

**NORTHWEST ARCTIC
SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes**

via teleconference
November 3, 2020

Invocation

Mr. Enoch Shiedt gave an invocation/moment of silence.

Call to Order, Roll Call and Quorum Establishment

The meeting was called to order on November 3, 2020 at 9:06 am. Council members Barbara Atoruk, Thomas Baker, Michael Kramer, Replogle Swan, and Enoch Shiedt, Sr. participated via teleconference. Louie Commack and Raymond Lee, Jr. were not present. Mr. Commack was excused for medical reasons. A quorum was established with seated Council members participating by phone.

Attendees:

Via teleconference

- Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) – Zach Stevenson, George Pappas, Orville Lind, Lisa Maas, Karen Hyer, Robbin Lavine, and Hannah Vorhees
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) –Susan Georgette, Christina Nelson, Bill Carter, and Krista Wildsworth
- National Park Service (NPS) – Maija Lukin, Raime Fronstin, Martha Fronstin, Marcy Okada, Joseph Dallemolle, Hannah Atkison, Kyle Joly, Justin Young, Letty Hughes, and Dr. Joshua Ream
- NANA Regional Corporation- Damon Schaeffer
- Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) –Brendan Scanlon, Mark Burch, Alex Hansen, Beth Milow, and Brandon Saito
- Alaska State Troopers- Steve Canteen
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) – Pat Petrivelli
- Bureau of Lands Management (BLM) – Tom Sparks, and Walter Gusse
- University of Alaska, Fairbanks- Kim Jochum

Review and Adopt Agenda

Motion by Ms. Atoruk, seconded by Mr. Shiedt, with the following changes;

- Allow a moment of silence rather than an invocation
- Add election of officers to agenda item 10A
- Add report by Marcy Okada under agenda item 12.

The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion by Ms. Atoruk seconded by Mr. Shiedt, to approve the winter 2020 meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed on a unanimous vote.

Council Member and Chair Reports

Barbara Atoruk of Kiana reported that caribou did not show this year. She noted that many hunters switched to hunting moose. Barb noted that the wildlife special action should not have been for the entire year, and noted that this needs to be temporary closure. She noted that we need to reach out to other RACs to put in a temporary wildlife special action, say for 3-4 months, instead of a whole year. She also asked about permits. Who gave permits to hunt the Squirrel and Noatak Rivers? Many local people were treated badly and called names by outsiders. We need to know who is allowing this to happen.

Thomas Baker of Kotzebue reported a lean fall, with no harvest of caribou or moose, and that it was a poor year to harvest meat. There were a lot of non-local outfitters flying in non-local hunters; this may have kept caribou away. There was not a minimal subsistence harvest from Kotzebue.

Enoch Shiedt, Sr. of Kotzebue reported that the breakup of near-shore ice was different this year. There wasn't solid ice; ice was scary and dangerous. Salmon arrived late, and water in the rivers was warm. There were lots of salmon available last summer, even for commercial fishermen. The salmon were very lean and the poor berry crop affected bears. Bears and lots of wolves were hungry. Mr. Shiedt noted that only one caribou was harvested from his cabin. He noted that he was adversely impacted by outfitters and transporters putting hunters in the path of migrating caribou. Mr. Shiedt said the RAC needs to meet the North Slope and stakeholders in Nome to come up with a plan to deal with this issue. Mr. Shiedt also said helicopters and planes landed, and took off near the Aggie River. Mr. Shiedt noted that he feels that outside hunters chased off the caribou, and local hunters suffer and need meat as a result. He wants to meet with the NPS to reduce the number of outside hunters. He noted that no sheep were taken from his camp and that there were lots of geese this year. There was a need to share this year, but he had nothing.

Mike Kramer of Kotzebue reported that the salmon run was poor and that the fish faced abnormally warm water temperatures. Many fish died on the sides of the rivers. Noatak saw lots of birds with "rice belly". Caribou had a difficult fall season. Lots of Kotzebue hunters were unsuccessful, but Noatak did awesome. Why didn't caribou come to other areas? Mr. Kramer noted that there was lots of transporter activity even with COVID-19. He noted that his wildlife special action was rejected and that there had been lots of disrespect toward people of the region from outside. He said that it seems that money is more important than lives of humans. Why are nonlocal hunters allowed and why aren't State and Federal governments protecting the subsistence priority. He is unhappy and disgusted. COVID-19 levels are rising and there are deaths in the region. The virus will spread. Mr. Kramer explained that he did not hunt moose because of eye surgery and that he had a new son in the spring. He heard lots of issues with wolves stalking

humans, and there were lots of run-ins with bears. There was the first report of a Stellar Sea Eagle in the region. He noted that it had been a difficult year for all. He did not make it to Kobuk.

Election of Officers

Ms. Atoruk nominated Mr. Shiedt as Chair of the Council, and Mr. Kramer as Vice-Chair. Mr. Shiedt seconded these motions. The motions passed unanimously. Ms. Atoruk was asked to serve as Secretary for this meeting.

New Business

Service Awards were presented to Mike Kramer (10 years) and Louie Commack (5 years)
Fisheries Proposals and Closure Reviews

There were no fisheries proposals or closures for consideration.

The Federal Subsistence Board 805(c) Report

The Council does not wish to include any items in an Annual Report.

2022 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP)

Ms. Karen Hyer of OSM presented the FRMP Priority Information Needs (PINs) working group discussion results. The Council agreed on topics for PINs.

Proposed Review Process for NPS Individual Customary and Traditional Use Determinations

Ms. Atkinson presented the Council with the proposed changes to the NSP individual C&T determination review process, and requested the Council's opinion on changes. Changes might include expanding the application timeframe window to remain open continuously, rather than every two years, and to provide greater opportunity to Subsistence Resource Commissions (SRCs) and Regional Advisory Councils to apply. Mr. Atoruk made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shiedt to defer this to NPS SRCs. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agency Reports:

- Damon Schaffer of NANA Regional Corporation reported on the formation, purpose and need for the Western Arctic Conservation Law Enforcement Working Group. Mr. described efforts to work across jurisdictions with partners, share resources, and described joint efforts to support shared law enforcement and conservation objectives.
- Majia Lukin of the NPS, Western Arctic Parklands addressed changes in personnel and how the COVID-19 pandemic affected visitor center operations and the status of numerous ongoing wildlife studies. She also responded to questions from Council members about the funds generated by transporters and guide services.
- Raime Fronstin of NPS provided an overview of wildlife studies conducted by region and species. He also answered questions about the distribution, location and movements of wolves.
- Joseph Dollemolle of the NPS addressed law enforcement matters pertaining the Western Arctic Caribou Herd on Federal Public lands in Unit 23.

- Steven Canteen talked about the State of Alaska's wildlife trooper's activities in Kotzebue. He also reported on the obligations facing ADF&G regarding providing hunting opportunities for all Alaskans.
- Susan Goergette from USFWS, Selawik NWR addressed changes in the personnel and how the pandemic affected visitor center operations and the status of wildlife studies. She also responded to questions about the amount of funds generated by transporters and guide operations.
- Tom Sparks of BLM in Nome addressed the status of caribou on the Seward Peninsula and provided a law enforcement update. He also provided an update on the Ambler Road.
- George Pappas presented the OSM update.

Future Meeting Dates:

The winter 2021 meeting to be held February 18-19 in Kotzebue.

The fall 2021 meeting to be held November 1-2 in Kotzebue.

/signature on the original/

Zachary Stevenson, Designated Federal Officer
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management

/signature on the original/

Enoch Shiedt, Chair
Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes were formally considered and approved by the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its winter 2021 meeting.

A more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcript, and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Zachary Stevenson at 1-800-478-1456, or 1-907-412-0821, email zachary_stevenson@fws.gov.