

KODIAK/ALEUTIANS SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Teleconference
Anchorage
March 9-10, 2021

These minutes are an abbreviated record of the business conducted at this meeting.

*For full details, transcripts of this three day meeting are available at:
https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/library/transcripts/3-kodiak_aleutians*

Invocation

Mr. Patrick Holmes gave an invocation.

Call to Order, Roll Call and Quorum Establishment

The meeting was called to order Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 8:30 am. Council members Patrick Holmes, Richard Koso, Sam Rohrer, Christopher Price, Rebecca Skinner, Coral Chernoff, Madam Chair Della Trumble, Natasha Hayden, and Melissa Berns were present via teleconference. The Council has one vacant seat. A quorum was established with nine of nine seated Council members participating by phone.

Attendees:

Via teleconference

- Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council: Patty Schwalenberg
- Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association: Tina Fairbanks
- Kodiak: Duncan Fields
- Native Village of Karluk: Catherine West
- Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak: Tom Lance and Matt Van Daele
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): Maria Fosado and Leticia Melendez (Izembek National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)), Mike Brady, Hansel Klausner, and Joy Erlenback (Kodiak NWR), Steve Delehanty (Alaska Maritime NWR), Frank Harris (Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office)
- National Park Service (NPS): Joshua Ream and Victoria Florey
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G): James Jackson, Lisa Fox, Tyler Polum and Kelly Krueger (Kodiak), Ross Rennick (Sand Point), Tyler Lawson (Cold Bay), Jeff Selinger (Soldotna), Robbin Dublin and Jackie Keating (Anchorage),
- Office of Subsistence Management (OSM): Donald Mike, Orville Lind, Jarred Stone, Robbin La Vine, and George Pappas

Review and Adopt Agenda

Motion by Mr. Koso, seconded by Ms. Berns, to adopt the agenda as read with the following changes:

- Old Business, agenda Item 10:
 - Update on community and local Advisory Committee outreach efforts
 - Briefing on NPS Individual Customary and Traditional (C&T) Use Determinations Federal Subsistence Board Action
- New Business, move Call for Wildlife Proposals under Agency Reports, last item
- Agency Reports
 - Mortensons and Russell Creek update
 - Migratory Birds Agency Reports
 - ADF&G reports

The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers

The Council held its election of officers for a term of one year.

Della Trumble was elected Chair

Rebecca Skinner was elected Vice Chair

Melissa Berns was elected Secretary

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion by Ms. Berns, seconded by Mr. Holmes, to approve the winter 2020 meeting minutes with the following modifications: There was a need to acknowledge reports regarding the activities around otter stakeholders and to give all participants an opportunity.

The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member and Chair Reports

Pat Holmes of Kodiak reported that with the minus tides, he had harvested limpet. He noted that urchins can be harvested before they spawn. He noted that herring will be much more available on the high tides this spring. He brought the Closure Review issue to the attention of the Advisory Committee and sent the information to the two Tribes in Kodiak. He talked to a couple of people in Dutch Harbor and they don't see a need to do this right now. He thought that we are on the right track.

Richard Koso of Adak reported that he just found out about being reappointed. He wasn't following subsistence issues as closely, not knowing if he would be reappointed. He is looking forward to contributing to the Council. He did stay in contact with the City Manager and some folks in Adak about caribou. They didn't have much of a problem locally getting their caribou this year. With COVID-19, there was less local travel, but they encouraged guiding. There are caribou issues to keep an eye on.

Sam Rohrer of Kodiak noted that people aren't getting out as much due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Deer numbers continue to be low on the west and north sides of the Island. He is hearing that deer numbers are down on the east side too. Deer numbers look better on the South end. He has been hearing that OSM participated in Advisory Committee meetings concerning closure reviews, and that there was interest in this issue.

Christopher Price of Unalaska noted that the Council should receive an update on the paralytic shellfish poisoning project, and he is interested in hearing reports on salmon numbers from McLees and subsistence surveys.

Rebecca Skinner of Kodiak noted that she participated in the Alaska Marine Science Symposium, and that the panel went well. She noted that more information would be better and thinks that the symposium is still available online, if people want to watch it. The Coast Guard and National Transportation Safety Board conducted a hearing on the *Scandies Rose* sinking. She noted that a lot of information on the sinking won't come out for a while. She noted the need for boaters to have a personal locator beacon and safety equipment, and watch conditions closely. She has been seeing emperor geese in Womens Bay. Kodiak has been fairly cold and they have had a lot of snow. She has seen a lot of deer on the sides of the road.

Natasha Hayden of Kodiak noted that she went hunting last fall and didn't see a huge abundance of deer, but did see a healthy number of does and fawns. She noted that if the weather cooperates, we should see a rebound of the deer population. Subsistence users are excited about the upcoming season. She noted that she is looking forward to the upcoming salmon season. They have been seeing some large bear tracks on Afognak over the last week.

Melissa Berns of Kodiak noted that deer were sparse around Old Harbor, but that the animals looked healthy. She noted that she was at the Fort Peck Indian Reservation picking up three bison to bring back to Sitkalidak to join the herd. She noted that their Native Corporation took some action to limit the amount of deer that could be taken by non-shareholders on corporation lands. People had good access to goats this year. She noted that there were lots of waterfowl and that she did see several hundred emperor geese. People harvested clams in the winter. There was one subsistence bear taken for meat and distributed around the community last fall. They are building a processing facility at Old Harbor and this will allow people to bring in deer and bison to keep them safe from bears.

Madam Chair *Della Trumble* of King Cove noted that there were lots of storms and winds last winter. People have harvested caribou and have been out fishing for cod. She has been watching a blue heron and the eagles. She noted that there have been fresh bear tracks close to town and the bears didn't go into hibernation until November last fall. They are getting clams and subsistence resources, but COVID-19 is affecting things. She noted that the majority of King Cove residents are being vaccinated and are looking forward to being able to meet in person again. Peter Pan Seafood has been contained and hasn't let anybody on or off the premises for quite some time. She hasn't done a lot of traveling and it has been

tough not being able to meet with people face to face. The King Cove Corporation does have land use permit fees to allow people to hunt off their lands and has only gotten minimal interest in the permits. The Corporation will be discussing this more. She noted that even though Cold Bay is a small community of only about 60 people, at one point they had 16 people that actually did have COVID-19. She said it was scary to see how fast this can impact the community. People are seeing wolves. She participated in the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) meeting January 26-29 where the Board addressed fisheries proposals. She noted that they are still gathering information on Fisheries Closure Reviews and are working with the Advisory Committees and villages. Fisheries Closure Reviews will be addressed in a future Council meeting. She noted that there was a lot of concern at the Board meeting about the delay in Council appointments. She is looking forward to the time when Council meetings can be face to face again. She didn't think that many people were aware of the Fisheries Closure Review issue and thinks that this is more of a public process and education issue, so next steps can be decided.

Old Business

- Ms. La Vine and Mr. Stone from OSM provide a briefing on the Fisheries Closure Reviews (FCR21-08, 09, 11, 13, 16, 18, and 19) that the Board deferred to give staff time to gather input from the communities impacted. Ms. La Vine noted that they have been reaching out to communities, Tribes, and State Advisory Committees. In addition to the seven deferred proposals, the remaining eight regional fisheries closures will be up for review in 2022 for a total of 15 fisheries closures to review next cycle. Ms. La Vine noted that most closures have the following in common: these are closures that the Federal Subsistence Management Program adopted from State regulations at the start of the Federal program; this is the first time that these closures are being reviewed; and all closures involve waters that are closed to subsistence fishing while they remain open to sport fishing. This Council is being asked to make a recommendation on these closures so the Board can decide how to proceed with Federal subsistence regulations. The Board can retain them, rescind them, modify them or defer them. At this point the first 7 closures were deferred by the Board at this Council's request. All 15 closures for this region would be addressed by this Council in fall 2022 and by the Board in January 2023. Outreach is occurring now and will continue for 1 ½ years. Madam Chair Trumble asked what the remaining 8 are. Ms. La Vine noted that analyses have not begun, but that they are: Unalaska Bay streams salmon; Adak Kagalaska freshwater salmon; Trout Creek salmon; Womens Bay salmon; Kodiak Area-all fish; Selif Bay Creek-salmon; Little Kitoi Creek-salmon; and Womens Bay-King Crab. OSM is working to prepare for these additional 8 Closure Reviews with the plan to begin these 8 additional reviews in 2022, but some information should be available next fall. After discussion, Madam Chair Trumble assigned Ms. Skinner, Mr. Price, and Mr. Holmes to work with her and OSM staff on the plan for review of Closure Reviews.
- Dr. Ream from NPS presented information on Individual C&Ts.
- Mr. Merizon from ADF&G gave an update on ptarmigan.
- The Council discussed their Charter. Mr. Holmes made a motion that Council members continue to serve on the Council when their term ends, until there is a replacement appointed by the Secretary's office, and that alternate members be included and identified when an existing

member retires or the seat is vacant. Mr. Koso seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

- Mr. Mike, Council Coordinator with OSM, presented the eight FY-2020 Annual Report items that the Council had discussed last fall. Mr. Holmes noted that for issue #2, he would suggest to acknowledge Council's appreciation for the hiring. On page 111, second to the last paragraph, the Council might say that stock and habitat assessment should be evaluated. For the first sentence of the last paragraph, the Council is interested in participating in agency sponsored meetings and other public forums relating to knowledge concerning seas otters. Ms. Berns recommended that the Council include the new manager's name (Maria Fosado) for Izembek NWR. She also added that there was a need to update issue #7 based on Board's action and other things that happened since the draft was prepared, like the outreach plan. Mr. Mike noted that for issue #1, the work is being done on the Adak Island Caribou Management Plan and the Council will be kept updated. Mr. Holmes made a motion to approve the Annual Report with these changes, and Ms. Berns seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

New Business

Wildlife Proposals

Motion by Ms. Skinner to have a one bull caribou hunt for Unimak Island for all rural residents with C&T (Akutan, False Pass, King Cove, and Sand Point). The dates would remain the same and the quota would be determined based on State and Federal consultation. Mr. Rohrer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Koso made a motion to include Nelson Lagoon and Cold Bay in the C&T, so it would include all communities in the Aleutians East Borough. This motion was seconded by Ms. Skinner. This motion passed unanimously. Ms. Skinner then made a motion to open the hunt up to non-Federally qualified users, and Mr. Rohrer seconded that motion. This motion passed 8 to 1.

Final proposal submitted as follows: Cold Bay and Nelson Lagoon to the C&T and b. modify the closure to closure of Federal public lands in Unit 10, Unimak Island only, to caribou hunting, except by Federally qualified subsistence users unless the caribou population estimate exceeds a population threshold." Also request annual harvest quotas be announced by a delegated official.

2022 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program

Mr. Jarred Stone with OSM presented the Council with the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP) Priority Information Needs (PINs) working group discussion results. OSM is currently seeking applications for projects that the Council developed PINs for last fall. He noted that for the FY-2022 funding cycle, that there will be about \$2.25 million available for the first year of new projects. He noted that anyone that wants to apply can find information about the program on the Federal Subsistence Management Program web page or by visiting www.grants.gov. He noted that applications will be reviewed by the Technical Review Committee and the results will be presented at this fall's Council meeting.

Agency Reports:

- The Council discussed concerns that were coming from Cold Bay. There were concerns about Sockeye Salmon escapements into Mortensen's Lagoon and about ptarmigan numbers. Madame Chair Trumble is going to meet with folks in Cold Bay to better understand the concerns. Lisa Fox and Tyler Polum from ADF&G provided more information on Mortensen's Lagoon.
- Kelly Krueger (ADF&G) provided an update on the Buskin River Sockeye Salmon assessment. For 2020, thru Sept. 22, the count was 7,741 Sockeye Salmon. Mark Witteveen (ADF&G) provided information on scales and aging of the Sockeye Salmon return to the Buskin River.
- Tyler Lawson gave an update on McLees and Unalaska lakes. The 2020 Sockeye Salmon escapement to McLees Lake was 5,037. The index escapement to Unalaska Lake was 800 Sockeye Salmon. Summer Bay Lake had an indexed escapement of 4,500 Sockeye Salmon. He thanked the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska for all of their support.
- Lillian Naves (ADF&G) gave a report on harvest assessment for the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-management Council. She gave a brief overview of the harvest for the Kodiak and Aleutian Region. Jason Schamber (ADF&G) gave an update on the fall/winter hunt in Cold Bay.
- Dave Safine (USFWS) provided a report on the spring/summer subsistence harvest of migratory birds in Alaska.
- Maria Fosado (USFWS) gave an update on the three commercial waterfowl guides at Cold Bay. Nate Svoboda (ADF&G) followed up with addition information on guide registration and permits.
- Patty Schwalenberg provided information on spring/summer harvest of migratory birds and the Migratory Bird Treaty as amended in 1997.
- Jason Schamber (ADF&G) updated the Council on the State Board of Game meeting cycle. Ryan Scott (ADF&G) provided additional information on Alaska Board of Game meeting schedules and discussed the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had.
- Chandra Poe from the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska gave an update on PSP and sampling of mussels and butter clams.
- Matt Van Daele from the Sun'aq Tribe gave more information on shellfish.
- Steve Delahanty (USFWS) gave an update on the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. COVID-19 prevented most of the traditional work over the past year.
- James Jackson (ADF&G) gave an update on 2020 subsistence salmon harvests in and around the City of Kodiak.
- Bill Pyle and Michael Brady (USFWS) gave an update for the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. They talked about brown bear, elk, caribou, mountain goat, sea otter, migratory birds and educational outreach, as well as Refuge cabins available for public use and Refuge staffing and permitting.
- Tyler Lawson (ADF&G) gave an update on Alaska Peninsula and Unalaska subsistence.
- Nate Svoboda (ADF&G) gave an update on brown bear, deer, elk, goat, caribou harvest.

- Maria Fosado (USFWS) gave an update for Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. She gave a staffing update and updates for caribou, waterfowl, brown bear, and plans for the upcoming field season.
- Dave Crowley (ADF&G) gave an update on caribou and wolves in Unit 9D and Unimak Island.
- Todd Rinaldi (ADF&G) gave an update on the Alaska Board of Game proposal and meeting schedule.
- Jackie Keating (ADF&G, Subsistence Division) presented information on several of their Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program projects in this region.
- George Pappas (OSM) gave the OSM report.

Future Meeting Dates:

Fall 2021 meeting to be held Sept. 27 & 28 in Cold Bay.

Winter 2022 meeting to be held Feb. 22 & 23 in Kodiak.

_____/signature on the original/_____

Tom Kron on behalf of the retired Council Coordinator, Donald Mike, Designated Federal Officer
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

_____/signature on the original/_____

Della Trumble, Chair
Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes were formally considered and approved by the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its fall 2021 meeting.

A more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcript, and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Katerina Wessels at 1-800-478-1456 or 907-786-3885 or email her at *katerina_wessels@fws.gov*.