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1 NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

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7
8 VOLUME I

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10
11 Inupiat Heritage Center
12 Utqiagvik, Alaska
13 October 13, 2022
14 9:02 a.m.

15
16
17
18 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

19
20 Gordon Brower, Chairman
21 Brower Frantz
22 Esther Hugo
23 Martha Itta
24 Steve Oomittuk

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29 Regional Council Coordinator, Leigh Honig

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Utqiagvik, Alaska - 10/13/2022)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning, everybody. I serve as the Chair for the Regional Subsistence Advisory Council. And I'm glad we got some of our technical difficulties squared away and we apologize for the inconvenience, we're a little bit late already. And with that before we start I'm going to just see about getting our invocation in order. And anybody want to volunteer to do invocation, if not I'll go ahead and do the invocation.

MR. WILLIAMS: (Invocation)

IN UNISON: Amen.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we've been reminded please press your mic when we're going to speak and one person will have to press their mic. When you're done turn your red light off and then the next person can turn theirs on. So some kind of technical difficulties going on.

All right. We'll go ahead and call to order our meeting and it is 9:02 a.m. We're about 32 minutes late this morning. And I'm going to ask the Madame Coordinator to go ahead and do our roll call to establish a quorum.

Madame Coordinator.

MS. HONIG: Wonderful. Thank you. So we will start from the top.

Gordon Brower.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Here.

MS. HONIG: Wanda Kippi, were you able to call in?

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BROWER: We'll acknowledge her if she calls in. There's some indications I think

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1 she'll be calling in.

2

3 MS. HONIG: Okay. Steve Oomittuk, were
4 you able to call in?

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I think Steve also
9 was -- couldn't make it and would be dialing in. We'll
10 acknowledge him when he dials in.

11

12 MS. HONIG: Billy Patkotak.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 MS. HONIG: We'll move on to Edward
17 Rexford, were you able to call in?

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There was some note
22 that Edward wouldn't be able to make it, but would dial
23 in. And we'll also acknowledge him when he dials in.

24

25 MS. HONIG: Martha Itta.

26

27 MS. ITTA: I'm here.

28

29 MS. HONIG: Esther Hugo.

30

31 MS. HUGO: Here.

32

33 MS. HONIG: Brower Frantz.

34

35 MR. FRANTZ: Here.

36

37 MS. HONIG: And Peter Williams.

38

39 MR. WILLIAMS: Here.

40

41 MS. HONIG: Okay. Mr. Chair, that is
42 four members present on a nine Council seat so we have
43 not met quorum yet.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: One, two, three,
46 four, five.

47

48 MS. HONIG: I retract that statement,
49 we have made quorum. Math in the morning.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes, math in the
2 morning is almost like third grade.

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: One number off. All
7 right. We've established quorum this morning and I'm
8 going to ask participants here -- well, let's start
9 online. Those that are represented online if you could
10 introduce yourselves, please.

11
12 MS. PATTON: Good morning, everyone.
13 This is Eva Patton. Missing being there with all of
14 you Council members and everyone in the room.
15 Wonderful that you're gathered together. And I am at
16 the National Park Service now at the Regional Office
17 Subsistence Program.

18
19 Good morning.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning, Eva.
22 You almost sounded like you were in a tunnel or
23 something, but we were able to hear you.

24
25 Anybody else online.

26
27 MR. TOOYAK: Yeah, good morning if you
28 can hear me. This is Andrew Tooyak. I'm with the
29 Wilderness Society.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Who was
32 that again, I didn't quite get that.

33
34 MR. TOOYAK: Andrew Tooyak.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Andrew.

37
38 MS. JOCHUM: Good morning. This is Kim
39 Jochum with the National Park Service Regional Office
40 Subsistence Program and InterAgency Staff Committee
41 member.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning. If you
44 can repeat your name. All those that are going to be
45 on their mics, can you -- if you can speak up unless
46 I'm -- unless it's only me.

47
48 MS. JOCHUM: Okay. I hope this is
49 better. Good morning.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Because I generally
2 have hearing problems.....

3
4 MS. JOCHUM: Can you hear me better?

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: nowadays.

7
8 MS. JOCHUM: Yeah. Okay. I'll try
9 again. Good morning. My name's Kim Jochum. I'm --
10 like Eva Patton I'm with the National Park Service, the
11 Regional Subsistence Program and an InterAgency Staff
12 Committee member.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Good
15 morning.

16
17 MR. ALDRICH: Good morning, Mr.
18 Chairman, members of the Council. I'm Wildlife
19 Biologist Casey Aldrich, National Park Service.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, National
22 Park.

23
24 MR. HANSEN: Good morning. This is
25 Alex Hansen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
26 Kotzebue. I'm the Caribou Biologist for the Western
27 Arctic Herd.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Good
30 morning.

31
32 MS. COLD: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
33 This is Helen Cold with the Alaska Department of Fish
34 and Game, Division of Subsistence in the Fairbanks
35 office.

36
37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning.

38
39 MR. BURCH: Good morning. This is Mark
40 Burch with the Department of Fish and Game in Palmer.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning.

43
44 MS. DREW: Good morning. This is Katie
45 Drew with the BLM Arctic District Office.

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning, BLM.

48
49 MS. KLEIN: Good morning. This is Jill
50

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1 Klein with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm the
2 Regional Subsistence Coordinator out of the Anchorage
3 office.

4

5 Good morning.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning, Fish
8 and Wildlife Service.

9

10 MS. OKADA: Good morning. This is
11 Marcy Okada with the National Park Service, Gates of
12 the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

13

14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning, Marcy.

15

16 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning. This is
17 Cory Graham with the Office of Subsistence Management.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Morning, Cory. Thank
20 you. I think we'll transition over into physically
21 present if you can come and introduce yourself at the
22 mic and who you're representing.

23

24 Thank you.

25

26 MR. CHEN: Aloha, Mr. Chairman and
27 Council members. My name is Glenn Chen, I'm the
28 Subsistence Branch Chief for the Bureau of Indian
29 Affairs.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native). Aloha.

32

33 MS. HEYER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman
34 and Council members. My name is Karen Heyer and I am
35 the Fisheries Biologist working in the northern region.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Morning, Karen.

38

39 MS. WESSELS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
40 members of the Council. My name is Katya Wessels and
41 I'm Council Coordination Division Supervisor with
42 Office of Subsistence Management.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native)

47

48 MR. HAWKALUK: Good morning, Mr.
49 Chairman and members of the Council. My name's Nathan

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1 Hawkaluk, I'm the Acting Refuge Manager for the Arctic
2 National Wildlife Refuge.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good.

5

6 MS. DAGGETT: (In Native) Good
7 morning. My name is Carmen Daggett, I'm the Area
8 Biologist for Fish and Game up here in Utqiagvik.

9

10 Good morning.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Carmen.

13 (In Native).

14

15 MS. MIKOW: Good morning. My name is
16 Beth Mikow and I'm the Anthropologist for the BLM
17 Arctic District Office.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Beth.

20

21 MR. SCANLON: Good morning. I'm
22 Brendan Scanlon from the Alaska Department of Fish and
23 Game. I'm the Northwest and North Slope Area Fisheries
24 Biologist out of Fairbanks.

25

26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Brendan.

27

28 MR. VICKERS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
29 members of the Council, everyone else here and on the
30 phone. My name is Brent Vickers. I am the
31 Anthropology Division Supervisor at OSM and today and
32 tomorrow I'll be representing the leadership team for
33 OSM.

34

35 Thank you very much and great to meet
36 you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Was that
39 Brent?

40

41 MR. VICKERS: Yes, sir.

42

43 DR. VOORHEES: Good morning. Hannah
44 Voorhees, Anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence
45 Management. It's great to see you all in person.

46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: You too, Hannah. (In
48 Native).

49

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1 MS. HOLMAN: Good morning, this is
2 Kendra Holman, a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of
3 Subsistence Management.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native) And then
6 our recorder.

7
8 REPORTER: Lynn, I'm the recorder.

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. All
11 right. Any others online that haven't formally
12 introduced themselves this morning before we move down
13 the agenda?

14
15 MARK DOWDLE: Mr. Chair, members of the
16 Council, this is Mark Dowdle with the National Park
17 Service. I'm Superintendent of Gates of the Arctic
18 National Park and Preserve.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Good
21 morning. And I'm going to go ahead and hand the mic
22 over to Leigh, do a little bit of housekeeping.

23
24 MS. HONIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
25 again welcome for everyone to come to the fall meeting
26 of the North Slope Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory
27 Council meeting. For those that are attending the
28 meeting in person please make sure to sign in at the
29 front table. There is a sign in sheet for each day of
30 the meeting and we'd appreciate it if you would sign in
31 each day that you are here. It helps greatly with
32 correct spelling of names.

33
34 This is a regulatory meeting and the
35 Council will be discussing and deliberating on fish
36 proposals and closures. There will be an opportunity
37 for public comment during that proposal period. You
38 can see the steps of the proposal presentation
39 procedure on page 32 of your meeting book. If you
40 would like to address the Council during the meeting
41 for folks in the room please fill out a white testifier
42 form on the table and hand it to me. This helps keep
43 track of anyone who'd like to speak regarding a
44 specific agenda item. For those of you that are on the
45 phone who would like to speak start by saying Mr. Chair
46 and wait to be recognized by the Chair before speaking.

47
48 (Teleconference interference -
49 participants not muted).

50

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1 MS. HONIG: For all participants on the
2 phone please remember to mute your phone when you are
3 not speaking. If you do not have a mute button on your
4 phone you can press star, six and that will mute your
5 phone. If you would like to speak.....

6
7 (Teleconference interference -
8 participants not muted).
9

10 MS. HONIG:unmute your phone by
11 again pressing star, six.
12

13 If you are unable to stay with us
14 throughout the meeting and hang on until the public
15 comment opportunity is open for the particular proposal
16 you'd like to address you may consider submitting a
17 written comment instead. You can do that by emailing
18 your comment to subsistence at fws.gov. You need to
19 indicate your name, affiliation and what proposal or
20 closure your comment addresses. Written comments will
21 be accepted until the start of the presentation of each
22 proposal or closure review analysis. Those will be
23 sent to myself and Staff and we will share those with
24 the Council.
25

26 I'd also like to remind folks that
27 there will be a time for tribal and public comments on
28 non-agenda items. The Chair will announce this each
29 morning and that will be an opportunity for those
30 present as well as those participating on the phone to
31 speak on non-agenda items. We would ask you to hold
32 any comments on proposals or agenda items until such
33 time as they come up before the Council so that the
34 Council will hear all pertinent information at the time
35 they are working on that item. However the Chair can
36 make exceptions.
37

38 All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair, for
39 allowing me to give those introductions.
40

41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Leigh.
42 With that I'm going to do our introductions by village.
43 I'll start with Nuiqsut.
44

45 Martha.
46

47 MS. ITTA: Good morning, everyone.
48 Martha Itta of Nuiqsut. I -- this is I believe my
49 second term of serving on this Board meeting and I'm
50

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1 honored to still be here. 2023 is when my seat will be
2 up and I'm undecided if I'm still going to turn in my
3 application.

4
5 So I work now as the (indiscernible)
6 Specialist for Nuiqsut, trying to work on education and
7 history culture for our village, trying to keep that
8 alive doing sewing classes for our village. I worked
9 as an administrator over 10 years, I now work with the
10 Borough so I'm -- you know, it's a change for me. So
11 I'm really honored to be here on the Board and I hope
12 to come back. So it's a decision I have to make and
13 I'm really honored to work with the Board and your
14 guys' villages. I love hearing about what happens in
15 your guys' villages, it helps me understand the
16 differences between our villages.

17
18 Thank you and welcome, everyone.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native). Thank
21 you, Martha. And my bad, I need to keep turning my mic
22 off.

23
24 We'll go to -- across the table to Mr.
25 Frantz.

26
27 MR. FRANTZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
28 name is Brower Frantz, I'm from Utqiagvik/Barrow,
29 Alaska. This is my first term, actual first in person
30 here. So it's a great thing to be here. Born and
31 raised in Barrow. I work as the North Slope Borough's
32 Search and Rescue Coordinator at the moment. I used to
33 be involved with the Fish and Game Management Committee
34 so working along with the Regional Advisory Council
35 here I think will be a good addition. I also used to
36 work with North Slope Borough Land Management so I do
37 know quite a bit about the Borough side of things and
38 Prudhoe Bay. And also I grew up traveling the whole
39 North Slope so snowmachining, boating, just grew up in
40 a subsistence lifestyle here. The only two locations I
41 haven't snowmachined to yet is Kaktovik and Point Hope.
42 So I do have an extensive subsistence knowledge up here
43 of traversing the land. So I look forward to
44 utilizing, you know, all of my knowledge to the best
45 extent that I can to work with the Regional Advisory
46 Council here.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Brower
2 Frantz. We'll go across the table to Mr. Williams of
3 Anaktuvuk.

4
5 MR. WILLIAMS: Good morning. I just
6 want to say thank you for coming to the meeting here
7 despite the weather here. And pray for our people that
8 they be safe. And I've been on this Board for the last
9 couple of terms. Raymond Bunyak is the one the
10 encouraged me to get back into this cause. I know it's
11 our tradition way of surviving. It doesn't matter
12 where we're at, where we are, we could live out of a
13 store anyway too so that's what he said, you know. And
14 we still got to fight for our, you know, surviving.
15 That's what's it all about. When I -- I get to you
16 know, elaborate details there about this and that,
17 we're here for a reason, that's why we're here and I
18 just wanted to say what Harry Brower said at a meeting
19 one time that if we all get in a kayak and one paddle --
20 one person paddle we ain't going to get nowhere, but
21 if all of us work together we get somewhere, he said.
22 We've got to work as one line of individual he always
23 tell me and I always use that knowledge and we should
24 keep that as a reference.

25
26 Thank you very much for the meeting.
27 Appreciate it.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Earl.
30 With that we'll go across the table to Esther Hugo of
31 Anaktuvuk Pass.

32
33 (In Native)

34
35 MS. HUGO: Good morning. My name is
36 Esther Hugo and I'm from Anaktuvuk Pass, born and
37 raised there. And now I'm glad to be back, I was with
38 the Council for a couple years, then I had to step down
39 for a little bit. Like my niece, Martha, I know I just
40 got back to the Council, but for now I got so many hats
41 on me that I have to decide this coming whole year what
42 I'm going to be doing. But I'm just happy that I'm
43 here to come to the meeting because it concerns a lot
44 of our subsistence and our way of life and survival.
45 We are poor where we're at in the Brooks Range. It's
46 been always interesting and very hard times because
47 today as we speak our caribou haven't migrated or come
48 by the village. These are hard times for our people
49 because that's the main diet and we survive with the
50

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1 caribou since time.

2

3 So we are hurting, but we had a couple
4 of charters going up to Nuiqsut, our neighbors, our (in
5 Native). We had four hunters go up there and they got
6 21 caribou with the residents there helping them out
7 with four-wheelers orgive -- taking them ridesto the --
8 to the caribou. And we were all happy when the
9 charter came. We fed the community and we started
10 distributing the meat. But the first day we start
11 doing that we decided we're going to feed the
12 community, whoever's hungry to come and they did show
13 up. And I tell you we were eating at the table, at the
14 VCR Grace, we never made one noise, we haven't said a
15 word for a good three, four, five minutes because we
16 are eating what we sure always wanted to eat, that's
17 our survival. And then somebody said god, it's so
18 quiet here. We all jump up, we got startled because
19 we're more into eating this fat or this fat rib, you
20 know, and we just started laughing. But most of all
21 our elders were there too and it was a happy time, we
22 were so full I didn't get a chance to eat until the
23 next day and I had supper at 6:00 and never got hungry.
24 That was fulfilling.

25

26 But I'm happy to be here and trying to
27 work on the issues, concerns on our caribou, our
28 survival, our only survival since time.

29

30 Thank you so much.

31

32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native). Thank
33 you, Esther. Always starting a good day with how the
34 community is dealing with the resources that our lands
35 are blessed with. And sometimes not always meeting
36 their needs.

37

38 With that I'm going to see if Kaktovik
39 has chimed in. Eddie, are you on.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We'll move over -- I
44 didn't hear Eddie chime in or not. We'll move over to
45 Point Hope. Steve Oomittuk, are you on?

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we'll move over

50

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1 to Atqasuk. Wanda Kippi, are you on?

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we'll move over
6 to Wainwright. Billy Patkotak, are you on?

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, Madame
11 Coordinator, we'll continue to acknowledge those that
12 join us later on. We do have a quorum

13

14 With that, with our introductions
15 complete and I'd need a motion on number 5 for review
16 and adoption of agenda.

17

18 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair, I make a motion
19 to approve the agenda.

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
22 the floor from Nuiqsut, Martha Itta on approving the --
23 in adopting the agenda.

24

25 MS. HUGO: Second.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a second.
28 We're under discussion. I believe we have some agenda
29 item additions with supplemental material that came in
30 through the mail that wasn't distributed in the initial
31 mail out. And I'd like to entertain that the
32 supplemental agenda be formally -- be part of the
33 agenda. And they did come in separately from the
34 packet. I'm going to ask Madame Coordinator here to go
35 ahead and read the additional that were not in the
36 original agenda.

37

38 Madame Coordinator.

39

40 MS. HONIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
41 the following items have been added to the agenda since
42 the publication of the meeting materials booklet and
43 the additions are. So under agenda item number 10, old
44 business, Office of Subsistence Management Staff will
45 be presenting special actions on WSA 21-01. That's one
46 addition.

47

48 And then under agenda item number 11
49 under new business, Brendan Scanlon will be presenting

50

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1 a project update before the Fisheries Resource
2 Monitoring Program report. So if it makes it easier we
3 can name that one 11B.

4

5 And under item 12, agency reports, the
6 National Park Service will be providing a personnel
7 update.

8

9 And then one addition that is not on
10 the printed agenda, I should also mention that on our
11 website there is the updated agenda, U.S. Fish and
12 Wildlife Staff of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge,
13 Nathan Hawkaluk, will be presenting a presentation.

14

15 And then for BLM we have a list of
16 Elizabeth Mikow who will be providing the Arctic
17 District Office update.

18

19 And then three reports have been added
20 under Alaska Department of Fish and Game. So Alex
21 Hansen will be providing the Western Arctic Caribou
22 Herd update and then we have Carmen Daggett who will be
23 doing the unit 26A update and Jason Caikoski may be
24 able to call in and provide the unit 26B and C update.

25

26 So kind of new information, Mr. Chair,
27 we have had a request to move the fisheries proposals
28 and closure review discussion to the first day of the
29 meeting when we'll have Office of Subsistence
30 Management Staff, Cory Graham, available for questions
31 on the phone.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Madame Coordinator,
34 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program or.....

35

36 MS. HONIG: Uh-huh.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER:is that the one
39 that you're mentioning that's 11C, if we made the
40 Brendan Scanlon B.....

41

42 MS. HONIG: Uh-huh.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER:then we would be
45 moving the old B which is now C, if we make those
46 changes, but if we move the Fisheries Resource
47 Monitoring Program up on the scale.....

48

49 MS. HONIG: Uh-huh.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER:then we wouldn't
2 have to change the lettering scheme, it could go back
3 to original, but we would need to add it to somewhere
4 on the first day, I mean, where would you propose that
5 we add the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program,
6 you're saying it has to be on the first day?

7
8 MS. HONIG: That would -- that would
9 work best I think for the Council because Cory Graham,
10 our Fisheries Analyst, would be available to answer
11 questions. However it appears that -- I mean, we do
12 have Hannah Voorhees available as well. They are
13 crossover proposals for your area.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I'm suggesting a
16 place, like is old business a good place for it or new
17 business.

18
19 MS. HONIG: If you could repeat that,
20 Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I'm trying to find a
23 spot for it that would reflect it to be on the first
24 day. Would that be -- where would you propose that it
25 be moved if it has to be on the first day. Are we --
26 after like 9, public and tribal comments on non-agenda
27 items, after that or somewhere under old business?

28
29 MS. HONIG: Yes, Mr. Chair. I think it
30 would be appropriate to put that after agenda item
31 number 9, after the public and tribal comments.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So we would make it
34 9A. We would move 11C which is -- if we were using the
35 original book it would be B.....

36
37 MS. HONIG: Uh-huh.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER:2024 Fisheries
40 Resources Monitoring Program to a new 9A.

41
42 MS. HONIG: Okay.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's the wish of
45 the Council on the proposed modification and additions
46 to the agenda.....

47
48 MS. HONIG: I'm sorry.

49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: that have been
2 read.

3
4 MS. HONIG: Mr. Chair, there was one
5 more item. I apologize. There was a request to move
6 Alex Hansen's presentation on the Western Arctic
7 Caribou Herd to a time today as well so he can go out
8 into the field and perform survey work on that herd
9 tomorrow.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Maybe
12 I'll see what's the witness of the Council to move the
13 Western Arctic Caribou Herd update somewhere on today
14 as well, maybe 9B, if we're going to have a 9A and 9B.

15

16 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
19 Martha from Nuiqsut.

20

21 MS. ITTA: I do agree since it's not on
22 the -- non-agenda item to put it under 9A and B for the
23 two items.

24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Is that a motion?

26

27 MR. WILLIAMS: Second.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Before we finalize on
30 the discussion here we'll go to Leigh again. Go ahead.

31

32 MS. HONIG: I'm sorry. Thank you, Mr.
33 Chair. I had misunderstood. So Brendan Scanlon's
34 presentation goes along with the fisheries proposals
35 and closure reviews. I thought it went with the FRMP.
36 So if you're able to hear Brendan Scanlon's
37 presentations before we get into the fisheries
38 proposals and closure reviews.

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Is that the caribou
41 stuff?

42

43 MS. HONIG: No, not the caribou.
44 Karen, would you like to -- can I -- through the Chair.

45

46 MS. HEYER: Mr. Chair and Council
47 members. Just for clarity on your agenda if you go to
48 number 11 the fisheries proposals and closure reviews,
49 number A, is what's requested to be moved because Cory

50

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1 Graham is on the phone and he has worked with Hannah
2 Voorhees on those and he can't be on the phone
3 tomorrow. Number B, the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
4 Program could go tomorrow because that is a combination
5 of myself, Hannah Voorhees, Brendan Scanlon and USGS
6 are all going to talk on that. We will all be here
7 tomorrow so that can stay where it is on the agenda.
8 So I just wanted to clarify it's A and not B that we're
9 requesting to be moved today.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Karen,
12 that makes it a lot more clear.

13

14 MS. HEYER: Okay.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And I do apologize
17 and, you know, this is a lot of changes and some of us
18 are fresh here and even I had, you know, in our
19 telephone conversation to try to make sense of what the
20 changes are coming for the agenda, it would be prudent
21 to -- to try to get the agenda so we don't have to do
22 this from the floor because that -- it's kind of
23 confusing a little bit. But I think it's cleared up.
24 It's not the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program that
25 they're asking to move up, it's the fisheries proposals
26 and closure reviews. That's -- I see a thumbs up on
27 that. So that would be moved over to 9A and then the
28 caribou, Western Arctic Caribou update would be
29 proposed to be 9B at that point.

30

31 And having cleared that up we still
32 have our motion from Martha, that it was -- that was
33 the case and Earl was about to second that.

34

35 MR. WILLIAMS: Yes.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. And Earl
38 is still nodding yes in those changes to the agenda.
39 All those in favor of modifying the agenda with all
40 that's been read into the record by Leigh and with the
41 additions -- with the supplemental material for WSA 21-
42 01, caribou in unit 23 and 21A that includes moose and
43 the addition of ADF&G, Brendan Scanlon and the other
44 personnel update from BLM, Arctic update was
45 supplemental 3 and the Western Arctic Caribou update,
46 Alex Hansen, supplemental 4, unit 26A, I think that's
47 Carmen Daggett, tab 5, with all those changes signify
48 by saying aye.

49

50

0018

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed
4 same nay.

5

6 (No opposing votes)

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, the
9 agenda has been revised. Back on the main motion to
10 adopt the -- there's a motion on the floor to adopt the
11 revised agenda. Do I hear a second.

12

13 MR. FRANTZ: Second.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded by
16 Brower Franz to adopt the agenda as revised. And any
17 discussion, any further discussion on the matter.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MR. OOMITTUK: Question called for.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
24 called for, it's Brower.

25

26 MR. FRANTZ: I believe that was on the
27 phone, we may have a new call in.

28

29 MR. OOMITTUK: This is Steve here.

30

31 REPORTER: Steve.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hey, Steve Oomittuk.
34 All right.

35

36 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, good morning.
37 I've been listening, I didn't want to interrupt.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: No, you did the right
40 thing. We were wanting to make sure we acknowledge all
41 the Council members when they call in. So you are
42 officially recognized and.....

43

44 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER:and making our
47 quorum a little stronger this morning. (In Native), my
48 good friend.

49

50

0019

1 Question's been called for to adopt the
2 revised agenda. Signify by saying aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
7 nay.

8
9 (No opposing votes)

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We now have an
12 agenda. With that we'll go to item 6, review and
13 approve previous minutes. So we'll need a motion for
14 that. And the minutes that are under discussion are
15 March 8 and 9, 2022.

16
17 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair, I make a motion
18 to adopt the meeting minutes of March 8 and 9 of 2022.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
21 the floor to adopt meeting minutes for March 8 and 9,
22 2022 from Nuiqsut, Martha Itta.

23
24 MR. OOMITTUK: Second that motion.
25 This is Steve.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded by
28 Steve Oomittuk of Point Hope. Any discussion.

29
30 MS. ITTA: Yes, Mr. Chair.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Martha
33 from Nuiqsut.

34
35 MS. ITTA: I know I attended this
36 meeting, but I -- it shows that I did not give a report
37 and I believe I gave a report the last meeting.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Who was
40 our coordinator at our last meeting, was that Eva?

41
42 MS. WESSELS: That was Eva.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Maybe -- I
45 heard Eva online earlier. And, Eva, there's a
46 discrepancy in the minutes where Martha was present and
47 did provide a report as shesuggested. Eva, is there --
48 maybe you have some response for that. I know you're
49 doing a new job nowadays, but I think you were our
50

0020

1 coordinator back then.

2

3 MS. PATTON: Hello. Good morning, Mr.
4 Chair, members of the Council. This is Eva. Yes, and
5 so if there -- if you find any errors or discrepancies
6 in the minutes then please do let your current
7 coordinator know and she will be able to make those
8 amendments and changes as you see needed in the minutes
9 so that we have them accurate and correct.

10

11 So thank you for catching that.

12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Eva.
14 Yeah, Madame Coordinator, please note that and it's --
15 maybe -- it would be important to make sure we capture
16 all the Council member's comments during their
17 reporting and stuff like that.

18

19 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Earl, go ahead, from
22 Anaktuvuk.

23

24 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, Peter Williams.
25 Anyway the last time when we were on this meeting she
26 discussed it at about, you know, there was tough on
27 fish and caribous and that's what the tension was.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Peter. I
32 keep calling you Earl. I always want to call you Earl.

33

34 MR. WILLIAMS: You can call them both.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. But thank
37 you for that. Any other discussions on the minutes.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 MR. OOMITTUK: Question called for.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. The
44 question's been called for. All those in favor of
45 adopting the minutes with the exception of Martha's
46 report which will need to be remedied signify by saying
47 aye.

48

49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

0021

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
2 nay.

3
4 (No opposing votes)

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, ayes
7 have it. The minutes are adopted to be corrected.

8
9 Thank you.

10
11 MS. HONIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We'll go to item 7
14 and we'll do Council member reports. And we'll go to
15 Point Hope and, Steve, you have the floor for Point
16 Hope's report.

17
18 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. Good
19 morning, everybody. Good to hear you. You know. Point
20 Hope has been a pretty good year for caribou. They've
21 been around practically all year, you know, even though
22 the population is low. It seem like they catching
23 caribou throughout the fall, summer, spring, I mean,
24 just a little ways out of town.

25
26 We had some muskox in town. They had
27 to scare a muskox out of town because it had porcupine
28 quills, you know, that was -- we thought about putting
29 it to sleep, but they just chased it out of town.

30
31 Just a lot of seals, a lot of (in
32 Native) whales, just been a very good year for
33 everything.

34
35 You know, the weather's been kind of
36 unpredictable, we don't have the normal winds that we
37 normally get at a certain time of the year. It's like
38 the winds are actually changing and that's what brings
39 the certain -- like the ducks and the geese, you know.
40 North winds the geese are flying and south winds the
41 ducks are flying, you know. It seems like we didn't
42 get very much north winds this year at certain times of
43 the year like the winds are shifting. We didn't see
44 like ducks.

45
46 Other than that everything's been
47 pretty good. We got a bunch of snow. Last year we
48 didn't get snow until November, almost the end of
49 November, but other than that we had a few accidents,
50

0022

1 some people out hunting, but the animals have been in
2 abundance this year and that's helped. We're very
3 grateful for that.

4

5 Thank you. I think it's been a very
6 good year for, you know, our food source, but it's been
7 very hard for the community this year, seems like a lot
8 of deaths. And we're still moving forward and enjoying
9 our way of life and accepting all the foods that come
10 to us. The belugas, you know, were coming through this
11 fall also. Seems like everything's a month late. The
12 ice left early, but everything is like a month late,
13 you know, the normal time with animals (in Native).
14 You know, the winds -- it's not the same as it normally
15 is, we see a big change the last few years.

16

17 Thank you. Everybody enjoy and get to
18 finally have this North Slope Subsistence Advisory
19 Council meeting.

20

21 Thank you. Good morning, everybody.

22

23 (In Native)

24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Steve.
26 (In Native). It's very good to hear from Point Hope.

27

28 With that we'll go to Mr. Frantz from
29 Utqiagvik. And each time we give a Council member's
30 report and just to see what's out there in our neck of
31 our (in Native).

32

33 Mr. Frantz.

34

35 MR. FRANTZ: All right. Thank you, Mr.
36 Chair. Brower Frantz from Utqiagvik. So we've had a
37 relatively good year as far as our subsistence hunts.
38 I do have a lot to report here. Fishing has been great
39 this year, there's been a lot of whitefish. There were
40 some that were kind of above normal size, not record-
41 breaking, but there have been a few reported, you know,
42 28ish inch, I think the biggest I've seen was 32. So
43 there was -- there are years to where some of the
44 whitefish are larger than others. So it was good to
45 see a report of larger whitefish around which means,
46 you know, they have a greater quantity of (in Native)
47 later on.

48

49 Belugas have been around, they've been

50

0023

1 plentiful and, you know, people have caught them here
2 in town. So there here is an abundance of that
3 resource here throughout the summer. Not too many
4 people go out and catch them, but when they do it is
5 distributed to pretty much everybody that likes to
6 barter. So that's a really good addition to our
7 resource here.

8
9 Caribou have been plentiful around
10 town. I know that, you know, according to the numbers
11 they're kind of going down a bit, but hanging in there,
12 but they have been plentiful around Barrow. I have no
13 heard too many complaints of disease or parasite, but
14 there have been some that were brought in with a few
15 different issues with them. But overall from what was
16 caught versus what was brought in I think was a
17 relatively good year that led to a lot of happy people
18 in the community. It did seem like there was a lot of
19 fat on a good amount of the caribou this year so it
20 looked like they were pretty healthy.

21
22 There's been a lot of gray whales
23 playing around town, scratching along the beach,
24 jumping around and it seemed like they were a little
25 closer than normal in some cases.

26
27 Whaling has been great, a lot of
28 whaling or a lot of whales have been caught this year
29 and they were caught in relatively close proximity to
30 town which also goes along with I think the gray whales
31 being closer to town. But and also they were smaller
32 in size versus what has been caught over the last few
33 years which is a good thing for the community. It
34 doesn't take nearly as long to cut them up and also,
35 you know, it's great for the elders because they don't
36 have to work so hard on trying to eat the whale. So I
37 think they've all been less than 30 feet so that was --
38 I think those are good numbers for Barrow especially
39 when you catch them in great quantities.

40
41 It's been a good -- a great year for
42 walrus. There was a pretty good walrus hunting season
43 that started as soon as the ice went out and it seemed
44 like everybody made use of that resource that was
45 available to us this year and we're grateful for that.
46 So a lot of walrus that have been distributed through
47 the community and it's been great.

48
49 Bearded seals. They've been really
50

0024

1 good, we caught a couple this year. So bearded seals
2 have been abundant this year. I didn't see any real
3 issues with bearded seals. I know in previous years
4 they -- we have seen them with parasites and with
5 different disease that ended up in some of them not
6 being taken home, but it seemed like this year it
7 didn't have that type of affect on us.

8
9 of moose. There has been a greater number
10 of moose seen around the Barrow area, some have
11 wandered north and occasionally you see a couple of
12 them every five or 10 years, but it seems like there
13 was at least three of them that wandered in and Barrow,
14 some around Nunivak, some around Peard Bay, some of
15 them were taken and it seems like they were more north
16 in general.

17
18 Muskox. Muskox we have seen over the
19 last few years, an abundance of muskox along the
20 Ikpihpuk River. This year I didn't see them, but I can
21 hear them within a few miles of us and making the
22 crashing noises from their challenges there. But last
23 year we did see a few more in the same vicinity so it
24 kind of goes to say I think Ikpihpuk has at least a
25 stable few muskox that hang around.

26
27 Foxes have been plentiful this year.
28 There are hundreds of foxes that are in and around
29 Barrow right now and also owls are plentiful this year
30 too. There was at least 10 of them that we saw in town
31 without leaving the outskirts of town. So must be a
32 good lemming year or at least maybe last year was, but
33 plenty of fox around.

34
35 The other thing that stood out to me
36 this year was porpoise. Over the last two years we've
37 been seeing an abundance of porpoise around here. So
38 we have seen them, I haven't heard of any taken, but we
39 have seen porpoise around town while we were out going
40 for bearded seal and walrus. So porpoise has
41 definitely been, you know, at least two consecutive
42 years that I've seen them personally.

43
44 So overall it's been a great season for
45 hunting. I think -- well, I guess I didn't touch on
46 waterfowl. We had a pretty good season this year even
47 though it was kind of late thaw. I believe they pushed
48 back the 30 day closure so we did work along with the
49 wildlife folks here to assist with that at least, you
50

0025

1 know, in talks with them. But everything looked good
2 on the waterfowl side.

3

4 So I think overall we had a good year
5 and lots of food to go around.

6

7 Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Mr.
10 Frantz. Pretty good report. And we'll move over to
11 Anaktuvuk.

12

13 Earl.

14

15 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Yeah, it's good to be back and since last year we've
17 been having like -- we're just struggling for, you
18 know, our Native food, but, you know, we just move on.
19 And we've been going out on sheep hunting. A few guys
20 got sheep, but they don't say much about it because
21 it's our way of life that, you know, they keep it to
22 themselves. You know, the elders used to say don't
23 brag about it, but that animal might hear you bragging
24 and then it'll come back and see you again. That's
25 always bothered.

26

27 (Teleconference interference -
28 participants not muted).

29

30 MR. WILLIAMS: But Ben Betreehe he had
31 a moose -- muskox permit, but he didn't get one. He
32 said he didn't see nothing around the village. That's
33 sad when we've been having a hard time with caribou.

34

35 When I went home to my hometown I
36 talked with elder about caribous and he would tell me
37 that caribou always migrate different routes every so
38 often for the lichen to regrow again. They just don't
39 go the same pattern all the time, they always go
40 different routes. Maybe they go the same way, but
41 different route. But they don't follow the same
42 pattern all the time, every five years or so they come
43 back this way. That's what he told me anyway. And I
44 heard that caribous were around between Arctic Village
45 and Nuiqsut area in the mountains. And I asked him how
46 come they're not moving and he said well, in the
47 falltime when it starts freezing it gets icy and ice
48 packed, you know, and bad for their hooves and stuff.

49

50

0026

1 (Teleconference interference -
2 participants not muted).

3

4 MR. WILLIAMS: So they stay in the
5 mountains where it's snow, not icy, that's why they
6 stay, where it's safe. And one more thing he said is
7 that, I don't know, the caribou sense weather, you
8 know, maybe that typhoon they knew it was going to
9 happen. The quails too, they said they know it's going
10 to happen, they move along. That's what he told me and
11 I just wanted to use that as an example that, you know,
12 due to warm climate change a lot of animals are popping
13 up in the Anaktuvuk area too, you know, like lynx. You
14 don't see no lynx around there because they were all
15 under my house. Wolves coming around, that can be bad.
16 Ben Betreehe ran into a black wolf in the village.
17 Hunting geese, didn't hear much about hunting geese.
18 That's one thing I wouldn't mind trying that at home
19 instead of the young guys.

20

21 Last year, I want to tell you a story
22 about these young boys, I bought some gas for them and
23 some shells, that's Dino's boys. Jagger, he was only
24 about 14. My son flat told me one time he said
25 encourage your kids, buy them something, even a gun or
26 something, not these \$10 (indiscernible), but they'll
27 live by it and look at it all the time, they'll be
28 encouraged to keep -- go hunting. That's what I did to
29 those kids. Yeah, hey, go help those old people out,
30 you know, I'll give you gas and shells. Eyes just
31 popped up, they said yeah, you know, yeah, right there.
32 And they've been out hunting and they've been sharing
33 some caribou with us elders last year, you know. But
34 this year it's quiet and just got to pray for one
35 another to keep ourself healthy.

36

37 I just wanted to share this with you
38 all. Thank you very much and everything. Hope our
39 hunting seasons get back in -- on the road.

40

41 Thank you very much.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Peter.
44 Yeah, I just wanted to -- you know, it's a good
45 opportunity to provide some feedback or also questions.
46 So I just wanted to add on your.....

47

48 (Teleconference interference -
49 participants not muted).

50

0027

1 MS. WESSELS: Yeah. Whoever is on the
2 phone and doesn't have their phones mute, please mute
3 your phone. We can hear you rustling around and
4 walking around. Please move your phone -- I mean, mute
5 your phone.

6
7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Those
10 online remember to mute and we'll get Carmen here in a
11 minute before I make an observation real quick. You
12 talked a little bit about when the rivers freeze.....

13
14 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah.

15
16 CHAIRMAN BROWER:and when he --
17 because I'm always reminded of when my dad was alive,
18 he was -- you know, he was a pretty good expert in my
19 own opinion, he was a reindeer herder from 1920s, '30s
20 and '40s, did a lot of reindeer husbandry up here in
21 the Arctic. And always looking out for caribou. It
22 was the reverse, they were afraid of caribou because
23 they had to protect the reindeer because the reindeer's
24 going to follow them. The reindeer will follow the
25 caribou, they will take off with them if you're not
26 careful. And but we've been exposed to those stories
27 for many years. One of the things I remember is that
28 and this is why he selected Chip 9 as -- it's -- the
29 traditional name is (in Native), it's from the (in
30 Native) area. He select his Native allotment there.
31 It's because of the rivers, they confluence. And the
32 caribou become sketchy and afraid to cross ice and they
33 will converge and follow that.

34
35 And one other thing I heard him talk
36 about when ConocoPhillips was drilling out by (in
37 Native), by the Monument. And there was an ice road, a
38 real ice road, all the way to Prudhoe from Barrow, you
39 know, not a snow trail, a really -- a real ice road.
40 One of the concerns he had was that the caribou will
41 look at that and be afraid to cross that, they will
42 travel alongside of it for a long ways and then
43 crossover. Sometimes it works to your advantage and
44 sometimes it doesn't. And I was thinking about the
45 trail that goes from Gailbreath to Anaktuvuk because
46 the caribou that might normally go north and hang
47 around there might follow that (in Native) and they
48 would follow that coming from the east.

49
50

0028

1 And that's just listening to the elders
2 that see how these animals react to their own
3 environment on top of a manmade environment like an ice
4 road look like a river sometimes if you look, an icy
5 river.

6
7 (In Native) and that's just my own
8 things I've been exposed to.

9
10 And, Carmen, I think you had a question
11 for Mr. Williams.

12
13 MS. DAGGETT: Through the Chair to
14 member Williams. My name is Carmen Daggett for the
15 record. And I was interested in the same thing that
16 Gordon brought up actually about the river observation.
17 So we've seen a few years that the Teshekpuk Herd gets
18 stalled at the Colville River this time of year. And
19 currently when I recently I think yesterday looked at
20 the map of where all the collars are, they're again
21 lined up along the Colville River. And so I would be
22 interested to know what the river conditions are like
23 right now in your area. I don't know if anybody has
24 been around rivers in that part of the country at all,
25 but I would be interested to know if there's pan ice or
26 if ice is real thin yet down there, any observations
27 there from anyone, even Martha at Nuiqsut, I would be
28 interested to know.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Earl, (in Native) was
31 asking about the ice in the rivers.

32
33 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, it was -- it's
34 still running, but kind of really slippery like icy,
35 just not really freezing up, just like they call it
36 (indiscernible) not much though, it's just a little
37 snow, but not much snow either. On the lake they're
38 kind of froze, but they're not -- you know, pretty thin
39 yet due to the weather change here, it's just really
40 drastic.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Earl. I
43 hope that was what you were fishing for.

44
45 MS. DAGGETT: I guess I was thinking or
46 have been considering for a while looking at a research
47 project to take a look at when rivers freeze and if
48 there does seem to be a solid correlation about
49 migration timing related to rivers freezing. And I
50

0029

1 have heard other elders talk about panic and I've read
2 about it in the literature some too. And so I know
3 it's been a big issue for Anaktuvuk Pass on getting
4 caribou to Anaktuvuk Pass. And so I would be really
5 interested to try to understand the drivers behind fall
6 migration better and perhaps this is part of that
7 equation. So that's why I was asking those questions.

8

9 Thank you, Mr. Chair and members.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. With that
12 I'll just check if Kaktovik, if you've come in yet,
13 Eddie Rexford, are you online.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, we'll
18 go to Nuiqsut, Martha Itta.

19

20 MS. ITTA: Yes, good morning, everyone.
21 Where to start first. Okay. Since we're on the topic
22 of the caribou, I'm really honored to, you know, my
23 community -- for my community to help out our neighbor,
24 Anaktuvuk Pass on caribou. They -- we do have an
25 abundance of caribou coming through like it was a good
26 herd passing through, like when we let the first herds
27 go through there was a good big herd of caribou that
28 went through. And the migration, there's a lot of
29 concern within the migration route, they're not
30 following their usual migration routes, they're coming
31 from different ways now, coming in to Nuiqsut like from
32 the south to the east. And yet they do get stuck on
33 the Colville River or GMT because of the roads, the
34 traffic that we have. A lot of the caribou do not
35 crossover on their migration route going toward Fish
36 Creek.

37

38 And there have been some sick caribou
39 that we've been catching still. Residents had been
40 turning them over to Fish and Wildlife, but have not
41 gotten answers on results on those that we sent out to
42 be tested.

43

44 But pretty much our caribou is -- the
45 migration is off. They're not crossing the roads on
46 the west side and that's where we usually, you know,
47 catch the caribou under restriction, we can't shoot
48 around the pipeline so we have to watch them, we
49 monitor them to, you know, to cross roads and to get to
50

0030

1 an area where we can shoot them. Many times the only
2 one that we catch that crosses the road are sick.
3 There are caribou that can barely walk, they -- they're
4 tired. We were monitoring caribou just not too long
5 ago, this last couple of months waiting for them to
6 cross to the west side and they were moving slow. Some
7 of them couldn't even walk, they would stop like right
8 on the middle of the road and get their strength and
9 then keep walking. So the migration and traffic are
10 still concerns, restrictions are still deep concerns
11 from the community.

12
13 Going on to our fish our -- we usually
14 get a lot of fish right down at the river in the
15 village, downriver -- going downriver toward the ocean.
16 We usually have a lot of abundance of fish, but this
17 last year or two it's been really slow with our (in
18 Native) and our sheefish (ph). It's a lot slower,
19 we're not getting as many. But when you go upriver
20 like toward (in Native) and set your net there's a lot
21 of fish there. And which we have to travel farther as
22 opposed to just setting our nets right down there in
23 town. So that issue that we're having with our fish is
24 there's not as many in town going downriver, but more
25 going upriver.

26
27 We do our -- we still are seeing sick
28 fish and still waiting on results from Fish and
29 Wildlife on those that were sent in. Still some are
30 missing their organs such as their livers and stuff so
31 we do catch fish with missing organs.

32
33 The walrus and the seals, hunting has
34 been good. Our community's been really blessed with
35 walrus and seals. We haven't heard any -- really any
36 concerns right there.

37
38 Moose. We're getting more hunters
39 getting more moose. So that was really good the last
40 year or two everybody's been having moose and enjoying
41 moose.

42
43 With our geese, our (in Native), we
44 have been -- there was a few geese caught that had --
45 that seemed sick, that had foam coming out of their
46 mouths. So we have been catching geese that are sick
47 and with stuff coming out of their mouth. I don't know
48 if anybody sent those into Fish and Wildlife, I haven't
49 heard of anybody turning those in.

50

0031

1 Muskox. I'm very grateful that they
2 opened up muskox in our region. They have been
3 multiplying really fast, we're getting more and more
4 muskox in our village, even right in town, right across
5 the river. And I know there was concerns about the
6 muskox harassing the caribou, bothering the caribou.
7 So our community caught -- I know there was a couple of
8 hunters that caught a muskox, got their permits and
9 they're really enjoying it, they're really enjoying
10 having muskox and being able to hunt them is something
11 new to our generation, our younger generation, so
12 they're really thankful when honored to be, you know,
13 to be able to hunt those and share it with the
14 community because many hasn't tried it yet.

15
16 So for the squirrels, I'd like to talk
17 about this is the first -- I don't know if this is the
18 first time I'm bringing this up, but they had done
19 seismic all around Nuiqsut, did a whole seismic work
20 right in our village, within the three mile
21 jurisdiction. Right -- even right on our rivers they
22 were doing seismic and we haven't seen any squirrels in
23 years. This year I saw one squirrel and that's the
24 first squirrel I've seen in years. We don't have any
25 more (indiscernible) coming out and we're thinking that
26 it's due to the seismic activity that's happened in our
27 village.

28
29 And also our berries with the seismic
30 work that happened, going all over our (in Native),
31 we're not finding our berries where we usually find
32 them. We have to go -- travel upriver or downriver to
33 find berries when we used to just pick them right in
34 our backyard. But due to the seismic work that had
35 damaged our tundra we're not seeing the berries there
36 anymore, we have to travel by boat upriver to go get
37 berries.

38
39 I don't know, the bears is the number 1
40 thing that -- the bears this last year, two, three
41 years, they're coming closer, they're coming into town
42 now right before hibernation. We've been having bear
43 encounters. They never used to come into town before,
44 but now they're right into town. We had -- almost had
45 a bear attack right -- my neighbor, my aunt's house, I
46 live right across her house and there's a grizzly and
47 her two cubs right after whaling season came into town
48 in the middle of the night. It was pitch dark and my
49 aunt's a smoker so she goes outside to smoke and, you
50

0032

1 know, it's pitch black and she hears something, what is
2 that noise. And she goes in, turns on her light, comes
3 back out and the bear is just charging right at her on
4 her porch, you know, it was almost getting to her. She
5 had enough time to run in and lock her door and the
6 neighbors came out shooting a gun, you know, and my
7 neighbor was screaming and hollering, two of my
8 neighbors and we're like oh, dear, he's at it again,
9 you know. And we were thinking it was a domestic
10 dispute or something because it sounded like he was
11 really intoxicated and, you know, just having one of
12 those nights. And we're like really scared, hiding,
13 oh, my god, he's at it again, everybody's locking their
14 doors and it happened that he was trying to scare the
15 bear off from his yard. And then the gun shooting, 15
16 shots, we thought he was shooting, oh, no, he's going
17 crazy and it happened to be a bear on their yard
18 charging at him. And then, you know, there's a video
19 of it that went viral of that incident.

20
21 So we're having grizzly bear problems
22 right now. It's terrorizing our community, it really
23 traumatized our community when those bears came into
24 town. They scare them off and they keep coming back,
25 they just keep coming back and our community is, you
26 know, asking a lot of questions on, you know, they need
27 to put them down, why aren't they putting them down,
28 but everybody knows that you cannot shoot a mother and
29 a cub. So, you know, they're just -- they hired a bear
30 watcher, 12 hours a day, so that helps a lot, but they
31 just keep coming back and there's questions within our
32 community whether they can put them down without
33 getting into trouble because they're harassing our
34 community.

35
36 Okay. Let's see.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

39
40 MS. ITTA: Yes.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's Carmen I
43 think wants to respond on something.

44
45 MS. ITTA: Okay.

46
47 MS. DAGGETT: You can finish if you
48 want and then I've got a bunch of stuff I want to ask
49 you.

50

0033

1 MS. ITTA: Oh, okay. The weather is
2 changed a lot, has changed a lot and has been a factor
3 in many of our issues regarding subsistence. Usually
4 it's freezing right now, but right now there's still a
5 lot of water, it's raining/snowing in our village so
6 it'll freeze and then it'll melt, freeze again.
7 Usually they're setting nets at this time, it's frozen,
8 but there's still a lot of comment, water in the -- on
9 the sides of the river so it's not fully frozen. We --
10 just the weather is unpredictable and, you know, we
11 kind of quit listening to the weather guy.

12
13 (Laughter)

14
15 MS. ITTA: So the weather's really
16 unpredictable. So with that I think -- I don't know if
17 this is the place to be bringing restrictions and
18 stipulations. I know the Bureau of Land Management
19 attends these meetings, but there is a lot of concern
20 regarding project developments and such as the Willow.
21 I know it's past that public process, but, you know,
22 with the Department of Interior and Washington, D.C.
23 folks, the leadership coming here to meet the
24 leadership of our community which is our corporation
25 president and I don't know if our mayor was invited,
26 but our community believes that, you know, that isn't--
27 that is not listening to the community, it's listening
28 to one person who is the president of our corporation
29 and not going to our community and talking to our
30 community themselves, looking at them in their faces
31 and getting their words and their comments and concerns
32 as opposed to going to one person, two people, whoever
33 was invited from our community as opposed to meeting
34 500 people face to face. There's a lot of concern
35 about that process because they're left out on these
36 decisions, these major decisions that are being said
37 and done out of our village and we have to deal with it
38 once they -- once it's said and done and they come
39 back. That's a concern that a lot of, you know, our
40 community members been speaking out. And I just wanted
41 to mention that.

42
43 I think that's all I have for now.
44 Thank you.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Martha.
47 Carmen. I think she has some responses to some -- I'm
48 thinking it's law enforcement.

49
50

0034

1 MS. DAGGETT: Through the Chair to
2 member Itta. I actually have several questions and
3 comments. That was a very thorough report and very
4 detailed. So thank you very much for taking your time
5 to think about that and give a really good
6 presentation.

7
8 The first thing that I remember in your
9 list was that caught my attention was the caribou and
10 talking about the caribou. You said that you sent some
11 sick caribou into Fish and Wildlife Service?

12
13 MS. ITTA: Yes, there was a few hunters
14 that had sent samples out to Fish and Wildlife.

15
16 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. So there is also
17 another option, if you wish you can certainly submit
18 samples through Fish and Game as well. And when we get
19 samples like sick caribou we send them to the
20 veterinarian in Fairbanks, she does the necropsy and
21 then we get a report from her. And I share that
22 information when I get the caribou with the North Slope
23 Borough Wildlife Department as well. So you have a
24 couple of avenues you can work with there. And I just
25 wanted to let you know that there's some options there
26 that hunters can utilize if they wish. It's your
27 choice entirely.

28
29 Muskox. So there's definitely a
30 variety of muskox hunts that are going to be available
31 beyond what is currently available this year. And I
32 will be in Nuiqsut for that career fair that
33 ConocoPhillips is putting on and there will be tier two
34 hunt applications available during that time period and
35 I will be happy to help people fill them out. So if
36 people are interested in applying for the State hunts
37 that are available in your area, I'm happy to help
38 during that time period and would love to help people
39 in any way that they need there.

40
41 All right. Bears. So I've had a lot
42 of conversations with the North Slope Borough Wildlife
43 Department and with individuals in Nuiqsut about the
44 bear situation. There are definitely a couple of
45 options for dealing with those bears. Defense of life
46 and property is definitely an option and in the
47 situation that you were talking about with individuals
48 being charged, that is definitely a situation where
49 someone could legally take a bear even though it's a
50

0035

1 sow with cubs.

2

3

MS. ITTA: Uh-huh.

4

5

MS. DAGGETT: So hunters need to know that. I've told every hunter that I've talked to that that's true and the North Slope Borough Wildlife Department has been conveying that message as well.

9

10 There's another option too. And I've
11 talked with Public Safety some about this option.
12 There's a permit that can be applied for to deal with
13 the whole issue and it's a public safety related
14 permit. And I talked with the police department in
15 Nuiqsut about perhaps them applying for that permit to
16 be able to take those bears. I talked with North Slope
17 Borough Wildlife Department regarding that issue and
18 asked them if they would be interested in applying for
19 that permit as well and they said they hadn't been
20 hearing anything from Nuiqsut lately. So they didn't --
21 if it continues to be an issue let's get that permit
22 applied for, let's deal with the bears.

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MS. ITTA: Okay. I have a question, maybe a couple. When you're talking about permit and, you know, our community -- bears harassing our community and, you know, if somebody has to shoot them, but they didn't get a permit will they get in trouble.....

MS. DAGGETT: So.....

MS. ITTA:or how does that -- how would this work, like would everybody have to apply for a bear permit?

MS. DAGGETT: So first of all people -- it depends on the scenario. So there was one individual that contacted me from Nuiqsut who recently shot a bear. That bear didn't have cubs so it was perfectly legal for them to hunt it without having a permit.

MS. ITTA: Okay.

MS. DAGGETT: They.....

MS. ITTA: Just as long as it doesn't.....

0036

1 MS. DAGGETT:should have a
2 hunting license.....

3
4 MS. ITTA: Okay.

5
6 MS. DAGGETT:but you can actually
7 just take it under your regular hunting
8 regulations.....

9
10 MS. ITTA: Okay.

11
12 MS. DAGGETT:because there's a
13 year round season for bears.....

14
15 MS. ITTA: Yeah. Okay.

16
17 MS. DAGGETT:on the North
18 Slope.....

19
20 MS. ITTA: Okay.

21
22 MS. DAGGETT:at least in 26A. So
23 it's the sow with cubs that's the problem.....

24
25 MS. ITTA: Okay. Yeah.

26
27 MS. DAGGETT:in that.....

28
29 MS. ITTA: Yeah. Yeah.

30
31 MS. DAGGETT:because you're not
32 allowed to legally take a sow with cubs except under
33 the defense of life and property regulation.

34
35 MS. ITTA: Yeah.

36
37 MS. DAGGETT: It's still legal to shoot
38 an animal under those regulations.....

39
40 MS. ITTA: Okay.

41
42 MS. DAGGETT:it just is a bit
43 more paperwork.

44
45 MS. ITTA: Okay.

46
47 MS. DAGGETT: And the individual won't
48 be allowed to keep the animal. So that's kind of the
49 difference between those and kind of the same thing
50

0037

1 with the public safety permit.....

2

3 MS. ITTA: Yes.

4

5 MS. DAGGETT:it would allow you
6 to take the sow with cubs -- would allow an individual
7 to take the sow with cubs and it would be basically
8 planned ahead of time.....

9

10 MS. ITTA: Okay.

11

12 MS. DAGGETT:and done that way.
13 But defense of life and property, if I'm in danger I
14 need to take this animal right now.

15

16 MS. ITTA: Yeah, that was the main.....

17

18 MS. DAGGETT: That's always legal or
19 that's legal, but it takes a little bit more paperwork
20 to process.

21

22 MS. ITTA: Okay.

23

24 MS. DAGGETT: And then there's the
25 regular hunting season which people are allowed to take
26 animals as long as it's not a sow with cubs. Does that
27 make sense?

28

29 MS. ITTA: They don't -- yeah, it does.
30 Thank you for that. I don't think they go -- they
31 don't get bears in Nuiqsut very much, it's just they
32 put them down when they're harassing the community. We
33 don't really eat bear there.

34

35 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah, I'm aware of at
36 least a couple of individuals that shoot bears annually
37 in Nuiqsut and they seal them with me under their
38 regular hunting license. So but that being said, I
39 understand people have different preferences for what
40 they want to take and what they want to eat and that's
41 all fine.

42

43 MS. ITTA: Thank you. That's the
44 question I needed answered because that was, you know,
45 the really big question in Nuiqsut, why aren't they
46 putting them down and, you know, those hunters are like
47 you can't shoot them.....

48

49 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah.

50

0038

1 MS. ITTA:you know, but now I --
2 now I have an answer for them.

3
4 Thank you.

5
6 MS. DAGGETT: Yeah. And feel free if
7 there's ever any more questions regarding that I'm
8 available at anytime to answer those questions. And if
9 you guys are interested in pursuing that permit you
10 should let me know because I can help you get.....

11
12 MS. ITTA: Thank you.

13
14 MS. DAGGETT:that established. I
15 already drafted a version of it and gave it to the
16 Wildlife Department, but.....

17
18 MS. ITTA: Okay.

19
20 MS. DAGGETT:I'm not sure if they
21 pursued that. So.....

22
23 MS. ITTA: Thank you.

24
25 MS. DAGGETT: Thanks.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Carmen.
28 And, Martha, I would think that -- just want to know if
29 you're done with your report.

30
31 MS. ITTA: Yes. I think that's all I
32 have for now, Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native). We'll
35 go to Anaktuvuk to Esther Hugo. You have the floor.

36
37 MS. HUGO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
38 just want to note that we are waiting for our caribou
39 to come and we got -- when they do come like while I'm
40 here or on the way home, we'll be catching the cows
41 because the bulls will be rutted. And as I spoke
42 earlier about the charter to Nuiqsut, yes, it cost the
43 city arm and leg, but we had put funds aside last year
44 just in case we get into this problem again with the
45 migration. And it happened so right now we're
46 patiently waiting for the cows to come, but I think
47 they're taking the west -- western site, camera site,
48 west of us. So hopefully they'll come around this next
49 month, December, the new year. That's just hopeful,
50

0039

1 really hopeful.

2

3

4 There's been a lot of bear sighting,
5 even right to the airport there. It was one of the --
6 I guess one of the mamma cub shooed it -- shoo it away,
7 you know, and this cub came. I think they shot it
8 because he keep coming around and there's a lot of kids
9 in the rivers or trying to go fishing. So we had to
10 put that bear down. The bears were -- abundance of
11 bears.

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I missed out on blueberries and (in Native) picking because I had to escort my cousin to Kaktovik, she's got oxygen and she's a year older and she had asked me to escort her. So I missed out on picking blueberries and (in Native). I got a little bit, but not enough. And with the short summer, you know, it's amazing that we do pick berries with the short summer. But it's always good to go out there, enjoy the day and just pick berries.

And there's been -- I see sightings of weasels just before I came. They are -- they're hungry too, looking for a little scrap meat, maybe tutu fat or tutu meat. I've been seeing sightings of weasels and rabbits. They're still hanging around, changing colors and they're not as much as before, the rabbits. They should be down in the trees because we never have sightings of rabbits when we were growing up.

You know, there's 98 households at home and we got 21 caribou. So you times 21 times four of them legs, the front and the back hindquarters, 21 times four. But then it wouldn't even feed the whole family because we were short 26 households as we speak. So I'm trying to see how we can fix that because they feel left out and the rest of the -- well, we let the seniors and gave the seniors most of the portion of caribou, that little fat that we got. And then I got to get home and think about these 26 families that didn't even get a bite. So hopefully the cows come pretty soon. They're looking out, everyday they're looking the outlook where we see if they're coming from the north.

And there's been a lot of sightings of wolves, big, black and there's a big, black wolf we need to catch. I know they got the gray one right where the migration starts north of us. And the bears

0040

1 they're there too, they're hungry. And we know that,
2 we see it through the predators that's coming to the
3 village. They're just as hungry as we are just for
4 that piece of meat of tutu.

5

6 And there's some people caught sheep
7 just recently. I had a portion and, man, I just kept
8 that for a day or two wondering should I save it or
9 should I eat it or share it. That was hard, but and
10 they got a moose and they shared that and I think Earl
11 had got a lot of moose meat, I know that.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MS. HUGO: Because a lot of us, you
16 know, we were offered chip blocks and I don't think
17 most of us got any, but I'm glad he got a whole bunch.

18

19 And, I mean, to me personally or to
20 some of my (in Native) we know there's moose, but we'll
21 eat it only if we're starving and we have nothing to
22 eat. That's how we feel, I mean, some of us feel at
23 home. Yes, it's good to eat moose, the big buck, yeah.
24 The bull the size of the caribou (indiscernible) marrow
25 bone. But it's just -- we're just thankful that
26 they're able to go out there and catch moose or sheep
27 when we really need that just for the old folks, I
28 guess they're the ones that we look to because we know
29 we can see in them that they're really craving for tutu
30 or some kind of meat.

31

32 And it's just one of the concern and
33 issues that we been dealing with for years and nothing
34 been resolved. Been hollering, been pointing fingers,
35 but this issue will not go away. And it hasn't,
36 nothing's been resolved, we've been talking about this
37 issue for so long it even got to where we blame a lot
38 of our sport hunters. They're the people if somebody
39 out there can listen to us, they probably say oh, it's
40 the same old thing, she's just talking about it, but we
41 know because we're caribou people, we seen it, we heard
42 it from our old folks. That's a tough issue because
43 caribou got four legs and the whole NPR-A out there,
44 outside of our mountains, the whole -- from Point Hope
45 all the way to Barter Island. And, you know, you add
46 up the numbers on the caribou there's at least more
47 than half a million -- I mean, the numbers went down,
48 but close to half a million. And not one darn caribou
49 came this -- right now. Last year they did and it was

50

0041

1 a sight, we were so happy, but not this year. It's
2 just one of those issues and concerns that we'll always
3 continue to have because we have no choice but to
4 survive with the caribou.

5
6 And it hurts a lot because we got a lot
7 of rules and regulations. But, you know, my -- our
8 people survive, they've been surviving since time. And
9 to me I'm getting older and I'm just wondering whether
10 my grandkids, my (in Native), I got 10 (in Native),
11 brand new one just a couple months ago. Just wondering
12 about them, whether they'll have the same issues as we
13 have been since pipeline. I know there's supposed to
14 be a change in life, but it hurts me because tutu is
15 the way of life for us to survive. I'm sorry I get
16 sensitive over this because I just can picture our
17 people and they're not with me, but they're behind me.
18 And the loss of our old folks, a handful of them now.
19 But we'll listen to them, we'll get their knowledge and
20 their understanding. Otherwise we'll -- we got hope.
21 We've been doing this for so long even though nothing's
22 changed.

23
24 We even had proposals twice since I've
25 been on to the Board of Game. We testified in front of
26 these guys, the Board of Game. And that was hurtful
27 part. If they just can understand and hear what we say
28 I guess it would work better, but they don't. I'm just
29 upset a lot of times. But I learned to -- we learned
30 to survive, we'll go on like my father and my mom did,
31 my (in Native) and my (in Native) did. That's how come
32 we're not meat people, we're caribou people, we're
33 different, we're just one of those in the wild Brooks
34 Range from east to west, north to -- so just thankful
35 we have relatives from Nuiqsut that come and share. We
36 even got some fresh (in Native), muktuk, a whole bunch
37 too. They were pretty happy just to get some (in
38 Native) fresh. The younger generation really craved
39 that, (in Native) and the muktuk, they really love that
40 more than I do I think.

41
42 But thank you all. Sorry again. I do
43 get emotional. I'm sorry.

44
45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Esther.
46 (In Native). And I really appreciate all of that and,
47 you know, I learn, I learn too. And I'm kind of
48 getting old myself, you know, and I am always learning.
49 And it's important. And thank you for your report.
50

0042

1 Brower, I think has questions for
2 Esther.

3
4 MR. FRANTZ: Well, I don't know if -- I
5 guess moreover a comment on it. I don't know if this
6 is the right time to do it or like a possible scenario
7 of the issue. I've been listening to this issue for
8 years as, you know, part of the Planning Department,
9 Fish and Game Management Committee and this is the same
10 exact issue that comes up every meeting, every year for
11 years, since I've been with the Borough, 2015, 2014.
12 And it's repetitive and it seems like it's still there
13 so I guess throughout the years, you know. Now I know
14 the boundaries of the State hunts versus, you know,
15 working with wildlife, the migratory routes and the
16 tagging so I was wondering if there has ever been a
17 study or at least some research thrown into the
18 migration pattern versus the State's boundaries where
19 they allow sport hunters, the locations of where the
20 sport hunters are, you know, I used to work compliance
21 so I know exactly where the airplanes land to drop off
22 their folks which is right at Gunsight Mountain and
23 they block off the valley there for the migration going
24 south. So I wonder if there's ever been any type of
25 research to correlate the migration pattern and maybe
26 some of the collars and the timing that they have all
27 of the sport hunters and there's literally hundreds,
28 maybe even thousands of them that they go up the Haul
29 Road with almost no State enforcement there. So it's --
30 you know, I'm just wondering if there has ever been or
31 can there be some type of investigation into this
32 matter with those pieces, with the migration route,
33 where the State is allowed to put sport hunters in the
34 State lands, where the hunters are actually going
35 because they're supposed to provide their GPS locations
36 and if there is a deflection there.

37
38 So just my comments. Thanks.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Brower.
41 Those are important, you know, regardless if it's the
42 right timing or not I think they should be expressed.
43 Those are -- they're -- it's a long -- maybe as long as
44 I've been on the Subsistence Board and that's -- I
45 think I started 1998 or '96 or somewhere around there
46 on this particular Board. And those have always been --
47 we even had a dedicated session as the Western Arctic
48 Caribou Herd started to show a serious decline we
49 convened in Anaktuvuk to talk about State standard, why
50

0043

1 there was an ANS, amount necessary for subsistence,
2 versus how they determine those kind of things and
3 whether or not they're allowed to mix Teshekpuk and
4 Western Arctic Caribou Herd in the same grouping to
5 make a larger ANS out of the whole situation. There's
6 been a lot of things as I roll through my own rolodex
7 in my mind how we've been trying to figure including I
8 think in the late 1990s or early 2000s we advocated
9 through -- with the ADF&G and others to develop a
10 control use area north of Anaktuvuk. I think that's
11 still on the books today, but they might need to be --
12 I always think there's a better way to do something
13 when something is not -- just because it looks good on
14 paper doesn't mean it's working, you know.

15
16 Only when we -- you know, I can only
17 recall some of the other stuff like the North Slope
18 Borough Assembly when development was being proposed
19 for Alpine and its satellites, they determined that
20 there was this impact based on when you deplete a
21 resource from the area while there is a liberal
22 management scheme that's being imposed because the
23 population is such that it's -- the management is
24 liberal, meaning the caribou are not insufficient to
25 supply all the resources for the entire State. But the
26 North Slope Borough Assembly determined that you can
27 deplete those resources from an area, even its
28 abundance. And I can -- I had to help write these
29 things and recommendations to the Assembly, I know that
30 for a fact and that's how the subsistence mitigation
31 was created by the Borough for Nuiqsut was because of
32 the subsistence resources, because of pipelines being
33 prominent, oil field security starting to be more
34 prominent and the ability to hunt liberally on lands
35 that normally had subsistence resources were severely
36 restricted. And that in effect depleted the ability to
37 hunt those lands as if they were still liberal in that
38 management scheme.

39
40 So there's lots of ways to think about
41 how we -- and I think we should never stop to try to
42 find the right way even if we have to make some changes
43 and things like that because I always thought -- you
44 know, there's these things called the preponderance of
45 the evidence that exists to do some of these things is
46 important. And I still think north of Anaktuvuk that
47 because the liberal management scheme within the State
48 allowing for Fairbanks, allowing for Anchorage, Juneau,
49 everybody in their right mind to go just north of
50

0044

1 Anaktuvuk to get personal use while the area of
2 influence that's identified by a community exists,
3 which area of influence in the Borough's comprehensive
4 plan which is mandated by State statutes, it's required
5 by North Slope Borough law and they create these
6 comprehensive plans for every community. In them lies
7 some of the resources that the Federal agencies, the
8 State agencies and by the way Alaska statutes require
9 the State agencies to conform to the laws of the North
10 Slope Borough Planning/Zoning Authority. When they
11 create these things they're not figment of some
12 imagination, they're law and that should be recognized
13 by other forms of government.

14
15 So an area of influence is an area
16 immediately outside the village district, immediately
17 outside of the city limits that is used to provide
18 traditional and subsistence uses that support the
19 community. Now what do you do when you put a lot of
20 different hunters, guides, personal use in front of an
21 area of influence that is adopted by ordinance, made
22 into law by the North Slope Borough which the State is
23 required by Alaska statutes and I can get those
24 citations and plaster them up here and say hey, State,
25 you should be looking at some of these things here, to
26 prevent a hardship because the Federal law requires a
27 rural preference. When the local government says that
28 you can deplete a subsistence resource even though it's
29 liberally managed by deflection or putting other
30 competing uses in its wake, in front of the area of
31 influence needed to support a village.

32
33 Well, maybe it's time for OSM to now
34 provide a subsistence mitigation program much like the
35 North Slope Borough does for Nuiqsut. And those are
36 important things to think about. And there are many
37 ways to think about what mitigation efforts that may
38 need to be brought about because of all of these
39 conflicting uses, even in liberal management. I'm not
40 saying the current caribou climate management is
41 liberal, I think it's pretty near preservation,
42 conservation teetering right there because of the
43 population decline.

44
45 Anyway I -- you get me going on some of
46 these things and I'll go off on a tangent because I
47 really believe it's important to listen to our
48 communities. They're the ones trying to put food on
49 the table, they're trying to make clothing and they're
50

0045

1 -- they have -- you know, the demographics in our
2 communities. When a community has 50 jobs and you have
3 400, 500 people in that community, you're going to see
4 subsidizing families from those that are making a
5 living with resources to help other families, say we'll
6 provide you gas and do this and go hunt for the
7 community. That is not -- they're not just saying that
8 for the sake of saying that, they're trying to put food
9 on the table. Very important things to think about.

10

11 And our berries. Those are important,
12 important, vital resources. We don't -- we can't grow
13 corn, we can't grow other things, we can't farm, we
14 depend on nature to allow for a variety of different
15 foods. And they're -- when these things start to
16 become broken nutritional issues start to be more
17 prominent.

18

19 With that I'm going to yield to Martha.
20 I think, Martha, you raised your hand on the same
21 topic, but.....

22

23 MS. ITTA: Yes. Mr. Chair, thank you.
24 Going back to Mr. Frantz' comments on if there are any
25 studies about on the migration route and State
26 jurisdiction. I just wanted to express my experience
27 with working with the Federal, State, the Borough
28 government all together in regards to all these
29 projects, you know, that went up in Nuiqsut for oil and
30 gas industry. That has been an issue we've been
31 voicing for years and years, putting them into public
32 comment. And the one thing that we've always run into
33 was conflict. Because we do have Steven Brown and
34 Associates doing studies for Nuiqsut on our caribou
35 just for Nuiqsut, but then it should expand and there's
36 the North Slope Borough Fish and Wildlife doing studies
37 and then there's the State doing studies. So we have
38 all these agencies doing these studies on our caribou,
39 fish and all our animals for their projects that they
40 want permitted. It's all in their permits, their
41 stipulations, their requirement to do so to get done
42 before any permits are issued.

43

44 So there's a lot of conflict that we
45 run into, it's there, but I think the way it would work
46 and the way it would resolve is having one contractor
47 do the whole nine yards, village to village, on the
48 whole migration, working with the State, but also for
49 and all the villages and, you know, get the answers
50

0046

1 right there. I think that would be the best way to do
2 it instead of having conflicts with -- so many
3 conflicts with all these agencies trying to do the same
4 thing, you know, bringing all these concerns like air
5 traffic. I mean, they're trying to do studies right
6 now in Nuiqsut when they're trying to catch the caribou
7 before they rut and not disturbing them. They've been
8 voicing these concerns years and years during these
9 public processes. Like Esther said they're not being
10 heard, they're not being listened to and that -- you
11 know, that's really important to know because it can be
12 resolved, it's just nobody's stepping up and every --
13 all these agencies are pointing fingers at each other
14 and then telling us it's our job because we're the --
15 we're the knowledge. But when we try to give you guys
16 the knowledge it doesn't go anywhere, it goes the
17 opposite direction of what we say.

18
19 So that's another -- that's an issue
20 that we've always had to deal with is conflict. It can
21 be done and I've requested that time and time again
22 along with our fish because right now the Borough, the
23 State and the industry have control of all that, all
24 the studies, the report, they handle all that, not the
25 village. We give our two cents in, we give it all,
26 everything that we have to try to protect our way of
27 life and animals. Now they're slowly depleting,
28 they're going away and it really hurts us and nobody's
29 listening. Nobody's listening. And all the agencies
30 are responsible, the Borough Planning Department who
31 permits -- who does the final permitting after public
32 process, after listening to the community, but then it
33 always ends up on the other side, on the industry side,
34 the State, the Federal so they can get their money.
35 But then they leave our people out and that's a really
36 big concern. So conflict is a really big issue and
37 trying to resolve our issues within these agencies. We
38 know who they are because we have to live with them, we
39 have to deal with them. It's always good to put a face
40 to names, to agencies, because we depend on -- our
41 lives depend on those people to keep us safe and to do
42 it right.

43
44 So I just wanted to make that
45 statement, we deal with a lot of conflict. It's time
46 to start resolving our issues. There's a way, there's
47 always a way.

48
49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
50

0047

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Martha.
2 And thank you again, Esther. (In Native)

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I'm just saying thank
7 you for making us more passionate about these issues,
8 it's very important.

9
10 Carmen -- yeah, I'll go ahead and
11 recognize Carmen. We're still on Esther's report.

12
13 MS. DAGGETT: Through the Chair to
14 members Hugo, Frantz and Itta. I -- your question,
15 Brower, your very specific question about timing,
16 hunters, locations, that is certainly something we can
17 look into and there's an open period right now for
18 submitting research proposals through the Fish and Game
19 region currently. And so I can work on something like
20 that. It's helpful to have specific questions like the
21 one that you pointed out. And I think that there's
22 this overarching issue of trying to get caribou to
23 Anaktuvuk Pass before the rut, before October 10 I
24 think is the right date, correct me if I'm wrong?

25
26 (No comments)

27
28 MS. DAGGETT: Okay. And so I think
29 it's important to look at a variety of different
30 questions associated with that problem and try to
31 pursue each one. And it might take some time to try to
32 suss out exactly what is causing all the issues, but I
33 think we can take them one at a time. And so I can
34 work with you, Brower, and others that want to be
35 involved and try to get a research proposal submitted
36 to take a look at that issue.

37
38 Thank you for your words. Thank you
39 for your knowledge. And we'll be in touch.

40
41 MR. FRANTZ: Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank
44 you, Carmen. And we appreciate, you know, bending the
45 ear enough to do something more than what we've already
46 been trying to do.

47
48 With that I'm going to see if Kaktovik
49 has chimed in yet. Eddie Rexford, we're still on the
50

0048

1 Council member reports and if you're on, Eddie Rexford,
2 it's a good time to do your report.

3

4 (No comments)

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Maybe we'll get to
7 hear Eddie later on. We'll see if Atqasuk, Wanda
8 Kippi, if you're on.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we'll go to (in
13 Native), Wainwright, Billy Patkotak, are you on.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We'll
18 move on down to the Chair's report. And I appreciate
19 all the Council members providing their detail reports.
20 It's always important to hear from all the communities,
21 I think it's important for land managers, regulatory
22 bodies and sometimes as a whole to be able to see what
23 issues are within our communities and maybe the ability
24 to craft regulation proposals that might do something
25 about it.

26

27 And like everybody else, you know, my
28 house was blessed with caribou here in Utqiagvik and my
29 son was hunting and he does a lot of my hunting
30 nowadays and I say yeah, they're your boats now, son,
31 and go out there and do stuff. I'm hurting today so
32 I'm glad our younger people love to go out there and
33 use the lands in the same way we've used them for many
34 years. So and caribou were close to Barrow in late
35 July, a lot of caribou around Barrow. It was a big
36 blessing otherwise I would be hunting in Ikpikpuk and
37 trying to find a way to bring all those resources back
38 to Barrow. And my cabin is, you know, 75 and 80 miles
39 southeast of here. And it's always a arm and a leg to
40 go up that way.

41

42 And it was important to hear about all
43 of our resources. Some of my friends that live on the
44 Chip River says oh, man, we see muskox up there, but
45 the guys that had the permits issued to them weren't
46 around to get those ones or try to get one of those.
47 And I think the current -- the only hunt that I know of
48 for muskox is 155 West right now if I'm not mistaken.
49 And maybe I'll go ahead and hear from Carmen and -- at
50

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1 least the ones on the Federal regs.

2

3

4 MS. DAGGETT: Mr. Chair, thank you for
5 your question regarding muskox regulation. So the
6 Federal hunting regulations, you're correct. There's
7 going to be another State hunt opening that -- the
8 eastern side. There's a -- Jason Caikoski's going to
9 talk about it because it's kind of his proposal, but
10 there's some information on the table and I believe in
11 your packets about a tier two hunt that is opening east
12 of 153 longitude so it includes Nuiqsut and west of the
13 Haul Road. So that's kind of the east/west boundaries
14 for your reference. And then the State tier two hunt
15 is going to be opening as well. The application period
16 starts November 1 for that tier two hunt for the State
17 entity to your -- the Federal proposal that went
18 through. So I think they kept the 156 boundary though
19 unfortunately when they put it into regulation so
20 that's going to be a little confusing until we can get
21 that amended. But so there is going to be technically
22 three different hunts on the books for muskox in 26A
23 that will be huntable next fall. Applicable this fall
24 for the tier two hunt for the State side just so that
25 we're all on the same page.

25

26

Thank you.

27

28

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CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Carmen.
We normally just think about the Federal regs because
that's where I -- I'm on Federal land. In any event,
Carmen, thank you for that update.

And I'm just happy to hear all of the
reports from all of the Council members on the areas.

And I didn't get to go fall fishing
this year. I did last year and that was -- even though
it was very difficult and I know there's some concerns
about late freeze up and issues around rivers and
things like that that may be -- should be a study in my
view about -- I don't want to say global climate
change, but I think there are enough changes to where
our catch is -- I would normally keep my catch in a
warehouse at my camp and for many years, it seems like
maybe at least eight years my catch would freeze, thaw,
freeze, thaw. And a big portion of them would become
rancid, they would spoil. It's not they're not edible
at that point and there are certain, you know, elders
that I know that love to eat (in Native) and could be

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1 made into those types of fish which is very green and
2 you would have to close your nose and eat it.

3

4 (Laughter)

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: But my mom loved it.
7 My mom loved to eat (in Native) fish. And to some
8 degree I really like that stuff too. But it's
9 important to be able to preserve your catch and keep it
10 fresh which is generally how the general public likes
11 it especially when you're fishing for -- in the prime
12 with the eggs in them, the whitefish. And there's only
13 a certain period of time and more often now the river
14 where you catch these are full of slush, you can't put
15 your net in them and you're going to other tributaries
16 and that's what I did last year. The main Ikpikpuk
17 Chip flowing, you try to put a net in that you're going
18 to lose your net in 15 minutes. Then I go to the -- if
19 the river's high enough I go to a tributary and fish
20 that and get as much there and it's more calm and
21 you're able to put nets under the ice. And last year I
22 think all of my catch went to various different
23 villages from Anaktuvuk to Point Lay and to Atqasuk,
24 they were distributed widely on the Slope.

25

26 And then I think a very important thing
27 about the Inuit culture is the sharing. And, you know,
28 we're -- if you were not here in I think it was 2018
29 had icy sea up here. And I always like to look at the
30 Inuit culture because of it's population. In 2018
31 Greenland, Alaska, Canada and Russian Inuit population
32 all together was 169,000 total Inuit compared to other
33 demographics you have millions and millions of
34 caucasians. millions of, you know, African Americans
35 and all that. And I would think that we would be among
36 the minorities of the minorities of the minorities in
37 that case. So we're almost an extinct people, but we
38 are here only because we share. Our food went to
39 elders, our food went to those that couldn't get it and
40 we shared our resources. And our whaling culture is
41 the biggest sharing program ever devised. I encourage
42 all of the OSM, ADF&G, Fish and Wildlife Service, look
43 at the culture of its massive sharing program, you will
44 start to understand why we need our food. If we didn't
45 do none of these things and everybody was out for
46 themselves we'd only probably be 3,000 people. We have
47 to take care of each other. That's an important --
48 it's I think one of the most important observations of
49 the Inuit culture is just we had to share by necessity,
50

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1 we couldn't leave no one behind. Even though I'm a
2 whaling captain on (in Native) day I become the same as
3 everybody else, I get a share just like everybody else,
4 the same amount, we become equal on that day.

5

6 Well, that's my report because I -- I'm
7 going to go into a lot more lecturing if I just keep
8 rambling on that. If there aren't any questions on the
9 Chair's report or any other questions on any of the
10 other reports that have been given forever hold your
11 peace or get on the mic right now.

12

13 So Brower Frantz.

14

15 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah, I forgot one little
16 addition to my report there. Shorebirds, the (in
17 Native) and just the abundance of -- well, used to be
18 abundance, there used to be an abundance of shorebirds
19 that we would see flocking around the beaches, we don't
20 see that anymore, not at all. I mean, we might see a
21 couple, but there used to be thousands and thousands of
22 the little sandpipers and (in Native), but we don't see
23 that anymore. I just wanted to add that. So there I
24 knew I was missing something.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Mr.
29 Frantz. That's an important observation as some of
30 those types are resources.

31

32 Before I go to you, Earl, just on that
33 (in Native), my older brothers and their friends would
34 always go (in Native) shooting station, they'd come
35 home with -- and back in our day we had to walk over
36 there and we didn't always have vehicles to go there,
37 they'd come home with rope tied with their 10 ducks on
38 the front and 10 ducks in the back and they're coming
39 home with ducks. And then me and my brother like Lewis
40 and Bael because we were littler and we couldn't shoot
41 the shotgun yet, we'd use slingshots. And also (in
42 Native). If -- our folks showed how to make a little
43 trap and you'd lay down in the sand when the -- they
44 come in your trap you pull it and you get them, (in
45 Native). And we would do those and I would go home
46 like the big boys with a little string with about 13
47 little (in Native) in the front, 13 little (in Native)
48 on the other side, maybe 10 years old, eight years old
49 and I'd say, mom, can you make me soup. And she would

50

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1 make the best (in Native) sandpiper soups ever, they
2 were fantastic. Same thing with the squirrels. I grew
3 up eating squirrels in Ikpikpuk all the time. They're
4 fantastic. If you've never had squirrel it's --
5 they're fantastic. All these little critters, we eat
6 them too. And then like Mr. Frantz expressed our beach
7 in the fall would be millions, there's so many you just
8 make a little (in Native), you don't even need to throw
9 rocks, you just -- oh, you've got five of them. Yeah.
10 And you would take them home all the time. We can't do
11 those anymore, we don't see that kind of abundance in
12 those types of little shorebirds up here.

13

14 Anyway thank you. Earl.

15

16 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah. On monitoring.
17 When I went to a meeting one time at Arctic Village in
18 '96 for border -- borderline meeting about caribous.
19 Anyway they brought up this monitor that in caribou go
20 all the way up to Fort Pearson area, go all the way to
21 Kavik, come back. Now that we have Facebook I was
22 wondering if we could find a way to have -- probably
23 have to go to State to get like, you know the
24 monitoring caribous, you know, like that they usually
25 have -- used to have GPS about western migration. They
26 used to use that for, you know, the Maniilaq area.
27 When we were on their group that's when I remember that
28 hunter, now that we have Facebook I was wondering if
29 they could put it on Facebook about, you know, that
30 when these caribou migrate that way we would like know
31 where they're at, you know, coming to Anaktuvuk or
32 something instead of just sitting there day dreaming
33 about when or where, you know. Something might be
34 helpful, but I was just wondering about that, you know.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, thank you,
37 Earl. And I'm not the authority on something like that
38 and it might be an issue maybe with the caribou
39 management if you put it on Facebook to see. I think
40 you're talking about all the animation related to
41 caribou collaring and things like that?

42

43 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And I think it's
46 important to bring it here.....

47

48 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah.

49

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: and put it up on
2 the screen to see, you know, what the historical and
3 the current trends of migration issues, you can see
4 them practically real time from a certain month to a
5 certain date and, but putting it out in the public
6 arena like that, it'll serve you, but it's going to
7 serve the guides, but it's going to serve Fairbanks,
8 Anchorage and Juneau as well to say oh, they're right
9 here, let's all go here. I mean, there's some certain
10 maybe ethical issues around that itself and maybe
11 Carmen was raising her hand a little bit about what
12 issues would develop out of something like that.

13
14 But I think it's important that we
15 request that type of animation so Nuiqsut and Anaktuvuk
16 can get a better understanding of what certain
17 migration paths exist because they're not all the same,
18 they're not all the same herd, there's a distinct
19 migration path of the Western Arctic Herd, the biggest
20 herd, out of (in Native) and it's important to
21 recognize the differences about migrations of different
22 herds. And Central Arctic Herd is -- has a different,
23 Porcupine has a different, Teshekpuk, had a very
24 different movement and then Western Arctic Herd has
25 that historical major movement. And they're very
26 important to understand those, it can help you when you
27 understand because they're -- we can't group all of
28 those different herds as one as they have a very
29 distinct movement pattern and it's good to recognize
30 that. And I think the biologist has shown us. And I
31 think we should request that on our next meeting maybe,
32 that animation should come back and continue to educate
33 the Council on those kind of movements.

34
35 Carmen.

36
37 MS. DAGGETT: Through the Chair to
38 member Williams. So Mr. Chair's comments about
39 availability of that information in a public forum like
40 Facebook, he's absolutely right that that availability
41 would be widespread in that venue. And I believe at
42 one point in the history of collecting that collar data
43 that at some point it was more widely available and
44 there was a lot of issues with it and a lot of
45 complaints from local residents about the availability
46 of that information to everyone. And so I think that
47 has been done and I think it is not being done that way
48 now because of the results of that history. So I think
49 there are definitely ways to share that information
50

0054

1 with this group and I'm happy to work with you on that,
2 but, you know, public forum there are a lot of
3 considerations to be made and Gordon brought up most of
4 those really good points so I'm not going to reiterate
5 them. So I'm just going to leave it at that.

6

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, that completes
10 my own report. And if there aren't any other questions
11 and I always appreciate, you know, hearing from others.
12 If there aren't any further questions on the reports,
13 item 7, we'll go to item 8, service awards. And we'll
14 start with -- let's see, Wanda is.....

15

16 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

19

20 MS. WESSELS: I'm sorry. For the
21 record Katya Wessels. I need to address one issue
22 first before we move to awards. And, you know, I say
23 thank you for the transcripts that we have. So while
24 you were presenting your community reports to the
25 Council members I reviewed the transcript from the last
26 meeting. And it appears that, member Itta, you did not
27 give a report last time because you were dealing with a
28 lot of issues in your community at that time with the
29 gas leak.

30

31 MS. ITTA: Oh, I do remember.

32

33 MS. WESSELS: And you were like in and
34 out of the meeting. So somehow it happened that you
35 did not present a report. So I would like to ask this
36 Council to rescind your motion on adopting the minutes
37 with the added. If you rescind that motion then you
38 can have another motion just to adopt the minutes the
39 way they are.

40

41 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

44

45 MS. ITTA: Yeah, I do recall that the
46 last meeting I had a family emergency and I had to step
47 out of the meeting.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I remember now.

50

0055

1 MS. ITTA: Now I recall. Yeah, so I
2 had to step out of the meeting and I did not do my
3 report.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And thank you.
6

7 MS. WESSELS: You said your community
8 was on high alert because of the gas leak.....

9
10 MS. ITTA: Yeah.
11

12 MS. WESSELS:and you needed to
13 evacuate.
14

15 MS. ITTA: Yeah. Yes.
16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, having said
18 that on item 6, review and approve previous minutes for
19 that March 8 and 9. And let me see how we clarify
20 that. Do we just state for the record that there has
21 been a clarifying statement regarding the minutes
22 regarding an emergency situation that Martha had to
23 deal with and because we adopted the minutes with the
24 exception of the report for Nuiqsut under Martha.
25

26 MS. WESSELS: You just do a motion to
27 rescind so that means that will rescind your previous
28 motion, it will be null.....
29

30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh.
31

32 MS. WESSELS:and then have
33 another motion to adopt the minutes the way they're
34 written.
35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.
37

38 MS. WESSELS: So you just need to have
39 two motions, motion to rescind and motion to adopt the
40 minute.
41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Well,
43 what's the wish of the Council on item 6 on the meeting
44 minutes now that we've got some clarifying statements
45 that they were.....
46

47 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair, I make a motion
48 to rescind the approval of the meeting minutes.
49
50

0056

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
2 the floor to rescind the March 8 and 9, 2022 with the
3 exception of a Nuiqsut report. There's a motion on the
4 floor to rescind that -- those minutes.

5
6 MR. FRANTZ: Seconded.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded by
9 Brower Frantz. Any discussion.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 MR. OOMITTUK:

14
15 MS. HUGO: Question.

16
17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
18 called for. All those in favor of rescinding the
19 approval of March 8 and 9 with the exception of
20 Nuiqsut's report signify by saying aye.

21
22 IN UNISON: Aye.

23
24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Earl, are you going
25 to say aye.

26
27 MR. WILLIAMS: Aye.

28
29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Steve, are you still
30 on.

31
32 (No comments)

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Steve, are you still
35 on.

36
37 (No comments)

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. All those
40 opposed say nay.

41
42 (No opposing votes)

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, the
45 meeting minutes for March 8 and 9 with the exception of
46 Nuiqsut's report on 2022 have been rescinded. We now
47 need to hear a motion that would accept the minutes as
48 is.

49
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0057

1 MR. FRANTZ: Mr. Chair, I'd like to
2 make a motion to accept the minutes as they're written.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
5 the floor to adopt the March 8 through 9 minutes, 2022.
6 Motion by Brower Frantz of Utqiagvik.

7

8 MS. HUGO: Second.

9

10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Seconded by Esther of
11 Anaktuvuk. Any discussion.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 MS. ITTA: Question.

16

17 MR. OOMITTUK: Question called for.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
20 called for. All those in favor of approving the
21 minutes for March 8 and 9, 2022 as written signify by
22 saying aye.

23

24 IN UNISON: Aye.

25

26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
27 nay.

28

29 (No opposing votes)

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, the
32 ayes have it. The minutes of March 8 and 9, 2022 have
33 been adopted.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We'll now go down to
40 item 8, service awards. First on the list is Wanda
41 Kippi. Wanda, are you on.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we'll acknowledge
46 Wanda when she joins and we'll go down to Steve
47 Oomittuk. Steve, are you on.

48

49 MR. OOMITTUK: Yes.

50

0058

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And we are -- we are
2 recognizing your service, you've been with the Board
3 for five years, the Regional Subsistence Advisory
4 Council now for five years with a five year service
5 award. And I think it's important that as our Council
6 members participate it is a volunteer service to -- and
7 I think it's a honorable service to look at our needs
8 in our communities in terms of fish and wildlife, the
9 regulatory climate that we exist in and recommend
10 changes for the betterment of subsistence in our --
11 within the North Slope region and our communities.

12

13 And really appreciate you, Steve
14 Oomittuk, and I'm going to ask to give you a few
15 minutes and then I'm going to have Madame Coordinator,
16 Leigh, help me with the service award. So I'm going to
17 give you the floor for a few minutes there, Steve.
18 You're receiving a five year service award for region
19 10 Regional Subsistence Advisory Council.

20

21 Steve.

22

23 MR. OOMITTUK: Well, thank you very
24 much. I really appreciate it. I've, you know, been a
25 subsistence all my life and, you know, just, you know,
26 because people come to me when they have concerns and
27 it's good to be on this Subsistence Advisory Council
28 and, you know, bring out the concerns that we have.
29 It's a way of life that, you know, we grew up with and
30 want to ensure that continues to the next generation
31 and any concerns that are out there or problems we see,
32 you know, just living our way of life. And people up
33 north, you know, we've seen a lot of changes throughout
34 times, but, you know, I really appreciate being on this
35 Subsistence Advisory Council.

36

37 And I thank you, thank you very much
38 for this appreciation. (In Native)

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, Steve.
41 Thank you very much. Maybe I'll extend to any of the
42 other Council members if they wanted to add anything
43 for Steve's service before I had it over to Leigh.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: With that, Leigh.

48

49 MS. ITTA: Yes.....

50

0059

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

2

3 MS. ITTA:Mr. Chair. I'd just
4 like to thank Steve for his service for his community,
5 learned a lot from him, learning the differences within
6 our villages. Good to work with you, Steve, and
7 congratulations on your five year award.

8

9 MR. OOMITTUK: (In Native). Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Anybody
12 else before we hand it over to the coordinator.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: With that, Leigh.

17

18 MS. HONIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
19 yes, we'd like to recognize you for your five years of
20 service to the Council. Being part of this Council is
21 an important role for -- to advocate for subsistence
22 hunting, trapping and fishing issues on Federal public
23 lands. Your knowledge about the resources and
24 subsistence uses make you an invaluable member to the
25 Council and the work you do is a vital link between
26 Federal policy and the impact on local Federally-
27 qualified subsistence users from your region. And we
28 want to thank you and show out utmost most appreciation
29 for the time you've served on the Council and your
30 continuation of serving on the Council.

31

32 And we do have a framed certificate for
33 you, Mr. Oomittuk, that I will send your way. And so
34 once again thank you for volunteering your time on this
35 Council, your knowledge is a valuable resource.

36

37 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Leigh.
40 All right. Congratulations, Steve. And it's always a
41 pleasure working with you, I've learned a lot. I --
42 I'm always listening to you and your talks about the
43 oceans, the land, the fish and the needs of the
44 community. And you put your community ahead all the
45 time.

46

47 Thank you so much.

48

49 With that Wanda is not online right now

50

0060

1 and once we acknowledge Wanda I think it might be more
2 appropriate when she's present to acknowledge her five
3 year service award as well.

4

5 All right. With that this is still --
6 we'll go down to item 9, public and tribal comments on
7 non-agenda items will be available each morning. So if
8 there are any tribal comments and public comments that
9 are not related to any item we welcome those and kind
10 of miss Roy Nageak would be one of those that would
11 come in on non-agenda items and speak on his behalf.

12

13 MS. HUGO: Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Esther.

16

17 MS. HUGO: (Indiscernible - away from
18 microphone).....

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. With that, if
21 there are no public and tribal comments on non-agenda
22 items we'll go to item A which is the -- is it the
23 fisheries proposals and closure review and that would
24 be Hannah Voorhees of OSM.

25

26 You have the floor, Hannah.

27

28 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
29 members of the Council. For your consideration today I
30 have one proposal and three closure reviews pertaining
31 to small systems, small fisheries in Western Interior
32 and Eastern Interior regions. These are crossover
33 proposals for you and you may act to make a
34 recommendation or you may act to defer to the home
35 regions as you wish.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So you'll bring those
38 proposals, each one, and we can either defer them to
39 that region or we could support them, that kind of
40 thing?

41

42 DR. VOORHEES: That's correct.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

45

46 DR. VOORHEES: For the record my name
47 is Hannah Voorhees, I'm an anthropologist with OSM. I
48 will now present Fisheries Proposal 23-01 which can be
49 found on page 33 of your Council book. I would like to

50

0061

1 note also that Cory Graham, Fisheries Biologist for OSM
2 is also on the line.

3

4 Proposal FP23-01 was submitted by the
5 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council and requests
6 the Federal Subsistence Board rescind the closure to
7 the harvest of non-salmon fish in the Jim River
8 drainage by Federally-qualified subsistence users and
9 modify regulations to allow rod and reel gear only and
10 an Arctic grayling harvest and possession limit of 10
11 per day which is five more than the default limit.

12

13 Jim River drainage is located in the
14 northern portion of the Western Interior region. This
15 proposal is coming before your Council because
16 residents of the Yukon northern area which includes the
17 North Slope have a customary and traditional use
18 determination for freshwater species other than salmon
19 in the Yukon River drainage.

20

21 The proponent for this proposal states
22 that the proposal would continue subsistence uses by
23 allowing harvest of non-salmon fish by Federally-
24 qualified subsistence users in an area that is
25 currently closed. The Council believes there is
26 verifiable traditional use of non-salmon fish in this
27 drainage and a limited harvest by rod and reel should
28 be allowed. The proponent adds that if subsistence
29 users are going to travel for Arctic grayling the
30 harvest limit should be increased to justify time and
31 expense. Allowing for a reasonable harvest of Arctic
32 grayling would reestablish a subsistence priority use
33 of fish. Limiting harvest to rod and reel gear only
34 would ensure continued viability of fish in the area.

35

36 While the Council also believes there
37 is verifiable traditional use of salmon in this
38 drainage it does not believe the salmon runs can
39 support any harvest at this time and the closure should
40 be rescinded for non-salmon fish only.

41

42 In terms of a brief regulatory history
43 the Jim River drainage is closed to subsistence fishing
44 under both Federal and State regulation, however sport
45 fishing is allowed under State regulation. The
46 Federal closure was reviewed during the 2021 to 2023
47 fisheries regulatory cycle and at that time the Western
48 Interior Council recommended eliminating the closure to
49 the harvest of all fish and modifying regulations to
50

1 allow rod and reel only as well as an Arctic grayling
2 harvest and possession limit of 10 per day. However
3 during the Board's fisheries regulatory meeting the
4 Board determined that any action beyond simply
5 eliminating or maintaining the closure would not allow
6 appropriate notice and opportunity for public comment.
7 Therefore the Board voted to maintain the closure with
8 the expectation that a proposal would be submitted by
9 the Council to eliminate the closure and that's the
10 proposal that's coming before you today.

11
12 In terms of where geographically we're
13 focusing, approximately three miles of Jim River exists
14 within the Kanuti Refuge boundaries managed by the U.S.
15 Fish and Wildlife Service. The remainder of the Jim
16 River drainage is in general domain lands managed by
17 BLM. I believe it falls entirely within unit 24.

18
19 In terms of biological background
20 chinook, chum and coho salmon spawn and rear in the Jim
21 River, but aerial surveys indicate low numbers in the
22 drainage. The predominant non-salmon fishes in the
23 drainage include Arctic grayling, burbot, humpback and
24 round whitefish, longnose sucker and northern pike.
25 Stock assessments of Arctic grayling were conducted in
26 1995 and 1997 in a 13 mile stretch of Jim River near
27 the Dalton Highway. In 1995 there was an estimated
28 density of approximately 387 fish per mile and in 1997
29 that density was 914 fish per mile.

30
31 Next I'll cover cultural knowledge and
32 traditional practices by communities using the closure
33 area. And please note that this is the same
34 information that will also apply to the next two
35 closure reviews so I'll not -- I won't repeat it there.

36
37
38 Wiseman and Coldfoot are the
39 communities most likely to subsistence fish in this
40 area if the closure is rescinded due to their proximity
41 to the drainage. Wiseman and Coldfoot are very small
42 communities located on the Dalton Highway. ADF&G
43 Division of Subsistence conducted its only subsistence
44 survey of the two communities in the 2011 calendar
45 year. During that survey year all Wiseman households
46 used fish although in small quantities. Four of the
47 five households fish for non-salmon species resulting
48 in an estimated 13 pounds of non-salmon fish per person
49 or 5 percent of Wiseman's total wild food harvest in
50

0063

1 waste -- I mean, in weight. Excuse me. The three most
2 significant non-salmon harvest in terms of weights were
3 Arctic grayling, longnose sucker and burbot. For
4 Coldfoot no residents of the community fish for either
5 salmon or non-salmon fish and no use of non-salmon fish
6 was documented for Coldfoot during the study period.

7
8 Subsistence fishing is prohibited in
9 the Jim River under State and Federal regulations so
10 there's no legal subsistence harvest in the system.
11 Harvest is allowed under State sport fishing
12 regulation. Arctic grayling make up the majority of
13 sport fish harvest along the Dalton Highway corridor.
14 During the period 2019 to 2018 an average of 122 Arctic
15 grayling were harvested from the Jim River.

16
17 If proposal FP23-01 is adopted non-
18 salmon fish could be taken by rod and reel only.
19 Subsistence rod and reel harvest would match State
20 sport fishing harvest and possession limits except for
21 Arctic grayling which under this proposal would have a
22 harvest and possession limit of 10 per day. The
23 current sport fish harvest and possession limit is five
24 per day for Arctic grayling. Subsistence fishing for
25 salmon would remain closed under Federal regulations in
26 the Jim River.

27
28 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
29 support FP23-01. If the system is opened to rod and
30 reel only State sport fish harvest and possession
31 limits would apply. Increasing harvest and possession
32 limits of Arctic grayling would provide a subsistence
33 priority for Federally-qualified subsistence users.
34 This proposal would increase harvest opportunity for
35 Federally-qualified subsistence users and provide a
36 subsistence priority as mandated by ANILCA.
37 Maintaining the closure to salmon will protect small
38 populations within the drainage.

39
40 Thank you. That concludes my
41 presentation. And I'm available for any questions.

42
43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank
44 you. Looking at the map, you know, I -- thank you,
45 Brower. Got to remember to press the button. Just
46 looking at the map it's, you know, way outside of our
47 region, just looks like south of Wiseman and Coldfoot
48 in the Jim River. And was there any particular reason
49 that it would grace our Council here, was there a C&T
50

0064

1 portion of that that lies within region 10 on that
2 river?

3

4 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 Yes, that's correct. So residents of the Yukon
6 northern area which includes North Slope, have a
7 customary and traditional use determination for
8 freshwater fish in a Yukon River drainage.

9

10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. And that
11 would be the reason why it's here.

12

13 DR. VOORHEES: Correct.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. I might want
16 to go fish there if I'm going that way. I.....

17

18 MS. ITTA: Me too.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER:look at it, some
21 of it has whitefish and grayling and I love whitefish.
22 Was there any questions.

23

24 MS. ITTA: Yeah, I do have a question,
25 Mr. Chair.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

28

29 MS. ITTA: So reading and hearing this
30 proposal so right now they're not allowed fishing on
31 the Dalton to my understanding. My community always
32 wondered if we can like pull over and go fishing in
33 those areas, but we never really tried because we
34 didn't know if we were allowed to. So that's a, you
35 know, question that I have because we'd love to go. We
36 travel that road all the time, all year round. So that
37 would be really good for us to be able to do.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Martha.
40 And C&T, customary and traditional use, in these areas
41 and we have that seems to tell me that at some point
42 some of our ancestors were fishing over there is why we
43 have C&T in that area or by trade or some other.

44

45 MS. ITTA: Oh, I forgot one question.
46 I know we have to get like fishing permits and stuff,
47 for our area if we get our fishing permit in our
48 village would -- I mean, if this opens would that be
49 good to use for that -- those areas?

50

0065

1 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hannah.

4

5 DR. VOORHEES: First I just wanted to
6 note that currently there is sport fishing opportunity
7 although specific regulation apply to the Dalton
8 corridor and someone on the State side could speak more
9 to that, but is anyone on who would like to address
10 Martha Itta's question about what permitting she would
11 need to use this system?

12

13 MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, who am I
16 speaking with?

17

18 MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chair, this is Cory
19 Graham with OSM. There would be.....

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

22

23 MR. GRAHAM:there would be no
24 permit required to subsistence fish if you're a
25 Federally-qualified subsistence user.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. Very
28 good. So we'll go through the protocol and let me know
29 if I'm -- I think we have to go through the protocol.

30

31 MR. WILLIAMS:

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Earl.

34

35 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, Mr. Chair. Earl
36 Williams, Anaktuvuk. I've been getting a lot of
37 messages from Jack Reakoff, you know, and I said
38 instead of bugging me about some kind of paperwork he's
39 putting up, I don't know, he's from Wiseman or
40 something, but he's been sending me a lot of messages
41 about some fish and game stuff. And I don't know what
42 the procedure is, but I told him he should talk to the
43 North Slope RAC, you know, and get a better
44 understanding because, you know, I just want to jump to
45 the vote and say, you know, this and that to him
46 because I don't know what side he's on, you know. And
47 that was kind of a conflict with me there for a while.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, Earl, this is

50

0066

1 Gordon. I talk to Jack Reakoff here and there.....

2 MR. WILLIAMS: Uh-huh.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER:to me he may
5 have what -- you know, information that, you know, we
6 might have C&T in the area and we should be of concern
7 for some of his concerns because he's more
8 knowledgeable in that area, he lives in that Wiseman
9 area right there. And if we have C&T and we align
10 ourselves with our neighboring Western Interior Council
11 like what he's the Chair of, I think it's Western or
12 Eastern, one of those, and he's -- I think he sometimes
13 looks for consistency in our -- in the concerns related
14 to those uses over there. So and Anaktuvuk is very
15 close on that side so his concerns might -- should be
16 reflecting your concerns. And I think that's to me
17 what he's trying to gain is, you know, we should work
18 together, if there's a sheep problem here that you are
19 available and C&T to work together with Jack Reakoff in
20 that area because he may have better firsthand
21 knowledge that hey, they're hunting too much over
22 there, they're going to kill off all the sheep or
23 something. And I think he's observing things like that
24 that that's how come we supported the sheep proposal to
25 restrict the sheep on that area by the Dalton right
26 there.

27

28 I hope that helps.

29

30 MR. WILLIAM: No, the reason why I
31 brought this up is I don't want to jump a boundary here
32 is what I'm saying. It's -- but I speak to him in
33 person around Fairbanks when I run into him and he
34 brings up a lot of issues up about, you know, what
35 you're saying. I understand what you mean, but, you
36 know, I just don't want to jump the gun and say, you
37 know, they might say I'm jumping the boundary line and
38 that I'm speaking on the other side, you know, I don't
39 want that imposed on me. So I'm just making a better
40 understanding that I told Jack that he should speak
41 with the North Borough Game -- Fish and Game, you know,
42 that way you could better consult because, you know,
43 I'm not -- I'm not here to, you know, stir up the pot
44 or whatever they call it, stirring up the pot or
45 nothing, but what I'm saying is just that if there's
46 some proposal he should bring it up to you all. That's
47 what I'm just saying, you know, that because I don't
48 want to be in -- in between person there.

49

50

0067

1 Thank you.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Peter.
5 Those are good things and generally my experience is I
6 learn -- I learn from Jack too and those are important
7 things.

8

9 With that we'll go to report on Board
10 consultation. Any tribal representatives that want to
11 speak on behalf of FP -- Fisheries Proposal 23-01. did
12 we get any tribes on there?

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Going down, any
17 consultation with ANCSA corporations on FP23-01?

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Normally you could
22 say, you know, we didn't get any of those yet or
23 something like that.

24

25 Hannah.

26

27 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
28 Cory can correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe there
29 were no comments submitted during consultations with
30 tribes or ANCSA corporation on this proposal or the
31 next three closure reviews.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And item 3, agency
34 comments. ADF&G comments.

35

36 MR. SCANLON: Mr. Chair, members of the
37 Board, this is Brendan Scanlon, North Slope/Northwest
38 Area Biologist. The Fishery Biologist for the Yukon
39 Management Area, Lisa Stuby, is on the line and
40 prepared to take any questions so I'll defer to her.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Brendan.
45 Any Federal comments.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any tribal comments.

50

0068

1 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead, Earl.

4

5 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, when I was at the
6 last tribal meeting I asked -- they were asking about
7 how can we get tribal back involved into subsistence,
8 you know, like we need to have a member representative
9 from the tribe, you know, just like around the hometown
10 area they have a tribal member to be on the Board and
11 stuff like that. I was just wondering if they -- or is
12 it just separate, you know, like -- you know, like
13 rural and tribe. They was asking a question about
14 that.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I'm a little
17 confused here maybe, Peter. Is it on the makeup of
18 this Council, like to have a tribal member?

19

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm a tribal --
21 I'm a member of my tribal village council, but I'm --
22 as a member anyway what I'm saying is that they were
23 asking if they're just kind of -- you know, they need
24 to have a tribe member at the Borough and stuff, you
25 know. I was wondering if that's feasible, you know,
26 or.....

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Peter. I
29 think what we're kind of looking for right now is for
30 what the Staff analysis had talked about under
31 Fisheries Proposal 23-01, to rescind the Jim River non-
32 salmon closure and institute grayling -- Arctic
33 grayling harvest limits. And there's just a list of
34 protocol that we go through before we weigh in. So I'm
35 just looking for the agency comments that may include
36 ADF&G, Federal and tribal. So if you're representing
37 the tribe you could -- and you're a tribal member have
38 at it. You could -- if you're the president of (in
39 Native) or something like that or a tribal member
40 you're able to comment on this proposal because we have
41 C&T on the Jim River.

42

43 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

46

47 MR. WILLIAMS: Anyway, you know, why I
48 said that is because I told Miles on the North Slope
49 Borough Subsistence, you know, it don't hurt to ask, he
50

0069

1 just told me just bring it up and just, you know, I
2 just wanted to find out more to clarify this.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. And I
7 think that might be something that OSM maybe write down
8 and -- about his comments about tribal representatives
9 on the Board. You know, I'm a tribe member, Native
10 Village of Barrow tribe member. So I could speak on
11 tribal behalf. In fact, I'm going to start working for
12 the tribe in two weeks. So in other event.

13

14 With that we'll go to Advisory Group
15 comments, other Regional Advisory Councils.

16

17 DR. VOORHEES: For the record this is
18 Hannah Voorhees with OSM. Eastern Interior Regional
19 Advisory Council did act on this proposal during their
20 October 5th to 6th meeting and were in support. The
21 Council noted that there's no biological concern
22 related to this proposal and it will benefit the
23 subsistence needs of people in the area.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Hannah.
28 Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I don't see any
33 comments from the Fish and Game Advisory Committees,
34 could be the North Slope Borough, Fish and Game
35 Advisory or could be ADF&G or other.

36

37 Go ahead there, Carmen.

38

39 MS. DAGGETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
40 don't believe that this was discussed during the most
41 recent meeting and I don't think they've met to discuss
42 it yet. So I don't think it's been talked about with
43 the North Slope Advisory Committee.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Carmen.
46 Subsistence Resource Commissions.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0070

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, summary
2 of written public comments.

3

4 DR. VOORHEES: For the record Hannah
5 Voorhees, OSM. There were no written public comments
6 on this proposal.

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Hannah.
9 Public testimony, anybody want to give any public
10 testimony on the Fishery Proposal 23-01 to rescind the
11 Jim River non-salmon closure and institute Arctic
12 grayling harvest limits. Public testimony is open.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Hearing
17 none, Regional Council recommendation. And we would
18 need a motion to adopt.

19

20 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. If I
21 may interject briefly. The options -- oh, I'm sorry.
22 That's correct. We'll be moving on to closure reviews
23 after this and this was originally a closure review,
24 but as it's written yes, that's correct. My apologies.

25

26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's the wish of
27 the Council.

28

29 MR. OOMITTUK: So moved, Mr. Chair.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There is a motion on
32 the floor from Steve Oomittuk to adopt Fishery Proposal
33 23-01, rescinding Jim River non-salmon closure,
34 institute Arctic grayling harvest limitation. And
35 there's some language underneath when we make a motion
36 to discuss justification. And this is the
37 recommendation consistent with established fish and
38 wildlife management principles, is the recommendation
39 supported by substantial evidence such as biological
40 and traditional ecological knowledge, will the
41 recommendation be beneficial or detrimental to
42 subsistence needs and uses. If a closure is involved
43 is the closure necessary for conservation of healthy
44 fish and wildlife populations or is closure necessary
45 to ensure continued subsistence uses. Discuss what
46 other relevant factors are mentioned in OSM Staff
47 analysis.

48

49 I think there's a motion on the floor

50

0071

1 to adopt.

2

3 Yeah, go ahead.

4

5 REPORTER: Test, test. Test, test.
6 Can everybody hear?

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I could hear, but I'm
9 present.

10

11 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I'm sorry. This is
12 Katya. I just would like to ask all the participants
13 when they talk to try to speak louder because
14 participants on the phone cannot hear you. I know
15 that's not in the nature of everyone to speak louder,
16 but please try.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you again. And
21 me going deaf I always need to speak loud anyway.

22

23 And so I think it's in the best
24 interest because this is not involving a closure, it is
25 involving to rescind the Jim River non-salmon closure
26 to institute grayling, it's to opening the Jim River,
27 the ability to subsist on grayling species over there.
28 So it's the recommendation will be beneficial to
29 subsistence needs and uses according to the
30 justification.

31

32 So there's a motion to adopt Fishery
33 Proposal 23-01 which we have C&T in the area for.

34

35 MR. FRANTZ: Second.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded by
38 Brower Frantz. Any discussion.

39

40 MS. HUGO: Question

41

42 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair, call for
43 question.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
46 called for. All those in favor of adopting Fishery
47 Proposal 23-01 to rescind the Jim River non-salmon
48 closure and institute Arctic grayling harvest limit
49 signify saying aye.

50

0072

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
4 nay.

5

6 (No opposing votes)

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, the
9 ayes have it to rescind the closure and to institute
10 the Arctic grayling harvest limit on the Jim River.

11

12 Hannah, are there any other proposals.

13

14 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 Hannah Voorhees, OSM, for the record. Next for your
16 consideration is FCR23-02. This can be found on page
17 52 of your meeting book.

18

19 FCR23-02 is a standard review of a
20 Federal subsistence fishery closure to the harvest of
21 all fish in the Kanuti River drainage. It is the
22 Board's policy that Federal public lands and waters
23 should be reopened when closures are no longer
24 necessary. The purpose of this closure review is to
25 determine if the closure is still warranted.

26

27 The closure area which is located in
28 the Western Interior region crosses the Dalton Highway
29 and is located on general domain land managed by the
30 Bureau of Land Management. Again this closure review
31 is coming before you because residents of the Yukon
32 northern area which includes the North Slope have C&T
33 for fish other than salmon in the Yukon River drainage.
34 And again you have the option to make a recommendation
35 or defer. I do want to note that on the next three
36 closure reviews the options would be retain status quo,
37 rescind or modify the closure or defer.

38

39 Under Federal regulations subsistence
40 harvest of all fish is prohibited in the Kanuti River
41 closure area. The Federal Subsistence Board adopted
42 this closure from State regulations at the beginning of
43 the Federal program and it has not been reviewed or
44 modified since. This is the same situation with the
45 next two closure reviews as well. Under State
46 regulations the Kanuti River is also closed to
47 subsistence fishing, but sport fishing is allowed under
48 State regulations. According to local knowledge and
49 the Anadromous Waters Catalog chinook and summer chum
50

0073

1 salmon are present in the Kanuti River downstream of
2 the closure area. However aerial surveys indicate few
3 salmon inhabit the Kanuti River including the closure
4 area. Non-salmon fish species such as Arctic grayling,
5 burbot, round whitefish, northern pike and longnose
6 sucker have been observed in the Kanuti River, but
7 information on them in the closure area is limited.

8
9 Wiseman and Coldfoot are the
10 communities most likely to subsistence fish in the area
11 if the closure is rescinded due to their close
12 proximity to the drainage. And I refer you back to my
13 previous presentation for that information.

14
15 If the closure is rescinded Federal
16 subsistence regulations for the Yukon northern area
17 would apply. Federal subsistence fishing schedules,
18 openings, closings and methods would be the same as
19 those issued by State emergency order unless superseded
20 by a Federal special action. Harvest of salmon would
21 be allowed and salmon could be taken by gillnet, beach
22 seine, dipnet, fish wheel or rod and reel. Non-salmon
23 fish could be taken with any gear listed at the top of
24 page 54 of your Council book. Subsistence rod and reel
25 harvest limits would match State sport fishing harvest
26 and possession limits. Harvest would be unrestricted
27 for all other legal gear types.

28
29 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
30 rescind the closure. Currently a portion of the Kanuti
31 River is closed to the harvest of all fish by
32 Federally-qualified subsistence users, but open to
33 sport fishing under State regulations. Rescinding the
34 closure would establish a Federal subsistence priority
35 in the area. However allowing unrestricted harvest for
36 gear types other than rod and reel in an easily road
37 accessible system may lead to overharvest and local
38 depletion of stocks. While populations may be
39 protected by limiting subsistence to harvest with rod
40 and reel only and modifying harvest limits, these
41 modifications are not possible through the closure
42 review process and would require a fisheries proposal
43 to be submitted. Until a proposal can be submitted the
44 Federal In-Season Manager may use their delegated
45 authority to restrict gear types and harvest limits for
46 up to 60 days to protect populations in the closure
47 area. Actions exceeding 60 days would require a
48 temporary special action be implemented by the Board.

49
50

0074

1 And that concludes my presentation and
2 Cory and I are available for questions.

3
4 Thank you.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Hannah.
7 So you keep referring to all three of these and I went
8 through 23-01 up to 23-05 and I look at the map,
9 they're all pretty much generally in the same areas,
10 like Bonanza Creek, some other fishing for all in the
11 Delta River and they seem to all suggest to -- by OSM
12 to rescind the -- to rescind the closure. So it seems
13 to me that we can group these three proposals to save
14 time and as recommended by OSM to rescind the closure.
15 And because every one of those I look at the
16 recommendation section, all three of them are
17 recommending by OSM to rescind the closure.

18
19 DR. VOORHEES: That's correct, Mr.
20 Chair. I will note that the FCR23-05, the Delta River
21 closure, is not -- that's in a slightly different area
22 in Eastern Interior, but the current Kanuti River
23 closure that I just presented on and the next Closure
24 Review, FCR23-03, Bonanza Creek, like Jim River which
25 you previously considered, all three of those are in a
26 concentrated area on the Dalton Highway corridor. And
27 so another option you may want to consider is taking up
28 Kanuti and Bonanza at the same time and the next -- if
29 you have interest in hearing the slightly different
30 details of Delta River, that -- I'd be happy to do that
31 as well.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: In effect we have --
34 they're here because there's some sort of C&T to the
35 North Slope region in these rivers and that's why
36 they're present here.

37
38 All right. So with that any other
39 questions from the Council members on this to Hannah on
40 the closures.

41
42 MR. FRANTZ: Mr. Chair.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Brower.

45
46 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah, I have kind of a
47 question slash comment that it seems like the
48 subsistence side was closed, but yet still sport
49 hunting was somewhat allowed it looked like on the
50

0075

1 State side. So it to me I look at it and it's just
2 more of a comment, but the subsistence side was taken
3 away before, you know, even thinking about taking the
4 sport side away. I think that's kind of backwards as
5 far as what we do here on the Slope, you know, that --
6 the subsistence side should have been looked at for
7 keeping first and taking away the others, at least
8 that's what I'm reading here if I'm reading it
9 correctly. It was done backwards to where you should
10 think about the subsistence users before, you know,
11 anybody else comes in and at least let them keep their
12 side versus somebody else that might not be from the
13 area still being allowed to hunt and fish in the area.
14 Just my comments.

15
16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Mr.
17 Frantz. I think those are good observations. And can
18 you speak to that a little bit, Hannah, why is sport
19 hunting available on those little creeks and no
20 subsistence. And it seems to beg a bigger question
21 here and I'm -- sometimes I always feel at odds with
22 how the State does its regulatory responsibility because
23 the State does not recognize a subsistence -- a rural
24 subsistence priority at all. And they can't as a --
25 that's why there was an impasse, when was it, 1991 or
26 '92 and why the Regional Council was created because of
27 that impasse in those days of just kind of trying to
28 think about how we came to be at that point where the
29 Federal had to take over management of fish and game on
30 Federal land because of that impasse.

31
32 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

35
36 MS. ITTA: I also have a question.
37 Recently the State of Alaska just recognized all the
38 Federally recognized tribes and I'm wondering how that
39 being done and said how that would come into play with
40 the State working with the Federal and the tribes on
41 these issues, you know, given that they're different
42 boundaries, but now the State now recognizes the
43 Federal tribes. Are these regulations and rules going
44 to change now that they're working together and the
45 tribes and the Federal government is recognized under
46 the State?

47
48 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you for that
49 question, Council member Itta. I can say that the
50

0076

1 Federal regulations are not poised to change due to
2 that development, however I would like to reach out on
3 the phone lines and the room and see if anybody would
4 like to speak to the State side for that important
5 question.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 DR. VOORHEES: Hearing none, I can go
10 ahead and answer your previous question, Mr. Chair,
11 when you're ready.

12
13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead.

14
15 DR. VOORHEES: So the fact that there
16 has been a sport fishery in these systems, but not a
17 subsistence fishery under the Federal regulations is as
18 you've noted exactly correct, it's kind of a product of
19 history of the State regulations being adopted into the
20 Federal system in 1992 and that closure just never
21 coming up for review until the current time however.
22 And so under ANILCA obviously there is a subsistence
23 priority and this -- the action recommended by OSM is
24 an attempt to correct this inequity and make sure that
25 when there's a sport fishery open the subsistence
26 regulations are at least mirroring that and hopefully
27 providing a subsistence priority eventually. However I
28 cannot speak to the State side as why they've
29 maintained a subsistence closure while having a sport
30 fishery.

31
32 Thank you.

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. I think
35 those are good discussions and so we're going to go
36 ahead and go down the list of other items here and I'm
37 proposing that we bundle -- is it 02 and 03, are those
38 the two, Bonanza Creek.....

39
40 DR. VOORHEES: Kanuti and Bonanza.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER:and Kanuti.
43 Okay. Report on Board consultations, tribe
44 consultations.

45
46 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.
47 Hannah Voorhees, OSM. I do not believe there were any
48 tribal consultations to report on for either of these
49 closure reviews.

50

0077

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Same thing with the
2 ANCSA corporation?

3
4 DR. VOORHEES: Correct.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We'll go
7 down the line, item 3, ADF&G comments.

8
9 (No comments)

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any Federal comments.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any tribal comments.

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Item 4, Advisory
20 Group comments, other Regional Advisory Councils.

21
22 DR. VOORHEES: Hannah Voorhees, OSM.
23 In regards to FCR23-02, Kanuti River, Eastern Interior
24 RAC again considered this at their recent meeting and
25 the recommendation was to modify, to rescind to non-
26 salmon species only. The Council was concerned about
27 Yukon salmon stocks and additional harvest of those
28 stocks.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Fish and
31 Game Advisory comments, Advisory Committee comments.

32
33 DR. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair.....

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hannah.

36
37 DR. VOORHEES:if I may. For
38 FCR23-02, Bonanza Creek, the Eastern Interior RAC acted
39 on this closure again at their recent meeting and they
40 had the exact same comments and justification.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Hannah.
43 Subsistence Resource Commissions.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Summary of written
48 public comments.

49
50

0078

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, floor's
4 open to public testimony.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's the wish of
9 the Council, we're on item 7, Regional Council
10 recommendation. We can defer it to the Eastern or
11 Western Interior if we want to and they seem to have
12 some recommendations to only non-salmon species sounds
13 like.

14

15 Hannah.

16

17 DR. VOORHEES: I'm sorry, Mr. Chair. I
18 just wanted to note that there were no written public
19 comments on either of these proposal -- closure
20 reviews.

21

22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Thank
23 you. So we're at a point where we can act on this by
24 motion or we can defer it to the Western Interior
25 Council if we want and leave it at that or we can act
26 as a Advisory Council because we have C&T in the area
27 for these creeks and I'm suggesting that we act on both
28 of them for expediency of time, 02 and 03. Fisheries
29 Proposal 23-02 and 23-03. What's the wish of the
30 Council.

31

32 MR. FRANTZ: Mr. Chair, I'd like to
33 make a motion to rescind I guess both, is that what
34 you're saying, both of the 02 and 03, FCR23-02 and
35 FCR23-03. So motion to rescind both of them for the
36 expediency.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
39 the floor to rescind the closures.....

40

41 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair, I'll second.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER:02 and 03.
44 Martha.

45

46 MS. ITTA: I second the motion.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a second on
49 the motion. And just for a justification I think that
50

0079

1 it will benefit subsistence, it wouldn't be a detriment
2 to subsistence needs, in fact this would be a benefit
3 to the subsistence users and maybe to right a wrong
4 that's been in existence for quite some time because
5 there's already sport fishing already occurring in
6 these areas under the State regs. And that would be
7 our justification to rescind the closures in 23-02 and
8 03. So any further discussion.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 MS. HUGO: Question.

13

14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The question's been
15 called for. All those in favor to rescind the closure
16 on FP23-02 and FP23-01 or 03, signify by saying aye.

17

18 IN UNISON: Aye.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Steve, you on.

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Maybe I
25 just didn't hear Steve.

26

27 MS. HUGO: I did.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. He said aye.
30 All those opposed say nay.

31

32 (No opposing votes)

33

34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: The ayes have it.
35 The Council has recommended to rescind those two. And
36 we'll go -- it's 12:30, I don't know about lunch or do
37 you guys want to take care of this last proposal. It's
38 the last one, right?

39

40 DR. VOORHEES: Sure.

41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's the wish of
43 the Council, lunch or do you want to take care of the
44 last proposal. If you guys want to (in Native) we can
45 stop for a little bit and have lunch or take a break or
46 we can finish the last proposal. It's -- I'm going to
47 just make it your decision.

48

49 MS. HUGO: I think we should just

50

0080

1 finish the last proposal, we're almost -- I mean, and
2 then we can go to lunch.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Hannah,
5 you have the floor. We'll go ahead and go through the
6 last proposal.

7

8 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 Hannah Voorhees, OSM. And I just wanted to do a sound
10 check to make sure. I've been told that maybe I just
11 was hard to hear or maybe all of us. Are we doing
12 better now?

13

14 MS. WESSELS: I got another note that
15 they couldn't hear you, Hannah.

16

17 DR. VOORHEES: Okay.

18

19 MS. WESSELS: So sorry, maybe -- can
20 you try to position your mouth right over the mic, but
21 not too close because then we get an echo.

22

23 DR. VOORHEES: All right. Well, I
24 apologize if you feel that I'm yelling at you. And
25 also I have, you know, a full write up of this
26 proposal, but I understand that you may want to treat
27 it similarly to the last two so I may abbreviate some
28 of this and try to make it short.

29

30 So FCR23-05 begins on page 88 of your
31 book. It's a standard review of a Federal subsistence
32 fishery closure to the harvest of all fish in the Delta
33 River. The situation is similar to the two previous
34 closure reviews. Under Federal regulations subsistence
35 harvest of all fish is prohibited in the Delta River.
36 This was rolled over from State regulations and has not
37 been reviewed since and is also closed under -- to
38 State subsistence, but open to sport fishing.

39

40 The Delta River begins at the outlet of
41 lower Tangle Lake in the Alaska Range, about 60 miles
42 south/southwest of Delta Junction. The upper portion
43 of the river is part of the National Wild and Scenic
44 River System administered by BLM and the lower section
45 is also on BLM land, but this is general domain land.
46 This closure review is coming before your Council
47 because you do have C&T.

48

49 In terms of species in this area chum

50

0081

1 and coho salmon spawn in the lower section of the Delta
2 River, but salmon do not inhabit the closure area. The
3 non-salmon fish community is comprised of Arctic
4 grayling, burbot, round whitefish, longnose sucker,
5 lake trout and Dolly varden. Arctic grayling is the
6 predominant non-salmon fish and limited information
7 exists for the other species. The density of Arctic
8 grayling in this system is among the highest ever
9 documented in Alaska. And research examining the
10 seasonal movements and locations of Arctic grayling
11 indicate that the study area provides year round
12 habitat for this large population.

13
14 Big Delta and Delta Junction are the
15 communities most likely to subsistence fish in the
16 Delta River if the closure is rescinded. They're in
17 proximity to the drainage, but unfortunately there are
18 no readily available data on fishing by residents of
19 these communities in the Delta River.

20
21 Sport -- so there's sport fishing only
22 and sport fish harvest estimates for the Delta River
23 are provided by the Alaska sport fishing survey.
24 Estimates for the Delta River below the Tangle Lakes
25 are available for 1996 to 2006 and for Arctic grayling
26 the median estimated sport fish harvest was 298 fish
27 per year and ranged between about 159 fish to 770 fish
28 per year. And sport fish harvest estimates are not
29 available after that date.

30
31 If this closure is rescinded Federal
32 subsistence regulations for the Yukon northern area
33 would apply. Non-salmon fish could be taken with any
34 gear listed on page 89 of your Council book.
35 Subsistence rod and reel harvest limits would match
36 State sport fishing harvest and possession limits and
37 harvest would be unrestricted for all other legal gear
38 types.

39
40 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
41 rescind the closure. The justification is identical
42 with that provided for the previous two closure
43 reviews.

44
45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Does that conclude
46 Staff analysis?

47
48 DR. VOORHEES: Yes, it does. Please
49 let me know if you have any questions.

50

0082

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions to
2 Hannah.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, was
7 there any tribal consultation in the proposal.

8
9 DR. VOORHEES: There were no tribal or
10 ANCSA consultations to report.

11
12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. ADF&G
13 comments.

14
15 MR. SCANLON: Mr. Chair, Brendan
16 Scanlon again, Northwest and North Slope Area
17 Biologist. Brandy Baker who is the upper Tanana area
18 Fisheries Biologist who can speak to this better than I
19 is on the line right now.

20
21 Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What was his name?

24
25 MR. SCANLON: It's a she, it's Brandy
26 Baker.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Brandy?

29
30 MR. SCANLON: Yes.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Brandy, do you got
33 any ADF&G comments for this since you might be the most
34 in the know?

35
36 MS. BAKER: Yes, Mr. Chair, this is
37 Brandy Baker with the Alaska Department of Fish and
38 Game, Division of Sport Fish in the Delta Junction
39 field office. I'm the Assistant Area Management
40 Biologist for the Tanana River drainage which the Delta
41 River encompasses. We would recommend that the sport
42 fishing bag and possession limit would follow if this
43 closure was to be rescinded only because the area as
44 described is small as far as where the location of
45 subsistence fishing could occur because the Delta River
46 also encompasses some military training areas for
47 Donley training area which is closed to recreational
48 access and just public access in general in a certain
49 section due to the impact area for training.

50

0083

1 So the other comment I have is that
2 this is spoke to as the Delta River, but the Delta
3 River also is encompassed in the Tangle Lakes and with
4 BLM Federal land being around the Tangle Lake system I
5 am unclear and maybe someone can clarify that the
6 Tangle Lakes would or would not be included in this
7 rescinded closure. At the Eastern Interior RAC there
8 was also confusion as to whether or not Ahtna lands,
9 the Copper -- upper Copper Center residents would be
10 qualified to fish in the section as well as it states
11 only the Delta residents.

12
13 That's all I have.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Hannah,
16 if you could clarify if the lake is included and if the
17 Ahtna Tribe folks are included as well.

18
19 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 This closure review is specific to the Delta River
21 itself only. Cory, you can correct me if needed.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. That was
24 one of the questions and I think there was one more.

25
26 DR. VOORHEES: Could you please repeat
27 that question. Oh, I.....

28
29 MS. BAKER: I'm sorry. It was a little
30 hard to hear. I believe that was Hannah that spoke and
31 I couldn't understand if it was for or not the Ahtna
32 residents.

33
34 DR. VOORHEES: I'm sorry, I don't
35 understand the -- that -- I don't understand the way
36 the question's phrased. If the question is whether
37 this would include the Tangle Lakes the answer is no.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I think the second
40 question.....

41
42 MS. BAKER: Okay.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER:is the residency
45 in that area, if it includes Ahtna tribal members, is
46 that -- maybe you can clarify that part, is it Brandy?

47
48 MR. SCANLON: Brandy.

49
50

0084

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Brandy.

2

3 MS. BAKER: Okay. Could you repeat the
4 question, please.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It was posed by you.
7 It was a question posed by you about who can -- if it's
8 rescinded and open for subsistence you mentioned if it
9 -- something about the Ahtna Tribe, would that include
10 them.

11

12 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you.

13

14 MS. BAKER: Okay. Yes, I believe my
15 question was that the Ahtna tribal lands would have
16 encompassed the Denali Highway area which is within the
17 Tangle Lakes River drainage which is the headwaters of
18 the Delta Wild and Scenic River. And this proposal
19 rescinding just the Delta River, if tribal or rural
20 residents of Copper Center, Glenn Allen, Paxton, would
21 qualify since the Delta River goes through the Tangle
22 Lakes, drops off the falls and then become what on the
23 map says Delta River which now we are referring to,
24 would they have traditional and customary use
25 determinations within that portion.

26

27 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you for clarifying
28 that question. No, they would not. That is a boundary
29 of customary and traditional use determination areas
30 and they would not have C&T.

31

32 MS. BAKER: Okay. Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. We'll go
35 down the list. I think we are now at Federal comments.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, any
40 tribal comments.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Other Regional
45 Advisory Councils. Hannah.

46

47 DR. VOORHEES: Hannah Voorhees, OSM.
48 The Eastern Interior Council took up this closure
49 review at their recent meeting, it is in their area.

50

0085

1 And they decided to defer a recommendation. They first
2 wanted to hear from people who will be most directly
3 affected such as the Delta AC. The Council was also
4 concerned about lack of monitoring and potential
5 overharvest.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Fish and
8 Game Advisory Committee comments.

9

10 MS. BAKER: Hi. Yes, this is Brandy
11 Baker at Fish and Game again. I just wanted to let you
12 know that the Delta Fish and Game Advisory Committee is
13 meeting on October 19th and they have this proposal on
14 their agenda to discuss.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Very
17 informative on that. Subsistence Resource Commissions.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Summary of written
22 public comments.

23

24 DR. VOORHEES: Hannah Voorhees, OSM.
25 There were no written public comments.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Mic is open to public
28 testimony.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Regional
33 Council recommendation and discussion of justification.
34 I'm kind of inclined to want to defer this like the
35 Eastern Interior. There are action items being
36 proposed by some ACs in their region over there that it
37 might be important to hear the Advisory Groups in that
38 particular region that are most affected. This is
39 quite a ways out of our area, but apparently we have
40 C&T in that area. So I think it -- I think we really
41 should defer to those most impacted in that area and
42 defer this in the same way that Eastern Interior has.
43 So what's the wish of the Council. We need to make a
44 motion, some type of motion, you could defer it or we
45 can elect to rescind it.

46

47 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,

50

0086

1 Martha.

2

3 MS. ITTA: I make a motion to defer to
4 the Interior Council's.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a motion on
7 the floor from Nuiqsut, Martha Itta, to defer FCR23-05,
8 the review of closure to subsistence fishing for all
9 fishing in the Delta River and to defer to the Eastern
10 Interior Council where those folks are most impacted by
11 the proposal.

12

13 MR. FRANTZ: Seconded.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's been seconded by
16 Brower Frantz from Utqiagvik. Any further discussion.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 MR. WILLIAMS: Question.

21

22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Question's been
23 called for. All those in favor of deferring FCR23-05,
24 review closure of subsistence fishing for all fish in
25 the Delta River, signify by saying aye.

26

27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All those opposed say
30 nay.]

31

32 (No opposing votes)

33

34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, North
35 Slope Regional Subsistence Advisory Council has
36 deferred this to the most impacted Regional Council.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 With that it is lunchtime and what's
41 the recommendation for lunch. Do we want to take 30
42 minutes, one hour, have lunch here or.....

43

44 MR. WILLIAMS: One hour.

45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: One hour. All right.
47 So we'll be back at 1:45.

48

49 MR. OOMITTUK: Okay. Enjoy lunch.

50

0087

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So let's take a break
2 and we'll see you in one hour.

3
4 (Off record)

5
6 (On record)

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER:Council. And I
9 believe we left off on 9 -- I think we finished 9A with
10 all the fishery proposals and went through all of
11 those. So we're now at in our revised agenda 9B and I
12 think that's the Western Arctic Caribou Herd update.
13 And who was the person, Hansen.

14
15 MS. HONIG: Mr. Chair. Yes, Alex
16 Hansen from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
17 I'm not sure if he's online.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Alex
20 Hansen, you up.

21
22 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, this is Alex, Alaska
23 Department of Fish and Game. How you doing, through
24 the Chair.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. You have
27 the floor for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working
28 Group.

29
30 MR. HANSEN: Can you hear me okay?

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah.

33
34 MR. HANSEN: All right. I'm going to
35 pull up my presentation here, but I believe if you're
36 following along it should be on supplement -- the
37 supplemental tab four. And I appreciate you folks
38 adjusting things around so that I could present today,
39 trying to get out and so some stuff tomorrow and the
40 weather's been challenging.

41
42 All right. One second. All right. So
43 if you found that presentation it starts on the top W-
44 A-H or WAH, Western Arctic Caribou Herd overview. And
45 in the text there, we'll just go through a few things.
46 We're going to talk about abundance, additional
47 biological data, management, harvest reporting and then
48 we'll summarize that. So get started here. The first
49 slide will be of the text will be WAH abundance. So a
50

0088

1 quick report and kind of a synopsis of recent
2 population estimate. We're currently counting the
3 census that we shot on the 9th and 10th of July this
4 year. We're getting really close on that, hope to have
5 an estimate out in a week or two. The last count was
6 2021, last summer, and that was 188,000. And that was
7 kind of a big deal because that went down below the IM
8 objective of 200,000 and the previous estimates from
9 2019 was 244,000.

10

11 So if we jump to the next slide this is
12 the abundance of the herd over time. So going back
13 into the early '70s. This is kind of the time frame in
14 which the Department was collecting population
15 estimates. And you can see that peaked around 2003.
16 And a period of decline from that point in time until
17 about 2016, we saw a little bit of a rise in 2017, 2019
18 and then we went down again last year. So that is what
19 -- kind of the long term trend. We've been in a period
20 of decline for a number of years now, over a dozen
21 years, and just based on where we're at right now I
22 don't think the population's going to be coming up this
23 year as compared to last year. So I'll get that
24 reported as soon as we get that count finalized.

25

26 On our next slide, calving. Our
27 parturition surveys for this past three years, 2022
28 through -- or 2020 through '22 was 66 percent which was
29 a little bit down from our long term average of 70
30 percent. This is a survey where we go out to the
31 calving grounds and look at collared individuals and
32 see how many of those collared cows have calves. It's
33 down a little bit, not startling, but we're keeping an
34 eye on that.

35

36 And the next survey we'll talk about
37 is recruitment. So this is something we do in the
38 spring, this is April sometimes going into May time
39 frame. And we're looking at the number of calves that
40 have made it through the winter basically. And so that
41 number is a representation of the number of short
42 yearlings or calves as compared to adults, to a hundred
43 adults. So kind of we're maintaining this long term
44 average of about 17 calves to a hundred adults which is
45 pretty good, you know, no major concerns. In those --
46 a few years earlier '15, '16, '17, a little bit higher
47 and but it's dipped down a little bit, but seems to be
48 okay at the moment. So this is something we do every
49 year, it's a long term data set that we have been
50

0089

1 maintaining for a very long time.

2

3

4 All right. Adult survival is the next
5 slide. And this is where, you know, kind of our
6 biggest concern is right now as we look at this longer
7 period of decline as we've been coming down and down
8 continually, our adult female survival on average is
9 about 72 percent lately. And this last year, collar
10 year 2020, these kind of lag behind because we're, you
11 know, calculating that after the fact, but in the past
12 three collar years it's been below average and our
13 average -- long term average is 81 percent. That
14 causes us some concern of course because the cow
15 survival is certainly tied very closely to herd
16 production, right. I will report that currently, we're
17 not finished with this latest collar year, I've kind of
18 had to change things around a bit and recalculating
19 because we had been catching on the Kobuk River in
20 September/October and we were starting our collar year
21 in October, but now we've switched our methods with
22 later fall migrations to do spring captures, net
23 gunning from helicopters and so our collar year's been
24 now adjusted to begin 1st of May. So I've got to
25 tinker with that a little bit more, but I will -- I
26 mean, I'm happy to report this last collar year the
27 survival has been up a little bit. We'll wait and see,
28 you know, what that brings and what that really tell
29 us, but apparently it looks a little bit better this
30 last year, but we're coming out of three years of
31 pretty low survival.

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And bull to cow ratio is our next slide
there. I'm prepping now for a fall comp or composition
survey. So what we're looking for there is the
composition of the herd, the percentage of bulls as
compared to the cows and calves. So in this herd we
try to maintain at least a minimum of 30 bulls to a
hundred cows. I did this survey last year and it was
47 bulls to a hundred cows which indicates that we have
some room for additional bull harvest and seem to be
doing okay with, you know, fairly high. Prior to that
the last one I did was 2017, we took a break in there,
but that was 54 bulls to a hundred cows. So that tells
us that we do have some potential room for continued
bull harvest, but also when we put that together with
our decreased cow survival it's, you know, may be time
to start thinking about ways we could cut back on cow
harvest. And that's certainly part of a larger
discussion that we'll have to talk about with RACs and

0090

1 ACs moving forward as we get the final number in. But
2 that is something to talk about.

3

4 And we try to model our -- I'm on to
5 the next slide, cause of mortality here. We do our
6 best to understand the cause of mortality, it's
7 honestly quite challenging because we're not on the
8 scene for every mortality event for instance. If folks
9 are harvesting them and they turn in a collar then we
10 can understand that, but we -- what we do is when we
11 get a detection of a mortality event on a collared
12 individual the -- as quick as we can which isn't always
13 very quick based on weather and helicopter availability
14 and everything else, we get out into the field and we
15 take a look at the scene we'll call it, but the
16 mortality site. And we try to understand what was the
17 cause of mortality, whether it was predation, sometimes
18 we can tease out whether or not that was a brown bear
19 or a wolf for instance and then try to figure out what
20 was going on. So if you can kind of look at that, it
21 kind of changes over time, but fairly high predation on
22 this herd which, you know, is to be expected. And
23 we'll continue to keep an eye on that and try to tease
24 out a little bit more information as possible.

25

26 So the next slide I have is -- this is
27 kind of an amalgam or, you know, kind of putting
28 together some of this information. So some of the
29 things we look at for a population trend of course is
30 the recruitment that I mentioned and then of course the
31 biggest driver is cow mortality or conversely survival
32 so as more cows survive they of course can produce more
33 calves. And if the calves survive they can of course
34 become adults and produce calves themselves. So
35 currently when we put those together in kind of that
36 declining year that band to the right, if you have a
37 color copy of this it's in the red, but you can see
38 those bars going down which is kind of those declining
39 years.

40

41 And then over to the next one to the
42 right, we're kind of, you know, mixed signals up and
43 down, but currently in a downward trend. So that's
44 where we're at, coming down a little bit.

45

46 And if you're -- if you track the WACH
47 Working Group the meeting will be coming up here in
48 December and the management level that is set by that
49 Working Group is -- kind of comes out of our population

50

0091

1 estimate of course and our cow survival and our calf
2 recruitment. So this is the latest one from last
3 year's, it's in the preservative declining which that
4 population falls within that window of 130 to 200,000.
5 And our harvest, you know, kind of recommending a
6 harvest rate of 6,000 to 10,000 animals within this
7 herd.

8
9 And some of the prescriptions in that
10 -- at that management level if we drop down to the
11 second one there where it says preservative could
12 include, these are kind of recommendations, no harvest
13 of calves or limit harvest of cows by residents to
14 permit hunts or village quotas and potentially limit
15 subsistence harvest to bulls as I mentioned to maintain
16 30 bulls to a hundred cows or harvest restricted to
17 residents only according to State and Federal law,
18 closure of some Federal public lands may be necessary.
19 So some of this stuff has already taken place and, you
20 know, certainly some stuff we can talk about moving
21 forward.

22
23 On the next slide, management tier,
24 I'll briefly mention that as you're aware the ANS is
25 combined with the Western Arctic and Teshekpuk of 8,000
26 to 12,000. You know, currently we feel like we're
27 probably still meeting that ANS. The trouble that we
28 run into with the Western Arctic Herd is our harvest
29 reporting or understanding of harvest locally is pretty
30 poor. I estimate we probably get harvest report of
31 about 10 percent of the total harvest and so we're
32 struggling with that and trying to work with folks to
33 use, you know, the tool that we've been given by the
34 Board of Game, the RC907 permit to get better
35 reporting. And that gets, you know, really important
36 right now as we're getting closer -- you know, as our
37 population is coming down we need to understand harvest
38 better so that we don't harvest ourselves into
39 additional problems, that we don't suppress the herd
40 growth for instance. So our estimated harvestable
41 surplus at least on the last estimate was 11,300 and
42 that's bulls and cows combined. So like I said I --
43 like we're close to that, but we don't have really good
44 harvest data so we're not exactly sure.

45
46 So as I mentioned some of the
47 challenges that we're facing are participation in these
48 permits, 907 and 800 is a little bit too low, actually
49 quite a bit too low to provide us a clear understanding
50

0092

1 of harvest. And in the past we had used a model and
2 looking at availability of harvest and basing it off of
3 population of communities and it just is, you know,
4 kind of -- kind of realized it was too coarse, you know,
5 to give us some ideas, a better understanding of the
6 long term, but it -- when we started to look at the
7 mechanics of that, you know, we had to see a change on
8 the order of about 60 percent of harvest from one year
9 to the next to affect any changes in that model. So at
10 the current time abandoned that model and looking for
11 better ways to understand harvest.

12
13 And just kind of speaking about that
14 model here, it'll give you kind of an example of what
15 we get, but and it gives us a long term understanding
16 that that harvest is kind of between 12 and 14, 16,000
17 animals annually. And that certainly changes based on
18 availability as, you know, some of your member reports
19 have stated, you know, Point Hope had good access and
20 plenty of animals, Anaktuvuk Pass not so much yet. So,
21 you know, the harvest obviously changes based on where
22 those animals choose to go. If you can see the little
23 pieces on top of those in mine it's red, on top of the
24 gray bars, but that is nonresident or non-local
25 harvest. So that is a very small portion of the total
26 harvest. And we don't have final numbers for this
27 year, but with the Federal land closure the harvest is
28 probably going to be about a third of what it has been
29 in the past few years is my guess. So it's really been
30 reduced quite a bit.

31
32 And I'm going to beat on this a little
33 bit more here, but harvest reporting as I mentioned is
34 super important. As you can see this next slide,
35 harvest reporting. You know, that data gap in the
36 middle is what we need. We need somehow to take that
37 10 percent and come a little bit higher and a little
38 bit closer to reality of what the harvest is so that we
39 can understand that moving forward. If we happen to
40 find ourselves, you know, in a real critical situation
41 with the population coming down and, you know, cuts are
42 necessary then we need to understand what harvest is
43 necessary for those communities out there. And, you
44 know, by getting those reports to us then we can
45 understand that better so that everybody is represented
46 well.

47
48 And I -- as I mentioned this next one
49 is annual variation in winter range. And I want to
50

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1 point this out because it's always a hot topic, right.
2 The caribou do different things every year. We
3 understand that they have very strong fidelity to the
4 calving grounds so June, end of May, first part of
5 June, they're up there on the calving grounds at Utukok
6 Uplands and that's where they're calving, the maternal
7 cows, right. But after that, you know, when they come
8 off of there the predictability of where they're going
9 to go gets less and less. Pretty much know they're
10 going to go to the Lisburne Peninsula each year, but
11 after that when they go into the -- kind of go into the
12 mountains then they can just kind of scatter every
13 which way to the North Slope, you know, into the
14 mountains off to the east or come down to the Noatak
15 Preserve. And this is a depiction here, this variation
16 in winter range, of where the Western Arctic Herd or
17 the bulk of the collars winter each year.

18
19 As you can see there's certainly some
20 change over time if you look at the red bar far to the
21 left like 1993, you know, 75 percent of the animals
22 were in the Nulato Hills. Now that was kind of the
23 period where they wintered in the Nulato Hills. If we
24 look over to the right, you know, '14, '15, that time
25 frame, 2014, 2015, they spent a lot of the time or most
26 of the collars wintered on the Seward Peninsula though
27 we can see there's variation over time. And the
28 important thing that I want to note about this is as
29 they're selecting these winter range sites that is
30 going to influence their travel path on the fall
31 migration. So if they're not now going to the Seward
32 Peninsula to winter for instance and they're wintering
33 in the central Brooks Range, you know, folks in
34 different areas that are accustomed to catching them on
35 the Kobuk River are not going to have that opportunity.
36 So certainly see changes over time with caribou
37 migrations. I think that has always been the case and
38 probably always will be the case. And trying to
39 understand, you know, the drivers behind that is
40 challenging, certainly can be range driven, you know,
41 as winter range is depleted they have to find different
42 places to winter, warmer falls, we're kind of seeing
43 some of that where they're just staying in the
44 mountains if they're not pushed out with, you know,
45 heavy fall snowstorms. A lot of drivers there for
46 migratory changes.

47
48 And kind of to summarize things, you
49 know, we're keeping a very close eye on things because
50

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1 we're near the critical thresholds. As I mentioned
2 we're below IM objective, short yearling recruitment is
3 decent, our calving is a little bit lower than we have
4 seen in the past, but we'll continue to monitor that.
5 And the biggest concern right now is adult cow
6 survival. Our most recent, you know, understanding of
7 that is it looks pretty good, moving forward in this
8 collar year, but that's followed up or that was
9 preceded by a bunch of low survival years. And if I
10 have to beat on this one more time, but to understand
11 that harvestable surplus and what's actually available
12 for harvest, we really need better harvest data.

13
14 All right. So just wrap -- wrapping
15 all that up there, I would just to say that I
16 appreciate your time and the opportunity to switch the
17 schedule around here on you, but I'm happy to field any
18 questions if anybody has anything they'd like to ask me
19 or comment I'm here for you.

20
21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank
22 you. Any questions on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
23 update and the management overview.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Seems like we're
28 starting to approach some trends of continuing decline
29 and is there a point that your management level will
30 change or are you guys in the process of considering
31 the management objective from liberal to conservative
32 to preservative?

33
34 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, that's a good
35 question, Mr. Chair. So, you know, I guess the honest
36 answer is what I do is I get together the information,
37 I present this to the Working Group and it's up to
38 those folks, those members of the Working Group to
39 decide what management level to go with. Currently I
40 suspect and I don't -- you know, just based on
41 biological information they will probably maintain the
42 preservative declining, but I'm not -- I can't speak
43 for the Working Group and what they'll go with. So the
44 next step down would be critical. And so that would --
45 you know, as we look at that table it would be a
46 population below 130,000 in a declining state, right.
47 So my expectation is at least for this year moving
48 forward we're probably not changing much if any. I
49 still feel like we're change -- we're kind of in that
50

0095

1 declining area within that population estimate.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And just to follow-up
4 and on the ANS and the harvestable surplus, are both of
5 those factoring Teshekpuk Herd into the Western Arctic
6 Herd for both of those categories, the amount necessary
7 for subsistence and the harvestable surplus?

8

9 MR. HANSEN: Sorry, I didn't catch all
10 your question. You're asking about the ANS and the
11 combination of Western Arctic and Teshekpuk?

12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I'm -- there's
14 some of the language in here where it takes into
15 account Teshekpuk Herd in the overall harvestable
16 surplus and the amount necessary for subsistence, the
17 ANS. Just wondering on both of those categories if
18 it's taking into account the resident herd on the Slope
19 or are those -- it just seems like that you are doing
20 that.

21

22 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, I hope I'm
23 understanding your question, but yeah, just a quick
24 clarification. You know, the resident herd up there on
25 the Slope, primarily Teshekpuk animals, but it depends,
26 you know, on timing. We've got some Western Arctic
27 animals heading out of Point Lay and Wainwright now so
28 there's still quite a few of those animals on the
29 Slope, but those -- the ANS is combined for those two
30 herds and, you know, that kind of comes into putting
31 together the population estimates of both herds and I
32 know Carmen's working on a population estimate for the
33 Teshekpuk and I'm sure she'll talk about that later,
34 but we do take both of those herd populations into
35 account when we look at potential harvest availability
36 or ANS.

37

38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other questions
39 for ADF&G folks on the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.

40

41 MR. OOMITTUK: Mr. Chair, this is Steve
42 for the record.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
45 Steve.

46

47 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah, you know, Point
48 Hope area and Kotzebue area were always concerned about
49 the population of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd

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0096

1 declining for the last 10 years. And yet, you know,
2 when we propose a closure to nonresidents or sport
3 hunters we -- it always get declined by the Federal
4 Subsistence or Advisory Council, you know, even though
5 we're concerned about the population. But last year we
6 had a -- they had a late count because they didn't give
7 us the numbers of the herd until late and it was a huge
8 decline at 188,000, you know. And whether it's 10,000
9 less or 10,000 more, but, you know, for years now we've
10 been asking that they do a closure for nonresidents and
11 sport hunters, but still it gets -- you get over rigid
12 and over concerned about their needs. You're trying to
13 get the numbers to come back up but, you know, at the
14 highest population of 500,000 at one time, I mean, that
15 was just 188,000 that's more than half. Do they know
16 why the population is dropping?

17
18 MR. HANSEN: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
19 Oomittuk. Yeah, to your final question, you know, why
20 is the population declining, that's really the question
21 we've been asking ourself and, you know, it's not an
22 easy question to answer. You know, the simple answer
23 is that adult female survival is down. What's driving
24 that, lots of things, you know, weather, predation, who
25 knows what else. We're trying to understand that, but
26 it's -- I guess I don't have a quick and short answer
27 for you as to what ultimately is causing, you know, the
28 population to decline. It's fairly well understood
29 that, you know, caribou populations are cyclic, they
30 come up and they go down and we're kind of in a
31 declining period right now, it bounced in 2017, 2018
32 there for a little bit and then we came down again.
33 Potentially we'll see it kind of spike up again, but
34 who knows, right.

35
36 And kind of speaking to your comments
37 about the closure, you know, as we were discussing this
38 the past couple of years the Federal land closure did
39 occur under WSA 21-01 of what, over 8 million acres in
40 the Noatak Preserve in unit 23. So a good portion of
41 the nonresident, non-local hunters were cutout this
42 year. One interesting observation that I saw is, you
43 know, is caribou when they came off the summer range or
44 kind of over there in your country for a minute, they
45 typically would move into kind of the Noatak Preserve
46 and we didn't see a whole lot of that this year, they
47 kind of went up on the North Slope. And so very
48 strangely, you know, that portion of land that were
49 closed didn't get that much caribou traffic. So even
50

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1 though there were no hunters there the caribou weren't
2 there in mass like that had been the previous few years
3 or falls. So very interesting to see what will come of
4 this closure and if it'll change anything. Currently
5 we're just barely this week starting to see some
6 caribou come down through Ambler, cross the Kobuk River
7 and it's starting to flow ice pans right now today. So
8 still late migrations coming out of there and most of
9 the Western Arctic Herd is still on the North Slope as
10 we speak with a few in the mountains, but a lot still
11 up north.

12
13 MR. OOMITTUK: Thank you. Yeah, we
14 noticed that a lot of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
15 is staying up north a lot longer than within our area
16 (indiscernible - distortion) caribou year round there.
17 It's usually most of the time we're having to go 50, 60
18 miles to get any. But lately they're just -- they've
19 been hanging around.

20
21 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, they spent a lot of
22 time on the peninsula this fall. It was very
23 interesting.

24
25 MR. OOMITTUK: Yeah. So all right.
26 Thank you.

27
28 MR. HANSEN: Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Any other
31 questions.

32
33 MR. TOOYAK: Mr. Chairman.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes, go ahead.

36
37 MR. TOOYAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, can you
38 hear me okay.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Who is it?

41
42 MR. TOOYAK: Yeah, hi. My name is
43 Andrew Tooyak. I'm with the Wilderness Society, I'm
44 acquainted with Steve Oomittuk. I also am a Point Hope
45 resident, born and raised. I'd like to pose this
46 question to ADF&G about the population. I understand
47 that in the '70s there was a great controversy about
48 the number of bowhead whales population in decline and
49 that may or may not have come from scientific studies.
50

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1 And all this population decline that we're hearing now
2 are from scientific studies. Have you had any resident
3 or person challenge that data because the anecdotal
4 information about bowhead whales during that time is
5 they are not in decline. And it took a longtime for --
6 to understand that yeah, actually bowhead whale
7 population was fairly stable, this -- it could just be
8 the case as well. If you're hearing any of this kind
9 of anecdotal talk from subsistence hunters saying that
10 there are more caribou than you're actually saying.

11
12 MR. HANSEN: No, that's a good
13 observation and I guess I don't under -- I don't have
14 the history of the bowhead whales, but I certainly
15 would recognize that we've certainly made mistakes in
16 the past and, you know, certainly haven't -- you know,
17 we've operated on the best scientific knowledge
18 available, correct, but as we move forward in time I
19 would say that this Western -- the census at least the
20 way we do it through the photo census, is one of the
21 most accurate ways to count big game species in the
22 world. We're operating within a time frame when all of
23 these animals -- largely all of these animals come
24 together in a small area. Well, it's a large area, but
25 small in comparison to their annual range, right. And
26 we have marked individuals, we try to maintain at least
27 a hundred collars out there. And while we're out there
28 doing the survey we're making sure that we know where
29 all of those collars are and they're coming together in
30 big groups. The biggest group we had these year was
31 nearly 100,000 animals. And then we fly over them when
32 they come together, we make sure they have edges on all
33 of the groups, we photograph everything and count every
34 single individual through a computer program. One by
35 one we have to count them with the mouse, have to click
36 on them.

37
38 So as far as the accuracy that has
39 definitely improved over time. If we go back into, you
40 know, the '70s and '60s and, you know, way back before
41 this technology, you know, certainly their methods
42 weren't as good as this. Over time we've made a giant
43 leap in technology just since 2017 was the first year
44 we transitioned away from black and white photos to
45 using digital photos so we're able to detect at least
46 better detection on calves and we're getting better
47 coverage and can shoot photographs in less ideal light
48 conditions. So I would say that I'm pretty darn sure
49 that these photographs and these counts are very
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1 accurate. And I'm more than willing to let anybody
2 come take a look at the photographs and see what they
3 think of the process. I'm happy to carve out some time
4 for anybody that wants to come by the office to do
5 that. And if they have any questions I'm happy to
6 field those as well.

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Any other
9 questions.

10

11 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha from Nuiqsut.

14

15 MS. ITTA: Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank you.
16 On the cause of the mortality percentage you have
17 predator unknown and hunter. Can you explain the
18 unknown percentage of the mortality?

19

20 MR. HANSEN: I'm sorry, I'm not getting
21 the question there.....

22

23 MS. ITTA: Under the cause of
24 mortality.....

25

26 MR. HANSEN:a little bit too far
27 away from the mic perhaps.

28

29 MS. ITTA: Under the cause of mortality
30 on the WAH adult mortality percentage you have predator
31 unknown and hunter. Can you explain why there is an
32 unknown in there?

33

34 MR. HANSEN: Oh, yeah, I can absolutely
35 explain why there's an unknown. As I mentioned when we
36 go out and look at these collars we're trying to
37 understand what the mortality of -- cause of mortality
38 was. If we can clearly understand that it was a brown
39 bear, let's say, you know, we see sign on a brown bear
40 maybe cached it, you know, dug up some tundra then we
41 can mark it as brown bear predation. But sometimes,
42 you know when we get out to a mortality site or a kill
43 site we find a collar and maybe a pile of hair and we
44 can't find any other evidence or maybe it's in a creek
45 or something and it's buried under the gravel and
46 there's nothing left to tell us. So some of those
47 things are really what kind of falls into that unknown
48 category, we can't put a actual cause on it.

49

50

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1 But thanks for asking that clarifying
2 question.

3

4 MS. ITTA: Thank you. What about --
5 this is in regards to the studies that you guys do and
6 the concern of our sick caribou with green meat and
7 pus. I'm wondering why those aren't in the report, do
8 you guys -- knowing that you guys do these studies you
9 guys have no idea like how many -- how many are sick or
10 the causes of the concerns by our community, I mean,
11 unknown is -- that's looking at your graph is almost
12 more than the hunters', you know, mortality rate. So
13 I'm wondering, you know, what's the cause of the
14 unknown. I know it's different -- I mean, there's --
15 you have the predators, I know that's a big concern,
16 but the unknown portion, that really concerns me.

17

18 Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Carmen. I'm going to
21 just add a little bit to that. I think it was about
22 early 2000, maybe late 1990s and we had some locals
23 that reported maybe 2,000 dead caribou at one area.
24 (In Native).....

25

26 MR. HANSEN: I'm sorry, was that
27 another question, I heard a bunch of static and some
28 things like that.

29

30 CHAIRMAN BROWER:and they were
31 very many. And we got to see some of that. And some
32 of the elders talk about that it was very cold.....

33

34 MR. HANSEN: Are we still on the phone.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER:(in Native), the
37 temperature was, you know, minus 40 for a long period
38 of time. Before that there had been some unusual
39 weather incidents where it got warm and actually some
40 rain during that time even though it's in the cold
41 month. And then a steep cold immediately following
42 that.

43

44 MR. HANSEN: Mr. Chair, this is Alex
45 Hansen, Fish and Game. (Indiscernible - simultaneous
46 speech) of the meeting.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And if you know
49 caribou (in Native) eat.....

50

0101

1 MR. HANSEN: Are there more questions
2 for me to answer there.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER:they'll also (in
5 Native), their hooves and their -- along their legs
6 that when they're digging they will -- they actually
7 get sick too from getting cuts. What it is they've
8 been trying to dig through ice, ice encrusted snow
9 along with the very, very cold weather and that's
10 something we observed back then. And we actually made
11 those reports around Ikpikpuk that there is that many
12 there, looked like somebody went up there with a
13 machine gun and shoot them all up, there was that many
14 dead ones up there.

15

16 Anyway some of those are kind of --
17 could be, you know, attributable to unknown kind of
18 things, we don't -- that's what the elders say most
19 likely scenario of what happened based on their own
20 observations. And that -- I would just help with that
21 little bit.

22

23 MS. DAGGETT: Through the Chair to
24 member Itta regarding your concerns about the unknowns.
25 So let me try to -- maybe I can help you see the
26 picture a little bit more. So when you go out to
27 investigate a collar for a caribou that you know is
28 dead there might be an extended period of time between
29 when the animal actually died and when you get to
30 actually look.....

31

32 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair, is the meeting
33 still connected?

34

35 MS. DAGGETT:at the area where
36 the animal died. And you're basically doing crime
37 scene investigation at that point, right, you -- you're
38 looking for any bones that are there and how the bones
39 were broken or if there's any left. You use what we
40 call luminal on the collar and see if there's blood
41 spatters on the collar to see if the animal died a
42 violent death or maybe it just starved to death and
43 there wouldn't be any blood on the collar. Luminal
44 would tell you that. So you kind of have to piece
45 together all of these clues to try to figure out how
46 this animal died. And it's a bit of an art and a bit
47 of a science at the same time. And you don't always
48 have time on your side because that collar's been
49 sitting there for a long time, you lose more and more
50

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1 evidence as that time goes on. So the likelihood that
2 you get to unknown if that time is longer is greater,
3 right.

4

5 So does that help, does that make sense
6 more how you would get to that point where you would
7 look at a collar and go I'm not exactly sure if a wolf
8 ate that because I don't have the bones to look at
9 anymore or if it was buried maybe a bear got it, you
10 know, like those are kind of some of the things you
11 would look for. So.....

12

13 MS. ITTA: Yeah, I -- thank you for
14 your -- for your comments. So that brings me to, you
15 know, the unknown, not knowing if it's predator and,
16 you know, or a hunter. I kind of would question the
17 graph and the results of your report. And, you know, I
18 just wanted to thank you for clarifying that and I just
19 wanted to see if anything was actually being done to
20 those dead caribous that you guys encounter, you know,
21 you guys aren't just oh, there's another dead one here,
22 putting it, you know, another number up or down. I'm
23 just wanting to know if something is being done about
24 it and we're getting the answers that we need, that way
25 we have a better understanding. I know there's a lot
26 of predators and many ways for the caribou to go, I
27 understand that, the whole scientific, I just want to
28 make sure something's being done about it, voicing our
29 concerns all the way to the Federal government, to
30 Washington D.C. and, you know, not getting answers
31 back, I just want to make sure something is being done
32 about that.

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Martha.

37

38 MS. DAGGETT: Can I.....

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Carmen.

41

42 MS. DAGGETT: Through the Chair. Just
43 one more piece. So you brought up your concerns about
44 the pus and seeing green caribou meat and those sorts
45 of things and those sorts of concerns. We try to
46 communicate with the North Slope Borough Wildlife
47 Department as much as possible. And I talk with them
48 regularly. There are times where we don't get
49 information back from them either or we don't hear from

50

0103

1 them about different things that happen. So it's
2 difficult for us to tell what's going on if we don't
3 hear back all the time from them.

4

5 MS. ITTA: Okay.

6

7 MS. DAGGETT: We try really hard to
8 have open communication and open doors. I try
9 personally very hard to have communication with them on
10 a regular basis. I don't -- I don't know why things
11 are the way they are there which is part of the reason
12 why I offered to if you want samples sent through Fish
13 and Game we can do that and we can have communication
14 that way as best as I can guarantee. And that's all I
15 can do about that.

16

17 MS. ITTA: Thank you for your response
18 though.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native)

21

22 MS. ITTA: That is -- Mr. Chair, that
23 is an issue that we've been having is not getting any
24 response.

25

26 Thank you for your comment.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: (In Native), Martha.
29 Always insightful and keep the OSM and ADF&G and the
30 Feds on their toes, you know. It's important for us to
31 know, you know, because we eat these animals and what's
32 ailing them and what is -- what is actually a -- the
33 unknown portion is -- you know, we all try to pitch in
34 because there could be so many variables involved in
35 the unknown.

36

37 With that, any other questions for the
38 Western Arctic Caribou Herd update.

39

40 MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Mr. Williams from
43 AKP.

44

45 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, back in '90s I
46 remember when we were on working group on Western, I
47 think you were on it at that time, I'm not sure.
48 Anyway somewhere between Point Hope and Point Lay
49 somewhere or Noatak they found 10 caribous were sick
50

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1 one time. I don't know, if they went hungry, starving
2 they said, but we never heard nothing about that, you
3 know, I was just wondering about that, you know, did
4 they ever find out about that. They found some pus on
5 them and stuff like that.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Earl, your
8 memory is -- serves you very well.....

9

10 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER:in the '90s.

13

14 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, but that.....

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah.

17

18 MR. WILLIAMS:you know, that's
19 kind of serious right now. They didn't bring nothing
20 out about that before because they said they starved,
21 but, you know, never heard nothing about it after that.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. I mean, yeah,
24 those are important things and those are things that we
25 observe, you know, we observe these things. Frankly
26 those -- a lot of tutus that died and they basically
27 starve and then froze.

28

29 MR. WILLIAMS: That's right.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. Anyway it's
32 their habitat sometimes does that. It just -- that's
33 just how it is. We live in a very extreme climate and
34 I'm glad we're all surviving it. But very good
35 observation there, Mr. Williams.

36

37 Any other questions to the Western
38 Arctic Working Group update on caribou.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank you
43 very much for the update and we know you are very busy
44 and your little airplane probably going to fly around
45 to go take more pictures of them and we appreciate all
46 the work you do.....

47

48 MR. HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49

50

0105

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: to bring this
2 kind of information and very, very useful. I would
3 like to see that the ADF&G caribou animation be re-
4 presented, maybe an updated one and I like to watch the
5 trend in the migrations. And they're very important
6 from -- well, you can watch the Central Herd, the
7 Western Herd, the Teshekpuk Herd, Porcupine Herd and
8 the amount of caribou resources that grace the Arctic
9 up here at one time, a very spectacular thing I think.
10 And we should continue to see those and so that we
11 understand, you know, for Esther and Earl and Martha
12 and Brower and for those that might be new to the
13 Council, you know, because I don't plan on serving
14 forever, you know, but it seems like I've been here
15 forever. But they're important details and they really
16 corroborate some of our own traditional knowledge we've
17 been exposed to like, you know, at some point, you
18 know, there should be some study about some elders that
19 had talked about caribous colliding together, different
20 herds. And then when they go back to where they're
21 coming from sometimes a whole bunch of them go with a
22 different herd and they might take 10,000 with them.
23 And then you'll see a corresponding shift in herd size.
24 And that's a traditional observation that has happened
25 before. So it's probably why they calculate Teshekpuk
26 and Western Arctic ANS together because they often
27 collide.

28
29 So with that any other questions.

30
31 (No comments)

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank you
34 for the Western Arctic Caribou update. And that brings
35 us to.....

36
37 MR. HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: old business.
40 And we'll go down to item A, 805(c) report summary.
41 And that'll be our Madam Coordinator.

42
43 Leigh.

44
45 MS. HONIG: All right. Thank you, Mr.
46 Chair and members of the Council. For the record my
47 name is Leigh Honig, Council Coordinator with OSM. And
48 I'm going to present you with a brief summary of the
49 Federal Subsistence Board's 2022 805(c) report to the
50

0106

1 Council. So the material for this agenda item can be
2 found on page 19 of your meeting materials booklet and
3 this is not an action item.

4
5 So to begin a brief summary of section
6 805(c), this is of the Alaska National Interest Lands
7 Conservation Act, provides that the Board generally
8 defers to the recommendations of the Council regarding
9 take unless one, the recommendation is not supported by
10 substantial evidence; two, the recommendation violates
11 recognized principles of fish and wildlife management;
12 or three, adopting the recommendation would be
13 detrimental to the satisfaction of subsistence needs.
14 When a Council's recommendation is not adopted the
15 Board is required to provide the reasons and facts for
16 their decision to the Council. And these are provided
17 in the annual 805(c) report.

18
19 As you can see from the 805(c) cover
20 letter this year the Board acted on 59 proposals and 16
21 closure reviews for the 2022 to '24 wildlife regulatory
22 cycle. The Board agreed with the recommendations of
23 the Regional Advisory Councils in whole or with
24 modifications on 50 of 59 of the proposals. The Board
25 accepted the recommendations of the Regional Advisory
26 Councils on 15 of 16 wildlife closure reviews, voting
27 to maintain status quo on 14 of them.

28
29 So specifically in regard to your
30 region, the Board's actions aligned with Council
31 recommendations on 10 of the 12 proposals. The two
32 proposals that the Board's action differed from the
33 Council's recommendations were on Wildlife Proposal 22-
34 45 which was harvest regulations for Alaska hare in
35 units 18, 22 and 23. The Council had recommended
36 changing the bag limit to 15 per season and also to
37 extend the season. And the Board adopted regulations
38 to shorten the season August 1 to May 31 and to modify
39 the definition of hare.

40
41 Wildlife 22-47 sought to allow the
42 taking of calf caribou in unit 22. The Council
43 recommended to support this proposal with modification
44 to allow harvest of orphan calves. And the Board did
45 not adopt this proposal. And the justification for the
46 Board's actions is located in 805(c) enclosure on page
47 22.

48
49 And if the Council would like I can
50

0107

1 summarize the proposals where the Board's actions were
2 consistent with the Council recommendation or I can end
3 there, whatever you prefer, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions on the
6 805(c) report and it was just a summary that was being
7 read. Do you -- what's the wish of the Council, would
8 you want to hear more or are we good. It's not an
9 action item, just a summary.

10

11 (In Native) is it good?

12

13 MR. FRANTZ: I think it's good.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thank
16 you, Madame Coordinator, for that. And we'll go to old
17 business, item B, FY'21 annual report replies and it's
18 also a summary, Madame Coordinator, and you can find
19 that on page 24.

20

21 Leigh.

22

23 MS. HONIG: All right. Thank you once
24 again, Mr. Chair. And for the record Leigh Honig and
25 I'm going to present you with a brief summary of the --
26 a brief summary of the Federal Subsistence Board FY'21
27 annual report reply to the Council. And you'll find
28 the Board's response and enclosure on page 24 of your
29 meeting book. And once again this is not an action
30 item.

31

32 So the Board appreciates your efforts
33 to communicate through your annual report to the Board
34 issues outside of the regulatory process that affects
35 subsistence users in your region. The Council
36 identified four topic of concern for the Board to be
37 aware of and the points of concern were topic one, was
38 unit 26C muskox and monitoring efforts and
39 transboundary management with Canada. The Board
40 acknowledge the complexity of cross-boundary management
41 and the Board noted that the Arctic National Wildlife
42 Refuge does not currently have a set population goal
43 and does not currently monitor muskox populations.
44 Refuge Staff have anecdotally observed 45 to 50
45 muskox.....

46

47 (Teleconference interference -
48 participants not muted).

49

50

0108

1 MS. HONIG:for years and Refuge
2 Staff have proposed to engage with their Yukon
3 colleagues to obtain recent population survey and
4 historical harvest data.

5
6 (Teleconference interference -
7 participants not muted).

8
9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Go ahead
10 and continue. We'll remind you please mute your phone
11 when you're not recognized.

12
13 Thank you.

14
15 Leigh.

16
17 MS. HONIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
18 Refuge Staff have proposed to engage with their Yukon
19 colleagues to obtain recent population survey and
20 historical harvest data. The Board hopes this will
21 lead to future collaboration.

22
23 So topic two that the Council brought
24 before the Board was the ongoing concerns about
25 contaminants in subsistence fish within the NPR-A. The
26 Board provided a report on monitoring polycyclic
27 aromatic hydrocarbons in sediments of the Colville
28 River and subsistence fishes important to the community
29 of Nuiqsut. And this is found on page 30 of your
30 meeting booklet. The proposed project is to address
31 the concerns of community members and is planning to
32 conduct a monitoring effort to evaluate potential
33 levels in the PAH concentrations in sediments and fish
34 tissues within the area of the NPR-A and to assess if
35 the PAH levels are associated with fish infected with
36 saprolengnia. Might have messed that name up. BLM is
37 applying for funding to do a joint study with North
38 Slope Borough Staff and Nuiqsut community members.

39
40 Moving on to topic three was the
41 recognition and support for community harvest and
42 sharing patterns. So the Board recognizes the
43 importance of community harvest and sharing of
44 subsistence foods. The Board wanted to highlight that
45 two wildlife proposals were adopted that provided more
46 flexibility for those that participate in community
47 harvest and food sharing networks. Wildlife Proposal
48 22-01 gave members of the communities with community
49 harvest systems more flexibility to engage in the food
50

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1 sharing network of choice or to choose not to
2 participate in the community harvest system. This
3 would allow those that opted out of the community
4 harvest system to maintain individual harvest limits
5 and the ability to participate in traditional harvest
6 and food sharing networks of their choosing.

7

8 The Board also adopted WP 22-02 which
9 allows more subsistence users to utilize the designated
10 hunters. The Board encourages future proposals to
11 further incorporate traditional food sharing practices
12 into regulation.

13

14 And finally topic four was the request
15 that the Board further consideration the continuation
16 of subsistence uses and that substantial evidence
17 include local and traditional knowledge when taking
18 action on proposals. And the Board replied that they
19 understood the value of TEK and understands the
20 frustrations of it not being fully incorporated into
21 the process. The Board is starting to improve this
22 area and used the example of Board action on WSA 21-01A
23 which was a closure that was supported based on local
24 testimony, TEK and survey data of the Western Arctic
25 Caribou Herd. The Board notes that further progress
26 can still be made and the fully staffed Anthropology
27 Division within OSM will contribute toward meeting this
28 goal of further incorporating the two knowledge systems
29 together. Furthermore when the Board relies on TEK in
30 its decision-making, the Board also intends to
31 acknowledge this use on the record.

32

33 The Board thanks the Council for well
34 representing the North Slope region's users' concerns
35 through your annual report.

36

37 And that concludes this summary. Thank
38 you, Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Madame
41 Coordinator. And again this is not an action item and
42 just a summary. Any questions on the annual report
43 replies.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none we'll go
48 to item C of old business, special actions. OSM Kendra
49 Holman and WSA 21-01 and caribou and moose I believe in

50

0110

1 unit 23 and 26A.

2

3

DR. VOORHEES: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members of the Council. This is Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist with OSM. This is an update and reminder about temporary special action request WSA 21-01 which requested that the Federal Subsistence Board close Federal public lands in units 23 and 26A to caribou and moose hunting by non-Federally-qualified users from August 1st to September 30th. This is an informational update only, not an action item.

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This March the Board voted to approve this request with modification. As a result some Federal public lands in unit 23 and a small portion of unit 26A are closed to caribou hunting by non-Federally-qualified users from August 1st to September 30th for two regulatory years. This is the closure that Alex Hansen was referring to earlier in his update. In addition all Federal public lands in unit 23 are closed to moose hunting by non-Federally-qualified users from August 1st to September 30th for two regulatory years. For caribou the closure area is Noatak National Preserve including the Nigu River portion of the Preserve in unit 26A and BLM managed lands between Noatak and Kobuk Rivers in unit 23. The area's closed to hunting by non-Federally-qualified users from August 1st to September 30th during the 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024 regulatory years.

The Board found this modification to be a reasonable compromise that provides for the continuation of subsistence uses and the conservation of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd while precluding unnecessary restrictions on non-Federally-qualified users. The partial closure targets the area of highest user conflicts and minimizes potential disruptions to caribou migration. The Board approved these requests with modification for two regulatory years to assess the effectiveness of the closures in conserving these populations and providing for the continuation of subsistence as well as to reduce the administrative burden of processing special actions. Conditions are not expected to change in 2023.

Thank you. That concludes my update and I am happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Hannah.

0111

1 Any questions on those temporary action special actions
2 for closing from August to September, it's like a
3 month, right?

4

5 DR. VOORHEES: Two months.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Two months. And you
8 said it affected a portion of unit 26A and can you
9 elaborate a little bit more on that?

10

11 DR. VOORHEES: Sure. So this is a very
12 small portion of 26A. It's the portion of 26A that
13 falls within Noatak National Preserve and more
14 specifically including the Nigu River portion of the
15 Preserve.

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So the upper reaches
18 of the NPR-A area I would think maybe in unit 26A on
19 Federal land?

20

21 DR. VOORHEES: This closure is limited
22 to just the portion of 26A in Noatak National Preserve.
23 It doesn't go any further north than that so no portion
24 of the NPR-A is included.

25

26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Any
27 further questions on that update.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: If not, thank you,
32 Hannah. So we'll go down to WSA 22-01, change to
33 Federal muskox permit system in game management unit 22
34 and 23 from Federal registration permit to Federal
35 drawing permit and OSM update.

36

37 MS. HOLMAN: Hello, Mr. Chair and
38 members of the Council. My name is Kendra Holman and
39 I'm a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence
40 Management. I will be presenting a summary of the
41 results for Temporary Wildlife Special Action 22-01.
42 This is an informational item only and no action is
43 required. This update is coming before you because
44 residents of unit 23 east and north of the Buckland
45 River drainage have a customary and traditional use
46 determination for muskox in unit 23 remainder. This
47 includes Point Hope.

48

49 Temporary Special Action WSA 22-01

50

0112

1 submitted by the National Park Service and the Bureau
2 of Land Management requested the Federal Subsistence
3 Board change the Federal muskox permitting system in
4 unit 22 and 23 from a registration to a drawing permit
5 for the 2022 through 2024 regulatory cycles. This is a
6 housekeeping request as these permits have been
7 distributed via draw permits since 1998. The
8 proponents have also requested to standardize the
9 language in the delegation of authority letter and to
10 change the In-Season Manager from the Western Arctic
11 National Park Lands Superintendent to the Anchorage
12 Field Office Manager for the Federal muskox hunt in the
13 southwestern portion of unit 23. The Federal In-Season
14 Managers consider a draw permit hunt to be the best
15 management strategy for conservation -- for conserving
16 natural and healthy populations while still allowing
17 for subsistence use by Federally-qualified subsistence
18 users. The Federal Subsistence Board adopted this
19 temporary special action during their April, 2022
20 meeting.

21

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the
23 Council. I'll be happy to address any questions.

24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions to
26 Kendra on WSA 22-01 to change the Federal muskox permit
27 system to a Federal drawing permit.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I do have a question.
32 Let's just say a drawing was held and just random, you
33 know, it could be somewhere else, and the person that
34 got the permit under a drawing system didn't have the
35 resources to go out and get that. Can that person have
36 a designated hunter help him?

37

38 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, that may be
39 something I'd have to look into. I'm not sure if the
40 designated hunter would cover that or not. That's not
41 something I have myself looked into unless there's
42 somebody else on the line that can answer that.

43

44 Hannah may have some information for
45 you here.

46

47 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you. I wanted to
48 jump in. That's a very good question. I believe they
49 could, but I'll verify that during this meeting and get
50

0113

1 back to you.

2

3 Thanks.

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, you know, maybe
6 one of my aunts or one of my sister-in-law couldn't go
7 do it and I'd say I'll go do it for you, I know where
8 there's one, you know, in the right place that's within
9 the law and get it for him or something. That way
10 their permit wouldn't expire or -- because it seems
11 like they expire and you go to go for a drawing the
12 next year again or something like that. But seems to
13 me that for those that don't have the resources that we
14 should be able to help them out to land that animal.

15

16 MR. FRANTZ: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Brower, Mr. Frantz.

19

20 MR. FRANTZ: Yeah, I've got another
21 question that pertains. So on this same note so if
22 it's in 23, but they have -- you know, they're within
23 the area so let's say somebody entered the drawing that
24 was kind of from the area, but let's say another
25 village away that got put in there, but they don't live
26 in the immediate location and -- but they received a
27 permit. How would that work?

28

29 MS. HOLMAN: So through the Chair.
30 These specific ones come down to -- within the
31 regulations. I believe these ones come down to the
32 customary and traditional use so I don't believe you
33 can receive that permit for these specific ones and
34 these specific hunts that we're addressing within this
35 special action. I can double check the regulations and
36 make sure but that -- what I remember is the portion of
37 this hunt that fell under unit 23 that is covered by
38 this Regional Advisory Council had a customary and
39 traditional use determination and that was how they
40 were able to do these hunts and be in these drawings.
41 There is a separate hunt that was established by the
42 Board, adopted by the Board, this last April that is
43 for 26A. But as far as these ones that's my
44 understanding and I can verify that for you.

45

46 MR. FRANTZ: Thank you. No, that's
47 actually the one I was kind of relating to was how
48 would you go about that one, like a permit was handed
49 to somebody that wasn't immediately living in 26A so

50

0114

1 just trying to centralize, you know, for other hunts a
2 more effective way to go forth with the -- you know,
3 the selection just to, I don't know, make it easier I
4 guess for the areas that are actually there within the
5 unit.

6
7 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.
8 Kendra's.....

9
10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead there,
11 Hannah.

12
13 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I just got caught up
16 in all of the how we could do things.

17
18 DR. VOORHEES: I just wanted to note
19 that Kendra's correct. So these would be permits that
20 you'd need to have a C&T for to be eligible for. So
21 theoretically it -- geographically that would be
22 already quite bounded, but if there was still an issue
23 with being distant from the hunt area a designated
24 hunter would be an avenue in which to address that.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: From the way I'm
27 gauging you have some information that you need to --
28 that might be helpful from the book.

29
30 DR. VOORHEES: The information I'm
31 getting is just supporting what we've told you.

32
33 Thanks.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. Any other
36 questions on the WSA 22-01 on the change -- the Federal
37 muskox permit system in game management unit 22 and 23
38 from a Federal registration permit to a Federal drawing
39 permit and on the update primarily affecting Point Hope
40 from our region.

41
42 (No comments)

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Hearing none, thank
45 you, Kendra. I suspect that you're going to do the
46 update on WSA 22-02, dall sheep in unit 24A and 26B.

47
48 MS. HOLMAN: Yes, Mr. Chair. For the
49 record again my name is Kendra Holman and I'm a
50

0115

1 Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence
2 Management and I will be presenting a summary of the
3 results for Temporary Wildlife Special Action WSA 22-
4 02. This is an informational item only and no action
5 is required.

6
7 Temporary Special Action WSA 22-02
8 submitted by the Western Interior Regional Advisory
9 Committee requested the Federal Subsistence Board close
10 Federal public lands to the harvest of dall sheep in
11 units 24A and 26B for the 2022 through '23 and the 2023
12 through '24 seasons. Population metrics, harvest
13 pressure and unpredictable weather events have led to a
14 conservation concern with a dismal outlook for ram
15 abundance along the Dalton Highway corridor. While
16 portions of the Brooks Range sheep population are doing
17 very well the easily accessible section of the Dalton
18 Highway corridor appears to be faltering and the most
19 recent surveys indicate few if any legal rams available
20 for harvest. Therefore the Federal Subsistence Board
21 adopted this temporary special action with a
22 modification to simplify regulatory language during
23 their July, 2022 meeting.

24
25 Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the
26 Council. I'll be happy to address any questions.

27
28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions to
29 Kendra on this one and I suspect this is one of those
30 that we collaborated with Jack Reakoff a little bit, I
31 think that was the proponent and the concerns related
32 to sheep on the Dalton Highway unit 24A and 26B and
33 that we can really support it -- I think we supported
34 that.

35
36 MS. HOLMAN: That's my recollection,
37 Mr. Chair, as well is that it was presented in the
38 winter meeting brief as we were still in the process of
39 writing the analysis.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. Any
42 questions on WSA 22-02.

43
44 (No comments)

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And thank you,
47 Kendra. And we'll go to item 11, new business. And I
48 believe we did the fisheries proposals already and now
49 we're going to go to the crossover proposals. Well, it
50

0116

1 seems like we did these already, we moved those up. So
2 I would think we are down to FCR23-05, is that -- or
3 did we do that one. That's the Delta River.

4

5 MS. HUGO: Mr. Chair.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
8 Esther.

9

10 MS. HUGO: Can we take a break.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: There's a request to
13 take a break. How long you guys want to be off.

14

15 MR. FRANTZ: All day.

16

17 (Laughter)

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, by the way
20 there's another group coming in right after we're done
21 so we want to be done as early as we can today. The
22 place is reserved by another group as well that's going
23 to meet. So by 5:00 o'clock or 5:30 so we're going to
24 speak super fast and clear.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: But let's take a five
29 minute break. Is that good?

30

31 MS. HUGO: Yes.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. We're off for
34 five minutes.

35

36 (Off record)

37

38 (On record)

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you for
41 reminding me. We'll end our break and go back into
42 session here. And we're under new business, we'll go
43 to item C -- C or B, one of those, because we switched
44 around letters earlier. So it's the 2024 Fisheries
45 Resource Monitoring Program. And I'll yield over to
46 Karen.

47

48 Is that where we're at now?

49

50

0117

1 MS. HEYER: Yes, Mr. Chairman and
2 Council members. For the record my name is Karen Heyer
3 and I'm a Fisheries Biologist with the Office of
4 Subsistence Management and I work in the northern
5 region. And I'll let Hannah introduce herself for the
6 record.

7

8 (No comments)

9 MS. HEYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
10 members, again for the record my name is Karen Heyer,
11 I'm a Fisheries Biologist with the Office of
12 Subsistence Management and I work in the northern area
13 and I'm going to talk to you today about the Fisheries
14 Resource Monitoring Program. And I'm going to let
15 Hannah introduce herself for the record.

16

17 DR. VOORHEES: Hannah Voorhees,
18 Anthropologist with OSM.

19

20 MS. HEYER: So, Mr. Chairman and
21 Council members, if you will turn to page 100 in your
22 book we're going to talk today about the Fisheries
23 Resource Monitoring Program and we're going to develop
24 the PINs for the next call for proposals. But before
25 we do that I just wanted to go over the Fisheries
26 Resource Monitoring Program and remind everyone what it
27 is and how it works and introduce it for our new
28 members too.

29

30 But within the Office of Subsistence
31 Management there's a program that allocates funding to
32 projects. And these are research and monitoring
33 projects that help collect information that Federal
34 Subsistence Managers use for Federal subsistence
35 management. And this program runs on a two year cycle
36 and every two years we have a notice of funding and we
37 put out a call for proposals and the project
38 investigators create proposals and submit them. And
39 the projects can be submitted by Alaska Natives, Alaska
40 Native rural organizations, universities and government
41 agencies and private contractors.

42

43 So anyway on page -- at the bottom of
44 page 100 is the timeline of the process. And the
45 process starts with development of the priority
46 information needs and those are the information needs
47 that the Council develops to guide the whole process.
48 And we meet here and you let us know where you think
49 the priorities are for research in your region. And
50

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1 then you will give us your priorities with the North
2 Slope and those priorities will be combined with
3 Northwest Arctic and Seward Peninsula to make up the
4 whole region, the regional priorities. And then once
5 we establish those we'll put that together and in
6 December we'll do a call for proposals which we now
7 call a notice of funding opportunity or NOFO. But
8 we're basically advertising to the investigators that
9 we are soliciting for proposals and then we list the
10 PINs there and we -- and those PINs help guide the
11 project officers because they let them know what we
12 consider important and what we're looking for proposals
13 on.

14 So that will happen and then once that
15 closes we'll get proposals for all of Alaska and those
16 proposals will come into the Office of Subsistence
17 Management and they'll be reviewed by a Technical
18 Review Committee. And that Committee will establish
19 that they're technically sound and the investigators
20 can do the work and they will score the proposals.

21
22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Karen, I got a quick
23 question.

24
25 MS. HEYER: Yeah, absolutely.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And I think it's
28 important for us to -- so our train of thought is right
29 there while you're going through this stuff.

30
31 MS. HEYER: Uh-huh.

32
33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Who is the Technical
34 Review Committee comprised of?

35
36 MS. HEYER: Thanks, Gordon, that's a
37 great question. It provides -- it's comprised of
38 technical experts from all the Federal agencies that
39 are a part of the Office of Subsistence Management and
40 then we have the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
41 that sits on it too. And they provide us with a
42 Fisheries Biologist from commercial fisheries and from
43 subsistence and then I think there's also some --
44 usually the Chief Fisheries Scientist sits on it too.
45 And they all just provide -- they all just review the
46 proposals for technical soundness.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, thank you. I
49 just, you know, we try to make priorities over the past
50

0119

1 at least two decades that I've been here and it's very
2 hard to get funding for the issues and concerns that
3 kind of been reoccurring. Maybe it's wordsmithing is
4 how we say things, maybe that's something we need to
5 work on together is how does this concern get addressed
6 when the words in the proposal can't be supported, but
7 maybe there's a different way of saying it that doesn't
8 put it aside and say we can't deal with that, you know,
9 that's a development related issue or something like
10 that rather than a subsistence related issue.
11 Anyway.....

12
13 MS. HEYER: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate
14 that because you're exactly right. And there are --
15 there are two challenges. Because the FRMP funds
16 projects are for management on Federal lands so it has
17 to have the Federal nexus. And then you're entirely
18 right that we don't fund contaminant studies and we
19 don't fund habitat studies and we don't fund anything
20 that has to do with hatcheries. So it has to fall
21 within those parameters. And then in addition to that
22 then you have to get an investigator who's interested
23 in doing the work. And if you can't get those two
24 things to align then we don't get any projects
25 submitted. And then -- and so if there's no projects
26 to submit there's no projects to evaluate. Then once
27 the projects are submitted then they're evaluated so
28 you not only have to get the projects submitted, but it
29 has to be a good project so that the TRC will approve
30 it as technically sound. So it is a challenge. And
31 I'll go over this a little bit later, but there were no
32 -- in the 2022 call for proposals we didn't get any
33 successful proposals in this subregion of the North
34 Slope, of the northern region. We did get -- we do
35 have projects in Northwest Arctic and we do have them
36 on the Seward Pen, but we don't have any right now, any
37 new projects on the North Slope that started this
38 summer. So I do agree with you, it is a challenge.

39
40 And so those have to come together and
41 then once we have those projects kind of in the queue
42 then we'll bring them back out to you. We have the
43 internal, we have the ISC which is the Staff for the
44 Board and they look at that and they make a
45 recommendation. And then we bring them back out to the
46 Councils and then the Councils make their
47 recommendation. But this doesn't happen until --
48 between September and November of 2023. So that's
49 almost a year away that we come back with -- we hope to
50

0120

1 come back with successful proposals for you. And then
2 from there it goes to our Federal Board and then it's
3 funded. So this is a long process and we're just
4 starting the process right now for the 2024 projects.
5 And so I just wanted to give you kind of the process
6 before we launch into our discussion.

7

8 Does anybody have any questions on
9 that?

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. I have
12 one more and on the process too. And by the way if you
13 Council members have some more need to understand
14 because sometimes we're going to get very long winded
15 on a concern of an issue related to a subsistence fish
16 and that we're going to blow in the wind for an
17 extended period of time and you could really say we
18 can't address that and maybe there's another agency
19 that should be put on notice by your group, say this is
20 -- this is this issue here, it's habitat related maybe,
21 but it's affecting the edibility of the resource
22 itself. And you might need to describe better to us
23 what is more likely to get funded about our subsistence
24 resources in fish and maybe there's a way to wordsmith
25 those and craft a way that something actually might be
26 studied that might encounter the issue. Eventually
27 encounter what our concern is, but it might be through
28 a different vehicle of how we say it.

29

30 MS. HEYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
31 members. Yeah, I -- a couple things come to mind when
32 you say that. So sometimes it is something like
33 habitat which we don't fund, but they're interested in
34 say a population and there's a bit of the project we
35 would fund. Sometimes we pair with organizations and
36 so part of the funding will come from us and part will
37 come from a different organization. And people will
38 bring in matching -- we call it matching funds, but
39 it'll be funds from a couple different organizations to
40 come to a conclusion that's bigger than just one
41 project. And that's been successful in many regions.

42

43 The other thing I think I'd recommend
44 as you move forward is making your PINs general enough
45 that they capture the idea, but -- or specific enough
46 that they capture the idea, but general enough that you
47 can maybe get a wide variety of investigators
48 interested in it because that is num -- no matter how
49 many PINs you list if we can't get investigators
50

0121

1 interested in it we can't get projects done. So I
2 think having maybe a wide variety of PINs and making
3 them somewhat general might help.

4

5 I'm just curious if Hannah has any
6 input for us.

7

8 DR. VOORHEES: Thanks, Karen. I would
9 agree. I think as we were developing the drafts PINs
10 this summer we honed in on the specifics of local
11 concern and all that context is important and should be
12 on the record and available for potential investigators
13 to see. But we may as we're going through these draft
14 PINs we may want to think about just paring them down
15 and making them a bit more general. That would be one
16 recommendation.

17

18 MS. HEYER: And I'd just like to
19 follow-up with what Hannah said because I think she had
20 a very important point there. Even if we make the PINs
21 general it's -- your discussions are invaluable to us.
22 And when investigators call me and they ask me about
23 ideas I always refer to what I hear at the RAC and I'll
24 say well, I haven't really heard that as a point of
25 interest with the RAC, but go to the transcripts and
26 look. And that's one of the really wonderful thing
27 about our transcripts is people can go and they can
28 look and they can read what you've said here. So if
29 you want to be very specific in your discussion I think
30 that's a value to the investigators because I really --
31 that's the first place I refer scientists when they
32 call me is to the transcripts so that they can see
33 exactly what you said and I don't have to paraphrase
34 it.

35

36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, thank you. And
37 I'm -- I know I think we've been very specific in the
38 past, but the ability for the Technical Review Team to
39 grant the resources to actually do something are two
40 different things it seems to me, that's how come I said
41 who all's on the Technical Review Team here. Shouldn't
42 there be a tribe in there or something, you know, to
43 help to look at the needed studies up here.

44

45 MS. HEYER: I'm looking around to try
46 to figure out who's best to answer that. So the
47 Technical Review Committee is not FACA, it's not a FACA
48 group and so we have to confine it to State and Federal
49 and government -- I think government entities because
50

0122

1 of that. We used to have a different makeup of the
2 Technical Review Committee and unfortunately I don't
3 have the real specific history there. And I'm not
4 sure, Katya, do you know the specific history?

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 MS. HEYER: I can get it for you,
9 Gordon, but we did have to restrict it to technical
10 specialists from the State and Federal governments, but
11 and that's when we started putting a real emphasis on
12 the priority information needs because that's when we
13 can go out to you and you can tell us what is most
14 important as far at least where the research in, that's
15 really where we go back to you and we expect you to
16 represent the local people and tell us really what the
17 important areas of research are.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, thank you. It
20 seems like there's some parameters in there that just
21 can't be overcome on who is going to be on there.
22 Seems like a political subdivision like the North Slope
23 Borough, it's Wildlife Department with senior
24 scientists that are in there that have worked directly
25 with the Internal Whaling Commissions throughout the
26 world, are not capable of helping steer a technical
27 study that needs to be important to the North Slope up
28 here. Seems like we have some scientists up here that
29 can probably be instrumental in helping, you know,
30 steer some of that kind of technical review need on the
31 Slope. Just my observation.

32

33 What was your name again, I can't.....

34

35 MS. WESSELS: Katya. Katya.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Katya?

38

39 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

40

41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Katya.

42

43 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. I just wanted
44 to explain a little bit more detail about what Karen
45 was saying. She used the word FACA. FACA is the
46 Federal Advisory Committee Act. Like your Council is a
47 FACA committee, it was chartered under the Federal
48 Advisory Committee Act. That's why we can have you as
49 advisors to the Federal Subsistence Board because your
50

0123

1 Council was chartered under FACA. And if the TRC would
2 have been a FACA committee then, you know, we could
3 have had members that are not employees of the Federal
4 agencies represented on it. But there's like a
5 complication in that because all the FACA committees
6 need to go through presidential scrutiny and, you know,
7 jump all kinds of other levels.

8
9 So that's why they're not doing it, but
10 that's why Karen was saying that we come to the Council
11 and asking for your input on the priority information
12 needs because that's what helps the Technical Review
13 Committee to make the decisions on the proposed
14 projects. And that's kind of what we work around, we
15 want your feedback, but we won't be able to establish --
16 at least at this point we're not able to establish a
17 Technical Review Committee that is at the same time
18 also a FACA committee where we can have other
19 representatives.

20 So sorry for my long winded
21 explanation, but I'm just -- I just hope that, you
22 know, have a full understanding.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. And
27 welcome to the club of long winded answers.

28
29 (Laughter)

30
31 DR. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, may I add
32 something?

33
34 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Hannah.

35
36 DR. VOORHEES: I wanted to just add
37 that actually when we have received projects for the
38 North Slope region they've been very successful in
39 their review by the TRC and funding. We just didn't
40 receive any projects for the North Slope region last
41 year, but when we do there's a pretty good success
42 rate. I went back and looked at the numbers recently.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I can remember
45 a lot of different, you know, studies, Dolly varden
46 abundance and distribution, those kind of things that
47 get -- but when we're starting to have things that we
48 consume, that might like the fish mold issues and
49 things like that, it just seems there has to be some --
50

0124

1 somebody to pay attention to that. And it's a
2 subsistence resource and -- anyway.

3

4 MR. VICKERS: Mr. Chair, may I speak?

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's your name
7 again?

8

9 MR. VICKERS: My name is Brent Vickers.
10 I'm the Division -- Anthropology Division Supervisor
11 and in that capacity I'm also the co-chair for the TRC.

12

13 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Brent,
14 you have the floor.

15

16 MR. VICKERS: Both Hannah and Karen and
17 others have done a -- and Katya have done a great job
18 of filling you in on a lot of things that was going
19 through my head so I'll just contribute a little bit
20 more. Building on what Hannah just said about the
21 proposals coming in or that unfortunately there were no
22 proposals for the northern region last year. The --
23 all the funding that goes through is done within the
24 region, it's not ranked Statewide to all the proposals
25 that come in for the different regions. The funding is
26 actually divided by region. And so proposals that come
27 in for the northern region would have a very good
28 chance of receiving funding. So really it goes back to
29 what Karen was saying earlier, it's a two step thing.
30 The first step is developing those PINs and getting
31 something that's very easy to read, very -- and can
32 attract potential investigators. And that attracting
33 the -- getting the investigators is really the next big
34 step. And if there are organizations that -- such as
35 those that you've mentioned that have the capacity to
36 do some of this research to maybe we could all try to
37 find them and work with them in developing proposals
38 that address your PINs because I do feel that proposals
39 that came in would have a very good chance of getting
40 funding as long as the TRC feels that they meet sort of
41 a baseline threshold in the evaluation. As long as
42 they can get past that baseline threshold there's a
43 pretty good chance. So I think if there are
44 organizations that you know that might be interested
45 that would be a very big step in the next direction of
46 getting those investigators.

47

48 Thank you.

49

50

0125

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Brent. So
2 I'm going to go ahead and go back to Karen and go ahead
3 and proceed with your quick infos and some of the
4 priority information needs which is the PINS, right,
5 and you're wanting to elaborate a little bit more on
6 process for new Council members and things like that.
7 So I'll turn it back to you.

8
9 MS. HEYER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
10 Council members. So I just wanted to remind everybody
11 this is a two year process. So we have -- we develop
12 priority information needs in 2020 and then again in
13 for -- excuse me. We develop them for 2020 and then
14 again for 2022. And so every two years we have new
15 projects that we're putting in the water so to speak.

16
17 So I don't have anything else to add
18 about the process at the moment and I'd like to turn
19 the floor over to Brendan and he's going to talk about
20 a project that was started in 2018. And when we give
21 funding it's for up to four years. So he has finished
22 up his 2018 project now and then we had a new set of
23 projects that went in the water in 2022 and that's they
24 cycle that we didn't have any submittals for this area.
25 And now we're going to be moving forward to 2024. So I
26 just wanted to clarify that because we just talked
27 about how there were no projects and there were no
28 projects in 2022, but there were some in 2020. And so
29 I'm going to turn the floor over to Brendan and let him
30 talk about his project. And then we have a couple
31 investigators that are on the line that want to talk a
32 little bit about something that they saw while they
33 were out doing research up here. So just let the
34 Council know a little bit about what they're seeing and
35 then we'll circle back around and work on developing
36 the priority information need that we want to use to
37 guide those investigators for 2024.

38
39 So now I've thrown a lot of numbers and
40 a lot of things at you so I just want to take a moment
41 and see if there are any other questions before I let
42 Brendan do his presentation.

43
44 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Martha.

47
48 MS. ITTA: I do have questions in
49 regards to your guys' program, but I'd like to hear
50

0126

1 what Brendan has to say first before I ask my question
2 because I do have a few questions and concerns.

3
4 MS. HEYER: Absolutely.

5
6 MS. ITTA: And I just wanted to ask if
7 Bureau of Land Management is on the line or here?

8
9 MS. MIKOW: I'm here and.....

10
11 MS. ITTA: Oh, okay.

12
13 MS. MIKOW:I believe Katie Drew
14 is on the line.

15
16 MS. ITTA: Okay. Okay. Thank you.

17
18 MS. HEYER: So absolutely. And we can
19 follow-up, after the presentations we can continue our
20 discussion.

21
22 MS. ITTA: Okay.

23
24 MR. SCANLON: Mr. Chair, if you could
25 give me just a second, I'm going to turn the chair
26 around so I can speak to the microphone and see the
27 screen at the same time.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good.

32
33 MR. SCANLON: Thank you. For the
34 record, Mr. Chair, my name is Brendan Scanlon, I am the
35 Northwest and North Slope Area Fisheries Biologist for
36 the Department of Fish and Game based out of Fairbanks.
37 And I spend most of my summers in the Unalakleet, Nome
38 and Kotzebue area so I don't get up here as often as
39 I'd like to. But I'm glad to be here today and I would
40 like to describe the final results from FRMP an funded
41 project on grayling in the Colville River. And at the
42 end I have a couple potential projects ideas that you
43 might want to consider for PINs and I'll also answer
44 any general fish questions that I can.

45
46 So first I'd like to talk about this
47 project we started in 2019, has to do with the seasonal
48 habitats and migrations of Arctic grayling in the lower
49 Colville River related to the Nuiqsut subsistence area.
50

0127

1 And this directly addressed the 2016 priority
2 information need on grayling abundance, distribution
3 and movement in that area.

4
5 Okay. Arctic grayling are important
6 for subsistence in the Colville River drainage
7 particularly for the people of Nuiqsut. And I didn't
8 realize how much grayling are actually harvested until
9 I looked into it a little bit. We don't have very much
10 recent information, but between Nuiqsut and Anaktuvuk
11 Pass it's about 7,000 fish a year. That's pretty old
12 information and I'm glad to see that the Subsistence
13 Division is starting a new household subsistence survey
14 for Nuiqsut this year. And we really don't know
15 anything about the grayling in the Colville River, you
16 know, the river's 350 miles long, but we don't have any
17 information. And in a lot of these North Slope Rivers
18 in the wintertime liquid water becomes less available
19 and in some of these rivers and stretches they will
20 freeze to the bottom and these fish like Dolly varden
21 and grayling and whitefish are concentrated in just a
22 few spots in some places. So like I said this project
23 was designed to directly address the priority
24 information need on grayling.

25
26 So oftentimes when we begin a project
27 on a species in an area where we have no information we
28 like to start out using radio telemetry as kind of a
29 first step. And what we can do with this is after we
30 tag some fish and track them for a while we can start
31 to learn what the important spawning and rearing and
32 overwintering habitats are. And it's always a good
33 first step for designing more detailed projects on such
34 things as estimating abundance in a certain index area
35 or doing some habitat work.

36
37 So our objectives were to describe the
38 seasonal movements and locations of grayling that
39 inhabit the lower Colville River between the Killik
40 River which is about a hundred miles upstream of
41 Nuiqsut. That's about as far as we would expect any
42 grayling from Nuiqsut to swim. And it goes to Nuiqsut
43 between August, 2019 to 2021. So we had 150 radio
44 tags, we put them out in fish that are 15 inches are
45 bigger for -- we chose that size because that's the
46 size we believe that the fish are sexually mature and
47 have spawned at least once. Also grayling aren't very
48 big and we want to use the bigger fish for these tags.
49 And we track these fish from aircraft throughout the
50

0128

1 period of the project. And with that we were able to
2 describe some pretty interesting seasonal movements.

3

4 So here's the study area. So we
5 designed it so we would work out of Nuiqsut in the
6 winter with the subsistence fishes there to put out
7 radio tags and then in the summer we would base that at
8 Umiat and fly to a lot of these small tributaries you
9 see to put up other tags as well. So we wanted to see
10 where the Nuiqsut fish went in the summer to spawn and
11 feed and how far downriver some of these fish in these
12 upriver tribs will go and whether or not they were
13 vulnerable to the subsistence harvest.

14

15 And if you've never been to Umiat this
16 is what it looks like. There's the Umiat International
17 Airport, it's on the Colville River about 60 miles
18 upstream of Nuiqsut.

19

20 So here's the timeline of this project.
21 Our first step was to go to Nuiqsut and do some
22 outreach. We did a presentation at the school and we
23 talked to local Council members and actually got a
24 really reliable local hire to help us later when we
25 went back to put the tags out. In the summer of 2019
26 we put out 109 radio tags and we spread them out over
27 these eight drainages. They're not as easily --
28 sprinkled that evenly, it's mostly go to do with we
29 tagged them in about accordance of how many we saw. So
30 this is roughly based on relative abundance. We didn't
31 see very many in the Taluga and the Kutchik, but we saw
32 a whole bunch in the Anaktuvuk. So we had seven tags
33 left and I was up counting dollies from the air at
34 Happy Valley so we went over to Killik where we had not
35 put any tags and put out a few there. Then we went
36 back to Nuiqsut in November, we put out 52 tags through
37 the ice and after that we began our periodic tracking
38 flights.

39

40 So here's what that tag distribution
41 looked like. That orange dot at the top is where we
42 put out the 52 tags through the ice during the winter
43 fishery. The yellow dots are where we put the radio
44 tags in the summertime.

45

46 So we're pretty proficient at using
47 hook and line to catch species like grayling, Dolly
48 varden, northern pike, sheefish for radio telemetry.
49 There's been a lot of research done on the affects of

50

0129

1 catch and release mortality and these studies have
2 evaluated different gear types, how long the fish is
3 out of the water, whether it's bleeding or not, where
4 the hook was placed. So we felt confident that we
5 would have a really high survival of grayling, radio
6 tagged grayling, that were caught with hook and line.
7 And also keeps us from slinging boats around and
8 dragging nets and catching unintended species.

9
10 So here's what our little mobile
11 surgery station looks like, You have these two
12 collapsible totes, one of them has freshwater for a
13 recovery tub, the other one has freshwater and
14 basically a synthetic clove oil ethanol mixture called
15 Aquiesse. It's a -- anesthetizes the fish after about
16 five minutes they -- they're still breathing, they're
17 tipping over their side a little bit and they're pretty
18 easy to work on. We put them up on a cradle and get
19 the length measurements. All the -- all the
20 instruments are sterilized in Novalscent.

21
22 Here's what the surgery -- typical
23 surgery looks like. This is called a shielded needle
24 technique. So the groove director which is in the
25 surgeon's right hand will catch the needle so it
26 doesn't stab any organs, the needle will go to the very
27 top, we'll stick the antenna inside the needle and pull
28 the tag in through the top. And once we're done we
29 give it some sutures and seal it up with vetbond which
30 is essentially animal grade superglue. And there you
31 can see the antenna of this fish after surgery, coming
32 out the back. And then after we determine it's going
33 to live we'll release it.

34
35 So we did all our tracking by airplane,
36 we did not put up tracking stations or use helicopters.
37 So you can put two HN antennas on the wing struts,
38 grayling don't typically leave the river so it's pretty
39 easy to look for them compared to furry animals. And
40 this table describes -- the take home is that the weak
41 link in these radar tags is battery size and these are
42 small fish with small tags and what we're able to do
43 with these tags is have them turn on and off. So we
44 have them turned off for long stretches of time when we
45 don't expect they will move at all, like for example
46 the 161 days. Those are how many days it's turned off
47 between middle of October to end of March. Because we
48 assume that that fish is just hunkered down in an
49 overwintering hole, there's no reason to have the tag
50

0130

1 going off, we can't get up there and track it in the
2 winter anyway. So that lets us extend the life of
3 these tags.

4
5 So we did a total of 12 tracking
6 flights. I don't want to put all those maps up here,
7 but this kind of summarizes what we learned. All the
8 orange dots are the fish that were tagged in the
9 Nuiqsut and almost of them initially went the Itkillik
10 River which I didn't expect. The Itkillik is not that
11 big, but it seems to be a very important spot for fish
12 that are vulnerable to harvest in subsistence. They
13 spread out quite a bit for the summer and there's a
14 gradual movement downstream in October as the water
15 levels drop and the onset of winter comes. They didn't
16 move down as far as I thought they would, some fish
17 stayed up high in the drainage, the Colville's big so
18 there's probably some liquid water up there, but there
19 wasn't a ton of mixing of upstream fish down to Nuiqsut
20 and most fish like I said went to the Itkillik River.

21
22 So the general upstream and downstream
23 movement with the seasons kind of coincides with what
24 we see with other grayling populations that we do
25 telemetry on. It wasn't as dramatic here I think
26 because this river is so big and it's -- there's a lot
27 of deep water. They didn't -- they weren't obligated
28 to move all the way downstream like they would say the
29 Sag. And a couple fish move over a hundred kilometers
30 so that's 67 miles or so from Nuiqsut. So the Itkillik
31 River seems to be a very important source for the fish
32 that are caught in the subsistence fishery. And just
33 based on the catch rates which were pretty high, the
34 size composition of the fish we saw in the subsistence
35 fishery and those we tagged up river and the relatively
36 low harvest compared to the size of the drainage. We
37 feel right now that the Colville River Arctic grayling
38 population is healthy, current harvests are
39 sustainable. We didn't see any mold on any grayling at
40 anytime.

41
42 So that's what I have for this project.
43 I'd be glad to take any questions and then I can move
44 on to other research ideas.

45
46 Thanks.

47
48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Thanks.
50

0131

1 Is it Brendan?

2

3 MR. SCANLON: Yes.

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Interesting and I
6 like the words and the -- all the words used to secure
7 funding for that. Now we should do that to broad
8 whitefish and do that same thing over in the Colville
9 River because it includes health and distribution and
10 it seems like if you make it broad enough you could
11 secure the funding. It -- I do know they some similar
12 study like that on the Ikpikpuk and tagged a lot of
13 broad whitefish I think out of the Teshekpuk Lake and
14 some other areas and really confirm a lot of things I
15 learned about whitefish growing up and where they come
16 in and out.

17

18 So any questions for Brendan on that
19 grayling study?

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I think those kind
24 are important studies, you know, and there should be
25 one about broad whitefish on the Sagavanirktok River,
26 the Sag River. And just to identify those resources
27 there that were once heavily used for subsistence
28 before, you know, the pipeline. And I do remember
29 working in the '80s in Prudhoe Bay and me and my
30 friends would go fishing on the Sag River and trying to
31 catch grayling. We get a lot of grayling, but I swear
32 there is a substantial run of spawning whitefish in the
33 Sag River. And because we would catch them and snag
34 them there were so many of them we'd snag them while
35 we're getting grayling. So I think it's an important
36 subsistence resource and distribution of abundance,
37 studies like that, and the health in that area would be
38 important as well. Just my own observations.

39

40 Any questions to Brendan on the
41 grayling study.

42

43 MS. ITTA: Yes, Mr. Chair.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

46

47 MS. ITTA: Okay. This is a question
48 not only pertaining to grayling, but I had some
49 fishermen and hunters ask me if there had been any
50

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1 studies on our lakes and our ponds for fish. There's --
2 because they've been dealing with sick fish and, you
3 know, they get -- I don't know if the word is anxiety
4 or they get concerned about their fish, you know,
5 there's many reports of that. And their concern is,
6 you know, with all the development going on in our
7 community surrounding us and contamination going into
8 our rivers if there had been any studies on our lakes
9 for fish. I know our elders used to set their nets in
10 the lakes and it has been a very long time since I've
11 heard anybody setting nets or going fishing in the
12 lakes. And that is the question by our fishermen and
13 our hunters is if they're feasible to be able to set
14 nets and fish there or if we're going to, you know, be
15 able to get fish from any of our lakes and our ponds.
16 They feel strongly, you know, with development our
17 fishing and our animals are slowly depleting and going
18 more westward, you know, there's a lot of concern by
19 our community that's not being addressed. I'm going to
20 go back to your program and I have -- and I'm going to
21 have a question for Bureau of Land Management. OCM is
22 under the State of Alaska; is that correct or
23 under.....

24
25 MR. SCANLON: I'm sorry, do you mean
26 OSM?

27
28 MS. ITTA: OSM, I'm sorry.

29
30 MR. SCANLON: Oh, that's all right.
31 Federal, that's Fish and Wildlife.

32
33 MS. ITTA: Under the -- okay. Okay.
34 So talking about funding and things being done, we
35 shouldn't even be having this conversation, you know,
36 talking about protecting our animals, our fisheries for
37 subsistence use. We shouldn't be trying to find
38 funding for this work to be done. Under the permitting
39 process we're protected under that by these
40 stipulations and these rules that you have to abide by
41 before getting permits. It's the job of the Bureau of
42 Land Management to ensure that their not impacting our
43 way of life, our subsistence, the whole nine yards, our
44 health. These should already be answered, this should
45 already be looked into before any permits are given
46 out. We're -- how are permits being approved when
47 we're still seeking answers in regards to our
48 subsistence, in regards to our impact, we only get
49 subsistence impact funding, but that is only for the
50

0133

1 community of Nuiqsut, it has nothing to do with --
2 nothing to do with the studies, you know, it's just for
3 like community, they get it once a year for subsistence
4 impact. They don't look at social, they don't look at
5 health, there's no mitigation for that. So I'm
6 wondering how these projects are being permitted when
7 you have no answers to ensure that our way of life, our
8 animals and our fish are being -- not being harmed
9 because we're seeing it differently.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 MR. SCANLON: For the record this
14 is.....

15

16 MS. DREW: Hi, Martha, this is Katie
17 Drew with the Bureau of Land Management. Can you hear
18 me?

19

20 MS. ITTA: Yes.

21

22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, BLM.

23

24 MS. DREW: Yeah. Well, I really wanted
25 to say -- well, I wanted to say thank you for the
26 question and voicing your concern, you know, about the
27 sick fish and the moldy fish that you're seeing in the
28 Colville. And I just wanted to let you know that we
29 are starting a study this year that looks at
30 contamination levels specifically the polycyclic
31 aromatic hydrocarbons and to see if levels of PAHs in
32 the different whitefishes, the broad whitefish,
33 humpback whitefish, least cisco and arctic cisco are
34 related potentially to the sick fish that you're
35 catching. And so the focus -- the focus of this study
36 right now is in the Colville, in the Fish Creek
37 watershed, in areas that are by kind of the oil and gas
38 development areas. But if there's specific fishing
39 areas and lakes on -- that are of concern that, you
40 know, fisherman would like to discuss with us, we're
41 more than happy to incorporate and look at fish in
42 those sites as well.

43

44 And we did secure funding for this
45 study. It wasn't through OSM because I believe that
46 OSM does not, you know, providing funding for
47 contaminant studies specifically, but we were able to
48 secure external funding from another source for that.

49

50

0134

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And what was your
2 name again from BLM?

3
4 MS. DREW: Yeah, this is Katie Drew.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Drew, I didn't get
7 the first name.

8
9 MS. HONIG: Katie.

10
11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Katie.

12
13 MS. DREW: Yeah, Katie.

14
15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good. I think
16 it's important to hear these and I think some of the
17 concerns that we've expressed through this Council
18 about mold and I don't know -- I guess mold is a
19 contaminant and the fish, should be -- should be part
20 of that, not just the hydrocarbon and other types of
21 stuff that you just mentioned. Try and think about
22 those fish that are reoccurring with mold and some of
23 the scientists say that that's a temperature related or
24 oxygen related issue that might plague in the Yukon
25 River or some other place. And but we're starting to
26 see that the last, you know, eight or 10 years, about
27 the Colville River specifically in and around the
28 community. Here's a potential observation, you know,
29 in the Ikpihpuk River where we fish, at least the
30 Barrow area fish, where there's an abundance of
31 whitefish. I have yet to see the fish mold impact in
32 that area. It's the same fish, broad whitefish, big,
33 heavy spawning area in the Ikpihpuk. It seems to me
34 that that's a healthy delta, it's a healthy tributary
35 and should be used for baseline information. And
36 compare that with what's going on in the Colville River
37 where you might have, I don't know, 1,000 wells that's
38 drilled every direction underneath in what you call
39 science have known for a long time because industry is
40 built in things called the thaw bulb, a area around
41 these lakes and rivers where there's a bulb of thaw and
42 sometimes they refer to it as thaw stable to where it's
43 about 40 miles of Trans Alaska Pipeline buried in the
44 thaw stablebulb. If you go take a look at it in the --
45 even in the wintertime you will almost see a linear
46 forest on that thaw bulb where the pipeline is in
47 there. It's warm. Now think about maybe a thousand
48 wellheads going spider webbing underneath this thaw
49 bulb in the delta and producing oil at 150 degree
50

0135

1 fahrenheit, it seems to me it's like having a little
2 bunsen burner all the time, 24 hours a day, seven days
3 a week in this thaw bulb and maybe changing the
4 temperature for two or three degrees and it seems to me
5 there should be a study of may -- when the scientists
6 say well, fish mold is a temperature related problem.
7 And maybe there's a bunsen burner affect of all this
8 spider web of wellheads producing in this thaw bulb.
9 And it's hot oil coming up from the depth of the earth
10 to be produced. I hope, you know, there's -- you said
11 you can add to your study, but think about that.

12

13 There's no current stems of wells
14 producing in the Ikpikpuk and we don't have the fish
15 mold there, but it's a like delta. It's very much
16 alike and there's -- the fisheries in the Ikpikpuk are
17 not impacted and we don't have the -- we don't have the
18 fish mold. I know that and a couple of us here fish
19 that area and it's a pretty healthy fishery.

20

21 Just thought I'd throw that in the mix
22 since she said well, maybe we can be able to add
23 because BLM is securing other forms of funding to look
24 at contaminants. Well, I think fish mold is a
25 contaminant and but how is it happening, you know, in
26 that area when it's temperature related.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 MS. DREW: Thank you. Yeah. No, thank
31 you for that. We really appreciate, you know, any
32 comments and insights, you know, that anyone has. And
33 at anytime, you know, kind of as we get this study up
34 and running I would be more than happy to meet with
35 folks In Nuiqsut or elsewhere to talk over the details
36 and just make sure that we're sampling in the right
37 area and monitoring the right things. So I really
38 appreciate that.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 MR. SCANLON: Mr. Chair.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead, Brendan.

45

46 MR. SCANLON: Thank you. Brendan
47 Scanlon again, Fish and Game. Kind of a lot to unpack
48 here. But the saprolengnia that you're seeing on the
49 broad whitefish is a water mold, it's not really a

50

0136

1 contaminant. It actually in most cases it's an
2 important component to organic decomposition. But also
3 the North Slope Borough Wildlife Department had at
4 least a nine year ongoing study looking at the
5 saprolengnia. In fact I read a paper on the airplane
6 up here in a journal that was published and members of
7 the North Slope Borough Wildlife Department were
8 involved in this study where they actually took
9 cultures from the broad whitefish in the Colville
10 Delta, they took cultures of the mold and they took it
11 to a lab and they grew some spores and they also grew
12 some from mold collected in British Columbia and they
13 did different manipulations where they fed these things
14 and then they also changed the temperature of the water
15 they were in, changed the salinity that they were in to
16 see what was driving growth. And temperature was not --
17 if I remember right, I have a copy of it here, I can
18 leave a copy for everybody, temperature was not as big
19 a driver as they expected, lack of salinity is what
20 really accelerated the growth, the more time they spent
21 in freshwater the more they seen the faster the growth
22 was of these spores. And I really can't speak to their
23 research anymore than that, but I wish Todd would come
24 to these meetings, I know he lives in town and he's
25 really the expert on this stuff. That -- the work is
26 being done and it's unfortunate that the results are
27 not being shared as much as they should be as so I
28 apologize for that.

29

30 And, Martha, I was going to -- I wanted
31 to make sure I was on the same page, you're talking
32 about permits, were you talking about permits for
33 people to do fish research or permits for oil and gas
34 companies to do more exploration?

35

36 MS. ITTA: I'm talking about oil and
37 gas companies, yeah. That's part of the process is
38 them showing the community that we're safe, our food is
39 safe, we're secured and they're supposed to bring those
40 before, you know, getting permitted. And the question
41 about the fish in the lake?

42

43 MR. SCANLON: Thanks. I don't know
44 much about the lakes up there, I do know that a lot of
45 them are very shallow and seasonally fish move in and
46 out, they're really productive for summertime feeding,
47 but since most of them are very shallow they'll move
48 out into the rivers to spend the winter because the
49 lakes will get anoxic or they'll freeze at the bottom.

50

0137

1 So I think while they're caught in the lakes they're
2 actually -- they probably spawn overwinter in the
3 rivers. I know there's been some radio telemetry done
4 on whitefish near Teshekpuk and also by Wainwright on
5 how they move in and out also with burbot as well. But
6 looking at the map behind you, I see a million lakes up
7 there, I'd really like to know which ones you're
8 talking about. I can't help you specifically with the
9 lakes you're speaking of now, but if someone hasn't
10 already done the research on it or if they have and
11 there's some reporting information on it, I can find it
12 and make it available to you.

13

14 MS. ITTA: I'm talking about all the
15 lakes and the ponds because of the big ongoing concern
16 of oil and gas development and the growing and the
17 contamination that we're seeing. Our -- you know,
18 we're looking at the future of our subsistence, you
19 know, if the fish are slowly depleting in our rivers we
20 want to be able to find a place where we'll continue
21 fish and catching fish to eat for our future of our
22 kids and our future generation because of the growing
23 concerns of oil and gas development that is not going
24 to stop.

25

26 Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Martha.
29 Any other questions on the grayling study from Brendan.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: If not, go ahead and
34 continue.

35

36 MR. SCANLON: Okay. I was -- thank
37 you, Mr. Chair. I was going to mention a couple other
38 potential fish research projects idea, but
39 unfortunately neither one of them involve whitefish. I
40 feel a little sheepish about that, but if you'd like to
41 listen I'd be glad to share them with you.

42

43 Okay. This came onto my radar
44 recently. As far as I know Anaktuvuk Pass and Kaktovik
45 are the only villages north of the Alaska Range that
46 regularly harvest lake trout for subsistence. And
47 there's been some research done recently down in Lake
48 Clark National Park on the Alaska Peninsula that has
49 shown that large, old predatory fish like lake trout
50

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1 can bioaccumulate mercury at unsafe levels for human
2 consumption. And mercury is a pretty nasty toxin, it
3 can cause all kinds of problems with children and
4 pregnant women and cognitive ability and cases of
5 cancer. And so after speaking to the researchers who
6 did the work down in Lake Clark I talked to them a
7 little bit and mentioned how to the village of Kaktovik
8 and the village of Anaktuvuk lake trout is an important
9 component of their freshwater fish harvest. So I just
10 wanted to throw this out here about Peters and
11 Schrader's Lake lake trout.

12
13 So we don't have a lot of current
14 information, but it -- what we do from household
15 surveys suggests that Kaktovik's harvest of 250 to 400
16 pounds a year of lake trout for Peters and Schrader's
17 lake mostly through the wintertime. Lake trout are --
18 they're like the elephants of the freshwater fish
19 world. They can live to be very old, they can't handle
20 very much change in habitat, they don't spawn in the
21 north until they're maybe 10, 12 years old. They only
22 spawn every two, three years or so. But they can live
23 to be very old and very big. So the Environmental
24 Protection Agency determined that far and away the
25 consumption of fish is the most significant source of
26 humans injecting mercury. And a lot of lake species
27 like lake trout are predators carry much higher levels
28 than smaller, younger fish who are not. So for example
29 round whitefish might have one-tenth the concentration
30 of mercury that a large lake trout might. As I
31 mentioned several lakes in southwest Alaska have shown
32 that lake trout had shown levels of mercury in the
33 tissues that were above human consumption standards.
34 And Peters and Schrader's Lake being where it is and
35 the size of it and the remote -- as remote as it is, it
36 probably has some of the biggest and oldest lake trout
37 in Alaska which would make them some of the biggest and
38 oldest freshwater fish in the State.

39
40 Okay. This is a little bit how mercury
41 works. Mercury is a -- can be a -- can be
42 (indiscernible) by burning fossil fuels, especially
43 coal, but it's also naturally occurring not just from
44 active volcanos, but from melting permafrost can
45 release naturally occurring mercury in the landscape.
46 And it biomagnifies as it goes up. So just looking at
47 this diagram here from algae up to bugs, up to small
48 fish, up to big fish, the big fish take all the mercury
49 that the -- everything below it had and because they
50

0139

1 live so long they keep building it up. Like I said big
2 lake trout can have 10 times the concentration of
3 mercury as say a cisco or a burbot. There's all kinds
4 of negative health affects, I don't need to go into
5 those, but as I mentioned these four lakes in Lake
6 Clark National Park had tissue samples from lake trout
7 that aren't as big or as old as they are in the arctic
8 that were above human benchmark for consumption.

9

10 So these four graphs are from the four
11 lakes where these lake trout were sampled. The
12 different colored dots are -- represent lake trout
13 caught in different areas. The red dots are shallow
14 water fish, the light blue dots are more pelagic so out
15 in the middle kind of below the surface and the dark
16 blue dots are the biggest, oldest fish that are found
17 in the profundal zone so in the really deep water.
18 That -- it's hard to see, but that smaller dashed line
19 on the lower end of these graphs is what's considered
20 safe for birds to regularly consume and a lot -- the
21 dashed line above that is what EPA has determined is
22 safe for humans to consume. Now these fish aren't
23 going to poison us, but they're just in place where --
24 in fact in Alaska in the Kuskokwim River drainage they
25 found high levels of mercury in burbot and northern
26 pike in the river near historical mining areas and
27 they've issued a consumption alert for pregnant women
28 and children to limit their consumption to a certain
29 amount. In the Arctic we don't have any really
30 baseline information on presence of mercury or the
31 presence of leach mercury from melted areas.

32

33 So we're pretty good doing lake trout
34 work. We did a lake trout project in Chandler Lakes
35 just a few years ago. We did a two event mark
36 recapture project.....

37

38 (Teleconference interference - all
39 circuits are busy).

40

41 REPORTER: Hold on, we've lost the
42 conference.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And the recording is
45 going on and I'm going to ask Madame Coordinator if
46 there are any action items, I don't know, we don't have
47 Steve if that takes our quorum away.

48

49 MS. HONIG: Yes, Mr. Chair, without

50

0140

1 Steve on the line that would take our quorum away. And
2 so there are a few more action items like this
3 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, the annual
4 report to the Board.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, if we cannot
7 reestablish the phone we lose Steve and then we lose
8 the ability to act on the Fisheries Monitoring
9 proposals.

10

11 MS. WESSELS: Oh, I'm sorry, we have a
12 quorum. There are -- we have two vacant seats, right,
13 on the Council?

14

15 MS. HONIG: Yes. I apologize, I don't
16 know why I cannot count, Mr. Chairman.

17

18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right.

19

20 MS. HONIG: So we still have a
21 quorum.....

22

23 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

24

25 MS. HONIG:without Steve. So we
26 can still move forward on action items. I apologize.

27

28 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. And to my
29 understanding Steve had to head to the hospital?

30

31 MS. HONIG: Uh-huh.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: So he's not going to
34 be able to join us. He said he might try to call from
35 the hospital tomorrow. So he's a diehard.....

36

37 MS. HONIG: Yeah.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER:representative.
40 So we'll pray that he's doing okay.

41

42 Let's go ahead and proceed.

43

44 MR. SCANLON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 I'll -- this is Brendan again with Fish and Game. I'll
46 just wrap up this lake trout idea then I just got a
47 couple more slides.

48

49 So if this is something the Council

50

0141

1 believes is important enough to go on as a priority
2 information need, like I said we're really going to do
3 lake trout work, we did a big project at Chandler just
4 a few years ago, Connected Lakes. They went really
5 well, we got a good abundance estimate of about 6,500
6 adult fish in the Connected Lakes. We also collected
7 some otoliths and found that one fish was 52 and there
8 was a whole bunch of 20 to 35 year old fish. So based
9 on the results of that project we feel that the fishery
10 is healthy and the fishery is the same. So we know how
11 to do lake trout stuff.

12
13 If this project were to go forward we'd
14 like to do something similar to Chandler and introduce
15 and mercury bioaccumulation part to it. So we would
16 collect -- not just get estimate of abundance and size
17 composition, but also collect samples of the water and
18 prey that these lake trout would eat to get a baseline
19 mercury content. Then we would take muscle tissue from
20 up to 30 lake trout. We would take samples from
21 several different tissues, but typically contaminants
22 accumulate most in the livers. And the advisories that
23 they have on the Kuskokwim for pike and burbot for
24 consumption, they suggest that the pregnant women and
25 children don't eat the livers at all and limit their
26 consumption of the rest of the fish. While we're there
27 we can go ahead and map the bottom profile of both
28 lakes, I think one lake has already been done. But
29 really if there's anything else to this project you
30 think is important or not yeah, please let me know.

31
32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Brendan.
33 Brower.

34
35 MR. FRANTZ: So just along the
36 accumulation lines, have they done any looks into
37 whether or not there was an amount of mercury
38 accumulating in the eggs?

39
40 MR. SCANLON: That is a good question
41 because some people do eat eggs, don't they. I don't
42 know the answer to that. But we can make that part of
43 the study for sure. And depending on the results of
44 this project I think it's probably prudent for us to
45 loop back around and go back to Chandler since --
46 because the folks of Anaktuvuk eat a lot of fish out of
47 there. It doesn't have to be a part of the FRMP, we
48 might just do that by collecting samples from fishers.
49 But like I said Anaktuvuk and Kaktovik are the only two
50

0142

1 places I know that regularly catches lake trout for
2 subsistence.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: On the research
5 ideas, any suggestions from AKP or on -- this is --
6 sounds almost like a proposal here to, you know, event
7 mark recapture project to estimate abundance similar to
8 Chandler Lake, 2018. Yeah. And was those other lakes
9 that you were sharing with us in their comparison, was
10 there -- was that one of the reasons.....

11

12 (Teleconference interference -
13 participants not muted).

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER:that maybe a
16 proposal like this should be entertained up here in the
17 Arctic too because of what you're finding down in other
18 parts of the State?

19

20 MR. SCANLON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 That's right. And there's not a real subsistence
22 fishery targeting lake trout in the Lake Clark area.
23 Of course they get millions of sockeyes and kings and
24 chums, but because the lake trout are, you know, kind
25 of the sentinel species or the biggest and oldest and
26 if mercury accumulation was going to be a problem it
27 would definitely show up there. And those fish aren't
28 as big or as old as the fish are up in the Arctic. So
29 the bigger, the older, if mercury bioaccumulation's a
30 problem the worst it's going to be with the bigger
31 fish. So yes.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. I would
34 support something like that this -- as a PINs, you
35 know, priority information needs, you know, to include
36 maybe the eggs because, man, I love to eat fish eggs,
37 you know, those are fantastic stuff. And a lot of my
38 fishing revolves around thinking about I'm going to go
39 get the eggs, you know, that's one of our big at least
40 for me is trying to get really fresh fish too. We
41 don't even cook them, we just consume them raw, you
42 know, frozen. And it might be important at least in
43 the broad whitefish that we go after. So.....

44

45 MR. SCANLON: Is that what they call
46 civics?

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What was that?

49

50

0143

1 MR. SCANLON: Is that what they call
2 civics, that's what they call them in Noatak.

3
4 MS. HUGO: (In Native)

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, (in Native).
7 Yeah. Yes. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, (in Native). I have
8 pictures of them from my last fishing here and I was in
9 heaven at my cabin surrounded by fish. But I do worry
10 about, you know, your -- in these, but I think these
11 are -- you're primarily targeting predatory fish and I
12 don't know exactly what broad whitefish, I don't know
13 if it's a predatory fish, but it might -- you know,
14 they eat certain different things, I know they eat
15 snails and stuff. So.....

16
17 MR. SCANLON: Sure. And I think with
18 going straight to lake trout if we find that mercury
19 bioaccumulation is not a problem with lake trout then I
20 think it's safe to say that fish below them on the
21 trophic level are probably safe to eat because they
22 would -- it would manifest itself the most in
23 predatory, large fish like lake trout.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. I know
26 where there's a lake close to my cabin that is a secret
27 spot and it has big trout too, probably like where --
28 probably like Anaktuvuk has. But it's ways up Ikpikpuk
29 area. Yeah. So we all have our secrets.

30
31 (Laughter)

32
33 MR. SCANLON: Mr. Chair, I just have a
34 couple more slides on one more topic if you don't mind.

35
36 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, go ahead,
37 Brendan.

38
39 MR. SCANLON: Thank you. Karen Heyer
40 wanted me to include some Dolly varden information
41 because this is still going on. I know a lot of you
42 have seen my presentations on doing the aerial surveys
43 of the char up in the streams in ANWR and the -- some
44 of the problems we've seen. So just quickly this is
45 what it looks like when we do these surveys. On a good
46 day it's a really nice, clean count, there's not much
47 else there, the water's clear and low. We know it's
48 important to the people of Kaktovik primarily, but also
49 some other villages on the North Slope. So this is a
50

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1 picture, this is actually from the Wulik River I did a
2 few years ago, there's about 3,500 fish here. And
3 Dolly varden in the fall are really a great fish to do
4 aerial surveys on. The aerial surveys are quick and
5 easy and when they're clean like this you can get a lot
6 of good information with just a little bit of effort
7 and money.

8
9 However this has been going on and I'm
10 sure a lot of you are familiar with this on the North
11 Slope. We first noticed this in 2016 on the Ivishak
12 River which dumps into the Sag River at the top. This
13 is water laden with iron and manganese. The
14 connectivity is high which makes sense because of a lot
15 of metals in it. Also the pH is lower than normal
16 which means it's more acidic than the fish would like,
17 not a bunch, but enough to probably make it irritating.
18 And what's interesting is that these did not come from
19 an apparent thaw slump or any kind of big flood or any
20 kind of (indiscernible) development, it just seemed to
21 be bubbling out of the ground and the hillsides. So
22 it's a spring that apparently has got so full that it
23 just -- you know, just kind of burst. And when it
24 comes out of the ground it's really kind of blue at
25 first. And I think it's got to do with the lack of
26 oxygen in the water while it's underground. As soon as
27 it gets oxygenated it changes color. But it's pretty
28 dramatic and it's not going away and it appears that
29 the last time I was up there doing the survey every
30 dribble of water between Ivishak and the HuluHulu
31 draining north had some water like this somewhere. And
32 it's also being seen now on the Noatak tribs, I saw it
33 this summer in a place called Nakolik and also the
34 Wulik River which is really important to the people in
35 Kivalina. There's a lot of Dolly varden that
36 overwinter there. So it seems to be a whole kind of
37 Brooks Range kind of phenomenon.

38
39 Karen was going to talk about another
40 project that fish and wildlife would like to start on.
41 It has to do with a fish kill they saw on the Shaviovik
42 River, but they were going to tackle some other rivers
43 as well and try to get at some of this water quality
44 stuff.

45
46 Karen, I had on here to play that video
47 clip, do you think there's time for that or.....

48
49 MS. HEYER: Yeah.
50

0145

1 MR. SCANLON: Okay. If you'll just
2 give me one second I have a short video clip.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: You said the
5 Shaviovik River, is that the river adjacent to the Sag
6 River going to the east?

7

8 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Could you repeat
9 the question.

10

11 MR. SCANLON: Shaviovik.

12

13 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Sorry, I'm not
14 familiar with that, I'd have to look at a map.

15

16 MS. VON BIELA: Hey, sorry to interrupt
17 this is Vanessa von Biela (indiscernible - simultaneous
18 speech).....

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: If you say it's right
21 I think it's the Shaviovik River.

22

23 MS. VON BIELA:it looks like we
24 were reconnected and I think you might be talking about
25 the subject that I was here to discuss with you guys.

26

27 MS. HEYER: Was that Vanessa?

28

29 MR. SCANLON: I'm just going to show
30 some.....

31

32 REPORTER: I'm sorry, what was your
33 name?

34

35 MS. VON BIELA: Hi, I'm Vanessa von
36 Biela with the USGS in Anchorage.

37

38 MS. HEYER: Hi, Vanessa. This is Karen
39 Heyer with OSM. We're going to finish up with Brendan
40 and then you're up next, okay?

41

42 MS. VON BIELA: Oh, okay. I'm sorry to
43 interrupt then.

44

45 MS. HEYER: No worries.

46

47 MR. SCANLON: Thanks, Vanessa. Anyway
48 I just wanted to show this clip again. This is from
49 2016 on the Ivishak River. The dirty trib coming in
50

0146

1 from the east is the Sagavanirktok River, that is --
2 there's some Dolly varden that spawn there, but anyway
3 this confluence is the Ivishak and the Sagavanirktok is
4 kind of the top end of where Dolly varden spend the
5 winter. We know this from a lot of radio tagging and
6 long term aerial surveys. And it's pretty prevalent
7 all the way down. And what -- the Water Resource
8 Center at the University of Alaska went up there in
9 January, punched a hole in the ice and they saw that
10 the water was clear, but the rocks were still stained.
11 It's kind of hard to tell here, but this little black
12 box on the bottom of the screen are fish that are
13 trying to get out of the way of it. There again on the
14 right that the black patch is some more fish. What I'm
15 really concerned about is spawning success will go way
16 down and the ability of eggs to hatch and little fish
17 to find things to eat is going to go way down because
18 stuff can grow on the rocks, eggs can get suffocated
19 and covered by all this silt. And we -- I was
20 cautioned against attributing this to climate change
21 because we don't measure that kind of information,
22 there's a bunch of fish right there, but there's a
23 couple spots particularly on the Canning River where
24 there's a thaw slump and right below that this kind of
25 orange turbid water starts. And we just do a Go Pro in
26 the water and tie it to a rock for just a little bit.
27 So this is still a problem and what we think might
28 happen is that because there's still lots of big, old
29 fish in the population that fishing along the coast
30 will still be good for a while and then just may go
31 close to zero because spawning success is going to go
32 way down.

33

34 On the Colville River -- the Anaktuvuk
35 River has a very large overwintering population of
36 Dolly varden there and the water seems to be crystal
37 clear. In the Anaktuvuk we also saw -- I saw more
38 salmon than I've seen in a while, we saw a group of
39 about 50 chums at the mouth of the Taluga and we got a
40 couple big cohos while we were putting out the grayling
41 radio tags.

42

43 But anyway I just wanted to get this
44 back on everybody's radar that the orange colored
45 water's not going away and this next project I think
46 will get at some of this information and provide some
47 more answers.

48

49 Thanks.

50

0147

1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, we can watch
2 this and be relaxed for a long time.

3
4 (Laughter)

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's almost like it's
7 therapy.

8
9 (Laughter)

10

11 MS. HEYER: Mr. Chairman and Council
12 members, I -- USGS is on the line and they wanted to
13 talk a little bit about something that they've seen
14 when they've been out sampling. And they have a
15 presentation too that is quite short, but I'd like to
16 get it going. But I'm wondering do -- does anybody
17 have any more questions for Brendan before I run and
18 get their presentation?

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah. I think it
21 wouldn't hurt if it's under the same.....

22

23 MS. HEALY: Yeah, it is. And I just
24 wanted Brendan to show you what they had seen when they
25 were out doing aerial surveys because it ties back into
26 this water quality and fish survival. So I'm going to
27 let them do their presentation because they've been
28 waiting on the line and then from there we can decide
29 if we want to discuss the PINs tonight or we want to do
30 that tomorrow morning.

31

32 So anyway I see them back there so I'm
33 going make sure we get that going.

34

35 And then, Vanessa, I'm going to get the
36 presentation up and then I'm going to give you the
37 floor, okay?

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: One question for
40 Brendan.....

41

42 MS. VON BIELA: Thank you so much.

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER:in that
45 turbidity, two rivers colliding, where one has a lot of
46 turbidity looks like and the fish avoiding that. Was
47 there any mortality associated with the fish in that
48 very turbid portions?

49

50

0148

1 MR. SCANLON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We
2 didn't see any dead fish, but we did see that -- we saw
3 the char where we wouldn't normally see them, like
4 every little clear dribble was just packed. I mean,
5 they were obviously exhibiting behavior trying to get
6 away from it the best they can. I don't know if there
7 was fish actually in the plume because we couldn't see
8 down in there, but they -- where they overwinter is
9 completely influenced by that turbid water. It seems
10 to start right there where the confluence is and goes
11 down to a river called the Achuka. And the whole
12 stretch of river was cloudy like that. So hopefully
13 they've learned to move upriver out of it to
14 overwinter, you know, nature finds a way sometimes, but
15 yeah, we didn't see any dead fish during our time
16 there.

17
18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And just an
19 observation. Sometimes I think Ikpikpuk River is like
20 that where a lot of silt and debris is coming down all
21 the time because some of the little tributaries like
22 (in Native), they're crystal clear. When they come in
23 contact with the Chip Ikpikpuk you could see the
24 difference is cloudiness in just the sediment moving
25 all the time unless you go way up to the head water
26 where it's more rocky then it changes.

27
28 MS. HEALY: Mr. Chairman and Council
29 members, I am going to give the floor to Vanessa and
30 she's online and she can introduce herself.

31
32 And, Vanessa, I have the slide show up
33 and you can just tell me when you want me to move
34 through it. I have the first slide up now.

35
36 Okay. I'm going to turn the floor over
37 to Vanessa.

38
39 MS. VON BIELA: Thank you so much.
40 Thank you to the Chair and the Committee. I'm Vanessa
41 von Biela, I'm a Research Fish Biologist from the USGS
42 in Anchorage. I work closely with Randy Brown from
43 Wish and Wildlife Service and today I am presenting
44 with Tom Glass, he's a Wildlife Biologist with the
45 University of Montana and the Wildlife Conservation
46 Society. Tom and the Wildlife Conservation Society
47 brought this recent fish mortality event they saw just
48 his past winter to the attention of Randy Brown and
49 myself. So I just wanted to sort of introduce the
50

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1 event that from a Fish Biologist perspective and, you
2 know, put a frame on it why we think it's so important.
3 And then I'll turn it over to Tom who is actually the
4 one of the ground and he's got the slide show that
5 you'll be seeing and a short video that will actually
6 show you the fish kill event.

7

8 So as you guys know much of the
9 freshwater on the North Slope gets locked up into ice
10 as winter progresses. This squeezes fish into smaller
11 amounts of remaining habitat and because of this fish
12 biologists have often viewed the amount of good winter
13 habitat as an overall cap on the abundance of North
14 Slope fishes. And it sounds like Brendan talked quite
15 a bit about this just over the last half an hour or
16 hour. So that was a really good introduction to this.
17 We've often thought of the liquid water that's
18 associated with the springs in the Brooks Range as
19 being very valuable winter fish habitat especially for
20 the Dolly varden that are using these areas for
21 spawning and juvenile rearing. So the observations Tom
22 has, you know, raises important questions about these
23 springs and maybe we have a understanding that there's
24 nuances in the habitat they provide with perhaps some
25 of the habitat is good and some of it is poor quality
26 and we've just been using too broad of a stroke
27 thinking it's all very good habitat.

28

29 So we wanted to just bring this
30 information to the attention of the RAC first to keep
31 you generally informed and then also for two specific
32 reasons. We're definitely interested to know if any of
33 the members have seen events like this in the past,
34 other winter fish die-offs like this one Tom will
35 describe. And then of course the second is because of
36 its relevance as you determine priority information
37 needs for the Fishery Resource Monitoring Program if
38 you see a need to understand these winter fish habitat
39 situations.

40

41 And with that I'll turn it over to Tom
42 and he's got some pictures of the event we
43 investigated.

44

45 MR. GLASS: Great. Thank you, Vanessa.
46 As Vanessa mentioned by name is Tom Glass, I'm
47 currently with the University of Montana, but formerly
48 I was at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Life
49 Conservation Society coordinating wolverine research
50

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1 project on the North Slope for the last six or seven
2 years here.

3
4 And so what I'm going to talk about
5 today as Vanessa mentioned is an observation that we
6 made while we were doing field work in the Kavik River
7 area, southeast of Prudhoe Bay through this spring in
8 March and April with wolverines. And we had collared
9 five wolverines in the area there and one of those
10 wolverines -- if you could go ahead and move onto the
11 next slide. Some of those wolverines spent a lot of
12 time at a site on the Shaviovik River that turned out
13 to be a spring site although we didn't know it at the
14 time, so these are -- this is a map of his movements
15 and so we spent nearly 250 hours total between April
16 8th and May 17th there. So this is characteristic of
17 what I would see, what I would expect to.....

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Give us a moment here
20 to get on the slide.

21
22 MR. GLASS:spending time with a
23 carcass.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Give us a minute to
26 get on the slide here.

27
28 MR. GLASS: Yes.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And you can call the
31 river what's it called, Shaviovik not Shav.....

32
33 MR. GLASS: Shaviovik. Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. We're on the
36 right page now.

37
38 MR. GLASS: Thank you. So this is --
39 this is just a map of -- sort of a close up map of the
40 site. This is focused -- it's sort of centered on the
41 spring site itself and the yellow lines show the
42 wolverine movements coming and going. So this is just
43 to illustrate that the wolverine was spending a lot of
44 time there. And then we also saw evidence of other of
45 other animals, ravens, red and arctic fox and otters
46 present at this site. You can go ahead and go on to
47 the next slide, please.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We're on the next
50

0151

1 slide.

2

3

4 MR. GLASS: When we got to the site we
5 didn't find a carcass, this is what we found there.
6 You can see the wolverine tracks moving across the
7 center of the frame in the hoarfrost on the surface of
8 the ice. This is a channel in the river, in this
9 braided section of river near the spring site and as
10 you can see there's some varied layers of ice thickness
11 there, some slightly thinner and likely newer ice
12 surrounded by slightly older ice. You can go ahead and
13 go on to the next slide.

13

14

15 And ultimately what we found there was
16 56 fish, most of the ones that we could identify were
17 graylings, adult Arctic grayling frozen into the
18 surface of the ice and distributed along a section of
19 the channel that was around 200 meters long. And so
20 these are just a few photos of examples of what this
21 looked like. They were frozen under just a few meters
22 of ice into that top layer and the wolverine had by the
23 time we got there the wolverine had excavated most of
24 them, but a few of the fish were still whole and frozen
25 into the ice in those -- as you can see in those top
26 photos there.

26

27

28 And I didn't know what to think when we
29 first found this site and I didn't quite understand
30 what had happened here and how 56 adult fish had ended
31 up on the surface of the ice. So we came back -- you
32 can go ahead and go to the next slide, please. And
33 again, I (indiscernible - distortion) twice.

33

34

35 We came back with this small auger and
36 we started drilling holes to understand what was going
37 on under the ice there and ultimately what we figured
38 out was that there was an isolated pool of water. You
39 know, we eventually figured out that it was a spring
40 fed pool under the ice so it's completely covered in
41 ice. The ice on top of the pool was at least 30 to 35
42 centimeters thick in all places. The pool was about 65
43 meters long and three or four meters wide. So very
44 long and narrow following the channel of the river.
45 And very shallow so very little water under the ice.
46 And what we left, we drilled a hole large enough to
47 lower a camera in and you can go ahead and go to the
48 next slide and this is a video of what we saw when we
49 lowered this camera down through the ice. So you can
50 go ahead and play the video, please.

50

0152

1 (Video plays)

2

3 MR. GLASS: So I shared this footage
4 with Vanessa and Randy Brown and several other
5 fisheries biologists and we can confidently identify
6 Arctic grayling and Dolly varden here, I would estimate
7 at least a hundred and possibly several hundred fish
8 dead in this pool. Our best guess is that the pool had
9 become covered in ice over the course of the winter, it
10 became hypoxic and the fish died of lack of oxygen.
11 And then those fish that we found on the surface of the
12 ice likely got pushed onto the surface as the pool
13 pressurized and during an overflow of excess water,
14 water carried onto the surface of the ice. And you
15 could see at -- maybe you can see at the end of that
16 video as well that there were still a few live
17 grayling, adult grayling, swimming around in the pool.

18

19

20 So this observation as Vanessa
21 mentioned raises some questions for everybody about
22 what determines the quality of overwintering habitat
23 for fish on the Slope and particularly the frequency of
24 events like this and the conditions that lead to events
25 to like this as opposed to feeding -- high quality
26 overwintering habitat that permits survival. And so
27 that spawned discussions in our group and the interest
28 in pursuing these questions further in the coming years
29 too. And you can go ahead and go to the next slide and
30 I'm happy to take any questions and I would also be
31 very interested hearing any similar observations that
32 anybody might have.

33

34 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and
35 the members of the Council for your time.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you very much.
38 And, you know, the area is -- you know, a lot of
39 people, industry folks, call it Shaviovik, the
40 traditional name, please, is Shaviovik. And the name
41 also means where the land sweats. There are (in
42 Native) in those areas which means natural warm
43 springs. And the land sweats. In about 1997 I went to
44 this area and I was a manager and I took some new
45 inspectors out because there was a seismic exploration
46 going on in that area, in the (in Native) called
47 Jacob's Ladder Project. And when I went there and I've
48 already heard some traditional information from people
49 that were born right there, like Herbert Aquivalok and

50

0153

1 Jenny Aquivalok, they were -- they have a Native
2 allotment in that area. They've since passed on as
3 elders, but I have been -- happened to listen to their
4 stories because I worked a long time, 30 years in
5 Planning. And I don't work there anymore right now,
6 but that -- but they described the area as always
7 geologically active. And tendencies for fish to get
8 entrapped, even for the spring to overtop the river and
9 make temporary pools in between and then they trap fish
10 in there and then they freeze.

11

12 When I happened to visit that area in
13 -- around 1998, 1999, it looked like you were on the
14 moon. There were like six foot tall, at least maybe
15 six or seven water volcanos and water coming out the
16 top. And it just looked like a different landscape,
17 but some of the land is that way and some of the
18 overwintering habitat that the fish might be trying to
19 go from one deep spot to another gets -- and they might
20 get fooled because the -- it's riddled with warm
21 springs. That's why the name for it is (in Native).
22 And it means where the land sweats. Just like (in
23 Native) at the -- at the -- down from the Colville
24 River. Traditional name claimed or (in Native) is
25 where the land shakes, the land shakes. And so some
26 name places are areas described by traditional users of
27 what happens on the land. So and there are other
28 incidences I know of around Atqasuk where a lot of fish
29 died and they were in a smaller overwintering habitat,
30 but it was too cold that year and that even though it
31 was a deeper pool they ran out of oxygen. Then when
32 spring break up comes a bunch of dead fish would come
33 ashore and -- from the spring break up event. So we
34 see that from time to time and, you know, some of these
35 lands are geologically active. I've been around long
36 enough to listen to some elders that actually lived at
37 these places while they were still alive. And Herbert
38 and Jenny were probably in their 80s when I was talking
39 to them and been -- maybe I was in my 40s back then.

40

41 Anyway just my own observations. So if
42 you say it right, Shaviovik, it means where the land
43 sweats.

44

45 MS. VON BIELA: Thank you for that.
46 This is Vanessa, can we practice that for a second?
47 Saviovik.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead.

50

0154

1 MS. VON BIELA: Saviopik.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Sha, you could say
4 shah, Shaviovik.

5

6 MS. VON BIELA: Shaviovik.

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Native).

9

10 MS. VON BIELA: Okay. Thank you. And
11 thank you for those observations and that knowledge.
12 It sounds like this is a different sort of area. So I
13 guess to understand your point of view, do you feel
14 like this is -- because this area so different, does it
15 make you not worry about some of the other springs or
16 for the overwinter habitat for the fish, either you
17 think -- would you want to see biologists measure the
18 oxygen in some different places that get encased in ice
19 over the winter or do you think this is a relatively
20 small concern because it probably doesn't happen in
21 very many places?

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, this is the
24 Chair. It doesn't strike me as a new event because are
25 talking about this for a long, long time. It's -- we
26 know that, but it would be a fantastic study. I mean,
27 it would be a good study which is corroborate what
28 traditional knowledge has already known, what we
29 already heard about it. But what is the earth doing.
30 You will see some of these -- a lot of scientists call
31 these things off ice, off ice incidents. And even
32 Anaktuvuk River has incidents of off ice. And it's
33 just a continued accumulation of ice spurred on by
34 spring, natural springs in just geologically active
35 areas. So and I -- it's alarming to see fish that way,
36 but even Ikpikpuk has spouts of those when the fish are
37 over -- every deep spot is a overwintering and rearing
38 pond on the Ikpikpuk. If -- after the spawn you can go
39 there in these deep spots and drill a hole and put a
40 camera down, you will see fish fry being born and
41 becoming part of the new population of spawning fish
42 later on down the line. And sometimes they're
43 susceptible to very cold weather events. And that's
44 how come there's some Borough rules and regulations
45 about protecting overwintering habitat, do not remove
46 the snow from them for fear that you'll freeze them
47 further down. And snow is an insulating quality that
48 also helps the overwintering habitat not freeze all the
49 way down.

50

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1 Any other observations or anything to
2 add. That was fantastic. I knew someday somebody was
3 going to be surprised to see it. And I've heard it
4 from elders and I've seen it in person. And sometimes
5 it different. I happened to see when it looked like
6 you were on the moon where there was actual ice
7 volcanos right there. And they were like six feet
8 tall. I might have pictures somewhere of them.

9
10 MS. VON BIELA: This is Vanessa again.
11 Yes, I was able to go to the Canning River and I'm
12 sorry I don't know the traditional name, in the winter
13 of 2019. And I was quite amazed by being on an off ice
14 even when you're way down in the delta court to the
15 ocean just how much ice is kind of forming through the
16 year. We had hoped to drill through the ice to look
17 for fish habitat and instead we really couldn't get
18 through the amount of off ice there was there.

19
20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right. Really
21 appreciate this -- the video and the -- for me, you
22 know, (in Native) right now is a traditional use area
23 from our recent past. And same thing with the Sag (in
24 Native), you know, those rivers were very much used in
25 the past. An things are a little bit different
26 nowadays and we focus on where we're primarily not
27 nomadic too much. We still like to go to these places,
28 but we fish and hunt our areas that we know are going
29 to be productive and don't have to go very far. I'm
30 not saying it's not important, there might need to be a
31 study on the abundance and distribution of those fish
32 that were in that mortality event right there, what
33 other rivers does this feed and provide the abundance
34 of resources to other tributaries or other deltas. And
35 that would probably be my concern. But the event
36 itself, it's in our history.

37
38 MS. ITTA: Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Martha.

41
42 MS. ITTA: If there's nothing else,
43 I.....

44
45 MS. VON BIELA: Yeah, this is Vanessa.
46 I could just follow-up on that.

47
48 MS. ITTA:I have a (indiscernible
49 - simultaneous speech).....

50

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1 MS. VON BIELA: I didn't have plans to
2 look further beyond in this one watershed. Our thought
3 was maybe we should look at some of these other springs
4 where these pools form downstream and get encased in
5 ice and look at overwinter dissolved oxygens so that we
6 know if there are places like this that maybe attract
7 fish overwinter because they smell like spring, but
8 then they end up getting encased in ice because they're
9 not close enough to the spring for that ice to stay
10 melted over that place. And so they're close enough
11 that they get liquid water, but far enough away that
12 they don't stay open and then you could end up with
13 this dissolved oxygen problem. So we were thinking
14 about places that were -- where we thought might be a
15 little like this, so a pool that formed downstream of a
16 spring in a variety of watersheds including like the
17 Marsh Fork further to the east.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I think we hear
20 the concern, but it's -- what you're talking about is
21 pretty much widespread along a lot of rivers. Frankly
22 when I'm fishing I wait for the river to come down so
23 that the turbidity subsides and then I can put nets
24 under the ice and I don't get debris, I get fish. And
25 some of those holes are going to be deep water holes,
26 overwintering habitats are going to be susceptible to
27 freezing and dissolved oxygen levels such as doesn't
28 support the fish over the winter. And then you'll have
29 the die-off. It is something that happens. I just
30 know that. And it's nature, nature is that way and
31 it's a good place to hunt wolverines, you know, because
32 I -- if they're not digging in my warehouse and trying
33 to tear my door off they'll go to that instead.

34
35 MS. VON BIELA: Well, thank you, I
36 understand you guys need to give up your room at 5:30
37 so I will say goodbye now and thank you for this
38 conversation.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And thank you.....

41
42 MR. GLASS: Yeah, this is Tom. Thank
43 you as well and thank you for teaching the correct
44 pronunciation of Shaviovik if I did that right. I'll
45 keep trying. So thank you for your time, everybody, I
46 appreciate it.

47
48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Very good.
49 Shaviovik. I know that means where it sweats, the land
50

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1 sweats.

2

3 With that I propose that we recess
4 until tomorrow morning as this place will be used by
5 somebody else. Do we take our materials with us at
6 this point?

7

8 MS. HONIG: Yes, please.

9

10 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We're advising
11 everybody to take your materials as another party will
12 come in to use the multipurpose room.

13

14 And those of you that want a ride to
15 the hotel, I can give you guys a ride if you want a
16 ride.

17

18 MS. HONIG: Thank you.

19

20 MS. WESSELS: And we're meeting
21 tomorrow at 8:30 a.m.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay. I'll pick up
24 Earl and I'll pick up Esther.

25

26 (Off record)

27

28 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
) ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

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

THAT the foregoing pages numbered ____ through ____ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the NORTH SLOPE SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I taken electronically on the 13th day of October;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 7th
day of November 2022.

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