strategy that's a topic. I  
6 would like a topic about concerns about expanded harvest  
7 for caribou, for the Arctic populations from the Road  
8 in Unit 26B.

9  
10 I have concerns that the harvest limits  
11 are going to be too high, that we want the Federal  
12 Subsistence Board to be aware that if that herd  
13 population gets driven to way far below the management  
14 objectives that they need to -- that there's there may  
15 be necessary actions by the Federal Board process,  
16 that's a that's a heads up to the Board. This was to  
17 identify needs and the subsistence use of Caribou is a  
18 significant need in the Northern portion of this of this  
19 region. Identification of current and anticipated  
20 subsistence uses of wild fish and wildlife. And we're  
21 giving the State -- Federal Subsistence Board a heads  
22 up that the State Board of Game has extended harvest  
23 limits that will (distortion).....

24  
25 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, this is Don.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....could be  
28 future management actions needed by the Federal  
29 Subsistence Board. With further data that's going to be  
30 coming forward in the next couple of years. And so, you  
31 can't give the entire.....

32  
33 MR. HONEA. Mr. Chair.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....Alaska 5 cow  
36 caribou bag limits that cannot, that should not have  
37 happened but that's what happened. So, that's a heads-  
38 up topic. These are just heads up topics and points of  
39 discussion, but not necessarily asking for a response,  
40 but just informational to the Federal Subsistence Board.  
41 The Federal Subsistence Board does not attend these  
42 meetings. This Annual Report avenue is how we speak to  
43 the Federal Subsistence Board. That's what we're doing  
44 with these annual topic reports. Any other annual topic  
45 reports that Council members would like to put up at  
46 this time? We have through the end of this meeting to  
47 put up additional topics. The -- we can finalize a  
48 commission topic with OSM at our spring meeting. We could  
49 put that down as topic.

1 MS. PILCHER: It needs to be this way.  
2 This is where you put all the topics.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, let's put that  
5 down now. And so, we'll finalize it. And so, I don't  
6 feel that that's the right avenue. I feel that the Inter-  
7 Tribal Fish Commission has the avenue. And I feel that  
8 the Inter-Tribal Fish Commission needs to speak directly  
9 to the Governor and the Commissioner of Fish and Game.  
10 The root of the problem, where's the buck stop is in the  
11 Governor's office. That's what you're asking, that's  
12 what you were saying, that's where the buck stops. And  
13 the Inter-Tribal Fish Commission needs to get directly  
14 in Dunlavey's face and Doug Vincent-Lang's face. You're  
15 exceeding sustainability, you're affecting our  
16 communities excessively on the Yukon River. The State  
17 managers are doing all they can but if they don't have  
18 anything -- you can't bake a pie if you don't have any  
19 ingredients. That's what the problem is. So, the Inter-  
20 Tribal Fish Commission can get in their face. The Federal  
21 Subsistence Board process is not going to get in the  
22 Governor's face. That's just never going to happen.  
23 That's not the way this program even does stuff. So, any  
24 other topics, we need topics for this Annual Report.  
25 Nissa.

26  
27 MS. PILCHER: Robert, you've expressed  
28 concern to me in 21A about non-local hunting pressure  
29 in there that this could be a good avenue in order to  
30 put that in. There's a mix of Federal and State land in  
31 that area.

32  
33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The controlled use  
34 area.

35  
36 MS. PILCHER: That's in in part of it. I  
37 don't want to put words in your mouth, but this would  
38 be a good avenue to let the Federal Subsistence Board  
39 know that there are concerns on both Federal and State  
40 lands of what is going on in that area. Not saying that  
41 this is the only thing that should be done, but this is  
42 one additional thing that could be done.

43  
44 MR. WALKER: Thank you.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert.

47  
48 MR. WALKER: Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr.  
49 Chair. That I did bring it up about the control use  
50 area, and we find that being approached by the Chairman

1 -- from the AC Board Chairman from Grayling, Anvik,  
2 Shageluk, Holy Cross approached me and said that we are  
3 -- maybe have an issue that taking place in 21A and if  
4 you look at your map, it's right next to 21E where all  
5 the green area is that if we could put a control use  
6 area through the State or through the Federal  
7 Government, but we would like to have a OSM and the YRAC  
8 Board, Lower Yukon, etc. Boards support this control use  
9 area because it does have moose travel from that area  
10 to our area and have their caps in 21E and then go back  
11 up into 21A, and this is recorded with the Federal  
12 biologist, I can't remember the lady's name. I read the  
13 report 20 years ago, and not only that, but a lot of  
14 other moose would come down in the winter and or in the  
15 summer, spring, and spend the summer there and then go  
16 back up into 21A. So, there's a crossover for the borders  
17 here with our moose here that -- and with the discussion  
18 with the AC RAC member from 21E is that planes are coming  
19 in from Galena, Fairbanks and Anchorage into this area  
20 and taking moose and even the biologist, I think it's  
21 from Kevin Wentworth -- Whitworth, who also had a  
22 concern. I didn't really have a chance to talk to him,  
23 but now that he has resigned and I'm kind of like little,  
24 not disappointed, but I'm just kind of a little bit --  
25 that we didn't have a chance to discuss this. And the  
26 transporters from all this area has [sic] been targeting  
27 this area very heavily, and we have to take some kind  
28 of a concern here. And I think that the four villages  
29 of Unit 21, Anvik, Grayling, Shageluk and Holocaust, we  
30 are under the Tanana Chiefs Conference, it's called  
31 Lower Yukon subregion, and we have our meetings there  
32 and TCC helps us with that. So, we did bring this up as  
33 a concern and a resolution and where we have TCC's  
34 resource working on this also with us and Jeff  
35 Beyersdorf. I don't know if Jeff's on this morning, but  
36 and he is wanting to biologist, BLM biologist that has  
37 helped us along, and we are trying to coordinate this  
38 with everything that to follow the law to make sure that  
39 this is done right.

40  
41 We're going to ask for it at the antlers  
42 be sawed so that you know it would lose the trophy  
43 outlook for the hunt there. And you know, that would be  
44 a start. So, hopefully by February, come next year that  
45 we would have this all put together and present it to  
46 the Board and present it to OSM. And this is where we're  
47 going to ask OSM to help us also on this too, you know,  
48 support us and ensure that we get this done right where  
49 we don't have to drop back and say, well, where did we  
50 go wrong? And I don't want to have to lose, I want to

00028

1 have to win on this one. And Mr. Chair, you know, this  
2 is something that we've been looking at for a year, but  
3 it just having a hard time getting started as we are.  
4 And I've worked with Nissa on this, she has been very  
5 helpful. Thank you, Nissa for that. And you know, and  
6 so, this is where we are in a way right now and we will  
7 come forward. Hopefully we'll have this put together by  
8 then. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Nissa.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, I -- it's  
11 premature without a map and a delineation of where the  
12 boundary extension would be. And Nissa gives me a message  
13 here that I got Kevin Whitworth on the phone. Are you  
14 there, Kevin?

15  
16 MR. WHITWORTH: This is Kevin. Can you  
17 hear me, Mr. Chair?

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can hear you.  
20 Kevin, did you want to -- are you working with Robert  
21 on this? This this controlled use extension? Is it into  
22 21A, into the unit?

23  
24 MR. WHITWORTH: You know, I don't have  
25 much comments on the controlled use area. But I do -- I  
26 can share a little bit of what we're seeing here in  
27 McGrath. As far as if you guys want to hear that side  
28 of the story, there's a lot of concern here in McGrath  
29 as far as this hunt.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, yes. Go right  
32 ahead. We're discussing.

33  
34 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, yeah. I heard my  
35 name when Robert was speaking there about this concern  
36 because -- and I've been speaking with folks here in  
37 town and McGrath because we have a guide and a  
38 transporter that work out of McGrath. They're very busy  
39 all through September and transporting folks out to the  
40 Innoko Refuge. There's a few controlled uses -- there's  
41 a few areas where they go and.

42  
43 (Simultaneous speech)

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Kevin.

46  
47 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah. Can you hear me?

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You dropped out  
50 there for your first part of your discussion. So, back

00029

1 up about a minute or so, just right after you started  
2 talking. You were gone for a while.

3

4 MR. WHITWORTH Oh, sorry. Yeah, this is  
5 Kevin. I don't have much to say about the controlled use  
6 area, that discussion, but I can share what folks are  
7 seeing here, McGrath and what I've been hearing folks  
8 talk about. And so, we have a transporter and a guide  
9 that is based out of McGrath for the month of September.  
10 They transport out to Innoko National Wildlife Refuge  
11 for hunting moose and floaters and all that sort of  
12 stuff. And we see a lot of what's come into town, you  
13 know, the antlers are stacked up, the moose meat is  
14 here. And we have a butcher here and this butcher, he  
15 tries his hardest to try to get through the meat that  
16 he gets. But this year there was so much meat that he  
17 just could not keep up. He had to stack the meat during  
18 the rainy weather. It was very moist and the temperatures  
19 were warm, he was literally stacking meat on pallets  
20 outside of -- outside. My neighbor, he shouldn't have  
21 did this, but he said that, you know, he would take some  
22 of those meat. I didn't get a moose this year, so he  
23 wanted to take meat. And the stuff is just rotten, it's  
24 green, it's terribly taken care of, it's shot up bloody.  
25 He gave me some scraps for my dogs. I cooked it, it was  
26 nasty. Anyways, and then you see it at the dump. They  
27 end up throwing. Can you hear me? Okay, Mr. Chair?

28

29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can still hear  
30 you. Go ahead.

31

32 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, I'm getting some  
33 background. I hear somebody talking. Some guy.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: On the.....

36

37 MR. WHITWORTH: But anyways Can you hear  
38 me okay, still?

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can, yes. Go  
41 ahead, Kevin.

42

43 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay so, what's going on  
44 here is just there's a lot of waste. There's the meat  
45 that's not being taken care of by the hunters. It's not  
46 being taken care of by the butcher, the outfitters, the  
47 transporter, I meant and then a lot of that meat is  
48 ending up in the dump, and the people are just so upset.  
49 People can't even go down to the dump. They just can't  
50 stomach what they're seeing. It's just very

1 disrespectful to the animal, to a National Wildlife  
2 Refuge that they would allow this and to just flood that  
3 place with so many people getting moose. And then we see  
4 it here in McGrath when it comes back to town in the  
5 waste. There's definitely they say, well, troopers can't  
6 do anything. It's legal what they're doing. But what how  
7 do you solve this solution or how do you solve this? I  
8 don't know, you know, the controlled use area what Robert  
9 mentioned is maybe the best way to do this, but I  
10 definitely just want to share the concern from this  
11 community and what they're seeing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
12

13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. Thank  
14 you, Kevin. Yeah, really concerning information, the  
15 controlled use area extension that would preclude  
16 aircraft use that would possibly address some of this.  
17 And that's quite an area in Unit 21A and that's the  
18 state of Alaska, Board of Game would have to be involved  
19 in this whole process, but the Federal Subsistence Board  
20 should be aware, and we'll make this an Annual Report  
21 topic that the Federal Subsistence Board should be made  
22 aware of the massive amounts of wanton waste that's  
23 occurring, but you need to get the statute also, Kevin.  
24 The State statute for salvage and wanton waste is to  
25 remove the edible, all of the edible meat from the back  
26 of the head to the distal joints in a preserved State  
27 that has to be in a preserved State for human consumption  
28 for two weeks after removal from the field. So, you go  
29 on the State website and find that the troopers said,  
30 well, they brought it out from the field. It's all  
31 rotten. Well, no, that's not what the statute says.  
32 That's what the, you know, I got the statute book, the  
33 Board support sent me a statute book. And that's what  
34 the salvage requirement requires, is that it has to be  
35 in a, in a palatable State for two weeks after removal  
36 from the field. So, I would encourage you to get that  
37 statute and take a look at it and start talking about  
38 at the Advisory Committee level, what that actually  
39 says. This whole thing that, oh, it's just all rotten.  
40 They can just toss it, no. If it's not in a, in a  
41 preserved State, you know, you let it spoil in the field  
42 there's needs to be tickets being written. That's what  
43 the Fish and Wildlife protection is actually derelict  
44 and not enforcing the statute itself. That's not a Board  
45 regulation, that's a State legislative statute, that  
46 salvage requirement. So, you -- I would encourage you  
47 to look at that statute. And we'll enter into further  
48 discussion about this in the need for this controlled  
49 use area is so -- that would be a point for our Annual  
50 Report as a concern for wanton waste in the Innoko

1 National Wildlife Refuge areas that are occurring in  
2 Unit 21E and 21A. So, that's another topic. And we can  
3 talk about that topic further, refine stuff later on in  
4 the spring meeting.

5  
6 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa for the  
7 record. You can edit what is there, but you guys have  
8 put quite a bit on the record as well as  
9 conversations.....

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

12  
13 MS PILCHER: .....that I, yes. You have  
14 put quite a bit on the record. And I'll run through this  
15 list before you guys finalize it and you can add, I  
16 don't need everything on the record. I just need.....

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Alright, yea.

19  
20 (Pause) (Distortion)

21  
22 MR. GERVIAS: Jack, this is Tim. Can you  
23 hear me?

24  
25 (Pause)

26  
27 MR. WALKER: (Indiscernible) yeah, we  
28 will work with you on this. That would -- this would  
29 give us a definite, you know, support to get it started.  
30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And Tim Gervais.  
33 Are you on the phone now? I got a message that you're  
34 there. Tim, are you there?

35  
36 (No response)

37  
38 I'm not hearing you Tim, if you're still  
39 there. I would like all Council members -- Darryl, are  
40 you still there? Don Honea.

41  
42 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Mr. Chair, could  
43 you hear me?

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. I'm looking  
46 for Annual Report topics. Do you have other Annual Report  
47 topics? Nothing that we've already covered.

48  
49 MR. HONEA: No, no, sir, I just mentioned  
50 what was priority. Thank you.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

(Simultaneous speech)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: There you are, Tim. Okay, you got [sic] any Annual Report topics?

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I would like -- I don't know if it's a report topic or request for training, but I would like a presentation on what the relationship of the Solicitor is to the Federal Subsistence Board and to the Regional Council. I don't understand that relationship, if it's all part of the same group or their own entity. And like I said earlier or clarified earlier for the March meeting minutes, I'm disagreeing with the Solicitor's interpretation of whether ANILCA has jurisdiction in the EEZ.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I -- use the correct term not -- no acronym. Our court recorder doesn't know that I and Council members don't know that acronym. Go ahead. Economic.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. GERVAIS: Economic Exclusive Zone. The three miles, three nautical miles to 200 nautical miles from the shore of the United States.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, state it again, you sort of faded. Our current recorder is going to have to type that out.

MR. GERVAIS: Restate the topic or the exclusive.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, the acronym. The acronym you were giving.

MR. GERVAIS: EEZ, echo, echo, zulu.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We need the term. We need what you're saying, not the acronym.

MR. GERVAIS: Exclusive Economic Zone.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, yeah, that's what I needed for the record. So, the record has to be clear. And so, I continue and so, we you want a legal



1 interpretation about -- you want a basically a report  
2 is what you would like from OSM or how would we get this  
3 kind of information. Brent, is this an Annual Report  
4 topic?

5

6

(Simultaneous speech)

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: Let me add something to it,  
9 right. And discuss it with the people in the room. But  
10 the problem is, and it's been this way for a long time  
11 is because salmon are migratory (indiscernible), we all  
12 know that. But they're spending the majority of their  
13 life out in the Exclusive Economic Zone. That's their  
14 habitat for more than half of their life. And the  
15 Solicitor is telling me that he doesn't have  
16 jurisdiction over those salmon while they're in the  
17 Exclusive Economic Zone, because that falls under the  
18 Department of Commerce. But then when I talked to North  
19 Pacific Management Council or Dr. Diana Stram with NOAA,  
20 he says it doesn't have to be concerned with the numbers  
21 in salmon and rivers, because the NOAA and North Pacific  
22 Council is [sic] not concerned with things, they're only  
23 concerned with things in the marine environment. And so,  
24 I'm getting these people that could have some bearing  
25 on what's happening with the salmon, whether they're in  
26 the rivers or in the ocean. And they're always deferring  
27 to say, well, that's because I work for Department of  
28 Commerce or I work for Department of Interior, I'm not  
29 responsible for dealing with the salmon because they're  
30 not -- they don't spend their entire life in my  
31 department's area of interest. So, we have -- somehow  
32 we need to get, like, an overreaching thing. The most  
33 important fact is we got [sic] to protect the salmon.  
34 But I'm getting managers or the Solicitor telling me  
35 they don't need to track the salmon in certain parts of  
36 their life cycle because it falls outside of the purview  
37 of Department of Commerce or Interior. But we need to  
38 protect the salmon for their entire life and not just  
39 half their life.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, you want an  
42 analysis from OSM or some a legal interpretation of a  
43 second opinion regarding that interpretation, is what  
44 you're requesting?

45

46 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, that that's one that's  
47 one thing. And probably a second thing is I would be  
48 interested in some kind of memorandum of understanding  
49 between the Department of Commerce and Department of  
50 Interior, realizing that we're dealing with migratory

1 species, with the salmon, the chum and the king Salmon  
2 or chinook, and there needs to be collaboration and  
3 cooperation between those two agencies to ensure that  
4 the salmon receive the proper protection for their  
5 entire life cycle. Just right now, we're getting a  
6 situation where they're saying, well, by regulation,  
7 such and such department is not -- does not have  
8 jurisdiction in that area. But that doesn't work. Have  
9 the Federal -- have the NOAA say they're not -- they  
10 don't have any interest in what happens in the river or  
11 to have the Solicitor tell me he can't protect, he can't  
12 enforce ANILCA because the salmon are swimming out in  
13 the Exclusive Economic Zone.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, basically, the  
16 Annual Report is requesting that the Federal Subsistence  
17 Board working with the -- it would be the U.S. Fish and  
18 Wildlife Region 7 should require a memorandum, of  
19 agreement to protect the salmon and the marine and  
20 freshwater environment. That's your request.

21  
22 MR. GERVAIS: Right, and not have people  
23 that work for Department of Commerce say they can't deal  
24 with any salmon issues that's not in the marine  
25 environment and not have people that work for Department  
26 of Interior say they're not responsible for what happens  
27 to the salmon when they're out in the ocean.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I completely  
30 agree with you on that. I completely agree with you on  
31 that issue, the -- they're passing the buck, and the  
32 salmon are losing and so are the subsistence users. So,  
33 our -- as a Subsistence Council were concerned with the  
34 health of the stocks and the demise of the stocks. These  
35 are not just they're not stocks of concern anymore, these  
36 are threatened -- these are becoming threatened species,  
37 salmon stocks. And so, we'll state that for the Annual  
38 Report that we feel that these are threatened with --  
39 in danger of extermination with current practices. So,  
40 the Federal Subsistence Board is -- we work through the  
41 Federal Subsistence Board. The Federal Subsistence Board  
42 should be we were requesting under this Annual Report  
43 topic that they enter in -- inform the U.S. -- through  
44 the Federal -- their arm as the U.S. Fish and wildlife,  
45 they need to work with the Interior Department and the  
46 Department of Commerce to have a memorandum of agreement  
47 to protect salmon in the marine and freshwater  
48 environments. Period. They can't pass the buck, there's  
49 no like you protect them inshore. Well, if we don't have  
50 -- well any fish for spawning escapement, it has to be

1 protected across the Board. That's what we're  
2 requesting, that's the Annual Report topic. Is that  
3 clear for the record, Nissa?

4

5 MS. PILCHER: It sure is.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, okay.

8

9 MR. GERVAIS: So, I would just like to  
10 add a couple more sentences here. It's not for the Annual  
11 Report, but just for building the record when Amendment  
12 91 was being deliberated in Anchorage by North Pacific  
13 Council, I specifically heard Dr. Stram when she was  
14 giving her NOAA staff testimony to the North Pacific  
15 Management Council. She said, we did no analysis of the  
16 salmon in the freshwater environment because that's not  
17 part of NOAA's responsibility. And then in the March  
18 24th meeting in Anchorage, I asked -- I was talking to  
19 the Solicitor and I said, clearly ANCSA and ANILCA is  
20 being violated here by allowing commercial fishing,  
21 bycatch of salmon in the Exclusive Economic Zone, while  
22 we're not meeting subsistence or spawning goals. And he  
23 said, well, that's Department of Commerce and I don't  
24 have any jurisdiction to engage Department of Commerce  
25 to try to enforce ANILCA Title 8. And to me, that that  
26 was a really inadequate interpretation of what needs to  
27 happen.

28

29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I think the  
30 record is clear on that for that Annual Report. Do you  
31 have any other Annual Report topics? I see that Kevin  
32 Whitworth wants to speak also. Is it on this Annual  
33 Report topic, Kevin?

34

35 MR. WHITWORTH: This is Kevin. Yes, it  
36 is Jack, Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

39

40 MR. WHITWORTH: This is a really -- thank  
41 you, Mr. Chair. Council member Gervais brings up a really  
42 interesting topic. Something that I just wanted you all  
43 to be aware and you guys may be already aware that the  
44 Cook Inlet EEZ zone is being managed right now by NOAA  
45 because they went through a lawsuit and they lost it.  
46 And so, they -- I don't know if they lost it or win it,  
47 but they now have to manage that EEZ zone for salmon.  
48 NOAA has to do that, and they're doing it this last  
49 year. It's a Federal NOAA managed salmon fishery. And  
50 so, the precedent has been set. The lawsuit's been set.

1 So, how they are able to not do it in the Bering Sea or  
2 Area M. Why isn't it being done there? That's the  
3 question Tim brings up. And I think that lawsuit is  
4 really important for folks to see it, look at it, and  
5 then maybe build on this topic for your Annual Report,  
6 because I think it -- the precedent has been set. So,  
7 NOAA telling you all that they cannot do it is false.  
8 They're doing it, and they look at the Cook Inlet salmon  
9 fishery. They're managing that fishery. Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chair.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Kevin.  
13 We'll include that line of reasoning that the NOAA is  
14 already managing in in an Economic -- Exclusive Economic  
15 Zone, its already in the Cook Inlet fishery. So, that  
16 covers that topic. Any other topics? Tim, we need to  
17 clean this. We need to finish off this Annual Report,  
18 and we're coming up with the various subjects. Any other  
19 subjects?

20  
21 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, yeah. Just one more  
22 is the Federal Subsistence Board should ask  
23 (indiscernible) Fisheries Service -- it's the genetic  
24 information coming from like this bycatch that's gonna  
25 [sic] to be sampled from that 2,000 chinook salmon caught  
26 as bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska last week.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right.

29  
30 MR. GERVAIS: When the state of Alaska  
31 does genetic information like, say, the Port Moller test  
32 fishery for fish coming into Bristol Bay, they're  
33 getting information within 24 to 36 hours. And last time  
34 we talked with Dr. Stram about the genetic information  
35 for the Bering Sea trawl fleet, she said that the genetic  
36 information takes somewhere between, I don't remember  
37 exactly under the impression she said between 2 to 3  
38 months to get that data back. So, I feel like genetic  
39 information, genetic sampling of trawl bycatch and king  
40 salmon catch that's caught in State water like  
41 commercial directed salmon fisheries, whether it's  
42 gillnet or seine, I think we really need to get that  
43 information out to the public and not try to hold back  
44 the information because it may be bearing bad news for  
45 some stakeholder group or some sector. So, I would like  
46 to try to get some kind of program or understanding  
47 where the Federal people or State people or together  
48 they do a better job of getting information on what's  
49 the genetic makeup of these different king salmon  
50 catches around the State, whether it's Bering Sea, Trawl

1 Fisheries, Gulf of Alaska Trawl Fisheries, or state of  
2 Alaska commercial salmon fisheries.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's an  
5 important topic and I would like that added. And I would  
6 like -- that's something that our fisheries people at  
7 OSM -- that genetic information is out there in our, our  
8 fisheries people with OSM can compile that that  
9 information. There's [sic] agencies that got it, we need  
10 it. We need to have where those stocks in the Gulf of  
11 Alaska, all genetic sampling done from salmon in the  
12 north Gulf of Alaska for chinook, chum, coho salmon need  
13 to be -- we need to get a report on what is the makeup  
14 of the Gulf of Alaska, Area M, South Alaska Peninsula  
15 and Bering Sea stocks that were actually taken on the  
16 high seas or basically in the marine system. Where were  
17 those stocks going to? What is their total -- we need  
18 to have -- I don't want to hear this stuff that they're  
19 all just little, little fingerlings. It's like no, no  
20 they're not. They're most of them are feeder kings, that  
21 doesn't that means they live to five and six years old,  
22 they might be four-year-old fish. They're going to come  
23 back as five. They might be 25-pound fish when they're  
24 caught in -- I don't want to hear this stuff that they're  
25 juvenile stocks, they're not all these little minnows.  
26 So, we need to know what the age classes are, we need  
27 to know the genetic makeup, and those are information  
28 that our fisheries biologists at OSM can actually  
29 compile that information for these Western Interior  
30 Regional Advisory Council, Y-K Delta Regional Advisory  
31 Council, Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council and  
32 YK Delta Regional Council and Bristol Bay Regional  
33 Council. They need, we -- and Seward Peninsula Regional  
34 Council. We need to know where these fish came from,  
35 what happened to those fish and what is the -- this  
36 smoke and mirrors stuff. We don't, you know, the genetic  
37 makeup of these stocks. The information is there. Each  
38 agency's got the information. It's trying to be clouded  
39 and in an obscure -- obscured in the, in the presentation  
40 to the public. And so, you're exactly right. The -- that  
41 information then can be disseminated from throughout the  
42 Inter-Tribal Fish Commissions for the Yukon River and  
43 the Kuskokwim River drainages. So, that's an Annual  
44 Report topic that we need to have that genetic  
45 information compiled for our -- all of these Councils  
46 use because this this problem is not going away. This  
47 is -- we're not going to stick our head in the sand.  
48 This is going to continue to -- and it's going to be --  
49 NOAA is going to be managing fisheries on the high seas  
50

00038

1 if the state of Alaska doesn't get their act together  
2 pretty soon. So, that's another Annual Report topic.

3

4 MR. GERVAIS: One addition to that, Mr.  
5 Chair. So, yeah, we need the genetic information.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, this would be  
8 Tim Gervais.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim Gervais. Other  
11 than in addition to the genetic information we need age,  
12 sex and length and weight. I mean, that's the kind of  
13 information we have to have to figure out where the  
14 salmon from each river system are at various points in  
15 their life. And that will be somewhat established by  
16 where they're being caught, by which commercial  
17 fisheries. And that's all I have. Thanks for your  
18 patience.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, that ASL, ASL  
21 information is extremely important in this whole --  
22 because we're going to need this. This problem is not  
23 going to stop. And so, we -- this is information that  
24 all the Councils need to this Council is putting this  
25 forward as an Annual Report topic that should also be  
26 transmitted to the other Regional Councils that were  
27 identified, that need this information, that needs to  
28 be passed on to the other Regional Councils at their at  
29 -- EIRAC is going to meet next week or whatever. So, I  
30 need other Annual Report topics. We need to finish off  
31 this Annual Report topic issue. This is an action item.  
32 We have -- any other Annual Report topics? Tommy.

33

34 (Simultaneous speech)

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I got Tommy here.  
37 Go ahead, Tommy.

38

39 MR. KRISKA: Thinking about the south of  
40 the Galena, Nulato, Koyukuk, the controlled use area. I  
41 put in a resolution two years ago to this Board, and I  
42 just kind of want to update that. And because I was just  
43 talking to the folks on the phone, and they still want  
44 it. So, just wanted to see if we can have that to our  
45 annual action item.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That would be  
48 delineating the same -- that was a Board of Game  
49 proposal. And so, they you could, you know, we could try  
50 and resubmit that request again at our -- but I'm not

1 sure when they would call for proposal on that. Nissa,  
2 do you have an idea about [sic] that would be?

3

4 MS. PILCHER: That's spring of 2026 for  
5 the Interior Board of Game meeting.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That would be  
8 another proposal. And so, what -- they would call for  
9 proposal at some point. And so, but you would have to --  
10 - we'd have to have the same or the compete -- your AC,  
11 did they endorse that proposal? Your Advisory Committee  
12 down there. So, that's not an actual an Annual Report  
13 topic. That's a to do item and we need to have that --  
14 that would be needs to be -- if you're your Advisory  
15 Committee or tribal organization can transmit that for  
16 our future meeting. We're going to be on Board of Game  
17 meeting stuff or Game meeting, Wildlife meeting next  
18 fall. So, that would be the time to actually discuss  
19 that, Tommy.

20

21 MR. KRISKA: Okay (indiscernible).

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, so bring the-  
24 - have Nissa work with you and get that information for  
25 the fall meeting next year. Any other Annual Report  
26 topics? Robert.

27

28 MR. WALKER: Yes, Mr. Chair, thank you.  
29 I think, Brent, I asked him a question and he got up to  
30 speak, and he kind of, like, left him out. Brent,  
31 remember I asked, would OSM support us on this 21A  
32 control use area proposal?

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead,  
35 Brent.

36

37 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
38 Council member Walker. I think your Chair pretty much  
39 addressed everything that I had to say. We can find out  
40 more information about how one goes about setting up  
41 controlled use areas. I do know that we cannot -- from  
42 what I've heard from the Solicitors, that we can no  
43 longer -- we cannot do it through regulation. So, we  
44 can't submit a proposal to set up a controlled use area  
45 under Federal lands. I don't know exactly the reasons  
46 why, but that's what I did hear recently from a Solicitor  
47 when trying to discuss this as a possibility in other  
48 areas. So, I think the best that we can do at OSM is try  
49 to find out more information, cause I don't know offhand  
50 how, how these become established.....

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Lisa Grediagin, go ahead.

MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, Lisa Grediagin, for the record, to just -- I guess a more -- provide a little more information on controlled use areas. All the ones in Federal regulation are also in State regulation. They are kinda taken over, you know, or transferred over to Federal regs from the State, and currently there's a few cases where the boundaries don't align, like the Federal boundary of the Kanuti controlled use area is different than the boundary of the State Kanuti controlled use area, but basically, if there's a, a controlled use area in Federal regulations, it would only apply to Federal users. And so I doubt it's the Council's or anyone's intent to only restrict Federal users while, you know, State users could still use aircraft or ATVs or, you know, other equipment, and so it would make the most sense to me to put a proposal into the Board of Game to establish a controlled use area under State regulations, since that would restrict everyone hunting under State regs, and then you could put -- potentially submit one under Federal regs. The guidance we got from the Solicitor is, you know, that's just hasn't really been done. Before we've had proposals again to modify the boundaries of controlled use areas, but I don't think we've ever had one to establish a new one, but it's one of those things, you know, if it comes up, you know, we deal with it at that time. But again, if there's only a controlled use area and Federal regs and not State, that would only apply to Federal users, so State users could still use, you know, ATVs or aircraft or whatever other equipment.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Lisa, yes, there Kanuti controlled use areas is disparate because the State -- the old controlled use area, the State trimmed off a whole bunch of it, but under the Federal process, we maintain the old boundary because there's a moose closure in there, that's what that was about. So, that's -- but I've not known of an -- of making it's -- a new controlled use area without going through the State process. So, that's -- the proposal is to work with -- your idea is to work with the state of Alaska to get a controlled use area extension into 21A, is your intention to work with the Federal and State government to -- and we were telling the Federal Subsistence Board that there's a need for that because of the wanton waste



00041

1 issues of coming off of the Innoko National Wildlife  
2 Refuge. Is that clear, Robert? Go ahead, Robert.

3  
4 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And  
5 Brent, first of all, I -- we were looking at kinda  
6 [sic] like a -- us [sic] support letter stating that,  
7 you know, we support this because of the past. What the  
8 biologists have made reports on it, I'd like to find  
9 those also, because I did mention earlier that the moose  
10 did migrate from 21A down to 21E and then migrate back  
11 so, we have that on record, Federal record in fact. It  
12 was done by a biologist lady, I can't remember her name,  
13 I read the report so, that is where I'm going to ask  
14 for, or we could ask for support. And Lisa, you know  
15 like, we're working with this through Tanana Chiefs.  
16 We're working with them and we're working with a BLM  
17 biologist by the name of Jeff Beyersdorf too, also who's  
18 giving us information that we need to use to do this.  
19 And we're not really -- I know the Federal Government  
20 kinda [sic] like, laid back now on a lot of these issues,  
21 and I can understand Lisa, your point of view, because  
22 we have to live here and we want to try to protect some  
23 of it, what we can because this is a resource what [sic]  
24 the tribes do use. I know 21A there's no people living  
25 there in 21A but, but there are people living in 21E  
26 and, and also 22 and 21D, etc. But these resources are  
27 very important to us, and there are records kept with  
28 the Federal Government from the Refuge there. And if we  
29 could have access to that too, and we're gonna work with  
30 this and we're gonna present it hopefully by the Board  
31 of -- the Federal Board of Game, and we will work with  
32 the Board of Game also from the State, and we'll see  
33 what they say, but we'll just work with that. And you  
34 know, I don't wanna [sic] drag this on. Mr. Chairman, I  
35 think we got it to where we needed, we need to be, and  
36 so thank you very much. Thank you.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right, well, we  
39 gave the Federal Subsistence Board a heads up on that  
40 issue, you know, the identified need for an extension  
41 of a controlled use area into the Innoko Refuge so the  
42 Federals -- but that's premature to any kind of Board  
43 action. There needs to be something happen with the State  
44 or something happen in the future. So, we can discuss  
45 this further at our -- this would be another Wildlife  
46 issue that will happen in -- the next fall's meeting of  
47 25. That's what that -- that's when that would mainly  
48 be happening. And we're looking for identifying.....

49  
50 (Simultaneous speech)

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

Oh, go ahead, Robert.

MR. WALKER: I think we can give you a report in the February meeting also just to update, okay.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I -- yes, I'd appreciate that. So, Annual Report topics. Darrell. Go ahead, Darrell.

MR. VENT: Yes, I just had some concerns and comments on our representation for our areas, you know, for instance was there a Central Arctic Herd, you know, and when you started talking about threatened or endangered species, how do we look at it? Our people lost their caribou, and there's no -- there has been no, you know, recognition for threatened or endangered. I mean -- and when you're talking about fish, you know, you're talking about, you know, the Yukon River. So, Canada, they're not getting any, you know, any amount of fishing up there. And they have the most threatened area right now. But to look at it, I see that the Kuskokwim area, we're not -- they're not being represented. I mean, maybe when this caribou migration pattern that just come down to Central Arctic. We didn't have representation at the time or we didn't have people that were concerned about it. But we have no caribou in our area, you know.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The Koyukuk River Advisory Committee made extensive comments on the proposal to the State Board of Game and so, we commented -- the State Koyukuk River Advisory commented extensively on that Central Arctic proposal, and that's when Michelle Quillan actually went before the State Board of Game in March of 2024 to talk about that. So, we were represented. I want to clarify the record, that we were represented through the AC. Advisory Committee is actually, are part of the regional Council process. So, that -- we did address that, but the State -- the problem is the State Board of Game didn't listen. They just passed the proposal as written. They don't pay any attention to the Advisory Committees, they didn't listen to the line of reasoning. So.....

MR. VENT: Okay, so how do we.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the -- we're trying to identify annual report top [sic] -- do you have an Annual Report topic?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9

MR. VENT: Well, yeah, I just wanted to comment on this control use area. When you go into control use, are you able to still get priority -- rural priority from the subsistence users or is it -- does it change it? That's one of the quest [sic] I just wanted to ask that question on your -- when you were talking about the topics.

10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Now the and -- the land status maintains, you know, it's Federal lands that would have a rural subsistence priority. In the Innoko Refuge is all Federal lands, and there's BLM lands but I don't have a Federal book before me to delineate the Federal lands. But there's BLM lands associated to that Innoko Refuge, and that's what Robert was talking about with Jeff Beyersdorf actually going through the process with them delineating this and this controlled use area. But that's futuristic. That's something that can get -- we're going to get a report on that in February from Robert, and then that's futuristic as far as actually submitting a proposal on that. Any other Annual Report topics? Not delinea [sic] not belaboring this controlled use area. Do you have other issues for your area, Darrell, that you think we need to address in our Annual Report to the Federal Subsistence Board?

28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36

MR. VENT: Yeah, I think I brought up last year, you know, that we're looking at fish species once that the salmon crash happened, we're going to start utilizing more of the other fishes, and they were supposed to do, you know, it look like the population of those fishes once that crash happened, I don't know if anything happened on that point there. I know I asked for information like that.

37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Koyukuk-Nowitna will give us a report on what their projects are, I see some water temperature projects and stuff. So, that will be in our briefings from the agencies. So, this is a report to the Federal Subsistence Board, the Annual Report. Anybody else have a specific subject to give to the Federal Subsistence Board that would -- that the Federal Subsistence Board needs to know from this regional Council? Jenny.

46  
47  
48  
49  
50

MS. PELKOLA: Jenny Pelkola. I'm just thinking, you know, I've been on this Board for many years, and it seems like we request this and we request that request, request, and we don't hardly get any of

1 our requests met. And now that we're requesting stuff  
2 from the Federal Subsistence Board, I think we need to  
3 just continue to keep, keep on, even though it looks  
4 like a losing battle, we just need to keep on bringing  
5 it up, bringing it up. I remember years ago, an elder  
6 spoke to me and he said the way you get things done is  
7 you have to keep bringing it up, bringing it up. No  
8 matter if you think you're losing or -- just keep  
9 bringing it up. So, that's something, I don't know if  
10 it's Annual Report thing that we should just continue  
11 to hound these Boards and hound, keep hounding the people  
12 to hear our requests, I don't know how you could do  
13 that, but, you know, continue to do it. And that's,  
14 that's just what I have to add.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. I  
17 mean, sometimes we are hounding. It would seem like we're  
18 hounding on this fishery stuff, but it's a -- it's so  
19 important stuff we're trying to move from -- we tried  
20 this angle, we're trying to -- it's like chopping down  
21 a tree or cut -- we made this cut that didn't work,  
22 we're gonna cut this way. We're gonna -- we're not going  
23 to stop chopping this tree down. We're going to keep  
24 working on that issue. This Council is to take comments  
25 on any issue that's -- that affects subsistence, and  
26 this extraterritorial issue of salmon out in the ocean  
27 is an issue that's affecting the people of this region.  
28 So, we're going to continue to hound them and hound them  
29 and hound them until the Federal Subsistence Board, and  
30 the Secretary of Interior, the Department of Commerce  
31 (distortion), and the Agriculture Department  
32 (indiscernible) -- of Secretaries will actually start  
33 addressing this salmon issue. This is a multi-agency  
34 problem. They need to step up to the plate. They can't  
35 just keep passing the buck. And so, you had a comment,  
36 Fred?

37  
38 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I got -- gotta go  
41 to the mic and you got to state your name. Thank you.

42  
43 MR. HUNTINGTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
44 I'm Fred Huntington from Galena and I was listening to  
45 you guys talking about the genetics of salmon that's  
46 been caught and where they come from and all that good  
47 stuff, you know, I'd like you to add all other species  
48 that comes in the Yukon. For one thing, you know, I've  
49 been fishing most of my life, this time of the year we  
50 fish for whitefish, and in the past, when I was a kid

1 growing up, we used to fish under the ice at Bishop  
2 Mountain in the fall time, and to -- one weekend we'd  
3 get 6 or 700 whitefish. Well, when I -- living here in  
4 Galena in the 70s and 80s and 90s and three or four  
5 days, we would have 5 or 600 whitefish on the beach  
6 freezing for the fall time, and a couple of years ago  
7 we had four fish nets and we were getting a lot of late  
8 summer chum, but basically, we were targeting whitefish.  
9 Out of four whitefish nets, we were getting about 30  
10 whitefish a day in which only three or four in the  
11 whitefish were females so, I noticed a large decline of  
12 whitefish. Nobody ever mentions that, nobody ever talks  
13 about it, but it's happening. I mean, I see it now, you  
14 put a fishing it in out there, you, you'd be lucky to  
15 get four or five fish a day. And so, I just wanted to  
16 make the Federal Subsistence Board aware that there are  
17 other species in the river that's being depleted, and  
18 it's not only chinook, summer chum, fall chum or coho.  
19 It's all species, that's about all I got to say.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I really  
22 appreciate that information, Fred. That's important  
23 information for this Council to know because nobody is,  
24 you know, the number of freshwater fish is declined.  
25 It's the perception is -- it's the effort is not there,  
26 but if you're setting gear and you're seeing a decline  
27 with the same per catch, per unit of effort has dropped  
28 like 90%, you're talking about around 90% decline,  
29 that's a significant problem. I'm concerned and I keep  
30 saying, I'll say it again. I'm concerned that with the  
31 reduced number of salmon coming back, that nutrient flow  
32 to the in-river systems were -- that all of these fish,  
33 these whitefish and everything are benefiting from  
34 salmon and the nitrogens feed the waters. And if there's  
35 not enough nitrogens, then the -- basically the  
36 fertilizer declines, then the number of insects  
37 declines, and I've seen a huge decline in the number of  
38 insects this year. And I think it happens -- is happening  
39 with water insects also, which would affect whitefish.  
40 So, there's a phenomenal insect decline this year. And  
41 people, nobody's gonna -- I see it in Kanuti's report  
42 that there's a 10% of the bumblebees that they actually  
43 saw previously, and I see that across the board. I think  
44 it's happening with water insects also, and that can  
45 affect whitefish dramatically, especially the broad  
46 whitefish, humpback whitefish and the ciscoes, those  
47 bearing ciscoes, those go down way downriver. So, those  
48 -- that's showing some kind of -- that probably  
49 attributed to this marine decline that we're seeing. You  
50 have another comment, Fred?

1

2 MR. HUNTINGTON: Yeah, you know, along  
3 the lines of the whitefish, I saw a video of the pollock  
4 trawlers running their fish through the conveyor belt.  
5 And these were not pollock, this was all whitefish going  
6 up the conveyor belt into the grinder and spit out in  
7 the ocean. And they were all whitefish, stacked about  
8 that high on a belt, about that wide, and that belt  
9 might have been 200ft long, but.....

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That was, that was  
12 wearing herring, herring looked a lot like.....

13

14 MR. HUNTINGTON: No, this is Whitefish.  
15 I watched this for a while, I watched it several times  
16 and there were large whitefish we would get right now,  
17 those were spit right back in the ocean after its grind  
18 up, seagulls were just having a party.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I've never heard of  
21 that before, so I would like to know more about that.  
22 What, what freshwater stocks are caught in the Bering  
23 Sea trawl fishery. What freshwater whitefish stocks are  
24 caught in the Bering Sea trawl fishery, so, make a note  
25 of that for our next meeting. Thanks for that one, Fred,  
26 I appreciate your comments. So, I don't know that we  
27 have any other Annual Report topics. I think that, Nissa  
28 you got comment.

29

30 MS. PILCHER: I just when -- I'd like to  
31 run through them.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, please go  
34 ahead.

35

36 MS. PILCHER: This was a pretty long  
37 conversation I want to make sure I didn't miss anything.

38

39 So, I tried to group them kind of by the  
40 salmon ones or the fish ones are all first. So,  
41 subsistence users are bearing the brunt of conservation  
42 issues. Was a -- one massive topic. There was a lot put  
43 on the record. The ask that you guys had last year was  
44 informational and encouraging the Federal Subsistence  
45 Board to take action. You did put a couple different  
46 options of actions they could take on the record. What  
47 we did lack on last year's was hatchery concerns. We did  
48 touch on enforcement concerns, but hatchery was not part  
49 of that. So, that will get included, and then also a  
50 request to expedite what is going on, I mean, this is

1 not a topic that you guys just came up with. This is an  
2 ongoing concern, and we can definitely feel that you are  
3 -- don't feel that things are -- yeah. I don't know how  
4 to express that well. Let's just try to speed up the  
5 process, I mean, Government moves slow, but fish are  
6 supposed to come back every year. Another topic would  
7 be look at how OSM could develop a fish commission. This  
8 is an ask and not -- the ask is to how one could be  
9 created. Another topic was requesting the Federal  
10 Subsistence Board -- request MOU between -- Memorandum  
11 of Understanding between the Department of Commerce and  
12 the Department of the Interior. Another one was.....

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Actually  
15 Department of Commerce, Department of Interior, and the  
16 Department of Agriculture, because the Department of  
17 Agriculture is part of the Federal Subsistence Board.  
18 So, the Department of Interior and Department of  
19 Agriculture are going to ask the Department of Commerce  
20 to have a memorandum of agreement to protect salmon in  
21 the marine and freshwater systems. That's what the  
22 request is, for the Federal Subsistence Board, which  
23 that's three of two of the entities.

24  
25 MS. PILCHER: Yes, thank you for that.  
26 This one, the -- and then the last fish ask perse is,  
27 this one gets a little muddy. It's -- you guys requested  
28 more information be given to you and be available on  
29 genetics across, like in the Gulf of Alaska, in Bering  
30 Sea. So, that was the ask.....

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And the State  
33 interception fisheries, which would be South Alaska  
34 Peninsula, Shumagin, Area M and other -- there's other  
35 fisheries that incidentally take, you know, outer  
36 districts of the -- of Cook Inlet. There's outer  
37 districts that are actually taking -- we need to know  
38 where these -- all of this sampling that's being done.  
39 We need to know where those genetics came from. I took  
40 genetic samples off of king salmon and chum salmon in  
41 the upper Koyukuk River for the Department of Fish and  
42 Game for five years. I know they have a genetic catalog  
43 for all of the portions of the Koyukuk -- of the Yukon  
44 River system. I helped them work on that project. Go  
45 ahead, Nissa.

46  
47 MS. PILCHER: And that information would  
48 also include the, the age, sex, length, weight and that  
49 other information that member Gervais put on the record  
50 if you guys chose to do so, one thing that member Vent

1 did just bring up is of course it's -- on your I believe  
2 it was FY-22 Annual Report, you did have concern over  
3 continued reliance on non-salmon species for subsistence  
4 needs. That addressed your concern over the lack of  
5 information on these non-salmon species and the  
6 continued reliance on them since the salmon aren't in  
7 the rivers anymore. We could certainly add that again.  
8 I believe the reply was along the lines of, you know,  
9 working through the Priority Needs Information and that  
10 process. But we could certainly add that again. And you  
11 do have Priority Need Information for the Yukon River  
12 concerning non-salmon species information gathering. So,  
13 that could definitely be added if you guys would like.  
14 And then as for -- that would cover the fish. And then  
15 as for the wildlife, we have sheep management, the  
16 harvest management strategy document. Just continue to,  
17 to hound to make sure that the Federal Subsistence Board  
18 is aware that this is still a thing, that the Council  
19 still wants to.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The manage -- the  
22 sheep management strategy, that our intention is to move  
23 it forward to final, before the Federal Subsistence  
24 Board. That's what -- that's where that is going, it's  
25 not going to let get bottled up if other -- if the other  
26 Regional Councils don't want to deal with sheep  
27 management strategies, that's fine with me. But this  
28 Council needs to have a sheep management strategy, and  
29 we have to work specifically with the North Slope  
30 Regional Advisory Council. EIRAC, they don't actually  
31 touch our sheep areas.

32  
33 MS. PILCHER: All right, and then another  
34 topic was the caribou in Unit 26B, the current harvest  
35 limit is too high. This was an informational topic to  
36 the Federal Subsistence Board letting them know about  
37 recent Board of Game actions that will cause negative  
38 impacts on those caribou.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The harvest rates  
41 for the Central Arctic Herd, caribou were harvested and  
42 sustainability at 1 to 3%. They were already harvesting  
43 large numbers of the -- large bull component. And so,  
44 there's parameters of the caribou harvest. But what you  
45 cannot have that kind of cow caribou harvest, there's  
46 no moose population that has cow moose harvest except  
47 where there's really high numbers of cow moose and moose  
48 have twins, caribou never have twins so, you can't give  
49 the public thousands of hunters a five-cow caribou bag  
50 limit, because that's what's going to come first in the



1 migration. So, that herd -- the Central Herd was only  
2 by last census that we got here at 34,500. And so, it's  
3 barely over its threshold. It will decline, and there  
4 may -- were signaling to the Federal Subsistence Board  
5 the Board of Game made a mistake that I will flat out  
6 say they made a big mistake by doing that. There are  
7 literally thousands of hunters participating and will  
8 continue to participate all the way through the end of  
9 April, so that herd will decline with that kind of a  
10 harvest rate, and we are going to need to address this  
11 issue in the future when we start to see numbers that  
12 are basically gonna go right into the toilet. We're gonna  
13 look at a Nelchina Caribou Herd debacle again. That's  
14 what we're looking at. So, the Federal Subsistence Board  
15 needs a head up, heads up. We need -- they're going --  
16 we may need to do a Federal regul [sic] Federal actions  
17 to protect this herd for subsistence use for State and  
18 Federal users.

19  
20 MS. PILCHER: And then the last one is  
21 21A, concern over, not only wanton waste, but also too  
22 many non-local hunters in 21A. The ask would be seeking  
23 support from the Federal Subsistence Board in addressing  
24 this concern in whatever their capacity is, and then  
25 also being aware that there could be things moving  
26 through the State regulatory system on these  
27 actions.....

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Basically, a heads  
30 up that there's becoming a need to -- for more controlled  
31 use in that area, with the escalating numbers of hunters  
32 going into that area and our concerns about the salvage  
33 of loss of resource due to poor salvage and the lack of  
34 enforcement. We want to highlight to the Federal  
35 Subsistence Board that we need additional enforcement,  
36 and that would be Federal enforcement. Or, you know,  
37 we're complexing everything, we're complexing  
38 everything. Well, we're not have enough enforcement. And  
39 so, Koyukuk-Nowitna they got dumped with Innoko, well  
40 they didn't give a heck of a lot more money, and we were  
41 promised that there was gonna be better enforcement. We  
42 were promised all kinds of stuff with this complexing  
43 issue. And so, that's not actually happening. And so,  
44 we need to have -- it should be an annual topic. That's  
45 the enforcement -- the Federal enforcement for Bureau  
46 of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife and National  
47 Park Service has to step up to the plate because the  
48 State can't keep up. The State just does not have the  
49 capability to keep up with the amount of problems that  
50 we have. So, we need additional Federal enforcement, has

1 to be -- there has to be additional funding by the  
2 Secretary of Interior's Office to provide more  
3 enforcement of the existing regulations. Regulations  
4 mean nothing if you don't have enforcement. When you  
5 only got one trooper on the entire Dalton Highway, and  
6 he's got 3 and 4,000 hunters that show up there, and  
7 there's -- he's got people getting a crash or something,  
8 you got to respond to an accident, and gunners are  
9 shooting caribou in the ditch with rifles illegally,  
10 well, there's no enforcement there. We need Federal  
11 enforcement, that's what we actually need. So, we have  
12 a real problem with not a lack of enforcement. So, that's  
13 an issue. That's -- we'll talk about that one again.  
14 That's going on the Innoko, well we know it's going on  
15 in the Innoko.

16  
17 MS. PILCHER: All right, other than that  
18 did I miss anything?

19  
20 MR. VENT: This is Darrell.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: (Indiscernible),  
23 Darrell.

24  
25 MR. VENT: Yeah, I know in the Annual,  
26 we spoke about Board stipends. I didn't hear anything  
27 about that.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're going to  
30 discuss that at a later time. Now, that's later on this  
31 meeting. And Robert, you got one -- this is Annual Report  
32 topics.

33  
34 MR. WALKER: Yes, Mr. Chair, thank you.  
35 You know, I did a study here about 20 years ago with the  
36 McGrath Wildlife trooper, and in a meeting, I asked him,  
37 how many square miles does he has to patrol, and he said  
38 about 172,000 square miles for him. And you have to go  
39 down to the Aniak trooper and I -- Wildlife trooper, and  
40 I asked him and he said, it's about the same as the  
41 McGrath Wildlife trooper. So, this is a lot of area for  
42 one person. And I remember back in the day, we used to  
43 have a Federal Fish and Wildlife officer come to our  
44 meetings and listened to our concerns. Now we don't have  
45 that anymore, I haven't seen this in -- well I just got  
46 back on, and this is -- I was surprised when you brought  
47 that up that we don't have somebody here just to sit  
48 down and listen. Do we have Wildlife -- Federal Wildlife  
49 trooper here?

50

1 UNIDENTIFIED: There was an enforcement  
2 that called in.

3  
4 MR. WALKER: Really? But back in the day,  
5 you know, we used to have -- somebody used to come and  
6 sit down and listen to what the Board, you know, the RAC  
7 Board had to say. So, this was -- I think we may have  
8 lost that, somebody who would directly hear these, all  
9 these reports, not only from the Board, but also the  
10 tribal people who come in and discuss their issues, their  
11 concerns that come to us. But we should have a Wildlife  
12 officer here from the Federal. Sit down and listen and  
13 take notes. Thank you, Mr. Chair

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, we got -- we  
16 have transcripts. I would encourage OSM to -- these  
17 discussions about enforcement problems. I mean, I would  
18 like OSM to transmit those through to the enforcement  
19 agencies of the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and  
20 Wildlife and the Bureau of Land Management. So, we need  
21 to move those -- there are various enforcement concerns.  
22 The first, you know, they're enforcement, they got to  
23 go do stuff, but we can compile those, you know, they're  
24 -- you're going to run across, you know, during this  
25 whole discussion, we've identified various issues. And  
26 there's just not enough enforcement when you --  
27 especially when you have a fire sale on caribou on the  
28 North Slope, I'll go ahead say it's a fire sale. And you  
29 got like -- let's just give the public five caribou bag  
30 limit, let's give the non-residents two caribou bag  
31 limit. We got hundreds of non-resident vehicles coming  
32 this fall, hundreds. There's hundreds and hundreds of  
33 hunters. Whether they got tags, I don't know. I have no  
34 enforcement authority. So, we need to have the  
35 enforcement officers for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
36 National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management, has  
37 to be aware that we're identifying issues, salvage  
38 requirement issues, and we need to have them understand  
39 that we have -- the agencies have to have the understand  
40 they need to and step up. They have to step up, the  
41 state of Alaska can't keep up. So, you got a comment  
42 there Nissa. Go ahead.

43  
44 MS. PILCHER: I do actually, Cody Smith  
45 with Fish Wildlife Service is online.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Cody you're  
48 online there?

1 MR. SMITH: Yes, good morning. Thank you  
2 for letting me jump on real quick. I just did want to  
3 clarify for the record that we do have multiple U.S.  
4 Fish and Wildlife law enforcement on the meeting right  
5 now and we are listening and taking notes. So, thank  
6 you.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I was unaware  
9 of that. So, there are various enforcement issues going  
10 on. My reported enforcement issues to Bureau of Land  
11 Management in the closed sheep closure area. There's  
12 various things happen. The other aspect is we make  
13 reports, we never hear anything back. We have no idea  
14 what's going on. Nobody that makes reports, gets any  
15 kind of information flow coming backwards. So, that's -  
16 - enforcement should be aware of if somebody makes a  
17 request for enforcement, we had a lady here, what was  
18 her name? Stickman -- Ms. Stickman. She was making a  
19 comments about an enforcement issue for the for trespass  
20 on Native allotments and she's not getting anything back  
21 from the Alaska State Troopers. So, it seems to be common  
22 practice of enforcement and of all agencies, not to get  
23 back to people who are making you know -- you want  
24 enforcement, you want pictures, you want tail numbers  
25 or license plate numbers and stuff. But we never hear  
26 nothing back. Whatever happened, did anything happen?  
27 That's the main question. Did anything -- was there any  
28 follow up? Are you -- can you -- are you -- I'll just  
29 ask you Cody, is -- when you get reports what is your,  
30 number of -- if you get reports how many of the reports,  
31 what would be a percentage are all looked at, 10%? How  
32 many times do you get a report, do you actually respond  
33 to the reports?

34  
35 MR. SMITH: Yes, and I understand your  
36 question, to be fair, I don't know that I could -- I  
37 don't wanna [sic] make up a percentage. I don't know  
38 that I could put a percentage on it, but I can say that  
39 any reports that come in, if there is information to be  
40 followed up on we're doing it, and things like photos,  
41 tail numbers, dates, names, all that kind of stuff helps  
42 us follow up on those reports quicker because the less  
43 information we have, the longer it takes us to compile  
44 that information to then follow up on it. But we are  
45 doing our best with the amount of folks we have to follow  
46 up on all the reports that we get.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so but I do  
49 -- and would you say that you're adequately staffed at  
50 U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Forest Enforcement?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

MR. SMITH: I think ours and any other program with probably any of the agencies that are on here right now would say the same thing that we I think we all feel understaffed, there's -- and from the enforcement perspective, there's plenty of workload and not enough of us to go around.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so we will use that as documentation for our Annual Report. Thank you very much, Cody. I appreciate that discussion with us, I appreciate you being on the phone. So, I think that completes our Annual Report topics. I don't know of any more. I haven't heard of any more from any Council members here, and we've covered a lot of different topics. And so, I think we got a full Annual Report and we'll review those topics, and for editing at our mar [sic], is it February meeting? Is it? Yeah, it's February. So, I think we're going to go to break now. Nissa, you got a comment?

MS. PILCHER: It's an action item.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so, we're gonna to pass this. The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the Annual Report topics that we discussed through this last several hours here. We need a motion. Moved by Robert.

MR. KRISKA: Second.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Tommy. Further discussion, I think we discussed asked a lot. Questions called by Jenny, those in favor of the -- adopting the Annual Report topics to be reviewed at our February meeting to be transmitted to the Federal Subsistence Board signify by saying aye. Aye, we got four eyes in the room. Do we have anybody on the phone? Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Darrell?

MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Tim, roger that. Darryl? Don?

MR. HONEA: Aye.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That was Darrell?

MR. HONEA: Aye, this is Don.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don, all right. Can you say your name, because we can't -- we have.....

MR. HONEA: This is Don, I said aye.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, roger and Darryl?

(No answer)

So, but Darrell is not talking right now. But maybe he can text his vote.

MS. PILCHER: Well, we got Tim. I can, I can text Darrell, but I'm -- I [sic] sure I heard his voice, but it would be good for the record to have him say.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Darrell?

MS. PILCHER: Darrell and aye.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Did you vote Darrell? Yeah, we got quorum, so the motion passes. So, now we're gonna go to break. We're got -- let's see what time we got here. So, it's 11:25. We can go to.....

MS. PILCHER: 35.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, 35, and so we can go till about a 15-minute break and then we'll go to 12:30. What's more -- we need to -- we have a lot of agenda. We spend a lot of time on that Annual Teport. But it was an action item. So, 15-minute break. I'll be back at 11:55.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're gonna start back up again. And who do we have on the phone, do we got Tommy? Or correction, do we have Don, Darryl or Tim on the phone?

1 Mr. GERVAIAS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim,  
2 I'm here.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, you're a  
5 little weak there, Tim. So, I roger you, roger that.  
6 Darrell? Okay, Nissa can see people on the phone also,  
7 but whether they're connected correctly that's the other  
8 issue. So, I think we got quorum now. So, what is our  
9 next, thing here, Nissa.

10  
11 MS. PILCHER: Nissa Pilcher, for the  
12 record, the next is future meeting dates and locations,  
13 and I can walk you guys through that.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

16  
17 MS. PILCHER: All right.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Page 108.

20  
21 MS. PILCHER: Yes, so page 107 for the  
22 winter 25 meeting. And that is the comb bound book.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 107?

25  
26 MS. PILCHER: 107. So, you guys chose the  
27 dates of February 25th and 26th. So, first let's look  
28 at the dates, then let's look at the location. So, one  
29 of the things that we ran into with this meeting is the  
30 Council selected and voted on these dates a couple times,  
31 but when it actually came time to hold the meeting,  
32 there was a lot of subsistence activities going on, that  
33 that could have kept people from attending. Are those  
34 two dates good? And, also bear in mind, if you do move  
35 it, you've got to move it somewhere where there's only  
36 two coun [sic], like you can't have three Council  
37 meetings in one week, and then there's also staff overlap  
38 because not like Cory for example, doesn't just work  
39 with the Western Interior, he works with other Councils.  
40 So, there's a possibility that if you move it, that  
41 might restrict the analysts that should be at that  
42 meeting being able to be at that meeting due to they're  
43 already set to work somewhere else.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the main  
46 question I want to have, since we keep getting Council  
47 members dropping out because of work and stuff, are these  
48 gonna work out for people who are at work? Does this  
49 work out for you, Tommy.....

50

00056

1 MR. KRISKA: Yeah.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....with your work  
4 schedule? And so that's fine with me. Tim, is February  
5 25 and 26 good for you on the schedule? You still there,  
6 Tim?

7

8 MS. GERVAIS: Yeah.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

11

12 MS. GERVAIS: This is Tim.

13

14 (Simultaneous speech)

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Those dates work  
17 for you. And Darrell? I would like to get all the  
18 Council members that I can to, to commit or, you know,  
19 say they're gonna come to the meeting at least. Don  
20 Honea.

21

22 MR. HONEA: Yeah, could you hear me now?  
23 Yeah, could you hear me?

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can hear you now,  
26 Don. Yeah, you're, you opened up so February 25 and 26,  
27 good for you?

28

29 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Yes, it is.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay so, -- and  
32 then.

33

34 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF Yes, go ahead.

37

38 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Oh, okay. I'm  
39 sorry. Just checking to see if I'm -- see if I wasn't  
40 muted. Okay, thank you.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, for some  
43 reason, you're not hearing me. I'm recognizing that  
44 those are good for you, Don. So, I'm good with that.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Yes.

47

48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And then Daryl, are  
49 you there, Daryl? So, Daryl is not there, but -- okay.  
50 That's Daryl? Oh, Daryl's texting, yes. Okay, so, that's



1 a that's an affirmative. So, the other aspect of that  
2 meeting is in McGrath. And so, there was -- I was talking  
3 to Nissa about some of these charter rates have gotten,  
4 like extremely high. And what did you get an analysis,  
5 Nissa?

6  
7 MS. PILCHER: I did not have time to do  
8 that. And not saying that we couldn't afford to do a  
9 charter or so, if McGrath is on a different -- is on the  
10 Kuskokwim. So, in order to get there and get home again,  
11 it's going to be 5- or 6-days travel if you guys do  
12 regular fare. My plan was to request a charter to get  
13 you guys to McGrath. That's not a guarantee. I don't --  
14 that's not a guarantee it would be improved -- approved  
15 but that was my intention. But that does definitely  
16 increase the cost. Seat fares can be cancelled up to 24  
17 hours, and we generally get our money back. Charters are  
18 a set fee no matter what. So, if I did go the charter  
19 route, we would need to make sure that we had Council  
20 members physically getting on that plane or as best as  
21 we could.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, is there's --  
24 what size aircraft? We're just talking about basically  
25 it would be our northern members would be Darrell, Tommy,  
26 Jenny and I. Pollock is not traveling anymore.

27  
28 MS. PILCHER: I wouldn't say not, but  
29 it's a possibility.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, like a 206  
32 would actually do that. Have you looked into like 206,  
33 Cessna 206, which is -- that's a pretty fast airplane.

34  
35 MS. PILCHER: It is. The part of the  
36 issue with how the Federal -- how we have to do charters  
37 is I don't know how much it's going to cost for a couple  
38 months because I have to submit the request in order to  
39 get the cost. So, it's not an immediate resolving [sic]  
40 and I -- like I said, I can look at both and see which  
41 option we think was going to be best.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: But so, what would  
44 entail if we went with a charter, is for everybody to  
45 jump on a fair flight to Fairbanks. Then we me take one  
46 airplane with us over to McGrath, which is -- that's  
47 about a two hours and 45 minutes or something like that.  
48 So, that that would be I think that's a, you know,  
49 chartering a Navajo or a Caravan is like, that's a big  
50 airplane, very expensive. Charter rates are like,

1 unbelievable that expensive. So, I think that it's --  
2 and then for Robert you got -- is there a fair flight  
3 now going from Anvik over to McGrath? I thought there  
4 was going to be. Go ahead, Robert.

5  
6 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes,  
7 there is a Wright aircraft that comes out of Fairbanks,  
8 goes to McGrath and goes to the Yukon. A -- the GASH  
9 villages, I'll say that and return back to McGrath and  
10 then go back to Fairbanks. And then it does a three-week  
11 during wintertime. So, you can call the office, and you  
12 can get a definite answer for that. So, they.....

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: They now have fair  
15 flight over from Fairbanks to McGrath. Okay so, I don't  
16 even have to charge them. Really? So, we just get fair  
17 flights for the northern members coming into McGrath or  
18 to Fairbanks. Then we get on that fair flight plan that's  
19 whatever -- what's important to know what day that is?

20  
21 MS. PILCHER: If it's three times a week,  
22 I would assume Monday, Wednesday, Friday, but then the  
23 next -- we need to make sure that the flight that's  
24 going there is big enough to fit all the Council members,  
25 which it should be.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I mean, they're if  
28 they're flying a Caravan over there, right?

29  
30 MR. WALKER: Yes, it's a Caravan. But you  
31 have to remember, like I have to go back on the schedule  
32 unless you want to charter me back if it's a weekend.  
33 They don't fly on a weekend either. Right there. So.....

34  
35 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, how it would  
36 currently look is we would be meeting a Tuesday and a  
37 Wednesday. So, if they flew Monday, Wednesday, Friday,  
38 we'd have to get you in on Monday, but then we wouldn't  
39 be able to get you home again until Friday.

40  
41 (Pause)

42  
43 And Tommy just asked if that would be  
44 for everyone. And yes, yeah, that would be for everyone  
45 if we were to fly seat fare.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, would it be  
48 advantageous for us to move these two dates? Oh, no, we  
49 wouldn't. We would fly on Monday. We would do the

50

00059

1 meeting, and then we'd have to spend an additional day  
2 in McGrath to fly back on Friday.

3

4 MR. KRISK: I think you could ask RideAir  
5 if they could bring us over there on a Tuesday. They do  
6 that.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, you talk into  
9 your mic there Tommy, please speak into your mic.

10

11 MR. KRISKA: I think if you ask them,  
12 they'll make a what they call -- a flag stop.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, flag stops.

15

16 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, that's technically  
17 considered a charter. And I would have to double -- I  
18 could do that on the State side, and I know they do it.  
19 I'm not positive how it would work on this side of the  
20 curtain.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, if they -- what  
23 time do they? Robert, you know more about this Anvik  
24 flight. So, on Wednesday they would fly down. And what  
25 time do they go over to Anvik, do they show up over  
26 there?

27

28 MR. WALKER: You would have to call  
29 RideAir on that. It's always weather permitting, two for  
30 one, and.....

31

32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Is that how you  
33 came up to Fairbanks?

34

35 MR. WALKER: Yes, I had to fly from Anvik  
36 to Fairbanks and Fairbanks to here. And then when I go  
37 home, I got to go to Fairbanks and then I got to go from  
38 Fairbanks to Anvik.

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. So, as the  
41 Council still wanting to go to McGrath, we could go to  
42 McGrath or change our destination. That's the  
43 other.....

44

45 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this  
46 is Don.

47

48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

49

1 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I am all for going to  
2 McGrath. I really think that we you know, maybe we could  
3 get the word out for representation while we're over  
4 there or people from Nikolai or something like that. I  
5 think -- I really deem it important. And their sound  
6 system, everything points to -- I enjoy going over there  
7 because of all the place [sic] where they put us up. And  
8 right across the road is -- I just find it ideal, so I'm  
9 glad that someone mentioned meeting there. Thank you.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Don. And  
12 Kevin Whitworth was on here earlier. Do you show him --  
13 are you there, Kevin?

14  
15 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is Kevin.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, we're  
18 discussing this next meeting date in McGrath. Do you  
19 think we would get good participation? Would you be in  
20 McGrath during those dates? The 25th.....

21  
22 MR. WHITWORTH: I missed the date. Say  
23 date again.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 25th and 26th of  
26 February.

27  
28 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, I think you'll get  
29 participation. Hard to say how many people, but there's  
30 this moose concern. It's fresh on people's mind now.  
31 It'll come up then, though, because it's such a concern,  
32 and people want to express their concerns for salmon and  
33 whitefish as well. So, I think you'll get -- and that -  
34 - and there are two airlines that are coming to McGrath  
35 Reeve and Alaska Air Transit. And there's, you know,  
36 there's commercial transporters or whatever coming out  
37 in and out of here and enough space, bed space and stuff  
38 like that so, we can accommodate.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, then our  
41 court recorder could probably come out of Anchorage,  
42 coming over to McGrath and back to Anchorage on another  
43 carrier, most likely. So, your company will have to  
44 figure that out, Tanya. So, I think that the Council  
45 probably would like to meet in McGrath. I'm just -- and  
46 that's okay with you, Robert. Tim, you're good with  
47 McGrath? Timothy Gervais.

48  
49 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, this is Tim. Yes,  
50 okay.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

(Simultaneous speech - distortion)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Roger that, Tim. You're really weak, Tim. Can you speak? You said something else. I couldn't hear it.

MR. GERVAIS: Yes, McGrath is good.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. All right, we're good on that. So, I would -- I think that we can do this with some fair flight and possibly some kind of a flagstop thing, or Robert has to leave on one eight or something to meet (distortion) Anvik. You know, they're going to McGrath and then the Anvik. I heard that RideAir was going to -- was negotiating with the GASH communities to travel air service over there. So, I -- I'm realizing that's what's actually going on. So, I think that those same dates and in McGrath is probably the best choice for our next meeting that -- this quote spring meeting. So, we need to have a motion to add. Robert and Nissa are talking right now. So, we're going to come before -- you have a final comment there, Nissa? Nothing. Okay I need a -- we need a motion to -- for this referred to as winter meeting, but we call it the spring meeting of 2025. We're still holding to McGrath on February 25 and 26 using available fair flights and so forth with the air carriers. And so, I think that this meeting can work out more economically than previously I thought. So, we have a motion to -- for this meeting. We need a motion to adopt these meeting dates and those -- and at that time.  
And.....

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, this is Don. That would be my motion.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Motion by Don. We have a second.

MR. GERVAIS: Second.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Second by Tommy. Those in favor of meeting in McGrath on February 25th and 26 of 2025 for the winter meeting signify by saying aye. Aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

MR. HONEA: Aye.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don.

MR. GERVAIS: Aye. This is Tim.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And Tim.

MR. HONEA: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

MR. HONEA: This is Don.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Roger, Don. And we have Darrell. Did Darrell show back up? Okay, not. So, then we're going to the fall meeting of 25.

MS. PILCHER: Correct, yes. So, on page 108, you guys are -- so flip the page. This is the fall 2025 meeting. You guys chose October 7th and October 8th with Fairbanks with alternate and Huslia. There's not a lot of wiggle room to move that later. It did seem like this -- we're meeting the 2nd and the 3rd of October, and it seems like that might have -- some felt that that was a little too early to meet. It does look like you guys may be able to move it to the week of October 20th. But I don't know if that's a good week or if you're interested in.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: What's your work schedule, Tommy? You're good with the 7th and 8th. And Don, are you good with that date?

MR. HONEA: Yeah, I am, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And Tim, are you good with the 7-8 of October?

MR. GERVAIS: Yes, that seems like that'll work out.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And I'm good with that date. Are you good with that date Jenny and Robert? No, no.

MR. WALKER: Yes, Mr. Chair, I would agree with that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 7 and 8 of October. And then Fairbanks is my preference because we get better

00063

1 agency participation and we're going to be moving into  
2 Game, Wildlife stuff. And so, I would prefer to be where  
3 Fish and Game's going to be for discussion about this  
4 controlled use area and stuff. And so, is that acceptable  
5 to the Council? Fairbanks for that fall meeting of 25.  
6 Jenny, Fairbanks? Tim, Fairbanks?

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: Yes.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim. Roger that,  
11 Tim. And then Don.

12

13 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Mr. Chair, you  
14 bring up a good point. That's what the agencies are and  
15 that we're approaching some vital subjects so, yes.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, roger that.  
18 And then Tommy, Fairbanks? Robert? Okay, all Council  
19 members have our affirmative on that. We need a motion  
20 to adopt the fall 2025 meeting in Fairbanks on October  
21 7th and 8ht.

22

23 MS. PELKOLA: I'll move.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny. Do  
26 we have a second?

27

28 MR. GERVAIS: Second.

29

30 CHAIRPERON REAKOFF: Seconded by Tommy.  
31 Those are in favor of that location and Fairbanks and  
32 those dates of October 7th and 8ht, 2025 signify by  
33 saying aye. Aye.

34

35 MR. HONEA: Aye.

36

37 MR. GERVAIS: Aye, this is Tim.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, roger that.  
40 We got both you and Don on there, so we're good.

41

42 MR. HONEA: Yes.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, that covers  
45 those two issues. Those were action items.

46

47 MS. PILCHER: We're good. I was just  
48 going to say the last one -- last action item is  
49 (indiscernible), move forward?

50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Nissa.

2  
3                   MS. PILCHER: All right. So, the last  
4 action item on your guys' agenda right now is to review  
5 -- it's a lot of words. It's a draft correspondence on  
6 OSM correspondence. So, at the All Council meeting, you  
7 saw -- this Council signed on to send a joint Council  
8 letter concerning correspondence issues. And at your  
9 meeting, you requested that included in that letter be  
10 additional language involving how OSM routes comments  
11 to the Board of Fish and the Board of Game. You wanted  
12 to add routing it through Councils or Council Chairs in  
13 order for them to review and add comments. This was  
14 unable to be added to that letter just due to the nature  
15 of the All Council meeting because it couldn't go before  
16 all of the Councils that signed on at that time. So, I  
17 did draft a letter to see if he wanted to review it, to  
18 see if this was still an issue and that you wanted to  
19 send it. But if you did want to review it, edit it and  
20 send it, that would be an action item. But you do not  
21 have to take action on it if you do not want.

22  
23                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This address --  
24 this letter addresses a sort of a vital issue that's  
25 been across thread with OSM for several years. Is the  
26 delayed progress of -- the Council correspondence review  
27 occurred because one Regional Council tried to lobby  
28 Federal representatives which violated the Hatch Act,  
29 which started the Council correspondence review and the  
30 Council correspondence review process was strictly not  
31 an editing process, was strictly a process to make sure  
32 that the Councils were not violating our legal  
33 parameters as Regional Councils. That's what the  
34 correspondence review where occurred a long time ago.  
35 I've been here for 31 years ago [sic]. This was like  
36 over 20 something years ago, 25 years ago, a long time  
37 ago. This got balled into this gobbledygook, picking up  
38 all kinds of sand and hairballs along the way, bouncing  
39 from desk to desk and these delays got to the point  
40 where we weren't even meeting our dates of vital letters  
41 to the Board of Fish or Board of Game or agencies on  
42 time certain things were not being met. So, all Councils  
43 were having the same problem. So, there's been a  
44 restructuring of the Council review -- correspondence  
45 review process. But we -- I feel that this letter would  
46 also -- to OSM again would like reiterate that this is  
47 a these are vital letters and it's my opinion that  
48 drastic editing should not be actually necessary or  
49 really did not have to occur, you know, yeah typos and  
50 stuff like that but not just change the whole meaning



1 of the -- there's some things that actually get changed.  
2 Which brings me to the other thing, the OSM makes  
3 comments to the Board of Game and Board of Fish that are  
4 never reviewed by the Federal -- by the Regional  
5 Councils. So, this of course, on its review process is  
6 a double-edged sword. And so, these Councils, if you're  
7 going to comment on proposals before the Board of Fish  
8 and Federal Subsistence Board, the Councils need to know  
9 what, not after the fact, not after the fact. If you're  
10 if you're going to transmit comments, the Council Chairs  
11 at least need to be apprised of what those comments are  
12 going to be. So, I'm stating that on the record. And so,  
13 that should actually be an included paragraph at the end  
14 of this. Is that this -- that any kind of transmissions  
15 from the Federal Subsistence Board to other agencies  
16 outside of what's occurred in Federal-Regional Council  
17 meetings. Sometimes the recommendations by OSM regarding  
18 salvage of ptarmigan were completely disparate to what  
19 the Regional Councils actually had opposed proposals,  
20 but they were supporting proposals that were opposed by  
21 the Council. So, OSM really has to have its own review  
22 process also. And I've stated this before and again and  
23 I'm saying it again, the Councils need to be able to  
24 look at what is OSM's correspondents doing. Is it  
25 actually meeting the needs of subsistence? Is it  
26 actually within the parameters of the Federal program?  
27 And why does OSM even feel a need to transmit  
28 recommendations to these State Board of Fish and Board  
29 of Game that actually don't support what Regional  
30 Councils are actually saying, that has actually  
31 occurred. So, this is -- this has been an ongoing thing.  
32 That's why I'm talking, maybe our staff here, Brent and  
33 it was an unaware of these issues before, but it's that  
34 actually has happened. And I feel that this should be  
35 part of this letter, that the Council should be apprised  
36 of what the comments are that OSM is making to other  
37 agencies. It's a double-edged, it's just a fair and fair.  
38 So, that's a paragraph that should be added. So, that  
39 could be cleaned up the language and so forth. But that's  
40 the intent of that paragraph. So, any Council comments  
41 on this on this letter to OSM regarding our  
42 correspondence review. None from Robert, Tommy, Jenny,  
43 Tim or Don?

44

45 MR. GERVAIS: No, Mr. chair. This is Tim.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Tim. Still  
48 there, Don?

49

50

1 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, this is Don. No  
2 comment.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so, the  
5 addition of that last paragraph is -- should be included  
6 into this, as discussed on the record. The Chair will  
7 entertain a motion to adopt this letter for transmission  
8 to the Office of Subsistence Management and in Anchorage  
9 regarding our correspondence review process and our  
10 review process. So, I need a motion.

11  
12 MS. PELKOLA: I'll move.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved by Jenny. Do  
15 I have a second? Second by Robert. Further discussion?  
16 None. Those in -- call for question. Question by Robert.  
17 Those in favor of the -- of transmitting this letter to  
18 the Office of Subsistence Management regarding  
19 correspondence review processes signify by saying aye.  
20 Aye.

21  
22 MR. HONEA: Aye. This is Don, aye.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don. Roger that,  
25 Don.

26  
27 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim, aye.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, roger that  
30 Tim. So, okay. So, we're finished with that. So, we're  
31 going to go into reports now, Nissa. And was there  
32 something we skipped? Council training.

33  
34 MS. PILCHER: You guys did actually move  
35 it to past reports, at least on my notes.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

38  
39 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim. I  
40 didn't -- I got cut off last night. Did you get a vote?  
41 A quorum vote on the Kuskokwim Priority Information  
42 Needs?

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, we did, and  
45 we registered your vote. Since you texted it in, we did  
46 register that. So, that Kuskokwim PIN, Priority  
47 Information Needs was actually passed this morning when  
48 we reviewed that.

49  
50

1 MS. PILCHER: The Council is -- has had  
2 a lot of really good conversations and a lot of good  
3 things were put on the record. But you guys are moving  
4 a little slower than you normally do, and we did move  
5 the reports. It may be a good idea to break for lunch  
6 at this time, so I can email all the people that were  
7 going to be giving reports and make sure that they are  
8 ready to go at 1:30, unless you guys want to not sit  
9 through -- unless you guys want to hear Cory's  
10 presentation on delegation of authority before you  
11 break.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: How long would this  
14 -- would that be approximately. So, it would probably  
15 be best to do that right now for ten minutes before  
16 lunch. Then we'll go to lunch. Then we'll be right into  
17 reports.

18  
19 (Pause)

20  
21 MR. GRAHAM: So, Mr. chair, members of  
22 the Council. Cory Graham, Fisheries Biologist at OSM.  
23 This presentation can be found starting on page one of  
24 your -- one with this, page one. So, I'm here to present  
25 the Delegation of Authority Training moving forward. OSM  
26 plans to hold one training session at each Council  
27 meeting. We feel this will help new council members  
28 become more familiar with the Federal Subsistence  
29 Management Program, and also serve as a refresher for  
30 the more seasoned members. Today, we're going to go over  
31 the basics of the delegation of authority. This training  
32 is meant to be informational, it's not an action item.  
33 And we'll get started. So, starting on the slide with  
34 the bear. The objectives of this training are to provide  
35 information about delegated authority. Show the Councils  
36 where to find information about delegated authority and  
37 discuss the Council's role in delegated authority. This  
38 training is meant to be a broad overview, but there will  
39 be time for Q&A at the end. So, next slide. So, here's  
40 the regulation that allows the Board to delegate their  
41 authority to agents -- field agency officials. The  
42 regulation describes what kind of actions can be  
43 delegated, for example setting harvest and possession  
44 limits, open or closing seasons, etc. but we'll try and  
45 use plain language in the next few slides to define and  
46 describe delegation of authority training. Next slide.  
47 So, what is delegation of authority? In the broadest  
48 sense, delegation of authority is the transfer of  
49 limited decision-making power from the Board to Federal  
50 managers. Delegated authority is what gives Federal

1 managers the legal authority to make in-season decisions  
2 to manage fish and wildlife populations.

3  
4           Next slide. So, as mentioned previously,  
5 the Board transfers the decision-making authority to  
6 Federal managers. For example, these may be National  
7 Park Service superintendents, Forest Service district  
8 rangers, or Fish and Wildlife Refuge managers and local  
9 Federal managers often have a greater connection to and  
10 understanding of the resource than anyone in Anchorage.  
11 So, beyond giving decision making authority to Federal  
12 managers who have boots on the ground, why is delegation  
13 of authority important? Next slide. Delegation of  
14 authority is important for multiple reasons. It allows  
15 Federal managers to make quick management decisions as  
16 data and local knowledge become available in-season. So,  
17 for example, maybe the preseason forecast for a fish  
18 population is strong, but in-season data and local  
19 observations indicate the run is really weak and will  
20 not meet escapement goals. The Federal managers  
21 delegated authority allows quick action to either close  
22 the fishery to all users to protect the populations or  
23 close the fishery to non-federally qualified users to  
24 protect and continue subsistence uses. It also allows  
25 for input from locals when there is a close relationship  
26 between managers and subsistence users. The next slide.  
27 Authority can be delegated to managers in two places.  
28 One is in unit specific regulations or what's found in  
29 the handy dandy. Currently, only Wildlife regulations  
30 have delegated authority in unit specific regulations,  
31 and this is mainly because Wildlife has a lot of routine  
32 management actions that happen every year. For example,  
33 a Federal manager may be delegated authority to announce  
34 the harvest quota for a moose hunt. Authority may also  
35 be delegated through delegation of authority letters,  
36 and these letters allow Federal managers to issue  
37 special actions, and we'll discuss these more in a little  
38 bit.

39  
40           Next slide. So, how the Board delegates  
41 authority depends on if the authority is delegated in a  
42 letter or unit specific regulations. For the letters,  
43 the Board may delegate authority at any time, and this  
44 is done through administrative actions, and these  
45 actions require the Board to vote either by email, poll  
46 or during a Board meeting. But they don't have to go  
47 through the full regulatory process, and this allows for  
48 quick action by the Board and for the Board to be  
49 responsive to changing conditions. This method does not  
50 require public input. However, the Board understands

1 public feedback is a critical component of the Federal  
2 Subsistence Management program and will often ask for  
3 feedback from the Councils before creating or modifying  
4 delegation of authority letters. So, delegation of  
5 authority in unit specific regulations, this may only  
6 happen through the public regulatory process. In other  
7 words, it requires a proposal to change existing Fish  
8 and Wildlife regulations during the regulatory cycle and  
9 public input is required during the public regulatory  
10 process. So, next slide. Here's an example of authority  
11 that's delegated to a manager in unit specific  
12 regulations. Again, these only occur in Wildlife  
13 regulations and are for routine annual management  
14 decisions. The authority is more limited in scope than  
15 delegation of authority letters. In this example, the  
16 authority only pertains to setting permit conditions and  
17 announcing closures for a winter hunt. If anyone, the  
18 Councils, the public want to change or modify this  
19 authority, they would need to submit a regulatory  
20 proposal.

21  
22 Moving on to the next slide. So, in  
23 contrast, the authority outlined in regulation, managers  
24 again may be also delegated authority through delegation  
25 of authority letters. Again, these letters give managers  
26 authority to issue special actions. The special actions  
27 issued by Federal managers are subject to regulatory  
28 requirements. For example, public hearings are required  
29 for temporary special actions, which are special actions  
30 that exceed 60 days but may not extend past the end of  
31 the current regulatory cycle. Public hearings are not  
32 required for emergency special actions, but they are  
33 they are encouraged. And the managers must also seek  
34 council recommendations when the timing of Council  
35 meetings allow. So again, these delegation letters can  
36 be issued or rescinded by the Board at any time. Issuing  
37 or rescinding the letters does not need to take place  
38 at a Board meeting or during the regulatory cycle. And  
39 this gives the Board flexibility to adapt to changing  
40 conditions and make sure managers have the tools they  
41 need to manage and protect populations, as well as  
42 optimize subsistence opportunity. So, if anyone wants  
43 to change the delegation of authority letters this may  
44 be requested by the Council or the public by letter or  
45 during a Board meeting. These delegation letters aren't  
46 currently published online. If the council or the public  
47 ever wants a copy, please reach out to your in-season  
48 manager or to OSM. Next slide. So, even though the  
49 delegation letters are issued for specific areas and  
50 species, the -- all delegation of authority letters

1 contain the same general language and requirements. For  
2 example, all letters require communication with affected  
3 parties such as the Council Chairs and ADF&G, tribal  
4 consultations must be conducted if practical, and  
5 managers may defer decisions to the Board with very  
6 controversial issues if immediate action is not needed.  
7 Next slide.

8  
9           The Federal program has Fisheries  
10 regulations and Wildlife regulations, and Fisheries and  
11 Wildlife delegated authority are issued in separate  
12 letters for fisheries. The scope is broad and consistent  
13 across letters, and they cover all species. Fish species  
14 in an area. A list of these can be found on page 98 of  
15 the Fisheries Regulation Book, I can show you that later  
16 if you can't find it now. And this contrasts with  
17 Wildlife delegations, which tend to cover specific  
18 hunts, species and management actions. Most wildlife  
19 actions are routine and occur every year, and the unit  
20 specific regulations for Federal wildlife harvest  
21 regulations. In the booklet, there's a white exclamation  
22 mark inside of a red triangle, and this indicates that  
23 additional management actions may be taken by the  
24 Federal in-season manager. And you should consult the  
25 delegation authority table listed on page 152. Again,  
26 if you can't find these, just -- I'll find them for you  
27 later. So, next slide. So, in summary we have delegation  
28 of authority which again means the Board may transfer  
29 limited decision-making ability to Federal managers.  
30 This authority can be found in unit specific regulations  
31 or in delegation of authority letters. And the unit  
32 specific regulations delegated authority can only be  
33 added or modified during the public regulatory process.  
34 The delegation tends to be for routine and annual  
35 management actions. They are currently only in Wildlife  
36 regulations because they tend to have more routine  
37 management actions. Next slide.

38  
39           So, the Council's role in delegation of  
40 authority, delegated authority in unit specific  
41 regulations would be submitting proposals to change it  
42 in regulation, making recommendations to the Board on  
43 the associated regulatory proposals and consulting with  
44 managers before they take action. Next slide. The  
45 delegation of authority letters are easier for the Board  
46 to change or resend. Giving the board more flexibility  
47 to act quickly and respond to changing conditions.  
48 Changes to the letters can happen outside the regulatory  
49 cycle, and delegation of authority letters give Federal  
50 managers the ability to issue special actions. Next

1 slide. The Council also has a role in delegation of  
2 authority letters. As you may request to add or modify  
3 them through letters or at Board meetings. The Board  
4 often asks Councils for feedback on proposed changes to  
5 delegated delegation of authority letters when time  
6 allows, and the letters also require that the managers  
7 consult with Council Chairs before issuing special  
8 actions, and the Chair is encouraged to seek feedback  
9 from other Council members. Next slide. So again,  
10 delegation of authority allows for quick in-season  
11 management actions. This allows Federal managers to  
12 protect fish and wildlife populations and continue  
13 subsistence uses. Managers are required to consult with  
14 affected parties before taking action, so Councils,  
15 ADF&G, tribes, OSM. Council Chairs are encouraged to  
16 bring in other Council members when consulting with  
17 managers. And if you have any, you know, if you ever  
18 have questions, please contact in-season managers or  
19 OSM. And that's the end of my presentation. I can answer  
20 any questions if you may have them.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you,  
23 Cory. And I've worked with this delegated authority  
24 consultations as the Chair on various moose hunt, and  
25 various aspects of this delegated authority process. So,  
26 is this presentation -- any questions on the  
27 presentation from the Council members?

28  
29 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

32  
33 MR. HONEA: Well, this is Don. Yeah, this  
34 is Don. Just a quick question. I don't know who is  
35 speaking, but just for clarification, is this delegated  
36 to the Federal managers of each, down from the  
37 Subsistence Board itself.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Corey.

40  
41 MR. GRAHAM: This is Cory with OSM. Yeah,  
42 delegated authority is transferred -- limited decision-  
43 making authority is transferred from the Federal  
44 Subsistence Board to Federal managers. And there are  
45 various Fisheries and Wildlife managers that have  
46 different delegated authority depending on where they're  
47 at and where they're managing.

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, it's usually  
50 the area, the Game management unit or the units or

1 districts for fisheries. Those are delegated to the to  
2 the in-season -- on Caribou in Mulchatna they were --  
3 the Togiak Refuge is actually managing for the Mulchatna  
4 Caribou Herd as the in-season manager to -- regarding  
5 opening and closings and basically protection of the  
6 resource. So, it's basically the local wildlife refuge  
7 or down in Southeast Alaska would be the regional  
8 forester, etc., etc. The managers -- land managers that  
9 are associated to that unit are actually doing the  
10 biological analysis too -- and discussing that when  
11 those openings are going to be or if there is going to  
12 be openings. Is [sic] that clarify that Don?  
13

14 MR. HONEA: Oh yeah. It does. So, thank  
15 you, Mr. Chair. I guess just one other question to Cory.  
16 All of these mandates that's coming down, have they  
17 always been in effect the -- this procedure or is there  
18 anything new on there. Because I believe like even in,  
19 I guess it's up to the Federal managers of each -- well  
20 like the Nowitna or the Innoko or something, I guess  
21 depending on the numbers for say, a winter hunt or  
22 something. I believe they've always had that -- they're  
23 depending I mean, the power to do that, depending on,  
24 on the numbers. So, it's -- I was just wondering is  
25 there anything specifically new on this to that or is  
26 just. Is this just like, a refresher? Thank you.  
27

28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Those regulations,  
29 these delegated authorities, were Regional Council  
30 proposals that were passed by the Federal Subsistence  
31 Board, like for winter Moose hunt around Huslia, down  
32 by in the inovi [sic], I mean in the Innoko. The Council  
33 was involved in those having flexibility. You know, we  
34 used to have hard regulation of winter hunts, except it  
35 was 50 below and nobody could go out. So, that gives the  
36 manager the leeway to have openings that's conducive to  
37 the -- protecting the resource, but also helping the  
38 subsistence users have the opportunity when the when  
39 it's appropriate. And so, those delegated authorities  
40 always have Council consultation. So, I usually get a  
41 call if the whoever the Chairperson is gets a call. I  
42 need to talk about this moose hunt. We are in deep snow,  
43 there's not enough moose here, we can't have the hands.  
44 It's so, the Chair will agree or disagree with the in-  
45 season manager and have discussions about it. So,  
46 there's been additions, you know there's other areas in  
47 Alaska where they've delegated authority on deer and  
48 caribou and other areas. But in our region, these  
49 delegated authorities have not significantly changed in  
50 the last ten years or so. There's -- they're pretty much



1 pretty similar to what they've been. And that's your  
2 experience. What they're it's not that they've always  
3 been there. It's that they've happened over time with  
4 various proposals that this Western Interior Council has  
5 actually submitted and had the Federal Subsistence Board  
6 deliberated and pass. So, does that clarify that for  
7 you, Don?

8  
9 MR. HONEA: Yes, Mr. Chair, that and  
10 thank Cory and yourself for explaining that. That's  
11 pretty self-explanatory. Other than that, thank you.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you,  
14 Don. Any other questions? So, thank you very much for  
15 the presentation, Cory. I think it's time for lunch. And  
16 so, let's see what time we got here. It's about a quarter  
17 to 1 so we can break for a one hour and come back at a  
18 sharp at quarter to 2, which would be 1:45.

19  
20 MR. HONEA: Okay. Thanks, this is Don  
21 signing out.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Don.  
24 Appreciate that. And hope you're, hope you're up back  
25 on here again.

26  
27 (Off record)

28  
29 (On record)

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, it's 1:45 and  
32 Robert's here. Jenny and I are here, and I can't -- I  
33 don't know who's on the phone. Is anybody on the phone?

34  
35 MR. GERVAIS: Hi, Jack. This is Tim.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, good to hear  
38 you there, Tim. Are you there, Don? And Brian Ubelaker,  
39 are you there? Nissa says we skipped over your  
40 presentation.

41  
42 MR. UBELAKER: Oh, it wasn't an entire  
43 presentation. It's a brief update, but yes, I am here.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so we're  
46 going to bring the meeting back to order after lunch  
47 break here. Tim is on the phone, and so, we're going to  
48 -- and Don, did you come back or Darrell? So, we're  
49 going to get a quick update from Brian here. Go ahead,  
50 Brian.

1

2

3 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
4 the record, my name is Brian Ubelaker. I'm a Wildlife  
5 Biologist with the Office of Subsistence management. And  
6 right now, I'd like to provide you a brief overview of  
7 proposed changes to the Wildlife side of delegated  
8 authority. And this is just meant to be a brief  
9 introduction to this effort. And you all on the Councils  
10 will have additional opportunity at future meetings to  
11 review further and to comment on this subject. So, the  
12 Office of Subsistence Management is proposing to move  
13 the authority and the existing delegation of authority  
14 letters back into the Wildlife unit specific  
15 regulations. While we staff have not thoroughly reviewed  
16 every single Wildlife delegation of authority letter,  
17 the vast majority of them are for routine management  
18 actions, as Cory was discussing earlier. And these  
19 happen every year pretty much right as rain. Things like  
20 announcing harvest quotas and closing seasons and having  
21 the delegated authority for these routine decisions in  
22 unit specific regulations is more appropriate than  
23 issuing a special action year after year after year. And  
24 this would also provide a clear public process for  
25 changing this delegated authority through the regulatory  
26 proposals, and it would decrease the administrative  
27 burden on Federal managers by limiting -- eliminating  
28 all the regulatory requirements associated with special  
29 actions and the delegation of authority letters. The  
30 timeline for these proposed changes is as follows. In  
31 March of 2025, during the next open window to submit  
32 Wildlife regulatory proposals, OSM will submit a  
33 proposal to move Wildlife delegated authority into unit  
34 specific regulations and to rescind many of the existing  
35 letters. Then, in the fall of 2025, at the fall meetings,  
36 Councils will consider and make recommendations on this  
37 proposal. Then, in April 2026, the Board will take final  
38 action on the proposal at the next Wildlife regulatory  
39 meeting. As I said, I'd keep it brief. So, thank you,  
40 Mr. Chair. This is the end of my brief overview to the  
41 proposed changes to Wildlife delegated authority. I  
42 would be happy to answer any questions or receive  
43 feedback on this topic. Although once again, this is  
44 just meant to be an introduction to this idea and the  
45 Councils will have additional opportunity to consider  
46 this at future meetings. Thank you.

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay thanks,  
Brian. My question offhand is the proposal that's going  
to be promulgated that will review. Is it going to lay

00075

1 out which letters would be rescinded or repealed as OSM  
2 got preferences?

3

4 MR. UBELAKER: Yes, sir. We'll us  
5 Wildlife staff are going to be tasked with reading  
6 through all the 68 letters that we have right now,  
7 determining which ones are like what we call the regular  
8 in-season management actions. Those making a list of  
9 them out of the letters, units, everything associated  
10 with it, and then we'll present those which ones we're  
11 going to move back into unit specific regulation to the  
12 Councils in the fall meeting.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, understood.  
15 Any questions from the council? Tim? Are you still there,  
16 Tim? Are you on there Don?

17

18 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I don't have any  
19 questions, Jack.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I just want to give  
22 Council members opportunity to question that. So, we'll  
23 it's just a heads up on that. Appreciate that Brian. So,  
24 we'll move on now.

25

26 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, sir.

27

28

29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, wait a second  
30 Robert's come in with a question.

31

32 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead. Don, go  
35 ahead.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Okay. No, I don't  
38 want to cut anybody off. Robert is next. No. I just  
39 wanted to let you know I'm online. Thank you.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I appreciate  
42 that, Don. Go ahead, Robert.

43

44 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank  
45 you, Don. I just had a question. What's going to happen  
46 2025 if we have a new President elected, will that change  
47 anything that we have to do here?

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can answer the  
50 question, but the question -- the answer would be it

1 will be business as usual. Under what the OSM and the  
2 Regional Councils will proceed, it was the appointments  
3 made process might change. That's my perception of what  
4 could happen with the appointment processes. Could be  
5 bottled up so to speak. So, that's -- this issue will  
6 continue forward and one way or another. So, it's who's  
7 going to be on the Council. That's what the question  
8 with elections has usually been. So, thanks so much,  
9 Brian. I don't think that there's -- this is just  
10 informational. We're going to be moving forward. And so,  
11 Charlie is here. Oh, there he is. Is he going to speak  
12 to us?

13  
14 MS. PILCHER: I don't know. I just wanted  
15 to point him out.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. We got  
18 the Chief, Charlie Green, is here. And if Charlie wanted  
19 to say anything to us, he's in the back of the room  
20 there. Anyways, recognize that the Chief is here so, of  
21 Galena. So, we're going to continue on here. So, we're  
22 into reports. So, we got a tribal governments. So, we  
23 got Charlie. So, if I can get the public's attention.  
24 Hello, hello? Hey, hey. So, rather recognized that the  
25 Chief is here, and we're at a serendipitously, you're  
26 at a point in the in our agenda for tribal government  
27 and Native organization comments or so if you want to  
28 have anything to say to the Council, step up to the mic  
29 there, Charlie. And you can turn on the mic. Thank you,  
30 guys.

31  
32 MR. GREEN: My name is Chief Charlie  
33 Green. I'm the Chief here of Loudon. And good to see all  
34 you guys. How you doing, Mr. Kriska and Mr. Robert? I  
35 guess I could turn to Mr. Jack. We're just on my way  
36 with our work here, tearing downtown said, hey, we'd  
37 better stop by and see you guys. And so how is, you  
38 know, I mean we're actually running a fishwheel right  
39 now trying to catch a few whitefish here. We had a good  
40 hunting season here this year. I think a lot of people  
41 got their moose a little bit rough weather, but we were  
42 pretty good here you know. Report here, I mean, what do  
43 you guys want to hear from our report here? And what --  
44 is there any specific thing you want me to talk about?  
45 You know, just that we had a good hunting season. We  
46 worked real hard on, you know, putting signs up, making  
47 sure we got our land -- is you know that no -- had not  
48 too many trespassers. Worked real good with the state  
49 Fish and Game guy here. Trent was real vocal with us,  
50 stopped making sure that we were cutting our horns, you

1 know, in the last some years, we got pretty slack about  
2 not following the rules because we had no Game wardens.  
3 So, you know we were not -- a lot of people weren't  
4 following the rules, but he was real good. He caught a  
5 lot of us not cutting horns and just reminding us that,  
6 hey, we got to start doing that, you know, making sure  
7 we're doing that. So, our hunting, like I said, I think  
8 went pretty good. I didn't see an overabundance of  
9 hunters. I'm real glad that Robert and Walker and them  
10 are taking most of our hunters. That's really -- thank  
11 you, Mr. you know Walker, that was very nice of you to  
12 do stuff like that. We have a less hunters around here,  
13 and we're just very glad that there's lots of moose down  
14 in the Lower Yukon. A lot of the guys are going down  
15 that areas to hunt. And we're just glad to see it, you  
16 know. So, thank you again.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You put up signs  
19 that says Anvik that way?

20

21 MR. GREEN: Yes, lots of moose that way,  
22 you know. But I mean, you know, so I think it was pretty  
23 good for us here. You know, obviously fishing, we're --  
24 we, you know, we got to see a few more fish. You know,  
25 I actually went up in the latter river because that's  
26 probably the most fish I've seen. Probably about a not  
27 quite half of what usually goes up there, but at least  
28 we're seeing more fish a little bit. You know so, that's  
29 a -- I think that's a whatever we're doing is helping  
30 somewhat, you know, without the trawlers in the Area M,  
31 and everybody else, at least something is happening a  
32 little bit. So, we're glad to see any kind of improvement  
33 here in Galena. So, that's really good you know. We got  
34 to use our fishwheel this summer a little bit. Got some  
35 elders, some chum salmon, you know, but so, that was  
36 good. We got to eat a little bit of few Yukon chum fish  
37 this year, summer chum. So, that's pretty awesome. We're  
38 pretty happy with that. So, you know, I would say in our  
39 meetings, not too much complaints. You know, we really  
40 had trespassing here in the last some years. But we as  
41 a Council and as you know, we've really been working  
42 hard with trying to partner with whoever we could, Doyon,  
43 Gana-A'Yoo, anybody to help us with signs. Anybody to  
44 you know, help us with our, you know, the trespassing  
45 and so.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We had Colleen  
48 Stickman tell us about these trespassers were on  
49 allotment, and they were actually blocking off the  
50 access on this trail going back. Did you have -- and she

1 reported that to the troopers and they didn't respond  
2 to that. Did you have that kind of response out of  
3 troopers for your trespass issues up here?

4  
5 MR. GREEN: Well, I don't think we had  
6 much here. We kind of take care of our, you know, some  
7 of the -- like you know, some of the people in Bear  
8 Creek called me and, you know, said, hey, there's hunters  
9 up here. You know, we can't -- we don't want them up,  
10 you know. But I don't know if they understand, that's,  
11 you know, when these guys are here, they're on Federal  
12 land, you know, and we can only make sure that they're  
13 not trespassing. Like I said, if she's seen a land  
14 allotment, that should have been an easy case to just  
15 take a picture on a land allotment. You know, with the  
16 coordinates right there, it's what the Game wardens tell  
17 us to do. And, you know, just walk up, take the picture,  
18 take the coordinates right where they're -- right where  
19 you're standing next to the boat. Take a picture and  
20 then the Game wardens can prosecute, but you can't --  
21 you know, it's really hard to prosecute anybody if you're  
22 not given coordinates they can -- you know, you can't  
23 stop them guys from going up to Kaiyuh. There's no way  
24 unless, you know, there's just a -- the -- you obviously  
25 know the State makes a lot of money off them people.  
26 And, you know, I've had native guys even in Bear Creek,  
27 why are they giving permits right in our backyard? But,  
28 you know, according to the Fish and Game, it's -- there's  
29 enough moose to do that. So, you know, we can't you  
30 know, contradict what the State is doing. They're making  
31 their money doing whatever. And I guess they give a  
32 couple of permits to out of State and then some in State.  
33 You know, I drew a Bear Creek permit this year. I just  
34 put in for all of them and never even attempted to hunt  
35 in Bear Creek or anywhere in this area. But I just did  
36 it to, you know, take a permit. And I think that's all  
37 we can do, you know, I mean, there's no way to -- we're  
38 not biologists that tell them that there's not enough  
39 moose here or whatever. We just we just try to, you  
40 know, make sure they're not on Gana-A'Yoo land or on  
41 private, you know, on people's land allotments, you  
42 know.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Well, we were  
45 concerned about -- hearing about trespass on native  
46 allotment lands.

47  
48 MR. GREEN: Tommy probably knows -- what  
49 do you say, Tommy? I don't want to talk on something I  
50 really don't know. What did you guys come up with

1 Colleen? I seen it all over Facebook. Where were they,  
2 were they on private land?

3

4 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, from a lot of the --  
5 some of the guys, they actually went over there. You  
6 know, some of the boys were going to kind of enforced  
7 that they're not supposed to -- they did go over there,  
8 but all they did was get laughed at, and they were right  
9 on the camp. Right on the native allotment. Right on it.

10

11 MR. GREEN: That should be easy. Easy.

12

13 MR. KRISKA: So, they -- there was two  
14 different groups that went there. One for four days and  
15 one for seven days. They, the first group, enticed the  
16 second group to go to moose. And there, they went right  
17 back there, camped out. I was too busy to even...

18

19 MR. GREEN: Yeah, but you know, -- The  
20 only way to, to get that is you got to show, you know,  
21 they got to be educated on what they do because that  
22 should be an easy bust, just easy. You know, if you just  
23 go there with any kind of a you know, a, you know, a lot  
24 of guys have their little Garmin, you know, their little  
25 things. You know, whatever you call them, the little,  
26 not GPS, but what you -- InReach. Yeah. And, you know,  
27 it just takes a second to just hit the button right  
28 there and, you know, next to the boat right there. And  
29 you just bring that back to the trooper. That trooper  
30 stops us all the time. You know, when I'm on the river  
31 and says, Charlie, anybody on the land or you guys have  
32 any complaints? No, you know, we --

33

34 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, he stopped me and  
35 asked me that same -- asked me if I know anything out  
36 there and need help anywhere. So, he was okay, you know.

37

38 MR. GREEN: Yeah.

39

40 MR. KRISKA: But then one of the things  
41 I was going to ask you is, you know, that a lot of the  
42 Natives in Nulato, Kaltag, even in Galena, they want  
43 that South Bank there no controlled used area.

44

45 MR. GREEN: Yeah.

46

47 MR. KRISKA: And they -- I was just  
48 wondering how you feel about that. And one more question  
49 that came up. They were thinking to have a check station  
50 in the upper Kaiyuh -- where you enter Kaiyuh and then

1 one at 22-mile. I don't know. I think that would be a  
2 better thing because right now, the way it is, if you  
3 look at the numbers that a lot of people, like you said,  
4 not only in Galena, but Nulato, I think Koyukuk is pretty  
5 well covered because they have to go to the check  
6 station. But below there a lot of people don't check  
7 their moose. And that year before on record there was  
8 five moose out in Nulato, four moose out of Kaltag. So,  
9 between those two villages there was only nine moose  
10 killed. But then the abundance of moose and permits went  
11 up because of the lack of harvest reports.

12

13 MR. GREEN: Yeah.

14

15 MR. KRISKA: So, I don't know. I'm  
16 thinking that it might be a -- it might help the  
17 controlled use area to get, you know, in place if we had  
18 a check stations in there.

19

20 MR. GREEN: Yeap.

21

22 MR. KRISKA: I don't know.

23

24 MR. GREEN: I totally agree with you. I  
25 mean, I more than anybody I scream about that being a  
26 controlled use area because the problem I see over there  
27 is there's so many lakes in Kaiyuh that there's too many  
28 airplanes, you know. Even though you guys are seeing the  
29 Road hunters. But lots of times we see guys come here  
30 and they go, I've been hunting in Kaiyuh for 15 years,  
31 you know, and they, you know, and -- cause I have a camp  
32 down here and until you really stay time, there's just  
33 planes flying back, float planes that I don't never see,  
34 you know, 180s, 185s going over to Kaiyuh and they're  
35 going back to where you guys don't go. But -- and they  
36 say we hunt where you don't hunt. But that's -- them  
37 moose walk across, you know, they're all from the same  
38 area. So, you know, myself, I would really like to see  
39 it be a controlled use area, you know, and I totally  
40 agree with that. You know, having a check station there  
41 in both ends and just so we kind of know, you know, the  
42 exact count that comes out. So, we're making sure we do  
43 the airplane, you know, to make sure that, you know,  
44 they're being checked to, you know, and so I would  
45 totally you know, we're talking about our moose  
46 management plan by the -- by our own, you know, our  
47 subregion here. You know where -- Jenny Bryant, who is  
48 a biologist here can help us with, you know, working  
49 with the feds down there trying to figure out, you know,  
50 ways that we can, you know, stop. I mean, just, you



1 know, try to keep this stuff local, and but I totally  
2 agree with that. You know, with making that a controlled  
3 use area, that's the only way we could maybe you know,  
4 slow them down. Our -- but, you know, I think, like we  
5 say, educating all of us and figuring out how to --  
6 because Facebook is not going to help us, you know, with  
7 these guys, they're not going to, you know, doing stuff  
8 out that, that people are putting this stuff out. We got  
9 to -- we have to just do it legally and work. And you  
10 know, we got to build these relationships with these  
11 State Fish and Game guys. So, they -- we know what they  
12 expect and what we expect out of them, you know, and the  
13 more you work with them the better. Whether it's fed,  
14 State, whatever, you know, whoever and getting out on  
15 these meetings and talking about it is the only way  
16 we're going to we're going to solve any kind of problems,  
17 you know.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I would  
20 encourage the Middle Koyukon Advisory Committee to work  
21 with -- locally to redefine that controlled use area.  
22 And then this Regional Council can endorse that on the  
23 Federal side. But it has to be -- it should be a joint  
24 control -- it has to be, you know, on the Federal and  
25 State lands, it has to be predominantly State  
26 regulation. The state-controlled use area, otherwise the  
27 feds, they can either close it to non-subsistence users,  
28 which causes a phenomenal amount of trouble when you can  
29 own it, when you have the highest one -- of the highest  
30 moose populations in Alaska right now. That's not going  
31 to work. They can't do that under federal regulations.  
32 So, it has to be predominantly driven by the by the  
33 Middle Yukon Advisory Committee. And this Council can  
34 help or endorse that at our February meeting, February  
35 25 and 26, we're going to be in McGrath. We can talk  
36 about that if you get it more defined by that time.

37  
38 MR. GREEN: I think if we work with the  
39 subregion here and try and start trying to refine this,  
40 this plan that we think that can work maybe we can, you  
41 know, at least -- I wish Jenny or, you know, Boomer was  
42 here to -- she's out somewhere flying, you know, surveys  
43 or something. But she knows a lot more about this, that  
44 kind of stuff. But you know, with other villages like  
45 Nulato, Kaltag especially that you know, are having  
46 these problems with these out of town hunters and I feel  
47 even bad, you know, Robert and stuff. I know I joke  
48 about that, but it's -- I think it's starting to be a  
49 problem down in Anvik and Grayling and Holy Cross and  
50 Shageluk, all you know, they're starting to have an

1 abundance of hunters. And, you know, I've seen pictures  
2 on the internet of them guys around Russian Mission with  
3 15 bull moose all skinned out, all, I mean, all the  
4 horns, all you know, just. I mean, and I see the big  
5 boats going by and coming back up, you know, that's  
6 going down river. So, there must be.....

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: A lot of guys going  
9 out of, out of the Innoko country going over to McGrath.  
10 And Kevin Whitworth was on the phone with us this morning  
11 talking about the amazing amounts of rotten meat in the  
12 dump in McGrath. The meat cutter there -- the butcher,  
13 he can't keep up with it. The meat's coming in all  
14 rotten. It has to be thrown to the dump. And people in  
15 McGrath are just super pissed about this thing.

16  
17 MR. GREEN: Yeah.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And that's coming  
20 predominantly off the Innoko Refuge.

21  
22 MR. GREEN: Yeah.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so that's the  
25 -- there's other avenues, the refuges can require, you  
26 know, specifics on the permits and when the permitting  
27 is processed for these air taxis going on these refuges,  
28 there's got to be more you -- not only that can that --  
29 you can define a controlled use area, but there needs  
30 to be -- we have meat on bone regulations. There's all  
31 kinds of stuff. And the state statute actually says that  
32 the meat has to be removed from the field and be in a  
33 condition for human consumption for two weeks after  
34 removal from the field. And the troopers have just been  
35 going well, it's rotten. They threw it in the dump in  
36 Galena or McGrath. That's not what it's supposed --  
37 that's not what the -- it's a legislative statute and  
38 they're not actually enforcing the statute. So, I  
39 encourage ...

40  
41 MR. GREEN: Okay. Well, we'll for  
42 sure.....

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Galena tribe and  
45 the various tribal organizations to look at the statute,  
46 what the salvage requirement actually says, and start  
47 holding the Department of Public Safety's feet to the  
48 fire on this, salvaging this meat in a palatable  
49 condition. That's what the statutes actually says. And  
50 so, if it's rotten, it's prima facie, you're getting a

1 ticket, you're from -- you come from Anchorage or  
2 something, and you rotted your moose for ten days out  
3 there in the Innoko Flats before you got flown out.  
4 You're getting a ticket.

5

6

MR. GREEN: Yeah.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This has got to  
9 stop. This will -- it'll just take a few tickets, and  
10 they'll stop doing it. The word will get out in their  
11 little circle. They got their own little circles, you  
12 know.

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tanana Chiefs,  
Navy CP, and all of the tribes need to get a legal  
interpretation of the state statute that's requiring the  
meat to be, if in a condition for two weeks in a  
preserved and in a condition for two weeks after removal  
from the field. That's what the statute says, unless the  
legislature has changed it on me. But I had a statutory  
regulation book that Kristy Tibbles sent me probably 4  
or 5 years ago, and that's -- I read that statutory. I  
was like, two weeks? I didn't know that part. So, the

1 troopers have not been enforcing that part, and the  
2 tribes need to start holding their feet to the fire. If  
3 you have this meat is coming in rotten, that's an instant  
4 ticket. Those guys, these guys come in here and think  
5 they're going to rot meat and throw it directly into the  
6 Galena dump or somewhere. That's got to stop. That's  
7 happening in McGrath, and they know it's going to happen.  
8 They go, oh we got it from the field, we got it flown  
9 out. We're just going to toss it. Then we don't have to  
10 pay all that shipping all the way back into Anchorage  
11 or down to Wisconsin. There's -- a lot of these guys are  
12 non-resident hunters. They can hunt on their own. I would  
13 encourage the tribes to actually have a legal  
14 interpretation and then approach the Department of  
15 Public Safety and the Commissioner of Fish and Game's  
16 office and say, hey, this is not -- this is the statute.  
17 You're not -- you're violating the statute by letting  
18 them go, bringing in -- I hear about this in Kotzebue.  
19 I don't care where it's at. It all happens all over the  
20 place. This has got to stop.

21  
22 MR. GREEN: Yes, that's.....

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKFOFF: That's a very  
25 valuable.....

26  
27 MR. GREEN: Information, yeah.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: -- and so then the  
30 meat comes back in a palatable condition, and then they  
31 can give it away to Jenny, who didn't even get a moose  
32 this year. And then she can get a good piece of meat out  
33 of it. No, but Jenny doesn't want to take a piece of  
34 green meat.

35  
36 MR. GREEN: Yep. Can we make sure I -  
37 Diloola where-- Diloola, can you make sure to you know,  
38 relay this for us at the EI Board, and then we can do  
39 it in our subregion too, to make sure that we get these  
40 -- yeah, we'll make sure we get -- to make sure to get  
41 the State and the feds, we know, you know, we know the  
42 guys in town there to make sure their law enforcement  
43 knows -- you know and figure out which way we're going  
44 to do. You know, like, I think that people like Craig  
45 Hill that come out of the Melosi with 6-7 moose or  
46 whatever, they should be able to have a you know, that  
47 meat checked in before he gives it away or brings it  
48 back to town. We want to make sure that the -- inspect,  
49 the guide meat that people are guiding around these  
50 areas, that they're bringing all the meat out, all what

1 they're required to, and that it's in good condition.  
2 And if it's not, then, like you say, I -- myself, I  
3 think a good way is to have Craig send it to the homeless  
4 in Anchorage. He could pay -- have the guides pay their  
5 way. Pay the meat out of here. The dirty meat to a  
6 processor where they can process the rotten meat, give  
7 it away or throw it in the dump or assess what it is.  
8 And that could be a penalty or -- because I don't know  
9 what's the penalty for rotten meat or I don't know if  
10 there's.....

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: There's statutory  
13 those are -- if the troopers wrote the tickets, then the  
14 judges would assess penalties. And there's statutory  
15 requirements for salvage, the amount of meat. But it's  
16 also the statute there -- what they've not been there -  
17 - you know, it's the amounts that they're actually  
18 accomplishing. Probably not even that I've gotten  
19 trooper meat. They got a piece of moose neck that big  
20 and two pieces of meat off the outside. That's the neck  
21 meat. These troopers don't know what any volume -- they  
22 don't know anything about this meat. I've had troopers  
23 throw out a whole bunch of bags of meat on the ground  
24 and are like, what is this? Oh, this is the hindquarter  
25 of a sheep. And you piece it all together what it  
26 actually is. It's like they have no idea that -- that's  
27 why bone on meat is a very valuable thing. Because then  
28 you know that you've got ribs in the four quarters. At  
29 least you've got the main part. But the palatable  
30 condition, that's where your attorneys need to enforce,  
31 you know, the statute says it has to be in a preserved  
32 state for human consumption for two weeks after removal.  
33 So, that's the part that needs to start being enforced,  
34 because we're just going to keep hearing about rotten  
35 meat the rest of our lives.

36  
37 MR. GREEN: Yeah.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: There's tons of  
40 rotten meat coming off the Haul Road. I live on the Haul  
41 Road. There's coming down out of the Arctic Slope at a  
42 75, 85°F, and they're pulling into Coldfoot with caribou  
43 stacked on the back of trucks whole, not even dressed  
44 out, rotting on the back of the truck, covered in flies.  
45 It's happening this summer because they opened on July  
46 1st. And so.....

47  
48 MR. GREEN: That's crazy.

49  
50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....you know,  
2 our troopers like -- well, they got the whole animal  
3 there. It's like, no, there's -- nobody's going to eat  
4 this thing. It's going directly to the Fairbanks dump.  
5 It's where it's going.

6

7

MR. GREEN: Yeah.

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Robert. I appreciate it. Good to see you again.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, guys. Thanks

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're looking for tribal governments and Native organization comments. So, come on up to the mic there.

MS. ERICKSON: Comments or my report report?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Report. You can give your report. I don't see -- you know got Charlie here. And so, I don't know of anybody else. Is there

00087

1 anybody on the -- I should have asked on the phone but  
2 I -- let's just take this TCC report.

3

4 MS. ERICKSON: Okay For the record,  
5 Diloola Erickson, Tribal Resource Stewardship Division  
6 director with Tanana Chiefs Conference.

7

8 (In Native) Diloola Ericson (In Native).

9

10 My name is Diloola Ann. I just wanted  
11 to introduce myself real quick. It's important to me  
12 when I give my reports to do that. My family comes from  
13 Kaltag or Ggaał Doh. That's where I'm an enrolled tribal  
14 member. I also have family ties here in Galena. My  
15 daughter is enrolled with Louden. And I was raised  
16 predominantly on Tlingit Aani in the village of Hoonah  
17 in southeast Alaska. I joined...

18

19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You were speaking  
20 Tlingit?

21

22 MS. ERICKSON: No. Denaakk'e, Koyukon  
23 Athabascan.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, all right.

26

27 MS. ERICKSON: I have been with TCC since  
28 April 22nd of this year. So, my report is kind of brief.  
29 We've done a lot in the last five months since I've been  
30 with Tanana Chiefs. Our tribal Resource Stewardship  
31 division was just upgraded from a program to division  
32 status, and we've been building out our team over the  
33 last five months. Two months ago, I just fully staffed  
34 the team. So, I have a coordinator, an outreach  
35 coordinator, a policy analyst, and an admin to support  
36 with our advocate travel. We attended and supported the  
37 Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. They hosted  
38 their spring preseason meeting in May, and I want to  
39 correct the record, I misspoke earlier. There are 55  
40 total tribes within the Yukon River watershed, 42 of the  
41 tribes have resolutions to be a part of the Yukon River  
42 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. They filed for 501-C3  
43 status about a month and a half ago, and they're in  
44 process of hiring an executive director and an admin for  
45 their support staff. I checked in briefly with Chief  
46 Ulvi earlier, who is the Chair of the Fish Commission,  
47 and she said that she will make sure that she's on the  
48 agenda for the winter meeting, and she'll give you a  
49 fuller Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission report  
50 out at that time. Our staff and our contractor, who

1 represents us for the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-  
2 Management Council, we held our fall meeting at the  
3 beginning of August and then our subregional meeting  
4 that had our six regional reps from the TCC region. Don  
5 Honea was one of the reps at that meeting and Randy Mayo  
6 is our representative on the State Council. And then he  
7 went, and he attended the State regional meeting a couple  
8 of weeks ago in Kodiak. And is pushing forward our  
9 priorities there. We're also actively engaging as a  
10 cooperating agency with NOAA NMFS for their chum salmon  
11 bycatch, EIS that will be released -- it's projected to  
12 be released early December, and then they'll be holding  
13 a special meeting in February 3rd through the 9th in  
14 Anchorage. They'll have a special meeting to go over  
15 that EIS, take public comment and then make a decision  
16 on what actions or alternatives they'll take from that  
17 EIS. We've submitted -- we co-authored four sections,  
18 along with the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish  
19 Commission of the tribal importance of chum salmon to  
20 our region and our people, our spiritual connection with  
21 chum salmon and our long standing history with them as  
22 well as harvest data that was pulled from ADF&Gs website  
23 to show what portion of subsistence -- what portion of  
24 subsistence harvest is chum salmon and it showed that  
25 it was like over 50% of the people who reside on the  
26 Koyukuk River, which is territory 5 for the Fish  
27 Commission, 50% of their diet, their subsistence diet  
28 is dependent on chum salmon.

29  
30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One question if I  
31 can stop you. Are you -- is TCC involved with this State  
32 Bycatch Advisory Council stuff? I just got an email  
33 yesterday about that. Are you -- is TCC involved with  
34 that process also?

35  
36 MS. ERICKSON: Our staff, we have four  
37 staff right now, and we're trying to make sure that  
38 we're at every meeting we can be at. And we did miss  
39 that recent meeting they just had not a few weeks ago.  
40 But it is on our radar going forward.

41  
42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This notice was for  
43 a meeting on November 5 and by zoom. And so that's what  
44 this notice is about. And I just received this from Fish  
45 and Game. I've got some auto serve thing as Advisory  
46 Committee member. So, I -- you're going to be involved  
47 with that?

48  
49  
50



1 MS. ERICKSON: Yes. Yeah, it is. It  
2 popped up on our radar. We missed the last meeting, but  
3 we're tracking it now.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I appreciate that.  
6

7 MS. ERICKSON: We're also a part of a  
8 lawsuit against NOAA NMFS, AVCP and Tanana Chiefs  
9 together are the -- not defendants, the other word.

10  
11 MS. PILCHER: Plaintiffs.  
12

13 MS. ERICKSON: Plaintiffs! On the lawsuit  
14 against NOAA NMFS for their pollock TAC, the Total  
15 Allowable Catch. And the argument there is that they're  
16 using outdated environmental impact statements to set  
17 their TAC for their pollock harvests. They just heard  
18 oral arguments, I think, a week ago down in Anchorage.  
19 And that lawsuit is continuing to unfold.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's before the  
22 Federal judge? Lisa?

23  
24 MS. ERICKSON: Mhm and I'll provide the  
25 WIRAC if there is interest of the sections that we co-  
26 authored for that EIS once they're published, if you  
27 guys want to have that in your supplemental material for  
28 your winter meeting.

29  
30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I would like to  
31 look at that.

32  
33 MS. ERICKSON: Yeah. I'll make a note of  
34 that. Tanana Chiefs is also involved in the AYK  
35 Sustainable Salmon initiative. And we just started  
36 engaging in that. And so, I'm learning about that space  
37 as well. And we're about to put out our call for  
38 proposals for that pot of funding for tribes or  
39 independent researchers that want to do salmon research  
40 that is within that scope of the AYKSSI. I know I put  
41 this on my report just because it was mentioned a lot  
42 earlier. But Tanana Chiefs Conference has a relator  
43 department that does support tribal members who have  
44 native allotments with trespass issues. That's April  
45 Monroe with Tanana Chiefs Conference. So, I just wanted  
46 to put that on the record too. If there's tribal members  
47 within the TCC region that need support in prosecuting  
48 a trespass, April can be the liaison for that.

49  
50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can you put her in  
2 touch with Colleen Stickman on that issue?

3  
4 MS. ERICKSON: Yeah, I talked to Colleen  
5 right after she testified and gave her her contact. We  
6 will be holding a fall special convention in November.  
7 November 13th through the 15th. And the first day of  
8 that convention will be focused on hunting and fishing.  
9 So, I just also wanted to put that on the record. If  
10 there was interest from any of the members to attend  
11 that convention. And we'll be giving out another TRS  
12 more in-depth report. The Fish Commission will also be  
13 giving the report. Eva Burk, who is contracted with the  
14 Fish Commission, will be sharing her Salmon Situation  
15 Report, which is like a comprehensive overview of the  
16 last year of where the salmon on the Yukon are at. And  
17 then we'll be having a number of different panels. The  
18 AMBCC representatives will be hosting a panel to talk  
19 about the work that they've been doing there. We'll have  
20 a panel of tribal members who have been pursuing  
21 alternative food sources. It'll be an adapting to the  
22 Salmon Crisis panel. And we'll also be having a tribal  
23 sciences panel. And so, I just wanted to put that invite  
24 out to folks who wanted to join that meeting. It'll be  
25 at the West Mark on November 13th in Fairbanks.

26  
27 And then there's just a few other  
28 things that I have been mentioning, as I've been giving  
29 out my reports at the various subregions and other  
30 meetings, just to put on people's radar that I think  
31 might be of interest here. And I'm sure you guys are  
32 aware of the Chinook Endangered Species Act process that  
33 is going on right now in the Gulf of Alaska. We're not  
34 actively commenting on it, but we're watching the  
35 process. The interest there for Tanana chiefs is the  
36 process through which NOAA NMFS is executing that EIS  
37 or ESA. It totally circumvented tribal consultation, and  
38 they are using faulty science in their reasoning for  
39 that ESA. And the reason we're interested in keeping  
40 tabs on that is if that gets put through, then that  
41 process will likely be used if they want to, if any of  
42 our tribes want to pursue an ESA for our chinook on the  
43 Yukon, and that's not a process that we want to be  
44 setting a precedent for. And similarly, we're also  
45 monitoring and engaging in the Yukon River panel,  
46 watching the seven-year moratorium process that went on,  
47 which also circumvented tribal consultation. And the  
48 other thing that we're also paying attention to is the  
49 USDA buyouts for the pollock industry. They have been  
50 supplementing the pollock industry for the last couple

00091

1 of years to the tune of about 66 million for this year.  
2 And that was pushed through from our representatives,  
3 Lisa Murkowski, Senator Sullivan and Representative  
4 Peltola wrote to USDA and asked for them to push through  
5 those buyouts. So, they're supplementing the pollock  
6 industry through that which, as we all know, is a huge  
7 factor in our salmon declines.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The buyouts are  
10 buying up quota or are just --

11  
12 MS. ERICKSON: They're buying filets and  
13 fish sticks.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, they're  
16 actually purchasing.

17  
18 MS. ERICKSON: They're purchasing and  
19 they're using it for like low-income food programs.  
20 Yeah.

21  
22 MS. PILCHER: Can you clarify what ESA  
23 is? For the record.

24  
25 MS. ERICKSON: Endangered Species Act.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, I would like  
28 no acronyms for Tanya here so that she -- when they  
29 transcribe, they can -- so, it's easy to get into the  
30 acronym thing. But we need to have it clear for the  
31 record.

32  
33 MS. ERICKSON: I did say yes, Endangered  
34 Species Act and then ESA previously. But I'm talking  
35 fast too, and I apologize. That's my speed.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's fine. Yeah.

38  
39 MS. ERICKSON: But that concludes my  
40 Tribal Resource Stewardship Division report. We also  
41 have a fisheries report. The TRS team, Tribal Resource  
42 Stewardship team has a fisheries program.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, at this point  
45 does the Council, have any questions for Diloolala about  
46 that portion of her report? It was real.....

47  
48 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

49  
50 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

1

2

MR. HONEA: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Diloolala, I'm actually glad TCC is online here. Because well, I mean the things that you got into there are pretty vast. You have among the migratory bird committee and fisheries and everything. But I had -- the reason I'm glad you're on here is because we had a discussion yesterday, and I'm sure you heard about it, about the Native allotments and gee, I don't know. So, many years ago, there was some kind of measure to try to make that where it'd be recognized, like private property. And so, I'm just hoping that whether yourself, somebody in the hunting and fishing or whether this is -- know I mentioned Doyon, I don't know if they have a hunting and fishing thing, but this is almost like legal stuff that they -- that we could be asking them for help too. So, anyway, I'm glad to -- you're in this and I know it -- you have a full plate there, so maybe it's -- maybe something will become of it. It seems like a little too late for this, but like I mentioned yesterday, that, hey, it's always -- we could always start somewhere and if we were at least to recognize it is a huge problem. And you know, whether it's on the Kaiyuh, whether it's on the Nowitna, I mean, this is -- this affects a lot of a lot of people and, you know, and enforcement of those things. I mean, I, you know, I've seen places where, you know, our own cabin on the Novi was occupied by people. And, you know, we had to kind of forcibly take them out. I mean with threats of having the troopers, like, they just filled up our cabin and so things like that. I'm glad you're here, and I'm -- I hope TCC could maybe help us addressing that. There's a lot of these concerns. I said, are not just the RAC business or YRDLFA or something. It's a concerted effort. Okay, I will let you go on with your presentation. Thank you.

37

38

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Don.

39

40

41

MS. ERICKSON: Thank you. Can I respond to that comment real quick?

42

43

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MS. ERICKSON: Thank you, Don, for that. I just made a note in my notebook here to have April Monroe invited to the next WIRAC meeting so that she can give a more in-depth report out on her trespass program and the work that she's been doing there. I know she has been in collaboration with Doyon lands on that work, and

00093

1 they're in development of an app that should help  
2 document trespass and create those reports so that you  
3 can expedite that process. So, I'll make sure that she  
4 gets invited to the winter meeting so she can provide  
5 that to you all.

6

7 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Appreciate that.  
10 Nissa.

11

12 MS. PILCHER: For the record, this is  
13 Nissa. Could you just say her name one more time again?

14

15 MS. ERICKSON: Yeah. April Monroe and I  
16 can get you her contact info after this.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, so, gonna  
19 give your fishery report. Go right ahead.

20

21 MS. ERICKSON: Okay, so we have a  
22 fisheries program that staffs three full time  
23 biologists, fisheries biologists. And this year we  
24 staffed one seasonal field tech. We have three major  
25 projects that we're working on. And you can find more  
26 detailed reporting on those in the supplemental material  
27 packet on page 97. I think our biggest one that most of  
28 our tribes are -- it's the high priority for us is a  
29 mid-river sonar feasibility study. Our biologists went  
30 out this summer to Tanana and tested two sites near  
31 Tanana, 113 miles upriver from the Tanana village and  
32 one 7 miles downriver. And that was above and below the  
33 Tanana and Yukon, where those two rivers come together.  
34 They're currently in the process of analyzing that those  
35 sonar sweep data that they have. They also ran a test  
36 fishery at both test sites this summer. All of the  
37 chinook that...

38

39 MS. WESSELS: I think they lost internet  
40 there.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, somebody  
43 talking over.

44

45 UNIDENTIFIED: I think the meeting had  
46 left going on overnight and may have gotten to be like  
47 24 hours long.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're getting some  
50 kind of crossover.

00094

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

MS. PILCHER: Can you hear us?

MS. WESSELS: Maybe we used all of the allowed minutes.

MS. PILCHER: That's Katya.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Katya. Katya.

MS. PILCHER: Are you guys there? Are you guys there?

MS. WESSELS: Yeah. We're here.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You're talking over us.

MS. PILCHER: We can hear you. Can you hear us now?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I heard them click out. Okay, continue.

MS. ERICKSON: All of the chinook that were caught in that test fishery were released alive and well. So, there was no incidental takes from that. And the site that was upriver from Tanana was near their spirit camp. And so, they involved a number of their youth from Tanana in that test fishery. And then at the winter meeting, I'll give a report out of the data that was analyzed there. We also conducted a coho spawning study this summer that used traditional knowledge from the late Reverend Chief David Salmon. He had identified in one of their Gwich'in publications that was their place name, Atlas, an area where coho salmon spawn that is not cataloged in the Anadromous Waters Catalog. And so, our biologists have been ground truthing and capturing the data needed to log that site in the Anadromous Waters Catalog. And they're currently about -- they're getting ready to go out on their last field session and hopefully we'll be able to capture the images of those spawning salmon up there. And then the last study that we have is a whitefish humpback study, humpback whitefish study up near Allakaket and Alatna, and they're testing two fish -- Whitefish stocks up there, one that is traditionally harvested by the community members up there, and then one that is not to test the different -- difference in composition of those two stocks of whitefish, to see if the like, increased

1 levels of harvesting are affecting those stocks or not.  
2 And they're testing fish in the Alatna River and then  
3 in the South Fork Koyukuk River. They just completed  
4 their second round of testing up there. The goal for  
5 2024 was 180 fish to sample. However, they were only  
6 able to sample 30. And they're also still analyzing that  
7 data. And we should have some results from those studies  
8 at the winter meeting.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're the fish  
11 present? They were having a hard time catching fish?

12  
13 MS. ERICKSON: I'm not sure. They just  
14 came back a week ago, and the only update I got was that  
15 they only sampled 30.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We would like to  
18 know what the reason -- why they could only get that.  
19 Because there -- I mean, I know people that fish up on  
20 the Alatna. They can catch a lot of fish in one set. And  
21 Fred's telling us about, you know, the decline here of,  
22 of Bering cisco. So, that's what they're -- that's what  
23 the fish would be. But there's other stocks that are,  
24 you know, the whitefish, -- the sheefish stocks are  
25 coming out of the Lower Yukon, they're going into the  
26 Alatna River. I would like to know your fishery  
27 biologists at our next meeting. Why they're -- why they  
28 were having a low success rate? And the waters dropped  
29 back now, and they should be actually be able to catch  
30 them because I live in the upper Koyukuk. So, I would  
31 like to know that that's an important thing that we need  
32 to know. Thank you.

33  
34 MS. ERICKSON: Thank you. I made a note  
35 of that, and I'll ask my biologists.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any questions on  
38 those fishery reports. No? Tim, are you still there,  
39 Tim?

40  
41 MS. PILCHER: We actually currently don't  
42 have anyone on. I was going to wait until we were done  
43 with this and then maybe ask you to stand down to see  
44 if we can restart some things.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, we need -- I  
47 think Kevin's supposed to come up here, so I will just  
48 state for the record, Diloola you're doing an excellent  
49 job. We had virtually no presence of TCC at meetings at  
50 times, and I was asking for TCC presence. And so, it's

00096

1 like Star Wars blasting forward. I mean, it's like all  
2 this stuff is happening, and I'm really excited about  
3 the progress that TCC is making on your division.

4  
5 MS. WESSELS: Did everyone drop from the  
6 Meeting.

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, thank you.

8  
9 MS. PILCHER: We did just hear someone  
10 online.

11 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

12  
13 MS. PILCHER: Are we back?

14  
15 MS. WESSELS: Even the meeting went on  
16 for too long. Because I think some people didn't hang  
17 up yesterday and it was going on for 24 hours and more.  
18 Or it's also possible that they lost internet there.

19  
20 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay.

21  
22 MS. WESSELS: They say they can hear us  
23 in the room. But we cannot hear them. I say we all hang  
24 up and let them restart the meeting and would try to  
25 call in.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we'll stand  
28 down for -- how long Nissa, Five minutes?

29  
30 MS. PILCHER: Let's try five.

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. We'll stand  
33 down for five minutes.

34  
35 MS. ERICKSON: I just want to say thanks.  
36 To the Chair and to the Council.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.

39  
40 MR. WALKER: Thank you for that report,  
41 April.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're back on  
44 record again. And are you on online here, Kevin  
45 Whitworth? Kevin Whitworth, are you here? So, Kuskokwim  
46 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Kevin Whitworth was on  
47 earlier, but we're on at this point in this agenda.  
48 Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association supplement -  
49 Huh? Oh, Kevin, are you here? I'm not hearing you, Kevin.

50



00097

1 If you're talking, you're muted. Nissa says that he she  
2 sees you on.....

3

4 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is --

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh. You're there  
7 and you're gone.

8

9 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
10 Kevin.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. There you  
13 are. Okay, go ahead with your Kuskokwim River Inter-  
14 Tribal Fish Commission update. Thank you.

15

16 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, thanks. I can hear  
17 you from the get-go there. I don't know what was muted,  
18 but somebody unmuted me anyhow. Kevin Whitworth, I'm a  
19 tribal member and McGrath Native village. I'm in McGrath  
20 right now, home. Former member of the Western Interior  
21 RAC. As you all know, I resigned. I just want to touch  
22 on that a little bit. You know, I really enjoyed working  
23 with you all and the Council, Jack, you as the Chair,  
24 our OSM staff. And I believe in the process, I like it  
25 but, I mean, I'm running -- at noon I ran to my fishwheel  
26 and grabbed all the fish I got out of there. It was ten  
27 or so fish variety of things and I just want to focus  
28 on my life, you know, subsistence lifestyle. And it's  
29 hard. This is a time of year where I really hit hard,  
30 trying to put away some fish for me and the whitefish  
31 that I do get, I distribute throughout the community.  
32 This time of year, and this is one of those crunch time  
33 of year. You're getting firewood, you're getting fish,  
34 you're getting things put away. And so, it's just really  
35 was hard for me to balance going to these meetings.  
36 October is really crazy. Springtime is the same thing.  
37 You know, it's just anyways, it's just a personal balance  
38 that I felt like I just needed to step aside and leave  
39 Western Interior RAC, but I do -- I'll be involved  
40 through my work with you know, Kuskokwim River Inter-  
41 Tribal Fish Commission. But I do appreciate you guys  
42 understanding that move by myself. So, anyhow before I  
43 get into my report for the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal  
44 Fish Commission, this has been a -- this topic has come  
45 up a lot. You know, the waste that we're seeing coming  
46 out of Yukon or - the Innoko River, Innoko National  
47 Wildlife Refuge. And this isn't not new. It's not like  
48 this is something new that we've seen here in McGrath.  
49 Just this last year, we have a new transporter. He's not  
50 that -- he hasn't been around for all that long. Willow

1 Air was the transporter guide, he had to guide these  
2 areas. But as far as the transporter, part of what they  
3 were doing, he sold that off to a new transporter. And  
4 this new transporter is very aggressive. We hear all the  
5 time, you know, they were at 50 to 60 transport people.  
6 They're moving 50 to 60 people. A few years ago, when  
7 they first started, they were up to 100 people now. And  
8 so, if you can imagine 100 people going out to the  
9 Refuge, you got guided use on top of that with Willow  
10 Air and all that meat. Not saying 100 Moose were shot.  
11 There's enough moose shot. And if you have any window  
12 where there's bad weather, and in this year we have --  
13 we had bad weather. And McGrath sits in between, you  
14 know, it's only 40 miles west of McGrath is the Innoko  
15 Refuge boundary, the eastern boundary. But you have the  
16 Kuskokwim mountains in between. And any little weather  
17 event will slow the transportation of moose meat out of  
18 the area. And there's no conditions in there where the  
19 guy has to check in with his hunters, you know, every 2  
20 or 3 days to get a moose out of there. So, he can go ten  
21 days on a float trip and that moose is sitting in his  
22 boat as he they float through the Refuge, waiting to get  
23 picked up. So, that moose meat gets to McGrath already  
24 tainted. And then the guy at the butcher shop was so  
25 overwhelmed that he had -- there's this store, there's  
26 a very long place where they store and hang the meat.  
27 But that thing was plumb full, so they had to stack the  
28 meat on pallets outside. It was raining, and everybody  
29 in town looked at this moose meat, people who were  
30 hunting all fall trying to get meat, and they're seeing  
31 this meat spoil, and it just pissed people off. So, then  
32 you get meat going to the dump, you get people who need  
33 meat, they get -- they say, yeah, I'll take a leg, and  
34 they take it, but they end up throwing it to dump  
35 themselves. My neighbor did this. He said, Kevin, that  
36 you wouldn't believe what the condition of those ribs,  
37 it was green. And I said, don't give it to me. My dogs  
38 are -- I don't want to. I don't want any part of that  
39 meat, in the way it's been treated. And even feeding it  
40 to my dogs, I did not want to do that and support  
41 anything that they're doing. And so, when I -- this  
42 afternoon at 12:30, when we went on the break, I picked  
43 up my friend to go check the wheel, and I told him about  
44 this meeting and he's livid. This is an elder, he's seen  
45 hard times where he's not getting any fish or not getting  
46 moose, and he's just livid with the situation that that  
47 this is a -- and it's both Federal and State. They need  
48 to get a handle of this. Transporter has a permit within  
49 to operate there within the Refuge. And there's  
50 conditions within that permit that the Refuge should

1 look at. We should look at that as citizens of this area  
2 and say, look, you guys are not living up to these  
3 conditions. And if they are living up to those  
4 conditions, then those conditions are weak. They  
5 shouldn't be to the point where they are able to do what  
6 they're doing. Those conditions in that permit should  
7 be robust enough, where there's time periods where those  
8 transporters have to get that meat out of the field, and  
9 then into the communities and out to Anchorage like Mr.  
10 Green had mentioned. That's a great thing. Get this meat  
11 out to Anchorage and out of this community because it's  
12 a mess. I'll stop there. But it's you know, when I  
13 grabbed my elder friend to go check the wheel and I tell  
14 him about this, he just -- I had to open my -- I had to  
15 make comments more about this situation. It's a mess.  
16 And I hope the Refuge will get -- look at this permit,  
17 work with the local people and consider building this  
18 permit so that it's more robust or if he's not living  
19 up to the conditions, then pull the permit from that  
20 transporter. Anyhow, I will move on to our Kuskokwim  
21 River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission report, which I think  
22 you guys have. Thank you, Nissa for getting that to  
23 everybody. It's an additional material in your packet.  
24 I'm not going to go through it all that thoroughly. You  
25 have it. But just to check in. Jack, can you hear me  
26 okay?

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Five by five,  
29 Kevin. Go ahead.

30  
31 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay. The Kuskokwim River  
32 Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, we have 28 appointed  
33 tribal commissioners, 28 tribes that are now part of the  
34 commission just this summer. The Native village of Kwig  
35 joined the commission. We have seven executive Council  
36 members, five season managers and two elder advisors. I  
37 think we have up to five permanent staff now. We have  
38 Justin Leon, he's our Research Director. I am the  
39 Executive Director. Avery Hoffman, a local guy from  
40 Bethel, he's our Fisheries Biologist. Andrew Magel, he's  
41 another fisheries biologist with Terese Vicente, tribal  
42 -- she's a program's director, and we have a couple  
43 other staff who volunteer. And then we do have  
44 contractors that we work with, biometricians and other  
45 folks. In the summer we do have a ramp up of projects  
46 that we employ over 25 local seasonal staff and interns  
47 through the summer months. But our main task at the Fish  
48 Commission is kind of three pillars: We have co-  
49 management, research and monitoring, and advocacy. The  
50 number one thing that we work on in co-management is our

1 MOU that we have with the Yukon Delta National Wildlife  
2 Refuge. Our co-management agreement, Spencer Reardon,  
3 he's the Yukon Delta Refuge Manager. He's our delegated  
4 authority for this fisheries management system that we  
5 have working with Fish Commission. He's great, he's got  
6 a good staff that he works with, Aaron Moses and Chris  
7 Tulik and others there. Awesome people to work with, you  
8 know, Boyd was great to work with, but there's a  
9 transition there. He left, and we have Spencer now as  
10 Refuge Manager. I congratulate him. And this last summer  
11 was it was seamless as far as the transition goes from  
12 Boyd to Spencer. Spencer has been part of the team there  
13 for a while, throughout the summer. So, I did feel like  
14 the relationship there is good. MOU was upheld through  
15 the summer with Yukon Delta Refuge. Our five in-season  
16 managers, two elder advisors, were at in-season  
17 management meetings with Spencer and his staff making  
18 management decisions. Not always that easy, not always  
19 -- especially when you are in times of conservation for  
20 chinook, chum and coho it's not easy to make management  
21 decisions where you're closing the fishery to, you know,  
22 your relatives and your family and your neighbors. But  
23 our in-season managers and other advisors and Spencer  
24 and his team worked real hard to try to bring the best  
25 information to our joint assessment packages that we put  
26 together every -- before every meeting, which is Western  
27 science. We don't have a lot of data on the Kuskokwim  
28 in-season we have harvest data that's collected from  
29 Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission part.....

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Did he drop? Kevin,  
32 if you can hear me, I lost you. Does anybody hear me on  
33 the phone? Can you hear me, Tim?

34  
35 MR. WHITWORTH: I think we started June  
36 1st with the Federal management, and we went through  
37 August 16th.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Kevin. Kevin.  
40 Kevin. Kevin. Kevin.

41  
42 (Simultaneous speech)

43  
44 MR. WHITWORTH: This is one of the  
45 longest seasons we've had with management.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Kevin. Kevin.

48  
49 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, go ahead.

000101

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You dropped there  
2 for a while.

3  
4 MR. WHITWORTH: Yep.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You dropped for  
7 about, maybe like 3 -- 70 --, 45 seconds or so. I'm not  
8 sure what's going on.

9  
10 MR. WHITWORTH: I was getting into in-  
11 season management, and we were.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We were in the in-  
14 season management.

15  
16 MR. WHITWORTH: That's too bad I dropped.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And then continue  
19 from.

20  
21 MR. WHITWORTH: Did you hear the in-  
22 season management?

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Now, continue.

25  
26 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, all right. So, the  
27 Teams people can hear me. So, anyhow one of our main  
28 jobs through the summer is working with Yukon Delta  
29 National Wildlife Refuge with their co-management  
30 agreement. We have in our MOU that we have our five in-  
31 season managers, two elder advisors who represent our  
32 tribe's river-wide work with Yukon Delta Refuge staff.  
33 This year was the first year that Spencer Reardon was  
34 the Refuge Manager there. We transitioned from Boyd to  
35 seamless transition. Spencer has been involved in the  
36 years past. Spencer did an excellent job and his staff  
37 there Aaron Moses, Chris Tulik, Evan Nikolai and just  
38 those guys and their vision of working with tribes in  
39 this MOU and uplifting the MOU is excellent. We did --  
40 it's not easy making these decisions. Because you're  
41 making decisions on the people, your neighbors, your  
42 family, your friends. But it's not -- when we have low  
43 numbers and chinook, chum and coho salmon, you got to  
44 balance conservation for these species and try provide  
45 some opportunity. So, this this year was one of our  
46 longest years, we had co-management from June 1 through  
47 August 16. We provided somewhere near 15 gillnet  
48 opportunities. Some of these were driftnet  
49 opportunities, some of them were set net opportunities.  
50 Some of them -- but at the end of the year, we, you

1 know, we run harvest estimation program. We have a  
2 harvest estimation in-season management, our project  
3 that we run in the summer. And so, we -- in real time  
4 during the summer, every time there's an opener about 2  
5 or 3 days after that opener, the Fish Commission produces  
6 a harvest estimate. So, we know in-season what the  
7 harvest estimate was from that opportunity. So, in  
8 total, right around 22,000 chinook salmon were harvested  
9 for the entire summer, chum salmon about almost 14,000,  
10 sockeye salmon almost 15,000. None of these -- coho  
11 salmon, you know, like 3,000. But that's because we  
12 stopped you know, up to August 18th, I think, or  
13 something like that, 19. These numbers, this is way below  
14 ANS amount necessary for subsistence. Way below, you  
15 know, chinook salmon, for example, this river, usually  
16 85,000, is usually ANS, you know, the bottom end. And  
17 so, when you're catching, you know, 20, 25,000, that's  
18 nowhere near the needs being met. So, we are definitely  
19 in a time period of low productivity for chinook, chum  
20 coho still here on the Kuskokwim, sockeye. And I'll just  
21 get into the chinook numbers a little bit. Right about  
22 143,000 fish passed for escapement this year. That's  
23 based on only one weir. All our weirs were flooded out  
24 this year. We did not get a chinook salmon estimate from  
25 most of the weirs. And so, it was based off of George  
26 River Weirs (indiscernible) reconstruction. And so, the  
27 error bars for that number is huge. It's like 90,000 to  
28 200 something thousand. So, not a lot of confidence in  
29 exactly what we ended up at. But we did meet our  
30 escapement goal, our robust Federal-Tribal escapement  
31 goal of 110,000. We're trying to manage the upper end  
32 of the state of Alaska escapement goal range, which we  
33 met this year.

34  
35 Chum salmon, this year was a little bit  
36 better, you know, just like Charlie Green was saying.  
37 He saw a little bit better on the Yukon. We saw a little  
38 bit better this year too. But we were just coming off  
39 of some of the most historic lows seen in 2021 through  
40 23 were the lowest we've ever seen on this river. And  
41 so, you know, we're coming off the bottom and we're just  
42 seeing a little bit of an uptick. There's not -- we are  
43 nowhere near one year a little bit better than the last,  
44 historic low numbers is not a recovery. Sockeye salmon,  
45 they're doing okay. They're doing just fine. I think we  
46 might have got even less than last. Very strong again  
47 this year. Coho salmon, it's hard to manage coho. By the  
48 time coho come into the river, there's almost no data.  
49 There's the Bethel tester is getting shut down. The sonar  
50 is getting close to shut down, so we -- but we have to

000103

1 manage with what we have and harvest information we do  
2 try to collect in-season. So, we're catching -- catch  
3 green effort. And we can see that over the years with  
4 how coho are doing. And this year we manage up to near  
5 the 50% mark. We didn't see a lot of effort up to the  
6 50% mark of the run, and people were starting to focus  
7 in on berries, getting ready for moose hunting. And so,  
8 we felt like that -- at that point, we felt that we  
9 could relinquish management. I think it happened August  
10 16th, and I don't want to get into all the projects  
11 we're involved with. Community-based harvest monitoring,  
12 the harvest estimate programs, Takotna River weir,  
13 Kwethluk River weir, Kwethluk River Smolt outmigration  
14 project, eDNA, we're trying to use - research the idea  
15 of using eDNA to try to come up with at least abundance,  
16 or maybe not individual run sizes of chinook, chum and  
17 coho salmon with the use of eDNA. We have water  
18 temperature monitoring network. We're trying to build a  
19 river wide network for water temperature monitoring.  
20 We're using drones. This year we have hired Dr. Danny  
21 Auerbach. He's out of -- I can't remember Eastern  
22 Washington University. He's got a great team. We have a  
23 champion, Danny researching the use of drones. And  
24 there's some really neat research coming out of our  
25 program that we have working with him. We have another  
26 project with documented knowledge of Kuskokwim salmon  
27 and people. This is something that our Executive Council  
28 has wanted for a long time, and we're finally -- found  
29 some funding to do some research and monitoring and  
30 recording of our elder's knowledge before -- that they  
31 want to pass down. We also, like Diloolah had mentioned,  
32 we're involved as a cooperating agency in a Chum EIS,  
33 this Bycatch Chum Draft EIS as cooperating agency. Our  
34 input is due tomorrow. So, right after this call, I got  
35 to do some review of that. Another big project -- just  
36 a heads up -- project that we're involved with. A lot  
37 of people are involved. There's a Gravel-to-Gravel MOU  
38 that tribes and Department of Interior are working on.  
39 The AVCP, (In Native), Tanana Chiefs, Yukon Kuskokwim  
40 River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Nome, Eagle, these  
41 villages, Bureau of Indian Affairs, USGS, BLM, U.S Fish  
42 and Wildlife, Park Service all involved in this Gravel-  
43 to-Gravel MOU. And we have a sign-in ceremony, October  
44 16th for this huge MOU. It's going to be a huge deal to  
45 come together, working together on this MOU. We try to  
46 get NOAA involved. It's really hard to get them involved  
47 with anything like this, but we tried to get them  
48 involved because the real vision of Gravel-to-Gravel co-  
49 management and rebuilding of the runs is really getting  
50 everybody at the table. But at least the Department of

1 Interior is showing that they are willing and wanting  
2 to work with tribes and this Gravel-to-Gravel MOU. And  
3 so, about to come out, more to come on that for you all.  
4 We'll be able to share that here soon. Probably in a few  
5 weeks-- we can -- we'll have something signed; I'm  
6 hoping. I'll stop there, we're working on our end of  
7 season situation report right now. I was hoping to get  
8 it done before this meeting, but we had other obligations  
9 so, that'll come out here real soon. I'll share that  
10 with you all. That's all. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so  
13 much, Kevin. I appreciate all those various projects and  
14 your impassioned testimony regarding this air taxi and  
15 the pathetic condition the meat and this particular air  
16 carrier was instrumental in the demise of the Mulchatna  
17 Caribou Herd back in the day, 97 through 2007. So, this  
18 is not going to stop. This will just continue to expand.  
19 There were 5,500 hunters flown onto the Mulchatna River  
20 Caribou Herd with a five-bull caribou bag limit. So, I  
21 feel that the Koyukuk, Nowitna, Innoko Refuge should  
22 review the permit that's been issued, and this  
23 particular carrier should be put on a hold until further  
24 review of the condition of the meat that's coming in.  
25 There needs to be additional aspects of their permit  
26 they need to have -- each hunter should have an InReach.  
27 They should be reporting their harvest. And then that  
28 meat's flown out and that should be disseminated in a  
29 timely manner. It can't be like floating around for ten  
30 days and rotting through the ribs as green. That just  
31 has to stop. And so, this permit needs to be put in stay  
32 position right now. And for further review for any  
33 additional there needs to be limits. This particular  
34 carrier will take unlimited numbers of hunters. They  
35 have the capacity to do that. So, I'm really concerned  
36 about that. And this Council is to address anything that  
37 affects subsistence users. And that's why the need for  
38 this controlled use area in the Innoko side. So, I  
39 appreciate those comments, Kevin, and all the projects.  
40 But I have a huge agenda still to go. And so, any -- you  
41 have one comment there, Nissa.

42  
43 MS. PILCHER: I don't -- I do, but I can  
44 let you finish up.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I, I think that  
47 you're a thorough coverage of your presentation. Thank  
48 you, Kevin. And no worries about you dropping off the  
49 Council. We fully understand life in general and then  
50 family life. Thank you.



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
This is Kevin.

MS. PILCHER: For the record, this is Nissa. Kevin, I was asked to say on the record or to provide on the record if you could think about or provide names or other individuals from your region that may be a good fit for the Council. I know we've had conversations off the record about it, but just so it's on the record. Thanks.

MR. WHITWORTH: Very good. Just off the record, I'll try my best.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thanks so much. So, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. Serena, are you on the phone?

MS. FITKA: Yes, I am.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead.

MS. FITKA: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and Council members, thank you for the opportunity for me to present to the Western Interior RAC. I am pleased to represent the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association. My name is Serena Fitka. My Yup'ik name is Cuucitcuar. I'm originally from Saint Mary's. YRDFA, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association is a virtual office, so I have -- I currently reside in Valdez and my staff are scattered throughout the State. I'd like to provide some really brief updates on some of the activities that we're doing and the accomplishments we made this year. I'll first start with our harvest survey program. This project is currently being funded under the National Park Service. We used to get funded with FRMP. However, with the funding situation we had to scramble around for some funds for this project. We have ten communities along the Yukon River with locally hired surveyors starting in June, running through the last week of August, surveyors interviewed local households about their experience fishing that week. Households are kept anonymous and the same survey questions are asked every week. Interviews are sent to us at the beginning of the week. The data is collected and then analyzed and put into a report that is sent out to partners and management agencies. The purpose of this report is to show fish capture data caught by effort and create a space where individuals can leave comments for managers.

1 This year we have created a digital app for surveyors  
2 to use and will be putting that forth for next season.  
3 The Yukon River In-season Teleconference Program, this  
4 year we got funding by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
5 Service. Because again, the delay in funding with FRMP  
6 we did get funding for this last season. We were not  
7 able to mail out our posters to all of the communities  
8 on the Yukon and First Nations in Canada. So, we put out  
9 a mass email to all the communities and partners and  
10 people on our lists about our teleconference. Our  
11 communication coordinator, Mike McIntyre, has been very  
12 diligent in getting the word out to the communities. We  
13 also switched our teleconference carrier, and it  
14 provided better services for us. We were -- we have been  
15 getting good attendance over many are participants  
16 online were -- have not been providing community reports  
17 or observations they are seeing on the river. And it was  
18 a pretty quiet season. We have been scheduling special  
19 reporting on various topics such as reports from Area  
20 M, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, Fishery  
21 Disaster updates, Gravel-to-Gravel initiatives and  
22 anything that we hear on the teleconference, or we hear  
23 at meetings on what the public's interested about or  
24 questions that they have. So, we try to make sure that  
25 we provide the information that's wanted. Let's see the  
26 Yukon River Watershed Ecosystem Action Plan, in 2023 we  
27 got funded by the Gravel-to-Gravel Initiative. A  
28 steering committee was developed, and our next meeting  
29 is coming up on October 22nd in Anchorage. And this --  
30 the purpose of this steering committee is to create a  
31 publicly accessible story map tool, a resource that  
32 prioritizes assessing threats to salmon habitat and  
33 identifying the highest priority restoration actions.  
34 This tool will be open to all, fostering a sense of  
35 community and shared responsibility for the Yukon  
36 Watershed. With the overall commitment to assist Yukon  
37 River Drainage Fisheries Association in creating a first  
38 river eco -- the first Yukon River Ecosystem Action Plan.  
39 During July and August of this year our environmental  
40 specialist, James, and our field technician Matthew  
41 conducted their first -- complete their first field data  
42 collection. They went out and did some water quality  
43 sampling and culvert surveys in the middle Yukon River  
44 and Tanana River watersheds using the U.S. Fish and  
45 Wildlife Service GIS database. They collected a total  
46 of 64 culvert surveys and 50 water quality samples.  
47 Fieldwork locations this season consisted of the area  
48 surrounding Nulato, Road system, accessible areas around  
49 Minto, Manley Hot Springs, Eureka, and off the Tanana  
50 Road. The field crew identified multiple additional

1 culverts of potential concern for the Yukon Salmon Fish  
2 Passage, which are not previously listed in the U.S.  
3 Fish and Wildlife Service database. Culvert survey data  
4 was entered into the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fish  
5 Barrier Hunter app, and water quality data was entered  
6 into a new Survey 123 app designed by YR DFA contractor  
7 instructor Michael Baker and associates.

8  
9 I'll move on to the Yukon River  
10 Clearinghouse Project. The purpose of this project is  
11 to identify data gaps along the Yukon River, and act as  
12 a clearinghouse for social and economical changes along  
13 the Yukon River, using both physical biological data and  
14 traditional ecological knowledge. We have hired a  
15 traditional ecological knowledge technician, Jadon  
16 Nashoanak, and he will be conducting interviews to learn  
17 about engineering a historical timeline of observed  
18 changes that may affect salmon on the Yukon River.  
19 Additionally, we have a physical-biological science  
20 technician, which is Matthew who's helping with the  
21 culvert assessments, stream assessments, and collecting  
22 water quality samples. With all of this data, we'll be  
23 creating a platform that will be shared holistically.  
24 We'll provide - we'll share a holistic overview of the  
25 Yukon River historic timeline. This platform will allow  
26 observers and agencies to submit their data to be added  
27 to the Clearinghouse project.

28  
29 Another project that we do have is  
30 engaging fishers and chinook salmon research on the  
31 Yukon River. This project is funded by the North Pacific  
32 Research Board and began in January of 2023. We are  
33 partnering with the communities of Alakanuk and Emmonak  
34 to conduct interviews about the health of chinook as  
35 they enter the river. We are gathering this information  
36 to help inform our companion project, led by Dr Katie  
37 Howard and Vanessa von Biela, which is seeking to  
38 understand the drivers of chinook salmon decline, and  
39 they theorize that one driver is what they are eating  
40 in the Bering Sea, and which is strongly related to the  
41 health when they enter the river. We have completed our  
42 interviews in both Emmonak and Alakanuk and provided a  
43 summary and feedback to Emmonak. We are working on  
44 summarizing the interviews from Alakanuk to gather their  
45 feedback. We also are working with the communities of  
46 Saint Mary's and Huslia to monitor water quality  
47 temperature or water temperature and develop a community  
48 action plan if there is another heat event that causes  
49 a salmon die off in the future. Those are just the major  
50 projects we have. We've been advocating a lot -- we just

1 hired a new policy coordinator, Olivia Irwin, from  
2 Nenana, and she's already out there at the North Pacific  
3 Fisheries Management Council meeting that's already  
4 happening in Anchorage this week. And we also have a  
5 list of other things that we're going to be working on.  
6 And our upcoming Board meeting that's happening in  
7 Anchorage on October 21st at Hilton Downtown. We're  
8 staffing up, the only position we have open right now  
9 is a fisheries biologist position which we got funding  
10 through EOS for three years, potentially four. So,  
11 hopefully we'll find a fisheries biologist soon and they  
12 can help us out with all our projects. Just some dates  
13 to keep in mind. Like I said, the North Pacific Fisheries  
14 Management Council is taking place right now. Our YRDFA  
15 Board meeting is scheduled October 21st, along with our  
16 steering committee on the 22nd, both in Anchorage. The  
17 Yukon River Panel Joint Technical Committee and  
18 Traditional Ecological Knowledge Committee will be  
19 meeting on the Chinook Rebuilding Plan in Fairbanks,  
20 November 18th and 19th which I sit on the Traditional  
21 ecological knowledge committee. So, I'll be attending  
22 that. Further down the road, Yukon River science  
23 Symposium that we sponsor will be in person this year,  
24 and we've selected February 12th as the set tentative  
25 date. We did lock dates in for our annual YRDFA Board  
26 meeting and our pre-season meeting that will be  
27 happening in Fairbanks April 22nd through the 25th. And  
28 that concludes my report. Sorry for talking fast, but  
29 I'll take any questions.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
32 Serena. Those are a lot of projects. And of course,  
33 YRDFA is doing a great job. And I'm really -- you're  
34 really coming up to speed with staff. I'm really excited  
35 to see the quality of your staff also. So, just like  
36 TCC, it's like a -- it's almost like Star Wars  
37 accelerating forward, so I appreciate that. Any  
38 questions for Serena on the YRDFA for presentation?  
39 Seeing none. You were very thorough. Appreciate that.  
40 So, and so, we're moving on to our agenda -- further on  
41 our agenda here. So, do we need to do this?

42  
43 MS. PILCHER: That was actually just  
44 informational. I just wanted to -- this is Nissa for the  
45 record -- the NOAA part, it's a flyer that's in your  
46 supplemental material. I thought you might want to read  
47 up on it. It doesn't concern this region, but it might  
48 be of interest to you since it deals with the petition  
49 to list chinook salmon in the Gulf as endangered. And I  
50 know I've heard that comment about the Yukon before, so

000109

1 it is just informational. We have no one to present on  
2 it.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
5 that. So, we're going to go into agency reports now.  
6 This would be U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Yukon River  
7 Subsistence fishing update, Holly Carroll are you on  
8 online there?

9

10 MS. CARROLL: Yep. Jack, this is Holly  
11 Carroll with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm online  
12 and I can give the report for both seasons of the Yukon  
13 River, and I'll definitely give the report for the Fish  
14 and Game managers as well. But they're online I believe.  
15 And so, when I finish, I'll give them an opportunity to  
16 add anything. But we did compile a pretty thorough report  
17 that we sent to you guys. It may not have made it into  
18 the online materials, but I presume Nissa, you could  
19 confirm that they would have gotten our RAC summary  
20 handout.

21

22 MS. PILCHER: Yes, it would have been on  
23 your guys' desk when you came in yesterday so, it might  
24 take some flipping to find it.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Right here,  
27 I found it.

28

29 MS. CARROLL: Okay, yeah. Great. So, I  
30 can't assume that everyone's read that because we didn't  
31 meet the deadline to get that in your packet. That  
32 deadline is almost a month ago, and we were still in the  
33 throes and still are, to some extent, of collecting our  
34 in-season data. But I can give a brief overview of the  
35 season. I know a lot of you live it and know it, but for  
36 the benefit of those online. Our season as far as salmon  
37 was you know, not super outside of what we predicted.  
38 We knew that we would need salmon closures because of  
39 our pretty poor projections. So, this year, we had a  
40 total chinook salmon passed the sonar at Pilot Station  
41 of around 65,000 chinooks. We had about the right amount  
42 of Canadian fish of a run that small passed the Eagle  
43 Sonar. So, we had about 24,000. When I say the right  
44 amount, what I mean is that we did not see a large  
45 discrepancy in that Canadian component that we counted  
46 at Pilot. We saw about what we would expect at the  
47 border, given that we had complete closures for chinook.  
48 But 24,000 chinooks at the border is still a very  
49 terrible escapement, considering that our new escapement  
50 goal it's a rebuilding escapement goal of 71,000.

000110

1 chinook. So, as Jackie mentioned earlier in the meeting,  
2 you know, these are scary low escapements. But it was  
3 an improvement over the last couple of years for the  
4 chinook.

5  
6 For the summer chum. That's the one  
7 bright spot in our returns. We had a drainage wide run  
8 of about 760,000. That run did meet our drainage wide  
9 goal. And we were able to allow some fishing on that.  
10 However, because the summer chum overlap with the  
11 chinook, we could not allow gillnet fish fishing for  
12 those. And of course, that's the proper, efficient gear  
13 to use. I know a lot of people were really hoping we  
14 could give them gillnet opportunities for their chums,  
15 but unfortunately, we couldn't afford to have any  
16 incidental harvest of chinook. But we did allow the  
17 selective gears, which are the dip nets, the manned fish  
18 wheels and beach seines. And so, some people in the  
19 lower river really were able to get some summer chum put  
20 away, and we're pretty grateful for that. But again, we  
21 came nowhere near meeting anyone's subsistence needs for  
22 salmon, even when we were able to allow some of those  
23 summer chum. The fall season was also not great. Our  
24 fall chum run ended up around 200,000 fall chum, that  
25 that's not large enough to meet the drainage wide  
26 escapement goal. The Canadian component of that run  
27 continues to be weak. It should be about a quarter of  
28 the run should be Canadian. And what we saw was about  
29 15%. And so, we've only projected to see about 12,000  
30 fall Chum at the border. Again, that is an abysmal  
31 escapement, as Jack had mentioned earlier. That run  
32 should be a minimum of 70,000. So, this is a pretty  
33 bleak state of affairs that our that our Canadian fall  
34 chum are not recovering as much. The drainage wide fall  
35 chum run is getting a little closer to meeting drainage  
36 wide goals, but this year was pretty weak. We are seeing  
37 some weakness in the age classes that may indicate some  
38 poor survival of even previous good spawning returns.  
39 It's the third lowest run size we've had for fall chum.  
40 The coho aren't faring a ton better. We have a projected  
41 run size of about 85,000, and that's about half the run  
42 size it should be. Should be closer to 140,000. So, as  
43 many of you know, we've had closures in place nearly all  
44 season for all species except for the summer chum and a  
45 lot of those closures are actually still in effect. They  
46 will all be lifted, you know, based on the migration of  
47 the fall chum. We want to make sure that we don't lift  
48 any of those closures until the fall chum have completely  
49 moved through some areas, and in some areas fall chum  
50 our main stem spawners are -- they do continue to spawn,

000111

1 you know, even as the water is freezing up. So, there  
2 are some closures that will stay in place through  
3 December but most folks on the main stem will see a lot  
4 of their closures lifting in the month of October, based  
5 on migration. We took Federal action all season So, that  
6 meant that when we did go fishing for the summer chum,  
7 that was limited to federally qualified users. And yeah,  
8 we just -- we did do something new this year. It was  
9 because the runs are so poor we've been really torn. We  
10 want to provide liberal opportunity for fishing the non-  
11 standard and the whitefish and other species during the  
12 summer season so that people can put some food away, and  
13 some people have explained that they're using maybe  
14 sheefish or other whitefish to still get their kids in  
15 camp and show some traditional storing techniques and  
16 have that time and tradition. And so, we really are  
17 trying to provide liberal opportunity with that. And so,  
18 in previous seasons we've allowed four-inch gear all  
19 season long, 24/7. We do limit it to 60ft so that it's  
20 very close to shore and better at targeting those  
21 resident species. But this year, we added during -- the  
22 king season -- we added a little two-week closure in  
23 each area based on when the height of the king run would  
24 be there, where we made all folks pull out their four-  
25 inch nets. We think that might have helped reduce the  
26 incidental harvest of chinook salmon. And then for fall  
27 season, we didn't really feel the need to do that too  
28 much until kind of partway through. And then we did end  
29 up reducing the four-inch gear to just sort of a weekend  
30 fishing schedule.

31  
32 We figured if we make most fish, go and  
33 check those nets and pull them out during, you know,  
34 Monday to Thursday, they could fish on the weekends. And  
35 we were probably going to reduce any incidental harvest  
36 of fall chum and coho doing that. So, we're trying to  
37 split the difference between providing opportunity for  
38 people to get those non-salmon, which might be the only  
39 fish kind of ticking some families over when it comes  
40 to food security. But then we're also trying to kind of  
41 institute these new conservation measures. And I will  
42 say that we held a public hearing. I, as a Federal  
43 Manager, when I take temporary special actions, I need  
44 to offer a public hearing, and we had excellent  
45 discussion during that. And quite honestly, we're  
46 getting a lot of people, particularly from the upper  
47 river areas, wanting us to have the four-inch closures  
48 in place for longer. Maybe most of the season to protect  
49 the incidental harvest of the salmon that we need to  
50 protect. So, I think that's going to come up in future

1 meetings. And I'm certainly going to ask you guys, as  
2 RAC members, to give us your advice on this matter.  
3 There are some fishermen in the lower river that  
4 absolutely, you know, rely on that four-inch. And there  
5 are some people who are saying, take it all away, make  
6 it completely closed, make it all or nothing. Because  
7 it's easier for fishermen to know and then that way no  
8 one is targeting those salmon. So, that's quite a request  
9 to actually ask us to take that opportunity away. And I  
10 think we're going to be really at odds for how to go  
11 about that. So, keep that in mind and when you go to the  
12 preseason planning meetings or when you have your, you  
13 know, comments you know, consider those things and  
14 consider giving your State and your Federal Manager some  
15 feedback on those things, because that's the stuff we'll  
16 be asking for. I also wanted to touch a little bit on  
17 some research stuff. You know, I mentioned that the  
18 summer chum run did -- met the drainage wide goal. And  
19 while we're really happy about that, it's not to say  
20 that there aren't some concerns about that run. We have  
21 not been meeting the Anvik escapement goal, nor the  
22 Andreafsky escapement goal for chum. And there's a lot  
23 of people that have concerns about that as well. Well,  
24 you know, how can you manage to do this drainage wide  
25 goal when you're failing to meet these small stock goals?  
26 And that's also going to be a question that's going to  
27 come up going forward. We do think that the chum are  
28 redistributing a bit in the drainage, but unfortunately,  
29 we only have a few assessment projects and so we don't  
30 know where they go. And so, us at Fish and Wildlife  
31 Service we're trying to partner and do some explorations  
32 for summer chum specifically. And one of the things that  
33 we want to look into is getting a better estimate of  
34 passage into the Koyukuk Drainage, which is a hugely  
35 important drainage for the chum salmon. We used to have  
36 a weir at Gisasa, Tanana Chiefs runs a weir at Henshaw  
37 and is going to take over the Gisasa Weir if they are  
38 funded by OSM. But we've been having problems with weirs  
39 in that in our current climate situation, these rivers  
40 are becoming incredibly flash floody [sic] or dealing  
41 with floods so often that these data sets, getting these  
42 weirs in and getting these escapement counts aren't  
43 always effective. And we aren't even getting sometimes  
44 50% -- 50% of the years are we getting data from those  
45 systems. And so, one thing that we at Fish and Wildlife  
46 Service would like to explore is could we use a sonar  
47 in the Koyukuk Drainage? Pretty low in the drainage  
48 because we'd want to see how many salmon are passing in  
49 there. And so, we might look at doing some sonar  
50 feasibility in the area. My assessment biologist, Shane



1 Ransbury has been working with some of the Refuge staff  
2 from Galena, and we might look at just doing some  
3 bathymetric surveys in that area. We've got plans to  
4 meet with Native corporation landholders to see if it  
5 would be okay if we set some sonar in the water this  
6 coming season, just to kind of explore some options.

7  
8 Related to that, the Andrafsky Weir  
9 is a project we've run for decades, and we are really  
10 having a hard time running it successfully because of  
11 the flooding issue. Many years we do not get the weir  
12 in time, we don't get the weir installed in time to  
13 estimate passage. And it's a very expensive project and  
14 has always relied on OSM funding, which is now sort of  
15 more of a questionable source of money as far as you  
16 know, there's so many good projects going into it, and  
17 it may not be worth us competing with some of those  
18 other projects if we can't successfully get counts  
19 there. So, next season, the 2025, that's going to be our  
20 last year at Andrafsky, for now, we plan to decommission  
21 the weir site. And, you know, we're -- our hope there  
22 is that we could then change our focus and still answer  
23 some of these really important questions about where  
24 chum are going or monitoring other really important  
25 chum streams. But one of the other things we're being  
26 responsive to is that, you know, we have had various  
27 elders at meetings, Benedict Jones most recently was at  
28 the YRDLFA meeting, and many people have expressed  
29 concerns about having weirs that cross these rivers when  
30 we have such low run abundance. Concerns about handling  
31 the fish are impeding their migrations. And you know,  
32 we hear those concerns loud and clear.

33  
34 And there's just a lot of reasons to  
35 pursue other research. Not to say that sonar is non-  
36 invasive. It becomes invasive when you need a fishing  
37 program associated with sonar. But that part of any sonar  
38 feasibility would be a few years out. So, those are some  
39 of the kind of research changes we're kind of dealing  
40 with and looking at, on another research note, we just  
41 completed our third year, and it's a very collaborative  
42 we, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Game, many other  
43 University partners have been studying ichthyophonus on  
44 the Yukon. We've been taking samples at three sites a  
45 lower river site at Pilot Station, site at Rapids and  
46 then a site at Fort Yukon. We've been trying to do a lot  
47 of things with that information that tell us about  
48 chinook health. But one of the main goals of that is to  
49 see if enroute mortality is occurring. And then if it  
50 is, what can we -- what is actionable information that

000114

1 we can use about that for management. So, for instance,  
2 you know, when we're managing a run and there's lots of  
3 fish, we usually just say okay what is the escapement  
4 goal? What is the harvest? Is there enough fish to go  
5 harvest? And we have not often accounted for mortality  
6 in that math, you know, do we think 10% are dying, do  
7 we think 20% are dying? That's not usually part of the  
8 math and it may need to become part of the management  
9 equation in future. And we're hoping that this study  
10 will help lend some, you know, concrete information  
11 about how we should be accounting for any loss that  
12 might be occurring for ichthyophonus. So, that that data  
13 collection so, the collecting of the samples of fish  
14 that ended this season, it will take us about an entire  
15 calendar year to analyze the research, coordinate across  
16 all our partners, and start to publish those results so  
17 people will have to hang tight. We're probably not going  
18 to have updates this winter, but we really hope to be  
19 able to do some really good job at going back into  
20 communities, going back to all of you, and kind of  
21 explaining what we've learned and how we should change  
22 things going forward, and hopefully even plan more  
23 community-based monitoring program for this disease. I  
24 guess that's kind of the bulk of the management and  
25 research stuff that I wanted to bring. I know you guys  
26 still have a big agenda ahead of you, so I guess I wanted  
27 to just see if any of the Fish and Game managers wanted  
28 to add anything that I might have forgot. I know they're  
29 doing lots of great research, including a chinook radio  
30 telemetry project. All kinds of really good research  
31 going on, but I want to kick it over to you guys to see  
32 if there's anything you want to add before we take any  
33 questions.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Go ahead,  
36 Deena.

37  
38 MS. JALLEN: Oh yeah. Thanks, Holly.  
39 Thanks, Jack. Can you hear me okay?

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Five by five. Go  
42 ahead.

43  
44 MS. JALLEN: Thanks. Yeah, I don't have  
45 a whole lot to add at this time. We're still working on  
46 putting together our summer season summary. That will  
47 be published hopefully a little bit later this month.  
48 Thankfully, Serena already mentioned most of the big  
49 meetings that are coming up this season. We will be  
50 presenting more of the results from the season. Holly

1 gave an excellent summary of the assessment and the run  
2 sizes we had this year. The chinook salmon radio tagging  
3 project did operate out of Emmonak and they had pretty  
4 good success. I think they got last year they only got  
5 about 50 kings, and then this year they got closer to,  
6 I think, 180 or 200 kings tagged and had really good  
7 success with seeing where those tags went up throughout  
8 the drainage. So, I'm sure there'll be more  
9 presentations about that later on in the season,  
10 particularly to JTC and to the panel once all those all  
11 the information from all the towers comes back in. Some  
12 of the flights were conducted pretty recently. So,  
13 that's still kind of a little bit ongoing research. But  
14 we did have pretty good success getting more kings and  
15 tagging them in Emmonak. It helped that the run this  
16 year was a little bit bigger, and also fishing conditions  
17 were better because we didn't have a lot of the really  
18 super high water that was kind of impacting us more last  
19 year. But yeah, with that, I don't have a whole lot more  
20 to add for summer season. Thanks, Holly, for a very  
21 comprehensive report. And I'll turn it over to Christy  
22 because I know she has some more pertinent and more  
23 timely fall season information to share.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thanks a lot.  
26 Go ahead, Christie.

27  
28 MS. GLEASON: Good afternoon, Jack. Can  
29 you hear me?

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Five by five.

32  
33 MS. GLEASON: Okay, great. Hi everyone,  
34 I'm Christie Gleason. I'm the Yukon area fall season  
35 manager with Alaska Department of Fish and Game here in  
36 Fairbanks. And I just want to let you guys know that  
37 I've been listening to your comments and your concerns  
38 regarding Yukon River salmon yesterday and today, and  
39 we've been listening to your concerns for the past five  
40 years during the Yukon salmon decline and we've been  
41 right here with you. I wish that we could open up salmon  
42 fishing for subsistence and get people back at Fish Camp,  
43 but unfortunately, the runs are too low. And Holly gave  
44 a really good overview of where we are with fall chum  
45 and coho. I just want to let folks know that the  
46 subsistence fishing closures are beginning to relax and  
47 so, District 2 reopened this morning with 7.5in or  
48 smaller mesh gillnets. District 3 is going to be up in  
49 a couple of days, and then we're moving that relaxation  
50 up-river. And something on the State side, I want to let

1 Yukon fishermen know there's an out of cycle State  
2 proposal, ACR #1, that was put forward by a fisherman.  
3 And that request to open up larger mesh gillnets for  
4 subsistence fishing in non-flowing waters for non-salmon  
5 throughout the Yukon River drainage. And if you have  
6 interest reading this proposal, you can find it on the  
7 ADF&G website. Nissa is really good at navigating  
8 because she used to do that job. And you can submit  
9 public comments on this proposal October 15th online.  
10 And this proposal is going to be discussed at the Board  
11 of Fish work session here at the end of October.  
12

13                   And the other thing I wanted to let you  
14 guys know, you guys had questions about Area M harvest  
15 and genetics data. And while Deena and I can't answer  
16 questions regarding that fishery because it's outside  
17 the Yukon, I can give you the phone number for the two  
18 people to call. So, for the genetic data, you can get  
19 ahold of Bill Templin. And his phone number is (907)  
20 267-2234. And then Matt Keys is the Fishery manager for  
21 Area M. And he gave the updates this summer on the  
22 teleconference. And his phone number is (907) 486-1874.  
23 And so that's all I have for today. I'll be standing by  
24 if you guys have any questions.  
25

26                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
27 all that -- all those reports. That was all very  
28 pertinent information. My main question is -- was the  
29 overall size of the fish -- each species is declining  
30 in size, was there a was there a noticeable decline in  
31 chinook, summer chum and fall chum, coho almon this year  
32 versus last year? And compared to historical levels, and  
33 as a calculation of egg capacity being made as you would  
34 with ichthyophonous, is there a indice to being developed  
35 to calculate the actual spawning capacity of the of the  
36 escapements that we're making? We're getting more  
37 chinook across the border, but are we actually losing  
38 in size? That's the that would be my question for the  
39 whole presentation.  
40

41                   MS. CARROLL: I can take a stab at that,  
42 Jack. This is Holly Carroll with U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
43 Service again. The short answer is yes. A lot of our  
44 fish were smaller. Especially we're dealing that with  
45 that with the chums. I think we're still seeing pretty  
46 poor nutrition in the ocean and so, they're coming back  
47 smaller. We also -- the issue that you're talking about,  
48 the border is definitely true in the sense that when we  
49 see less five- and six-year-olds, for instance, you  
50 know, we're not getting as many females. And so, yes,

1 you're definitely not getting as many eggs as you used  
2 to, and our fish are smaller. And that is one of the  
3 reasons, that's one of the biological sort-of rationale  
4 that went into raising the border goal. I know a lot of  
5 people are frustrated with the process for how that goal  
6 was come to, you know, tribes weren't involved in  
7 consultation with that, the goal was increased, and not  
8 a lot has been discussed about why that goal was  
9 increased. But for myself, one of the reasons I'm glad  
10 it was increased is that exactly what you're addressing,  
11 Jack. For many years, we've known that the number of  
12 fish we're putting at the border, even when we sometimes  
13 meet the goal, is not equivalent to the kind of quality  
14 of fish we would have seen a decade, or even 20 years  
15 ago.

16  
17 So, by having more fish, in theory,  
18 you're going to increase the eggs in gravel. Of course  
19 you have to achieve those goals. But yeah, I - if you're  
20 also asking are we constantly creating an egg index.  
21 That's definitely not happening because you do have to  
22 kill fish to do that. But I will say that part of the  
23 ichthyophonous study, and I believe I'll let Fish and  
24 Game hop in if they can. But one of the studies is  
25 looking -- I believe it's Dr. Howard with Fish and Game.  
26 We've been sending her eggs from the ichthyophonous  
27 study. And some folks are working on egg health, timing  
28 and stuff like that, but we haven't been necessarily  
29 measuring egg densities in our current runs to try to  
30 calculate the sort of -- the fecundity, because we know  
31 it's poor. So, that's the that's the shorter answer  
32 there. I guess I would stand down to let any Fish and  
33 Game staff add, if we've got some other egg studies  
34 going on that I maybe forgot about.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, that  
37 answered my primary question. Does ADF&G have any  
38 additional information on that?

39  
40 MS. GLEASON: Hi Jack, this is Christie.  
41 Just quickly on the fall chum and the coho, I looked at  
42 the data for this year. And both the fall chum and the  
43 coho adults returning to the Yukon were half an inch  
44 smaller than historical average. So, that is a little  
45 better than what we saw a couple years ago, when in 2020  
46 and 2021, when we first started to see the salmon  
47 decline, those fish were coming back as adults, about  
48 an inch and a quarter smaller for body length. So, that's  
49 all I have.

50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I appreciate  
2 that. That's good information, thank you. So, I  
3 appreciate this report. This is a Fisheries oriented  
4 meeting. So, that I wanted to be thorough on that aspect.  
5 And so, I appreciate all of the -- I'm very satisfied  
6 with all you're doing to try to get these runs to return,  
7 your contemplation of the subsistence needs. And so, I  
8 -- you're stuck on the -- you're stuck against the wall  
9 there. So, I appreciate both State and Federal  
10 management on the Yukon River. That's just my  
11 perspective as a Council member. So, I know that's hard  
12 on the subsistence users, but we're never going to get  
13 these fish back if we don't have a fish on the on the  
14 spawning grounds, they will never come back then. So,  
15 appreciate that. I did ask for -- basically I wanted to  
16 ask Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Game Northeast  
17 Region, Jordan. Did they get a Central Arctic Caribou  
18 Herd -- I had combined that in the agenda. Did they get  
19 a survey for the Central Arctic Herd? That's basically  
20 what I wanted to know. And a real and a real quick answer  
21 if you're there, Jordan.

22  
23                   MS. PRUSZENSKI: Hello, Mr. Chairman. And  
24 just for the record, this is Jordan Pruszenski area  
25 assistant area biologist for the Northeast. This year  
26 we did not get a photo census for the Central Arctic  
27 Caribou Herd. Yeah, we went up multiple times to just  
28 check to see if that herd really grouped up, and they  
29 just never really got super grouped up. So, yeah. So,  
30 we'll try again next year. Really quick, I can just let  
31 you know that the partition rates, survival rates are  
32 all still indicating that that herd is increasing. And  
33 so, we still feel confident that 35,000 population  
34 estimate that we got in 2022 is still very accurate. So,  
35 yeah, yeah, happy to answer any other questions I also  
36 have. I know you guys are running out of time, but I do  
37 have a little report on how just an update on how the  
38 harvest was going, I've heard a lot of concerns.

39  
40                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, briefly on the  
41 on the harvest. I was -- I saw a lot, a lot of  
42 participation this year. So, go ahead real quick on that  
43 one.

44  
45                   MS. PRUSZENSKI: Yep, yeah. So, just to  
46 give you a breakdown of what the harvest has been so far  
47 just know that this is preliminary. The harvest is still  
48 -- the season is still open for residents until April.  
49 But so far, there have been 794 caribou harvested. And  
50 of that, there were 97 caribou -- 97 cow caribou that

1 were harvested. So, that equates to less than a 2%  
2 harvest overall and a less and a 0.3% harvest of cows.  
3 Now we feel that this caribou herd we'd actually like  
4 to see this caribou herd passed up to a 4% overall, and  
5 we feel that the population wouldn't be impacted by up  
6 to 1% harvest of cows. So, we feel pretty good about  
7 that harvest and feel that that's allowing these  
8 Alaskans, Alaskan residents and others to go and use  
9 this caribou herd, especially during this time where  
10 other herds aren't doing as well. Just to give you a  
11 number breakdown of the number of participants in these  
12 hunts. As of right now, there were 548 non-residents who  
13 participated, and that's up a little from the long-term  
14 average of 403. And then as of right now, sorry, the  
15 non-residents, that number is solid, that season's over.  
16 But as far as residents go, as of now, there have been  
17 246 Alaska residents who have participated. And over the  
18 season, we expect that to keep -- we expect more Alaskan  
19 residents to go up, but it seems to be right on track  
20 to hit the average of about 600 participants and overall  
21 over the sort of long term average for hunter  
22 participation. It's about 1,000 hunters per year, go up  
23 and use the Central Arctic Caribou Herd. And we feel  
24 like that seems to be about where it's on track. My boss  
25 and I did drive up the Road multiple times this winter.  
26 I actually drove up the Road four times this winter, and  
27 I was able actually to see some sheep from the Road. So,  
28 that kind of harkens back to an earlier concern. So,  
29 that is kind of exciting to report. But we did go  
30 specifically to talk to Central Arctic Herd caribou  
31 hunters just to see how it's going, why people were up  
32 there. And we did hear a lot from Alaskan residents who  
33 we went up that said they would have normally hunt the  
34 Nelchina or 40-mile, but because of those populations  
35 not doing well and restrictions on the on-seasons that  
36 they decided to give driving up the Road a try. So, it  
37 did allow for Alaskans to use that harvestable surplus.  
38 Yeah, thank you. And happy to answer any other questions.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I'll just --  
41 well, I'm going to comment the number of hunters that  
42 actually reported are actually finished hunting. That's  
43 the 246 harvest for resident hunters and -- that  
44 participant. But there were actually hundreds and  
45 hundreds, thousands of hunters that drove up during  
46 periods when the caribou came in two main bursts. And  
47 you got telemetry on that, it came in two pushes, they  
48 got beat back both times. So, many hunters that went  
49 there, they're not done hunting. They may intend to come  
50 in the springtime. What I would like you to do is what

1 I would like to see is that all of the cow caribou need  
2 an age composition. What hunters will do will kill the  
3 largest cows that they encounter, whether because they  
4 have the largest antlers. Those are the highest  
5 fecundity cows. So, this herd has climbed to where it's  
6 at right now because of cow harvest restrictions that  
7 were on from 2016 to July 1 of 2024. You should be taking  
8 require -- requesting you know, the front jaw for from  
9 the from these cow caribou. And what's going to happen  
10 this spring is there's going to be a lot of participants  
11 coming for the for the march through late April and they  
12 will kill -- they will almost kill majority of the  
13 harvest is going to be cows because those have antlers  
14 and hunters will kill caribou with antlers. I don't care  
15 what the perception is, they will kill caribou, and they  
16 kill the largest antlered caribou because they do have  
17 hard antlers. And pregnant cows are going to have antlers  
18 all the way to the end of the season and the April 30th.

19  
20 So, I would like to see the Department  
21 of Fish and Game start thinking about -- this is not  
22 just going to be a little bit of cow harvest, and that's  
23 all over now. No, this is going to be the main on --  
24 this is going to be the main event. Is this with dog  
25 teams and skiing out and so forth. And they're going to  
26 kill larger cow caribou. And so, the harvest rates could  
27 easily exceed your 1% harvest rate. And I think you  
28 vastly underestimate how many hunters, the troopers have  
29 -- probably if they had a trooper province -- the  
30 presence there would have documented we had 2,000  
31 hunters and in 2000 and 2001 crossed the Yukon River  
32 bridge when we had a checkpoint. If you had a checkpoint  
33 at Coldfoot and if you -- they ran Coldfoot out of fuel.  
34 There was so many vehicles going up there, they literally  
35 ran them out of fuel multiple times. They couldn't keep  
36 up with the with the number of hunters going up the  
37 Road. So, you need to talk to what happened in Coldfoot  
38 there. You may have hit blanks when there -- but internet  
39 now they will respond as soon as the caribou showed up.  
40 Boom, they show up there again. So, the main cow harvest  
41 is going to occur this spring. That's what's going to  
42 happen. I think you should actually request that the  
43 public submit jaws so that you know what you're actually  
44 -- they're going to take our largest fecundity cows. So,  
45 that's that would be my comment. But I.....

46  
47 MS. PRUSZEKNSI: Absolutely, absolutely.  
48 Oh, and I appreciate that. I really actually, I really  
49 appreciate your comments because Mark Nelson, the area  
50 biologist, and I have actually been drafting a citizen



1 science, trying to get that that exact type of  
2 information. Understand age, ask people how what are the  
3 body conditions looking like? Try to get that  
4 information. So, really appreciate that support for  
5 that. So, I really appreciate that. And then yeah, we'll  
6 definitely be continuing to look. And we closely monitor  
7 the cow harvest and we're prepared to close that with  
8 an EO if that is necessary. But as of right now we feel  
9 like this this the hunt is so far on track as far as  
10 that goes. But definitely appreciate your comments and  
11 we'll definitely be monitoring. So, thank you.

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The Caribou  
14 presence was.....

15  
16 (Simultaneous speech)

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Darell, go ahead.

19  
20 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just wanted to get  
21 some numbers. She was talking about the number of cows  
22 shot. How many bulls were shot during that time? Were  
23 there percentage numbers that we could get from that?

24  
25 MS. PRUSZENSKI: Yeah, yeah. The number  
26 of bulls that were harvested were about 700. Oh, wait,  
27 did I just say that right? Just went up. Oh, nope. I'm  
28 sorry, I just did the wrong math. Let's see. 548 minus  
29 97, there we go 451. There we go, quick math.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, yes, it was --  
32 so, there was significant bull harvest. Most of that  
33 is.....

34  
35 MS. PRUSZENSKI: Yeah and that's.....

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....most of that  
38 is the large bull component, is because they killed the  
39 largest antlered bulls.

40  
41 (Simultaneous speech)

42  
43 MS. PRUSZENSKI: That's right around 2%.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We can't spend a  
46 lot of time on this, I just wanted those preliminary  
47 numbers. We are going to be talking about this, this  
48 issue again in February. So, I'd appreciate further  
49 discussion on this in February. And so, we'll have -- I  
50 do feel that you could easily.....

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

(Simultaneous speech)

.....easily exceed the cow capacity of this population. So, I'm concerned about that aspect. It's the cow harvest is what I'm super concerned about. So, and the incidental harvest mortality factor, there's no calculation of incidental harvest mortality factor on aggregating species that that typically live in open terrain. So, a lot of hunters will walk off or go out with dog teams this spring. There's going to be large numbers of hunters because they didn't get opportunity in the fall hunt. They will use the snow to access this herd further. So, depends on where the herd goes. Yeah so, right now the herd is afraid of the Road. So, that's what's happened because of cow harvest during migration. So, okay. We've covered that. I appreciate that information, Jordan. We need to move on. So, we're moving down to Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, and we have Clayton here -- is here for them. And you're going to give us -- I have your, your update, but go right ahead. And so that is in our -- is that in our packet here also?

MR. MERRILL: It should be in your packet, page 111.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Page 111. Oh yeah, there it is.

MS. PILCHER: In the comb bound book.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, there it is. Go ahead, Clayton.

MR. MERRILL: Thank you, Chair -- Mr. Chair, Council members. In the interest of time, I suggest.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'd like you to introduce yourself for the record.

MR. MERRILL: Yeah, Clayton Merrill, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Subsistence Coordinator for Arctic Kanuti and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges. In the interests of time, I suggest that I don't re summarize everything that's available in the book and instead use this time to introduce myself formally to the Council. Yes, my name is Clayton Merrill. I'm the new Subsistence coordinator for Arctic Kanuti and Yukon

1 Flats National Wildlife Refuges. I hope to work closely  
2 with this Council as well as the EIRAC and North Slope  
3 RAC in the future. This is Vince Mathews' old position,  
4 if you were familiar with him. I'm from rural Maine  
5 originally. I grew up as a hunter, a fisherman and a  
6 trapper. I've -- during my life, I've been a biologist,  
7 a marine, a truck driver. I've done a lot of things. I'm  
8 very honored to be here and to try and help with  
9 coordinating subsistence and working as a direct contact  
10 between these Councils and the refuges that I represent.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I appreciate your  
13 background and bat biologists and a lot of other stuff.  
14 So, this this guy is a real asset to the U.S. Fish and  
15 Wildlife and this, this program in general. And so, I'm  
16 really happy that you're onboard with -- and going to  
17 be interacting with this Council. And Vince was our  
18 Coordinator for this Council, he was also in your  
19 previous -- your predecessor to your position. I read  
20 through, I looked through this and I encourage the  
21 Council to look through the Kanuti's report here. One  
22 of the issues that I've been talking about is that the  
23 pollinating insect, you know, you're doing a lot of great  
24 projects, but the pollinating insect reduction is  
25 graphic as to what I've been seeing, and this is  
26 affecting a lot of other species. It's affecting the  
27 number of insects, it's affecting the bird species,  
28 especially because they didn't have -- and the fish  
29 species, they rely on these arthropods for food, for  
30 protein sources. So, I'm really happy to see that. I  
31 would like to see this continue with Koyukuk-Nowitna. I  
32 would like to see that same kind of -- because I'm  
33 getting really concerned about this insect thing. I have  
34 no idea why it's happening, but thanks for your  
35 introduction and all the good work that Kanuti is doing.  
36 I want to do -- so Arctic Refuge any information you can  
37 convey from them on sheep inventories and so forth for  
38 our next meeting. I would appreciate that.

39  
40 MR. MERRILL: Yes, if -- is Tim Knudson,  
41 did he make it back online? If not, I have a statement  
42 from them.

43  
44 MS. PILCHER: Let's take a look.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim Knudson, are  
47 you there?

48  
49 MR. MERRILL: Alright so, earlier today,  
50 Tim Knudson sent this to me. He's been on the call since

1 yesterday, and he had other conflicting issues just  
2 recently. But he did intend to be here. So, I'm going  
3 to.....

4  
5 MR. KNUDSON: I am here. Sorry, I had a  
6 trouble unmuting, but, Clayton, you go ahead and read  
7 the statement, and I'm here if there are any questions.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead,  
10 Clayton.

11  
12 MR. MERRILL: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair  
13 and Council members for allowing me to speak. Conducting  
14 a sheep survey was identified by Arctic Refuge  
15 management as the highest priority biological survey for  
16 the Arctic Refuge in 2024, following the conclusion of  
17 the 2023 sheep survey. In early August, Arctic Refuge  
18 staff began internal discussions on how to accomplish  
19 the survey in 2024. The first official meeting involving  
20 the Refuge supervisory biologist, mammal biologist and  
21 logistics coordinator took place in early October. A  
22 contracting request for two aircrafts to conduct the  
23 survey was submitted on October 11th. Throughout the  
24 remainder of the year, we communicated with the DOI  
25 Aviation Contracting Office, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
26 Service Regional Aviation Office and the NPS  
27 to emphasize the importance of the survey and the need for  
28 aviation resources. From January to March, a Refuge  
29 biologist worked with the DOI Aviation Contracting  
30 Office to identify vendors for the Sheep survey, but  
31 efforts to secure a vendor were unsuccessful. By the end  
32 of March, we shifted our focus to finding DOI pilots to  
33 conduct the survey. Two pilots volunteered, and the  
34 survey was scheduled for late July in the Western Arctic  
35 Survey Area.

36  
37 However, both pilots withdrew in early  
38 June. In the following month, Arctic biologists  
39 contacted vendors again to see if they could accommodate  
40 the survey, but these efforts did not yield results. In  
41 mid-July, we adjusted our approach from the NPS survey  
42 protocol to a minimum count survey in big Game Units 9  
43 and 10. We reached out to DOI pilots once more, and one  
44 pilot volunteered for a survey scheduled in early  
45 August. Unfortunately, this effort was cancelled due to  
46 poor weather conditions. I share these details to  
47 highlight the ongoing efforts by Arctic Refuge staff to  
48 conduct sheep surveys. We recognize that this remains a  
49 challenge and are committed to finding a solution to  
50 ensure annual sheep surveys are completed. We intend to

1 collaborate with our interagency partners to establish  
2 a successful approach for conducting sheep surveys in  
3 the Brooks Range in 2025 and beyond. I welcome any  
4 questions through the Chair. I also wanted to mention,  
5 Nissa has my -- several of my business cards. She will  
6 distribute those to the Council members. Perfect. So,  
7 feel free to reach out to myself for Tim.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: My comment on that.  
10 We have a sheep closure for Unit 26B west of the  
11 Sagavanirktok and the Unit 24A, it's imperative that we  
12 get this composition data. That was the primary thrust  
13 of this Council was to get that composition data, which  
14 was a ground survey that was done from 1986 to 2012 from  
15 the Road down the Atigun Gorge. And it has -- and I want  
16 -- and I talked to the Refuge Manager about this this  
17 spring. The continuity of that that was done in June  
18 when sheep are on this, on the south facing slopes eating  
19 wildflowers and stuff, you won't run into this pilot  
20 problem. People didn't build it and want to walk it.  
21 Well, somebody can walk it, you can walk it. You walk  
22 that with a spotting scope and the composition survey  
23 was for quarter curl, half curl, 5/8 curl, three quarter  
24 curl, 7/8 and full curl. And the long-term data set  
25 showed that any sheep that got to three quarter curl  
26 started disappearing throughout that entire data set.  
27 So, review the Western Interior Regional Advisory  
28 Council Sheep Management Strategy. Look at that at that,  
29 have that clarified, that -- I embedded that in the  
30 document. And we need to duplicate that that survey.  
31 That's imperative to our understanding of the population  
32 and the structure that we have, the age class structure,  
33 the ram component tells you what the age class structure  
34 is. And the Department of Fish and Game doesn't want to  
35 think about it, because they don't want to know that  
36 there's so many missing cohorts in the population, but  
37 there are many missing cohorts in the population.

38

39 So, this whole air survey thing, this  
40 is what the problem is. We've got an air -- but you got  
41 staff that are physically fit and you can I could walk  
42 that. I'm 67 years old. I'll walk the survey with you,  
43 and I will tell you what you're looking at. But somehow  
44 this has to happen because we our closure only goes to  
45 2026. We need to have this data set. And I've been  
46 beating and beating on Arctic for two years for this  
47 data set. This Council has customary and traditional use  
48 of dall sheep and Unit 26B. And so, this is -- this has  
49 to happen. And so, if it can't happen with aircraft,  
50 rewind the tape, the data set is in June. Once sheep

1 once the once the ground cover starts to open up and it  
2 starts to get hot, the sheep move into high elevation,  
3 and they disperse out. You have a long-term data set and  
4 we have to duplicate that. And the best way to do it was  
5 how it was done for many years, 1986 to 2012 is a long  
6 period data set, as it was done by ground survey, by  
7 walking. I remember when they did it. So, that would be  
8 my comment. And that's as far as I'm going to go with  
9 that. So, thanks so much for Artic's participation. Go  
10 ahead there, Robert.

11  
12 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
13 Clayton, I'm looking at page 112.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Of the Kanuti  
16 Update.

17  
18 MR. MERRILL: Right under the picture of  
19 me.

20  
21 MR. WALKER: I'd like to thank you for  
22 your report, which, you know, I know it's always nice  
23 to hear that we have first-hand reports to the Board,  
24 because it does make a difference to when we have to do  
25 something. And getting down into the moose right here.  
26 You stated that there was 783 to 1,100 moose within the  
27 Kanitu Wildlife Refuge, and my curiosity was with the  
28 abundance of moose like that. How many wolf packs did  
29 you have or know of inside the Kanitu Refuge?

30  
31 MR. MERRILL: That information, I don't  
32 know off the top of my head. Is a Chris Harwood on the  
33 call by any chance? The biologist for Kanuti.

34  
35 MR. WALKER: Well, yeah. Just to be fair,  
36 I -- and 21E where I reside, I always make sure I ask  
37 the people, ADF&G and the Department of Fish and Game,  
38 the biologist, how many wolf packs do we have? Just out  
39 of curiosity and, you know, like they estimate about 120  
40 and 140 wolves in that area with, you know, our high  
41 numbers of moose that do reside there. So, I'll just  
42 kind of curious if you, your department or somebody else  
43 did an aerial survey of this for predators.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'll answer that  
46 question. I've been on this Council -- Kanuti used to  
47 do track inventories, wolf pack track inventories, but  
48 they haven't done those. The Department of Fish and Game  
49 did a wolf control project near the Kanuti Refuge is  
50 about six, five, six, seven years ago, they did an

1 analysis of the effects of the moose population with the  
2 controlled use or the Kanuti area as their control. And  
3 so, the analysis that Glenn Stout showed us was that the  
4 wolf population was suppressed where that was treatment  
5 was applied, but the wolf population responded back to  
6 what it had been previously. So, there was -- there is  
7 no, you know, people thought that there was a increase  
8 in moose population locally, but that's a temporary  
9 thing. My experience, I trap wolves in that country.  
10 Wolf population has cannibalized itself down because the  
11 population of moose has fallen significantly in 2018-  
12 19, 19-20. We only had the last survey that the data  
13 showed that, I think it was 21, survey data was three  
14 yearly bulls per 100 cows, meaning that there's only six  
15 yearlings recruiting into the population. And that's a  
16 bad number. That's a real low number. So, the moose  
17 population is actually in retraction still, and it's  
18 starting to stabilize. But the wolf numbers will  
19 cannibalize themselves. And I lost -- I saw several packs  
20 that were either eliminated by other wolves or are they  
21 reduced -- their productivity goes way down. I saw a  
22 pairs [sic] -- packs that had five yearlings with them  
23 only have one yearling with them, they had real low  
24 recruitments. We have low hare population. Wolf numbers,  
25 your answer to your question is wolf numbers have  
26 actually retracted there because of the population of  
27 moose has gone down and the wolf population has actually  
28 cannibalized itself back down again. It's not that  
29 they're not -- they're basically still at a significant  
30 impact on the moose population, but there are less wolves  
31 than there probably were when they when they were doing  
32 wolf control before the deep snow years. So, that's they  
33 used to do these track surveys, I don't know if Kanuti  
34 has that on the -- in the future are going to be doing  
35 those. But it would be probably behoove [sic] the Refuge  
36 to actually fly a wolf track survey. They would hire up,  
37 they don't have to be -- they would hire an experienced  
38 pilot that was used to tracking wolves. And they would  
39 get them to fly over several years and or several days  
40 and come up with the a number of wolf packs in that  
41 area. So, we need.....

42

43 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

46

47 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair, this is Glenn  
48 Stout, the Galena area biologist. Would you like me to  
49 give a little bit of brief explanation on that?

50

000128

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go right ahead,  
2 Glenn. That's what we're looking for.

3  
4                   MR. STOUT: Alright, thank you. So,  
5 coordinating with the Kanuti Refuge we continue to do  
6 wolf surveys on the Kanuti Refuge proper, as well as the  
7 controlled use area that we had, or the wolf control  
8 area that we had done between 2013 and 2018. The last  
9 survey we did was in 2020, we counted 21 packs with  
10 approximately 96 wolves in that area. And as you  
11 mentioned, we did see a decline in the removal area, but  
12 it took about three years for that wolf population to  
13 respond, to recover to pre-control levels. And so, by  
14 2020, we were back up to the pre-control levels. So, to  
15 answer the question, we had 21 packs with approximately  
16 96 wolves spread out amongst those packs.

17  
18                   MR. WALKER: Yeah, great. I mean, Glenn,  
19 you know, is Robert Walker here, member, I was just ask  
20 Clayton. But I am curious because when you look at a  
21 size of a moose that confined into this area and it's  
22 0.35 moose per square mile, that's a lot of Moose. And  
23 for that area. And I could understand there would be 96  
24 wolves, because when you look at the size of that herd  
25 that reside there, I would, you know, I would have a  
26 concern too, because I don't know what the hunting  
27 pressure would be on there too. And we would have to  
28 take a look at it again next year if it's possible, if  
29 you and Clayton, Glenn could do this and report back  
30 next year.

31  
32                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Glenn.

33  
34                   MR. STOUT: So.....

35  
36                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Glenn,  
37 your response.

38  
39                   MR. STOUT: Yeah, to member Walker there.  
40 We do those surveys when we get funding for them. And  
41 so -- and we coordinate that with the Kanuti Refuge and  
42 when they have funding, and we try and get funding. I  
43 apply for funding every year, but I don't always get it.  
44 I don't know if I'm going to get it for this spring yet.  
45 I'm hoping to and if we do and the Kanuti has funding,  
46 you can bet we'll try and get another wolf survey done.

47  
48                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And also, Glenn,  
49 you're still intending to do a trend count for Kanuti  
50 this coming October-November time frame.



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

MR. STOUT: Yeah. Our plans are -- we do have funding to do a population estimation survey, not a trend count area, but it's a full population trend estimation survey, or GSPE survey for the Kanuti Refuge.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, good to know. Yeah, that's good. So, I think that that's important right now to get a population and also, demographics of what that population is right now. So, all right. I think we've covered this Kanuti report real well. Appreciate your supplementary information. And did Chris Harwood have any additional to that? I see Chris was online here also.

MR. HARWOOD: Mr. Chair, this is Chris Harwood with Kanuti Refuge biologist. I think Glenn and Clayton covered it. Thank you, Glenn, for stepping in. He had the most recent information. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. All right. Thanks so much. Appreciate that information. That's where I like to have this kind of stuff now because we're moving towards our Wildlife proposals later on. And so, I -- I'm happy to hear that there's going to be a popular -- GSPE survey this, this coming fall possibly if we get snow for it. So, that was good. Thank you very much. Thank you, Clayton.

MR. MERRILL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'm glad you're on board. And so, we're a Kanuti complexing. And so, was Harwoof here. Oh, there's Harwoord over there. Oh, yeah. We're going to talk about this community complexing issue, which this Council was concerned about that. Complexing Kanuti with Yukon Flats.

(Pause)

Go ahead, Harlin.

MR. ITCHOAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, my name is Karlin Itchoak.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Karlin.

MR. ITCHOAK: K-a-r-l-i-n I-t-c-h-o-a-k. And also wanted to introduce myself as well, I'm the Assistant Regional Director for Refuges for the U.S.

1 Fish and Wildlife Service based in Anchorage. And happy  
2 to talk about other issues too. I know there's a lot of  
3 lot of other issues I talked about today that that you're  
4 looking for answers and anywhere I can provide answers  
5 there too, I'm happy to.

6  
7 For the complexing, as many of you know,  
8 we've been under budget constraints for a while. 2018  
9 National Wildlife Refuge Service systems here in Alaska  
10 started going through the base budget reset process. And  
11 around that time there was discussions around complexing  
12 different stations, Izembek and APB, another one was  
13 Yukon Flats and Kanuti, as you know, and at the end of  
14 that process, it was decided that they would hold -- we  
15 would hold off on complexing Izembek, APB, and the focus  
16 was on Yukon Flats and Kanuti. And so that process  
17 started in 2018 and then it was to be about a five-year  
18 process initiating in the around 2020. And since I've  
19 been onboard in the last 9 months or so, we've been  
20 looking at that and decided to hit the pause button.  
21 We're still going to be doing complexing, but we've hit  
22 the pause button in terms of whether it's going to be  
23 Kanuti and Yukon Flats only because we wanted to go back  
24 and do more consultation with the tribes, with various  
25 tribes and other folks within the region. So, Sara Boario  
26 our Regional Director, myself and our managers and some  
27 of our liaisons, we've been holding consultation and  
28 learning a lot through that process. But that's where  
29 we're at with the complexing. Unfortunately, because of  
30 the, the current budget situation we're going to have  
31 to -- and the budget challenges that will continue in  
32 2025, recognizing the budget declines are ensuring tough  
33 choices that have to be made. But we are committed to  
34 continuing the conversations through consultation and  
35 more proactively engaging with the tribes around the  
36 complexing, so.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, and then  
39 of course you have reviewed our Western Interior  
40 Councils discussion. See, we went through this process  
41 with the Innoko and we were promised that Innoko would  
42 be funded, they would be complexed with Koyukuk-Nowitna  
43 and they'd be complexed and that it would be funded. But  
44 what we see, and you've heard it, that Innoko is the  
45 stepchild at this point. It doesn't have -- there's no  
46 presence down there, hardly any presence that it's left  
47 to these, to the basically to the wolves. The air taxis  
48 are running rampant down there, doing whatever they feel  
49 like and throwing rotten meat into the dumps and McGrath,  
50 there's all kinds of stuff can happen down there without

1 any real presence. So, I'm concerned that Kanuti will  
2 then become the stepchild, and that Kanuti is going to  
3 be -- it has various -- it's got a proposed Ambler Road  
4 going across nearly on top of the northern border of  
5 that Refuge. There's [sic] all kinds of stuff going on  
6 at Kanuti, and Kanuti has been a from day one, from this  
7 inception of this Council, Kanuti has been in the  
8 forefront of biological information. They have always  
9 been in the forefront of coming up with innovative  
10 things, doing stuff that other refuges kind of picked  
11 up too. So, that's great. So, I am concerned that Kanitu,  
12 is this going to go by the wayside, that it's not going  
13 to have enough funding. It's going to be an especially  
14 on the enforcement problem. So, we have that throughout  
15 the entire region, our region here, we don't have enough  
16 enforcement. And I think that, you know, when I had our  
17 meeting in two 2023 in April of 23 were in Anchorage and  
18 we were -- we had the Refuge Division Chief, I think  
19 that's your position is right now, is basically there's  
20 lots of -- I was asking, well, what about the biologists?  
21 Are you going to take biologists out of the regional  
22 office? You got a whole stack of them in there. You're  
23 going to send them off to do field work? Are you going  
24 to have -- you're going to have LE coming out of  
25 Anchorage? You're going to have all this -- you still  
26 got all this staff in the regional office. Are you going  
27 to actually assist the refuges? If they're going to be  
28 complexed, can you put them on like furloughed or like  
29 detail, I guess you call it detail into those refuges.  
30 That's what was and that was part of the discussion and  
31 that was in April and of 2023 down in Anchorage meeting.  
32 He wouldn't even come to our meeting. I could have hit  
33 his office with a stone from our meeting place at the  
34 diamond. So, I was a little concerned that he didn't  
35 want to step up to the plate and actually face this  
36 Council. So, I'm concerned about this complexing thing.

37  
38 So, I'm going to -- I'm voicing all  
39 these concerns to you because you're in the hot seat  
40 now. So, I understand budgets, but I'm also am concerned  
41 for the resources. And the resources, if they left to  
42 the devices of the commercial entities can actually be  
43 pretty much abused and just flat out say it. That's  
44 what's happening in Innoko. That's why there's  
45 discussion about controlled use or aircraft controlled  
46 use areas and stuff like that. So, I would like you to  
47 work with Director Boario about how you're going to  
48 provide staffing. That's if you're going to complex, you  
49 have to provide staffing to the refuges. They can't be  
50 left. But all I see is a fire hose of money being sprayed

1 at Arctic Refuge regarding, you know, the 10-02 area.  
2 But nobody wants the 10-02 area, nobody even bid on the  
3 10-02 area. So, I'm not really concerned about that  
4 because the oil companies don't even want the 10-02 area.  
5 But I do feel that we have to focus on the problems that  
6 we have. We have dall sheep problems. We got -- we have  
7 to these refuges; they can't be left alone. They have  
8 to have adequate staffing and I want to see as many of  
9 the staff that we have, you know, we have some really  
10 capable staff members at these refuges, and they have a  
11 lot of institutional knowledge about these refuges. I  
12 want to see them that institutional knowledge and  
13 incorporated into the -- if you're going to go  
14 complexing, it has to be in a thought out manner. So,  
15 that would be my comments on that. So, since you're new  
16 to this position and you had to hear it and you're right  
17 here in front of us. I'm real -- that's real, I'm happy  
18 to see that. So, because your predecessor wouldn't even  
19 come up to the plate here. So, we have experience with  
20 complexing in this region. And so, it's not been the  
21 happiest of situation. And I'm sure that Koyukuk-Nowitna  
22 is not super happy about that situation either, because  
23 they don't have enough at least detailed staff to help  
24 them out, assist. They got they got all kinds of stuff  
25 going on here. So, they need help on Innoko, also. That's  
26 a complex -- it's a template of what went wrong in the  
27 complexing of these. So, let's take that, this situation  
28 and Koyukuk-Nowitna, Innoko and apply that to -- let's  
29 not make the same mistake at Koyukuk or at Kanuti and  
30 Yukon Flats. So, any comments from the Council members?

31  
32 (No response)

33  
34 No. I think we covered that. Thanks so  
35 much, Karl.

36  
37 MR. ITCHOAK: Thank you, Chair. If you'd  
38 like, I can give you an update on the transport issue  
39 in Innoko or unless we've discussed that at nauseam.

40  
41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, we'd like  
42 that.

43  
44 MR. ITCHOAK: I do oversee law  
45 enforcement. Chief Shami -- Sham Hart is under our  
46 division. And I appreciate Kevin Whitworth and others  
47 bringing up this issue earlier. And we'd just like folks  
48 to know that the law enforcement is patrolling the area  
49 and has contacted the hunters in the field. The Fish and  
50 Wildlife officers have been working with the troopers

1 on this in the last few weeks. We heard earlier some  
2 comments about the hunters, maybe being the problem, but  
3 I'm told from our officers that there have not been  
4 issues with the hunters salvaging the meat. But the Fish  
5 and Wildlife officers and the troopers are -- they've  
6 received complaints from the hunters about the  
7 transporter not picking them up in their game and from  
8 the field in time. So, they're investigating that, and  
9 it's under investigation, but our Fish and Wildlife  
10 officers are on it. And I know Cody Smith was on earlier  
11 and just appreciate what all of our officers are doing,  
12 not only in this manner, but we have about 13 officers  
13 right now. We're hiring another patrol captain, one just  
14 retired in Kenai. So, we have about 13 when we're fully  
15 staffed about 14 to 15 officers. And you mentioned  
16 earlier, Mr. Chair, that we were understaffed in the law  
17 enforcement and I would say grossly understaffed. And  
18 you also recommended to the Council that you reach out  
19 to Secretary Holland. I appreciate that, I'd recommend  
20 reaching out to Congress as well, since we can't lobby  
21 on ourselves, but on behalf of ourselves. But I would  
22 just say that our 2015 International Association of  
23 Chief of Police report, when we did an assessment of  
24 what it would take to fully patrol 76.8 million acres  
25 of refuges in Alaska, it would take about 77 officers.  
26 And right now, as I mentioned, we have about 13, and  
27 they're just doing an incredible job. They can't be  
28 everywhere. I'm always told that we have a lot of dual  
29 functioning employees. I haven't met one yet. They're  
30 all quadruple functioning or multi-functioning  
31 biologists-pilot, pilot-law enforcement officer. So, I  
32 just want to give a shout out to the incredible job that  
33 they are doing with what limited resources that we do  
34 have.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I do appreciate,  
37 you know, what the -- I saw Fish and Wildlife enforcement  
38 on the Road the first year of the sheep closure in 2022.  
39 And so, I talked to enforcement there. So, I do feel  
40 strongly that if the permitted air -- the transporter,  
41 is basically the hunters are complaining about not being  
42 picked up, they're not fulfilling their concession  
43 permitting. And they're causing great consternation for  
44 possibly other reputable transporters. I feel that their  
45 permit should be revoked immediately. I feel their  
46 permit should be -- to comply they should be required,  
47 there should be stipulations that they're required to  
48 respond to their clients. They should have an airplane  
49 on both sides of the Kuskokwim mountains so that they  
50 can transport the meat to other locations. Not trying

1 to get it all back to McGrath. Send it, fly it down to  
2 Aniak. You're on that side, you can fly right on the  
3 river all the way down to Aniak, right down the valley  
4 there. So, there needs to be some stipulations put into  
5 that permit. I would revoke their permit at this point.  
6 I would revoke it because they have complaints and they  
7 have the whole community of McGrath is complaining  
8 bitterly about the 100 clients that they took with the  
9 significant amounts of wanton waste. And I do feel  
10 strongly that the -- that (indiscernible) staff work  
11 with the troopers and go back to the State statute of  
12 what the statute says about meat salvage requirement  
13 that's under statutory requirements to be in a preserved  
14 state for two weeks, not just back to the bulk, back to  
15 the to the communities up from the field, here it is,  
16 we're throwing it right in the dump. That's not what the  
17 statute says. So, I think that there's some significant  
18 -- if they started writing tickets for rotten meat coming  
19 out from the field, and that should be -- there should  
20 be tickets. You would get a citation if you didn't have  
21 all the meat, they should get a citation for the  
22 condition of the meat also. If the hunters don't know  
23 enough to book a -- the transporter should -- and there  
24 needs to be education, anybody that's flying out into  
25 those refuges on State and Federal lands needs to know  
26 that this is a huge animal and this has to be removed  
27 from the field in a timely manner. So, there's a -- I  
28 would -- I'm really concerned about this air taxi thing.  
29 The controlled use area that could happen, that couldn't  
30 happen depends on the Board of Game process. But there  
31 is -- there are avenues in regards to this revocation  
32 of the permit. They've already performed in a poor manner  
33 this year to where they need a revocation. So, that --  
34 get their head out of their out of the sand, sort of  
35 speak. So, any further comments on that, on the  
36 transporter issue on Innoko? No. So, I think we're --  
37 Nissa.

38  
39 MS. PILCHER: This isn't about that. I  
40 just wanted to let you know Tim texted and the weather  
41 has come up pretty bad where he is, and he's no longer  
42 able to stay connected for any length of time. So, he  
43 had to sign off. But he will review all of the  
44 transcripts when they get posted.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, okay. Yeah,  
47 well, that's -- we're past the action items though, so.  
48 All right. So, thanks so much, Karlin, I appreciate that.  
49 I'm super happy with you in this position. I'm just all  
50

000135

1 giddy about this stuff, getting good staff on U.S. Fish  
2 and Wildlife.

3

4 MR. ITCHOAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
5 Appreciate it. Thank you, Council.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. So, we  
8 went through that. So, our Refuge, sheep, gavel to gavel  
9 -- Gravel-to-Gravel Initiative. So, that's Koyukuk-  
10 Nowitna, Koyukuk-Nowitna. Oh, here we are right here I  
11 was skipping something. Koyukuk-Nowitna, Jeremy. And how  
12 long have you been here, Jeremy? Kind of a long time,  
13 isn't it?

14

15 MR. HAVENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
16 Council members. Yeah, I've been up here 13 years now,  
17 I think. So, I'm learning every day and there's always  
18 a new challenge, but it's really good. And I enjoy the  
19 job and, you know, working with the Council here. But  
20 real quick before I begin, I did have a handout I want  
21 to give you guys as part of my presentation. I'll jump  
22 into it here in a little bit, but I'll hand that out  
23 before we get started.

24

25 (Pause)

26

27 Okay, for the record, my name is Jeremy  
28 Havener. I'm the Refuge Subsistence Coordinator for  
29 Koyukuk, Nowitna and Innoko National Wildlife Refuges.  
30 First thing I want to start off with, just because we've  
31 got quite a bit going on here in Galena with our office.  
32 We've got some new faces with our staff. And first update  
33 is David Zabriskie, our former manager, he moved on and  
34 he's now in Tanzania, I believe. And so, he left this  
35 summer. Replacing him is, he's acting, but we have a new  
36 deputy refuge manager and that's Doug Calvin, and he's  
37 right over there. He comes here from Oregon, he was  
38 working for the Warm Springs Tribe, and I don't know if  
39 you want to introduce yourself.

40

41 MR. CALVIN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman  
42 and Council. My name is Doug Calvin, I am the acting, I  
43 guess, Refuge Manager, unofficially, and the Deputy  
44 Refuge Manager. Had a couple of months to cross with  
45 David Zabriskie before he followed his wife on attaché  
46 job in Tanzania. So, I'm not new to the profession, but  
47 I am definitely new to working in Alaska. I visit Alaska  
48 on numerous occasions, but I'm honored to be here and  
49 to work with you. I've been working on Confederated  
50 Tribes of Warm Springs for over 32 years as a program

1 manager for their Fish-Wildlife Parks and built their  
2 conservation enforcement program. Prior to that, with  
3 the state of Oregon, California, Arizona, and the  
4 Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service in  
5 Australia. So, I'm not new and like Clayton and I found  
6 out we had a lot in common last night. So, I'm honored  
7 to be here and, like I said, wanted to engage a little  
8 bit with the Council. And so, like I said, I've been  
9 here, I think three months, less than Karlin, and Karlin  
10 got me beat by about three months, so. But he's from  
11 Alaska, so he's even got that ahead of me so, excellent.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I've talked to you  
14 on the sidebar here. I'm real happy about your experience  
15 level, especially working with tribes and understanding  
16 tribal issues and so forth. So, I'm just a real dovetail  
17 for this refuge complex that you have here. So, I'm  
18 really happy with your -- you're coming here, you're  
19 going to easily come up to speed. Sometimes it's like  
20 it's like glacial trying to retrain a refuge manager  
21 that just gets -- unless they got Alaska experience,  
22 they just fall by the wayside. It's just overwhelming  
23 to them. It'll be easy for you here. It's got a lot of  
24 similarities. So, thank you for -- nice introduction  
25 there, Doug. So.....

26

27 MR. HAVENER: Yeah, thank you, Doug. And  
28 then next we had a new staff hire. Actually, it was just  
29 kind of a change, and that's Marie Cleaver, and she's  
30 right over there, and I don't know if she can stand up  
31 real quick so everybody can say hi, but, yeah, she was  
32 a budget tech for us for a number of years. She moved  
33 to Galena from Ruby as a local hire or through the local  
34 hire program and wanted to try something new. And, you  
35 know, knowing her knowledge and experience in this area,  
36 I thought she'd make a perfect fit for a refuge  
37 information technician. So, she applied for and was  
38 hired as our new RIT for this region. And, you know, I  
39 just want to make sure everybody's aware of her position.  
40 And, you know, one of the things we're always trying to  
41 work on is tribal relations. And she's a great contact  
42 as a liaison for our office and so, welcome, Marie.

43

44 MS. CLEAVER: Thank you.

45

46 MR. HAVENER: Before I jump into some of  
47 the biological stuff and subsistence programs, I want  
48 to talk a little bit about it. I always kind of look  
49 over it sometimes, but we do have two park rangers for  
50 our refuges, one in McGrath and one here in Galena, and



1 some of the things they've been working on. And, you  
2 know, with those positions, we get a lot of environmental  
3 education, you know, going into the schools here in  
4 Galena and in McGrath. And, you know, myself, I'm a  
5 hunter safety instructor for the state of Alaska. And  
6 we've been to the villages and done some Hunter Ed  
7 programs. But also, some of the things they've been  
8 working on; we've -- every year we have two science  
9 culture camps. And those took place this summer, one in  
10 McGrath, one in Galena. Kelly down in McGrath also was  
11 working on Refuge brochures, and I know these have been  
12 out for a little while. It's probably been about a year,  
13 but I don't know if these have been introduced to the  
14 Council. And so, I brought a whole bunch here today and  
15 I can hand those out if people are interested. But both  
16 of our park rangers worked on these and we've got one  
17 for all four refuges. We were kind of the guinea pigs  
18 in this, in that we were going through a new format, and  
19 so we had to work with a national team and provide a  
20 whole bunch of information. So, all staff was working  
21 on that, but it created a really good product. It kind  
22 of just has a lot of information about each refuge, you  
23 know, the history on the Refuge, things you can do there.  
24 And then the thing I think that's really neat is they  
25 kind of dedicated a whole page as a map. So, you can  
26 actually see some detail on here. And it's, I don't  
27 know, it just turned out really good, I just want to  
28 acknowledge our park rangers for the work that they've  
29 done to get these created. And so, they -- like I said,  
30 it's probably been about a year that we've had these now  
31 maybe a little bit less, but I just want to make sure  
32 the Council was aware of those. And you know, hopefully  
33 we can get those out to people.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Pass those around  
36 for me.

37  
38 MR. HAVENER: Yeah, no, absolutely.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, continue.

41  
42 MR. HAVENER: One -- so, what I just  
43 handed out, the pamphlet and that is on the Wild and  
44 Scenic River Corridor Management Plan or Comprehensive  
45 Management Plan, excuse me. And I'm not sure if our  
46 former manager talked to the Council at all about this  
47 process, but we are -- we've been working on this now  
48 for probably a year or year and a half, and I just want  
49 to make sure everybody's aware of it. Right now, we're  
50 going through the consultation process, but what we are

1 doing is, we are creating a Wild and Scenic River  
2 Comprehensive Management Plan for the Nowitna River.  
3 It's a wild river that was created by the Wild and Scenic  
4 Rivers Act of 1968, but of course wasn't created until  
5 1980 when the Refuge was established. But with this  
6 process, we just want to make sure the Council is aware  
7 we don't have an actual date of when this draft plan  
8 will be released. Right now, our best guess is mid-  
9 October. But in this handout I gave you, there's  
10 information about what we're doing, why we're doing it,  
11 and then there's a website where you can go to find that  
12 information. Once this is available for comment, we can  
13 make sure that Council members and this Council has  
14 access to be able to get on to the website to read over  
15 the draft and also make comments that they feel  
16 necessary. One other thing that we've just completed is  
17 a is an 810 analysis, and that's also going to be in the  
18 draft. And you know, with this we discovered there's not  
19 going to be any impact to subsistence. But anyway, I  
20 just wanted to brief the Council on that. I'm sure  
21 there's a lot of details with this, but, you know, for  
22 time's sake I'm going to keep moving on and then I can  
23 open up for questions at the end.

24  
25 So, biological program. We had a busy  
26 summer. It seemed like most of our inventory monitoring  
27 projects took place. Right now, I think today, actually,  
28 our pilots came out and they were flying beaver cache  
29 surveys on the Nowitna. And so, we'll have that  
30 information sometime this winter all compiled. And I'll  
31 plan on this February meeting that you guys are having,  
32 we'll get a full biological report and have that to you  
33 guys so you can see, you know, the I&M projects that we  
34 have going on in particular moose surveys. And with that  
35 being said, the moose surveys, those will be taking place  
36 in November. One of the big things we're going to be  
37 looking at this year and we've talked about it for a  
38 couple of years now, but I think things are falling in  
39 place is on the Nowitna Refuge, we've noticed the adult  
40 numbers slightly declining in that population, and I  
41 know we've made some cuts on the number of draw permits  
42 in that area recently, but we are going to be flying the  
43 full GSPE population survey. And so, that's going to  
44 take a lot of extra flying hours, but we'll get that  
45 done this November, you know, if conditions are right.  
46 And you know, something doesn't prevent us from doing  
47 that. But I just wanted the Council to be aware of that.  
48 I know Council Member Honea has been really interested  
49 in that. We've done quite a few village visits and talked  
50 to talk to the tribes on that, and it seems like

000139

1 everybody's expressed concerns on that population. With  
2 that being said, the fisheries update.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can I stop you  
5 there? Are you going to do a GSPE with ADF&G on the  
6 Koyukuk also or?

7

8 MR. HAVENER: I don't think we are. And  
9 I know Glenn's on here so he might know more information  
10 about that.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: If you're going to  
13 do the -- oh, you're just going to do it.....

14

15 MR. HAVENER: 21B.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: .....the novi  
18 [sic] -- I, okay. Did you get a survey, GSPE survey last  
19 year for Koyukuk? I haven't heard of one yet.

20

21 MR. HAVENER: I have not.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Are you there,  
24 Glenn?

25

26 MR. STOUT: Yeah. Mr. Chair, this Glen  
27 Stout. We tried to do the GSPE, but we got weathered out  
28 of it so, we weren't able to complete it. I've got  
29 funding to do one of the three sub areas again, and  
30 that's my plan is to try and get it done. We've put a  
31 priority for our funding on the Kanuti first, and then  
32 one of those three sub areas over in 21D, 24D is our  
33 second priority.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, that's what  
36 I need to know. Thanks so much. Appreciate that. So,  
37 continued, Jeremy.

38

39 MR. HAVENER: Yeah. And so, our Fisheries  
40 Biologist, Wyatt put together a quick little report on  
41 some of the things he's been working on. And one of them  
42 I wanted to talk about real quick just because I know,  
43 Jack you wanted to you asked some questions about the  
44 water temp information. And so, yeah, our fish biologist  
45 has been going around and trying to implement putting  
46 out water temp monitors. And I did speak with him briefly  
47 and it sounds like those temperature monitors are --  
48 that's all they're doing. They don't have the ability  
49 to do pH or any other things. So, it's working with our  
50 Water Resources branch at a Fish and Wildlife Service,

1 that's where the temp loggers are coming from. And we  
2 are putting them out and, you know, on here it talks  
3 about some of the places we've put them, and that  
4 includes the Dakli Wheeler Creek, Billy Hawk Creek,  
5 gisas [sic] or yeah, Gisasa River, Willow Lake over by  
6 Huslia. And we do have intentions in the future to try  
7 to get some things out in the upper Nowitna, maybe it's  
8 Silatna River. And just wanted to kind of clarify some  
9 of that stuff.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I have some  
12 comments about that. You know, the water temperature,  
13 that's a really important issue. I would like to see  
14 some baseline, you know, trophic, you know, basically  
15 how much algae, how much insects is in each portion of  
16 that -- known spawning areas for whitefish and salmon.  
17 So, that would be in conjunction with this project, is  
18 what is actually going on in the substrates? You know,  
19 because we have, you know, chums, they vacate the  
20 drainage, but coho Salmon and chinook stay in the system.  
21 So, that's an important aspect. It's also the aspect of  
22 what's going to affect those whitefish populations. It's  
23 where those whitefish are going to spawn, when they  
24 emerge, they're going to have to have food. And so that's  
25 a kind of an important part of that, okay.

26  
27 MR. HAVENER: So, we appreciate those  
28 comments. And so, now for the subsistence portion, a  
29 couple updates. So, I just got back from the Nowitna  
30 Check Station on Monday evening. And I guess during my  
31 staff updates, I forgot to introduce one of our  
32 volunteers, and he's over here. He helped me out a ton  
33 this year at the Nowitna Check Station. I think he spent  
34 what three weeks out there, Bob? And that's Bob  
35 Rybarczyk, he was the former Refuge Manager here, and  
36 he came back to help out with the Nowitna Check station.  
37 But we've got most of the stuff put away, and we're just  
38 trying to turn things back over to Fish and Game. But,  
39 we this year we had 117 hunters with 39 moose harvested.  
40 So, the harvest came back up from a couple of years ago  
41 and.....

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 117. Oh, excuse me,  
44 117 hunters. And how many?

45  
46 MR. HAVENER: 39 bulls were harvested.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.

49  
50

1 MR. HAVENER: And it seemed like, you  
2 know, most people were seeing things. We did have one  
3 black bear harvested this year. And most people were  
4 seeing moose, so it seemed like things were pretty good  
5 for everybody. You know, we checked the meat on everybody  
6 coming out, and it seemed like everything looked good  
7 and all the meat was there. But yeah, no, it was a good  
8 year overall, and it seemed like most people are happy.  
9 Following the State season there, we have a Federal Moose  
10 Hunt, it's FM21-01. And for that hunt, we had nine  
11 permits issued this year and four moose have been  
12 harvested. That's preliminary, I'm still kind of going  
13 through and tracking some of that stuff down, but I  
14 think that'll probably be the final number if I had to  
15 guess. So, it seemed like most people were happy and  
16 we're successful that we're coming up the Nowitna  
17 hunting. The Innoko Federal Hunt, I just wanted to touch  
18 base on that real quick. There's a hunt down there from  
19 February 15th through March 15th. But I think it's been  
20 3 or 4 years now, I'm not exactly sure on the exact  
21 date, but the State created a registration hunt that  
22 takes place exactly at the same time as the Federal  
23 hunt. And so, what that's done is caused most of the  
24 subsistence users in that area to get the State  
25 registration permit, because then they can hunt on  
26 corporation land and lands closer, you know, to their  
27 village, so they don't have to travel so far. And just  
28 wanted to touch base on that. I don't think we've issued  
29 a Federal permit for that and at least 2 or 3 years, and  
30 that's been the case this last February and March as  
31 well. Also, there is a Federal fall hunt there and I  
32 don't have exact numbers, I do stay in touch with Josh  
33 Pierce, the area biologist down there. And what has been  
34 done there is a combined State-Federal permit that  
35 people get for that for that early portion. And I think  
36 the numbers have been pretty minimal, but that hunt is  
37 still available. And if the Council was interested, I  
38 could try to dig up some of that information and, and  
39 find the exact harvest data for that early hunt in 21E,  
40 is the Game Management unit.

41  
42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Maybe at our spring  
43 meeting. Oh. go ahead.

44  
45 MR. KRISKA: Oh, I was just going to --  
46 are you saying that fall hunt is that from September  
47 25th to the 30th of September?

48  
49 MR. VAVENER: Member Kriska. Yeah, that's  
50 that is September. No, excuse me. It is August 25th

1 through September 30th and that is, it's in Game  
2 Management at 21E so, it's down around GASH the villages.  
3 And there's a few days on either end of the State hunt  
4 where there's a, there's a Federal opportunity available  
5 and that has a combined State-Federal permit that people  
6 get a registration permit, I can't think of the number  
7 off the top of my head, 836 maybe, but that's the permit  
8 I'm talking about.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. That -- yeah,  
11 that answers your question?

12  
13 MR. KRISKA: I was just wondering because  
14 a lot of people are getting mixed up with that. There's  
15 -- they don't -- I guess it's down, this down the lower  
16 part. But some people said there's hunting season is  
17 still open. I said, no, I don't think so. So, they're  
18 thinking it's up this way on the Federal lands, but it's  
19 not.

20  
21 MR. KRISKA: No, member Kriska. Thank you  
22 for that information. That's good to know. And those are  
23 things that, you know, we're always looking to hear and  
24 try to clear up some of that confusion because one of  
25 the things you know, we can do at the Refuge, you know,  
26 especially working with an RIT in our visitor services  
27 staff, is try to send out some outreach. I know member  
28 Walker reached out to me this this fall or well, summer  
29 and was kind of asking some questions about law  
30 enforcement and that specific permit and we put together  
31 some flyers and sent out. But you know, definitely want  
32 to try to spread the word so we keep people aware of  
33 where those hunts are open.

34  
35 Last thing I want to touch on is the  
36 delegation of authority decision. We're going to be  
37 starting to look into that here. It'll be after moose  
38 season or moose surveys are completed. And once the  
39 reports kind of put together, but definitely will be  
40 reaching out to everybody and want to hear if there's a  
41 need for moose. And those areas we're making a decision  
42 on are on Federal lands and Game Management Unit 21B,  
43 21D outside the controlled use area, 21D inside the  
44 controlled use area and in 24D. And so, we will -- once  
45 that report and that report usually gets done around  
46 December, we'll start making phone calls, you know,  
47 doing tribal consultation, talking to the Regional  
48 Advisory Council members and then the state of Alaska  
49 and the Advisory Committee Chair to see if there's a  
50 need for that hunt. And those hunts take place mostly

000143

1 the one that we've kind of looked at is up around Huslia,  
2 and that one is in it's been April 10th through the  
3 15th. But I just want to give you guys a heads up, you  
4 know, and, you know, if anybody wants to maybe talk  
5 about how the moose season went, you know, we're looking  
6 for that information. So, just want to make sure you  
7 guys are aware of that. But that's my presentation. And  
8 I'll leave it open for questions. Thank you.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Robert, go  
11 ahead.

12  
13 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
14 Jeremy, do you -- do they still use that refugee cabin  
15 there on the Refuge?

16  
17 MR. HAVENER: Member Walker, I'm assuming  
18 you're talking about the field camp. That's -- it's, I  
19 think, 350 miles up from the mouth of the Innoko River.  
20 And yeah, that field camp is still there. In 2014, when  
21 we took management of the Innoko Refuge, we did go down  
22 there and did a couple trips of kind of cleaning things  
23 up, and I know there were some boats and stuff, and we  
24 did some auctions, and I think people in the GASH  
25 villages had a chance to purchase some of those. But  
26 yeah, it's still there and it's kind of a base for field  
27 operations. And we do use it at least once a year for  
28 banding waterfowl at this at this point.

29  
30 MR. WALKER: Yes, I remember back in the  
31 day that it was used 24/7, and you had a pilot that did  
32 fly out there pretty much daily. And to condense, you  
33 know, to conduct surveys and all this research that went  
34 on there, I was, you know, like when I read up on most  
35 of it, you know, I was really surprised on how much data  
36 that they produce from that area for the whole  
37 surrounding area, and it was pretty interesting. And  
38 where did all that data go, did it all stored in  
39 Anchorage?

40  
41 MR. HAVENER: Member Walker, yeah. We  
42 still have -- when we did the transfer, a lot of that  
43 stuff came up to Galena, and we're still sorting through  
44 a lot of that stuff. I mean, it's there. But my specific  
45 knowledge of it is I don't know exactly where it's at.  
46 I know, it is in our office.

47  
48 MR. WALKER: Yes. Because I did ask about  
49 a study that was done by one of the biologists, the  
50 lady, I can't remember her name. I read the report, and

1 I had a copy. And when I left the Federal RAC here the  
2 first time I was burnt out, I took everything and burnt  
3 it up. And I'm kind of kicking myself, you know, that I  
4 never should have did [sic] with some of it because some  
5 of it was very useful for what we're going to do now.  
6 And if that could be found where a lady made a report  
7 to the RAC about how some moose walked all the way from  
8 there, all the way back behind Anvik called Benselena  
9 Dome, had her calf and walked all the way back. And if  
10 we could find that information, that would be very  
11 helpful for us, because we can say that, you know, this  
12 is a very -- this place here is a very important place  
13 for moose to originate and where they do come from and  
14 how they did. And I did track there right by the cabin  
15 back in the day, too. And we used to go up there and we  
16 used to get invited to eat, you know, it was kind of  
17 kind of strange here at Beaver Camp and going up there  
18 and getting invited. So, it was it was kind of nice,  
19 though.

20  
21 MR. HAVENER: Now, we appreciate those  
22 stories, and I'll definitely stay in touch with you on  
23 that report you're looking for. I'll see if I can do  
24 some digging this winter and come up with something.

25  
26 MR. WALKER: Okay. Thank you, I  
27 appreciate that.

28  
29 MR. CALVIN: Mr. Chairman and Council. I  
30 think a lot of those are in. We have a lot of files  
31 upstairs in our building here and we -- a lot like I  
32 said, we're pretty limited in regards to our staff time.  
33 And I know Boomer one of our staff biologists. Is it you  
34 know trying to get some of that stuff organized and, you  
35 know, even digitized as well as sorting through those.  
36 And that's kind of one of the priorities, I think our  
37 retired manager, Bob here probably has a better  
38 reflection on some of that, but I think there's most of  
39 those files are in our office here in Galena, so.

40  
41 MR. REBARCHIK: Yeah, yes.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Step up to the mic  
44 there, Bob.

45  
46 MR. REBARCHIK: My name is Bob Rebarchik.  
47 I was previously a Refuge Manager up until 2022, I  
48 retired in 2020 2nd June. Those files are in the office  
49 upstairs, primarily. I believe the person you're  
50 referring to is probably Beverly Skinner, who was one



1 of the biologists. Her husband was also the biologist.  
2 They're on the Innoka Refuge for about 15 years, and I'm  
3 guessing that's who may have done that report. I have  
4 not seen it, but I would bet it's in those files.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Robert.

7  
8 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
9 know, it just couldn't be found, but I just.....

10  
11 (Simultaneous speech)

12  
13 MR. REBARCHIK: This is first we've heard  
14 of it, so now we can look.

15  
16 MR. WALKER: Well, I'm, you know, I'm not  
17 going to run down there and tear into your materials and  
18 look for it, but I don't know if you've recorded or put  
19 it on diskette, but it would be very helpful because  
20 we're working on a proposal to have this place here put  
21 under, you know; God, my mind is running 90 miles an  
22 hour; control use area. And that's what we're -- the  
23 more information we have, it's going to be better for  
24 us, because I know it's going to be a fight with the  
25 State, and I don't really want to fight. I'd just like  
26 to sail it to smooth through where it would be in  
27 everybody's benefit, not only ours, but it would make  
28 it so easier for people to look at this and say, well,  
29 you know, okay, we had our chance there and we kind of  
30 blew it, but we don't want to have to us blow it because  
31 and, you know, the more information we can have, it  
32 would be better for us to -- I really appreciate that.  
33 Thank you, Jeremy, and you with your crew and your new  
34 member here.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, thanks so much.  
37 Appreciate that. One more comment there, Doug. Go ahead.

38  
39 MR. CALVIN: Yes, one more comment. I --  
40 since I've only been here six months, I've heard a lot  
41 of good stories about the Innoko Field camp, both from  
42 staff. I've been trying to get down there myself dealing  
43 with some of the administrative stuff, trying to get  
44 Karlin and myself down there. I have some, I guess some  
45 brainstorming ideas how to bring that back to being a  
46 very productive research facility as well. Maybe not in  
47 the glory days where we have all the funding, but I  
48 think a good example that I used at the Chiefs and the  
49 Managers meeting was a friend of mine was a manager at  
50 the middle of the Frank Church Wilderness in Idaho. So,

1 it's the largest wilderness in the Lower 48. And they  
2 were managers with the University of Idaho that worked  
3 with the Forest Service land, actually Wilderness, where  
4 it was like 30 or 40 miles in, you had a little -- all  
5 you had was a bush plane thing, but it developed a lot  
6 of good information and research information similar to  
7 what you're talking about over time. And it's kind of  
8 like one of the premiere, that's what I keep hearing  
9 about this complex since I got here between Innoko and  
10 stuff, and how to maybe make that a more productive  
11 facility, as well as a Refuge establishment and work  
12 with the tribes and the villages as well as like some  
13 of the university. And we have the University of Alaska  
14 and Fairbanks. So, I'm going to be promoting that the  
15 best I can, and that might help provide us with  
16 additional information, but also additional funding to  
17 be able to operate that facility.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I appreciate  
20 that.

21  
22 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
23 know, they sent Jimmy Bentham, who was the pilot for the  
24 Refuge, and they sent him down by snowmachine. They said,  
25 come on up, you're invited for dinner. And we looked at  
26 each other, my partner said, yeah, good idea. We'll go  
27 up and we'll have something different to eat from what  
28 we've been eating. So, we kind of like washed up, got  
29 ready, went up, and when we got up there, they had beaver  
30 meat. You know, we kind of like looked at each other  
31 when we were eating beaver meat for two weeks already,  
32 you know, and we thought we were going to have something  
33 different, you know? But we were courteous, and we said  
34 yes, oh man, this is really great, you know, like we  
35 never had it before. So, that was the story that we  
36 (indiscernible).

37  
38 MR. CALVIN: Wonder if that was Ed, our  
39 current pilot that's assigned to the refuge comes back  
40 forth. That's due in the beaver lodge surveys as we  
41 speak with his wife, who's -- but he started his career  
42 there as a tech, so it might Ed.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, we need to  
45 move on in this agenda. Thanks so much. Appreciate it.

46  
47 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair.

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. Who said that?

50

1 MR. STOUT: Mr. Chair. This is Glen Stout  
2 with Fish and Game. While you were talking on moose, I  
3 thought I'd give you just real quick numbers from the  
4 Koyukuk River Check Station.

5  
6 CHAIRPERON REAKOFF: Okay.

7  
8 MR. STOUT: We checked 243 hunters, and  
9 our preliminary harvest was 98 moose. We've had 51  
10 antlers turned in, they're in Galena. So, all the reports  
11 I've been getting really area-wide is people did real  
12 good on moose up and down the river.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate  
15 those numbers, Glenn. That's -- those are important  
16 numbers for us. So, all right, that's -- is that  
17 percentage of harvest per hunter gone up or down? 98  
18 moose for 243, is that around average-ish?

19  
20 MR. STOUT: So, those are very typical  
21 numbers pre-COVID. You know, we really had kind of a  
22 rain shadow effect after 2020 and all our numbers went  
23 down, and then we had a couple high water years and  
24 success rates were down. So, for about three years we  
25 had pretty low numbers. These numbers are much more back  
26 to normal.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, all right.  
29 That was the question. So, all right. Appreciate that.  
30 So, we need we got a lot of stuff in front of us here.  
31 So, we got Aaron Moses was the next step for YKD.

32  
33 MS. PILCHER: I think it was actually  
34 Gravel-to-Gravel. And then the YKD update.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, gravel-to-  
37 gravel. So, this -- we've had this discussion several  
38 times on Gravel-to-Gravel. And so, but I would like if  
39 there's a presentation, I would like a real brief one  
40 because we've getting delayed in our progress here. So,  
41 who's giving this update, the gravel-to-gravel update.

42  
43 MS. PILCHER: That's Becky. Are you on?

44  
45 MS. SHAFTEL: Hi, Mr. Chair. My name is.  
46 Sorry.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Becky.

49  
50

1 MS. SHAFTEL: Yes, Becky Shaftell. I can  
2 keep this very brief. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and the  
3 Council members for the opportunity just to give a very  
4 short update. It's great to hear that you've already  
5 heard about this initiative, which is really trying to  
6 bring our Federal partners in the Department of Interior  
7 to be working more closely with tribes and tribal  
8 consortia on the Western Alaska salmon Crisis. And I'll  
9 just give you a couple updates. We have an in-person  
10 meeting taking place this week in Anchorage. If there  
11 are any members or listeners that are really interested  
12 in the projects that have been funded thus far, there's  
13 been a lot of focus on stream restoration work, invasive  
14 species work, and tribally led assessment projects  
15 across the Yukon and Kuskokwim watersheds, and also the  
16 Norton Sound regions. That'll be next week. I can put  
17 my email in the chat. I am the coordinator on the project  
18 at BLM, but there's also a coordinator named Boyd  
19 Blihovde at Fish and Wildlife Service, and both of us  
20 have been working together to try to bring partners  
21 together and schedule some of these engagement  
22 activities. Just to mention one other important thing,  
23 we're working to finalize a memorandum of understanding.  
24 It was mentioned earlier on the call by one of our other  
25 signatory partners, the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal  
26 Fish Commission, and we really hope that will be signed  
27 prior to AFN on October 16th. A really important document  
28 moving forward that we hope will shape this partnership  
29 and better actions to help with salmon. So, that's it.  
30 But if there are any questions, please reach out. I'll  
31 just put my email in Boyd's email in the chat and  
32 hopefully others can find us if they're interested in  
33 hearing more. Thank you very much.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Kevin Whitworth  
36 was on our Council and gave us a real good overview of  
37 the gravel-to-gravel issue last year. And so, we've  
38 heard quite a bit about that and I think is good to hear  
39 the update and where your progress is at this time. So,  
40 thank you Becky. So, we got Aaron Moses from YK Delta.  
41 Are you there, Aaron?

42  
43 MR. MOSES: Yes, Mr. Chair, I'm here. Can  
44 you hear me?

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I can hear  
47 you fine. So, a brief overview of YK Delta. Go right  
48 ahead.

49  
50

1 MR. MOSES: All right, just for the  
2 record, my name is Aaron Moses. I'm the Subsistence  
3 Coordinator for Yukon Delta. Kevin gave a really good  
4 intro to the fish from the summer. I'll just give you  
5 guys a little bit more data. For the summer, we fished  
6 a total of 498 hours and resulted in a minimum harvest  
7 of 53,194 salmon. And this is compared to last year,  
8 where we fished 270 hours with an estimated harvest of  
9 69,800. So, we had more fishing hours but this summer  
10 seemed like there was a little bit less fish. The sockeye  
11 did come in fairly normal, but on the lower end. In the  
12 past -- last year we had 800,000, but this year we  
13 estimated about 600,000 sockeye. So, that could have  
14 been a little bit due to that. The composition for  
15 harvest of those 53,000 was 41% chinook salmon, 27%  
16 sockeye, 25% chum and 5% coho. That's just a little more  
17 info for salmon. Going on to waterfowl, we -- this year  
18 or next year, the emperor geese hunting will be closed.  
19 They are lower than the threshold of 23,000. The last  
20 estimate came in at 18,000. So, starting next year, all  
21 hunting of emperor geese will be closed. Another thing,  
22 the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza was a concern  
23 coming into 2024. Yukon Delta was unable to sample birds  
24 due to logistical issues, but we did find and report 22  
25 dead birds from field camps. We have found that emperor  
26 geese have really high immunities to avian influenza.  
27 Up to 98% and 65% to the current strain from 2022 and  
28 2023. The proportion of the population of cackling geese  
29 that have immunity to Avian Influenza went from 35% in  
30 2022 to 50% in 2023, meaning that they are getting the  
31 Avian Influenza, but they are surviving. Adults seem to  
32 survive well, but the past two winters there have been  
33 die offs of juveniles because they do not have these  
34 immunities.

35  
36 Going on to moose, our season for -- on  
37 the Kuskokwim in Zone 2 is still open. We have a fairly  
38 lengthy season all the way to October 15th. And for the  
39 third year we are going to be able to have a winter  
40 moose hunt on the Kuskokwim Mountains, Kilbuck  
41 Mountains. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game did a  
42 minimum moose count up in the tributaries last year and  
43 counted 2,300 moose and that's just the minimum count.  
44 Three years ago, when we did a minimum count, we only  
45 counted 780. So, the population up in the mountains on  
46 the Kuskokwim has basically tripled. So, we are moving  
47 to have any [sic] moose hunt starting this winter. And  
48 the hunt is only for federally qualified subsistence  
49 users. And also, on for transportation or transporters  
50 for moose hunting in our -- in this area, we do have two

1 transporters here for non-resident hunters. But we --  
2 the stipulation that we give them is that they are not  
3 allowed to drop off any hunters in areas accessible to  
4 subsistence users. So, a lot of the time they're off in  
5 lakes that are quite a ways off the main river system.  
6 We had law enforcement in Saint Mary's this year. And  
7 he said that there was a little bit less pressure hunting  
8 from non-residents that are doing their DIY hunts, but  
9 he did see quite a few people in Saint Mary's. And that's  
10 pretty much -- that's the hub of that area. So, that's  
11 the point from Anchorage that they a lot of people come  
12 in. Just staffing updates. Having said that, we got new  
13 Refuge Manager, Spencer Reardon. He was -- he has been  
14 a Wildlife biologist here for the last year, but he grew  
15 up here in Bethel. So, we have a local Refuge Manager  
16 now. We still have some shortages and staffing, but we  
17 are hopefully able to hire as supervisor of biologists  
18 soon. With that if you guys have any questions.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That was all great  
21 information, Moses or Aaron, I mean, and the -- I'm  
22 surprised at that increase of that moose population, but  
23 that makes sense. There may be dispersal from other  
24 portions of in Unit 18 from the Yukon side and other.  
25 It's just showing the response to the shrubification  
26 [sic] of the tundra areas and the expansion of these  
27 populations. That's great news because we got [sic]  
28 other areas in Alaska that are having declining  
29 populations or reduced populations. So, any comments or  
30 questions for Aaron? No. Thanks so much, Aaron.  
31 Appreciate your report to us. So, we're -- the proposed  
32 rule update from the National Park Service.

33  
34 MS. PILCHER: Actually, Jack. National  
35 Park Service asked if Marcy with the Gates of the Arctic  
36 could give her update first.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, that's where  
39 I was going to go with that, but that's great. So, Marcy,  
40 can you give us the Gates of the Arctic update?

41  
42 MS. OKADA: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Council  
43 members. My name is Marcy Okada. I'm the Subsistence  
44 Coordinator for Gates of the Arctic National Park and  
45 Preserve. And I'd like to refer you to your supplemental  
46 meeting packet, page 131. We just have a really short  
47 update for Gates of the Arctic.

48  
49 First of all, Jack had mentioned our  
50 Subsistence Resource Commission meeting in Anaktuvuk

1 Pass this past April. There's two members from this RAC  
2 that are on our Subsistence Resource Commission both  
3 Jack Reakoff as our Vicechair and Pollock Simon Sr. from  
4 Allakaket. Our next meeting is coming up next month in  
5 November in Fairbanks. It will be November 13th and 14th.  
6 And then moving right along to our update on the Western  
7 Arctic Caribou Herd. Just want to note that last winter  
8 there were quite a few caribou from the Western Arctic  
9 Herd that went up into the Nulato Hills. And then Western  
10 Arctic Herd caribou that were on the North Slope between  
11 Atqasuk and Nuiqsut. And then also we had some caribou  
12 in the western portion of Gates of the Arctic. I also  
13 want to note that this past spring, 50 more satellite  
14 collars were deployed on the Herd. 46 of those collars  
15 were on females and four collars were on males. And then  
16 lastly, we have a new sheep biologist. His name is Zach  
17 DeLile. And him and his crew were able to do distance  
18 sampling surveys for dall sheep this past summer, from  
19 June 28th to July 8th. In both Gates of the Arctic  
20 National Park and Preserve, and then also on BLM and  
21 State managed lands surrounding the Dalton Highway  
22 Management corridor. Results are still pending from this  
23 survey. And a lot of this information is going to be  
24 shared at our upcoming Gates of the Arctic Subsistence  
25 Resource Commission in November -- Commission meeting  
26 in November. So, that's just our quick update if folks  
27 have any questions.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so  
30 much, Marcy, and I look forward to meeting the new sheep  
31 biologists at the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence  
32 Resource Commission meeting, and hopefully we'll have  
33 some numbers. We need to have data from that survey. And  
34 so, any questions for Marcy on her presentation? No,  
35 that was adequate, Marcy. Thanks so much.

36  
37 MS. OKADA: Thank you.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, we -- we've  
40 the Gate, the park services proposed rule issue before.

41  
42 MS. PILCHER: Yes, she just has a brief  
43 update.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so did there's  
46 just a real brief update on that. And who is giving  
47 that?

48  
49 MS. PILCHER: Eva Patton.

50

000152

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Eva, are you there?

2

3 MS. PATTON: Yeah. Hi, Chairman Reakoff  
4 and Council members. Can you hear me okay?

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We hear you great.  
7 Eva, go right ahead.

8

9 MS. PATTON Hi. Thank you, Jack and  
10 Council members. And, so wonderful you're all meeting  
11 there in Galena and was hoping to be there, too. It's  
12 been a few years. Just want to express my appreciation  
13 to the Council and to the community, and the tribe and  
14 all the good work everyone is doing there on the Yukon.  
15 And exciting to hear from Diloola as well from TCC.  
16 We're looking forward to working with you in your new  
17 role in the Tribal Resources Stewardship Program there  
18 at TCC. This is Eva Patton, I'm serving in the role of  
19 the Subsistence Program Director for National Park  
20 Service now in the regional office out of Anchorage, and  
21 we do work with all our Subsistence Parks throughout  
22 Alaska. Just a quick update. We did hear back from Pat  
23 Owen, from Denali. She got called out so, she won't be  
24 available this evening for the Denali sheep update. But  
25 the council does have that report from Denali in your  
26 supplemental materials. And if there's any questions,  
27 happy to help make those connections moving forward.

28

29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Eva. Eva, I would  
30 like to have that interaction with Denali at our February  
31 meeting that's coming up. I think that's important  
32 information for this Council. But we will be dealing  
33 with sheep issues, but I don't -- those -- there was  
34 some details that I needed to discuss but we don't have  
35 time for that anyways right now. But at the spring  
36 meeting I want to go into further details about some  
37 composition issues and so forth with that, with those  
38 studies about comparisons. And I was real happy to see  
39 that Denali had quite a bit of sheep survey data there,  
40 but I would like Denali to be available for discussion  
41 at our at our February meeting. So, continue with your  
42 report.

43

44 MS. PATTON: Thanks, Jack. Yes,  
45 Absolutely. Happy to help make those connections for the  
46 upcoming meeting. And just real quickly, report before  
47 the Wildlife Rule, the National Park Service regional  
48 office did receive a substantial Inflation Reduction Act  
49 grant for addressing climate resilience and food  
50 security and the National Park Service subsistence



1 communities. So, we do have -- we are working with our  
2 resident zone communities, our park nexus communities  
3 in co-stewardship agreements, which was a big part of  
4 that IRA funding and also funding to support research  
5 and monitoring and important subsistence research for  
6 ungulates, sheep, caribou and moose specifically, and  
7 also salmon, mostly focused on the Copper River, where  
8 the Wrangell-St. Elias has in season subsistence  
9 management authority. But in part of our funding, we  
10 were able to pivot as Serena noted for the Yukon River  
11 Drainage Fisheries Association to fund their summer 2024  
12 Subsistence Harvest Monitoring program on the Yukon  
13 River. And they were also pivoting to more of a  
14 environmental based monitoring with support and apps  
15 through the Indigenous Sentinels Network. Anyway, we  
16 were really pleased to be able to be a part of that  
17 support on the Yukon River and will be engaging with all  
18 our Park communities moving forward in these co-  
19 stewardship agreements and, and opportunities for  
20 funding. We are on the agenda today to discuss the  
21 National Park Service Wildlife Rule, which has come  
22 before the Regional Advisory Councils in the past year.  
23 And this was addressing specifically concerns that the  
24 National Park Service had about bear baiting on National  
25 Preserve lands. So, it has no effect on subsistence. But  
26 because of the interest in the overlap with subsistence  
27 reporting and also had solicited feedback from all of  
28 the RACs and SRCs on this. That Wildlife Rule was passed  
29 just recently in August, and it is now on National  
30 Wildlife Refuges under sport hunting regulations. So,  
31 under State regulations, it is now prohibited to bait  
32 bears specifically for public safety reasons. So, the  
33 concerns were both immediate relative to bears defending  
34 a bait station and more long-term relative to food  
35 conditioning. And it was overwhelmingly supported by  
36 most of the RACs and the SRCs and in the hopes of you  
37 know, preventing any concerns about food conditioning  
38 of bears and you know, any persons [sic], subsistence  
39 or otherwise out on National Preserve lands to not  
40 encounter a bait station which would potentially pose  
41 concern for, for safety. In addition, this Wildlife Rule  
42 that was just passed, did clarify trapping regulations  
43 on National Preserve lands. And this does apply to both  
44 subsistence and to State regulations that any -- that a  
45 firearm can be used under a trapping license to safely  
46 and quickly kill an animal that has been -- is in a  
47 trap, but got anchored from a trap, or was in a trap and  
48 escaped from that trap and is injured or wounded.  
49  
50

1                   So, it does clarify those regulations  
2 and in Park Service lands to be able to dispatch an  
3 animal under a trapping license with a firearm. There  
4 were other proposed prohibitions in the proposed  
5 Wildlife Rule from the National Park Service, primarily  
6 looking to provide support for a subsistence priority.  
7 In particular, the hunting of caribou, the hunting of  
8 swimming caribou on National Preserve lands in the Park  
9 Service did receive feedback. There were, you know,  
10 interests and concerns from tribal members who are no  
11 longer rural representatives or are no longer rural,  
12 federally qualified subsistence users residing in urban  
13 areas that would like to return home and hunt in a  
14 traditional way. So, those other provisions were not  
15 adopted in this current rule. So, currently it's just a  
16 prohibition on baiting on national preserve lands under  
17 sport hunting regulations, and then clarifying that use  
18 of a firearm under a trapping license.

19  
20                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, well I'm --  
21 I was happy to see that the clarification under the --  
22 for the trapping regulations because I've had animals,  
23 you know, they get really super excited and they may get  
24 -- they may break something and get loose, and so I've  
25 had to dispatch them, you know, immediately after they  
26 were getting away. So, I was happy to see that change.  
27 That's -- it's, you know, best to take the animal, it's  
28 -- it was caught. It needed to be dispatched anyway so,  
29 I'm happy to see that aspect. Bear baiting is very little  
30 bit -- very lightly used, even near the gates of the  
31 Arctic Park where the subsistence are -- the Gates of  
32 the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission, Denali in  
33 our region is lightly bear baiting is not a large factor  
34 there. So, I -- so that's not an impact to this region.  
35 So, I maybe in other regions but not here. So, I  
36 appreciate your update there. Supposed to start my  
37 generator at home, sorry. And so, I -- we need to move  
38 on, I appreciate that update Eva. Any comments or  
39 questions from the Council on that presentation? Seeing  
40 none, that was fairly thorough, Eva so thank you very  
41 much. So, we're going to be moving. Nissa.

42  
43                   MS. PILCHER: I'm just double checking.  
44 Erin Julianus was going to give the BLM update that is  
45 next, she did let me know that she had to run home really  
46 quick, but she'd be back on at about 5:30. It's close  
47 to that, I'm going to quickly -- the next agenda item  
48 on under Bureau of Land Management is a news release. I  
49 just wanted to let you guys be aware of that. I don't  
50 know anything about it other than what's in the news

000155

1 release. So, the Biden-Harris administration affirms  
2 protection of 28 million acres of public lands in Alaska.  
3 This is informational only, and that document is in the  
4 supplemental material.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

7  
8 MS. PILCHER: So, that's all. I just  
9 wanted to share that information with you.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right.

12  
13 MS. PILCHER: But, Erin, did you get back  
14 on?

15  
16 (No response)

17  
18 All right, if it's okay, we can go to  
19 Liz with the next agenda item and other business, and  
20 then when Erin does call in she can give her brief update  
21 on the Central Yukon region.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, that'd be  
24 great.

25  
26 MS. PILCHER: Okay.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Liz.

29  
30 MS. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon -- evening,  
31 Mr. Chair, and members of the Council. I'm Liz Williams.  
32 I'm the cultural anthropologist at OSM or one of them,  
33 and I'm the anthropologist for this Council, and we  
34 talked a lot about the fisheries resource monitoring  
35 program. And that's where we provide funds through a  
36 competitive process for all sorts of entities to conduct  
37 research on subsistence fisheries in Federal public  
38 waters. But there's also the partners for Fisheries  
39 Research Monitoring, anyway, the Partners Program is  
40 what we call it. And so, we wanted to remind you of that  
41 because of the continuing resolution and the election  
42 year, we're not really sure when we will get the funds,  
43 but there will be a notice of funding opportunity at  
44 some point where we will inform you of this, beginning  
45 of this competitive process. And this is a unique  
46 competitive grant because it's aimed at Alaska native  
47 and rural nonprofit organizations to strengthen Alaska  
48 native and rural involvement in Federal subsistence  
49 fishery management. And this really gets to the heart  
50 of the Fish and Wildlife Services, as well as DOIs intent

1 to increase co-stewardship, because a successful  
2 applicant for this program can hire a fisheries  
3 biologist, an educator, or an outreach specialist. And  
4 this is salary money for a full-time position to work  
5 on research, community harvest surveys, all these things  
6 that involve local community sort of control and  
7 creating their own method of harv [sic] of their own  
8 harvest data collection method. So, it's a unique  
9 opportunity.

10  
11 We have at least six active partners  
12 right now. We have Hoonah Indian Association, Yakutat  
13 Tlingit Tribe, Qawalangin Tribe from Unalaska Native  
14 Village of Eyak, Native Village of Napaimute, which is  
15 in Aniak on the YK delta and the Orutsararmiut Native  
16 Council out of Bethel, TCC has also been a partner and  
17 because of the fisheries problems and the closures, a  
18 lot of communities have asked us about funding for  
19 culture camps, and we can't just provide money for  
20 culture camps perse but if a successful applicant hired  
21 an educator, fisheries biologist or outreach specialist,  
22 they could incorporate planning and implementation of a  
23 culture camp as part of their program. So, again, it's  
24 the salary for a full-time permanent person to take care  
25 of these types of things. And again, there's a lot of  
26 complaining about turnover among Federal employees and  
27 Federal agencies, and they don't get to know the people,  
28 or once they do, they leave. And this is an investment  
29 in growing our own in Alaska and hopefully hiring and  
30 keeping rural Alaska native employees in government  
31 agencies that work on resource management and all other  
32 types of positions that exist in their hometowns or in  
33 their home State. So, that's my brief presentation. If  
34 anybody has any questions, you can contact Karen Hyer  
35 or me, and we'll definitely let you know when the notice  
36 of funding opportunity does become available.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Liz.  
39 Is [sic] there any questions from the Council?

40  
41 (No comment)

42  
43 Seeing none, thank you for that  
44 overview. Oh, Robert, I didn't hear it.

45  
46 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
47 know, I asked this afternoon what was going to happen  
48 if there was a change of presidency come November and  
49 January. What kind of outlook are we gonna look at if  
50 there was a change from Democrat to Republican?

000157

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

MS. WILLIAMS: Nobody knows.

MR. WALKER: That's the best answer I heard all day, thank you.

MS. WILLIAMS: Wow, thanks.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, thanks so much, Liz. Appreciate that. And lis [sic] -- Nissa tells me that we have Aaron and, and Jeff on the phone. So, go ahead, Erin and Jeff. It's BLM, spotlight go ahead, go ahead and sign on, can you hear us?

(No response)

Are you there?

MR. Beyersdorf: Yes, I can hear you just fine.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.

MR. Beyersdorf: Well, I'll let Erin go first, I know she's online as well.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, Erin. We're not hearing.

MS. JULIANUS: Hey, can you guys hear me?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I can hear you now. So, go right ahead.

MS. JULIANUS: All set, Okay.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: A little bit closer to the mic.

MS. JULIANUS: I was trying to figure out the star six thing, my goodness. Can you guys hear me now okay?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right, that's a pain, I've been there.

MS. JULIANUS: Okay, yeah. Yeah, so, this is Erin Julianus with the Bureau of Land Management in Fairbanks, biologist for the Central Yukon field office. You caught me, like, right in the transition of headed

1 home. So, I apologize for that, but, yeah, as Jeff said,  
2 he's also on the phone and can speak to, you know, the  
3 Central Yukon RMP and the Amber Road, if you guys have  
4 any questions about that. I didn't submit a summary  
5 report for this meeting for the Central Yukon. I think  
6 this is the first time I've missed it in ten years, so  
7 I apologize to the Council for that. But most of our  
8 business is kind of same-old and my report is going to  
9 be pretty brief today. So, the Central Yukon Resource  
10 Management Plan has been finalized, and the record of  
11 decision, which is kind of the final part of the process,  
12 is in the final review status. So, it hasn't been signed  
13 yet, but we should have a signed record of decision  
14 soon. And we're going to have a new management plan for  
15 BLM lands in the Central Interior for really the first  
16 time in over, over 30 years, which is exciting to me and  
17 I know, exciting for our staff. Let's see, we hired a  
18 new manager for the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center.  
19 His name is Brian Perry, he came up from Yellowstone,  
20 worked for the Park Service, and we're really excited  
21 to have him onboard. AIVC, the visitation at the Visitor  
22 Center continues to be high. And we're gonna -- we plan  
23 to open the winter Visitor Center, our Coldfoot contact,  
24 contact station, again this year from mid-February  
25 through mid-April, which has been a lot of fun in the  
26 past, so. The one thing I guess the one maybe action  
27 item for the Council is regarding some new signs we're  
28 going to be installing at the Yukon River bridge at the  
29 boat launch. Yeah, I was listening closely to earlier  
30 public testimony about the trespass issues on  
31 allotments, you know, especially during the hunting  
32 season. And that's actually, in part, largely what the  
33 signs are intended to address. So, we're working on  
34 language for those signs. You know, right now it's going  
35 to be Leave No Trace principles, and, yeah, reminders  
36 about private land and ethics when using the river. So,  
37 yeah, we're working on that language right now. It would  
38 be great to -- we're certainly going to involve, you  
39 know, tribal entities. But it would be great to, you  
40 know, get the Council's thoughts on that as well, you  
41 know, recognizing that, of course, signage can't solve  
42 trespass issues entirely, but maybe it can help, so.

43  
44 Let's see continued permitting  
45 workload. Our permitting workload is always pretty high.  
46 I don't think I have any -- anything in particular to  
47 address as far as that goes. We're going to be renewing  
48 the Anaktuvuk Community Winter Access Trail right of  
49 way. So, working on that this winter. But yeah, same  
50 old, you know, permitting guides, tour operators

1 construction projects along the Dalton Highway, so. And  
2 then for Wildlife work, we just finished the composition  
3 survey for the Rea Mountains and Hudson Hills Caribou  
4 Herds in September. We're hopefully going to complete  
5 the Middle Fork trend count again in November and maybe  
6 help Glenn out with the Kanuti GSPE. As Marcy said we -  
7 - they the Park Service was able to complete the distance  
8 estimation or the transect dall sheep -- dall sheep  
9 surveys and the 1A, 1B survey area again this year,  
10 waiting for results on that. I continue to be grateful  
11 to the Park Service, yeah, for their willingness to kind  
12 of partner with us to get that work done every year. So,  
13 let's see. I think that's about it for the updates that  
14 I have. Kind of in the interest of time, yeah, and with  
15 that, I would yeah, turn it over to Jeff if you'd like  
16 to add anything, and we can answer any questions after  
17 that.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I would like a  
20 comment right now. I'm happy to hear that you're putting  
21 up signage about -- at the Yukon River bridge to catch  
22 the public as they're crossing not only into the areas  
23 associated to the Road, but they're also like, there's  
24 hundreds of boats launched. Bob Mauer was counted over  
25 155 boats before and before they were finished launching  
26 there, they're gonna go out and be getting onto a Native  
27 allotment. So, I'm really happy to hear that you're --  
28 I do you know, as you approach the bridge, I think you  
29 need a sign previous to the bridge that points out, I  
30 see you got a nice sign there for your Visitor Center,  
31 but I also see you need to be -- have a little one  
32 previous site, just a little one that shows that there's  
33 something coming up. There's nothing before the bridge  
34 as far as you know, services and stuff like that, so I  
35 do -- I am happy to hear about that signage issue because  
36 there's going to be like -- there's literally thousands  
37 of hunters that cross over that bridge, and that's the  
38 perfect place right in the bottleneck to catch them, to  
39 inform them. And, and if they got a -- if they know it's  
40 coming up, they would be able to turn in there. We have  
41 a lot of people coming out of South Central that never  
42 been up here before, because they lost the Nelchina Herd.  
43 So, I'm -- I think one little sign up, you know, half a  
44 mile up there by Pump six or something like that to  
45 catch them before they cross the bridge. That'll,  
46 that'll.....

47  
48 MS. JULIANUS: South, south of the, yeah.  
49  
50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: South of the bridge  
2 if, so that they, they can see that's coming up and then  
3 they can get the information they need, which is going  
4 to address this whole -- some of the trespass we got  
5 here at Galena came from the bridge, that's where those  
6 guys came from. So, that's where we need to get -- I  
7 think you've got a great idea putting those signs there,  
8 (indiscernible) down at the boat launches. That's  
9 another place where they're gonna go dump their boat in.  
10 So, thanks for all that information. I look forward to  
11 seeing that -- results of that, and hopefully you get  
12 the middle fork trend count and dall sheep survey results  
13 for, for our upcoming meeting in, in February. So, Jeff,  
14 you want to give us update also.

15  
16                   MR. BEYERSDORF: Yes, (indiscernible)  
17 Chair Reakoff and members of the Council, this is Jeff  
18 Beyersdorf, I'm with the Bureau of Land Management here  
19 in Fairbanks and Chair Reakoff, I just -- I really had  
20 just kind of an overall 30,000 foot update, and then I'm  
21 just prepared if you had any potential questions, you  
22 know, as Erin mentioned, in spring of this year, we  
23 issued the final Environmental Impact Statement for the  
24 Central Yukon RMP. With that part of the process is it,  
25 is a request for a Governor's consistency review and any  
26 protest, we did get a protest and that, that protest is  
27 being handled at our headquarters office. Once that  
28 protest is resolved, then we would look to issue the  
29 record of decision. I -- as Erin mentioned, that's fairly  
30 close. I expect that we may see it before the end of  
31 October. And as, as you and members of the Council may  
32 be aware, we selected alternative E within that RMP EIS  
33 that was issued. We also had the -- this past spring,  
34 we had the Ambler Access Road Supplemental EIS issued  
35 in April of 2024, and then in June of this past year,  
36 we had the record of decision. And with that supplemental  
37 EIS and the record of decision, we chose the no-action  
38 alternative for the Ambler Road. So, we're not issuing  
39 a right of way for the Ambler Road.

40  
41                   A couple of other things I wanted to  
42 pick up on what Rebecca Shaftel provided, we've been  
43 also the recipient of some bi-partisan infrastructure  
44 law Inflation Reduction Act funding, we've been  
45 utilizing that for reclamation of streams to bring back  
46 fish habitat. We've been doing that both in the Nome  
47 Creek area up in the Whites and then also out in the 40  
48 mile in Jack Wade Creek, a component of that, we've been  
49 doing some assessment inventory and monitoring to find  
50 out what the conditions are on the ground in regards to



1 some of the -- these stream and terrestrial habitats  
2 there, and then the last thing I really have to share  
3 is that I know there was a mention of the Indigenous  
4 Sentinels Network and BLM has also been engaged with the  
5 Indigenous Sentinels Network and working with some of  
6 the representatives out of Circle with that. So, I'll  
7 take any questions that you may have at this point.  
8 Jack, I'm sure you have a couple for me, so.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, I -- one of  
11 the elephants in the room is this PLO 5150 issue. This  
12 Council is opposed to lifting that as recommended  
13 several times that 51-50, the Dalton Highway corridor,  
14 2.1 million acres is -- be retained predominantly  
15 because of its value for subsistence users, for the  
16 communities. Expanding now that -- with ice roads, you  
17 just gave a report on -- again on this Ice Road down  
18 Anaktuvuk, there's many subsistence users starting to  
19 use that Road, and they have customary and traditional  
20 use for caribou and stuff from that Road. So, we've --  
21 I've enumerated all those various communities before  
22 that, that was in your -- in the record. And so, I would  
23 like the Council to know where we're at with 51 -- PLO  
24 5150. I'm opposed, this Council's on the record is being  
25 opposed to lifting that, and I would like a brief update  
26 on what is -- the State made any priority, what is their  
27 status since September 12, the last time I talked to  
28 you.

29  
30 MR. BEYERSDORF: Well, I think as far as  
31 an update, what I would say -- through the Chair, to the  
32 members you know, there was a Congressional hearing this  
33 summer with our Director Stone-Manning at that  
34 congressional hearing the PLO 5150 did come up. And there  
35 were questions from Senator Murkowski and follow up  
36 letters from Murkowski and Sullivan in regards to the  
37 PLO 5150. What I can say is at this point, that process,  
38 I would say, is on hold. BLM is willing to pick that up  
39 if there's interest in moving that forward from the State  
40 side and there's support at the department level for  
41 that. And I understand your concerns. I've heard that,  
42 and you and I know that we've sat down at the table and  
43 had discussions on this and, you know, BLM if those, --  
44 if that were to move forward, we remain committed to a  
45 very public process for that, that would include public  
46 engagement and comment opportunities from stakeholders  
47 in regards to any issues, concerns and being able to  
48 address them before we could make any decisions. But at  
49 this point, what I would reiterate is that is in a hold  
50 status.

1

2 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's exactly  
3 what I wanted on the record from you. Jeff, I appreciate  
4 that status report. And so, I did want to comment on the  
5 BLM aspect, Central Yukon. We discussed this illo, illio  
6 weed I forget how you pronounce the name, this invasive  
7 weed that's been looked for in Bettles in the Vor Lake,  
8 the mother load of where that's gonna come from, is from  
9 Grayling Lake. Is there an inventory being done there?  
10 We've got air taxis come flying off that lake all the  
11 time, and they're going all over the refuges and stuff.  
12 They're spreading, spreading -- if it's there, they  
13 could be spreading it all over the place. So, I'd like  
14 a status report of that weed an invasive weed in that,  
15 in Grayling Lake specifically, because that's where --  
16 practically all the air traffic is coming off out of a  
17 lake system on the Road is at Grayling Lake, and there's  
18 lots and lots of vehicles that could -- and various  
19 things that park (indiscernible) close to that could  
20 actually introduce that into that lake. So, I wanted to  
21 bring that up. When I was -- when we were listening to  
22 that report about Kanuti, you know, looking at Vor Lake  
23 and Bettles and stuff, it's like, well, it might not be  
24 there, but it could be going into Grayling Lake, and  
25 that, that would -- may not -- that aircraft would not  
26 be fueling up in Bettles got aircrafts that are flying  
27 off Grayling Lake could be flying, you know, they're  
28 flying their own -- fueling right there on the road. So,  
29 can you give us a sort of an overview of what you've  
30 done with that, Erin or Jeff?

31

32 MS.JULIANUS: Yeah, yeah, this is Erin.  
33 The -- our fisheries staff did do an inventory for elodea  
34 in Grayling Lake, specifically this past summer. So, and  
35 I don't know if they have committed to do it annually,  
36 but I know the past couple of years they have for, for  
37 those very reasons.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, it should be a  
40 requirement that the aircraft's are -- operators are  
41 aware that they -- said that we do not want to bring  
42 this into the Brooks Range, we do not want it  
43 disseminated -- the permitted carriers they're flying  
44 off of Grayling Lake should have to be hyper aware of  
45 that issue that we do not want this introduced. The  
46 other question I had, and that was -- is the guide  
47 allocations for the commercial guide permits that are  
48 issued for the BLM lands. The allocations were far too  
49 high to start with, with the population status of the  
50 dall sheep. I would like a report at the next meeting

000163

1 on that permitting. Steve are -- Steve your, your  
2 permitting guide.....

3

4 MR. BEYERSDORF: (Indiscernible  
5 - distortion)

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Say again.

8

9 MR. BEYERSDORF: Steve Taylor.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Steve Taylor,  
12 exactly.

13

14 MR. BEYERSDORF: Yeah.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, I would like  
17 a report on that at the next meeting, because that's a  
18 very important issue. We have, you know, there's -- it's  
19 basically on hold. We don't want to go into laps of our  
20 closure with just a full on having permitted guides that  
21 have more allocation than the population actually has  
22 and without any regards to subsistence or any other  
23 users. So, it's basically the allocation was set for  
24 full allocation to the commercial use and not any  
25 consideration of subsistence use. I also want to talk  
26 about at that meeting about where these permits are  
27 actually valid. In regards to the guide use area that  
28 are associated to the Road. So, that's a heads up for  
29 the next meeting. So, any questions.....

30

31 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, I'll speak to, to  
32 I'll speak, I'll speak to Steve about that, Jack. And  
33 yeah, maybe we can just plan on him. Yeah, just coming  
34 with Tim McGrath at the next meeting, so.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, all right.

37

38 MR. BEYERSDORF: And they will -- through  
39 the Chair, to the members, you know, when I was in  
40 Wiseman last month there were some local individuals  
41 that expressed concerns in regards to guides, and I was  
42 planning on following up one on one with them directly.  
43 So, that has been heard, and, you know, as Erin  
44 mentioned, we will -- we'll visit with Steve and we can  
45 be prepared to present some information at the next RAC.

46

47

48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, yeah,  
49 that's -- I wanted that up on, you know, for -- at this  
50 presentation. I wanted that up for the next meeting. So,

000164

1 any other comments or questions? Nissa, you got a  
2 comment?

3

4 MS. PILCHER: I did. There was an acronym  
5 that went out. It was GSPE, and Chris messaged me that  
6 that means Geospatial Population Estimator. So, just to  
7 get that on the record.

8

9 MS. JULIANUS: Sorry.

10

11 MS. PILCHER: Oh no worries, no worries.  
12 And then also.....

13

14 MS. JULIANUS: Was that the only acronym?

15

16 MS. PILCHER: I think so, I believe so,  
17 thanks, Erin. And then also just in my 530 state, I  
18 accidentally shot right over the Office of Subsistence  
19 Management's report and went to the partners  
20 presentation. So, when we're ready the OSM report would  
21 need to be given.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, well, we got  
24 our agency's reports now, so, now I feel comfortable  
25 about going to the other reports that we have here, and  
26 I've lost track of where I'm at on this, so. Brent, go  
27 right ahead.

28

29 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, MR. Chair,  
30 members of the Council, on behalf of the Office of  
31 Subsistence Management. Oh, for the record, this is  
32 Brent Vickers, Office of Subsistence Management and I  
33 want to thank you all for your service and exceptional  
34 work that you have done on behalf of your communities  
35 and user groups. We value your expertise and your  
36 volunteer contributions of your knowledge, experiences  
37 and time with the regulatory process. All right, OSM  
38 administrative move. At the request of many stakeholders  
39 made during listening sessions and tribal consultations  
40 across the State, Congress has administratively moved  
41 OSM from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service directly to  
42 the Office of Assistant Secretary -- within the Office  
43 of Assistant Secret [sic] -- Assistant Secretary Policy,  
44 Management and Budget. This move became effective in  
45 July -- July 15th, 2024. So, just a few months ago. This  
46 move is one of many efforts that the Department of  
47 Interior is making to strengthen Federal Subsistence  
48 policies and structure, and to ensure that the  
49 federally-qualified subsistence users and Alaska native  
50 peoples [sic] have an opportunity for meaningful

1 engagement in the Federal Subsistence Management Program  
2 implementation. This move is a response to the concerns  
3 and input of Alaska native communities and people, many  
4 of whom rely on subsistence uses and to the need to  
5 enhance program operations for all federally-qualified  
6 subsistence users, particularly in the face of a  
7 changing climate.

8  
9 OSM responsibilities and functions of  
10 administrative support to the Federal Subsistence Board  
11 and Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils remains the  
12 same following this move to the Office of Secretary.  
13 Federal Subsistence Management programs operations  
14 continue seamlessly, and the regulatory cycle is going  
15 on without any interruptions. If you need to reach out  
16 to OSM staff, we now have new email addresses that have  
17 been updated on our website. The main contact phone  
18 number remains the same (907) 786-3888 and our main email  
19 address is subsistence@ios.doi.gov. I'll just say from  
20 -- personally, I think that working with the Office of  
21 Secretary has been excellent so far. They have been very  
22 eager to learn, to help us, to take on -- help us get  
23 through the transition, we've had weekly meetings, bi  
24 weekly meetings with different groups and everything  
25 you've heard from Eric Werwa, he's been great, his staff  
26 has just been excellent. I also -- I'll just be honest,  
27 I'm very happy with the move so far. I've been very  
28 happy with Office of Secretary, even though they're in  
29 D.C., they've been very -- they've been communicating  
30 with us daily. Also, I just wanted to mention in regards  
31 to the move relation, that this is sort of a side note.  
32 I've heard murmurings and even read that because of the  
33 move, OSM was not able to provide funding this cycle for  
34 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, FRMP. That  
35 is inaccurate, we didn't -- basically didn't have money  
36 and we had to make that decision before the move -- that  
37 Congress passed the move. And really it came down to --  
38 we funded more projects than usual in our last cycle  
39 because we had some leftover funds from the Covid years  
40 and not traveling. So, we decided to then invest a lot  
41 more money into the FRMP. We are continuing to fund all  
42 those projects at the same time with the -- we don't  
43 have -- we haven't had a budget increase with the  
44 continuing resolutions that have been going on, but we  
45 have been able to hire some new staff and fill in those  
46 vacant positions that have been vacant for years. So,  
47 really, we just didn't have any funds to spend. It's  
48 very unfortunate both -- everyone at OSM was very  
49 disheartened when we really just had to face we didn't  
50 have the funds for that and just wanted to mention that

1 cause I had heard it was in regard to the move, but that  
2 had nothing -- we are, yes.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And what is the  
5 prospectus for funding, future funding?

6

7 MR. VICKERS: We -- well, it all comes  
8 down to Congress and everything, but we have put in  
9 requests for more money for the FRMP, as well as funding  
10 for a Wildlife monitoring program.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, being under  
13 DOI's Policy, Management and Budget, maybe they got  
14 deeper pockets somewhere.

15

16 MR. VICKERS: You know, I don't know how  
17 it all works. Until we have -- we'll see with the new  
18 elections and the new Congress, if they're able to put  
19 it forth, a new -- the budget request for us, and that's  
20 all out of our hands.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right, right.....

23

24 MR. WERWA: Hi, this is Eric Werwa, I'll  
25 just say, yeah, again. Congress determines the depth of  
26 our pockets. We will -- they will be as deep as the  
27 amount of money that we are given to use.

28

29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Understood, Eric.  
30 And what is your last name again? I keep missing it.

31

32 MR. WERWA: It's a Werwa, W-e-r-w-a.

33

34 MR. VICKERS: I'll mention that Eric is  
35 currently on the phone at 9:30 p.m. East Coast time,  
36 It's great to hear you, Eric. Thank you for joining our  
37 meeting.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I like that  
40 dedication, Eric. I appreciate you being on the phone.  
41 I was requesting that somebody from DOI monitor these -  
42 - this meeting, and so, you can see the kind of  
43 consternations that we're having during these  
44 deliberations and with the various issues. So, I'm happy  
45 you're getting the broader perspective of this -- how  
46 this Council is working. So, thank you very much for  
47 being there. Go ahead and continue, Brent.

48

49 MR. VICKERS: Okay, thank you. Some

50

1 information on correspondence, which I know is always  
2 of interest to this Council. We like to let you know  
3 that -- all know that we've been very aware of the  
4 frustrations that the Council have been expressing about  
5 correspondence, particularly the slow or non-existent  
6 responses back to you. This is an area that we have  
7 hoped our recent move would improve, and I'm happy to  
8 let you know that we're already seeing positive movement  
9 on this front. The new direct lines of communication  
10 between our office and the Secretary of Interior's  
11 Office have allowed us to work with them on getting  
12 these letters, the attention they deserve. Members of  
13 the Secretary of Interior's Office are reviewing the  
14 current set of letters sent to the Secretaries, are  
15 digging in on the issues, and hoping to provide signs  
16 of progress back to the Councils in the near future. We  
17 are looking forward to sharing more information with you  
18 all as responses and courses of action are developed  
19 around this issue. You have all highlighted.

20  
21 Update on the Wildlife Final Rule in the  
22 2024-2026 regulations booklet. The Final Rule for the  
23 Federal Subsistence Management Regulation for the  
24 Harvest of Wildlife on Federal Public Lands in Alaska  
25 for regulatory years 24 through 26, have been published  
26 in the Federal Register and went into effect on August  
27 29th, this summer. The regulation booklet are [sic]  
28 available online on the Federal Subsistence Management  
29 Program website, or hard copies can be mailed to you  
30 upon request.

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I want to comment  
33 on that issue. The publishing of that Rule, and the  
34 adoption of the actions taken by the Federal Subsistence  
35 Board was picked up by the sport hunting communities,  
36 and so they felt that the regulatory changes that the  
37 Federal Subsistence Board had made were not actually  
38 valid, and my brother in law was taking -- he was in  
39 communication with some of these people, and it was like,  
40 no, they passed the regulations. It's actually the  
41 regulatory changes that have been made. But the  
42 publishing -- there was public that was under the  
43 perception that because they were not published in the  
44 -- in finalized until August 29, were not valid  
45 regulations until that time. So, this is another issue  
46 of making sure that once the Federal Subsistence Board  
47 makes those -- that -- those, those regulations have to  
48 be adopted before July 1. They have to be published  
49 before July 1. That's the regulatory year for, for the  
50 adoption of the -- so, there were people maybe thought

1 they could hunt illegally in closure areas or whatever  
2 because those regulations weren't published. I wanted  
3 to bring that up at this meeting because this regulate  
4 [sic] -- regulation book wasn't even available to my  
5 community. This is the first time I've seen one. We  
6 didn't get -- we didn't have them at the Visitor Center.  
7 I didn't -- I have not had one. These have to be sent  
8 out to, to the communities. You know, you don't have to  
9 send me a pile of them. But I mean, I deal with the mail  
10 in my community, in my area. So, I deal with the mail  
11 so, you could've sent me ten of these and I'd be good,  
12 but nobody had one of these. So, you know, there's --  
13 there are some issues with the delay of the publishing  
14 of the Final Rule and then the production of this handy  
15 dandy, referred to as the handy dandy that has to be  
16 finalized. And, the Federal Board met in April, those  
17 regulations should be going into -- be immediately  
18 published in the Federal Register so that they -- that  
19 they're finalized by July 1, at least finalized by July  
20 1. This book may be -- take a little to get published,  
21 but the reality is there's people that seem to think  
22 that those regulations are invalid until that's  
23 published in the Register. And so, I would, I want to  
24 bring that up, I want you to analyze that, that position.  
25 But I want you to be aware that that's what's actually  
26 going on.

27  
28 MR. VICKERS Yeah, thank you for that. I  
29 know that the length of time it's been -- the extreme  
30 length of time, the slowness of getting these things  
31 published, has been a huge source of frustration on our  
32 part. I can name some people who practically have ulcers  
33 waiting for the Final Rule to get published. This is,  
34 again, something else that we hope gets sped up with our  
35 move to the Office of Secretary, because it's, again,  
36 just going through hoops and us waiting and -- but what  
37 I really appreciate is your feedback and knowing the --  
38 what -- how people interpret that. And so, we can at the  
39 very least improve how we communicate to the public when  
40 these things are taking longer than we had hoped, and  
41 that's great to know. So, thank you for your input on  
42 that.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes, I thought that  
45 was opportune time to have discussed that, you know, the  
46 -- this publishing date and what that actually -- what  
47 the results of that actually is doing. So, and I'm glad  
48 that Eric's on the phone there to hear that aspect of  
49 this, of this regulatory process. We went through a huge  
50 Board meeting stuff. But up until that's published, the



1 public doesn't think that it's actually valid. So, I --  
2 continue I'm just bringing up a point there, thank you.

3

4 MR. VICKERS: Okay, thank you again.  
5 Update on the regulations regarding the Federal  
6 Subsistence Board composition. Based on requests during  
7 joint consultations, the Department of Interior and  
8 Agriculture are in the process of revising the  
9 regulations concerning the composition of the Federal  
10 Subsistence Board. The Final Rule regarding this  
11 revision is expected to be published by the end of this  
12 fiscal (indiscernible) well soon. It was expected to be  
13 in end by -- the end of September, but we haven't seen  
14 it yet, so hopefully soon. The departments are expected  
15 to add three public members to the Board. These members  
16 will be nominated or recommended by Federally recognized  
17 Tribal Governments and will be required to have certain  
18 knowledge and experiences. The Rule will also define  
19 requirements used to select the Board Chair, and will  
20 affirm the Secretaries authorities to replace Board  
21 members and the Secretary's responsibilities and  
22 oversights regarding the Board's decisions. The rule  
23 will become effective 30 days after publication in the  
24 Federal Register. Update on deferred Wildlife Proposal  
25 WP 24-01, a proposal to sell the hides of brown bears.  
26 At its public meeting in April 3rd, 2024, the Board  
27 deferred its action on Wildlife Proposal, WP 24-1 a  
28 request to allow the sale of brown bear hides taken  
29 under Federal regulations. Board's justification for  
30 deferring the proposal was two-fold one to allow time  
31 to explore options for federally qualified subsistence  
32 users to obtain a permit allowing the sale of a hide  
33 from Federal agency, and two to potentially establish a  
34 work group to negotiate with the Alaska Department of  
35 Fish and Game concerning the use of its permit to sell  
36 a brown grizzly bear hide and or skull.

37

38 Our update is that ADF&G is not able to  
39 permit the sale of brown bears on behalf of the Federal  
40 Subsistence Management Program if the proposal is passed  
41 as submitted as discussed by the Board. In other words,  
42 ADF&G cannot permit the sale of brown bear hides taken  
43 in units with one brown bear limits under Federal  
44 regulations. OSMs therefore exploring opportunities for  
45 federally qualified subsistence users to a permit -- to  
46 obtain permits from Federal agency. We will update the  
47 Board on this option at the Fisheries Regulatory Meeting  
48 in February 2025.

49

50

1 OSM staff updates, would like to provide  
2 you with the most recent OSM staffing updates since the  
3 All Council meeting held in March of this year, OSM  
4 welcomed our new acting or temporary director, Ciisquq  
5 Crystal Leonetti. She will be in this acting role until  
6 the end of November and her permanent position, Crystal  
7 is Alaska Native Affairs Specialist at the U.S. Fish and  
8 Wildlife Service. Among regular OSM director  
9 responsibilities, Crystal has been leading OSM through  
10 its administrative move and is doing a tremendously  
11 wonderful job. She really is, She's doing great. OSM  
12 Director's position was advertised on September 5th and  
13 closed on September 25th, 2024. OSM had some staff  
14 departures, Theo Matuszkiewicz, OSM Supervisory  
15 Regulatory Specialist retired in July after over 20  
16 years of faithful service, and the OSM, staff will miss  
17 his greatly -- is in-depth knowledge of regulations, his  
18 kind advice and wonderful sense of humor. Justin Kohler,  
19 who was an OSM fisheries biologist, has been acting in  
20 his position, the Regulatory Specialist in the interim,  
21 and was able to jump right in and ensure that OSMs final  
22 and proposed rules, as well as meeting announcements,  
23 are seamlessly moving through the approval and Federal  
24 Register publication process. This position will be  
25 advertised for permanent hire fairly soon. Kayla  
26 McKinney, OSM Subsistence Outreach Coordinator, left OSM  
27 to move to another State. Lee Honig and Sherrie Gould  
28 Fares are covering some of this position duties in the  
29 interim while performing their regular duties, and  
30 they're doing superb jobs. The vacant position of the  
31 Subsistence Outreach Coordinator will be advertised in  
32 the near future. We encourage all individuals with  
33 diverse outreach skills and interests, in working in  
34 subsistence issues and rural communities to apply.

35  
36 In August, we were also saddened to  
37 learn of the departure of OSMs Deputy Director Amy  
38 Howard. She left the Federal service for a new job with  
39 Aleut Corporation as the Director of Lands and Natural  
40 Resources. Her last day with OSM was August 30th. While  
41 congratulating Amy on her new job, we will sorely miss  
42 her inclusive and fair management style, her great  
43 support for the entire OSM team and her smile. Katya  
44 Wessels, who was the Council Coordinator -- Coordination  
45 Division Supervisor, is serving and acting as -- serving  
46 as Acting Deputy Director until the end of October. After  
47 that, God help us all, Brent Vickers, myself, will serve  
48 as Acting Deputy Director for the next two months.  
49 Litigation uptake, a detailed litigation update was  
50 provided to the Councils at the March 2024 All Council

1 Meeting. Since then, in the Kake Emergency Hunt, which  
2 is the Alaska Department of Fish and Game versus Federal  
3 Subsistence Board. The matter briefing is now in  
4 progress before the Ninth Circuit Court in the Kuskokwim  
5 matter, the District Court found in favor of the U.S.  
6 and all claims and enjoined the State from taking any  
7 further actions and violating Title 8 of the Kuskokwim  
8 River. The State has appealed, and a briefing has just  
9 recently commenced before the Ninth Circuit Court, and  
10 that concludes my updates, thank you.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, thanks so  
13 much, Brent. That's a -- that was a mouthful.

14  
15 MR. VICKERS: Yep.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so yeah,  
18 that's, that's a lot of good information there. And so  
19 I was -- yeah, Amy, Amy did a great job. She was a real  
20 good person. I -- sorry to see that private sector  
21 poaching off good people like that. That's, that's  
22 annoying. So, I think that all of these things are very  
23 pertinent, and I think that it's -- it helps the Council  
24 understand the inner workings of how the Federal program  
25 works with OSM, and so, so, I'm glad that you're at our  
26 meeting here since you're gonna be stepping up closer  
27 to that fire. Just hope you don't singe your beard there.  
28 That's a hot seat. So, where are we at there, Nissa?

29  
30 MS. PILCHER: Well, now we're into other  
31 business. We already did A, the -- Liz gave her update  
32 on the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. And  
33 the rest of the agenda is pretty much mine and it will  
34 go quickly.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. Go  
37 ahead, Nissa.

38  
39 MS. PILCHER: So, next up is the 805C  
40 report. If you guys have a copy of that. Why did I --  
41 Oh, there it is. So, it's on page 123, I believe, of  
42 your meeting book, for some reason, I didn't put it in  
43 my notes.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 123?

46  
47 MS. PILCHER: Yep. So, the Board action  
48 differed from the Council's on five proposals that were  
49 found on the non-consensus agenda. Most of those were  
50 different for what I would call administrative reasons,

1 and not that the Board differed from your reasoning,  
2 like one was deferred, that kind of thing. But you have  
3 it in your book, you can review it at your leisure, and  
4 I believe it was sent to you as well. So, that's all I  
5 have on that agenda topic, unless there's questions.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, I don't have  
8 any questions on that.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: Okay, the next is 2025  
11 Council application and nomination open season. So, as  
12 we are all aware, this Council does have two vacancies  
13 and there will be a couple of seats expiring come  
14 December of 2025. That is what's going on. The roster  
15 in the book is old Tommy. So, yours would reflect a much  
16 higher date. So, you're totally fine. Tommy has actually  
17 been recruiting prospective members and introducing them  
18 to me. Please, please do so. I will gladly talk about  
19 this program to anyone if you want to send them my  
20 direction. So, please help spread the word about the  
21 upcoming open season, as well as the two vacancies that  
22 also need to be filled. And especially those who reside  
23 in the mid to headwaters of the Kuskokwim and now that  
24 we have lost member Whitworth, normally I would do a  
25 plea for the GASH region as well, but now we have member  
26 Walker with us. So, for those members whose term will  
27 expire in December of 2025, so that's next year, I will  
28 make sure that you are fully aware and trust me, I will  
29 pester you until you get your application in, or you  
30 tell me to leave you alone, that you're not putting it  
31 in. So, don't worry about missing that. The next action  
32 or the next item is correspondence update. This is a big  
33 chunk of your agenda, but it is -- these were all mailed  
34 or emailed to you, but I just wanted them in one location  
35 for you to be able to review.

36

37 These are all letters that your Council  
38 sent or joined in other -- with other Councils to send.  
39 Such as the Quadrilateral Council letteral -- letter  
40 concerning the Western Arctic Caribou Herd. I won't read  
41 them, they're in front of you, but those were all  
42 approved and sent out to everybody that needed to get  
43 them. That was on the header and the CC list. I did  
44 include two other pieces of correspondence for you as  
45 informational only, in case you were interested. The  
46 Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group wrote a  
47 letter concerning trawling and Kuskokwim Bay. I believe,  
48 to the Federal entities. And then the Office of  
49 Subsistence Management just sent a letter to the North  
50 Pacific Fisheries Management Council on communication

1 with Councils regarding chum salmon bycatch. They had -  
2 NMFS had a very short comment window about this subject.  
3 And OSM was able to submit a comment since really no  
4 Councils had an opportunity to do so. It is also listed  
5 -- it is also in there for you to read as well. So, that  
6 concludes correspondence. The next is the Board of Fish  
7 Agenda Change Request update. We did already talk about  
8 this a couple times. That is the ACR that was submitted  
9 for Area M revolving aggregate seine length. So, that  
10 is gonna go before the Board of Fish the end of October  
11 at their work session to -- for them to debate the merits  
12 of it meets the ACR or not, if they choose not to submit  
13 it or not to further it into a proposal as an out of  
14 cycle proposal, the Council has directed me to submit  
15 it when it is in cycle I believe, which is next year and  
16 that will be done. And also, the Council did direct me  
17 to seek other interested parties that were interested  
18 in co-signing that has already started. And I will  
19 continue to do so up until, like we figure out if it's  
20 going to be a proposal or not. Oh, and then the next,  
21 the next one will actually take a while, sorry. But that  
22 concludes everything other than declining balance cards.  
23 So, bear with me, this is the last agenda item. So, as  
24 you have heard, OSM moved out of the Fish and Wildlife  
25 Service and were under the Secretary of Interior. This  
26 transition gives us the opportunity to revise some of  
27 our administrative processes, such as the way we process  
28 travel for Council members on official business. OSM is  
29 considering ways to make -- considering ways to make the  
30 way we process Council member travel more efficient and  
31 user friendly, and we'd like your feedback on this  
32 matter.

33  
34 Currently, Council members receive  
35 about 60% of their estimated total per diem in the form  
36 of a check at the start of each meeting, which is called  
37 a travel advance. The remainder of this is mailed to you  
38 in a second check once all the travel vouchers are  
39 processed after the meeting ended. Rather than  
40 continuing to issue and mail checks, we are considering  
41 switching to a declining balance card. These are like  
42 debit cards that would be loaded with funds for you to  
43 use for meals and incidental expenses during Council  
44 meetings, instead of having to deposit or cash a paper  
45 check. If OSM proceeds to use declining balance cards,  
46 each Council member would be issued a card that would  
47 be their responsibility to keep safe and bring to each  
48 meeting. If a card is lost, it can be replaced, but it  
49 may take several days to get a new one in the mail.  
50 Council members would be able to use their card while

000174

1 in travel status, or to withdraw cash from an ATM.  
2 There's a set limit on there, so, like there's a certain  
3 amount of money loaded onto the card.

4  
5                   Yeah, exactly. Your coordinator will be  
6 able to tell you how much per diem has been deposited  
7 onto the card, and the cards can be used to pay for  
8 expenses such as meals, taxis, groceries; taxi and  
9 parking receipts would still need to be submitted to me  
10 so I could get you reimbursed. OSM will continue to book  
11 flights and lodging. Council members would use their  
12 declining balance card when they check into a hotel or  
13 to other accommodations. The remaining per diem owed to  
14 Council members after the meeting would be direct  
15 deposited into your bank account. Any ATM fees would be  
16 reimbursed as part of this direct deposit, as well as  
17 any unused portion of the travel advance funds on the  
18 card. The card will be turned off between the meeting,  
19 so it can't be accidentally used. If OSM decides to  
20 proceed with using these declining balance cards, then  
21 in order to set them up -- here's the catch, we will  
22 require Council members to submit forms to us that  
23 contain personal identifiable, personal identifiable  
24 information such as your date of birth and banking  
25 information. Please know we respect your privacy, and  
26 this information will be confidential. Declining balance  
27 cards are potential -- a potential new tool and no final  
28 decisions have been made, we're hopeful that we could -  
29 - that they could help reduce the administrative burden  
30 that comes with processing travel for the over 100  
31 Council members twice a year, and help you receive your  
32 per diem payment more quickly.

33  
34                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can we comment on  
35 that?

36  
37                   MS. PILCHER: Oh, please do, to help us  
38 evaluate this change, OSM would like to hear your  
39 feedback and questions. And this is a topic that all  
40 Councils are discussing, please be candid.

41  
42                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I would be okay  
43 with that, but I do know people that don't have bank  
44 accounts and they might not be able to accommodate this  
45 methodology. So, I think there should be an alternates,  
46 you know, some people can, can do it this way or we can  
47 maintain the old advance and check method, which the  
48 checks can actually be cashed when people are in  
49 Fairbanks or something. But I would be concerned about  
50 Council members -- I've known many Council members and

1 I've -- they would probably not be able to utilize this  
2 and would therefore wouldn't -- so, they might be able  
3 to get the card, but they don't have a bank account to  
4 deposit the money into. So, the balance could actually  
5 be -- if there's a balance due, they could just send  
6 them a check. That would be the way to do that. They can  
7 give you the card, okay here's your card it's all loaded  
8 up. You can run it when you get into Fairbanks and you  
9 can eat and all that. But if there's still additional  
10 funding there, you didn't use it all. You only eat once  
11 a day and you might end up with extra money like me. I  
12 -- you would just -- the person would get -- receive a  
13 check in the mail or they could submit their -- they  
14 might not feel comfortable putting out all their bank  
15 information because of breaches and security or  
16 something. So, that would give the Council member the  
17 option of, of using the card, but then the balances  
18 would then be transmitted back to them with a check if  
19 they didn't feel comfortable or didn't have an account.  
20 Those would be the -- that would be my main comments to  
21 protect our Council members. We got to think about all  
22 the various people that may be in the future. This might  
23 not even be an issue in 20 years, but right now it would  
24 be. Robert.

25  
26 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That  
27 discussion that we had at the last meeting too at the  
28 very end was, you know, we've never been given a pay  
29 raise, for how long, I think it should have been brought  
30 here too. And what do we get in a day Nissa, 200 dollars?  
31 50 dollars or what?

32  
33 MS. PILCHER: Honestly, I don't know --  
34 the per diem rate changes based on where you are. So,  
35 like the State -- I could say specifically because it  
36 doesn't change, but the Federal government changes and  
37 I don't remember what Galena's are, I can look for it  
38 though.

39  
40 MR. WALKER: Okay, well, you know, I  
41 Wanna [sic] make a motion to this, if I could.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REKOFF: Go ahead.

44  
45 MR. WALKER: Mr. Chair, member of the  
46 Board, that -- I make a motion that we raise our meeting  
47 fee 100% from what we are getting now. Mr. Chair.

48  
49 MR. KRISKA: Sencond.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, we don't have  
2 quorum, that's probably the biggest problem we have  
3 right now.

4  
5 (Simultaneous speech)

6  
7 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, yeah, if we don't  
8 have quorum, and so the per diem is based on Federal per  
9 diem. So, you guys get what Federal employees get when  
10 they travel. And I don't know -- I don't know if there's  
11 a process that would allow certain people that are  
12 traveling on Federal business to get a higher rate than  
13 others, my guess is no, but I can definitely write that  
14 down. And this, of course, all falls back on the fact  
15 that you guys aren't compensated, which has been brought  
16 up a couple times. There's a joint letter, there's a  
17 letter going up internal, Eric Werwa did hear your guys'  
18 comments and concerns about, excuse me, not getting  
19 compensated, but I am not sure that requesting that your  
20 per diem be increased will go anywhere just because it's  
21 based off of Federal per diem rates.

22  
23 MR. WALKER: Yes, yes. I -- Mr. Chair.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robert.

26  
27 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
28 know, Nissa, I mean, I've been on Board for 15 years  
29 before I took a 15 year break, and we've been talking  
30 about this 15, almost 20 years ago, you know, and if I  
31 would look at what percent rate that I would say we  
32 would go over the last 20 years with like an 8% increase  
33 into our funding as we are, not only us but the other  
34 RAC Boards too, because I think that, you know, we're  
35 running on, like, almost 25 years ago payment, because  
36 we do pay taxes on this. And this is something that has  
37 to be -- I think this really should be hashed out now.  
38 I think we should have a negotiation team to go in and  
39 talk, because if we don't talk, we're never going to get  
40 nothing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41  
42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Robert. We  
43 transmitted a letter, you know, to regarding this  
44 compensation issue, pointing out that we're actually  
45 have deference with the Federal Subsistence Board. We're  
46 not just advisory, we're actually making management  
47 decisions. We made some valid points. They haven't  
48 analyzed that aspect yet. So, we have -- we're -- we  
49 already have a letter transmitted and so that letter was  
50 finalized. And so, what would be the process now, that



000177

1 letter will be received and be analyzed. And who would  
2 be doing the analysis? Where Brent go?

3

4 MR. WALKER: (Indiscernible)

5

6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, but anyways.

7

8 MS. PILCHER: My vague, vague  
9 understanding of what's going on, and Cory's looking at  
10 me like he -- oh no -- never mind, I'll take it. Is that  
11 your Council wrote a letter, the Joint Council also wrote  
12 a letter that got transmitted to the Federal Subsistence  
13 Board. Then it went to the Department of the Interior  
14 and Agriculture, since it's a joint -- And wait, is that  
15 in a, it might be in a reply somewhere, hold on. It is  
16 going up the ranks of whatever is.....

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's actually --  
19 it's going, it's gone through the hoop, through the  
20 Federal Subsistence Board. And it's targeting now --  
21 targeting the true -- who the agencies; the Secretary  
22 of Commerce and Secretary of Interior's offices. So,  
23 that's where it should be right now. That's as high as  
24 that thing has ever gotten. We've bounced that ball off  
25 that wall many times. We've not hit that hoop yet. So,  
26 now we've got it in the right court. So, I'm not  
27 discouraged by how far that actually went, went through  
28 the Federal Subsistence Board process. We're discussing  
29 this compensation issue and, and where our letters were  
30 at, at this time. They're at the Secretary's offices,  
31 it's an analysis so, I'm encouraged that it went past  
32 the Federal Subsistence Board because it always bounced  
33 right back off that wall, right back in our face at the  
34 Federal Subsistence Board. Robert is right, we've been  
35 talking about this issue for 20 more than 20, 20 to 25  
36 years. I've - many, many it's actually happened at the,  
37 the Subsistence Resource Commission level also, it's  
38 also happened at that level also. So, I'm encouraged  
39 where it's at right now. We don't really need a  
40 resolution. We ought to let them -- they're actually  
41 analyzing it right now.

42

43 MR. WALKER: (Indiscernible)

44

45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, they just got  
46 it. When did they get it?

47

48 MR. WALKER: For the other one that we  
49 asked for back in 19 -- what the heck was 2000.....

50

1 (Simultaneous speech)

2

3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The letters that we  
4 transmitted this -- the letters that we transmitted this  
5 -- those last meetings in March. When did it, the Federal  
6 Subsistence Board pass it on to the agencies, that would  
7 have been at their work session this summer.

8

9 MR. WALKER: Well, is Brent holding it  
10 up?

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're asking.....

13

14 MR. VICKERS: I promise that wasn't me.

15

16 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. Go right  
19 ahead, whoever's on the phone.

20

21 MS. WESSELS: Hi, this is Katya Wessels.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay Katya, go  
24 right ahead, Katya (distortion).

25

26 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I would like to shed  
27 a little bit of light on the letters. So, the letters  
28 were received and they were processed by OSM and the  
29 Federal Subsistence Board considered them and decided  
30 to forward them to the Secretaries of the Interior and  
31 Agriculture, so, the -- several letters were -- some of  
32 them were sent early in the year. But specifically, I  
33 think the joint letter on compensation was sent to the  
34 Secretary of the Interior on July 29th. It was before  
35 the Board work session, and there's just more  
36 discussions happening now. You know, the letter is in  
37 the Secretary's office, but there's more discussions  
38 happening now on the process of how these letters will  
39 be reviewed, in which order, and to get you the Councils  
40 some answers to your questions and your requests are  
41 being considered, that's true. What you said, Jack, is  
42 exactly correct. So, that's where we're at, at this  
43 moment. I see a lot of positive movement that the  
44 Secretary's Office is paying attention to what is  
45 happening. And you know, we, we're hoping we'll get some  
46 kind of answers relatively soon. I cannot provide you  
47 with a date, but that's where we're at, thank you.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
50 clarification on the dates of when the Federal

1 Subsistence Board passed that through. That's -- so  
2 right now it's actually gotten -- it's gotten way past  
3 any, any kind of a recommendation. That recommendation  
4 would fall flat because that's not how they analyze this  
5 stuff. They use -- they have certain parameters, but  
6 they're also gonna analyze whether these Councils are  
7 actually falling under -- fully under Act -- Federal  
8 Advisory Committee Act. We're actually, we're actually  
9 not quite that. We're actually making decisions. So,  
10 that would be -- the Federal Subsistence Board members  
11 are paid a per -- a stipend, a per diem or allocation  
12 for their day -- every day they're at the Federal  
13 Subsistence Board meeting those -- they actually fall  
14 under a specific status, and we would like to know at  
15 the -- at our next meeting what that status of the  
16 Federal Subsistence Board members are would be in a, in  
17 a step right below those Federal Subsistence Board, but  
18 they're making decisions, we're making decisions. So,  
19 we're not -- this has moved for -- way further forward  
20 than it's ever had before. And so, this -- were being  
21 transcribed right this minute. Go ahead and talk Robert,  
22 I want you to get lots of stuff on the record, go ahead.

23  
24 MR. WALKER: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair  
25 and member of the Board that, you know, we have -- every  
26 time we go out to rural Alaska to -- the price of living  
27 is higher out here compared to what we do in Anchorage  
28 and Fairbanks. And, you know, like, maybe we should even  
29 get COLA, why not? Because we're, we're not, we're not  
30 served breakfast, lunch or dinner. We are just given a  
31 stipend and that's it, we're on our own. We're just like  
32 -- but you do provide housing for us. But the point is,  
33 is that we're going to be doing this if we're gonna have  
34 to go buy our own breakfast, our own lunch, and our own  
35 dinner, we should be given COLA. So, this would offset  
36 what we're talking about. I know this is supposed to be  
37 a wage Board thing, but, you know, this is the Federal  
38 Government -- we're just like, hey, here you go bye and  
39 we have to be hauled around like we're special people,  
40 VIP people. I mean, we don't even have our own vehicle,  
41 we got driver's license, I got a commercial driver  
42 license. And I just find sometimes how we are being  
43 treated like, you know, like just because you're the  
44 Board that you have a right just to do this, this, this,  
45 this and that's it. Because, hey, you know, we are  
46 knowledgeable people. We are part of this selection that  
47 has been done by the OSM. I've been here for a long  
48 time, seven, 15 years before I took a break. And we're  
49 still at the same place that I left 17 years ago. And I  
50 just, I just kinda [sic] find it really hard because I'm

1 not asking to be special, but I'm just asking that how  
2 we do things to make things work and we're being treated  
3 like different people. I don't know, for I'm not saying  
4 you guys are racist or anything, but I'm just saying  
5 we're just like, treated like the same thing year after  
6 year, after year, after year. We want you to do this,  
7 we ask you to do that. And then when we ask for  
8 something, well, we're gonna have to go back and look.  
9 We have to look at the budget, we have to go over here.  
10 And I, and I just think that, you know, there's time for  
11 change, that this has to be re-evaluated. I'm, I'm just  
12 hoping that Brent could be -- get up there and into  
13 where he could be in charge of OSM and take a harder  
14 look at all these issues that not only we talk about,  
15 but what we have to do, too. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Robert. Go  
18 ahead, Jenny.

19  
20 MS. PELKOLA: I've been on this Board for  
21 many years too, and I remember when I first got on that  
22 we started talking about this. Well, I didn't understand  
23 what they were talking about, but Robert is right. You  
24 know, it's more expensive in the village, and you can  
25 go to the store and you can see we have to pay, like,  
26 what, 10, 11 dollars for a little tiny bottle of a box  
27 of milk or whatever. So, it is more expensive to come  
28 to the villages, and I remember back in time we had a  
29 two and a half day meeting and, you know, like, now  
30 we're running how many hours late, but over than we used  
31 to, I mean yeah, we used to get done in two and a half  
32 days, and we had a lot of material to cover, and you  
33 know, some of them take a long time, and some of them  
34 are short, which you know, it's too bad that they have  
35 to make them short, because I like to hear everything  
36 when they say, well, I'll just make this brief, you  
37 know, because they feel like they're taking up too much  
38 time, I think. And it shouldn't be like that if they're  
39 gonna -- if they work hard to make a report, they should  
40 give a report, the whole thing. And I try to keep up on  
41 their -- what they're saying, and I get lost in some of  
42 them because some of them are just to (indiscernible).  
43 What do you call it? Repetet?

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Repetitious.

46  
47 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah, repetitious. Which is  
48 good too, because the more you hear something, it sticks  
49 in your brain. But I agree with Robert, it's -- it is  
50 very disgusting. Especially, like when you come to

1 somebody's hometown and they don't even get a lunch or  
2 a sandwich or something. I remember in the past too here  
3 in Galena when we used to have a meeting here, we --  
4 they'd find somebody to make us lunch. And then, of  
5 course, we had to pay for it, but, you know, so you  
6 don't have to run out of this building and trying to  
7 find somebody to give you lunch and or run to the store  
8 and spend way over than what you, you just got, you  
9 know, allotted for, you know, for your lunch. But I  
10 think it's something we need to look at. And I just  
11 thank you for bringing all the snacks, which is very  
12 good, and I noticed there wasn't very much sweets, which  
13 is very good for me, because as older you get, you don't  
14 want to eat too much sweets. So, I thank you for whoever  
15 brought the snacks. Thank you very much, Nissa, thank  
16 you. And thank you for calling me at the last minute,  
17 but you were already here. Otherwise, I probably  
18 would've had a whole list to order anyway, that's what  
19 I'd like to say.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Jenny. I  
22 appreciate those, those comments, it is -- and it's,  
23 it's good for DOI Eric to hear that there's - this,  
24 these per diem rates that are analyzed down in Washington  
25 D.C. do not reflect 11 to 18, 19 dollars a gallon for  
26 fuel, and many villages, 7.50 is considered cheap, and  
27 food items are between 100 to 2 to 500% over Fairbanks  
28 shelf prices. And Fairbanks isn't noted for its  
29 exceptionally cheap food prices. So, we're talking big  
30 bucks here, and so these per diem rates that I was --  
31 Nissa was scrolling through some of those, those are not  
32 actually taking into account antiquated data, not taking  
33 into account inflation rates, that's -- it's an  
34 exponent, it's a compounded factor when the airplanes  
35 have to fly the stuff out here. Well there's a whole  
36 bunch of airplanes, she's gonna have to, you know, get  
37 drowned out by freight planes flying in and out of Galena  
38 here, flying fuel and stuff in and out of here. So, this  
39 issue has been on and on and on, and this is as high in  
40 the mark as it's gotten. I'm going to be real bummed out  
41 if Office of Management and Budget down there and in the  
42 Secretary's Office actually rejects what we said,  
43 because we're gonna have to start all over. They're gonna  
44 keep hearing it, they're going to keep hearing it from  
45 every last Council for the rest of the program's life,  
46 which could be hundreds of years on Federal public lands.  
47 They're going to keep hearing it, that these Councils  
48 are actually integral and recognized under the  
49 reevaluation as a major part of the statutory  
50 requirements to have a meaningful role in subsistence

1 management. And so, to have meaningful participation,  
2 we're not gonna get participation if people can't even  
3 survive on the, on the per diems. And basically, there's  
4 other, there's other organizations that have a much  
5 higher per diem rates and much higher stipends and so  
6 forth to participate in meetings. So, I do hope that  
7 this moves forward. I have higher hopes now than I've  
8 ever had, being here for 31 years. I this is as high as  
9 this ball has bounced. So, any further comments?

10

11 MR. WALKER: Jeff was shaking his head  
12 (indiscernible). Jeff, you were shaking your head when  
13 Jack was talking. Did you want to -- oh Brent, Brent,  
14 sorry.

15

16 You were, you were disagreeing with  
17 something Jack was saying.

18

19 MR. VICKERS: No, no, I'm not this  
20 (indiscernible).

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, no, he was, he  
23 was basically affirming that these costs are  
24 unbelievable here.

25

26 MR. VICKERS: Yes.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, he was like,  
29 I know, it's just unreal. That was his reaction.

30

31 (Simultaneous speech)

32

33 MR. WALKER : I make a motion to adjourn.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We have -- we  
36 wanted to have final comments, and Jenny wants to have  
37 a final comment, Jenny's always got really good final  
38 comments.

39

40 (Simultaneous speech)

41

42 MS. PELKOLA: My comments done, but.....

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I want Jenny's  
45 final comments, I like to hear them. Go ahead, Jenny.

46

47 MS. PELKOLA: Should I take an hour or a  
48 half or what, I just want to talk -- reiterate about the  
49 fish, fishing. Oh, Jenny Pelkola. You know, we talked  
50 in depth about it, about not being satisfied with what's,

1 going on with the fish. So, I just think we need to  
2 continue, continue hashing -- talking about it and doing  
3 that and, and I say this almost at every meeting, I  
4 think it's very important for all the members to try to  
5 be on -- in person, because I think in our whatever you  
6 call that thing at the end of the book, about our when  
7 we're gonna serve the -- beyond a Council, we're  
8 committed to, like, two meetings a year. So, I think in  
9 person -- okay, I got that, and I think that we need to  
10 -- I know we have ten RACs in the State, all in different  
11 areas, and I think we need to -- when we have a meeting  
12 like that lady from Eastern Interior was gonna sit in  
13 in our meeting, which I think is good, I think we should  
14 have interaction between, if we could, you know, with  
15 the other RACs to see what they're doing cause I don't  
16 know what's [sic] a lot of them are doing. Wanton waste,  
17 it's sad to hear about that and McGrath, and I know if  
18 those Greenpeace people heard about this, they'd  
19 probably put a stopping -- a stop the moose hunting and  
20 everything. I think I got the right group. And we also  
21 -- when we have a meeting, we should maybe send an  
22 invitation to the host village or to Tribal Councils,  
23 you know, and we talked about the compensation and also  
24 that should be for phone calls, but that's just  
25 encouraging them to stay home so, I won't say that. I  
26 take that back off the record. And we talked about this  
27 in the past, an alternate person. We wouldn't have all  
28 this phone problems and cutting in and out if the people  
29 were here, and I think our meeting would move on faster  
30 and I think that's all I have to say, thank you.

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
33 Jenny. Appreciate those comments and Tommy, you got  
34 final comments.

35  
36 MR. KRISKA: We'll be here a couple of  
37 hours. No, I'm kidding, I just agree with Jenny where,  
38 you know, we should have a joint venture, some meetings  
39 with the other RACs. I think it's very important, I do  
40 talk to a lot of them on the phone every other day. I  
41 talk to a lot of people out there about everything that's  
42 going on with RACs and fishing and a lot of other things.  
43 It's amazing to find out where I'm at in this time in  
44 my life. I'm -- I put a lot into trying to do the right  
45 thing for our people. Wanton waste that -- that's a real  
46 bad thing, I kinda [sic] feel bad because I'm a  
47 transporter myself and to get in that loop it's really  
48 bad. I mean, I don't allow that around what I'm doing.  
49 I talk, you know, to the guys I transport and tell them  
50 that if you're out there and you get a moose, I want you

1 out of there within four days from the time you get your  
2 moose or you can come out early and which they agree  
3 upon. And that's what happened to all my clients this  
4 year, they came out 2 or 3 days early. Yeah, you just  
5 gotta talk to them, I guess. But some guys like with a  
6 hundred hunters, I don't know how, how you do that. It's  
7 just collecting money and dropping people and throwing  
8 in people, throwing out people I don't know, that's a  
9 different business. And it's just sad that the  
10 transporter name is being used for that. I don't like  
11 that. But.....

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Say Tommy, do you  
14 require them to have an InReach to be able to contact  
15 you when they want, when they've gotten.....

16  
17 MR. KRISKA: Oh, yeah, I do have InReach,  
18 I have satellite phones, I have -- all my boats have  
19 radios. I check with them when I'm dropping another party  
20 off, or go by them and let them know what's going on,  
21 but they can contact me if they want out within 24 hours,  
22 I told them, give me 24 hours, you need to contact me,  
23 but they'll text my InReach and I get that at home  
24 anywhere around services like in here, I can get a  
25 InReach. And so, we're connected 100% of the time. So,  
26 if they want out, I'll go get them. And being here in  
27 person or either the alternate, I think that's something  
28 I am -- this meeting is only for two days. I have to get  
29 away from a lot of the things I do, and I'm a very busy  
30 person, but this stuff is pretty important. If it could  
31 all connects to everything else that we do through the  
32 Tanana Chiefs and Yukon River Drainage Fisheries  
33 Association and Mid Yukon Advisor. I'm on lot -- a mentor  
34 for some other things, but the whole thing is connected,  
35 big. I do a lot of talking with the guys. It's all  
36 connected, and it's all for the people, so. I don't know  
37 about this per diem thing. I don't know how that kind  
38 of stuff. It's still down in few dollars. You should  
39 give us 2 or 3 dollars and we'll call it good, because  
40 I don't even -- I never even cashed that check at all.  
41 I kind of ate in my boat and out of my boat ever since  
42 I got here. Because it was just a hassle to be running  
43 around to these stores. Jenny was right that, you know,  
44 possibly have some meals fed to us. I mean, I go to a  
45 lot of meetings in Fairbanks and everything is way  
46 different. And I think that they got their things going  
47 and they know what they're doing and -- but they're  
48 never listened to, like we should be. I don't know, I  
49 just -- I'm really happy to be at these meetings and  
50 it's kind of frustrating that the outcome of a lot of



1 it over time, I've been into this thing since 1990 in  
2 and out of a lot of different Boards and things getting  
3 worse rather than better. I mean, I kinda [sic] feel, I  
4 don't -- I said it once before that, you know, we give  
5 all these departments and all these people this advice  
6 and everything, and it seems like nothing comes of it.  
7 It's -- personally, I think a lot of it is used against  
8 us to better their ways of making money out of the  
9 resources on this land, which is sort of a bad deal. But  
10 I think you know that, like I said, that buck goes back  
11 to the White House or wherever it's coming from. And  
12 they have to listen, and they have to do what they gotta  
13 do in order to get paid. So, I don't know, I'll leave  
14 it at that, I could talk all day. But anyway, you guys  
15 have a great time or go home safely because, you know,  
16 I need to go home safely. But I just found out that two  
17 hours ago or not even a person passed here in the clinic,  
18 and it's my lady's half sister. So, you know, there's --  
19 -- some of these things that you have to put up with and  
20 then have a straight face is it's kinda pretty hard to  
21 do so, but just be strong and things will happen. But  
22 anyway, I have to let you go because I have -- gotta run  
23 all the way home and that's down.....

24  
25 MR. HONEA: I have my own.

26  
27 MR. KRISKA: Oh! Robert have his own, he  
28 says. But anyway, I better let him talk, thank you very  
29 much and I see you guys at the next meeting.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
32 Tommy. I really appreciate you coming to the meeting and  
33 all the good information you bring us, and my condolences  
34 to your family. Go ahead, Robert.

35  
36 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
37 members of the Board, staff, our recorder who, I gave  
38 her a little extra candy here so she can make it home  
39 tonight. It's always nice to come and listen and do some  
40 friendly criticism here for our Governments, whether  
41 it's State or Federal. Congratulations on Brent for his  
42 position to be here. I look forward to work with you a  
43 few more years, I hope so, and the rest of the staff  
44 also, and our TCC lady too who has come here and really  
45 -- I think TCC is moving up too, because I think they're  
46 starting -- to start utilizing the Western Interior and  
47 the Eastern Interior a little bit more as they go along,  
48 which is great because I think government-to-government  
49 relationship should be taking place with these other  
50 entities too and the other RAC Boards. Money is something

1 that is a commodity that -- the high price of living is  
2 -- I can't blame the Federal government for that, but I  
3 think that it is partially responsible for that as we  
4 speak, as the last four years with the democratic  
5 government that we have, it certainly has brought up the  
6 price. I notice when we go to stores in Anchorage, it's  
7 almost like 25% of everything. A box of cereal back in  
8 the Anvik cost almost 11 dollars, now it went up like  
9 almost 5 dollars for a box of cereal. So, this is  
10 something that even a box of milk went from 2.50 up to  
11 4.50, that's 2 dollars, you know, and if you use 100 a  
12 year, that's 200 dollars. So, all these things add up,  
13 you know, and I'm not here to, to get rich of this  
14 government here, but I'm just want to have things better  
15 for our way of life. But it seems like we're losing. And  
16 Tom's right, you know, we're fighting, fighting,  
17 fighting, and we're -- and we're not seem like gaining  
18 in any place. Seem like when I left and I came back,  
19 we're at the same place because the Federal government  
20 say we're here for your subsistence, but on the other  
21 hand, this is public land. So, it still is a public  
22 land, so, we didn't gain too much there. Trespass was  
23 set up by the Federal, not by the Federal, by the State  
24 government with the native claims under ANSCA here so,  
25 you know, they know they can get away with it because  
26 they talk among themselves. Cause I've been asked  
27 questions about corporation land since I was a president  
28 once. That they can come on your land and kill a moose  
29 and you get caught and they get ripped up or something,  
30 they go to court, they pay 500 dollar fine, they get to  
31 keep the meat and the moose or whatever. So, this is  
32 [sic] things that a lot of people don't realize that,  
33 hey, this corporation land you can't do this, but there  
34 are loopholes and everything that you do. So, anyway, I  
35 enjoyed this meeting. I got to say what I had to say.  
36 And we got our Chairman back. So, that is something that  
37 is also nice, and I see we still have three vacancies,  
38 two vacancies now on our -- so, our February meeting is  
39 going to be interesting too, and a new recorder.  
40 Congratulations to you on that one. Thank you, Jack,  
41 thank you, members of the Board, thank you, staff. I'll  
42 end it there.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thanks so  
45 much, Robert. Good to have you back on the Council.  
46 Always have lots of, lots of discussion and probing  
47 various aspects of this whole program. I appreciate the  
48 Council members that attended the meeting, I appreci  
49 [sic] -- I've been there where those, you know, being  
50 stuck on the phone and trying to deal with the phone

1 issues and, and I've -- I feel that we can improve that  
2 aspect. We were dropping some of the calls because it  
3 did exactly what I was afraid it was gonna do here. The  
4 internet would dump us off and we would get our -- we  
5 would lose, then everybody's got to dial back in. You  
6 are on the other end of the phone. You're trying to find  
7 out what's going on, you dial in, you're stuck -- we  
8 lost I don't know, we probably lost at least close to  
9 an hour on this whole dropping the call thing. It's  
10 imperative that this program devel [sic] -- you hear  
11 those crystal clear people, Serena she's talking on,  
12 she's talking on Starlink, you hear that kind of, kind  
13 of bandwidth, you know, there on Starlink. That's what  
14 that is, and I wanted one here, I wanted one here. When  
15 did I say that? Two months ago, a month and a half ago?  
16 I wanted one here. And so OSM has gotta bite the bullet,  
17 it's not that much. The time we lost here, all the wages  
18 that was [sic] lost, the staff sitting around here is  
19 cheap, is cheap stuff. You buy it, get the modern stuff  
20 that's updated, and so there's this -- these Councils  
21 every last ten Councils needs their own Starlink. If  
22 they -- if there's the slightest doubt about what the  
23 internet is. I've been on -- I've heard people in  
24 Anchorage, bandwidth isn't that good if somebody's  
25 sitting in their house, and sometimes in Anchorage. I've  
26 heard people fading in and out. If there's - if the  
27 slightest doubt that we're not gonna be providing a  
28 public forum in the modern world then we -- and so we  
29 should consider even at that point, moving forward with,  
30 with video capabilities, then we'd have true interaction  
31 with the public. This is stuff to think about at the,  
32 at the OSM level. I'm not decrying what OSM has done  
33 right now. I'm just saying that I was, you know, when  
34 we got the capabilities, we got to be able to start  
35 using it. So, that was -- but that was the way this  
36 meeting went. I think we covered a lot of very important  
37 issues. We gave a lot -- we got lots of public comments  
38 and I'm super happy with TCC's movement forward, the  
39 program is really accelerated forward. It was like flat  
40 on its face, it was like years -- I was like, where's  
41 TCC? Where's TC? Almost every meeting I was asking for  
42 TCC, not present at all, no comments about anything. And  
43 so, we've -- there's been a big movement forward, I'm  
44 happy with that.

45  
46 I'm happy with Kuskokwim River Inter  
47 Tribal Fish Commission, Kevin is -- that they're doing  
48 a lot of projects, I'm seeing a lot of good movement  
49 forward with, with YRDFA. I'm seeing a lot of good  
50 movement forward in the Federal subsistence programs,

1 and the refuges and parks are moving forward with getting  
2 the data that these Councils need for proper fish and  
3 wildlife management, for subsistence. And so, I'm  
4 there's various people that sat through this entire  
5 meeting. I'm really happy about that. And so, I'm looking  
6 forward to our next meeting. There's a lot of important  
7 issues on the horizon that are for our next meeting. And  
8 so, the -- at that point, thanks so much for your  
9 attendance, thanks so much for -- I'm real pleased with  
10 your performance here. So, we are -- the Chair will  
11 entertain a motion for, for adjournment.

12

13 MR. WALKER: I'll move.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved by Robert.

16

17 MR. WALKER: I'll move.

18

19 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair this is Tim.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, you, you came  
22 back. Okay, I didn't know you were there, Tim. So, okay,  
23 your final comment.

24

25 MR. GERVAIS: I would like to thank the  
26 community of Galena for hosting the meeting. I'd like  
27 to say excellent job to you Chairman Reakoff on  
28 contributing your knowledge and managing the meeting.  
29 I'd like to thank all the Council members for giving up  
30 a week of their life to come to this meeting and  
31 contribute. What you're saying and doing is important.  
32 These communities, the people of the region and the  
33 (distortion).

34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Are you still  
36 there, Tim?

37

38 (No response)

39

40 I think Tim dropped. Rogue wave,  
41 apparently. So, I don't know if he's going to be able  
42 to come back on. Tommy's dressed and needs to go to  
43 Nulato and so I think.....

44

45 MS. PELKOLA: I second the motion.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.  
48 Those in favor of adjournment signify by saying aye.

49

50 IN UNISON: Aye.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, meeting  
adjourned.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 1 through  
189 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the  
WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY  
COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME II recorded on the 3rd 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 Isabela, Puerto Rico this 15th  
day of October 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rafael Morel  
Chief Project Manager