

**NWX- US FISH & WILDLIFE**

**Moderator: Robbin Lavine**

**April 14, 2022**

**11:30 am CT**

Coordiinator: Good afternoon and thank you for standing by. I'd like to inform all participants that your lines have been placed in a listen-only mode until the question-and-answer session of today's call. Today's call is also being recorded. If anyone has any objections, you may disconnect at this time. I would now like to turn the call over to Ms. Sue Detwiler. Thank you. You may begin.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Operator. I just want to check to make sure (Tina), are you recording this now, court reporter?

(Tina): Sue, I am.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Okay. Well, this is Sue Detwiler, Assistant Regional Director for the Office of Subsistence Management. This is day 3 of the Federal Subsistence Board 2022-2024 Wildlife Regulatory Meeting. I'm just going to go through a roll call here to see who we have online, starting with Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

Sarah Creachbaum: Good morning, Sue. Good morning, everyone. I'm present.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Sarah. BLM, Thomas Heinlein.

Thomas Heinlein: Yes, good morning, everyone. Tom is present.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Fish & Wildlife Service, Sara Boario.

Sara Boario: Good morning, Sue, and everyone. I am on.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Good morning, Sue and all. I'm here.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning, Dave. BIA, Gene Peltola.

Gene Peltola: Good morning, everyone. BIA is on.

Sue Detwiler: Great. Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: Good morning. I'm on.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning, Rhonda. Public member, Charlie Brower. Not on yet. Chair, Anthony Christianson, are you on? Okay. So we're still waiting on members Charlie Brower and Anthony Christianson. Move onto legal counsel, Department of Interior Regional Solicitor's Office, Ken Lord, are you on?

Ken Lord: Good morning.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning. USDA Office of General Counsel, Jim Ustasiewski? Moving onto the Board starting with Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Ben Mulligan and/or (Mark Perch).

Ben Mulligan: Good morning, Sue. This is Ben.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning, Ben. Regional Advisory Council Chairs, starting with Region 1 - Southeast, Don Hernandez?

Don Hernandez: I am here.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning, Don. Region 2 - Southcentral, Gloria Stickwan, Vice Chair, standing in for Greg Encelewski. Gloria, are you on? Okay. Region 3 - Kodiak/Aleutians, Della Trumble, are you on?

Della Trumble: Yes. Good morning.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning, Della. Bristol Bay, Nanci Morris Lyon?

Nanci Morris Lyon: Good morning. Im here.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning. YK Delta, (Ray Oni)?

Eva Patton: Good morning, Sue and everyone, this is Eva. And I will be presenting on the YK Delta RACs we have, since (Ray) is not able to connect. No phone lines are going through yet in (Alukinuk) today. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you, Eva. Western Interior, Jack Reakoff?

Jack Reakoff: Jack Reakoff here. Good morning.

Sue Detwiler: Good morning. Seward Peninsula, Louis Green?

Nissa Pilcher: This is Nissa Pilcher, Council Chair for the Seward Peninsula RAC. I still don't believe Louis will be able to join us today. I'll be representing in his stead.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you, Nissa. Region 8, Northwest Arctic, Thomas Baker?

Brooke McDavid: Good morning, Sue. This is Council Coordinator, Brooke McDavid. Chairman Baker will not be available this morning.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you, Brooke. Region 9 - Eastern Interior, Sue Entsminger?

Brooke McDavid: This is Brooke McDavid, again. Sue will be joining us later today.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. And North Slope, Gordon Brower?

Eva Patton: Good morning, again. This is Eva Patton, Council Coordinator. And our Chair Gordon Brower, will be joining us a little later this morning, for the North Slope Region proposals. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you, Eva. So we are still missing Public Member Charlie Brower. And Anthony Christianson, Chair, are you on?

Anthony Christianson: Good morning, everybody. Can you hear me now, Sue?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. Good morning, Tony. We just finished going through the roll call, and we have eight - seven of eight members. Charlie Brower has not signed on yet. But other than that we have seven members online.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Sue. I was...

Sue Detwiler: Sorry.

Anthony Christianson: I was stuck in that one room. I could hear you guys, but you couldn't hear me. So welcome, everyone. Welcome to the Federal Board meeting here this morning. We'll go ahead and get started since we have a quorum, and we'll hope that Charlie can join us soon. This is the third day of our Federal Board meeting. We hope to have a productive day and get through most of the agenda that we can, today.

We'll start this morning off with public testimony on non-consensus agenda items. And so if there is any public who would like to speak to non - I mean non-agenda items, sorry. Not non-consensus. Non-agenda items. This is the time. There are agenda items that will be available for discussion later. But this is for agenda items for the public that may not be on the - I mean topics that may not be on the agenda. So at this time we'll go ahead and open up the floor for any public comments on non-agenda items. Thank you.

Coordiinator: And to ask a question, please press star 1. Please ensure that your phone is unmuted. And record your name clearly when prompted. And to withdraw your request, please press star 2. Again, that is star 1 to ask a question or comment.

Charlie Brower: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Hello? Hello?

Anthony Christianson: I hear you Charlie.

Sue Detwiler: Hi Charlie.

Charlie Brower: Okay. Okay. Im online.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. Yes, you are. Charlie, this is Sue Detwiler. Chair may have dropped off or may be on mute, but we were just waiting to see if there were any public comments on non-agenda items.

Coordiinator: We do have a question or comment from (Bill). Your line is open.

(Bill Showanik): Hi. Thank you, everyone. I'm (Bill Showanik). I guess this is actually related to an agenda item. But if I could just have a (unintelligible) and I'm just kind of popping into the meeting. And I'm interested in addressing proposals 22-46 and 56. And I guess my question is looking at the online what you've covered so far, I guess I would just like to kind of confirm or not that number 46 will likely be taken up this morning. That's my question (unintelligible).

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Maybe Sue, or (Lisa), you can answer that for him?  
Thank you.

(Lisa Gretig): Okay. This is (Lisa). I'm not hearing Sue, so I'll jump in. (Lisa Gretig) again, for the record. And my understanding is he's asking if WP 22-46 will be taken up this morning. And, you know, it's hard to give a definitive answer on when the board will take up specific proposals because they're just going in order, and it's hard to know how long some proposals will take. But it seems pretty likely given what the order of proposals, that that one will come up this morning.

But it definitely is on the non-consensus agenda, so the board will be considering that proposal, you know, individually, and there'll be a time for public testimony on that one. But to be able to give an exact time on when the

board will be addressing that proposal is, you know, beyond the scope of my authority. Thank you.

Coordiinator: Next question comes from (Robert). Your line is open.

(Robert Jule): Hi. (Robert Jule) for (NOVA). Yes. I'm one of the co-sponsors for subsistence fishing on the (unintelligible) River, on the Cordova. And myself and my co-sponsor (unintelligible) so we're not going to be able to attend. But I wanted to make a comment about the last comments made. Apparently, board member spoke of Sue Entsminger about coming down here and no one wants this. And I would totally disagree. That person cherry picked.

When we had our conference call with them we said we would show them everything. They never contacted us. They never reached out. And I'm just really frustrated. I'm curious why all of these special interests get priority over rural Alaskan residents, to obtain subsistence fish. I'm sorry I couldn't call in during the proper time, but I just wanted to get my comment stated. Thank you all for what you're doing.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. I appreciate you taking the time to call in.

Coordiinator: No further questions or comments on the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: All right. Thank you, Operator. I appreciate it. Sue if there - or board, if there's any information sharing this morning before we get started, would be agenda this opportunity for the board to bring up anything or discuss anything before we get started with the next proposal.

David Schmid: Mr. Chair, this is Forest Service.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, Dave. You have the floor.

David Schmid: Yes. I don't know if the last speaker is will with us. I believe it was Mr. (Jule). And I'm not sure whether he was aware that that action that he was referencing, will be taken up by the board. It's near the tail end of our agenda. As well that was 22 - 21-10 I believe. But there may be another opportunity to comment on that before the proposal is actually deliberated on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. Thank you, Dave, for that clarification and point. Thank you. All right. Hearing no more board discussion or information, we'll go ahead Sue, and we'll call on the next order of business for our Wildlife Proposals today, and call in the staff to provide the analysis. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're in the Bristol Bay non-contentious agenda items, Wildlife Proposal review - closure reviews show we are on WP 22-40 and that will be presented by Robbin LaVine.

Robbin LaVine: Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the board. For the record, my name is Robbin LaVine, and I'll be presenting the analysis for WP 22-40. It begins on page 280 of volume 1 of your meeting materials. If you will recall, this was pulled from the consensus agenda.

Proposal WP 22-40 was submitted by the Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and it requests that federally qualified subsistence users be allowed to use a snow machine to position wolves and wolverines for harvest on federal public lands in Units 9(b), 9(c), 17(b), and 17(c), provided the animals are not shot from a moving snow machine.



The regulatory history on this one is important for understanding WP 22-40. So I'm going to apologize in advance if it's rather lengthy. Again, this is really critical for you to understand all the various different working parts of this proposal. In 2016 Wildlife Proposal 16-48 requested that federally qualified subsistence users be allowed to use snow machines to position a caribou, wolf, or wolverine for harvest in Unit 23.

The board adopted the proposal with modification to allow this method of harvest on BLM lands only at - the regulatory language for this agency does not specifically prohibit the use of snow machines to position animals for hunting. The board also noted at this time this harvest method is allowed on some state managed lands.

In 2017 Wildlife Proposal 18-24 requested pretty much the same thing as 16-48, that federally qualified subsistence users be allowed to use a snow machine to position caribou, wolves, and wolverines for harvest in Unit 17, provided the animals were not shot from the moving vehicle. The same proposal, 148, was submitted to the Board of Game.

During its fall 2017 meeting, the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council opposed 18-24. However, in February 2018 the Alaska Board of Game adopted proposal 148 with modification limited to the taking of a caribou only shot from a stationary snow machine with further clarification describing exactly how the snow machine may be used for assistance. And I'll read that language in just a minute.

During the April 2018 Federal Subsistence Board meeting, the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council requested proposal 18-24 be taken off the consensus agenda, and some public testimony was received in support of WP

18-24. The board deliberated the proposal on record and rejected it citing concerns over a lack of clarity and consistency among existing regulations.

In 2020 the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council submitted proposals 20-26 and 20-27. Wildlife Proposal 20-26 requested that federally qualified subsistence users be allowed to use a snow machine to position wolves and wolverines for harvest on BLM managed lands only, in Units 9(b), 9(c), 17(b), and 17(c).

Proposal 20-27 also submitted by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council requested a unit-specific regulation for Unit 17, allowing use of a snow machine to assist in the taking of a caribou and allowing caribou to be shot from a stationary snow machine, using the regulatory language adopted by the Board of Game, on the aforementioned Proposal 148 back in February 2018.

That regulatory language read, in Unit 17 a snow machine may be used to assist in the taking of a caribou, and caribou may be shot from a stationary snow machine. Assist in the taking of a caribou means a snow machine may be used to approach within 300 yards of a caribou at speeds under 15 miles per hour in a manner that does not involve repeated approaches or that causes the caribou to run. A snow machine may not be used to contact an animal or to pursue a fleeing caribou.

During the April 2020 board meeting, the board took up Proposal 20-27, discussed, and adopted it. The board then considered Proposal 20-26, the wolf and wolverine proposal. The board deferred Proposal 20-26 and suggested further consideration of the proposal by the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council working group, to - and here's the direction - 1, expand the analysis to include all federal lands in Units 9(b), 9(c), 17(b), and 17(c). So not just BLM lands only.

Two, identify specific language that may reduce complexity between state and federal regulations. And three, anticipate and address regulatory conflicts between the proposed regulatory language and agency-specific regulations. The working group met several times via teleconference.

At the February 2021 Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council meeting, the working group reported to the council they were in agreement to expand the analysis to include all federal lands in the units, and not just BLM lands, but did not request a - suggest a change in specific language.

Upon the working group recommendation the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council submitted this proposal, WP 22-40 for the 2022 regulatory cycle. However, the working group met again in May and suggested further clarifications of the term position, using the same regulatory language as proposed in WP 20-27, the caribou proposal.

And at the fall 2021, Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council meeting, the council developed their recommendation accordingly. You can find the council recommendation on page 295 of your meeting materials. Other notable events include that the same proposal was submitted to the Board of Game by the local AC. Proposal 23 suggested the use of snow machine to position wolves or wolverines for harvest in Unit 17 only, provided they are not shot from a stationary snow machine.

The Board of Game took up this proposal in early 2022, but took final action after the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council held their winter meeting. Currently, the wolf population in Units 9 and 17, is believed to be stable. Less is known about the resident wolverine population, and this change in regulation could result in increased biological vulnerability.

The OSM preliminary conclusion or actually, the OSM conclusion is to support Proposal 22-40 with modification to utilize the same regulatory language as Wildlife Proposal 20-27. And to include all federal public lands in Units 17. The modification should read, in both Unit 9 and Unit 17, unit-specific regulation - on federal managed lands, a snow machine may be used to assist in the taking of wolf or wolverine, and a wolf or wolverine may be shot from a stationary snow machine.

Assist in the taking of a wolf or a wolverine, means a snow machine may be used to approach within 300 yards of wolf or wolverine, at speeds under 15 miles per hour, in a manner that does not involve repeated approaches, or that causes the animal to run. A snow machine may not be used to contact an animal or to pursue a fleeing animal. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Im ready for questions.

I would note once again, that the materials for Wildlife Proposal 22-40 can be found on page 280, beginning on page 280 of volume 1 of your meeting materials. Remember, this was on a consensus agenda. And I'll also note that there were no written public comments on...

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Ms. LaVine. I just got dropped off there for a split second and came back on. And so did we do the public testimony?

Robbin LaVine: I just got to the point, Mr. Chair, through the Chair, I just got to the point where I noted there were no written public comments on this proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Ms. LaVine. We'll go ahead and move on to open up the lines for any public comment that may be online. Operator, at this time

this is when we would now make available the lines for anybody who would like to speak. Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. As a reminder, to ask a question or give a comment or testimony, press star 1. No questions on the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. I appreciate that, Operator. We'll go ahead and move onto Regional Advisory Council recommendations.

Nanci Morris Lyon: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Nanci Morris Lyon, Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council Chairman. Yes, this proposal has been a long, hard-fought battle for us. And we thought we had it conquered. And then we realized that we were not capturing the intent. So the comments that we have on this proposal, our deliberation that caused this to request this to be moved off the consensus agenda as follows.

The Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council requests that 22-40 be removed from the consensus agenda until board (unintelligible) to be deferred on this proposal. During the winter 2022 meeting the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council took up WP 22-40, stating there were parts of the OSM modified regulatory language that did not capture the council's intent. Some council members spoke with hunters from the region.

The hunters did not support the proposed regulatory language and expressed concern with the speed parameters and prohibition against hunters making numerous approaches. This regulatory guidance is not realistic for harvesting a wolf. A hunter would not be able to hold ground traveling at or under 15 miles an hour while attempting to take a wolf. By the time a hunter gets in 300 yards a wolf will hear you and run.

The council expressed concern that at speeds of 15 miles an hour it is impossible to sneak up on a wolf. In order to effectively and efficiently harvest a wolf, a hunter will generally have to make numerous approaches before the hunter is able to harvest a wolf. WP 22-40 could also impact subsistence activities in the subsistence economy.

Many hunters sell the (unintelligible) wolves, and use those funds to purchase fuel to hunt caribou. The language before the board will reduce harvest opportunities in the field. Finally, the council noted that the Alaska Board of Game was scheduled to address a similar proposal known as Proposal 23, during the winter 2022 meeting.

The council expressed interest in the Board of Game action on this proposal and it (unintelligible) keeping regulations aligned on state and federal lands. The council recognizes the complexity and the widespread ramifications the regulation may have. We are asking that the board defer action on this proposal until more information can be gathered and more user groups can be fully informed and their interest considered.

On January 24, 2022 at the Central Southwest Board of Game meeting, the Board of Game passed Proposal 23 as amended, to include Unit 17 and included language that allows the use of snow machines to approach within 300 yards of wolf or wolverine at speeds less than 15 miles an hour, including repeated approaches. The Board of Game also expressed intent to define condition at the following statewide meeting.

On March 7th the statewide meeting, the Board of Game passed Proposal 271 as amended, which removed the restrictions on distance, speed, and repeated approaches for harvesting wolf or wolverine. The language that the state finally adopted was as follows. A snow machine may be used to approach and

pursue wolves and wolverines that may not come in contact with live animals.  
And that basically concludes the board's comments for this proposal.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the RAC Chair? All right, thank you. We'll go ahead and move onto summary of tribal comments. I believe that's you, Robbin?

Jack Reakoff: Mr. Chairman?

Anthony Christianson: Yes?

Jack Reakoff: Jack Reakoff, Western Interior Regional Council.

Anthony Christianson: Oh, Im sorry. There's more on this one. Sorry. I'm just looking at my agenda. Thank you, Jack for intercepting me. You have the floor.

Jack Reakoff: So the - at the fall meeting my RAC supported WP 22-40 as modified by OSM and at the time the council felt that the refined language recommended by OSM and the working group, addressed the Federal Subsistence Board's previous concerns on this issue, and was an equitable accommodation of both agency-specific and federal subsistence regulatory systems.

The council also noted that Unit 19 residents who live within Western Interior Region, would be affected by this proposal. But subsequently, the Board of Game promulgated Proposal 271, and then the (unintelligible) River Advisory Committee met in regards to this proposal. And so we opposed it as written. And so the restrictions of approaching wolf and wolverine at 15 miles an hour - we wanted to see that the caribou regulation was divided out (unintelligible) for caribou but not for wolf and wolverine harvest.

And so as Nanci is saying there, the council's previous comments are now qualified by the state Board of Game action. And so at this point - we supported the proposal but at this point I would agree with Nanci. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Jack. Any questions for Jack? Any other Regional Advisory Council chairs like to speak to this? Thank you. Thank you to the two chairs there. We'll go ahead and move on. And Nanci and Jack, we'll go ahead and move on to Orville. You have the floor as Tribal Native Liaison consultation..

Orville Lind: Good morning, Mr. Chair, Federal Subsistence Board members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for OSM. During the August '19 consultation sessions we did not have no comments or recommendations on this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Orville. We'll go ahead and move onto the State Liaison Representative.

Ben Mulligan: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Ben Mulligan here for the day. For the record, ADF&G supports the proposal with modification that would align state and federal regulations. I will note for the record, since we just checked in yesterday with our Board of Game regulatory specialist and unfortunately, we don't have our final regulatory language available for your guys' review, for this discussion, or else we would have provided that to you to help make your discussion a little easier. My apologies.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Ben. Any questions for the state? Hearing none, we'll go ahead and move onto the ISC comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chair again, this is Robbin LaVine, Subsistence Policy Coordinator and the Interagency Staff Committee Chair.



For Wildlife Proposal 22-40, the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Robbin. I'll open up the floor for board discussion with council chairs and state. Hearing none, board action. Floor is open for board action.

Sarah Creachbaum: Mr. Chair, National Park Service.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move to defer Wildlife Proposal 22-40 to use snow machines to position wolves and wolverine in Units 9(b), 9(c), 17(b), and 17(c). If I get a second I will explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA seconds.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. During the most recent meeting and today, the proponent asked the board to defer Wildlife Proposal 22-40 to allow the council another regulatory cycle to formulate language defining positioning of wolves and wolverine. The council noted the discrepancy between traditional harvest methods, and the OSM modification to allow for the use of snow machines to assist in the take of wolverine and wolves.

In deference to the councils, I intend to support my motion to defer Wildlife Proposal 22-40. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any board discussion, comments, or questions?

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Gene, you have the floor.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Mr. Chair. BIA is very much in support of deferring this proposal for further - as clarification of verbiage to be considered by the board my question would be up until what points are we deferring? Would it be the winter meeting coming up next winter, or - so temporarily I was wondering although I made the motion to support, I'd also like to get clarification, possibly an amendment to at what point we would defer to. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Gene. Any other board questions or comments? Call for the question.

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. Go ahead, Gene.

Gene Peltola: Yes. So not hearing any discussion about deferral date, I'd like to make an amendment to the motion to defer to the January, winter, upcoming board winter meeting.

Anthony Christianson: Okay. Is there concurrence by the maker of the motion?

Sarah Creachbaum: Yes, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Okay. Any opposition from the board to defer this to our winter meeting? Hearing no objection to the deferral we'll - motion carries to defer

this to the winter meeting. Okay. We'll go ahead and move on. Staff, you can call upon the next Wildlife Proposal and the analysis. Thank you.

Kendra Holman: Mr. Chair, can you hear me?

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor.

Kendra Holman: Okay. Mr. Chair, members of the board, my name is Kendra Holman, and I'm a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. Wildlife...

(Lisa Gretig): Mr. Chair, this is (Lisa Gretig). I'm sorry to interrupt. But could you just clarify on the record, the vote for WP 22-40? I'm - I never heard a vote and I'm hearing from other staff they didn't hear a vote for that one as well.

Anthony Christianson: When you have a motion on the floor and you second it, if there's no opposition from the board then it's unanimous consent that we move forward. For the record. No opposition.

(Lisa Gretig): Okay.

Anthony Christianson: Yes.

(Lisa Gretig): Thank you for that clarification.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, (Lisa). We'll get back to the staff we're presenting.  
Thank you.

Kendra Holman: Okay, Mr. Chair. So this is Wildlife Proposal WP 22-41 that was submitted by the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge and the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, and can be found on page 300 of your meeting books. This proposal

requests that the federal in season manager be delegated authority to open and close seasons, announce harvest limits, and set restrictions for caribou.

In all portions of Unit 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 17(a), 17(b), 17(c), 18, 19(a), and 19(c), be a delegation of authority letter which is Appendix 1 and can be found on page 327 of you meeting books. The proponent states that the summer of '19 and 2020 population estimates of the Mulchatna caribou herd was 13,500 caribou which represents a 50% decline from the previous five years, and is below the state's minimum population objective of 30,000 caribou.

The proponent notes that the 2019, 2020 federal and state seasons were shortened due to conservation concerns. The 2020-2021 season was also shortened, providing for a bull only harvest in August and September, while the rest of the season remained closed. This request will help to conserve and recover the Mulchatna caribou herd and provide flexibility needed to make harvest management decisions in a timely manner.

The proponents recognize that the request will reduce harvest opportunity in the short run, but that conserving the Mulchatna caribou herd now will increase harvest opportunity in the future. The proponents also state that the - that harvest of other resources such as moose may increase the response to this proposal.

Until 2014 the Mulchatna caribou herd experienced harvest regulations that had been liberalized and then restricted as the result of dramatic population increases and decreases. In 2015 to 2018 the Board of Game and Federal Subsistence Board began liberalizing Mulchatna caribou and herd regulations.

In 2019 ADF&G decreased the harvest limit of the RC 503 caribou registration hunt permits. This was followed by the Federal Subsistence Board

approving a special action request to decrease the harvest limit for the 2019-2020 regulatory year. This included closing units 18, 19(a), and 19(b) caribou hunting, except by federally qualified subsistence users with a harvest limit of one bull and delegating authority to Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Manager to open and close seasons throughout the herd range.

This request was approved due to serious conservation concerns for the Mulchatna caribou herd and support from the affected Regional Advisory Council and local users. In 2020 ADF&G began liberalizing regulations by announcing a bulls only hunt across the range of the Mulchatna herd.

The Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Manager announced an identical federal hunt in 2020-2021. Excuse me. The population size and distribution of the Mulchatna caribou herd has changed dramatically over the past 40 years. The current range of the Mulchatna herd is depicted on figure 1 of page 306 of your meeting books.

The herd primarily occurs in two distinct populations, an eastern segment and a western segment, with separate calving and seasonal areas based on radial collar animals, mixing between these two subpopulations is low. The herd peaked at 200,000 caribou in '96 and declined steadily to 18,000 in 2013.

Between 2014 and '16 the herd stabilized around 28,000 caribou. Then most recently, in 2019 population estimates indicate the herd has declined to 13,500 which is well below the state's minimum population objective of 30,000. The western segments population has declined since 2012 while the eastern segments population increased between 2014 and 2016, and then declined back to 2012 levels in 2019.

Population numbers can be found on figure 2 on page 314 of your meeting book. While the cause of the decline is unknown, decreased range quality predation, particularly by brown bears on the calving grounds, ice events, deep snow, and the harvest pressure, may all have contributed to the decline.

Given the recent substantial decline to the Mulchatna caribou herd population, conservation measures are warranted. Reported caribou harvest has declined in correlation with the caribou population from almost to - in 2000 to 28 caribou in the 2020-2021 season.

Reported harvest numbers can be found in figure 5 on page 318 in your meeting book, and within table 2 which also starts on page 318 of your meeting book. Household harvest surveys as well as law enforcement information and observations, indicate actual harvest is much higher than reported harvest, although the magnitude of unreported harvest is unknown.

While this change may decrease harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users in the short term, it may help to conserve the Mulchatna caribou herd to ensure further harvest opportunities. If this request is approved, the federal in season manager would be delegated authority to open and close seasons, announce harvest limits, and set sex ratios across the range of the Mulchatna caribou herd.

The conservation benefits of adopting 22-41 are uncertain. Delegating authority to an in season manager to provide management flexibility which is critical in responding to changing her conditions in a timely manner. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the council. I'd be happy to address any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions from the board? All right. Hearing none, well did we get any public comment during this proposal?

Kendra Holman: Mr. Chair, this is Kendra Holman again, and we did not receive any written public comments on this proposal.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Kendra. And we'll, at this time, we'll go ahead and move onto the online. Operator, if there is any public online that would like to speak to this agenda item, this is their time to do so. Thank you.

Coordiinator: No questions on the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Okay. Thank you. We'll move onto Regional Advisory Council recommendations.

Nanci Morris Lyon: Mr. Chair, for the record, Nanci Morris Lyon, Bristol Bay Regional Subsistence Advisory Council.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor.

Nanci Morris Lyon: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Bristol Bay Regional Subsistence Advisory Council was in support of WP 22-41. The council agrees with having one in season manager for streamlining the process, as well as being responsive to the needs of the caribou population and the subsistence users. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other Regional Advisory Council?

Eva Patton: Mr. Chair, this is Eva Patton on behalf of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, Eva. You have the floor.

Eva Patton: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the board. For the record, Eva Patton, Council Coordinator for the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And again, unfortunately, phone line in (unintelligible) have been down as well as internet. I was able to connect with somebody from (unintelligible) and they're communicating with me just within the community.

So these are the challenges rural communities face, in having meetings by teleconference. But I will be providing the council's recommendation and again, the council had requested that this proposal be moved to the non-consensus agenda, to address some further concerns that the council has with the viability of the Mulchatna caribou herd, and wish to be able to share this concern and potential conservation strategies, both with the board and with the other councils within the region of this herd, the Bristol Bay and the Western Interior Regional Advisory Councils.

So at their fall meeting in 2021 the council voted to support WP 22-41. And the council supports the refuge manager's delegated authority for flexibility to engage conservation measures as needed, to manage the Mulchatna caribou herd. Council is very concerned about the decline in the herd and supports the manager having the ability to open or close the hunt, and set harvest and sex restrictions in order to maintain a viable population for subsistence harvest opportunity in the future.

The council requests that the refuge manager work closely with local communities and include their observations and management decisions for the Mulchatna caribou herd. People from the villages are not - are always out on



the land and observing, and have in depth historical knowledge of this herd over the years.

Further, at the council's recent winter meeting, in March 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, the council herd reports updated reports on the status of the Mulchatna caribou herd and was very, very concerned about, you know, the 50% reduction in the herd size.

And deliberated further about observation or management actions that they would like for the refuge manager to consider, and for the board to consider in support of the refuge manager with the delegated authority. So the council had deliberated a request for a five years moratorium hunting the Mulchatna caribou herd.

And again, because they're very concerned about the dramatic decline of this herd and an incredibly important subsistence resource for numerous communities throughout the range of the herd, then the council has endeavored to ensure that the herd will be able to recover, so it will remain a subsistence resource in the future.

And therefore, the council is requesting a full closure to any harvest of the Mulchatna caribou herd until it rebounds to an established stable population objective of at least 30,000 caribou. And the council further requests to establish jointly with the Federal Subsistence Board and the federal land managers, a five year moratorium, to close to the harvest of the Mulchatna caribou herd, or until that population objective of 30,000 caribou has been met, in order to help that herd rebound so it will once again be able to reach a population size that can sustain subsistence harvest into the future.

So the council's recommending to close all state and federal lands. They did provide comment to the Board of Game as well and is requesting to close all federal lands to the harvest of Mulchatna caribou herd throughout their migratory range, and that includes all portions of Units 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 17(a), 17(b), 17(c), 17(c) remainder, 18, 18 remainder, 19(a) and 19(b).

And to maintain a sex ratio of 30 bulls to 100 cows, that would ensure herd productivity. And they're asking for continued outreach, hunting regulations, and closures, education and incentives for caribou conservation measures. And improved knowledge and in compliance with harvest reporting requirements.

Again, as you heard in the analysis, the herd has reduced to approximately half its size in the past few years. And as a result of this decline the conservation measures were implemented in the past two seasons by both state and federal managers.

And since receiving management authority the Kodiak refuge manager in collaboration with staff from Alaska Department of Fish and Game, had determined that there is no harvestable surplus that would allow the herd to grow. And therefore, the council is requesting this hunting moratorium in the interest of allowing time for the Mulchatna caribou herd to recover, and a closure across the entire range of the Mulchatna caribou herd is warranted.

A hunting moratorium will help send a clear message to all communities across the range of the herd, about the dire situation of the herd's population size. And need to work together on communication and outreach to build support for these conservation efforts, for a sustainable subsistence harvest opportunity in the future.

This council has experience with success of similar hunting moratorium efforts in the past for moose on both the Lower Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. And now those moose populations have rebounded to provide once again, for ample subsistence harvest opportunity. And the council believes the same can be achieved for the Mulchatna caribou herd. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the board.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Eva. Any questions for Eva? Hearing none, was there any other Regional Advisory Council?

Jack Reakoff: Mr. Chairman, this is Jack Reakoff, Western Interior Regional Advisory Council.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Jack.

Jack Reakoff: Sir, the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council supported WP 22-41. The council supports the delegated authority and an in season manager to help manage and conserve the herd. The delegation of authority was initially put into place by approval of those temporary special action requests submitted by the Western Interior Council and Yukon Delta Regional Advisory Council.

The council believes that it should remain in place becoming part of the codified federal regulations. Further comment - the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council is very concerned about the Mulchatna caribou herd way back in the early 2020s. If you look at the data - the herd bull/cow ratios were going completely into the toilet as far back as - below management objectives, as far back as 2000, 2001.

That herd got down to one large bull per 100 cows. The herd went into reproductive failure. And so that's what happened with the herd. I talked to

semi-herders, ranger herders in Scandinavia. They don't breed reindeer unless they're eight years old for cows, breeding cows and they have 15 cows per one large bull. No six. I asked them about younger bulls. No way.

This population has been staggering for years but is starting to recover. And to comments from the Yukon Delta subsistence staff, let the Western Interior Council know that there was exceptionally high harvest of caribou in the winter of 2018-'19. Under further investigation we decided that a discussion with a YK Delta RAC that there was a significant winter harvest occurring, and that's where the recent declines, especially in the western component.

We did not deliberate. Our meeting was before the Western Yukon Delta's meeting, and we are meeting about a week before them. We would have probably went along with this moratorium idea, but I can't speak to that. The council has not deliberated that. But I do feel that extreme measures of conservation need to be put into place. An in season manager needs to be in delegated authority, because predominantly federal public lands.

And this herd is under - is in a real critical condition. It needs to have conservation of especially the cow component and large bull component at this time. And so those would be my comments to the Federal Subsistence Board. I'll entertain any further questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Jack. Any questions for Jack? Thank you, Jack. Any other Regional Advisory Councils who would like to speak to this?

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board, for the record my name's Nissa Pilcher. I'm the Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Council.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Nissa.

Nissa Pilcher: Hello. The Seward Peninsula supported WP 22-41. The council supports closing the Mulchatna caribou herd to protect the herd until the population is healthy enough to support harvest. The delegation of authority will allow timely decisions to be made to respond to changing conditions of the herd. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other regional councils who would like to speak to this? Hearing no more Regional Advisory Councils, we'll go ahead and move onto Tribal Alaska Native corporate comments. Native Liaison?

Orville Lind: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Orville Lind, Native Liaison, OSM. There are no comments or recommendation on this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Orville. We'll go ahead and move onto the Alaska Department of Fish and Game state liaison.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports giving the federal in season manager the flexibility to manage the Mulchatna herd by allowing them to open and close the season, announce harvest limits, and set sex restrictions. The Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge has been a partner in research, monitoring, and education when it comes to the Mulchatna caribou herd, and has been a partner towards the longstanding common goal of conserving the herd throughout its range. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? Thank you, Ben. We'll move onto ISC's comments.

Robbin LaVine: Good morning, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. For Wildlife Proposal 22-41 the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. That opens the floor for board discussion with the council chairs and state liaison. Floor is open for board action on this proposal.

Sara Boario: Mr. Chair, the Fish & Wildlife Service moves to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-41. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA seconds.

Sara Boario: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I intend to support 22-41 that requests that the Kodiak Refuge federal in season manager be delegated authority to open and close seasons, announce harvest limits, and set sex restrictions for caribou in all or portions of Units 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 17(a), 17(b), 17(c), 18, 19(a), and 19(b), via delegation of authority letter.

Adoption of this proposal will delegate authority to manage the herd by delegation of authority letter that has been supported by the Western Interior council, Bristol Bay council, Seward Peninsula council. We recognize the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta council's interest in a moratorium to protect the herd for future generations. And we share their concern about reduction in the herd size. And in the response, the manager has closed the hunt in 2021 and 2022.

The delegation of authority letter provides management flexibility for the Kodiak Refuge Manager, to continue to work closely with local communities and to include their knowledge and observations in management decisions as well as education and outreach materials. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any further board discussion? Comments? Questions?

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, Gene. You have the floor.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do appreciate the comments provided by the Regional Advisory Councils. (Unintelligible) have been a very supportive delegated authority with regard to management (unintelligible) the field level. In response to the YK Delta's request for five year moratorium, although it might not specifically be what the YK Delta would be pleased with, although if the board was to adopt this, it would be well within the purview of the (unintelligible) manager, i.e. the recognized Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge for work at a local level and exercise.

The delegated authority to open and close, so something similar could be accomplished. My concern would be that the board try to tack something on at this juncture that (unintelligible) inappropriate because it did not go through the public process. Although, speaking to the YK's concern, something similar could be accommodated by working with the NC's management for the herd.  
Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Gene. Any other board comments, questions, or discussion? Call for the question.

Gene Peltola: BIA question.

Anthony Christianson: Roll call, please, Sue.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The motion is to adopt WP 22-41. I'll start out with Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service.

Sara Boario: The Fish & Wildlife Service supports the motion.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. BIA, Gene Peltola?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service.

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Tom Heinlein, BLM.

Thomas Heinlein: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Forest Service supports. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: Support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Charlie. Chair, Anthony Christianson.



Anthony Christianson: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The motion passes unanimously.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Sue. We'll call on staff for the next WP proposal.  
Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. It should be Wildlife Closure Review 22-05 presented by Kendra Holman.

Kendra Holman: Again, hello, Mr. Chair and members of the board. My name is Kendra Holman and I'm a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. This closure review can be found on page 1048 of your meeting book. Unit 9 - the closure location is within Unit 9(c). That portion draining into the Naknek River from the south. Public lands are closed during December for hunting of moose except by federally qualified subsistence users hunting under these regulations.

The regulatory history for this area - in the 1990s ADF&G emergency orders closed this December antlerless moose and all our parks and Naknek drainage in Unit 9(c). In '92 they proposed that the harvest limit be changed from one moose to one bull in the entire drainage. As a result of this action, the Naknek drainage was divided into two hunt areas and the December hunts were closed except to federally qualified subsistence users, this area draining into the Naknek River from the north and the area that drains into the river from the south.

Additionally, this action closed federal public lands for moose harvest during December, except for federally qualified users. In '95 the fall season was

extended and federal registration permit required during the August. In 2006 the antlerless harvest was eliminated, but a federal registration permit was required for both fall and winter season. In 2008 a Unit 9 moose working group was established to better understand the conflicts in the region and develop management strategies and recommendations.

In 2011 and 2012 regulations were liberalized on the recommendations of the working group. In 2016 it was determined that the registration permit is required for both fall and winter seasons. The closure was reviewed with the determination and the closure was reviewed with the determination to maintain status quo.

Since the early 20th Century most of the Alaska Peninsula gradually expanded their range southward. This expansion was accompanied by a dramatic population increase until the 1960s when the population began to decline.

Moose population status and trends in Unit 9 is difficult for several reasons, including low moose density and snow and weather conditions are frequently inadequate for surveys. In 1991 the Alaska Peninsula at (unintelligible) National Wildlife Refuge, began conducting area surveys of moose. The surveys provided the bull/cow and calf/cow ratios for the total density estimates. Figures 1, 2, and 3 on pages 1056 and 1057 of your meeting book, shows this information.

Alaska resident moose harvest in Units 9(b) and 9(c) occur by registration permit RM272. A non-resident moose harvest in Units 9(b) and 9(c) occurs under registration RM282. While reported moose harvest can be parsed out by subunit it's not possible to distribute it by hunt area. Therefore, the number of moose reported harvest only within the closure areas not available. Although reported moose harvest within Unit 9(c) provides some insight.

In 2020 to 2019 total reported moose harvest of 9(c) averaged 29 moose ranging from 16 to 43 moose per year. Between 2010 and 2015 80% to 90% of the Unit 9 moose harvest occurred in September. Figure 4 on page 1058 of your meeting books shows the breakdown of reported moose harvest in Unit 9(c) by local and non-local users from 2000 to 2019. Local user is defined by those with a customer and traditional use determination.

If this closure is rescinded non-federally qualified users would be able to harvest moose on federal public lands within that portion of Unit 9(c) draining into the Naknek River from the south during December. It may also result in increased moose harvest. Though increases are expected to be small, moose density within the closure areas below state management harvest levels for moderate density Moose population.

Moose densities within the closure are very low and the population trend is uncertain. The conservative approach is to maintain the closure until moose densities increase and the population exhibits an increase in trend. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the board. I'd be happy to address any questions.

Sue Detwiler: Chair this is Sue. Did you drop off the line? Do we need to hand off to Rhonda while you get back online?

Rhonda Pitka: Hello? Hi. This is Rhonda. Am I taking over now?

Sue Detwiler: I'm not sure of Tony, Rhonda. He may have just dropped off and is trying to get back into this room. I think the next step that we were at was written comments or actually board questions on the staff presentation and then written comments.

Rhonda Pitka: Oh, okay. So can we get a summary of the written public comments? Thank you for that, Sue. I appreciate it.

Kendra Holman: So this is Kendra Holman. There were no written comments received on this proposal.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. At this time I'd like to open the floor to public testimony. Operator, is there anybody queued up for questions?

Coordiinator: This is the operator, as a reminder, to ask a question or give a comment or testimony, please press star 1.

Rhonda Pitka: This is pretty funny. But actually, I thought that I had got dropped off from the call because I couldn't hear anything after a while. So it was just Tony and not me. If we don't...

Coordiinator: No questions over the phone.

Rhonda Pitka: ...have any public comments I'd like to - Operator, were there any public comments?

Coordiinator: No questions over the phone at this time.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. Okay. So we are at Regional Advisory Council recommendations. Bristol Bay?

Nanci Morris Lyon: Thank you, Madam Chair. Nanci Morris, Bristol Bay RAC for the record. So the council recommended for original closure that although local residents desired an antlerless moose season, the council questioned whether this population could sustain a (unintelligible). In order to protect the herd and to

provide priority to federally qualified subsistence users, the council believed that a bull-only harvest should be allowed and that federal lands draining into the Naknek River from the south, should be closed to non-federally qualified subsistence users.

The council believes that this would result in a greater number of bulls available for subsistence users and a larger cow base for herd expansion in the future. When - then the closure was then put in place and we support maintaining status quo on WCR 22-05. The council believes that there appears to be available moose for harvest in December, however population may not be high enough for the elimination of the closure to be sustainable.

The council agrees that maintaining the subsistence priority should continue. And I'd just like to point out too, if you look at the graph on page 1058 we've had some pushback in the area of some guided hunters who also use these areas for their hunt. You can see recovery happening, however it has not completed yet. So we're totally in favor of maintaining the status quo and protecting what harvestable surplus that is for our subsistence hunters.  
Thanks.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you so much. I appreciate that. Next Regional Advisory Council? Or was that it?

Sue Detwiler: I believe that was it, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Oh, perfect. Okay. Then we are onto the Tribal Alaska Native Corporation comments for consultation, Orville Lind.

Orville Lind: Good morning, Madam Chair, board members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for OSM. During the consultation session there were no comments or recommendations. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you, Orville. I appreciate it. Now we are onto Alaska Department of Fish & Game comments.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, Madam Chair. For the record, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports the elimination of this closure. The current moose population in this area is stable with a density for which there is no conservation concern. In looking at the movements of collared cow moose in the area, this indicates that there's enough movement through the ten cow areas that multiple BCC should be pooled.

And that is what we do here at ADF&G, pooling with nearby park border and King Salmon River town areas from 2018 to 2020 resulted in counts of 192, 220, and 221 respectively, and a density of .8 moose per square mile. Whole cow/calf ratios were 49, 34, and 22 per 100 cows. This data indicates a stable population of moderate density.

There was a proposal at the Board of Game earlier this year. And given the data, the Board of Game chose to increase the moose season length in GMUs 9(b) and 9(c) for resident Alaskan hunters that extended the moose hunt in those units for five days in the fall and 15 days in the winter. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you for your comments. Right now we're at the Interagency Staff Committee comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the board. This is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Closure Review 22-05 the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comments. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. We are on board discussion with council chairs and the state liaison.

Anthony Christianson: Hello.

Rhonda Pitka: Hi, Tony. Right now we're at board discussion and deliberation on WCR 22-05.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Rhonda.

Rhonda Pitka: I wasn't hearing any. So our next step would be Federal Subsistence Board action. And now you're online, so you can take this over. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Rhonda. I appreciate it. Board action is - table is open for board action.

Sara Boario: Mr. Chair, the Fish & Wildlife Service moves to maintain status quo for Wildlife Closure Review 22-05 which keeps Unit 9(c) closed to the taking of moose except by federally qualified subsistence users. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA seconds.

Sara Boario: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Moose densities within Unit 9(c) closure area remain low and the population trend is uncertain. Maintaining the closure as supported by the Bristol Bay Council, will continue to provide a conservative

approach until moose densities increase and continues to provide a subsistence opportunity for federally qualified users. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Any questions, comments, or discussion from the board? CaAll for the question.

Gene Peltola: BIA question.

Anthony Christianson: All in favor of the motion say aye.

Sara Boario: Aye.

Gene Peltola: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Woman: Aye.

Anthony Christianson: Opposed, same sign. Thank you. Motion carries unanimously. Sue, please call on the staff for the next WP proposal analysis.

Sue Detwiler: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So that concludes the Bristol Bay non-consensus agenda items. Now we're moving into the YK Delta and that will start with WP 22-44 presented by Tom Plank.



Tom Plank: Good morning, Mr. Chair, members of the board. My name is Tom Plank and I am a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. And I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP 22-44 submitted by the Yukon Delta Wildlife Refuge requesting that the fall moose season in the Kuskokwim hunt area of Unit 18 be extended from September 1st through the 30th to September 1st to October 15th, and that it may be announced season be established from December to January 31st with a harvest limit of one antlered bull by federal registration permit. And this is beginning on page 1053 of your book.

The proposal states that the average moose harvest since 2017 for the RM615 hunt within Zone 2, has been 78 moose which is below the quota of 110 moose. The proponent further states that extending the season in Zone 2 which is predominantly federal public lands, will allow for additional hunting opportunities for federally qualified subsistence users and the announcement of a may be announced winter season will allow the harvest of any remaining fall quota.

Federal public lands and the Kuskokwim hunt area have been closed to non-federally qualified users since 1991. Between 2004 and 2008 the Federal Subsistence Board and State Board of Game, enacted a harvest moratorium to promote growth of Unit 18 moose population. Since 2009 moose harvest in the Kuskokwim hunt area has been managed by quotas. And in 2017 ADF&G and the Yukon Delta Refuge began managing this hunt in two zones.

Zone 1 is primarily non-federal lands and quotas are set by ADF&G. Users can easily access Zone 1 by boat along the main stems of the Kuskokwim River and quotas are quickly met. Zone 2 is primarily federal lands and Yukon Delta Refuge sets quotas. Zone 2 is much more difficult to access and quotas are not usually met.

For regulatory year 2020-'21 a (unintelligible) Special Action Request, WSA 20-05 extended the season seven days.

And of note, the Alaska Board of Game extended the state season in Zone 2 until October 15th at their January 2020 meeting through adoption of Proposal 7 as amended. The extended close date of October 15th was recently updated and enacted for the 2021-'22 season. And then Wildlife Special Action, WSA 21-03 was approved by the board in August 2021, which extended the fall moose season to October 15th in Zone 2, to align with 2021-'22 season with the current state regulations.

Here in the 1990s moose populations in the Kuskokwim River drainage were low, and hunting pressure limited growth of the population. The 2004 to 2008 moratorium was effective in establishing a harvestable population. And since then the moose population has continued to grow. Currently, ADF&G estimates 4000 moose in the Kuskokwim hunt area which exceeds population objectives. Bull/cow ratios are high, as are cow/calf ratios which indicate a grown moose population.

Since 2011 reported harvest had averaged 183 moose per year, although harvest has increase as the moose population, and therefore, harvest quotas have increased. Federally qualified subsistence users account for 95% of the moose harvested. And demand far exceeds moose availability. As previously mentioned, ADF&G and Yukon Delta Refuge, cooperatively manage the Kuskokwim hunt areas in two zones.

Prior to adopting a fixed season quotas in Zone 1 were quickly met and seasons closed early by state emergency order. Under the fixed season Zone 1 was open for 11 days in 2020 and open for nine days in 2021. However, since

2017 average harvest in Zone 2 has only been 78 moose, which is well below the quota of 110 moose.

Harvest from 2019 to 2020 when the season was extended seven days, at a harvest increase of 20% with 90 moose harvested in 2020. This could be an indication that the season extension was effective for 2020. Zone 2 consists of tributaries to the Kuskokwim Rivers and requires specialized boats to access, as well as longer travel times and more fuel. The unmet quota in Zone 2 is likely a function of difficulties in access rather than the lack of need for moose meat.

If WP 22-44 is adopted, the moose season and Kuskokwim hunt area of Unit 18 would be extended 15 days, closing October 15th instead of September 30th. And the winter season would be announced if the fall harvest quota was not met. This would increase hunting opportunities for federally qualified subsistence users and could increase total moose harvest in the area. If water levels are too low in the fall to access Zone 2, a winter season could be announced providing easier access via snow machine, which would also address the concerns addressed in the WP 22-43.

Alternatively, if the harvest quota is met in the fall then the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge manager would not announce a winter season. OSM's conclusion is to support proposal WP 22-44 with modification to clarify the regulatory language and to delegate authority to the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge manager to announce the winter season via delegation of authority letter only.

Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the board. I'd be happy to field any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Tom. Any questions from the board? Thank you. Did you receive any public comments during this proposal?

Tom Plank: This is Tom Plank with the OSM again. And there were no written public comments submitted. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Tom. With that, we'll move onto the operator. Is there anybody online who would like to be recognized at this time, to provide public comment for this agenda item?

Coordiinator: As a reminder, to ask a question or comment, please press star 1. No questions over the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move onto Regional Advisory Council. Any recommendation?

Eva Patton: Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the board. This is Eva Patton, Council Coordinator for the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And I will be providing the council's recommendation on behalf of Chair (Raymond Oni). The YK Delta RAC supports WP 22-44. Moose harvest quotas for Zone 2 of the Kuskokwim hunt area are often not met due to difficulty in reaching upper river tributaries of this area.

Extending the fall season may allow for easier access when water levels rise with the fall rains. Also, moose are not moving around as much with warmer temperatures in the early season (unintelligible). The council has heard requests from local communities and tribes in this area that an extended season would give hunters a better opportunity to be successful. The winter maybe announced season will also help subsistence users meet their moose

harvest needs if the harvest quota is not met during the fall hunt. Thank you,  
Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Eva. Any question from the board? Are there any other  
Regional Advisory Council chairs who would like to speak to this?

Jack Reakoff: Jack Reakoff, Western Interior Regional Advisory Council.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Jack.

Jack Reakoff: So Western chair Regional Advisory Council oppose the proposal WP 22-43,  
and we support 22-44. The reason we oppose proposal WP 22-43 is access to  
those one is easy, and the quotas are met rapidly. The council is also  
concerned about the really low bull/cow ratios. The council believes the  
moose population in Zone 1 can't support additional harvest.

We support WP 22-44 because by December 15th 60% of moose have lost  
their antlers, timing for the announced hunt should consider this information.  
The council supported the proposal as submitted, to align with the Yukon  
Delta Regional Advisory Council's recommendation. Western Interior  
(unintelligible) proposal with the State of Board of Game, and we were  
informed by (Glen Stahl), area biologist for the (unintelligible) that 60% of  
bull moose have loose antlers by December 15th. And that's a consideration in  
this winter hunt opening date. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Jack. Any questions for Jack? Any other Regional  
Advisory Council wish to speak to this? Thank you. Hearing none, we'll move  
onto the Tribal Alaska Native Corporation comments. Orville?

Orville Lind: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Orville Linda, Native Liaison for OSM. During the consultation session there were no comments or recommendations on Wildlife Proposal 22-44. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Orville. We'll go ahead and move onto Alaska Department of Fish & Game. Mr. Mulligan?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, sir. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports the aspect of the proposal that would align the federal and state fall moose season, but opposes the proposed winter season. We do recognize the moose population in the Kuskokwim hunt area continues to increase, however additional opportunity for a winter hunt has the potential to increase harvest to a level that would decrease bull to cow ratios quickly in curbing that positive trend in the population. Thank you, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Mr. Ben. We'll go ahead and move onto Interagency Staff Committee comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. The Interagency Staff Committee provided the following comment. Adoption of proposal 22-40 would provide additional harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users through the extension of the fall moose season in the Kuskokwim hunt area of Unit 18 from September 1st through 30th to September 1st through October 15th. And a winter maybe announced season will be established from September 1st through January 31st, with a harvest limit of one antlered bully by federally registration permit.

The winter hunt will not increase the quota and instead will potentially allow for the current quota to be met. Additional harvest opportunity is warranted

given the current quota was not met in 2020 and 2021 during the fall moose hunt in Zone 2, despite extending the season into October by special action.

Therefore, a winter season was proposed by the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, allowing additional harvest opportunity may help to meet the quota in Zone 2, which is primarily federal public lands, which is difficult to access and in area where quotas have not been met.

Residents of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Region have repeatedly expressed a need for additional hunts. In addition, the caribou season has been closed for the last two years in the local area, which has placed an additional burden on subsistence users. After the mid-2000 moose hunting moratorium, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, along with partner agencies, promised more hunting opportunities once the moose population increased.

This hunt proposal is an effort to fulfill those promises. The Interagency Staff Committee recognizes the support of this proposal from the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council and the suggestion by the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council, to consider the timing of the winter maybe announced season with respect to when moose shed their antlers. The refuge manager already has delegated authority to establish an annual quota, and to close the season once the quota is met.

The fall hunt requires the use of a state registration permit under federal regulations. The adoption of this proposal would require the creation and issuance of a federal registration permit for the winter season. Delegating this additional authority to the in season manager to announce the winter season, would provide management flexibility and simplify unit-specific regulations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Robbin. Any questions for ISC? Hearing none, we'll open the floor for board discussion with Council Chair or State Liaison. Hearing none, we'll open up the floor for federal board action this agenda item.

Sara Boario: Mr. Chair, the US Fish & Wildlife Service moves to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-44 as modified by OSM. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA second.

Sara Boario: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I intend to support my motion to extend the fall moose season in the Kuskokwim hunt area of Unit 18 from September 1-30 to September 1 to October 15. And that a maybe announced season be established from December 1 through January 31 with a harvest limit of one antlered bull by federal registration permit.

Adoption of this proposal will offer additional subsistence harvest opportunity to federally qualified users with more harvest opportunities in Zone 2 of the Kuskokwim hunt area, by extending the fall season for easier access when (water) levels rise with the fall rains. Also, moose are not moving around as much with warmer temperatures early in the season.

We support the modification by OSM to delegate authority to the Yukon Delta National Wildlife manager to announce the winter season. The manager already has delegated authority to set quotas. While the council supported the proposal as originally submitted, without the OSM modification the ability of the manager to open a winter maybe announced hunt provides a tool for managers to use to provide additional opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users.



A bulls-only hunt will alleviate concern for over-harvest of the population, especially when current quotas are not being met. This proposal provides additional subsistence opportunity while taking measures to ensure conservation when needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any board comments, questions, or discussion? Call for the question.

Gene Peltola: BIA question.

Anthony Christianson: All those in favor of the motion say aye.

Sara Boario: Aye.

Woman: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Woman: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Anthony Christianson: Opposed same sign. Motion carries unanimously. Thank you. Sue, can we move onto the next one, please?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. Wildlife Proposal 22-45 also presented by Tom Plank.

Tom Plank: Hello again, Mr. Chair, members of the board. For the record, my name is Tom Plank. I'm a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. And I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP 22-45, submitted by ADF&G requesting to create specific harvest regulations for Alaska Hare in Units 18, 22, and 23. And this is starting on page 1094 in your books.

The proponent states that the once abundant Alaska Hare in Units 18, 22, and 23, is now at a very low density and has a patchy distribution throughout the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, Seward Peninsula, and Northwest Alaska Region. The Alaska Hare sometimes called jackrabbits, Tundra Hare, or Arctic Hare. The Alaska Hare is called the Tundra Hare in federal regulations, but Alaska Hare appears to be the dominant term in contemporary usage, including in state regulations.

The Alaska Hare is a different species than the Snowshoe Hare, despite being lumped together in federal regulations. You can see the comparison chart table on page 1100. Federal Subsistence regulations for the hares in Units 18 and 23, have not changed since 1990 when the Federal Subsistence management program began.

At that time, a year-round season with no harvest limit was adopted from state regulation. Federal Subsistence regulations for hare in Unit 22, were established in 1990. And in 1995 the board adopted a proposal to shorten the season for hares in Unit 22 from July 1st through June 30th to September 1st to April 15th, with intent to close the season for hares during the mating, breeding, and birthing seasons.

ADF&G submitted Proposals 15 and 43 for the Alaska Board of Game's consideration during the January 2020 meeting, noting very low densities and patch distribution of Alaska Hares in the units. ADF&G requested the reduction of season and harvest limits in Units 18 and 22. And for consistency, the Board of Game adopted the identical management structure in Units 18, 22, and 23, for the Alaska Hare consisting of a harvest limit of two per day with a total of six per season, and an August 1st to May 31st season that requires hunters to salvage and hide all meat for human usage.

Alaska Hares are among the most poorly understood game species in Alaska. Anecdotally abundance is well below historical levels throughout the range of the species. In 2018 ADF&G initiated a multiyear study to evaluate movement and mortality as well as the long term capture techniques. Little is known about the harvest of Alaska Hare.

Household harvest surveys indicate that it is harvested throughout the communities of Western and Southwestern Alaska. If this proposal is adopted the Alaska Hare season will be reduced, although hunters will still have the opportunity to harvest hares during winter when they are out engaging in other subsistence or recreational activities.

The change in daily and overall harvest limits may be effective in reducing harvest which could translate into an improvement in the conservation status of these populations. Any positive effects these changes have on Alaska Hare population, will benefit subsistence users in the long term, despite the immediate reduction in subsistence opportunity.

The proponent requests a season which would be more restrictive than existing state regulations. If adopted, as requested, federally qualified subsistence users would still be able to harvest Alaska Hare in August and

May under state regulation. So the OSM conclusion supports proposal WP 22-45 with modification to shorten the season to August 1st to May 31st, and to modify the definition of hare in federal regulation.

Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the board. I'll be happy to field any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Tom. Any questions for Tom? Okay. Hearing none, any public comment received during this proposal, Tom?

Tom Plank: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, Tom Plank with the OSM. There were no written comments received for this proposal. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Tom. At this time is there any public online that would like to be recognized at this time? This is their time to be recognized for this. All right. Hearing no public online, I'm going to go ahead and call for a few-minute break before we get to the Regional Advisory Council. We'll go ahead and take a few-minute break here and reconvene at 11:00. Thank you.

Eva Patton: Board, this is Eva. Are you able to hear me?

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor.

Eva Patton: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the board. This is Eva Patton, Council Coordinator for the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And I will be providing the council's recommendation on behalf of Chairman (Raymond Oni). The YK Delta RAC supports WP 22-45 with the OSM modification.

The council supports reducing the harvest limit for Alaska Hare due to observed low population levels and lack of biological data for this species. The council discussed seeing few jackrabbits which they're called locally in the YK Delta Region, referring to Alaska Hare, that they see few Alaska Hare or jackrabbit tracks anymore, in the areas where they used to be abundant. And the decline has been a common observation around communities across the YK Delta Region.

Council members noted that Alaska Hare used to be abundant in snares around 30 years ago, but perhaps fast moving snow machines made it easier to track them down. And based on these local observations reducing the harvest limit now is warranted. The council requested more data but noted it is hard to study something when it is so scarce. And the council supports the OSM season date and modification, so that the federal season will not be more restrictive than the state season. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Sue, will you call our next RAC? Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. We have four additional councils that may wish to comment. And the next one would be Seward Peninsula.

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board, for the record my name is Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Council. I'll be speaking on their behalf.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Nissa.

Nissa Pilcher: All right. The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council wanted to support as modified by OSM. The council supports this proposal for the

conservation of the Alaska Hare. This population has been reported as low.  
Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Next council would be Western Interior.

Jack Reakoff: Jack Reakoff, Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. We deferred this proposal to the regions that would have Alaska Hare. And so I misstated last night regarding these proposals. I was cooking dinner, so sorry. And that's what the council decided to do. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Northwest Arctic?

Brooke McDavid: Mr. Chair, for the record, Brooke McDavid, Northwest Arctic Council Coordinator. The Northwest Arctic Council supported WP 22-45. The council noted that they have not seen the Alaska Hare in the region recently. People used to teach their young children to hunt them since they were easy to catch. The council supports maintaining the opportunity to still harvest some Alaska Hare when they are available.

They are good eating and providing subsistence opportunities to help address food security is important. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: And North Slope.

Eva Patton: Good morning, Mr. Chair, members of the board. This is Eva Patton, Council Coordinator for the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And Chairman Gordon Brower is not able to connect at the moment, so I will provide their recommendation.

The North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council supports WP 22-45 with modification to change the harvest limit for Alaska Hare to 15 per season, and support the longer season as recommended by OSM. And the council supported a reduction in harvesting seasons to help conserve the Alaska Hare, but expressed concern that only six Alaska Hares per year is not enough for making traditional cultural garments like parkas or blankets.

And the council considered going from a no limit hare to only six per year is too drastic of a change. But thought that perhaps 15 hares per year would provide for subsistence needs as well as conservation. Hares are an important resource for food security and traditional cultural first sowing practices. The council highlighted the importance of making fur parkas, mittens and muffs, especially for children and elders.

March is the optimum time to harvest hare for their fur and making the longer season on the OSM preliminary conclusion as preferred. The council did also stress that because Alaska Hare are not commonly seen in the North Slope region, or specifically around Point Hope in Unit 23, that there is likely confusion between Alaska Hare versus Snowshoe Hare. And the council reiterated the importance of making it very clear that these regulations are targeting Alaska Hare only and not the more abundant Snowshoe Hare.

They suggested using pictures and range maps to highlight the differences between the two species so that the local communities are not unnecessarily restricting harvest of an important subsistence resource where Snowshoe Hares are plentiful. And their suggested modifications can be found on page 1106 requesting two hare per day, 15 per season. And again, I'm supporting the OSM modification for a longer season. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Sue Detwiler: Mr. Chair, those were the councils that made recommendations. Thank you. Mr. Chair, I'm not sure whether you have dropped off again, or if Rhonda Pitka is on. But I think that would move us to the next stage of Tribal and Alaska Native Corporation comments. Are you on, Mr. Chair?

Rhonda Pitka: I'm on, Sue. Let's go to Regional Advisory Council comments.

Sue Detwiler: Sorry, Rhonda. Yes, I think I misspoke. We just finished with the five Regional Advisory Councils' recommendations and we're ready to go to the Tribal and Alaska Native Corporation comments.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Sue.

Rhonda Pitka: Oh, Im sorry. I misheard that also. Okay. Tribal and Alaska Native comments. Orville Lind?

Orville Land: Thank you, Madam Chair. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for OSM. During the consultation sessions we had no comments or recommendations on that proposal. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Can you guys hear me, Sue?

Sue Detwiler: Yes.

Anthony Christianson: Okay. Sorry. I started to speak a couple of times, and you guys weren't hearing me. Thank you. Sorry about that. We'll move onto Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, the Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports this proposal and also supports the modification to match the state



season of August 1st through May 31st as it still addresses the conservation concerns we have, and that local residents have also expressed along the way. And while aligning state and federal regulations to reduce hunter confusion. Thank you, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Then we'll move onto ISC committee comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And for this proposal the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Robbin. We'll move onto the board discussion with the Council Chair State Liaison. Hearing none, we'll open up the floor for board action on this proposal.

Sara Boario: Mr. Chair, the US Fish & Wildlife Service moves to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-45 as modified by OSM to establish specific seasons and harvest limits for Alaska Hare in Units 18-22 and 23. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA seconds.

Sara Boario: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I intend to support my motion to establish specific seasons and harvest limits for Alaska Hare in Units 18, 22, and 23 in deference to the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta and Seward Peninsula RACs. The analysis presents evidence for the need to establish specific regulations for Alaska Hare in these units, distinct from those for Snowshoe Hare.

Local knowledge indicates a reduction in the amount of Alaska Hares over recent years. Reducing the amount of harvest is a biologically appropriate

means of aiding population recovery. The OSM modification to align federal season dates with state seasons, will reduce regulatory complexity and provide subsistence harvest opportunity through the fall, winter, and spring seasons. A harvest limit of two per day and six per year, will be more effective in reducing the overall harvest and shortened seasons.

Finally, OSM's modification to the definition hare in federal regulations, will clarify any confusion that may arise from the use of different terms referring to Alaska Hare such as Tundra Hare. The YK Delta RAC supports reducing the harvest limit for Alaska Hare, due to observed low population levels. And the Seward Peninsula RAC supports conservation of the Alaska Hare whose population has been reported as well.

And we recognize the North Slope Council's request that we make it very clear that these regulations are targeting Alaska Hare only, and not the Snowshoe Hare, which is more abundant in that region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Is there any further board discussion, comments, or questions on this? Okay. We'll call for the question.

Gene Peltola: Question. BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and do roll call on this one, Sue. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The motion is to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-45 as modified by OSM. We'll start out with Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service.

Sara Boario: Fish & Wildlife Service supports the motion.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Sara. BIA, Gene Peltola?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports for reasons previously articulated in the motion.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Tom Heinlein, BLM.

Thomas Heinlein: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Forest Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Charlie Brower. Chair, Anthony Christianson.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. I support.

Sue Detwiler: And thank you. So motion passes with seven votes. One person not present.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Sue. We'll go ahead and move onto the next Wildlife Proposal and call on the staff to present. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. We're moving out of the YK Delta into Western Interior. And the first - the one proposal is WP 22-46 presented by Tom Plank.

Tom Plank: Good morning, Mr. Chair, members of the board. My name is Tom Plank. I'm a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. And I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP 22-46, submitted by the Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission, requesting that brown bear harvest limits for the portion of Unit 24(b) within Gates of the Arctic National Park, be increased from one bear to two bears. And this one would be found in your first volume of the consensus on page 361.

The proponent submitted this proposal because residents have observed brown bear populations growing, and believe the harvest to be far below sustainable yield. The commission states that the proposal would afford (Anubic) Pass residents hunting brown bear additional harvest opportunities. In 2020 the Alaska Board of Game adopted proposal 72 at a March 2020 meeting to increase the brown bear harvest limit to two bears in Unit 24(b) under state regulations.

The commission also submitted Wildlife Proposal WP 22-56 to increase the brown bear harvest limit to two bears in Unit 26(a), that portion within Gates of the Arctic National Park. Using extrapolated data from similar habitats and units, the estimated brown bear population for the northern portion of Unit 24 and southern portion of Unit 24, are 450 bears and 180 to 320 bears respectively. Gates of the Arctic National Park has an estimated density of 33.4 bears per 1000 kilometers.

The Unit's brown bear population is thought to be stable or slowly increasing. However, reproductive output for Gates of the Arctic is among the lowest in

Alaska. Limited food resources, and a short growing season are likely contributing factors to this pattern.

The three-year main reported harvest is 15 bears, including 14 bears harvested on average, in the northern portion of the unit, and one bear in the southern portion. Fifty-one percent of the harvest was by Alaska residents. The total estimated harvest has consistently been below the estimated bear population per year.

This harvest rate is well below the state management objective and the sustainable harvest rate is estimated at 5% to 6% of the estimated bear population per year or 39 to 56 bears per year can be sustained for all of Unit 24.

If adopted this proposal would align federal regulations within Gates of the Arctic National Park with state harvest limits, which would simplify regulations and lead to less confusion for users in Unit 24B. Current harvest rates are well below the state recommended sustainable harvest for Unit 24.

Alaska residents can already harvest two bears in Unit 24B under state regulations. An adoption of this proposal is not expected to have a substantial impact to current harvest levels and should have minimal impact to the brown bear population given the low level of harvest in the area but would increase harvest opportunities for federally qualified subsistence users.

OSM in conclusion supports proposal WP22-46. Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the Board. I'd be happy to field any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for staff? All right. Any public comments received during this proposal period?

Tom Plank: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, this is Tom Plank with OSM. There were three written public comments, all opposing citing concerns over low density and the low reproductive rates of bears in the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

The commenters are concerned of an increase potential for overharvest. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, at this time if there is anybody online who would like to speak to this proposal, this is the opportunity for them to speak to this agenda item. Thank you.

Coordinator: As a reminder, if you'd like to make a public testimony, please press star 1 at this time. There are no comments or questions or comments on the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendations.

Jack Reakoff: Mr. Chairman, this is Jack Reakoff, WIRAC.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Jack.

Jack Reakoff: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Council deliberated this proposal WP22-46. And the Council states the brown bears are a vital subsistence resource especially in the gates of the Arctic Park, especially when the caribou aren't available and that the brown bear population within the gates of the Arctic National Park is currently quite high. The proposal provides additional subsistence opportunity.

I'm the Vice Chair of the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission and the Gates of the Arctic National Park is an 8.2 million acre park. And the primary beneficiary of this proposal would be Anaktuvuk Pass.

When we had a meeting in mid-April of 2019, several people were stating that there are a lot more brown bears around than there used to be and that the caribou migrations have been coming later and later.

So the reason for a two harvest bag limit because not all hunters harvest these. There are specific hunters that actually will target brown bears and know how to skin them and how to cut them and like to eat the meat and there are hunters that don't.

It's not that everybody in Anaktuvuk is going to be hunting these bears. But it would give the people who do eat brown bear to share this meat throughout the community with the additional harvest opportunity. And so the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission submits the proposal for the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Jack. I appreciate that. And we will take a second here to take a step back. We did have one public commenter online and at this time, operator, if you want to make that line available for them, we will give them an opportunity to testify today. Thank you.

Coordinator: Bill, your line is open

Bill Sherwonit: Okay. Thank you. My name is Bill Sherwonit. I've spoken to you a couple times. I'm happy to have a chance to talk. I've been following the discussions today.

I live in Anchorage Alaska and I am not a - I do not practice a subsistence lifestyle. I am not a hunter. However I would like to speak a few words on behalf of brown bears or grizzlies that inhabit Gates of the Arctic National Park.

And although I'm speaking here for Proposal 46, this will also apply for Proposal 22-56. I will not be able to be around, but you can apply my comments to that proposal as well.

So I live in Anchorage. I have a long relationship with Gates of the Arctic National Park that goes back to the 1970s. Gates of the Arctic and the Central Brooks Range, I was introduced - obviously that was before the 70s. It was before there was a Gates of the Arctic National Park, but the Central Brooks Range and then later Gates of the Arctic are one of the special places in my life. I have a special relationship with the wilderness.

And I've had encounters with grizzly bears a number of times during my times up in the Brooks Range and in Gates of the Arctic National Park. And I'm presenting the perspective of someone for whom grizzly bears enliven the landscape and enrich my experience.

So I'm speaking in opposition to the expansion of the hunt and while you folks may not - or you may wonder what my expertise is or why you should pay any attention to me.

I will instead refer to the fact that the Interagency Staff Committee spoke in opposition to this proposal. And I simply hope that your discussion will include the perspectives of that committee.



While the Fish and Game representative said that there are no concerns about overharvest of the bear. In fact that committee did express conservation concerns for this brown bear partly because of the low reproductive rate that was previously mentioned.

I guess my argument is that I see, based on the committee's information and my own admittedly limited perspective, I don't see a need for an increase in the bear harvest. And I would say that the conservation concerns for brown bears or grizzlies within Gates of the Arctic outweigh the need for increased harvest by subsistence residents.

I would also point out that Gates of the Arctic National Park has much different perspectives and values than the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. And the fact that the Alaska Board of Game has approved such an increase in harvest is no rationale or no good reason for an expansion of the hunt within Gates of the Arctic National Park.

So I guess that's all I have to say for now. I appreciate you hearing the perspective of someone who lives a long ways away from the areas in concern. But as I have mentioned, and I really need to emphasize that although I don't live there, those places and the animals that reside within them have a special meaning to me and I thank you for your time.

Coordinator: There are no further comments or testimonies on the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We were on Regional Advisory Council so thank you for taking the time to call in today. Is there any other Regional Advisory Council?

Okay. Hearing none, we'll go ahead and move on to Tribal and Native corp comments.

Orville Lind: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Orville Lind, Native liaison, OSM. There were no comments or recommendations on Wildlife Proposal 22-46. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll call on Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Ben: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports this proposal. As previously stated federally qualified users can and do currently hunt brown bears in the remainder of GMU 24B under the more liberal state regulations.

The Department estimated a population of 450 bears in northern GMU 24 and a range of 320 to 480 in the remainder of the unit. Based on estimated sustainable harvest rates of 5% to 6% within the GMU a minimum, annual harvest of 39 to 56 bears can be sustained for all of the game management unit. A three-year mean harvest from regulatory 16 to 18 in Northern GMU 24B was 14 bears.

There have been one - there has been one brown bear, a male, reported harvested in the southern portion of GMU 24B during this same regulatory period. Based on this harvest history, harvest is not anticipated to increase to unsustainable levels.

And as always, the Department has a history supporting the alignment of state and federal regulations to reduce user confusion. Thank you, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Ben. Any questions for the state? We'll move on the Interagency Staff Committee.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Interagency Staff Committee provided the following comment for Wildlife Proposal 22-46.

While adoption of Proposal 22-46 would provide additional opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users, conservation concerns also exist for this brown bear population.

Brown bear densities and reproductive output within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve are among the lowest in Alaska. Limited food resources and a short growing season are likely major factors contributing to these demographic patterns.

Based on a reported subsistence use within the region, there does not appear to be a subsistence need to justify doubling the harvest limit from 1 to 2 brown bears within the Gates of the Arctic portion of Game Management Unit 24B.

According to harvest survey reports with Anaktuvuk Pass only 4% to 10% of households use brown bears across Game Management Unit 24. On average only 15 bears were harvested per year between 2016 and 2018 and on average only half the harvest was by Alaska residents.

The reported brown bear harvest has remained consistently low over the last 20 years, not reflecting an increasing subsistence need. Low density and recruitment within the brown bear population across GMU 24B increases the risk of overharvest.

The ISC acknowledges the concern for the conservation of brown bear populations within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. This proposal contradicts the affected Land Management Agency's mission where harvesting predators is not permitted when there's no documented subsistence need.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Jack Reakoff: Mr. Chair, this is Chairman Reakoff.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor, Jack.

Jack Reakoff: In response to the Interagency Staff Committee, as I stated, and I appreciate you recognizing that there's only certain households that harvest brown bears, and so 4% to 10%.

That's exactly why we submitted this proposal because those households with caribou coming later and later every year, those households harvest bears for basically a wider range of household than that. They share the spare meat.

And the perception is that brown bears are inedible and that's a very common misperception here in the upper drainages of the Kanektok River and Brooks Range. Brown bears dig legume roots (unintelligible). And those roots impart the bear with a very mild flavor.

When bears are harvested in later fall, they have a really high fat content. Fat is very valuable in the subsistence economy. And so the reality is there are specific individuals that will utilize the additional bag limit to harvest for the community. They are stating to us that there are actually more bears. There are dispersals. And so there are more bears arriving.

The bear population is very healthy. It's not that they're eliminating the bears around the community for preparation control. They are looking for additional meat resources when they are having hardship with caribou coming later in the year, with migrations coming later. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Jack. Any other questions, comments or board deliberation? This is the time.

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Gene.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I'm not sure who the author of the ISC comments were, but this question is specifically for the author of the last two paragraphs as written.

I think the opposing statement is a very strong statement. And I'd like to understand how they came to this position, especially the part that says when there is no documented subsistence need. So I'd like to get clarification on that terminology which is utilized what led up to that statement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Gene. I think that was a question for staff.

Gene Peltola: Yes, Mr. Chair. BIA for clarification. That is specifically addressed to the author, not necessarily the ISC as a whole because the ISC as a whole did not prepare that ISC comment.

As the author of the statement, I would like to have clarification of how it is determined there is no documented subsistence need. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. As far as getting that is a clarification for the question. Thank you, Gene. So that would be to the author of the proposal. Thank you. Is someone from the ISC available to contact the author to answer the question? Thank you.

Robbin LaVine: One moment, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And I am the Interagency Staff Committee chair. If you'll just pause for a moment, we may have someone who is able to respond to you.

Regardless of authorship, as you know, the Interagency Staff Committee comes together and reviews and edits these comments as a group. So I'll just put that out there and thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Robbin.

Robbin LaVine: And we do have an ISC member on hand to respond to Board member Peltola's question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Kim Jochum: Hello. This is Kim Jochum, ISC, from the National Park Service. I'm happy to respond to the question.

So, yes, we have information or, you know, from the past community harvest service that were conducted over the years in that region. So that data is what's used for that commenter's analysis overall.

So there's no - from understanding and interpretation of the data available, there's no documented unmet subsistence need or hasn't been in the past. I hope that helps. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you.

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, Gene.

Gene Peltola: I'm not totally pleased with the response, but if that's the best we can have for now, I thank you for the effort.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other Board questions, comments or deliberation for this proposal? Now is the time. Thank you, staff. Hearing no more discussion, we will call for a federal board action on this.

Sarah Creachbaum: Mr. Chairman, National Park Service.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor. Thank you.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The National Park Service moves to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-46 with a modification to only adopt this proposal for one full regulatory cycle 2022 to 2024. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Woman: Second.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. Wildlife Proposal 2022-46 requested the brown bear harvest limit for that portion of Unit 24B within Gates of the Arctic National Park be increased from one to two bears.

The analysis of this proposal points out the sensitive conservation status of the species. Brown bear densities with 33.4 bears per 1,000 square kilometers and reproductive output within Gates of the Arctic National Park and preserve are among the lowest in Alaska.

Limited food resources in a short growing season are likely major factors contributing to these demographic patterns. According to harvest survey reports within Anaktuvuk Pass, only 4% to 10% of the households use brown bears.

Additionally across all of unit 24 on Anaktuvuk - I'm sorry. Additionally, across all of Unit 24 on average only 15 bears were harvested per year between 2016 and 2018. And on average only half of the harvest occurred by Alaska residents.

Although brown bear harvest has remained consistently low over the last few decades, low density and recruitment within the brown bear population across 24B increases the risk of overharvest.

We do recognize the hardship of our Subsistence Resource Commission submitting this proposal and the supporting Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. Therefore, although we do have a strong conservation concern for the species in that region, we move to adopt this proposal for two years, one full regulatory cycle only, to support these identified immediate needs of the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission and the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council.



Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Yes. Any other further questions or comments from the Board?

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, you have the floor, Gene.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hearing the motion and looking at the total situation, this proposal is submitted by the SRC and supported by the Western Interior.

I understand the Park Service's concerns about potential for overharvest and therefore their modification to one full regulatory cycle or two years.

Although in supporting the motion, I'm inclined to vote to support with a caveat. And I'll explain why I have my caveat.

One, the current projection of caribou in the region is not the greatest. Two, a bear can't supplement a protein diet utilizing red meat. And if caribou aren't available, bear is a species which can be utilized by subsistence users.

Park Service plans are a bit more restrictive than some other federal conservation program lands with regards to subsistence harvest. With that being said, I moved to drop the previous modification of one full year - I mean one full regulatory cycle or two years only. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: This is Rhonda. I'll second that. Was that a motion?

Anthony Christianson: So there's a motion to amend the original motion to the language included there by Gene, seconded by Rhonda. Any further discussion on the motion?

Sue Detwiler: Mr. Chair, this is Sue Detwiler. I'm sorry. Could someone state what the motion with the modification is?

Gene Peltola: Yes, Mr. Chair. This is BIA. My motion was to drop the temporal limitation of one regulatory cycle or two year and let the motion proceed if my modification is accepted to go through as a permanent change to regulations because there are checks and balances with the federal - within the federal system to address the concerns, I believe, of the Conservation Agency.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Gene. Any other questions for Gene? There's been a motion made and seconded to amend the original motion to take off the language that was stated. Any other further questions on the motion?

((Crosstalk))

Anthony Christianson: The question has been called. We'll do roll call on the motion to change the original motion. Sue, please.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Let's see. Let's start with the maker of the original motion, Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service?

Sarah Creachbaum: The National Park Service opposes the modification to the National Park Service's modification.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sarah Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service is opposed.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thomas Heinlein, BLM?

Thomas Heinlein: BLM is opposed.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: Forest Service supports the modification offered by BIA to the original motion.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Charlie Brower?

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I support.

Sue Detwiler: So the motion passes with five votes yay, three nay. And that is the motion to amend to remove the time limit modification. So that motion has passed. So we would go back to the original proposal.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. We will go back to the original motion at this time and with the changed language of the modification that just passed to include dropping the modified language to what Gene stated in this motion that just passed. So now the original motion shall read - I'll have staff read it and then we will go ahead and vote on it. Thank you soon.

Tim: And, Mr. Chair, you need a second on it still.

Anthony Christianson: Oh, we didn't have a second to the maker of the motion?

Tim: No, sir.

Anthony Christianson: So now we need a second to the original motion since there was a modified.

Rhonda Pitka: This is Rhonda. I will second that motion, the main motion.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Rhonda. And thank you, Tim, for the process clarification. Any further discussion on this proposal as stated? Maybe for the record, we can have the staff read into the record what the motion that has been seconded is now? Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Mr. Chair, I'll take a stab at that. The motion is to adopt the proposal as submitted.

Anthony Christianson: Without modification, Sue, right?

Sue Detwiler: Yes.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. I just wanted to get that on the record. Okay. I will now go ahead and do a roll call vote for the original motion now to be reflective of the original proposal. Thank you. Sue.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. I'm sorry, but can I ask who was the maker of the original motion on this?

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA. The original motion was made by National Park Service. BIA made a motion to modify it. We're back and now we're going back and voting on...

Sue Detwiler: Okay. I got it, right, so it goes back to Park Service. I understand. Thank you. Yes, so starting with Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum?

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service opposes.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sarah Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Thomas Heinlein, BLM?

Thomas Heinlein: BLM opposes.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: The Forest Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Charlie Brower?

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. The vote is six yays and two nays so the motion is adopted. So the proposal passes as submitted.

Anthony Christianson: All right. Thank you. Thank you, staff. We'll go ahead and break at this time for lunch. I know we did have yesterday scheduled a time to be determined to look at a proposal we were looking at yesterday. But I think what we will do just for the order of time today is just keep going as we are going and put that to the last on the agenda.

If nobody objects to that, we'll just go ahead and give it as much time as we can and we will just continue on down the line and use that proposal as the last order of this agenda item. So we'll come back at 1:30 and pick up where we're leaving off now.

Thank you. Recess until 1:30. Hello, Sue? I'm on now.

Sue Detwiler: Great. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I just want to confirm with Tina that the recording has started now.

Tina: I am recording. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. So Mr. Chair, we haven't gone through a roll call yet so I'll just quickly go through and see which Board members are on. Sarah Creachbaum from Park Service?

Sarah Creachbaum: Good afternoon, Sue and everyone. I'm here.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Tom Heinlein, BLM?

Thomas Heinlein: Good afternoon. I'm on.

Sue Detwiler: Fish and Wildlife Service, Sarah, are you on? Are you still on?

Sarah Boario: Yes. I'm here, Sue. Thanks.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Forest Service, Dave Schmid?

Davd Schmid: Yes, good afternoon, Sue. I'm here.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: Good afternoon. BIA is on board.

Sue Detwiler: Thanks, Gene. Public member Rhonda Pitka? Public member Charlie Brower? Chair Anthony Christianson, I just heard you. So it looks like we have six of eight Board members on right now.

Anthony Christianson: All right, Sue. We'll just give everybody another minute or two and hope they chime in. Yes, Sue, I think Charlie was going to be a little bit late this afternoon so maybe if we could just check if Rhonda is on.

Sue Detwiler: Robbin, is there any way to check with the operator to see if Rhonda is in the participant's room and not able to get into the speakers' queue?

Coordinator: Hello. This is the operator. So I don't see anyone with the host passcode, but Rhonda, if you're on and you have a guest passcode, please press star zero. And Rhonda if you're on please press star zero. So it does not look like she has joined the call yet.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, operator.

Coordinator: At this time I still don't see a host passcode.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, operator. Sue, we'll just give her another minute and then we'll go ahead and get started. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay.

Anthony Christianson: All right. We'll just go ahead and get started this afternoon. Thank you for everybody coming back. Again we'll just check if he's on and we'll get started with the next order of business where we left off before lunch. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We left off before lunch with a Western Interior proposal. We completed that. Now we're moving into the Seward Peninsula



proposals and wildlife closure reviews. And we will start out with WP22-47, which will be presented by Brian Ubelaker.

Brian Ubelaker: Thank you, Sue. Can everybody hear me all right?

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor.

Brian Ubelaker: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And good afternoon Mr. Chair and members of the Board. As Sue said, my name is Brian Ubelaker. I am a wildlife biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.

I will be giving you a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP22-47, which was submitted by the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group. This analysis begins on Page 1,109 of your meeting books.

Proposal WP22-47 requests that caribou cap harvest be permitted in Unit 22. The proponent states that the intent of this proposal is to allow for the harvest of orphaned calves and that this change would align federal and state regulations.

In 2016 the Board of Game established the current registration permit hunt for caribou in Unit 22 with the harvest limit of 20 caribou per year. Then in 2018, the Federal Subsistence Board adopted regulations to require a state registration permit for federal users in Unit 22.

In January of 2020, the Board of Game adopted a proposal to allow calf half harvest in Units 22, 23 and 26A. Also in 2020 the Federal Subsistence Board established a year around bull season and allowed calf harvest in Unit 23. Justification for this change to allow calf harvest was to permit the taking of orphaned or injured calves.

Caribou calves of the Western Arctic herd are typically born in May or June, are typically weaned by October and usually stay with their mother for the first year of their life.

If a calf is orphaned after they are weaned, they have a much greater chance of survival than if they're orphaned before they are weaned, provided they stay with the herd.

The current population estimate of 188,000 places the Western Arctic caribou herd in the preservative declining management level as determined by the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group.

Some harvest recommendations of this level included no calf harvest, limiting cow harvest by residents and restricting harvest to residents only.

Factors leading to the declining population are not known for sure, but it is believed cow mortality and decreased calf recruitment are factors.

Residents of Unit 22 on average account for 17% of the Western Arctic caribou herd harvest. From 2016 to 2019 reported harvest averaged 377 caribou per year, of which 74% were bulls and 26% were cows. It is unknown how many calves have been harvested as that is not a reportable category.

The majority of Unit 22 harvest occurs in the winter when caribou are found on the Seward Peninsula. If calf harvest is allowed, it may present a minimal conservation concern as most hunters do not specifically target calves. However it would allow the harvest of orphan calves who may die otherwise.

One consideration at this point is that it is difficult to tell if a calf is orphaned or not as caribou herds tend to be quite spread out. Orphaned calves who stay with the herd are much more likely to live than a single calf on its own.

Adoption of this proposal may also reduce wanton waste. It has been mentioned at RAC meetings that rural residents have discovered calves that have been shot and left to lay in the field. It is believed these were shot mistakenly by hunters who realized too late their unintended harvest and then left it in the field rather than bring back an illegal harvest and face repercussions.

This would also align federal and state regulations. Currently federal regulations are more restrictive than state regulations. Therefore OSM's conclusion is to support proposal WP22-47. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll be happy to answer any questions anyone may have.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions? Hearing none, any public comment received during this proposal?

Brian Ubelaker: Yes, Mr. Chair. The Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group submitted one comment. And at their December 15, 2021 meeting, they voted 15 to 2 in support of this proposal. Their intent behind submitting it was to allow the harvest of calves who would die because they are alone.

This type of harvest is already allowed on state land and on federal land in Unit 23. And this proposal will align federal and state regulations. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, at this time. Is there any public online who would like to speak to this proposal? Now is the time for them to speak to this agenda item? Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. As a reminder to ask a question please press star 1. There are no questions or testimonies on the phone at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move on to the Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

Eva Patton: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members of the Board. For the record, this is Eva Patton, Council Coordinator for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And currently phone lines are still down in Alakanuk and I'll be providing the RAC recommendation on behalf of Chairman Raymond Oney.

The Y-K Delta RAC Subsistence Council supports WP22-47. The council supports reducing regulatory confusion by aligning the more restrictive federal regulation with the more liberal state regulation so that subsistence hunters will not be cited for taking an orphan caribou calf.

Council members noted that while people do not target calves in the Yukon Delta Region, if one were orphaned, it would die anyway. Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the Board.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. And, Sue, can you call on the next RAC please?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. That would be Western Interior. After Western Interior, it would be Seward Peninsula.

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the Board, for the record my name is Nissa Pilcher. I am the council coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Council. I will

be providing the Council's recommendation for Chairman Louis Green at this time.

The Council chose to support WP22-47. The council voted to support this proposal as it increases harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users. However, as hunters do not specifically target calves, no impacts to the calf population or herd improvement are expected.

Supporting this proposal will also align state and federal regulations. If Jack isn't online as well, I can give the Western Interior recommendations as well if given a moment to find it.

Jack Reakoff: Mr. Chairman, this is Jack Reakoff. Mr. Chairman, this is Jack Reakoff.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, you have the floor, Jack.

Jack Reakoff: Okay. The Western Interior Regional Advisory Council supported proposal WP22-47. Council recognized that while most people do not target calves or are planning the harvest of calves made orphan who are vulnerable to predation available for harvest. It's an unusual event but it does happen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Next, Sue.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. I wasn't sure if Seward Peninsula was finished. And after Seward Peninsula, it would be Northwest Arctic Council.

Brooke McDavid: Mr. Chair, members of the Board, for the record this is Brooke McDavid, the Northwest Arctic Council coordinator. I'll be presenting on behalf of Chairman Baker.

The Northwest Arctic Council opposed WP22-47. The council opposes allowing the harvest of caribou calves because they are the future stock of the herd.

The council received feedback from local elders that calves should not be hunted in order to sustain and grow the caribou herd and strongly encouraged opposition to this proposal so that calves would not be targeted. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: And finally the North Slope Subsistence Regional Council also had a recommendation.

Gordon Brower: Yes, good afternoon. This is Gordon Brower, North Slope Regional Advisory Council chair. And the council did support WP22-47 with modifications to only allow harvest of orphan calves on 1134.

And I personally, you know, witnessed, you know, calves, not the yearling type ones that are capable to be away from its mother, but those that are still being weaned by a cow. And we've seen and personally observed, you know, red foxes and other predators continuously harass some of these orphaned very young ones.

So we talked about that a little bit. And, you know, in our own history too our people up here have harvested calves before for clothing and that's probably the same as other tribes in other areas. But this intent here is just to look at probably on the humane side of things because sometimes a hunt can allow a calf to get orphaned or a predator may have got the cow or something like that.

So the council supported inserting orphaned in front of calves may be taken in the regulatory language to make it clear that the intent was not to target calves but rather to legalize subsistence harvest if a calf was injured or orphaned.

Council members discuss that an orphaned caribou likely would likely not survive based on some of the things we described and their meat and hides would not go to waste. The opportunity to hunt the orphan calves would be beneficial in providing soft meat for elders and in making traditional clothing.

However the council considers conservation and ensuring the growth of the herd as a priority and is very concerned about the decline of the Western Arctic caribou herd. The council does not want to send the wrong message with a regulation about harvest of calves when they are essential to conservation as they are the future of the herd.

The modified regulation should read as referenced on Page 1,135 of the Federal Subsistence Board book, C, where orphaned would be inserted into the regulation. That concludes the North Slope's recommendation. Was I on or am I off?

Sue Detwiler: Yes.

((Crosstalk))

Anthony Christianson: This is Anthony Christianson. Thank you for your comments today. My phone is just no responding. Yes, I heard you loud and clear. Thank you. Next, Sue. Thank you, Gordon.

Sue Detwiler: That concludes the Regional Council recommendations. The next step would be the Tribal and Alaska Native corporation comments.

Robbin LaVine: Hello, Mr. Chair, members of the Board. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Tribal liaison Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation for this proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. No comments received during this. We'll move on to the state liaison, please.

Ben: Good afternoon. Mr. Chair. For the record, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports this proposal as it will reduce hunter confusion by aligning state and federal regulations. You know, the Department heard the discussions at the community level that calves would not intentionally be targeted, but opportunistically harvested if abandoned, orphaned or injured.

With herd animals it can often be difficult to determine which cows have attending calves. As a result, maternal cows are occasionally harvested unintentionally leaving a calf orphaned. In general the removal of these calves through human harvest would be largely compensatory in nature and not consume a significant portion of the harvestable surplus of the herd.

Thank you, sir. Thank you. Any questions for Ben? All right, hearing none will move on to our Interagency Staff Committee recommendation.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you. Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine and the Interagency Staff Committee provided the following comment.

Adoption of Wildlife Proposal 22-47 would provide additional harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users although most real residents do not target calves. Because of this, any additional harvest of calves



due to adoption of this proposal is not expected to affect the conservation status of the Western Arctic caribou herd.

Additional harvest opportunity may also be warranted given that calf harvest is already allowed under state hunting regulations and allowing such harvest may help to minimize want and waste when calves are mistakenly shot while also allowing for the harvest of orphaned calves.

The ISC recognizes the concerns regarding calf harvest brought up by the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. However, as previously mentioned, the minimal amount of calf harvest already occurring does not indicate that allowing such harvest under federal regulations would cause a conservation concern for the Western Arctic caribou herd. And therefore such harvest does not violate recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation and it's consistent with the ANILCA Section 805(c).

One topic that the ISC would like to bring to the attention of the Board is that in December 2021, the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, the proponent of WP22-47, voted to change the management status for the Western Arctic caribou herd to the preservative declining level.

This was in response to the recent population estimate for the herd being counted at 188,000 animals, a decline from the 2019 estimate of 244,000 caribou. One of the recommendations that may be included under this management level is a prohibition on calf harvest.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Robbin. Any questions for ISC? All right. Hearing none then we'll move on and open up the floor for Board discussion on this

agenda item. Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on. And if no Board deliberation questions, we'll open up the Board floor for action. Thank you.

Thomas Heinlein: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Tom Heinlein, BLM. Hello. Can you hear me?

Anthony Christianson: Yes. I can hear you.

Thomas Heinlein: Okay. Mr. Chair, Tom Heinlein, Bureau of Land Management. I move to adopt proposal WP22-47. And if I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Man: Yes, I second.

Thomas Heinlein: Thank you. Adoption of this proposal will provide federally qualified subsistence users with more harvest opportunities while also helping to reduce want and waste by allowing the harvest of calves mistakenly shot by hunters. It will also allow for the harvest of orphaned calves.

Since most federally qualified users do not target calves, the impact on the Western Arctic caribou herd population should be negligible and the harvest of calves is already allowed under state regulations.

The adoption of this proposal would give federally qualified subsistence users the same opportunities afforded under state regulations and is consistent with the recommendations of the Seward Peninsula, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other Board questions or comments?

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor, Gene.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One thing, we've had a lot of discussion about caribou here in this meeting also prior in the month with another administrative action we took.

One thing I wanted to point out is that earlier on in the month when we addressed the caribou regulatory scenario, we invoked one of the four criteria on the preservative management under the Western Arctic Caribou Management Plan.

And the very first one listed specifically addresses this. And I appreciate the ISC pointing that out in their comment section on this proposal.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Gene. Any other Board questions or comments?  
Hearing none, I'll call for the question.

Gene Peltola: BIA question.

Anthony Christianson: Roll call, Sue, please.

Sue Detwiler: The motion is to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-47. Mr. Heinlein, BLM, vote?

Thomas Heinlein: BLM votes to support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. BIA, Gene Peltola?

Gene Peltola: Bureau of Indian Affairs votes to oppose. And since it is in opposition to the Regional Advisory Council, I'd like to stipulate 805(c) aspect of it. When the Board in prior administrative action invoked the Western Arctic Caribou Management Plan, that preservative management, it also calls for a prohibition on calf harvest.

And based on the management plan criteria of preservative management, we feel that it violates recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation as identified in the Western Caribou Management Plan recommendations. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sarah Boario?

Sarah Boario? Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum?

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Forest Service, Dave Schmid?

David Schmid: The Forest Service supports with the justification provided by BLM. Thanks.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I vote to oppose using the same justification that the BIA put forward. This herd has been in decline. And I don't think that this action is warranted. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Charlie Brower, are you on?

Charlie Brower: Yes. I am. I oppose. Same reasons Dave. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, thank you. And Chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I oppose.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, so we have four ayes, four nays so the motion does not pass.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Sue. And we'll go ahead and move on to the next proposal. Thank you. Calling on staff to present the analysis.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, we are moving into a series of Unit 22 moose proposals, The first one being Proposal 22-49 presented by Brian Ubelaker.

Brian Ubelaker: Thank you Sue. Good afternoon again Mr. Chair and members of the board.

Once again for the record my name is Brian Ubelaker. And I am a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management.

And I'll be giving you a presentation, a summary of the analysis for a Wildlife Proposal WP22-49 which was submitted by Lance Kroneberger of Eagle River. This analysis begins on Page 1138 in your meeting books.

Wildlife Proposal. WP22-49 requests that the federal public lands closure for moose in the portion of Unit 22 north of and including the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik River drainages referred to as Unit 22A North be rescinded September 1 through the 20th to coincide with the state's non-resident moose season.

The proponent states that federal public lands which are remote and difficult to access comprise a large portion of this hunt area while the communities in the area are surrounded by state managed land. He states that the federal public land closure serves to concentrate all moose hunting activities onto the small area of state managed land and that rescinding the closure would reduce the potential for conflicts in the field.

In recent regulatory history the Board of Game extended the state non-resident season in 22A North in 2017. And then in 2018 the proponent submitted a similar worded proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board for the first time. The board considered this proposal and opted to open federal public lands to all federally qualified subsistence users stating that although the moose population was growing densities were too low to open to all users.

In 2020, the proponent submitted the same request again to the Federal Subsistence Board. The board rejected his proposal stating that biological information was lacking for the area. The board committed to working with ADF&G to conduct new surveys in Unit 22A in 2000.

The moose population in Unit 22A is considered to be increasing. In 2020 ADF&G estimated the total Unit 22 moose population at 6775, which falls within their management objectives. The most recent 22A population estimate is 2043 moose.

Due to budgetary restrictions, information concerns and time constraints Unit 22A surveys are conducted in the Unalakleet River drainage. And population estimates are extrapolated for adjacent areas from these surveys.

ADF&G estimates the Unit 22A North population at 645 moose with a density of .35 moose per square mile. Extrapolated data appears to show this population has been increasing since 2003.

Recruitment is estimated for the area and is characterized as adequate. And the observed bull to cow ratio is above state population objectives

Reported moose harvesting Unit 22A has increased over the last 20 years. The average yearly harvest from 2003 to 2018 was 27 moose miles per year with 72% being harvested by federally qualified subsistence users, 7% by non-local residents and 18% by non-residents.

But since 2014 the average has been 39 moose harvested per year with 66% going to federally qualified subsistence users and 24% being reported by non-residents.

Moose harvest among subunits of 22A is not distributed equally with the population throughout subunits. In 22A Central for example, home the 36% of Unit 22A residents, claims 64% of the reported moose harvest. One explanation of this inconsistency may be the fact 22A Central requires a registration permit, which has a failure to report punishment and 22A North uses the harvest ticket which has no report requirement associated with it.

This is of interest because household surveys show higher annual harvest than ADF&G harvest reports. ADF&G estimates that as many as 20 moose are harvested annually and not reported in 22A North. And there are currently five permitted guides 22A North.

If the closure in Unit 22A North is rescinded all users would be allowed to hunt moose on federal public lands including the five guides that operate in

the area. Lifting the closure may increase moose harvest by non-local and non-residents in 22A North. This increase in harvest may be detrimental to the moose population which in turn would affect federally qualified subsistence users ability to meet their needs.

The Shaktoolik River is the main artery used to access federal public lands and increased used by sport hunters may lead to increased pressure in user conflict. Limited understanding of population limits the ability to judge if an increase in harvest will affect the moose population in Unit 22A North.

But the very high bull to cow ratio suggest the population can withstand more bull harvest. Rescinding the closure may alleviate some hunting pressure and user conflict by spreading non-resident hunters out to federal public lands not easily accessed except by plane which may take pressure off river corridors.

But with the population appearingly covered the original conservation concern is over therefore, OSM's conclusion is to support proposal WP22-49. And thank you Mr. Chair. And I will be happy to answer any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions from the board. All right, we'll take any public comment received during the proposal period? Thank you.

Brian Ubelaker: Mr. Chair, there were no comments submitted regarding this proposal. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, we'll now provide an opportunity for the public to speak to this agenda item. If anyone online would like to be recognized please let the operator know?



Coordinator: Absolutely. As a reminder if you would like to make a public comment please press Star 1.

Anthony Christianson: All right, hearing none we'll go ahead and move on, nobody online. Move on to the Regional Advisory Council.

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board for the record my name is Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I'll be providing the council recommendation for Chairman Green.

The council opposes WP22-49 because the idea of opening federal lands to non-residents, if the locals are not able to hunt their due to the access difficulties, still does not favor the subsistence user. The population estimate is not based on data from Unit 22A North but rather is extrapolated from data over - or excuse me, from data from the neighboring hunt area, Unit 22A Central.

The council considers it wiser to protect resources for subsistence users until proven they can support sport uses as well. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Is there any other Regional Advisory Council?

Sue Detwiler: I think that's the only one Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, thank you Sue. We'll move on to the tribal consultation summary, Orville.

Robbin LaVine: Hello Mr. Chair, members of the board this is Robbin LaVine standing in for Tribal Liaison Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations

during the consultation on disclosure review. Thank you Mr. Chair - or just actually, sorry, this proposal 22-49. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on to the Alaska State Department State Liaison, Ben?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you sir. For the record Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports this proposal. The biological circumstances that warranted the initial closure of federal public lands in 2003 no longer exists.

Recent regulatory changes have been adopted by both the Alaska Board of Game and this board as well. In 2017 the state non-resident season in 22A North was extended from September 1 to September 14 to September 20.

The Federal Subsistence Board through WP18-38 with modification to open federal public lands for the harvest of moose by all federally qualified users, which includes all residents of GMU 22. And looking at these extensions of the regulatory hunt cycle neither of these most recent changes have resulted in an increase in moose harvest from the 22A North hunt area. And so the state believes that you can lift this closure. Thank you sir.

Man: It's going to be cleared.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? Thank you. We'll call on the Interagency Staff Committee.

Robbin LaVine: Hello Mr. Chair, members of the board, this is Robbin LaVine. And the Interagency Staff Committee has the following comments.

Adoption of proposal 22-49 would open federal public lands within the Unit 22A North moose hunt area to all users September 1 through 20th, a period that coincides with the state's non-resident season. Recent surveys completed in 2020 and 2021 in Unit 22A Central, adjacent to the area in question, showed extremely high bull to cow ratios and a population estimate that is above state management objectives.

Additionally, low reported harvest, and estimates of total harvest that are below the harvestable surplus, indicate that the Unit 22A North moose population can withstand increases in harvest that may result from with rescinding the closure during September.

Furthermore, current hunting pressure seems to focus on the area of more easily accessible state lands along the river corridors whereas federal lands are more remote and more difficult to access. Part of the board's rationale for not rescinding the closure in 2020 was due to the lack of recent biological information for the Unit 22A North hunt area.

The board now has current biological metrics from an adjacent hunt area to make an informed decision on WP22-49. The board's closure policy states that federal public lands and waters should be reopened as soon as practicable once the conditions that originally justified the closure have changed to such an extent that the closure is no longer necessary.

The original justification for the closure in this area was due to conservation concerns. Recent surveys indicate that these conservation concerns may no longer exist warranting rescinding of the current closure.

It should be noted that BLM does not limit the number of guides permitted in the area or the number of hunters that they can bring in. Therefore, guided

hunts do have the potential to take more moose from 22 A North if federal lands are opened.

Harvest in this area by non-federally qualified users should be closely monitored if the closure is rescinded. The Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council opposes this proposal because poor access to the area in question makes hunting difficult for federally qualified subsistence users and because the biological metrics used to justify rescinding the closure are based on extrapolations from the adjacent Unit 22A Central hunt area.

Recent surveys indicate that rescinding the current closure would not violate recognized principles of Fish and Wildlife conservation and that retaining the closure is not supported by substantial evidence both of which are consistent with ANILCA Section 805C. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Robbin. Any questions for ISC? Hearing none that opens up the - for board deliberation. The floor is open for board action.

Tom Heinlein: Mr. Chair, Tom Heinlein BLM.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, you have the floor Tom.

Tom Heinlein: Thanks Mr. Chair. I move to adopt proposal 22, Wildlife Proposal 22-49. And if I get a second I'll explain why I intend to vote in support my motion.

Rhonda Pitka: This is Rhonda, I'll second.

Tom Heinlein: Thank you. Recently completed surveys in 2020 and 2021 in Unit 22A Central, adjacent to the area in question, showed extremely high bull cow ratios and a population estimate that is above state management objectives. In

addition, estimates of the total harvest that are below the harvestable surplus indicate that the moose population in Unit 22A North can sustain additional harvest pressure that may result from rescinding the closure to non-federally qualified users.

Current harvest pressure has been mostly focused on the more easily accessible state lands adjacent to river corridors and not the more remote and difficult to access federal lands in the area. The last time this came before the board part of the rationale for not lifting the closure was a lack of recent biological data.

This is no longer the case and the board's closure policy states that the federal public lands and waters should be reopened as soon as practicable once the conditions that originally justified the closure have changed to such an extent that the closure is no longer necessary. Since the closure was originally put in place due to conservation concerns continuing the closure is no longer supported by substantial evidence and recent biological metrics indicate opening the closure to non-federally qualified users would not violate recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation.

The BLM takes the concerns of the Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council seriously and acknowledges that any additional harvest by non-federally qualified users that may take place because of the opening of this closure should be monitored closely to prevent overharvest. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any further board questions or discussions?

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor Gene.

Gene Peltola: Thank you Mr. Chair. I have some questions for BLM. As is mentioned in the analysis that BLM does not limit the number of permits issued to big game guides nor does it limit the number of clients that are able to be serviced under those permits.

Is that because you don't have a mechanism to do it and choose not to or do you have a mechanism in place to cap the number of clients that are going to be taken in per permitted guide? And the reason I asked that is that it's the ISC had made a recommendation that there's a potential for overharvest in the long run.

And if that was to occur how could BLM address that before the - if the board was not able to address it in a timely manner? And the reason I ask that is the history of BLM in regards to some other discussions in this body in the past we look at the progression and evolution of the BLM permitting process. So thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, thank you. Any other board questions or comments, discussion? You have the floor, sorry.

Tom Heinlein: Thank you Mr. Chair. Tom Heinlein, BLM. Just in response to the BIA question it, you know I'd need to do a little more research on that question Gene.

The, you know, I think BLM maintains mechanisms to actually look at, you know, putting in processes and procedures to manage permit numbers in instances where more use were to accelerate or usage judged to be, you know, expanding.

I believe in this case the number of operators, transporters is not at that level. And - but I would be happy to do more leg work on that question if that is in any way unsatisfactory.

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Go ahead Gene.

Gene Peltola: So - and Tom the reason I asked that question is that we - the board here in recent history has addressed several proposals and we've opened up some areas we have remain - have some remain closed just do one of them.

We've always looked towards and hoped for survey data, but that's not necessarily the case in this situation. I'm a tad uncomfortable as the Seward Pen Council had stipulated about using adjacent data.

I'd be a lot more comfortable in getting closer to supporting the proposal if BLM had a mechanism to address the commercial use of those federal lands under your purview if required to do so. Okay, thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other board question, comments? Call for the question? Hello, call for the question.

Sue Detwiler: Question.

Anthony Christianson: Sue, we'll go ahead and do a roll call please. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. The motion is to adopt WP22-49, start with Thomas Heinlein, BLM?

Tom Heinlein: BLM votes to support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: Forest Service will support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Creachbaum, Park Service?

Sarah Creachbaum: Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Sara Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: BIA Supports with the statement made by BLM they look in to inquire about their abilities on their permitting system in place in addition to there are checks and balances with the federal program to address it if needed to in the future. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair Christianson?



Anthony Christianson: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. The motion passes unanimously.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, thank you Sue. We'll go ahead and move on to the next agenda item. Thank you for calling the staff.

Sue Detwiler: Next Agenda Item is Wildlife Closer 22-09B. Also presented by Brian Ubelaker.

Brian Ubelaker: Thanks Sue. Good afternoon again Mr. Chair and members of the board. For the record I am Brian Ubelake. And I am a Wildlife Biologist with the Office and Subsistence Management, and I'll be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-09B. And this analysis begins on Page 1158 of your meeting books.

Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-09B pertaining to Unit 22A, that portion in the Unalakelet River drainage and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound, north of the Golsovia River drainage and south of the Tagoomenik and Shaktolik River drainages. Federal public lands are closed to the harvesting of moose except by residents of Unalakelet. This closure was initially established in 1995.

The moose population in the Unalakelet River drainage of Unit 22A has been increasing since 2011. In 2011 and '12 the state harvest quotas were not met during the regular season, and they established a winter season for moose.

Then in 2013, '14 and '15 the regular season quotas were not met yet again prompting the state to extend the regular moose season by six days via

emergency order. In 2017 the Board of Game permanently established the moose season for 22A Central as September 1 through the 20th.

That same year with an increase in population the state opened then extended the winter moose season. Then in 2018 the state extended the fall moose season through September 30 via emergency order.

In 2020, the Board of Game extended the fall season through September 30 and the winter season through January 31. This closure was last reviewed in 2015 and the council recommended to maintain status quo.

The moose population in Unit 22A Unalakleet drainage has been showing signs of increasing since 2003. Most recent population estimates - estimation is 766 moose in the unit, which is approaching the upper end of the state management objective of 800. The bull to cow ratio is also higher than population objectives from the unit at over 120 bulls to 100 cows.

The moose harvest has increased in the Unalakleet drainage since 2008 keeping pace with increasing quotas. Total reported harvest has ranged from 14 to 45 moose during that time frame.

Federal harvest during this time has averaged 16.5% with the average federal success rate at 13%. This closure could either be modified to allow moose hunting on federal public lands by all federally qualified subsistence users or it could be completely rescinding to allow harvest by all users.

As the hunt is closely managed by harvest quotas little conservation concerns exist for overharvest I this closure is completely lifted. The moose population and harvest quotas have increased in Unit 22A Central and the bull cow ratio is high indicating surplus bulls available for harvest therefore providing

harvest opportunity for all federally qualified subsistence users in the central portion of Unit22A is warranted.

Opening to only federally qualified subsistence users rather than all users represents a conservative incremental approach that is consistent with board action in Unit 22A North and Unit 22A remainder in 2018. Therefore, it is OSM's conclusion to modify the closure to allow all federally qualified users to hunt on federal public lands. Thank you. And I'd be happy to answer any questions anyone may have.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions from the board? And hearing no questions was there any public testimony during this proposal process?

Brian Ubelaker: No Mr. Chair. There were no written public comments submitted. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, at this time we'll make available anybody online who would like to speak to this agenda item this is their opportunity?

Coordinator: Again for recollection of you'd like to make a public comment press Star 1, There are no comments in the queue.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move on at this time to Regional Advisory Council recommendations.

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board for the record my name is Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I'll be providing the council's recommendation for Chairman Green today.

The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to support this proposal. I will note that it was actually a split vote, which is not - it appears not to be our usual for this council.

The majority of the council felt that the residents of Unalakleet rely the most on moose in Unit 22A Central therefore they deserve the majority of the harvest. Moose harvest is improving for residents of Unalakleet, but it is still not like it was historically. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Native Tribal Liaison?

Robbin LaVine: Good afternoon Mr. Chair, members of the board. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Tribal Liaison Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during consultation on this item. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Good, thank you. We'll move on to the state liaison Benn Mulligan?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you sir. For the record the Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports the elimination of the current closure prohibiting non-federally qualified users from hunting for moose on federal public lands in GMU 22A Central.

The current composition and historical harvest levels indicate that additional harvest opportunity is warranted. There's no concern that the harvest of moose by non-resident hunters in the area would increase because there is no non-resident season in the area.

Dramatic increases in the harvest of moose by resident hunters are not likely to occur because of challenges associated with accessing the hunt area. Even a

substantial harvest of bulls by non-federally qualified users that are Alaska residents would have little effect on the population due to the extremely high bull cow ratio with the latest in 2020 being 122 and 100 cows respectively, well above the management objective of 30 bulls to 100 cows.

Furthermore, ADF&G has the authority to issue emergency order closures as needed to maintain harvest at sustainable levels within the hunt area eliminating any overharvest concerns. Thank you sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? Okay, we'll go to the ISC recommendation?

Rhonda Pitka: Hello Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. For Wildlife Closer Review 22-09B the ISC provided their standard comment. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. That opens up before for board discussion, questions state liaison or ISC? Okay, hearing none that'll open up the for board action on this proposal? Thank you.

Chris McKee: Mr. Chair, this is Chris McKee. Can you hear me?

Anthony Christianson: Yes, Chris you have the floor.

Chris McKee: Yes, just to note that Tom is going to have to step away from the meeting for about the next 90 minutes so I'll be standing in for him, and I'll be making the motion for this.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Chris welcome.

Chris McKee: Thank you. Mr. Chair I move to modify the closure to moose hunting in the Unit 22A Central hunt area to open to all federally qualified subsistence users. And if I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Gene Peltola: Yes, I second.

Chris McKee: Thank you. Moose populations and the harvest quota have increased in the hunt area and bull cow ratios are extremely high all of which indicate that there is a surplus of bulls available for harvest.

Opening the area to all federally qualified subsistence users is a conservative and appropriate incremental approach consistent with past board actions in other areas of Unit 22 in 2018. Additionally, given the improved biological metrics, keeping the area open to only a subset of federally qualified subsistence users is not supported by substantial evidence as stated in ANILCA Section 805C. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any more questions or discussions? Did we get a second for that sorry, Chris?

Chris McKee: I believe BIA seconded.

Gene Peltola: Yes, BIA did second.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, thank you. So the floor is open for discussion guys. Call for question?

Gene Peltola: BIA question.

Anthony Christianson: Roll call Sue please?

Sue Detwiler: Okay, the motion is to modify the closure to open to all federally qualified subsistence users. And we'll start with BLM, Chris McKee?

Chris McKee: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. BIA Gene Peltola?

Gene Peltola: BIA support for reasons articulated by BLM in their motion.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sara Boario?

Sara Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Creahbaum, Park Service?

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: Forest Service supports on the justification provided by BLM.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Charlie Brower?

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. And Chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Motion passes unanimously.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, sorry I got spaced out there. Are we still voting on this?

Sue Detwiler: Yes, we just concluded the vote. And the outcome was to retain the closure with the modification to include all subsistence users.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Sue. We'll go ahead and take a five minute break here. My attention span got a little stretched out there so I'll take a five minute break, and we'll come back.

Sue Detwiler: And Chair Anthony Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: Yes, I'm on. Thank you Sue.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. It looks like everybody's on except one member.

Woman: Did I get cut off?

Sue Detwiler: No, you're still on.

Anthony Christianson: No, you're still on. Yes, I think we're just letting everybody get back on the line here and, and then we'll get started where we left off Sue. Thank you, when we're ready.



Sue Detwiler: Okay, just let me know when you're ready?

Anthony Christianson: Yes, I'm ready Sue.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Let's see where we left off was we were just going to be starting Wildlife Closure Review 22-11, 12. And that would be Brian Ubelaker again.

Brian Ubelaker: Thank you Sue. Hello again Mr. Chair and members of the board. For the record Brian Ubelaker, Wildlife Biologist with OSM.

I will be present the summary and the analysis for the Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-11,12. This analysis begins on Page 1173 of your meeting books.

Wildlife Closure Review 2211 and 12 pertaining to Unit 22B west of the Darby Mountains. WCR2211 closes federal public land to the harvest of moose during the fall season except by federally qualified subsistence users. WCR22-12 closes federal public lands to the harvest of moose to all except for residents of Golovin and White Mountain for the winter hunt, and this closure was initially established in 2002.

These closures were enacted, sorry I am getting some notes, and it is hard for people to hear me. Is this any better?

Anthony Christianson: I can hear you fine, thank you.

Brian Ubelaker: Okay, I will continue then. These closures were enacted to conserve a declining population of moose. ADF&G had closed this hunt by emergency order several times when the harvest quota of 20 moose was met.

Last year the Board of Game changed permit availability by only allowing them to be picked up in person in an effort to limit the number of hunters. And these closures have been reviewed by the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council at their winter meetings in 2011 and in 2015.

The moose population in Unit 22 is estimated at 6775, which is within state management objectives. ADF&G considers the moose population in Unit 22B to be stable to increasing, but below management objectives.

The last estimate completed for 22B West was 728 moose in 2016. A composition survey from 2015 determined the bull cow ratio to be 41 bulls to 100 cows, which is above the state management objective.

Most of the moose harvested in 22B occurs under state regulations with a state permit. Only one moose was reported harvested by federal permit in 2001. And since 2014 harvest has met or exceeded quotas in all years except for 2018.

One alternative considered is an incremental opening of the closure to allow all federally qualified subsistence users from Unit 22B, or excuse me, from Unit 22 to hunt in 22B West during the winter hunt. The possible increase in hunting pressure and competition from federally qualified subsistence users within Unit 22 alone would likely reach the quota within several days as most state hunts in Unit 22 currently do.

If these closures are rescinding non-federally qualified users would be able to harvest moose on federal public lands within Unit 22B west of the Derby Mountains. The Unit 22B West moose population is currently below state management objectives.

But as moose harvest in Unit 22B West is managed by harvest quotas rescinding or modifying these closures would likely result in a zero to minimal increase in harvest. However, competition with non-federally, and other federally qualified users on federal lands, could reduce harvest opportunity for residents of White Mountain and Golovin therefore it is OSM's conclusion to maintain status quote.

Thank you much. And I would be happy to answer any questions anyone might have.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the board? All right, did we receive any public comment during this proposal period? Thank you.

Brian Ubelaker: Mr. Chair, no there were no comments submitted. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, at this time we'll provide a line for anybody online that may want to provide public testimony at this time to the agenda item?

Coordinator: If you would like to ask - state a comment please press Star 1. Once again, for any comments please press Star 1. I'm showing no comments at this time sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on to Regional Advisory Council Chair recommendation?

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board for the record, Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I'll be providing the council's recommendation for Chairman Green.

The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to support this closure. The council believes that since the moose population is below state management objectives, and the recruitment is low, federal and should remain closed to all but local residents this will allow for the continuation of subsistence uses. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Is there any other Regional Advisory Council who would like to speak to this? Hearing none we'll move to Tribal Native Liaison?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Tribal Liaison Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on this review. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move on to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Ben?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you sir. For the record Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports the elimination of these two closures. The measures the department and the Board of Game has taken in managing moose populations in GMU 22B West makes it so that maintaining the closures in this area is unlikely to result providing any additional harvest opportunities to federally qualified users or increase any potential increase in non-federally qualified users coming into the area.

In 2020 the Board of Game directed ADF&G to limit the availability of the pertinent registration hunt permits and are now only available during a set time frame in the local communities. Given this information the department is more than capable of sustainably managing this moose population while providing reasonable opportunities for subsistence users. Thank you sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? We'll move on to the Interagency Staff Committee recommendation.

Robbin LaVine: Yes, good afternoon Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Closure Review 22-11, 12 the Interagency Staff Committee provided their standard comment. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. That opened up the floor for a board discussion, deliberation? Okay, hearing none we'll move on. Open the floor for board action for this proposal? Thank you.

Chris McKee: Mr. Chair, Chris McKee with BLM.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, thank you Chris. You have the floor.

Chris McKee: Thank you Mr. Chair. I move to maintain the status quo for the closure to moose hunting by non-federally fairly qualified users and Unit 22B west of the Darby mountains. And if I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Gene Peltola: Yes, I second.

Chris McKee: Thank you. The moose population in Unit 22B West hunt area continues to be below state management objectives with continued low recruitment, therefore the closure of the non-federally qualified users should remain in place to allow for the continuation of subsistence uses of the moose resource during both the fall and winter hunts, and it's consistent with the recommendation of the Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Chris, did we get a second for Chris?

Gene Peltola: Yes, BIA seconded.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, thank you. The floor is open now for discussion?

Gene Peltola: BIA...

Anthony Christianson: Call for the question? Thank you Gene. We'll go ahead and do a roll call Sue. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, motion on the floor is to maintain the status quo on this closure. Chris McKee, BLM your vote?

Chris McKee: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports to maintain the status quo as recommended by the Seward Council.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sara Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service?

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: Forest Service supports indifference to the RAC and the justification provided by BLM.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support indifference to the Regional Advisory Council and as stated by BLM. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you? Public member Charlie Brower?

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. And chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I support too. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Yes, motion passes unanimously.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, Sue we'll call on the next proposal to be presented by staff.  
Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Wildlife Closure Review 22-13. Again, Brian Ubelaker.

Brian Ubelaker: Thank you Sue. Hello Mr. Chair and members of the board. I promise you only have to listen to me one more time after this, well for today anyway.

Sorry, for the record my name is Brian Ubelaker. I am a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. I will be presenting a summary

of the analysis for a Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-13. And this analysis begins on Page 1185 of your meeting books.

Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-13 pertaining to Unit 22D within the Kougarak, Kuzitrin and Pilgrim River (unintelligible) public land (unintelligible) to residents of Units 22D and 22C. This closure was initially established in 2002.

This closure was enacted to restrict heavy hunting pressure to conserve a declining population of moose. Since then the season has been shortened on three separate occasions.

Overharvest from the herd has occurred in 2003 and 2004 despite efforts to close the hunt by ADF&G. The Seward Peninsula RAC reviewed this closure in 2011, in 2014 and recommended to maintain status quo.

The moose population only on Unit 22 is estimated at 6775 moose. Sorry, is that a question?

Sue Detwiler: I think people need the mute, Star 6. You're talking over Brian, Star 6.

Brian Ubelaker: Okay, let's see the moose population in Unit 22 is estimated at 6775, which is within the state management objectives. ADF&G considers the moose population in Unit 22B to be decreasing to stable with population estimates below their management objective.

The bull cow ratio has averaged 26 bulls to 100 cows which is above their management objective. No non-resident harvest has occurred in 22B since the non-resident season closed in 2002.



All harvest under state regulations has occurred on non-federal lands. Moose harvest in Unit 22D are managed by quotas. And between 2014 and 2019 reported moose harvest has exceeded harvest quotas. Since 2017, the season has closed in five days or less. If this closure were rescinding non-federally qualified users would be able to harvest moose on federal public lands within Unit 22D, that portion within the Kougarok, Kuzitrin and Pilgrim River drainages.

As the state hunt is managed by harvest quotas rescinding the closure would likely result in zero to minimal increase in harvest. Unit 22B moose population is below management objectives. Bull to cow ratios are relatively low indicating few surplus bulls available for harvest and calf and cow ratios are very low indicating a declining population.

Increased hunters would lead to decreased harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users by increasing competition for a small quickly met quota of harvestable moose, therefore it is OSM's conclusion to maintain status quo on this closure. Thank you. And I am available for questions.

Anthony Christianson: Any questions? All right, did we receive any public comment during this proposal period? Thank you.

Brian Ubelkaer: No sir, there were no public comments submitted. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Move on to anybody online who would like to be recognized at this time. Operator, this is the time for them to speak to this agenda item. Thank you.

Coordinator: As a reminder Star 1 if you would like to make a comment. Once again that is Star 1 for any comments. No comments at this time sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on to RAC Chair recommendation.

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board for the record Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I'll be providing the council's recommendation in the absence of Chairman Green.

The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to maintain the status quo for WCR22-13. The council felt that with populations below state management objectives and a low bull, cow and calf cow ratios the population in the unit is declining.

And with the state managing harvest using a quota system that is usually met or exceeded the closure should be maintained at this time. That is all. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Now we'll open up the floor for our Tribal Native Liaison?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orvillie Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on disclosure review. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Move on to the state liaison, Ben Mulligan?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you sir. For the record Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports the elimination of this closure. The elimination of the federal public lands closure in this area is unlikely to result in any changes to the harvest opportunities for federally qualified users.

In order to hunt in this area ADF&G administers register - registration permit RM840 with harvest quotas. These seasons are subject to emergency order closures once the quota is met. And successful hunters are required to report their harvest within the day of the kill.

Registration permit - this registration permit is only available in person at licensed vendors within the area during the time frame of July 25 to August 25 making it a high bar for those outside the area to hunt on the - in this particular hunt. Thank you sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? Okay, hearing none we'll move on to ISC recommendation?

Robbin LaVine: Hello Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Closure Review 22-13 the ISC provided the standard comment. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. I hope up the floor for board discussion? Hearing none I open the floor for action? Thank you.

Chris McKee: Mr. Chair, Chris McKee for BLM.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor Chris.

Chris McKee: Thank you Mr. Chair. I move to maintain the status quo for the closure to moose hunting by non-federally qualified users in Unit 22 within the Kougarak, Kuzitrin and Pilgrim River drainages. And if I get a second, I'll explain why I tend to vote and support my motion.

Gene Peltola: Yes, I second.

Chris McKee: Thank you. The moose population in Unit 22D is below state management objectives with relatively low bull cow ratios showing a lack of surplus bulls available for harvest. Lo cow calf ratios in the area indicate a declining population with state hunting quotas often being exceeded.

Maintaining the closure will help to ensure harvest opportunities for federally qualified subsistence users and is consistent with the recommendation of the Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Thank you. Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions comments or discussion from the board? Call for the question?

Gene Peltola: Question BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Roll cal please Sue?

Sue Detwiler: Okay, the motion is to maintain the status quo on this closure. Chris McKee, BLM?

Chris McKee: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Gene Peltola BIA?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports - maintains status quo as recommended by the Seward Pen RAC.

Sue Detwiler: Sara Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Creachbaum National Park Service?

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: The Forest Service supports indifference to the RAC and as stated by BLM.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support as stated by BLM and thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member Charlie Brower ?

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair Anthony Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Motion passes unanimously. And the next item on the agenda is Closure Review 22-14, and I believe that is (Tom) Ubelaker once more.

Brian Ubelaker: Thank you, Sue. Yes. Hello again, Mr. Chair, members of the board. Brian Ubelaker, Wildlife Biologist with OSM. And you will be getting a summary of the analysis for the Wildlife Closure Review, WCR 22-14 which the analysis begins on page 1197 of you meeting books. Wildlife Closure Review

WCR 22-14 covering Unit 22(b) West of the (Tisik) River Drainage in Canyon Creek.

Federal public lands are closed to the harvesting of moose except by residents of Units 22(b) and 22(c). This closure was initially established in 2002. This analysis is for a small portion of Unit 22(d) that abuts 22(d) (Kuzatrin) that was analyzed in the previous presentation. Regulatory history, biological data, and harvesting information is identical with that analysis. So for brevity, I will refrain from restating the same information. However, if anybody has any questions regarding this, please let me know and I will be happy to answer them.

Jumping ahead to effects - if this closure is rescinded, non-federally qualified users would be able to harvest moose on federal public lands within Unit 22(d), west of the (Tisik) River Drainage in Canyon Creek. Unit 22(b) west moose population is below state management objectives and metrics point to a declining population. Federally qualified subsistence users may experience increased competition and decreased harvest success if this closure is rescinded.

Therefore, it is OSM's conclusion to maintain status quo. Thank you. And if anybody has any questions, please let me know.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, (Tom). Any questions from the board for (Tom)? Okay. Hearing none, (Tom) did we get any public comments during this proposal period? Thank you.

Brian Ubelaker: No, Mr. Chair. No written comments were submitted. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: All right. Thank you, (Tom). And we will move onto anybody online who would like to speak to this agenda item at this time. Operator, it would be their time to be recognized.

Coordinator: As a reminder, for any comments, star 1. I'm showing no comments at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move onto the Regional Advisory Council chair recommendations.

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board, for the record, Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I will once again be providing the council's recommendation for Chairman Green, for WCR 22-14. The council requested to maintain status quo.

The council feels again, that with populations below state management objectives, and low bull/cow and calf/cow ratios, that the population in Unit 22(b) is declining. If the state is managing harvest with the quota, then the moose population is not strong enough to support removing the closure and should be maintained at this time. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the RAC? Moving onto Tribal Native Liaison.

Robbin LaVine: Sorry, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on this item. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on from there, to State Liaison. Thank you.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, sir. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports this - supports the rescinding of this closure. It's the same reasons that - because of the same registration permit is involved for our comments pertaining to WCR 22-13. So I will just reference those, and our support for elimination of the closure. Thank you, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? ISC recommendation?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the board, this is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Closure Review 22-14, the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. That opens the floor for board discussion. Floor is open for board action.

Chris McKee: Mr. Chair, Chris McKee for BLM.

Anthony Christianson: You have the floor.

Chris McKee: Thank you. Mr. Chair, I move to maintain the status quo for the closure to moose hunting by non-federally qualified users in Unit 22(d), west of the (Tisik) River Drainage in Canyon Creek. And if I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA, second.

Chris McKee: Thank you. The moose population in Unit 22(d) is below state management objectives, with relatively low bull/cow ratios, showing a lack of surplus bulls available for harvest. Low calf/cow ratios in the area indicate a declining



population with state hunting quotas often being exceeded. Maintaining the closure will help to ensure harvest opportunities for federally qualified subsistence users, and is consistent with a recommendation of the Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Chris. Anybody - questions, comments, or discussion?

Gene Peltola: BIA calls for question.

Anthony Christianson: Question has been called. Sue, I'll just do an "all in favor" on this one say by, signify by saying aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Rhonda Pitka: Aye.

Rhonda Pitka: Aye.

Anthony Christianson: Opposed same sign. Motion carries unanimously. Thank you. We'll go ahead and move onto the next proposal there, Sue. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. The next proposal is Wildlife Proposal 22-50 and we're moving into the Northwest Arctic Region.

Tom Plank: Thank you, Sue. Hello, Mr. Chair, members of the board. My name is Tom Plank and I am a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. And I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal, WP 22-50 submitted by the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, requesting the beaver harvest limit be changed from 50 and 30 beaver in Unit 23, Kobuk (Kusolik) River Drainages and Unit 23 remainder, respectively, to no harvest limit in both traps areas. This one was removed from the - from volume 1, so it's starting on page 420.

The proponent states that the proposed changes would align federal beaver trapping regulations with the more liberal state regulations, as well as provide increased harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users. There has been a general trend for liberalizing, trapping, and hunting regulations, in Unit 23. In 1999 the Alaska Board of Game adopted a year-round hunting season for beavers in Unit 23, with no harvest limit or ceiling requirements.

In addition, the trapping season was extended to year-round with no harvest limit and no ceiling requirements. In 2007 the board adopted a proposal requesting a hunting season for beavers in Unit 23 with no closed season and no harvest limit. Arctic landscapes are in transition due to changes in the climate, increased warmth in the summer, and longer growing seasons are contributing to the increasing Tundra productivity in shrub-dominated vegetation.

Beavers have increasingly moved into Tundra areas during the last 20 years. Beaver numbers remain high in Unit 23, particularly in the Selawik and Kobuk River Drainages, where beavers have fully occupied high quality habitat and now widely occur in marginal areas as well. Current harvest data is limited because few people have seal pelts since ADF&G made beaver seal requirements voluntary for Unit 23 in 2000.

The most recent (Triandi) harvest surveys in the community subsistence information system, is in 2014. The data suggests that beaver harvesting varies greatly by year and community, as you can see in figure 1 and table 1 on page 423. If this proposal is adopted the beaver harvest limit would be changed from 50 and 30 beaver per season in Unit 23, the Kobuk Selawik, and Unit 23 remainder respectively, to no harvest limit in both trap areas.

No impact to the beaver population or user groups are expected as federally qualified subsistence users can already trap an unlimited number of beavers on most federal lands under the more liberal state regulations. Additionally, adoption of this proposal would align federal and state regulations reducing regulatory complexity for users.

OSM's conclusion is to support Proposal WP 22-50 with the modification to combine Unit 23 trap areas. Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the board. I'll be happy to field any questions.

Rhonda Pitka: Hello. Did I get cut off?

Sue Detwiler: You are still on. I think we're waiting for Chair Christianson. I'm not sure if he got dropped off or not.

Coordinator: He disconnected yes.

Rhonda Pitka: Oh. Okay. Well then, how about we go to the next thing on the - on the list, Sue?

Sue Detwiler: Which would be summary of written comments on this closure review.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much.

Sue Detwiler: Or, I'm sorry, proposal.

Tom Plank: Thank you very much, Madam Chair and Sue. This is Tom Plank with OSM. There were no written public comments for this proposal. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for that. I'd like to open the floor now for public comment.

Coordiinator: And once again, star 1 for any comment. Once again, that is star 1 for any comments. No comments at this time.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. Regional Advisory Council recommendations. I believe that Robbin LaVine? Oh, wait, no. What am I thinking. I'm sorry. Western Interior. I'm sorry.

Jack Reakoff: Madam Chair, Jack Reakoff here, Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. Council supports as modified by OSM. Council feels that some residents in the area use beaver for meat, particularly before caribou migrations migrate into the area. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Seward Peninsula.

Nissa Pilcher: Madam Chairman, members of the board, for the record, Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I'll be providing the council's recommendation for Chairman Green. The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to support with modifications suggested by OSM.

The council supports this proposal as modified because beaver are populous in expanding further northward. The council said they were concerned the dam created by beaver will have a negative impact on salmon and salmon fishing. This proposal would aid in keeping beaver populations in check, thereby helping salmon populations. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. Northwest Arctic?

Brooke McDavid: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is Brooke McDavid, the Council Coordinator for Northwest Arctic Council. I will be standing in and presenting the recommendation for all of the Northwest Arctic proposals today, on behalf of Chairman Baker, who is unable to make it. The Northwest Arctic Council submitted WP 22-50 and supports this proposal.

Beavers are extremely abundant across the region and are continuing to expand their range way up into river tributaries. Beaver dams are negatively affecting fish, fishing access and water quality. Additional beaver harvest opportunity supports subsistence and may help to keep the beaver population in check. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. North Slope?

Gordon Brower: This is Gordon Brower with the North Slope Regional Subsistence Advisory Council. We chose to support WP 22-50 for our neighbors. And the council justification - beavers are extremely abundant in Unit 23 and their range keeps expanding. The council fully supports increased subsistence opportunities that a harvest the super abundant beaver population in Unit 23. And that's the end of our comments.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. I appreciate all of your comments from the Regional Advisory Council. Right now we're at Tribal Alaska Native Corporation comments. And I believe that's Robbin LaVine.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation, on this proposal. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for that. I appreciate that. Next on the list, would be the Alaska Department of Fish & Game comments, the State Liaison.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, Madam Chair. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports this proposal. We have no conservation concerns as users could already participate under our more liberal state bag limits, and it - but in the end they will align state and federal regulations, which eliminates user confusion, which we always support. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for that. I appreciate that. Now we're on Interagency Staff Committee comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Proposal 22-50 the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. I appreciate that. We're at for discussion with council chairs and state liaison now. Hearing none, I'll open the floor for Federal Subsistence Board action.

Sarah Creachbaum: Madam Chair, Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service.

Rhonda Pitka: Yes. Go ahead.

Sarah Creachbaum: Madam Chair, I vote to approve Wildlife Proposal WP 22-50 with the OSM modification to combine the Unit 23 trap areas to reduce confusion in the regulations, and with an additional modification to set the harvest limit at 100 beaver per person. If I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA, second.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. The National Park Service understands that beavers are increasing in range and activity in Unit 23 and the surrounding regions. However, setting unlimited harvest limits on National Park Service lands, without population estimates or robust harvest information, violates our recognized principles of Fish & Wildlife conservation as referenced in ANILCA Title VIII Section 805(c) and is laid out in the NPS Management Policy's Chapter 4.4.2.

The service will assess the results of managing plant and animal populations by conducting follow up monitoring or other studies, to determine the impact of the management methods on non-targeted and targeted components of the ecosystem. Approving an unlimited harvest without a system in place to monitor impacts to the beaver population, would be unwise given the history of over harvesting the species in other parts of their range.

We do however, recognize that the consistent observations of abundant beavers may represent an increased opportunity for subsistence and creates concerns of environmental impacts to fish streams and other important resources for subsistence users in the region.

Affected councils voiced concerns of beaver dams to have a negative impact on salmon and salmon streams, and to be negatively affecting fish, fish access, and water quality. Therefore, our additional modification is to set the harvest limit at 100 beaver per person. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Hello? Can you hear me?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. Rhonda, this is Sue. May I just step in and make sure I got - we got the - I'm sorry, the motion correct? Wishes to adopt the proposal as modified by OSM to combine Unit 23 trap areas with additional modification to set the harvest limit at 100 beaver per person. I just want to make sure we're correct on that.

Rhonda Pitka: That's correct.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you very much.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you.

Gene Peltola: Madam Chair, BIA.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. Go ahead, BIA.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was wondering if I could get a clarification, if I heard correctly, that I thought I heard in the justification, the history of over harvest (unintelligible) beaver. Is that correct?

Sarah Creachbaum: Yes. That's correct. And I referred to other areas, over harvest in other areas.



Gene Peltola: Okay. So I thought it would be a very, very quick proposal to take up since it's supported by similar Regional Advisory Councils. Although, in other GMUs throughout the state that I know of, no (unintelligible) individuals that harvest more than 100 per year, which not only provides a high local individuals to utilize, beaver is excellent table fare in addition to its high fat content, high protein content for dogs, particularly across the 64 and (unintelligible).

And I'm not quite sold on the limit of 100 per person. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. Was there any amendment to that, or was that just a comment under discussion?

Gene Peltola: It was a comment that I was considering. So at this time I'd like to move to make a motion to remove the modification of 100 per person. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Okay. So there's a motion on the table to amend to remove the limit of 100 beaver per person.

Charlie Brower: Second.

Rhonda Pitka: Seconded by Charlie Brower. Any more discussion on the motion?

Man: Question.

Rhonda Pitka: Question has been called. Can we get a roll call on the...

Sue Detwiler: Sure. Yes. Okay. So...

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you so much.

Sue Detwiler: The motion on the floor is to amend the original motion to remove the harvest limit modification. And I will start the roll call with the maker of the motion, Gene Peltola from BIA.

Gene Peltola: Support. For previous reasons articulated.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Moving to Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service.

Sara Boario: Fish & Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. National Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service opposes.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. BLM, Chris McKee.

Chris McKee: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Forest Service supports the amended motion by BIA.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Member, Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair, Anthony Christianson, have you come back online? Well, it looks like the motion to amend has passed by 7 to 1.

Rhonda Pitka: Okay. Now we're back to the main motion. So now the main motion would read, as modified by OSM to combine Unit 23 trap areas?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. That's my understanding, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. And I believe member Brower just called the question.

Charlie Brower: That's right.

Rhonda Pitka: Okay. Can we get a roll call vote then? Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. So the roll call will start with Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

Sarah Creachbaum: Because the no bag limit is outside NPS policy I'll have to oppose.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish & Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA.

Gene Peltola: Support.

Sue Detwiler: Chris McKee, BLM.

Chris McKee: BLM supports in deference to the Western Interior and Seward Pen RACs.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Forest Service supports in deference to the RACs. And with all due respect to the Park Service within working - operating within their policies.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: I support in deference to the Regional Advisory Councils. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: Support.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. And Chair Christianson, are you able to - were you able to make it back online?

Anthony Christianson:

Sue Detwiler: Yes. The next proposal is Wildlife Proposal 22-50 and we're moving into the Northwest Arctic Region.

Tom Plank: Thank you, Sue. Hello, Mr. Chair, members of the board. My name is Tom Plank and I am a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. And I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal, WP 22-50 submitted by the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, requesting the beaver harvest limit be changed from 50 and 30 beaver in Unit 23, Kobuk (Kusolik) River Drainages and Unit 23 remainder,

respectively, to no harvest limit in both traps areas. This one was removed from the - from volume 1, so it's starting on page 420.

The proponent states that the proposed changes would align federal beaver tracking regulations with the more liberal state regulations, as well as provide increased harvest opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users. There has been a general trend for liberalizing, trapping, and hunting regulations, in Unit 23. In 1999 the Alaska Board of Game adopted a year-round hunting season for beavers in Unit 23, with no harvest limit or ceiling requirements.

In addition, the trapping season was extended to year-round with no harvest limit and no ceiling requirements. In 2007 the board adopted a proposal requesting a hunting season for beavers in Unit 23 with no closed season and no harvest limit. Arctic landscapes are in transition due to changes in the climate, increased warmth in the summer, and longer growing seasons are contributing to the increasing Tundra productivity in shrub-dominated vegetation.

Beavers have increasingly moved into Tundra areas during the last 20 years. Beaver numbers remain high in Unit 23, particularly in the Selawik and Kobuk River Drainages, where beavers have fully occupied high quality habitat and now widely occur in marginal areas as well. Current harvest data is limited because few people have seal pelts since ADF&G made beaver seal requirements voluntary for Unit 23 in 2000.

The most recent (Triandi) harvest surveys in the community subsistence information system, is in 2014. The data suggests that beaver harvesting varies greatly by year and community, as you can see in figure 1 and table 1 on page 423. If this proposal is adopted the beaver harvest limit would be

changed from 50 and 30 beaver per season in Unit 23, the Kobuk Selawik, and Unit 23 remainder respectively, to no harvest limit in both trap areas.

No impact to the beaver population or user groups are expected as federally qualified subsistence users can already trap an unlimited number of beavers on most federal lands under the more liberal state regulations. Additionally, adoption of this proposal would align federal and state regulations reducing regulatory complexity for users.

OSM's conclusion is to support Proposal WP 22-50 with the modification to combine Unit 23 trap areas. Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the board. I'll be happy to field any questions.

Rhonda Pitka: Hello. Did I get cut off?

Sue Detwiler: You are still on. I think we're waiting for Chair Christianson. I'm not sure if he got dropped off or not.

Coordinator: He disconnected yes.

Rhonda Pitka: Oh. Okay. Well then, how about we go to the next thing on the - on the list, Sue?

Sue Detwiler: Which would be summary of written comments on this closure review.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much.

Sue Detwiler: Or, I'm sorry, proposal.

Tom Plank: Thank you very much, Madam Chair and Sue. This is Tom Plank with OSM. There were no written public comments for this proposal. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for that. I'd like to open the floor now for public comment.

Coordiinator: And once again, star 1 for any comment. Once again, that is star 1 for any comments. No comments at this time.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. Regional Advisory Council recommendations. I believe that Robbin LaVine? Oh, wait, no. What am I thinking. I'm sorry. Western Interior. I'm sorry.

Jack Reakoff: Madam Chair, Jack Reakoff here, Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. Council supports as modified by OSM. Council feels that some residents in the area use beaver for meat, particularly before caribou migrations migrate into the area. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Seward Peninsula.

Nissa Pilcher: Madam Chairman, members of the board, for the record, Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. I'll be providing the council's recommendation for Chairman Green. The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to support with modifications suggested by OSM.

The council supports this proposal as modified because beaver are populous in expanding further northward. The council said they were concerned the dam created by beaver will have a negative impact on salmon and salmon fishing.

This proposal would aid in keeping beaver populations in check, thereby helping salmon populations. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. Northwest Arctic?

Brooke McDavid: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is Brooke McDavid, the Council Coordinator for Northwest Arctic Council. I will be standing in and presenting the recommendation for all of the Northwest Arctic proposals today, on behalf of Chairman Baker, who is unable to make it. The Northwest Arctic Council submitted WP 22-50 and supports this proposal.

Beavers are extremely abundant across the region and are continuing to expand their range way up into river tributaries. Beaver dams are negatively affecting fish, fishing access and water quality. Additional beaver harvest opportunity supports subsistence and may help to keep the beaver population in check. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. North Slope?

Gordon Brower: This is Gordon Brower with the North Slope Regional Subsistence Advisory Council. We chose to support WP 22-50 for our neighbors. And the council justification - beavers are extremely abundant in Unit 23 and their range keeps expanding. The council fully supports increased subsistence opportunities that a harvest the super abundant beaver population in Unit 23. And that's the end of our comments.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. I appreciate all of your comments from the Regional Advisory Council. Right now we're at Tribal Alaska Native Corporation comments. And I believe that's Robbin LaVine.



Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation, on this proposal. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for that. I appreciate that. Next on the list, would be the Alaska Department of Fish & Game comments, the State Liaison.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, Madam Chair. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports this proposal. We have no conservation concerns as users could already participate under our more liberal state bag limits, and it - but in the end they will align state and federal regulations, which eliminates user confusion, which we always support. Thank you.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for that. I appreciate that. Now we're on Interagency Staff Committee comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Proposal 22-50 the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. I appreciate that. We're at for discussion with council chairs and state liaison now. Hearing none, I'll open the floor for Federal Subsistence Board action.

Sarah Creachbaum: Madam Chair, Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service.

Rhonda Pitka: Yes. Go ahead.

Sarah Creachbaum: Madam Chair, I vote to approve Wildlife Proposal WP 22-50 with the OSM modification to combine the Unit 23 trap areas to reduce confusion in

the regulations, and with an additional modification to set the harvest limit at 100 beaver per person. If I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA, second.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. The National Park Service understands that beavers are increasing in range and activity in Unit 23 and the surrounding regions. However, setting unlimited harvest limits on National Park Service lands, without population estimates or robust harvest information, violates our recognized principles of Fish & Wildlife conservation as referenced in ANILCA Title VIII Section 805(c) and is laid out in the NPS Management Policy's Chapter 4.4.2.

The service will assess the results of managing plant and animal populations by conducting follow up monitoring or other studies, to determine the impact of the management methods on non-targeted and targeted components of the ecosystem. Approving an unlimited harvest without a system in place to monitor impacts to the beaver population, would be unwise given the history of over harvesting the species in other parts of their range.

We do however, recognize that the consistent observations of abundant beavers may represent an increased opportunity for subsistence and creates concerns of environmental impacts to fish streams and other important resources for subsistence users in the region.

Affected councils voiced concerns of beaver dams to have a negative impact on salmon and salmon streams, and to be negatively affecting fish, fish access, and water quality. Therefore, our additional modification is to set the harvest limit at 100 beaver per person. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Hello? Can you hear me?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. Rhonda, this is Sue. May I just step in and make sure I got - we got the - I'm sorry, the motion correct? Wishes to adopt the proposal as modified by OSM to combine Unit 23 trap areas with additional modification to set the harvest limit at 100 beaver per person. I just want to make sure we're correct on that.

Rhonda Pitka: That's correct.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you very much.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you.

Gene Peltola: Madam Chair, BIA.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. Go ahead, BIA.

Gene Peltola: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was wondering if I could get a clarification, if I heard correctly, that I thought I heard in the justification, the history of over harvest (unintelligible) beaver. Is that correct?

Sarah Creachbaum: Yes. That's correct. And I referred to other areas, over harvest in other areas.

Gene Peltola: Okay. So I thought it would be a very, very quick proposal to take up since it's supported by similar Regional Advisory Councils. Although, in other GMUs throughout the state that I know of, no (unintelligible) individuals that harvest more than 100 per year, which not only provides a high local individuals to

utilize, beaver is excellent table fare in addition to its high fat content, high protein content for dogs, particularly across the 64 and (unintelligible).

And I'm not quite sold on the limit of 100 per person. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you. Was there any amendment to that, or was that just a comment under discussion?

Gene Peltola: It was a comment that I was considering. So at this time I'd like to move to make a motion to remove the modification of 100 per person. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Okay. So there's a motion on the table to amend to remove the limit of 100 beaver per person.

Charlie Brower: Second.

Rhonda Pitka: Seconded by Charlie Brower. Any more discussion on the motion?

Man: Question.

Rhonda Pitka: Question has been called. Can we get a roll call on the...

Sue Detwiler: Sure. Yes. Okay. So...

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you so much.

Sue Detwiler: The motion on the floor is to amend the original motion to remove the harvest limit modification. And I will start the roll call with the maker of the motion, Gene Peltola from BIA.

Gene Peltola: Support. For previous reasons articulated.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Moving to Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service.

Sara Boario: Fish & Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. National Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service opposes.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. BLM, Chris McKee.

Chris McKee: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Forest Service supports the amended motion by BIA.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Member, Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: I support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair, Anthony Christianson, have you come back online? Well, it looks like the motion to amend has passed by 7 to 1.

Rhonda Pitka: Okay. Now we're back to the main motion. So now the main motion would read, as modified by OSM to combine Unit 23 trap areas?

Sue Detwiler: Yes. That's my understanding, Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. And I believe member Brower just called the question.

Charlie Brower: That's right.

Rhonda Pitka: Okay. Can we get a roll call vote then? Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. So the roll call will start with Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum.

Sarah Creachbaum: Because the no bag limit is outside NPS policy I'll have to oppose.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish & Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA.

Gene Peltola: Support.

Sue Detwiler: Chris McKee, BLM.

Chris McKee: BLM supports in deference to the Western Interior and Seward Pen RACs.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service.

David Schmid: Forest Service supports in deference to the RACs. And with all due respect to the Park Service within working - operating within their policies.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Rhonda Pitka.

Rhonda Pitka: I support in deference to the Regional Advisory Councils. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: Support.

Sue Detwiler: Okay. Thank you. And Chair Christianson, are you able to - were you able to make it back online?

Anthony Christianson: Yes. Can you hear me, Sue? I support.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. Okay. Thank you. So the vote is 7 to 1 in favor of the main motion, which is to adopt the proposal as modified by OSM.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Sue. Sorry I keep getting dropped here, down here. I think we're having sun flares. That's what I'm going to blame it on today.

Sue Detwiler: That must be a tough problem to have down there.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. I'm sorry to brag guys, but sun shining in Southeast and the fish eggs are spawning. So it's a little update from the Chairman here. So, thank you, Sue. And sorry I keep getting dropped. My phone ran out of power.

And thank you to Rhonda for picking it up. We'll go ahead and move onto the next one, Sue. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: That'd be Wildlife Closure Review 22-18, and that will be Kendra Holman presenting then.

Kendra Holman: Can you hear me?

Rhonda Pitka: Yes. Go ahead.

Kendra Holman: Hello, Mr. Chair, members of the board. My name is Kendra Holman, and I'm a Wildlife Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management. This proposal or this closure review, can be found on page 1210 of your meeting book. Unit - the closure location in Unit 23, south of Rabbit Creek, (Cayuk) Creek and Noatak River, and west of the Cutler, Redstone, and Baird Mountains.

Federal public lands are closed to the taking of sheep except by federally qualified subsistence users hunting under those regulations. A map of this location can be found on page 1211 of your meeting book. The initial federal subsistence hunting regulations in 1991, were established by adopting existing state harvest limit of one ram with a 7/8 curl in the fall hunt, and one sheep with a harvest quota of 30 animals in the winter hunt.

In 1991 and 1992 special actions adopted by the Federal Subsistence Board, closed the sheep harvest south and east on the Noatak River. In 1998 the board adopted the state sheep harvest zone of Unit 23 dividing it into the Baird and De Long Mountain ranges, and closing federal public lands to non-federally qualified users in the Baird Mountains.



In 1999 a designated hunter permit system was adopted by the board in the Baird and De Long Mountain hunt areas of Unit 23 and 26(a). In 2014 both federal and state sheep seasons were closed in Units 23 and 26(a). In 2016 a maybe announced sheep season in the Baird Mountain hunt areas of Unit 23 and delegated authority to open and close the season, determine annual harvest quotas.

The doll sheep of the Baird Mountains of Unit 23 are as the northwestern margin of the range in Alaska. And because of this, fantastic weather events affect their populations more than sheep populations in the other areas, with more abundant habitat and stable range conditions.

Severe weather in the 1990s resulted in a high natural mortality, dramatically reduced sheep numbers in the area, and caused the closure of the general and subsistence hunts between 1991 and 1995. The sheep population ranged from 643 sheep in 2011 to 174 sheep in 2019, representing a 73% population decline. This is shown on figure 1 on page 1216 of your meeting book.

Between 2011 and 2019 the lamb per ewe-like sheep ratios ranged from 1 to 52 lambs per hundred ewe-like sheep. This can be seen on figure 2 on page 1216 of your meeting book. Low lamb reproductivity in 2013 was partially attributed to the long and cold 2012-2013 winter, late spring and record cold temperatures in May 2013.

Between 2011 and 2019 the total number of rams per ewe-like sheep ranged from 17 to 29 rams per 100 ewe-like sheep, seen on figure 2 found on page 1216 of your meeting book. Between 2011 and 2018 the full curl ram per ewe-like sheep ratio ranged from one to nine full curl rams per 100 ewe-like sheep. These low ratios indicate there are very few to no large rams available for harvest.

Low sheep abundance results (slid) in closures of both the state and federal hunting seasons in the Baird Mountains from 1991 to 1994. The Federal Subsistence hunt was opened in the 1998-'99 regulatory year and harvest occurred each year through 2014, except the 1999-2000 and the 2000-2001 regulatory years when low numbers of full curl rams were observed during surveys, and the hunt was closed.

No sheep harvest has occurred in the Baird mountains under state or federal regulations since 2014 when the seasons were closed, due to conservation concerns. Between 2004 and 2014 the annual report of sheep harvest in Unit 23 and 26(a), averaged 23 animals under both state hunting and federal subsistence regulations.

The majority of the harvest came from federal subsistence registration hunt in Unit 23. The sheep population in the Baird Mountains remain low, declining 73% since 2011, with few large rams and no harvestable surplus. If this closure were lifted, no federally qualified subsistence users would be allowed to hunt sheep on federal public lands in the Baird Mountains.

The closure would be maintained - this closure should be maintained due to conservation concerns. The Western Arctic National Park land superintendent has a delegated authority letter to announce the federal in season sheep, maintaining that the maybe announced season and delegated authority allows for hunt flexibility and harvest opportunity, in the event that the sheep population recovers and the harvestable surplus exists.

The delegation of authority letter is attached on Appendix 1 found on page 1222 of your meeting book. Preliminary conclusion is - the OSM conclusion

is to maintain the status quo. Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the board. I'd be happy to address any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions from the board? All right. Thank you. Hearing none, did we receive any public comment during the proposal period? Thank you.

Kendra Holman: Mr. Chair, this is Kendra Holman. There were no written comments received.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, at this time if there is any public that would like to be recognized, this is your time to speak to this agenda item. Thank you.

Coordiinator: And if you would like to make a comment, please press star 1. I'm showing no comments at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Operator. We'll move onto Regional Advisory Council chair comments.

Brooke McDavid: Mr. Chair, this is Brooke McDavid, Northwest Arctic Council Coordinator. The Northwest Arctic Council voted to maintain the status quo on Wildlife Closure 22-18. The sheep population remains very low and needs to continue to be protected. It's noted that the population has been too low, even for a to be announced winter season for federally qualified subsistence users.

Local observations indicate a low and dwindling sheep population that is stressed by challenging winter weather conditions and predation. The council requests ongoing monitoring of the sheep population. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move onto Tribal Native Liaison.

Eva Patton: Mr. Chair?

Anthony Christianson: Oh, yes, sorry, there are other RACs. Go ahead. Eva, you have the floor.

Eva Patton: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the board. I do believe North Slope Regional Advisory Council Chair Gordon Brower, is online to provide recommendation. Thank you.

Gordon Brower: Thank you, Eva. And we are on WCR 22-18?

Eva Patton: Yes. Correct. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Gordon Brower: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, we've heard some concerns in Unit 23 and in fact I'd like to thank Jack Reakoff, for attending the North Slope Regional Subsistence Advisory Council meeting to express some concerns that we heard in our (unintelligible) area, having some federally qualified subsistence users identified. So the council recommendation is to maintain status quo. Justification of sheep population remains very low and needs to continue to be protected.

The council supported maintaining the closure due to continuing conservation concerns. The council member from Point Hope, (Steve Umaduk), noted that sheep hadn't been seen locally in the De Long Mountains or Cape (unintelligible) in quite some time, as their population declined. And those were his own personal knowledge regarding that. So with that, that would be the end of our comments for WCR 22-18.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Mr. Brower. Are there any other RACs who would like to speak to this? Thank you. We'll move onto Tribal Consultation, Native Liaison?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Tribal Liaison, Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on this proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move onto State Liaison.

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, sir. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports the elimination of this closure because as of right now currently, no open state season for sheep within GMU 23. And what harvest does occur the superintendent of the Western Arctic National Park lands has been delegated authority on federal public lands, to provide opportunities to federally qualified users when appropriate.

ADF&G will not consider any hunting under state regulations until such a time as the population reaches the appropriate size. Thank you, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Okay. Thank you. We'll go onto ISC recommendation.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine, Policy Coordinator and Interagency Staff Committee Chair. For Wildlife Closure Review 22-18 the ISC provided the standard comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you, Robbin. That opens the floor for board discussion. Floor is open for board action.

Sarah Creachbaum: Mr. Chair, National Park Service.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. You have the floor, Sarah.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. Mr. Chair, the National Park Service moves to maintain status quo for Wildlife Closure Review WCR 22-18, which keeps Unit 23 closed to the taking of sheep, except by federally qualified subsistence users. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Gene Peltola: BIA, second.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. The sheep population in the Baird Mountains remains low and has been declining by 73% since 2011, with few large brands and no harvestable surplus. Further, the state sheep season has been closed since 2014 and the Western Arctic National Park land superintendent has delegated authority to announce a federal sheep season, and to close sheep hunting to non-federally qualified users when necessary.

No federal sheep hunting season has been announced since 2015 due to conservation concerns. In case the sheep population would recover to the degree that harvestable surplus exists, harvest opportunities can be created through the delegation of authority in place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any further discussion by the board? Call for the question.

Gene Peltola: BIA, question.

Anthony Christianson: Question been called. All in favor of the motion as presented, signify by saying aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Woman: Aye.

Woman: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Anthony Christianson: Opposed same sign. Motion carries unanimously. Thank you. We'll go ahead and move onto the next one, Sue.

Sue Detwiler: That would be Wildlife Closure Review 22-45 and that will be presented by Hannah Voorhees.

Hannah Voorhees: Hello, Mr. Chair and members of the board. This is Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist with Office of Subsistence Management. And I'll be presenting Wildlife Closure Review 22-45, located in Unit 23. The analysis begins on page 1226 of the Board Book.

A description of the closure reads, Federal public lands within a 10-mile wide corridor, 5 miles either side, along the Noatak River from the Western Boundary of Noatak National Preserve, upstream to the confluence of the Cutler River, within the Northern and Southern boundaries of the Eli and Aggie River Drainages, respectively, and within the (Scroll) River Drainage, are closed to caribou hunting except by federally qualified subsistence users.

This is a year-round closure that was initiated in 2018 and has not been reviewed since. All federal public lands in Unit 23 were closed to caribou

hunting by non-federally qualified users for the 2016 to 2017 regulatory year. That closure was due to conservation and the impact on non-local hunting. Beginning in 2017, the current targeted Noatak closure went into place, first as a special action, and then as a standard regulation in 2018.

In other regulatory conduct that does not make it into the Board Book, on May 30th this year the board approved Wildlife Special Action 21-01(a) with modification to close the Noatak National Preserve, including the Nigu River portion of the preserve in Unit 26(a), and BLM managed lands between the Noatak and (Kobuk) Rivers in Unit 23 to caribou hunting by non-federally qualified users from August 1st through September 30th, during the 2022 to '23 and 2023 to '24 regulatory years.

In terms of biological background, the Western Arctic herd peaked near 500,000 caribou in 2003, declining to about 200,000 in 2016. In recent years the herd seemed to be recovering with approximately 244,000 caribou in 2018. But the most recent photo census in 2021 estimated the herd at only 188,000. Local hunters account for approximately 95% of the total herd harvest.

Next, effects of the closure to date - the most recent subsistence survey of caribou harvest in Noatak dates to 2016 to 2017. There are no new data available that would allow for a comparison of household harvest before and after implementation of the closure. However, testimony reflecting the success of the closure for Noatak has been given by Northwest Arctic Council members every year since the closure was implemented.

If the closure is lifted, non-federally qualified users would be able to hunt caribou on federal public lands, along the Noatak River, and within the (Scroll), Eli, and Aggie River Drainages. Of note, since the approval of WSA



21-01(a) following production of your Board Book, this (affect) would apply except for August and September, during the next two years, when the targeted closure currently under reviewed, will be encompassed by and duplicated by the new larger temporary closure area.

If the closure is lifted this could result in more user conflict and interfere with caribou harvest by federally qualified subsistence users. The OSM conclusion is to maintain the status quo with the following justification - the current closure is still necessary to continue subsistence uses of the Western Arctic caribou herd for federally qualified subsistence users, specifically Noatak residents.

The underlying factor leading to the closure, user conflict, has persisted overall in Unit 23 but has been mitigated in the closure area. Additionally, the herd is now being managed at the preservative declining levels under the Western Arctic caribou herd working group's management framework. Thank you. That concludes my presentation. And Im happy to answer any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Any questions for staff? Hearing none, was there any public testimony given during this proposal period? Thank you. Was there any public testimony received during this proposal period? Thank you.

Hannah Voorhees:Mr. Chair, my apologies. I had an issue with mute. This is Hannah Voorhees again. A written public comment was received from Resident Hunters of Alaska. The group supports eliminating the closure because it excludes non-local residents of Alaska. They suggest eliminating access to non-resident hunters through the Board of Game process instead.

The Western Arctic caribou herd working group submitted the following brief comment to the Federal Subsistence Board on February 3, 2022. The working

group voted to support WCR 22-45 and the continuation of the current closure. And that was the extent of the comment. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Operator, at this time is there anybody online who'd like to be recognized to speak to this agenda item? Now would be the time to be recognized. Thank you.

Coordiinator: And as a reminder, for any comments, please press star 1. I'm showing no comments, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move onto Regional Advisory Council recommendation.

Sue Detwiler: Mr. Chair, there were several Regional Advisory Councils that had comments on these and might start with Western Interior.

Jack Reakoff: Mr. Chairman, Jack Reakoff.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, Jack. You have the floor. And too we'll call it, from here forward, thank you.

Jack Reakoff: Okay. The Western Interior chose to defer this to the - back to region, to the affected region and didn't take any comments on it. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Northwest Arctic?

Brooke McDavid: For the record, Brooke McDavid, Northwest Arctic Council Coordinator. The Northwest Arctic Council voted to maintain the status quo for WCR 22-45. The council recommended maintaining the targeted caribou closure in Unit 23 as the success of this closure has been time tested now, and protects the

opportunity of subsistence hunters along the Noatak River and the other river drainages. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: North Slope?

Gordon Brower: Hey, good afternoon. Gordon Brower, Regional Advisory Council Chair for the North Slope. And the North Slope did make a recommendation. The council recommendation is to maintain status quo. Justification - the council recommended maintaining the targeted caribou closure in Unit 23 in support of Noatak to continue to reduce previously significant user conflict in the area, and because the targeted closure provides a needed priority for subsistence users to put food on the table. That's the end of our comment.

Sue Detwiler: Seward Peninsula?

Nissa Pilcher: Mr. Chairman, members of the board, for the record, Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council. The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council voted to maintain the status quo for WCR 22-45. The council recommended maintaining the status quo because the closure is still necessary to continue subsistence uses of the Western Arctic caribou herd, and due to the proximity of Unit 23 to the closure area, excuse me, and due to proximity of the Unit 23 closure area to Unit 22. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Mr. Chair, I believe those are all the Regional Advisory Council recommendations.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions from the board for any RAC chairs? Hearing none, we'll move onto the state - I mean the Tribal Native Liaison.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on Wildlife Closure Review 22-45. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. State Liaison, Mr. Mulligan?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you, sir. For the record, Alaska Department of Fish & Game supports the elimination of this closure. Harvest by non-federally qualified users is minuscule when compared to the overall harvest on the Western Arctic herd. Bulls are overwhelmingly harvested by non-federally qualified users and the herd's bull to cow ratio is above the objective. And there is still a harvestable surplus available to meet the amount necessary for subsistence.

If migration of the herd is a consideration of this closure caused by non-federally qualified users' hunting practices and/or airplane activity, then as we have previously stated on comment on this issue before, there are more appropriate mechanisms through the state's public regulatory process, available to address those issues. Thank you, sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for the state? Moving on, ISC recommendation?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine. And for Wildlife Closure Review 22-45, the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. That opens up the floor for board deliberation. Comments or questions? The floor is open for board action.

Sarah Creachbaum: Mr. Chair, National Park Service. Mr. Chair, the National Park Service moves to maintain status quo for Wildlife Closure Review WCR 22-45. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Woman: I'll second.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. The board enacted the current closure for the continuation of subsistence uses of the Western Arctic caribou herd. The underlying factor leading to the closure in 2018, user conflict, has persisted in Unit 23. Feedback from Noatak residents indicate that the current closure has reduced user conflict, resulting in more successful caribou hunts, and allowing for the continuation of subsistence uses.

Further, the Western Arctic caribou herd management plan indicates the population to be at a preservative declining level, and the Federal Subsistence Board just supported the special action request, WSA 21-01, to close large proportions of federal lands in Unit 23, to non-federally qualified subsistence users for one regulatory cycle.

Since the closure has been enacted, user conflicts within the closure area, have been reduced and the hunt experiences and harvest success of federally qualified subsistence users have improved. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. All right. The floor is open now for any board questions, comments, or discussion on this. Motion? Call for the question.

Gene Peltola: Question, BIA.

Charlie Brower: Question.

Anthony Christianson: Okay. All in favor? Sue, do you want to do roll call on this one? It got quiet there. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Yes. I was just wondering if I got cut off there. I'll try roll call then. Starting with - the motion on the floor is to maintain the status quo on this closure. And we'll start out with National Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum?

Sarah Creachbaum: National Park Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sara Boario, Fish & Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish & Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: BIA supports based on the recommendation by the affected Regional Advisory Councils.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chris McKee, BLM?

Chris McKee: BLM supports in deference to the councils.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

David Schmid: The Forest Service also supports in deference to the councils.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public member, Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support in deference to the Regional Advisory Councils. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member, Charlie Brower.

Charlie Brower: I support as stated.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you, Charlie. Chair Christianson? Did we lose you, Tony?

Anthony Christianson: No. I'm here. Thank you. I said yes, I support.

Sue Detwiler: Oh, okay. Thank you. Motion passes unanimously. So I believe that brings us to our final two proposals on the non-consensus agenda - Eastern Interior's items were all on the consensus agenda. And so that brings us to North Slope with their two proposals, WP 22-54 and that will be presented by Kendra Holman, if you're ready to go on, Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Yes. We'll go on. Thank you. Kendra, you have the floor.

Kendra Holman: Hello, Mr. Chair, members of the board. This is Kendra Holman and I'm a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management. Wildlife Proposal WP 22-54 submitted by the North Slope Regional Advisory - Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, can be found on page 1253 of your meeting book. This proposal requests modification of the hunt area boundary for moose in Unit 26(a), identified on map 1 on page 1256 of your meeting book.

The proponent states that the moose hunt opportunity in this is particularly beneficial in the (unintelligible) that have the closest access to the hunt area. The current boundary of 156 west longitude is a 70 mile trip by boat up the Ikpikpuk River for residents of (Ukiabik).

An expanded hunt area would allow moose harvest west of the Allakaket River and would be beneficial to the local community hunters that don't have to - that have to travel so far. The council recommends establishing this new boundary to follow the natural landscape feature of the Allakaket River, which is a tributary to the Ikpikpuk River and runs north, south to Admiralty Bay.

The Allakaket River is well known by local communities and will provide a natural hunt area boundary that is easy to identify rather than the current abstract 156 west longitude that is very difficult to locate on the ground. Establishing the hunt area west of the Allakaket River would help local communities and families that hunt and have cabins on the Chipp River and have access to this moose hunt area.

Council members have relayed their experiences and how that encountering a moose in the area is opportunistic, and therefore the harvest is anticipated to still be little. From 1991 to 1996 there was a 75% moose population decline prompting stricter state regulations.

In '96 the Federal Subsistence Board closed moose hunting to - on all federal public lands and Unit 26A except in that portion of the Caldwell River drainage downstream from the mouth of the Anaktuvok River. The area did remain open to federally qualified subsistence users.

From 2002 to 2014 state and federal hunting regulations were liberalized as the moose population has started increasing in 1998. In 2014, the season was reduced in length and the non-resident draw hunt closed due to the moose population decline.

Prior to the 1940s moose were scarce along the North Slope subsequently populations expanded along the limited riparian habitat of the major drainages



and have become well established in the southeast portion of Unit 26A. The northern extent of the population on the North Slope is limited by habitat availability.

Since the late 1970s ADF&G has conducted several aerial surveys in all the major drainages of Unit 26A to assess population status and recruitment of short yearlings. Between 1970 and 2021 the Unit 26A moose population fluctuated ranging from 294 moose to 1535 moose. This can be seen on Table 1 on Page 1260 of your meeting book. And the percentage of short yearlings range from 1% to 25%.

The periods of population declines resulted from poor calf survival and high adult mortality. Moose mortality was likely due to malnourishment, bacterial diseases, mineral deficiencies, predation from wolves and bears, weather factors and competition with snowshoe hare for browse. In 2008 weights of short yearlings average 322 pounds which is the lightest recorded in Alaska and an indicator of nourishment.

Moose harvest levels have responded to population levels and regulations. The peak estimated abundance of moose was in 1991. The average harvest levels at that time was 57 moose per year.

In 1995, restrictive regulations implemented, and the harvest dropped to 14 moose. In 1996, the use of aircraft in the area was banned, and the moose harvest dropped to an average of four moose per year until 2004.

In 2006, regulations began to be liberalized including a state draw permit hunt and the use of aircraft to hunt moose, which lasted until 2015. Non-resident moose hunting in Unit 26A has been closed since 2014.

From 2009 to 2019 the average reported moose harvest was 3.73 per year. This can be found on Table 3 which is on Page 1262 of your meeting book.

The proposed changes will have little effect on the moose population of Unit 26A. Regulations in the affected area would change from one bull during this season of August 1 to September 1 to one moose during the season of July 1 to September 14.

The change is not expected to impact the moose population or harvesting levels. The prohibition of harvesting a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf would be applicable and would help to mitigate any conservation concerns.

While the moose population and Unit 26A is below state management objectives adoption of this proposal is not expected to have the - to affect the population due to very low harvest. Adoption of the proposal also increases hunting opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users by providing a longer season and a more liberal harvest limit within the affected area and makes it more feasible for federally qualified assistance users to reach the hunt area.

Currently, the number of animals reported harvest in Unit 26A is less than 1% of the population. OSM's conclusion is to support proposal WP22-55 with modification to revise the hunt area descriptor to Unit 26A that portion west of the eastern shore of Admiralty Bay and the Allakaket River to 155 west longitude excluding the Caldwell River drainage, one moose however you may not take a calf or cow accompanied by a calf.

Thank you Mr. Chair, members of the board I'd be happy to address any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions from the board for staff? All right, hearing none any public testimony received during the proposal period?

(Kendra): Mr. Chair, this is (Kendra). There was no written public comments received on this proposal.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you (Kendra). Operator, this is a time anybody online who would like to be recognized to speak to this agenda item now is the time.

Coordinator: As a reminder if you'd like to make a comment please press Star 1. For any comments please press Star 1. And no comments at this time.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll go ahead and move on, Tribal Liaison?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation of this proposal. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Robbin. Did we jump over Regional Advisory Council recommendations? Sorry about that guys?

Sue Detwiler: Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. And we do have the North Slopes Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Chair, Gordon Brower online. Thank you.

Gordon Brower: Thank you Madam Coordinator, Eva. I'm going to miss calling you that when you move over was it to the Gates of the Arctic I think that you were moving on as a long time coordinator. Yes, Mr. Chair Gordon Brower, Regional - North Slope Regional Subsistence Advisory Council Chair.

We deliberated on this more than once before and have been a source of dialogue for many years about the descriptor on moose. And the council supported, and it was our proposal with some modification clarifying the hunt area boundary descriptor.

The council submitted this proposal to provide easier access to traditional hunting areas along the Allakaket River for federally qualified users. It's much easier to look at a land feature and determine whether you're in and out of a boundary than turning on a GPS to determine your outside of the 156 west longitude, which also puts that boundary about two miles to the west.

And until you reach somewhere around Price River or Price or Valley of the Willows area then you can get in the hunt area. And there are some more opportunistic provisions we're looking at that once in a while a moose will come and meander down the river and it's much easier to use the bank of the Allakaket River until it terminates up by Ikpikpuk where the Chipp and Allakaket reach up that way.

And then - and so right now the subsistence hunters from (Latravic) and Ugashic have to travel extremely long distances. And when we get to these places we're already committed to bringing probably in excess of, you know, \$700 worth of fuel to get this far to go to our hunt areas.

And long distances to reach the current hunt area which is difficult to access and prohibitive due to high cost of fuel. And we know that fuel is one of those things that, you know, sometimes families subsidize each other in order to try to be more successful.

Changing the hunt area boundaries so that it follows the natural river corridor rather than 156 west longitude will also help the hunters know for certain they

are in - within bounds. The council also noticed that this proposal would not pose a (unintelligible) because hunters can only travel to the hunt area on occasion due to the high cost and time involved.

And the moose are not always available for harvest along the river corridors. Council members reported that moose are often in excess of 130 miles from (Atralvik) so harvest is still very opportunistic.

The council supports the OSM recommendation to include the eastern coastline of the Admiralty Bay as it clarifies the description of the hunt area boundary where the Allakaket River enters the bay. And that concludes our comments on the - and our justification for the proposal. Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Gordon. Any questions from the board report? Appreciate that. Any other RACs wish to speak to this? Okay, we'll move on to the Tribal Native Liaison. Robbin?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on this proposal. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. We'll move to the state liaison counterpart?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you Mr. Chair. For the record Alaska Department of Fish and Game opposes changing the border for any moose hunt in GMU 26A because it will result in the misalignment of federal and state regulations, possibly creating confusion amongst not only the hunters but enforcement officers who are on the grounds. Thank you sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Ben. Any questions for the state? Hearing none we'll go ahead and move on ISC recommendation?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Mr. Chair. This is Robbin LaVine again. For Wildlife Proposal 22-44 the Interagency Staff Committee provided the standard comment. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Robbin. Any board discussion, deliberation? The floor is open for board action?

Tom Heinlein: Mr. Chair Tom Heinlein, BLM.

Anthony Christianson: Yes Tom, you have the floor.

Tom Heinlein: Thank you. Mr, Chair, this is Tom Heinlein, Bureau of Land Management. I move to adopt proposal WP22-54 as modified by OSM. And if I get a second, I'll explain why I intend to vote in support of my motion.

Man: Second.

Tom Heinlein: Thank you. If this proposal is adopted it would increase harvest opportunities for federally qualified subsistence users by providing for a longer season and more liberal harvest limit while also making it more feasible for hunters to reach this new hunt area. Harvest in the area is currently very low and is not expected to affect the moose population.

The modified hunt area descriptor does not leave any gaps or ambiguous areas while using the hunt boundary that follows the natural river corridor allows hunters more easily know where they are located. The modification is also

consistent with the recommendation of the North Slope Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other board discussion, comments or questions?  
I'll offer a question on the motion?

Man: Question.

Anthony Christianson: We'll go ahead - question has been called. All in favor of the motion as presented signify by saying aye?

Woman: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Man: Aye.

Woman: Aye.

Anthony Christianson: Opposed same sign? The motion carries unanimously. Thank you, we'll go ahead and go on to the North Slope last proposal. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Yes, Mr. Chair that's Wildlife Proposal 22-56. And that will be um presented by Tom Plank.

Tom Plank: Good afternoon Mr. Chair, members of the board. Again, my name is Tom Plank. And I'm a Wildlife Biologist in the Office of Subsistence Management and I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP22-56 submitted by Gates of the Arctic National Park Subsistence Resource Commission requesting that brown bear harvest limit for that

portion of Unit 26A within Gates of the Arctic National Park be increased from one bear to two bears. And that is starting on Page 477.

The proponents submitted this proposal because residents of Anktuvok Pass have observed brown bear populations growing and believe that the harvest to be far below sustainable yield. The commission states that the proposal would afford Anktuvok Pass residents hunting brown bears additional harvest opportunities.

At its January 2020 meeting the Board of Game adopted Proposal 29 to increase the resident state brown bear harvest limit in Unit 26A from one bear per year to two bears per year. The Board of Game concluded that there was no biological concern.

Furthermore, they concluded that the residents harvest was low and comparing data from eight other units with a two bear harvest limit the change in harvest limit was not likely to increase bear harvest significantly. Densities of brown bear vary widely in Unit 26A with densities highest in the foothills of the Brooks Range and lowest in the northern portion of the unit.

The current population estimate for brown bears in Unit 26A is 900 to 1120 bears. Brown bear densities and reproductive output within Gates of the Arctic National Park are among the lowest in Alaska, limited food resources and a short growing season are likely major factors contributing to these demographic patterns.

The ADF&G management goal is to keep the harvest at or below an average of 5% of the bear population during any two year period. Under these guidelines the maximum allowable harvest would be approximately 51 bears per year.



Between 2008 and 2018 total reported harvest and in Unit 26A ranged from ten to 31 bears and averaged 20 bears per year with the resident reported harvest on average accounting for eight bears per year.

A significant management problem in Unit 26A continues to be unreported harvest and non-compliance with bear hunting regulations. However, community based harvest assessment studies indicate a potential of three to four harvest brown bears per year that are not reported, but does not appear to be at a level that causes a biological problem.

Current harvest rates are below the state recommended sustainable harvest rate for Unit 26A. This proposal may result in some increase in harvest but is not expected to increase total harvest rates above the minimal sustainable level, but it would increase harvest opportunities for federally qualified users specifically within Unit 26A the portion within Gates of the Arctic National Park.

Adoption of this proposal as submitted would retain the more restrictive harvest limit of one bear per year on other federal public lands within Unit 26A although under state regulations federally qualified subsistence users can already harvest two bears on these federal lands not with Gates of the Arctic National Park.

The OSM conclusion is to support proposal WP22-56. Thank you Mr. Chair, members of board. I'm happy to be - to field any questions.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any questions for staff? All right, was there any public testimony received during the proposal period? Thank you.

Tom Plank: Yes, Mr. Chair there are two written public comments both opposing citing concerns over low density and the low reproductive rates of bears in the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. The commenters are concerned of an increased potential for overharvest. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Tom. Operator, at this time make available anybody online who would like to publicly testify. This is their opportunity to speak to this agenda item. Thank you.

Coordinator: Certainly. Once again that is Star 1. Once again that is Star 1 if you would like to speak at this time. And I'm showing no one in the queue at this time sir.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you very much. At this time we'll again call on our Regional Advisory Council Chair to give us the position. Thank you.

Gene Peltola: I believe that's the North Slope.

Sue Detwiler: Yes, thank you Mr. Chair, members of the board. I believe Gordon Brower is still online. And we have...

Anthony Christianson: Yes.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, thank you.

Gene Peltola: Thank you. Gordon Brower, North Slope Regional Advisory Council Chair. We rose to support WP22-56 on the brown bear in Unit 26A increase harvest limits justification.

The council believes it is important to recognize that this proposal came from the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission based on the

request of residents of an Anaktuvok Pass to increase the harvest limits of brown bears. This regulation also - this regulation change is also consistent with current harvest limits for brown bear in Unit 26A and 24 under state regulations and create more uniformity across land different jurisdictions

Council Member Williams of Anaktuvok Pass noted that typically they do not harvest many bears, but when the brown bears population is increasing they become more frequent around the village, and it would be helpful to have the opportunity to harvest more. That is the extent of our comments. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you for your comments. I'm not sure if Tony Christianson is still on the line.

Rhonda Pitka: And Madam Chair, I'm just getting some messages that people have been dropping off. I think it's those solar flares down South East.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, so thank you. Mr. Brower for your comments. Tribal Alaska Native Corporation Comments.

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Madam Chair. This is Robbin LaVine standing in for Orville Lind. There were no comments or recommendations during the consultation on this proposal. And thank you Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much. And now we're on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments, the state liaison?

Ben Mulligan: Thank you Madam Chair. For the record the Alaska Department of Fish and Game supports this proposal. Harvest of brown bears in GMU 26A is low and very few are reported harvested within the park boundaries.

Only federal - federally qualified users of the area are allowed to hunt within the Gates of the Arctic National Park so this increase in the bag limit only apply to those limited amount of hunters. In other parts of the state a changing bag limit of brown bears from one to two has resulted only in a moderate or no increase in harvest.

We also support the proposal as it aligns state and federal bag limits. Thank you Madam Chair.

Rhonda Pitka: Thank you very much for your comments. Interagency Staff Committee comments?

Robbin LaVine: Thank you Madam Chair. This is Robbin LaVine with the Interagency Staff Committee. The Interagency Staff Committee forwarded the following comments.

While adoption of proposal WP22-56 would provide additional opportunity for federally qualified subsistence users conservation concerns also exist for this brown bear population. Brown bear densities and reproductive output within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve are among the lowest in Alaska.

Limited food resources and a short growing season are likely major factors contributing to these demographic patterns. Based on reported subsistence use within the region there's not appear to be a subsistence need to justify doubling the harvest limit for brown bears from one to two within Gates of the Arctic portion of Game Management Unit 26A.

According to harvest survey reports within Anktuvok Pass only 4% to 10% of households use brown bears and across Game Management Unit 26A, on

average, only eight bears were harvested per year between 1985 and 2014, and on average only half of the harvest was by Alaska Residence.

Reported brown bear harvest has remained consistently low over the last 20 years not reflecting an increase -increasing subsistence need. And low density and recruitment within the brown bear population across GMU 26A increases the risk of overharvest.

The ISC acknowledges the concern for the conservation of the brown bear population within Gates of the Arctic. This proposal contradicts the effective land management agency's mission where harvesting predators is not permitted when there is no documented subsistence needs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Robbin. And so we'll go back to board discussion and deliberation? Thank you Rhonda for stepping in.

Gene Peltola: This is Chair BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, you have the floor.

Gene Peltola: Mr. Chair, BIA would like to express our utmost concern about the last sentence in the ISC position or comments similar to those that (unintelligible) on when we deliberated 22-46 in GMU 24B as well. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Gene. Let the record reflect that statement. Any other board comments, discussion, deliberation prior to board action? The floor is open for board action?

Sarah Creachbaum: Mr. Chair, National Park Service.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, you have the floor.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thanks Mr. Chair. The National Park Service moves to adopt Wildlife Proposal 22-56 with the modification to only adopt this proposal for one full regulatory cycle, 2022 to 2024. Following a second, I will explain why I intend to support my motion.

Gene Peltola: Yes, I second.

Sarah Creachbaum: Thank you. Wildlife Proposal 22-56 requests that the brown bear harvest limit for that portion of Unit 26A within Gates of the Arctic National Park be increased from one to two 2 bears. The analysis of this proposal points out the sensitive conservation status of the species.

Brown bear densities with 33.4 bears per 1000 square kilometers and reproductive output within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve are amongst the lowest in Alaska. Limited food resources and a short growing season major likely factors contributing to these demographic patterns.

From harvest survey reports within Anaktuvok Pass 4% to 10% of households used brown bears. Further across all of Unit 26A on average only eight bears were harvested per year between 1985 and 2014.

Although reported brown bear harvest has remained consistently low over the last few decades low density and recruitment within the brown bear population across 26A increased the risk of overharvest. In support of our Subsistence Resource Commission submitting this proposal and supporting North Slope Advisory - Regional Advisory Council we do support increasing

the bag limit from one to two 2 bears per year, but only for one regulatory cycle.

This would allow us to better understand both the subsistence need and the potential ramifications on the population because we do have a strong conservation concern for the species in that region. The information on the level of additional harvest following the increase in the bag limit is congruent with our recognized principles of fish and wildlife conservation as referenced in ANILCA Title 8 Section 805C.

And is laid out in the NPS management policies Chapter 4.42 that states, the service will assess the results of managing plant and animal populations by conducting follow-up monitoring or other studies to determine the impacts of the management methods on untargeted and targeted components of the system.

As we move to adopt this proposal for two years one full regulatory cycle to support those identified immediate needs of the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission and the North Slope Regional Advisory Council. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Any other board discussion comments, questions?

Gene Peltola: This is Chair BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, go ahead Gene.

Gene Peltola: Thank you Mr. Chair. BIA would move to modify the existing motion to strike the two year one regulatory cycle requirement, Similar to when we - the

board engaged in our discussion and vote on 22-46B for GMU 24B as one analysis there was not identified a potential biological problem.

Two, that in the lack of other protein sources bear meat can be utilized to supplement those that may not be readily available otherwise. And three, there are precautions in place with the existing program without putting a temporary limitation on the regulation to address any concerns may arise. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Charlie Brower: Second that amendment.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, there's a motion on the floor with a motion now to amend the original motion to strike the language of the two year. Any other further board discussion about the modification language? Call for the question?

Man: Question.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Roll call Sue on this motion to strike that language on the original motion of the two year. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, yes start with Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: Support.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service opposes.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Sarah Creachbaum, National Park Service?



Sarah Creachbaum: The modification is outside of National Park Service regulation and policy. The National Park Service opposes.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, thank you. Thomas Heinlein, BLM?

Tom Heinlein: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: David Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: Forest Service supports the amended motion.

Sue Detwiler: Okay, public member Rhonda Pitka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support the amendment.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public number Charlie Brower?

Charlie Brower: I support the amendment.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. The motion passes 5-2.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you Sue. We'll go back to the main motion. Is there any discussion on the main motion now that it reads - take the two year cap off?

Man: Mr. Chair if there was a second I didn't hear it.

Anthony Christianson: Yes, there was a - can we get a - sorry can - so the maker of motion was seconded by...

Sarah Creachbaum: Yes, I believed the motion was - oh the first...

Anthony Christianson: The first motion was seconded.

Gene Peltola: BIA motioned the first motion.

((Crosstalk))

Gene Peltola: And Charlie seconded ther amendment.

Man: Thank you.

Anthony Christianson: Thank you. Call for the question on the amended motion?

Gene Peltola: Question BIA.

Anthony Christianson: Roll call Sue, please?

Sue Detwiler: National Park Service, Sarah Creachbaum?

Sarah Creachbaum: Oppose.

Sue Detwiler: Sara Boario, Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sara Boario: Fish and Wildlife Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Gene Peltola, BIA?

Gene Peltola: Yes, I support as recommended by the Regional Advisory Council.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Tom Heinlein BLM?

Tom Heinlein: BLM supports.

Sue Detwiler: Dave Schmid, Forest Service?

Dave Schmid: Forest Service supports.

Sue Detwiler: Public member Rhonda Pilka?

Rhonda Pitka: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Thank you. Public Member Charlie Brower?

Charlie Brower: I support. Thank you.

Sue Detwiler: Chair Christianson?

Anthony Christianson: Yes, I support. Thank you Sue.

Sue Detwiler: Motion passed 7-1.

Anthony Christianson: Okay, thank you. All right, well that motion passes. We'll go ahead and conclude the business for today, that will give our partners there a little time to look at the maps.

So tomorrow we'll be picking up the final non-consensus agenda item, WP-something ten. And so we'll get started there first thing in the morning, and then we'll move on to adoption of the rest of the agenda items.

So tomorrow I look forward to coming back doing business at 9:00 am. Thank everybody today for the diligence and the patients and stepping in where we have dropped calls. Thank you Rhonda and staff, and we'll catch everyone back here tomorrow at 9:00 am. Thank you.

Man: Good night, thank you.

Woman: Thank you.

Man: Have a good evening.

Woman: Thank you.

Man: Thanks all.

Woman: Thank you all. Good night.

Coordinator: This does conclude today's conference. You may disconnect at this time.

END