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SOUTHCENTRAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC MEETING

Dimond Center Hotel  
Anchorage, Alaska  
March 15, 2023  
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Greg Encelewski, Chairman
- Ed Holsten
- Heath Kocan
- Andrew McLaughlin
- Michael Opheim
- Hope Roberts
- Diane Selanoff
- Gloria Stickwan
- Donna Wilson
- Dennis Zadra

Regional Council Coordinator, Jessica Gill

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Anchorage, Alaska - 3/15/2023)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I'm going to call the Southcentral Regional Council to order March 15th here. It's approximately a couple minutes after 9:00. Gloria, would you like to do an invocation for us.

MS. STICKWAN: Okay.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Could you do that for us, please.

(Invocation)

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Gloria. We've got call to order. We've got invocation. We got roll call. Hope, would you like to do it or do you want Jessica to do it?

MS. ROBERTS: I can do it, sure.

Edward Holsten.

MR. HOLSTEN: Here.

MS. ROBERTS: Michael Opheim.

MR. OPHEIM: Here.

MS. ROBERTS: Richard G.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Encelewski.

Here.

MS. ROBERTS: Diane Selanoff.

MS. SELANOFF: Here.

MS. ROBERTS: Dennis Zadra.

MR. ZADRA: Here.

MS. ROBERTS: Gloria Stickwan.

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1 MS. STICKWAN: Here.

2

3 MS. ROBERTS: Angela Totemoff.

4

5 (No response)

6

7 MS. ROBERTS: Donna Claus.

8

9 (No response)

10

11 MS. ROBERTS: Andrew McLaughlin.

12

13 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Here.

14

15 MS. ROBERTS: Donna Wilson.

16

17 MS. WILSON: Here.

18

19 MS. ROBERTS: Hope Roberts. Here.

20

21 Heath Q.

22

23 MR. KOCAN: Kocan. Here.

24

25 MS. ROBERTS: We have 10 out of 12.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Alrighty. Thank  
28 you. Well, we have a quorum, so we're going to go  
29 ahead and get started here. I guess I've got Donna  
30 Wilson on the phone, is that correct -- I believe  
31 that's correct.

32

33 At this time I'm going to ask our  
34 coordinator Jessica to give us a few pointers to get  
35 started for the day. I'll turn it over to you and let  
36 you take care of that.

37

38 MS. GILL: Great. Thank you, Mr.  
39 Chair. For the record my name is Jessica Gill. I'm  
40 the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council Coordinator.  
41 Also welcome to the winter meeting of the Southcentral  
42 Regional Advisory Council. For those attending in  
43 person please make sure you sign in at the front table.  
44 There's a little round table in the back there just  
45 right as you enter. If you can please sign in, it  
46 helps with our administrative record.

47

48 For those on the teleconference line  
49 please keep yourself on mute. If you don't have a mute  
50

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1 button on your phone, press \*6 to mute and unmute  
2 yourself. If there's a distraction on the line, the  
3 operator will mute that line. Please don't place us on  
4 hold because it could create some interference on our  
5 end. And if you need to leave or have a bad  
6 connection, please hang up and call back in.

7  
8 The Council members represent people of  
9 their regions to the Board, the secretaries, agency  
10 staff and the general public. As secretary appointees,  
11 Council members also represent the Federal Subsistence  
12 Management Program to the people of their regions.  
13 Therefore, Council members are expected to treat fellow  
14 Council members, agency and organizational staff and  
15 members of the public with respect both at meetings and  
16 -- at public meetings and at other times. Council  
17 meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of  
18 Order.

19  
20 At the beginning of each day there will  
21 be an opportunity to provide public comment on  
22 non-agenda items. The Council Chair will announce this  
23 opportunity. This isn't testimony for proposals or  
24 agency report information as we have time on the agenda  
25 for that. With that I'll turn it back over to you.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Thank  
28 you, Jessica. We're going to go ahead and I'm going to  
29 do a little welcome and I'm going to ask you guys to  
30 introduce yourself here. We'll go around here shortly.  
31 For those that don't know me, I'm Greg Encelewski. I'm  
32 from Ninilchik. Current Chair. We'll elect another  
33 one here shortly. Maybe I'll get relieved of this  
34 duty. Anyway, for now, here I am.

35  
36 So we'll get started. Today a couple  
37 things on the welcome. We do have an agenda here.  
38 It's got a lot of reports and a lot of presentations.  
39 A lot of important stuff. So we'll take all the time  
40 we need, but we don't have a lot of action items.  
41 We've got a couple things we're going to add to the  
42 agenda. We'll just save that for the introduction.

43  
44 What I'd like to do is I'd like to go  
45 around the room. The Board members will give their  
46 talk here in a little bit and they'll tell a little bit  
47 about what they've been up to, but we'll go ahead and  
48 go around the room whichever way we want to start.  
49 Katya, I think we could start with you and we'll just  
50

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1 go around that way.

2

3 MS. WESSELS: After all these meetings  
4 I forgot that I need to come up to the microphone.  
5 Sorry about it. Good morning. My name is Katya  
6 Wessels and I'm Council Coordination Division  
7 Supervisor with OSM. Happy to see you all here in  
8 person.

9

10 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning, Mr.  
11 Chairman. Members of the Council. My name is Greg  
12 Risdahl. I am the USDA Forest Service Subsistence  
13 Program Leader and Interagency Staff Committee member.  
14 Here to answer questions and take notes. Thank you.

15

16 MR. ROBERTS: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
17 Members of the Council. I'm Jason Roberts. I'm an  
18 anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence  
19 Management.

20

21 MR. UBELAKER: Good morning. Brian  
22 Ubelaker, wildlife biologist with OSM.

23

24 MS. FLORES: Good morning. I'm  
25 Victoria Flores, Subsistence Program Analyst at the  
26 National Park Service.

27

28 MS. DETWILER: I'm Sue Detwiler, the  
29 Assistant Regional Director for Office of Subsistence  
30 Management.

31

32 MS. KETRON: Good morning. I'm  
33 Caroline Ketron. I'm the anthropologist at the  
34 Glennallen BLM.

35

36 MR. MASTERFIELD: Good morning. Jacob  
37 Masterfield, Associate Field Manager, Glennallen Field  
38 Office.

39

40 MR. MCKEE: Good morning. Chris McKee,  
41 Statewide Subsistence Coordinator for the Bureau of  
42 Land Management and Interagency Staff Committee member.

43

44 MR. WIGGLESWORTH: Good morning,  
45 everyone. My name is David Wigglesworth. I'm the  
46 Deputy Assistant Regional Director for Fish and Aquatic  
47 Conservation with Fish and Wildlife Service here in  
48 Alaska. Nice to see you all.

49

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1 MR. SCHMALZER: Good morning. I'm Dan  
2 Schmalzer. I'm a Subsistence Technician for the U.S.  
3 Forest Service out of Cordova.

4  
5 MS. THAMM: Good morning. I'm Heather  
6 Thamm. I'm with the Chugach National Forest  
7 subsistence staff member and I'm based out of Moose  
8 Pass.

9  
10 MR. BURCH: Good morning. I'm Mark  
11 Burch with the Department of Fish and Game.

12  
13 MR. SARAFIN: Good morning. Dave  
14 Sarafin, the Fisheries Management biologist at  
15 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

16  
17 MR. RINALDI: Good morning. This is  
18 Todd Rinaldi with the Alaska Department of Fish and  
19 Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation.

20  
21 MR. GORZE: Good morning. I'm Dan  
22 Gorze. I'm the fisheries biologist for Ahtna  
23 Intertribal Resource Commission in Glennallen.

24  
25 MS. SMITH: Good morning. I'm Toisan  
26 Deborah Smith from Sealaska, Goldbelt shareholder.

27  
28 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
29 Members of the Council. Good to see you all in person  
30 as always. I'm Robbin Lavine, Subsistence Policy  
31 Coordinator and the Chair of the Interagency Staff  
32 Committee.

33  
34 MS. KLEIN: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
35 Members of the Council. My name is Jill Klein and I  
36 work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as their  
37 Regional Subsistence Coordinator and I'm based here in  
38 Anchorage and also an Interagency Staff Committee  
39 member. Good morning.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: How about on the  
42 phone? Is there anyone else on the phone want to  
43 introduce themselves that's on there?

44  
45 MS. CELLARIUS: Good morning, Mr.  
46 Chair.

47  
48 MS. GILL: The person who just spoke  
49 can you give us your name, please.

50

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1 MS. CELLARIUS: Yes. I was just  
2 waiting to be acknowledged. It's Barbara Cellarius.  
3 I'm the cultural anthropologist and subsistence  
4 coordinator for Wrangell-St. Elias.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You sounded  
7 different. I didn't recognize you. Gotcha now though.  
8 Okay. Thank you, Barbara.

9  
10 Anyone else?

11  
12 MS. D'AMICO: Good morning, Mr. Chair  
13 and members of the board. This is Ruth D'Amico,  
14 District Ranger of the Seward Ranger District on the  
15 Chugach National Forest.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.

18  
19 MR. ESKELIN: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
20 Council members. Todd Eskelin with Kenai National  
21 Wildlife Refuge. Sorry I couldn't be there in person,  
22 but they only let me out of my dungeon once a year. So  
23 we'll see you next fall.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I was looking  
26 forward to really giving you a good time too on the  
27 moose or something. Okay. Thank you, Todd.

28  
29 MS. CRAVER: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
30 Members of the Council. This is Amy Craver from Denali  
31 National Park and Preserve Subsistence Coordinator.  
32 Thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Amy.

35  
36 MS. JOCHUM: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
37 Members of the Council. Kim Jochum, National Park  
38 Service Regional Office Subsistence Program.

39  
40 MS. OWEN: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
41 Members of the Council. This is Pat Owen. I'm a  
42 wildlife biologist at Denali National Park and  
43 Preserve.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.

46  
47 MR. CHEN: Aloha. Mr. Chair and  
48 Council Members. My name is Glenn Chen. I'm the  
49 Subsistence Branch Chief of Bureau of Indian Affairs.

50

0008

1 Always a pleasure to attend these meetings.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.

4 Anyone else?

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you.

9 We'll go ahead and get started then. Right now before  
10 us, Council Members, I have the agenda and each one of  
11 you should have gotten a new agenda, a revised agenda.  
12 We're going to revise it maybe some more here, but I'm  
13 going to open it up. One item I want to bring a  
14 highlight to is today at 1:00 o'clock, 1:30 time  
15 certain DOI wants to talk to us about some upcoming  
16 potential plans for them. So we will have them on and  
17 we can add that under Item M, but we need to do it at  
18 1:30 when they call.

19

20 So when someone makes a motion to  
21 approve, we'd like to add that to the agenda. Andy.

22

23 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Motion to approve that  
24 as you spoke.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Is  
27 there a second.

28

29 MR. OPHEIM: I'll second.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by  
32 Michael. Discussion.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
37 All in favor, aye.

38

39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

42

43 (No opposing votes)

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, that's on  
46 the agenda. Other additions, corrections. Andy.

47

48 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
49 I'm hoping to add making a motion here specifically on  
50



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1 old business, 11(b) to follow up on delegations of  
2 authority.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, 11(b)  
5 delegations of authority by Andy. Is there a second.

6

7 MR. OPHEIM: I'll second.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by  
10 Michael. Discussion.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
15 All in favor aye.

16

17 IN UNISON: Aye.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

20

21 (No opposing votes)

22

23 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: So carries. Any  
24 other additions or corrections to the agenda with those  
25 two additions?

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Now I'll  
30 entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as amended with  
31 the two additions.

32

33 MR. HOLSTEN: I'll make that motion.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Ed.

36

37 MR. OPHEIM: I'll second that.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by  
40 Michael. Any discussion.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
45 All in favor aye.

46

47 IN UNISON: Aye.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

50

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1 (No opposing votes)

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CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: So carries.

We've got an agenda. Man, we're going to rock and roll now. Okay, thank you. At this time, Jessica, I'm going to turn it over to you, but just before I do I think I'm ready to -- okay, we have to have election of officers. So I'm going to turn this meeting over to Jessica for that for now for the Chair. Thank you.

MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Again, this is Jessica Gill for the record and the Council Coordinator for the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council and the designated Federal official.

In accordance with the Council Charter, Council members elect a Chair, a Vice Chair and a Secretary for a one-year term. The term usually starts at the beginning of the calendar year.

I would now like to open the floor for nominations for Council Chair. These nominations do not need to be seconded. Are there any nominations for the Chair position?

MR. OPHEIM: I'll nominate Greg.

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Second, though he doesn't need it.

MS. SELANOFF: Move to close nominations for the Chair.

MS. GILL: All right. So Mr. Greg Encelewski was nominated for the position of Council Chair. Any further nominations.

(No comments)

MS. GILL: Not seeing any. So if there are no further nominations I will declare the nominations for Chair closed. The nominations for Greg Encelewski as Chair for the Southcentral Regional Advisory Council please signify by saying yea.

IN UNISON: Yea.

MS. GILL: All right. So those opposed signify by saying nay.

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1 (No opposing votes)

2

3 MS. GILL: No opposing votes. So, all  
4 right, Mr. Chair, you're back as Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All right. I  
7 can't get out of it. I guess I'm here for a while.  
8 Thank you, thank you, thank you for your confidence. I  
9 will keep moving on and try to do the best we can here.  
10 Okay. I am going to open the nominations for Vice  
11 Chair at this time. Is there a nomination there?

12

13 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: I nominate Gloria  
14 Stickwan Vice Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Gloria Stickwan.

17

18 MS. STICKWAN: I decline.

19

20 MR. OPHEIM: I'll nominate Andy.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We've got a  
23 nomination for Andy. Is there a second.

24

25 MS. STICKWAN: I move to close.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We could close.  
28 We've got a nomination. We've been moved and seconded  
29 and moved to close for Andy for Vice Chair. Is there  
30 any other nominations?

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
35 All in favor of Andy, aye.

36

37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

40

41 MS. WILSON: Aye.

42

43 MS. GILL: Ms. Wilson, was that an aye  
44 in favor of Andy?

45

46 MS. WILSON: Yes.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. That  
49 carries. Yeah, we get a little delay on the phone

50

0012

1 there. Okay. I will now open the floor for Secretary.  
2 Nominations are open. Go ahead, Gloria.

3

4 MS. STICKWAN: I nominate Michael.

5

6 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Second.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Moved and  
9 seconded for Michael. Okay.

10

11 MS. SELANOFF: Move to close  
12 nominations.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, does anyone  
15 else want to -- it's been moved to close nominations.  
16 Is there anyone they accept? Any further nominations?

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Do you accept the  
21 nomination, Michael?

22

23 MR. OPHEIM: Yeah.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. There's no  
26 further nominations.

27

28 MR. ZADRA: I would move to nominate  
29 Hope Roberts.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. We've got  
32 a nomination for Hope Roberts again. Is there a  
33 second?

34

35 MS. WILSON: I'll second that. This is  
36 Donna.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Donna seconded  
39 it. So we've got moved and seconded. Okay. Jessica,  
40 how are we going to do this? We've got two  
41 nominations. Do you want to handle that by roll call  
42 or how do you want to do it?

43

44 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes,  
45 we'll do a roll call vote. I'll do Michael first and  
46 then I'll do Hope. One second. So roll call vote for  
47 Michael as Secretary. Ed Holsten.

48

49 MR. HOLSTEN: Yes.

50

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1 MS. GILL: Michael Opheim.

2

3 MR. OPHEIM: Yes.

4

5 MS. GILL: Greg Encelewski.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I'll reserve my  
8 vote until the end.

9

10 MS. GILL: Okay. Thank you. Diane  
11 Selanoff.

12

13 MS. SELANOFF: Yes.

14

15 MS. GILL: Dennis Zadra.

16

17 MR. ZADRA: No.

18

19 MS. GILL: Gloria Stickwan.

20

21 MS. STICKWAN: I don't know.

22

23 MS. GILL: I'll hang on to your vote  
24 until the end. Angela -- oh, Angela is not here. Andy  
25 McLaughlin.

26

27 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Yea.

28

29 MS. GILL: Donna Wilson.

30

31 MS. WILSON: Yea.

32

33 MS. GILL: Hope Roberts.

34

35 MS. ROBERTS: (Indiscernible - away  
36 from microphone)

37

38 MS. GILL: All right. Heath Kocan.

39

40 MR. KOCAN: Yea.

41

42 MS. GILL: Back to Gloria.

43

44 MS. STICKWAN: I think I'll vote for  
45 Hope.

46

47 MS. GILL: Okay. Greg Encelewski.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I'll give Hope a  
50

0014

1 shot, but it sounds like Michael won. But anyway, it  
2 is what it is.

3

4 MR. OPHEIM: Thank you.

5

6 MS. GILL: Yes, I have six yes votes  
7 for Michael, so it looks like Michael was nominated.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Michael,  
10 I'll turn it over to you. No, I'm kidding. You might  
11 be surprised though. You're going to get some stuff.  
12 Okay, thank you.

13

14 Now if you guys want to take a look at  
15 your previous minutes, let's take a look at the minutes  
16 from October 12-13.

17

18 (Pause)

19

20 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Anyone got any  
21 additions, corrections they see? The floor is open for  
22 a motion to accept if not.

23

24 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Motion to approve.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Andy.  
27 Is there a second?

28

29 MR. HOLSTEN: Second.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by Ed.  
32 Any discussion.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
37 All in favor aye.

38

39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

42

43 (No opposing votes)

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Motion carries.  
46 We do have official minutes 12/13/22. Thank you.

47

48 All right. Now at this time we're  
49 going to do Council member reports. Diane, I think

50

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1 I'll just start with you around there and then we'll  
2 get to the phone at the end. If you want to just tell  
3 us a little bit about how you've been, how you survived  
4 the winter or didn't survive and what's going on in  
5 your area. Thank you.

6  
7 MS. SELANOFF: All right. I made some  
8 phone calls to get some other opinions and it came  
9 immediately to the fishing net. It was like an 80  
10 percent low last year. With it being spring now and  
11 the anticipation of the upcoming fishing season that's  
12 weighing on everybody's minds and wondering how that  
13 will be, but it was an 80 percent low for both the reds  
14 and the kings, but they were able to supplement over  
15 the winter with humpies or pinks if you prefer to call  
16 them.

17  
18 With it being spring too a lot of  
19 thought is going like to the bears and the hunters that  
20 are out. Those have been in good population. The only  
21 thing with the bears is people who are hunting them  
22 from, you know, out of town are not respectful of the  
23 lands that they're on. It's supposed to be more like  
24 beach hunts, but they end up doing a lot of  
25 trespassing. So that's on people's minds again.

26  
27 As for the moose last fall they didn't  
28 have too much of a moose take, so there wasn't a lot of  
29 moose subsistence in people's diets this past winter.  
30 It just seemed like it was not a good season.

31  
32 We were talking about even something  
33 like the berries. There's a moth in the Cook Inlet  
34 area that's been affecting some of the plants. The  
35 salmonberries seem to have been fine, but it's the  
36 blueberries that seem to have been impacted more. The  
37 shellfish that's always good. That's been fine, so  
38 that diet of shellfish has been pretty good.

39  
40 Last winter -- well, this winter I  
41 guess I should say the community was able to go out and  
42 set nets and get some codfish and able to share them  
43 locally, so that was a really good treat in like  
44 January when everybody was gathering for like (in  
45 Native) and (in Native) fish was shared generously and  
46 nets were put out daily. With that there's a lot more  
47 anticipation for the herring coming in. It's always a  
48 favorite.

49  
50

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1 I guess that's it for my area that I  
2 can think of now. I'm probably going to think of like  
3 10 more things after I'm two or three people down.  
4 Anyway, thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Diane.  
7 Heath, good to see you here in person. Your turn to  
8 speak.

9

10 MR. KOCAN: Thank you. Unfortunately I  
11 was gone most of the fall and winter. I went out of  
12 state for a while. In general I feel like on the moose  
13 most everyone I know that got tags ended up getting  
14 their moose around Cordova. Hopefully the silver  
15 fishing is a little better coming into this year. It  
16 was pretty bad. At least what I got to do at the  
17 beginning of fall last year.

18

19 Yeah, that's all I've got for right  
20 now.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.  
23 Michael.

24

25 MR. OPHEIM: Yeah, we've been having a  
26 pretty good winter. Rabbits seem to be in decline this  
27 year with that cycle going. Not as many porcupine  
28 around either. We had a lot of moose down on the road  
29 this winter. A lot of snow I guess up high pushed them  
30 down. I've seen at least eight different moose in the  
31 last few weeks. One cow she had a bit of a limp to  
32 her, so hopefully that won't affect her down the road.  
33 Then one cow she was huge. I hope she has twins. It  
34 would be nice to see the moose population bounce back a  
35 little more than what it has been.

36

37 Not too many coyotes. No wolves. It  
38 sounds like the wolves may have moved down towards Port  
39 Graham/Nanwalek area. I was talking to somebody  
40 yesterday and heard they had some wolves down there.  
41 That's kind of interesting they moved down.

42

43 Lots of people doing really good on  
44 winter kings. One guy, he rows around the bay, and he  
45 said he got three strokes outside the harbor and had  
46 one on. So that's pretty good fishing. Lots of ducks.  
47 It's been pretty nice the last few years. More and  
48 more ducks showing up. Swans overwintering in the area.  
49 They move between Chrome Bay and Seldovia Bay depending  
50



0017

1 on the weather during the wintertime, so kind of fun  
2 seeing them come in and out.

3

4 We did have in our goat hunt there two  
5 nannies harvested. We haven't had nannies harvested in  
6 the area in forever, but it was folks it sounded like  
7 from out of town. It wasn't anybody local. It sounded  
8 like they didn't much care for whether they harvested a  
9 billy or not and they weren't going to do it again  
10 anyway, so it was just they harvested what they  
11 harvested. Unfortunately our herd is a little small  
12 and we'd like to see it continue to grow. Hopefully  
13 that will not happen so much anymore.

14

15 We did have one moose wash up. It was  
16 reported to Fish and Game. I guess that's somewhat  
17 normal. They swim to different locations and sometimes  
18 don't make it. That's kind of a bummer.

19

20 Yeah, it's been a pretty good winter in  
21 Seldovia. Hopefully spring is here.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We're going to  
24 come to Seldovia. Thank you.

25

26 MR. ZADRA: Good morning, everybody. A  
27 report from the Cordova area. We had a lot of snow  
28 early on in the winter and people were pretty concerned  
29 about the deer populations. Deer hunting was good,  
30 then it warmed up and started to rain and melted the  
31 snow and turned it into a bunch of ice and it continued  
32 to rain and it melted all the ice. So we had pretty  
33 much brown ground for a big part of the winter.  
34 February it did start snowing again. I think the deer  
35 population is going to be just fine.

36

37 A little side note. I drew a Copper  
38 River bison tag this last year and then was able to go  
39 up in February and hunt that. It's the first time I'd  
40 been up in that country in the wintertime in a long,  
41 long time. It's pretty spectacular. That was a real  
42 enjoyable experience.

43

44 I wanted to touch on the Fish and Game  
45 forecast for the Copper River. They forecast a  
46 midpoint range of 53,000 kings coming up, which is 15  
47 percent above the 10-year average, so that's a pretty  
48 optimistic forecast. The king run actually came in  
49 above forecast last year. If that trend continues,  
50

0018

1 it's a good chance we're going to see quite a few kings  
2 in the Copper.

3

4

5 The wild sockeye run is 1.6 million,  
6 which is 9 percent below the 10-year average, but it's  
7 above what it's been the last few years. So that's  
8 encouraging as well. The downside is the Gulkana  
9 hatchery for catch is only 49,000 fish, which is 68  
10 percent below the 10-year average. Basically those  
11 fish are just not getting to the hatchery. Something  
12 is happening to them before they had a chance to do  
13 that. Hopefully that's going to get addressed.

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I just finished up the statewide Board of Fish meeting, which was I felt a very good meeting and all. I think the significant thing that came out of it the Board did pass Proposition 165 and that eliminates commercial guides from guiding in subsistence fisheries. So they can still guide in personal use fisheries, but in the Prince William Sound the Board of Fish two years ago the Board decided to not allow them to guide in the Glennallen Subdistrict, but basically now has expanded it statewide. So I think that's moving in the right direction.

That's pretty much all I got.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Dennis. Hope, how about you.

MS. ROBERTS: Like Heath I've had to -- I left for part of the fall, but I found it hard to find sea otters and seals. It was just not cost efficient. I ended up going to an entirely different region to find them where they were plentiful. The ones I did find in the area are typically smaller than those in other areas.

That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you. Gloria.

MS. STICKWAN: We had a one-day meeting at Copper Center for the Wrangell-St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission meeting. It was a two-day, but we ended business in one day. Made comments on the Proposed National Preserve Lands and I emailed it too and she has a copy for you to look at later when we go

0019

1 through that. We also made comments on the closure  
2 review. Those are the ones I'm talking about that  
3 she's emailed to you. Sue Entsminger was voted as  
4 chair and I was accepted as vice chair.

5

6 I don't remember what else to say. I  
7 left my notes at home.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Gloria.  
10 Thank you. Andy.

11

12 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Yeah, similar to  
13 Dennis's wintertime observations we had snow start on  
14 early and then a large six-week window of rain. Lots  
15 of freezing and ice then a lot of snow came on. Then  
16 again now probably at sea level we have about three or  
17 four feet of base.

18

19 From my experience the deer population  
20 dynamic gets hit the worse the tail end of winter.  
21 That's when they kind of lost all their fat and the  
22 stresses. We find the dead ones on the beach after the  
23 late winter gets hard. I'm glad the middle of the  
24 winter seemed kind of mild, but we'll see what happens  
25 with the deer. I don't know. Keeping my finger on the  
26 pulse of that.

27

28 I see right now the high elevations not  
29 a lot of snow pack up there, which is not typical.  
30 Usually there's cornices and things coming off the top  
31 of avalanche zones, but willows and alders are sticking  
32 out up there and usually they're completely buried.

33

34 That kind of leads me to believe that  
35 we're going to have one of those low water summer  
36 events where there's no snow melt runoff on those years  
37 I see where salmon don't even know which -- where the  
38 streams are because the streams are just gravel and the  
39 salmon just kind of mull around in the saltwater. So  
40 that might  
41 be a natural-hatched salmon issue. Not the hatcheries,  
42 but the natural streams.

43

44 Silvers seem to kind of not really  
45 happen last fall. Not a great catch. There's a silver  
46 salmon derby out there in Chenega and it was a no-catch  
47 silvers thing. Humpies were entered. Winter clam  
48 digging I noticed a lot of the historical beds where  
49 the hard shell, not the soft shells, are just -- looks

50

0020

1 like a mine field happened out there. So many sea  
2 otters. So come on over. We have plenty of sea otters  
3 around where we are.

4

5 Herring so far have been a no show.  
6 Typically in the winter we have humpback whales like  
7 wintering before they head off to Hawaii, but have not  
8 had any humpback whales this winter like typical  
9 between January/February-ish. That's usually a factor  
10 of the larger schools of herring that are out there,  
11 but that's not happening.

12

13 I've seen no mountain goats on  
14 Bainbridge. There used to be, you know, half a dozen  
15 or 10, but those are non-existent in the places that  
16 they typically have been. I think there's a lot of  
17 less subsistence activity going on due to prices in  
18 gas. Fuel prices went up. They trucked the fuel out  
19 there, so upwards of \$8 a gallon puts the kibosh on  
20 people freely jumping in a boat and going and doing  
21 excursions. Especially things that require boating.

22

23 Fewer deer were harvested this winter.  
24 That's a factor of fewer hunters too. The one deer  
25 that I got on the opening day went to -- two-thirds of  
26 it went to the community. You know, about six  
27 households.

28

29 Winter trawling from what I hear, not  
30 in the village of Chenega, but Tatitlek and areas north  
31 and over by Cordova people are getting a few winter  
32 kings.

33

34 I just wanted to mention that the  
35 animals that are harvested, fish and game mammals,  
36 commonly are caught on Alaska sport licenses and tags.  
37 I mean everybody kind of knows this, but they're shared  
38 in village life subsistence-wise. To me they're not  
39 typically sport animals that are being taken, but  
40 they're being recorded as that, but they're definitely  
41 subsistence animals.

42

43 That's it for Chenega. Thanks.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Andy.  
46 Ed, do you want to go ahead?

47

48 MR. HOLSTEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
49 Just a few comments. Like most have talked about we

50

0021

1 had snowier than normal winter. Fortunately we've had  
2 little or no rain. So we've got a pretty good  
3 snowpack. Just talking to folks this morning it's  
4 snowing in Cooper Landing right now.

5

6 What was kind of unusual after the  
7 first couple of large snows we had about two or three  
8 brown bears wandering around. Everybody was trying to  
9 figure out what that was about. Fortunately no bad  
10 things happened. The bears made it back into their  
11 dens.

12

13 Rabbit populations are high, still  
14 high, which is good. Seen more moose and more younger  
15 yearlings than normal. A lot of that might be due to  
16 heavy snowfall driving them down a little lower. On  
17 the flip side, the good side is hardly any road kill  
18 this winter, which is good.

19

20 The last thing, and I'm sure there will  
21 be some discussion about this. Greg might talk about  
22 this. We're facing some severe closures on chinook  
23 this year.

24

25 That's all for now. Welcome everybody.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Ed.  
28 We have two Council members on the phone. We've got  
29 Donna Claus. Do you want to speak first? She's not  
30 there? Donna Wilson.

31

32 MS. WILSON: Yes, I am here and just  
33 getting bits and pieces. I'm in Arizona. You're in  
34 Alaska. It takes a while for those sound bits to get  
35 through. I am here.

36

37 The only comment I would have at this  
38 time is that there's been some concern expressed about  
39 the proposed truck route or hauling route for the  
40 mining activity up near Tok and the possible  
41 environmental impacts of dust and high traffic with the  
42 transport of those materials. Somebody compared it to  
43 the Red Dog Mine. I'm not sure what that's about. I  
44 just was wondering if there were any studies or any  
45 kind of information available on environmental things  
46 in relation to that proposed haul road.

47

48 That's it. Thank you.

49

50

0022

1                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Yeah,  
2 if Jessica or anyone gathers information on that,  
3 they'll get it sent to you. Thank you.

4  
5                   Did I get everyone, Jessica, except  
6 myself? Okay. I want to give a little report here on  
7 some of the stuff on the Peninsula. I'll try not to be  
8 subjective or personal about it, but there's a lot  
9 happening there.

10  
11                   I know we're in the winter cycle, so  
12 let me tell you a little bit about winter. Ed is  
13 correct. A lot of snow, but good. It was snow and  
14 didn't turn to rain. It was actually a nice winter, a  
15 real winter, but way the hell too much snow. We can't  
16 even move, but it's opened it up. There's a lot of  
17 snowmachiners down there. Oil companies are doing some  
18 seismic work. We're a little bit concerned. I've been  
19 pushing back on some of this because of the noise and  
20 the impact on the peninsula.

21  
22                   There's a lot of people, a lot of  
23 activity moving around. That definitely affects  
24 animals moving around. The moose are up to their  
25 bellies. They're eating pine trees I've never seen  
26 before. They're chewing on pine trees, stuff that they  
27 shouldn't be eating. Hard to get around. Spooked and  
28 dogs and animals chasing them. So quite a few little  
29 die-offs too on the little ones. Hopefully it doesn't  
30 affect it.

31  
32                   The fall hunting went fairly good in  
33 Ninilchik. You know, we keep a pretty good track from  
34 the association side on all our roads and then we work  
35 with the Fish and Game. There was a fair amount of  
36 nice bulls taken. We're still restricted to the spike  
37 and three brow tine on the State side. The Feds, their  
38 hunt up there, Todd will be reporting on that. I think  
39 they got a few and it's a pretty good hunt. We really  
40 enjoy that.

41  
42                   The clams continue to be shut down.  
43 We're going to be talking about clams a little bit  
44 today. The Ninilchik area has been shut down for about  
45 five years now. People are going across the bay to get  
46 their clams and they're even getting a little loose and  
47 getting down to where they're getting kind of scarcer  
48 and harder to get.

49  
50

0023

1                   Just recently tanner crabs closed.  
2 People got good tanner crab down there. I was lucky to  
3 get a few of those. That was really good.

4  
5                   There's a lot of stuff going on on the  
6 fisheries. Even though it's winter, you know, the  
7 winter kings and the king derby in Homer is going on  
8 here this weekend, I think, or next weekend. They  
9 continue to do fairly well, but they're even getting  
10 not as good as it used to be.

11  
12                   What's happening on the fishery is --  
13 you know, the projection for the year on the Kenai  
14 River streams is about 5 million. That's about mid to  
15 normal. That's all streams. Kasilof, Kenai, Susitna,  
16 all that together. So it's actually a little under  
17 prediction. But there's closures and we've never seen  
18 closures this early on the kings. All the streams on  
19 the Kenai Peninsula are closed to king fishing for any  
20 wild stock.

21  
22                   The only river that's left open for  
23 sports fishing is the Ninilchik. They have a hatchery  
24 fish in there. In my opinion and in the village's  
25 opinion they've ruined our rivers anywhere there. The  
26 hatchery fish are a terminal fish. They let them fish  
27 them, but they also catch wild stock. They get to  
28 release them. For some reason Ninilchik's was left  
29 open. Everything else is closed to wild stock;  
30 Kasilof, Kenai, Homer. Even to sportsmen in the  
31 saltwater. So it's a big change on the Kenai.

32  
33                   There's a battle going on between the  
34 drift gill fleet and the Feds and the State. The  
35 economic exclusion zone they call it, which is a big  
36 chunk of the inlet on the southern side. It's managed  
37 by the State for years. They quit managing it and  
38 wanted to close it. The Feds are supposed to come in  
39 and manage it. They didn't want to manage it and they  
40 got court ordered to comply with the Magnuson-Stevens  
41 Act. So they're getting ready to make a decision on  
42 that.

43  
44                   The setnetters on the Kenai Peninsula  
45 are closed again. This is the earliest officially  
46 they're closed because of the kings. So no fishing for  
47 me. I'm going to be a tourist, I guess. Anyway a lot  
48 of things are happening there.

49  
50

0024

1                   Just to tell you, you know, we're in a  
2 game cycle. There was a few wolves taken around  
3 Ninilchik. Not as many as before. There's a lot of  
4 coyotes running around though too.

5  
6                   I just want to tell you briefly, and I  
7 don't want to take too much time, but the fisheries is  
8 becoming such a concern all over the state. The Kenai  
9 Peninsula is no exception to that. The Cook Inlet  
10 tribes have formed a group. It's Cook Inlet Fishery  
11 Group. They're meeting here in Anchorage the 30th and  
12 it's really to address concerns of subsistence fish and  
13 for their villages because they're really hurting and  
14 it's getting pretty bad. So those things are going on.  
15 The fishery is just really getting kind of scarce with  
16 the kings because they're all pretty small.

17  
18                   Anyway, any other questions I'll  
19 answer, but that's my report. We're still kicking.  
20 We're still -- you know, food security is just getting  
21 to be a little bit of concern. As you know, nationwide  
22 there's a lot of things going on. More and more I'm  
23 hearing that the subsistence is really becoming  
24 important to all villages. Not just in our region, but  
25 other regions. Thank you.

26  
27                   At this time I'm going to acknowledge a  
28 couple people who came in the room. We went around and  
29 introduced everyone. Judy, I see you're here. It's a  
30 pleasure to see you. Orville, I see you came in and  
31 signed up. Anyone else I missed just sign in or let  
32 people know you're here. If you want to talk a little  
33 bit to introduce yourself, you can at this time. If  
34 not, we'll move on.

35  
36                   Okay. Now we have on our agenda every  
37 day we have public and tribal comments on non-agenda  
38 items. So that is available at this time. If there's  
39 any comments on non-agenda items, public or tribal. I  
40 will announce that every day.

41  
42                   (No comments)

43  
44                   Okay. We're ready to go to old  
45 business. We would like to start out by a follow up on  
46 the May 2023 North American caribou workshop. I think  
47 Brian is going to give that.

48  
49                   MR. UBELAKER: Correct. Good morning,  
50



0025

1 Mr. Chair. Council members. For the record my name is  
2 Brian Ubelaker. I'm a wildlife biologist with the  
3 Office of Subsistence Management.

4  
5 During your fall 2022 meeting you heard  
6 about the Caribou and Ungulate Conference. Ungulates  
7 are the dictionary definition of hoofed mammals. We  
8 understand there was some confusion. So it's the  
9 Caribou and Ungulate Conference that's taking place in  
10 Anchorage this May.

11  
12 All Councils nominated one member to  
13 attend the conference and provide input on Alaska  
14 Ungulate Management Symposium. An informational flyer  
15 about this conference can be found in your meeting  
16 books on Page 14. Before I proceed would any Council  
17 members like an overview reminder of the conference?

18  
19 (No comments)

20  
21 MR. UBELAKER: Okay. I will move on.  
22 On Page 15 of your meeting books please find a summary  
23 of all potential topics suggested by Councils for  
24 discussion during the State and Federal Ungulate  
25 Management in Alaska Symposium.

26  
27 This session is intended to be a  
28 neutral forum for Council members, State Fish and Game  
29 Advisory Committee members, National Park Service,  
30 Subsistence Resource Commission members, Federal and  
31 State agency staff and other interested parties to  
32 discuss ungulate management in Alaska, specifically  
33 regarding harvest regulations.

34  
35 During the fall 2022 meeting cycle all  
36 Councils provided input on potential topics to discuss  
37 during this symposium. Several Councils asked for a  
38 follow-up summary list during these winter meetings.  
39 Councils are now being asked to review this list and  
40 provide additional feedback for this symposium such as  
41 highlighting topics of particular interest or providing  
42 clarification on topics.

43  
44 OSM Staff will then decide which topics  
45 will be discussed during the symposium based on  
46 feedback from all 10 Councils, prioritizing topics that  
47 are relevant statewide and applicable to all regions  
48 and Councils.

49  
50

0026

1 Mr. Chair, now I turn the discussion  
2 over to you. Any feedback will be very helpful in  
3 finalizing the discussion topics for the symposium.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Very good,  
6 Brian. Council members, if you have any topics you  
7 want to add to this, Gloria is going to attend for us.  
8 Is there anything that we would like to add to this  
9 list or anything you want to help Brian out with.  
10 Anyone got any ideas? We've got quite a list here. If  
11 anyone comes, they could send stuff to Gloria too, I  
12 guess.

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All right. I  
17 guess we're good. Thank you, Brian. If you want to  
18 stay there, you're going to do the next one under new  
19 business.

20  
21 MR. UBELAKER: You're going to be  
22 hearing from me quite a bit for the next foreseeable  
23 future.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We've got the  
26 Wildlife Closure Review.

27  
28 MS. GILL: Mr. Chair. We added an item  
29 B to this old business part.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Oh, we did.  
32 Brian, sorry about that. I've got it in a little tiny  
33 pencil here. It says 11(b). That was what Andy added.  
34 Okay. Andy, you want to talk to that first? Brian, if  
35 you want to just hold off a minute.

36  
37 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
38 I think it can be kind of fast here. It's an old  
39 business topic that I think for a lot of new faces on  
40 the Council and also in the room in case we have people  
41 who weren't around. Some people here were back at like  
42 the Homer meeting when this -- we had like a half a day  
43 learning about delegations of authority and a vote  
44 happened a long time ago. I've brought this up  
45 multiple times.

46  
47 It was where we had the snowpocalypse  
48 and deer had an issue in Prince William Sound Unit 6D.  
49 The snow was very deep. Milo Burcham was our manager  
50

0027

1 at the time. Federal manager for Chugach National  
2 Forest. He called around to, you know, myself and  
3 other key members of villages in Prince William Sound  
4 who are kind of the eyes and ears of what's going on  
5 out there with the deer population.

6  
7 After that consultation we all agreed,  
8 yes, go ahead and close it because we had already  
9 closed it ourselves. We had already said, okay, we're  
10 not going to hunt anything. These deer are having a  
11 bad time, you know. So we voted on a delegation of  
12 authority to allow that Federal manager to be able to  
13 make a quick decision, but in that point in time in the  
14 recommendations that we as a Council gave to the Board  
15 forwarding to the Board was a two-year sunset clause.  
16 Let it go for a couple years and then go away.

17  
18 Well, what happened is I asked Tim  
19 Towarak who was on the Board at the time why that  
20 sunset clause didn't -- he said I didn't even know  
21 about it. So a failure of communication had happened  
22 where that clause that we put in our recommendation did  
23 not move upward and this is way beyond the two year --  
24 this is like four or five years now since that two-year  
25 sunset clause thing.

26  
27 So there's four or five main points  
28 that I want to bring up, okay, about this that I'm  
29 planning to make a motion. I'm going to make a motion  
30 in a moment here to rescind that Federal management  
31 because the sunset clause wasn't in there.

32  
33 Here's the points that I came up with.  
34 There was the original failure of the OSM to include  
35 the sunset clause that we've put in our recommendation  
36 to go to the Board when that initial delegation of this  
37 authority was created.

38  
39 By the way, talking to Milo, I said  
40 what would that have done for you if you'd had it.  
41 He's like, well, seven days maybe, 10 days, I could  
42 have reacted that many days earlier to the thing in the  
43 overall take of Federal subsistence deer in Prince  
44 William Sound. I asked him is that a significant  
45 statistical relevance to the population? He's like,  
46 no, not really.

47  
48 So that Delegation of Authority is kind  
49 of somewhat of a moot point. We as a Council -- that's  
50

0028

1 why we exist, so that these managers can ask us who  
2 have our finger on the pulse of the population as to  
3 how it's doing. Very commonly I've seen even with the  
4 State Fish and Game biologists that are responsible for  
5 the wildlife populations where we live we know a little  
6 more about what's going on. Then they do the pellet  
7 count and they're like, oh, yeah, I guess the pellet  
8 count does reflect what you guys were saying.

9  
10 So there's a thing where we need to be  
11 consulted in my opinion and I'm not an advocate of  
12 delegations of authority and I would encourage people  
13 that are new on the Council here to realize that this  
14 delegation of authority thing removes us from the chain  
15 and there's no more required consultation for us to be  
16 able to provide input on that non -- I understand  
17 sometimes in a timely manner these decisions would be  
18 smart to be made real quickly.

19  
20 MS. SELANOFF: What does the Delegation  
21 of Authority authorize? What does it do exactly?

22  
23 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: That means the manager  
24 like Milo did not have to call Council members to get  
25 input to make the decision.

26  
27 MS. SELANOFF: Okay. So if he didn't  
28 have to do that, he made that decision on his own.  
29 Does he do that with everything or just.....

30  
31 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Just specifically with  
32 the deer and the moose of Unit 6D in Prince William  
33 Sound.

34  
35 MS. SELANOFF: Okay.

36  
37 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: And that's something  
38 that I think the local people should be consulted  
39 about. To get you some history on this, a long time  
40 ago there was Mr. Blossom, Showalter, elders on this  
41 Council from Soldotna, Sterling area. They had a very  
42 bad taste in their mouth about historical delegations  
43 of authority that happened down on the Kenai for moose.  
44 So I'm kind of knowing what other experienced members  
45 had in their minds, you know. I know some other people  
46 here also would recall the strong opinions.

47  
48 MS. SELANOFF: So the delegation of  
49 authority is this specifically for the deer population  
50

0029

1 or in general across the board for.....

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9

10 authority do we have currently outstanding?

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MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Each delegation of authority has to be voted on. The longer you stay on this Council you'll see. They'll propose more delegations of authority so managers don't have to consult us anymore on specific species.

MS. SELANOFF: How many delegations of authority do we have currently outstanding?

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: OSM would be able to tell you. I think there's the Kenai River fishery.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: There's a lot of them out there, but just so we're specific here Andy is talking strictly to the delegation Unit 6 for deer and moose. So that's what we're dealing with now.

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Yeah.

MS. STICKWAN: Maybe a review of delegation of authority after Andy is finished would be good for her.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Go ahead, Robbin.

MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair and members of the Council. Delegation of authority letters are a delegation by the Board to Federal managers to act in very specific ways under Board authority. In particular we're looking for options for those managers to respond really quickly in emergency situations. We usually can provide an update on all of the delegation of authority letters in your region, wildlife, fisheries. These have been really important tools in many locations and regions.

If you wish, we can talk to our staff to see if someone with a little more background than myself can speak to just the process of delegation of authority letters, what they do for your region and your role in understanding and supporting that process.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Robbin.

0030

1 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Yeah, I'm speaking  
2 specifically to the deer and moose of Prince William  
3 Sound Unit 6. So no more Milo Burcham as our manager,  
4 who is retired. Prior to that delegation of authority  
5 Milo had been required to call the Southcentral RAC  
6 members for opinions and input before he made his  
7 decisions.

8  
9 In my opinion RAC members themselves  
10 are the eyes and ears for the managers and we're the  
11 boots on the ground who keep our finger on the pulse of  
12 the population and we are very keenly aware of the  
13 abundance. I think we should be consulted before these  
14 type of closures happen.

15  
16 Like I mentioned, during the  
17 snowpocalypse there was no delegation of authority at  
18 that time. The population still remains viable today  
19 even though the manager had to call us. So it wasn't  
20 like he needed that delegation of authority, you know,  
21 so it's just kind of something that happened. The  
22 two-year sunset clause not being put into there is why  
23 this is being brought back up.

24  
25 So on record right now the sunset  
26 clause was to be included and then we were told at that  
27 time that, oh, it would just take a motion at any  
28 meeting to rescind it. Well, this is that time. This  
29 is four or five years after the two-year sunset clause.  
30 So I'm making a motion to rescind the Unit 6B Federal  
31 delegation of authority.

32  
33 MS. SELANOFF: I'll second.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. We've got  
36 a motion by Andy and seconded by Diane to rescind a  
37 delegation of authority in Unit 6B for moose and deer.  
38 Any discussion about the matter we're about to vote on.  
39 Go ahead, Ed.

40  
41 MR. HOLSTEN: Yeah, I just have a  
42 query. The board members, those of you that are  
43 familiar with 6D, work in that area, what's your take  
44 on the delegation of authority in the 6D. Is it  
45 working? Is it not working?

46  
47 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead, Dennis.

48  
49 MR. ZADRA: Well, I'm just trying to  
50

0031

1 get clear myself and Andy is probably better, but this  
2 only alludes or involves Federal subsistence harvest,  
3 correct?

4

5 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Correct.

6

7 MR. ZADRA: And it has nothing to do  
8 with what the State does in their stuff. So in my  
9 point it's like -- and Milo I think was right --  
10 there's minimal Federal subsistence harvest. Most  
11 people in Unit 6D take their deer under a State tag.  
12 That's all. That was my question that this does not  
13 have anything to do with State management.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good  
16 clarification. Okay, Robbin. We've got a motion and a  
17 second on the floor. I'm ready for a vote. I'll let  
18 you speak, but I'm not sure of the procedure, but go  
19 ahead.

20

21 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
22 Further information for your consideration as you  
23 prepare to take your vote. Within the delegation of  
24 authority letter the Board first would have taken  
25 action on the delegation of authority letter. If there  
26 was a sunset clause that would have been included. If  
27 it would have changed, you would have been notified.  
28 Your request can go to the Board and the Board will  
29 take action on your recommendation. So anything that  
30 you start here will go directly to the Board.

31

32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's where  
35 we're going. Very good. Okay. I've got a motion,  
36 second, discussion. Let's go ahead and take a vote.  
37 All in favor aye.

38

39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

42

43 (No opposing votes)

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
46 That carries. Thank you, Andy. Sorry for the  
47 oversight. Brian, we'll go back to you now. Go ahead  
48 and go on the next closure.

49

50

0032

1 MR. UBELAKER: Very good. Before I  
2 jump into the closure reviews I wanted to give you a  
3 brief overview of the closure review process and let  
4 you know how this is going to proceed.

5

6 For the record once again my name is  
7 Brian Ubelaker, wildlife biologist with OSM. In August  
8 of 2020 the Federal Subsistence Board approved a  
9 revised closure policy, which stipulated all closures  
10 will be reviewed every four years. The policy also  
11 specified that closures similar to regulatory proposals  
12 will be presented to the Councils for a recommendation  
13 and then to the Board for a final decision.

14

15 However regulatory actions on closure  
16 reviews are limited to retaining, rescinding or  
17 modifying closures. Actions such as changing seasons  
18 and harvest limits or delegating authority to in-season  
19 managers are outside the scope of closure reviews.

20

21 To this end closure review analyses are  
22 being presented to the Councils now during the call for  
23 wildlife proposals to inform their decision on whether  
24 or not to submit a proposal addressing the closure that  
25 would be outside the scope of the closure review.

26

27 This is not an action item. This is  
28 just informational. However if Councils do decide to  
29 submit a proposal to address the closures, a motion and  
30 vote is needed. The Councils will make a formal  
31 recommendation on the closure reviews during their fall  
32 2023 meetings and the Federal Subsistence Board will  
33 take action on these closure reviews in April of 2024.

34

35 Before I proceed with the closure  
36 reviews are there any questions that I can clarify?

37

38 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any questions by  
39 the Council for Brian?

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I think you're  
44 good to go.

45

46 MR. UBELAKER: Okay. Moving on to  
47 Closure Review WCR24-03 which reviews the moose hunting  
48 closure except by residents of Chenega Bay and Tatitlek  
49 in the portion of Unit 7 draining into Kings Bay.

50



0033

1 I'm going to preface this. I've read  
2 this review well over a dozen times and it's confused  
3 me 13 of those times. So if at any time there's  
4 confusion, please stop me and ask clarifying questions.  
5 It's a bit wrapped up.

6  
7 In 1997 the Federal Subsistence Board  
8 established a customary and traditional use  
9 determination in a hunt for moose in the Kings Bay  
10 drainage area of Unit 7 to include the residents of  
11 Chenega and Tatitlek and closed Federal public lands to  
12 all other users. In 2001, the moose season in the  
13 Kings Bay drainage area was closed by special action  
14 because the moose population was too small to support a  
15 harvest.

16  
17 In 2006 several proposals were  
18 submitted to change the season length, harvest limit  
19 and the land closure, which were supported with  
20 modification by the Council. However, the Board  
21 decided to close the season and Federal public lands to  
22 all users due to conservation concerns.

23  
24 In 2008 the Board gave C&T for moose in  
25 Unit 7 to residents of Cooper Landing. This  
26 determination was for all of Unit 7 including the Kings  
27 Bay drainage area.

28  
29 In 2010 the Council voted to maintain  
30 the closure to all users for the conservation of a  
31 healthy population. That same year the Board gave C&T  
32 for moose in Unit 7 to residents of Hope and Sunrise.

33  
34 In 2014 the Board voted to allow  
35 residents of Chenega and Tatitlek to harvest one moose  
36 each every four years once the closure was lifted.  
37 Therefore Federal public lands were closed to the  
38 taking of moose except by residents of Chenega and  
39 Tatitlek. However, the Federal season remained closed.

40  
41 In 2020 the Board voted to maintain  
42 status quo on Wildlife Closure Review WCR20-03 because  
43 there was little information about the status of the  
44 population in the Kings Bay hunt area.

45  
46 I know that was a bunch of numbers and  
47 dates. Any clarification before I move on?

48  
49 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: No, but they can  
50

0034

1 follow along in their books. There's a lot of  
2 information there. End of Page 18.

3

4 MR. UBELAKER: The amount of moose  
5 habitat in the Kings Bay area is small and consists of  
6 narrow riparian areas along the Kings and Nellie Juan  
7 rivers. Informal habitat evaluations by the Forest  
8 Service in Kings Bay occurred in September of 2019 and  
9 supported this.

10

11 A comprehensive moose survey has never  
12 been conducted in Unit 7, but an aerial survey  
13 conducted by Fish and Game in January of 1997 revealed  
14 a minimum of 20 moose in the area consisting of eight  
15 bulls, ten cows, and two calves.

16

17 A moose index survey was flown in 2006  
18 by Fish and Game in which a total of five moose were  
19 observed. Two were seen south of the Nellie Juan River  
20 confluence with Kings Bay and two were seen in the area  
21 between the Nellie Juan River and Kings River. One bull  
22 moose was observed upstream in the Kings River  
23 watershed. No calves were observed in the area.

24

25 Black bears occur in high density in  
26 western Prince William Sound and brown bears are  
27 regularly present in the Kings Bay area as well. These  
28 two predators may elevate the importance of safe  
29 calving habitat, which appears to be limited.  
30 Productivity and viability of this small group of  
31 moose, therefore, is marginal. The restricted area used  
32 by moose in the Kings Bay area makes them vulnerable to  
33 hunters who walk up the river valley or use authorized  
34 motorized access.

35

36 Reported Federal muskox harvest has  
37 been relatively low across the Seward Pen -- nope, that  
38 is the wrong one.

39

40 (Laughter)

41

42 MR. UBELAKER: Wouldn't it be nice to  
43 have muskox down here though? I told you it was  
44 confusing. Moose start turning into muskox.

45

46 (Laughter)

47

48 MR. UBELAKER: Well, I am all confused  
49 on that one. Thank you, sir. I'm going to wing this

50

0035

1 one then. Bear with me, please. Harvest data indicate  
2 that no moose were reported harvested from this area  
3 from 1997 2021 under Federal regulations. In 2001  
4 there was some hunting that occurred by Tatitlek with  
5 no success. According to the State there has been no  
6 harvest on Federal public lands under State regulations  
7 since 1997 when the lands were closed. Federal public  
8 lands comprise over 80 percent of this hunt area and  
9 moose numbers are very low, leading to very little  
10 harvest.

11

12 If the closure were retained there  
13 would be no changes in how this hunt is managed.  
14 Anyone hunting under State regulations would only hunt  
15 in the non-Federal lands in the area. The small moose  
16 population that currently exists would remain  
17 protected.

18

19 Alternately, the current closure could  
20 be partially rescinded to open to all Federally  
21 qualified subsistence users with C&T for the Kings Bay  
22 area. However, as the Federal season is currently  
23 closed, this would not result in any increased hunting  
24 opportunity or harvest and a proposal would need to be  
25 submitted to establish a Federal season.

26

27 If the closure were completely  
28 rescinded and Federal public lands opened to all users,  
29 Federally qualified subsistence users could not hunt  
30 under Federal regulations unless the Board opens a  
31 Federal moose season. However, hunting of moose in  
32 this area could occur under State regulations.

33

34 Therefore, it's OSM's preliminary  
35 conclusion to retain the status quo on this closure.  
36 Thank you.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any questions for  
39 Brian on that closure review. We've got one here.  
40 Michael, go ahead.

41

42 MR. OPHEIM: I was just wondering is  
43 there any flights planned for that area to do any more  
44 counts?

45

46 MR. UBELAKER: I did not get any  
47 response from Fish and Game on this closure review, so  
48 I cannot speak to their side and I believe the Forest  
49 Service may be able to speak to that. I think they  
50

50

0036

1 have something coming up in the works. They're the  
2 most recent ones to do any kind of population surveys  
3 down there. I believe the population is so low it's  
4 not on anybody's radar to really survey it too much.

5

6 MR. PEARSON: Hello. My name is David  
7 Pearson. I'm with the United States Forest Service.  
8 I'm temporarily the Subsistence Program Manager. So  
9 this is on our agenda; however, we did have some  
10 regulatory difficulties within the agency starting  
11 about 2018.

12

13 Our aviation policy moved out of the  
14 region and was incorporated within the larger Forest  
15 Service Aviation Policy, which is more tied to fire.  
16 What that did was restrict local carting of smaller  
17 companies with airplanes that we used to rely on. So  
18 starting around 2018-2019 our availability of aircrafts  
19 for us to use has been extremely limited.

20

21 So essentially we have painted  
22 ourselves into a little box here when it comes to  
23 aviation use across the forest. We currently are  
24 looking into working with Fish and Wildlife Service or  
25 the State to get some population placed into this area,  
26 but it's pretty low priority for other agencies. We're  
27 continuing to look into it and see what we can do to  
28 make that happen, but as of right now we have limited  
29 options that we are trying to move forward.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good to know.  
32 Very good. Thank you. Okay. Any other questions.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All right.  
37 Brian, keep going.

38

39 MR. UBELAKER: Okay. I won't try to  
40 move on without referring to muskox ever again.

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's an  
45 interesting thing, you know. I drew a permit for the  
46 muskox and I'm having a hard time getting out there.  
47 But anyway.

48

49 MR. UBELAKER: It's a heck of a Sno-Go

50

0037

1 trip from Ninilchik up there.

2

3

(Laughter)

4

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MR. UBELAKER: Okay. Wildlife Closure Review WCR24-41, which can be found on Page 29 of your meeting books, reviews the closure to moose hunting in Unit 6C from November 1st through December 31st, except by Federally qualified subsistence users.

This hunt was originally established in 2000 when the Board adopted modified Proposal P00-17. The season was set as August 15th through December 31st with a harvest limit of one cow by Federal registration permit.

In 2002, the Board adopted modified proposal 248 allocating 75 percent of the allowable bull moose harvest and 100 percent of the allowable cow harvest to Federally qualified subsistence users. Season dates were also changed with both seasons opening on September 1st and the cow season closing date changing from December 31st to October 31st.

In 2007 the Board adopted WP07-19. Changing the harvest limit for this hunt from one cow moose to an antlerless moose to account for unintentional harvest of a bull without antlers.

Finally, in 2014 Federal lands were closed in Unit 6C from November 1st through December 31st when the Board adopted WP14-18. This proposal allowed Federal users an opportunity to harvest antlerless moose that were not harvested during the early season if necessary to control the population. This closure was last reviewed in 2020 when the Board chose to maintain status quo.

Currently Fish and Game submitted Proposal 62 to the Board of Game, which requests re-establishing an antlerless moose season in Unit 6C. Specifically, the proposal requests a hunt from November 1 to December 31 with a harvest limit of one moose by registration permit only. In its proposal, Fish and Game notes that because the antlerless moose quota is harvested under Federal subsistence regulations, the State has not held an antlerless hunt in Unit 6C since 1999. The Board of Game will consider this proposal in March of 2023.

0038

1                   The moose population in Unit 6  
2 originated from 24 moose calves that were transplanted  
3 to the west Copper River Delta between 1949 and 1958.  
4 This transplanted population rapidly grew and expanded.  
5 This population has been hunted annually since 1962.

6  
7                   The current management objectives in  
8 Unit 6 are to maintain a post-hunting population of 600  
9 to 800 moose with a minimum bull:cow ratio of 25:100.  
10 Moose population estimates have been within the  
11 management objective since 2011 and composition surveys  
12 indicate a stable or increasing population since 2013.

13  
14                   Because of relatively easy access to  
15 Unit 6C, hunter success often approaches 100 percent  
16 for moose permit holders. Between 25 and 123 moose  
17 permits were issued each season between 2001 and 2021,  
18 depending on the estimated moose population. Harvest  
19 in 2021 was 62 moose, which is lower than the average  
20 from 2013 through 2021, but higher than the annual  
21 average of 52 moose from 2002-2012. Between 2013 and  
22 2021, an average of 10 moose permits and three  
23 antlerless permits went unfilled, indicating a few  
24 surplus moose are available for harvest at the end of  
25 the season.

26  
27                   The current management system is  
28 meeting the long-term needs of local users in Cordova.  
29 The allocation of 75 percent of bull permits and 100  
30 percent of antlerless permits to Federally qualified  
31 subsistence users provides a Federal subsistence  
32 priority. While the unfilled Federal permits indicate  
33 the subsistence needs are being met while leaving some  
34 harvestable surplus.

35  
36                   There is no conservation concern to  
37 justify the closure to hunting moose on Federal public  
38 lands to non-Federally qualified users from November  
39 1st through December 31st in Unit 6C. However, it  
40 remains to be seen how the State offering an antlerless  
41 hunt in Unit 6C would affect the moose population and  
42 the Federal subsistence priority. Therefore, it is  
43 OSM's preliminary conclusion to rescind the closure.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Questions.  
46 Anyone. Dennis, Andy.

47  
48                   (No comments)

49  
50

0039

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Does  
2 anyone have any comments or concerns? Go ahead.

3  
4 MR. OPHEIM: I just quickly read  
5 through this last night and it seemed like the  
6 justification was there and the population was stable.  
7 I think it would be interesting to see how it works and  
8 if in a few years they go back and see what the moose  
9 population is doing.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Dennis.

12  
13 MR. ZADRA: I'm just -- I've got the  
14 book, but the State Proposal 62 is that for the  
15 upcoming Board of Game meeting here?

16  
17 MR. UBELAKER: I don't believe so. It  
18 said that it would be decided upon in -- what did I  
19 say, April, this upcoming one, '23.

20  
21 MR. ZADRA: Okay, yeah. That will be  
22 right after this. I'm on the Cordova Prince William  
23 Sound Advisory Committee and we have had discussion  
24 specifically with the biologist Charlotte Westing on  
25 this. I don't see it as the State saying they're going  
26 to open up a Federal or a State antlerless hunt. I  
27 think it's more of a housekeeping thing. Just for the  
28 discussion I don't think there's a lot of fear that  
29 we're going to end up with a State cow hunt out of  
30 this. I've already reviewed the proposals and have  
31 more information.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Sounds  
34 good. Any other comments, questions.

35  
36 (No comments)

37  
38 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none. I  
39 guess we're good.

40  
41 MR. UBELAKER: Proceeding on. Wildlife  
42 Closure Review WCR24-35 is found on Page 43 of your  
43 meeting book. This closure reviews the closure to  
44 caribou hunting in the southeastern portion of Unit 12  
45 where Federal public lands are closed to caribou  
46 hunting, except by Federally qualified subsistence  
47 users. This closure specifically targets the Chisana  
48 Caribou Herd.

49  
50

0040

1                   Because of its small population size  
2 the Chisana Herd has never supported a large harvest.  
3 A hunt with a harvest limit of one bull was closed in  
4 1994 when the bull portion of the population declined.  
5 The Board also closed portions of Federal public land  
6 to non-Federally qualified subsistence users at this  
7 time.

8  
9                   Then in 2012 the area was opened to  
10 hunting to specific communities and a new season  
11 established. In 2016 this area opened to all Federally  
12 qualified subsistence users but remained closed to  
13 non-Federally qualified users.

14  
15                   This closure was reviewed in 2020 and  
16 the Board decided to maintain status quo due to  
17 conservation concerns. Most recently in 2022 the hunt  
18 was closed because recruitment had fallen below the  
19 minimum threshold identified in the management plan.

20  
21                   The Chisana Herd ranges between Alaska  
22 and Yukon Territory in Canada. It's population  
23 declined from an estimate 1,900 animals in 1988 to a  
24 low of 315 animals in 2002. Weather, predation and  
25 hunting all contributed to the decline. In 2003 an  
26 intensive recovery effort was initiated and since then  
27 the herd has stabilized at around 700 animals.

28  
29                   Since 2010 bull to cow and calf to cow  
30 ratios have exceeded management objectives in all years  
31 except 2017 when the bull to cow ratio was just below.  
32 The 2022 hunt was closed due to a cow:calf ratio below  
33 the minimum threshold.

34  
35                   In 2012 a limited Federal hunt  
36 restricted to select communities opened for the Chisana  
37 Herd. In 2016 the hunt was open to all Federally  
38 qualified subsistence users. The Chisana Management  
39 Plan prescribes an annual harvest rate of 2 percent  
40 allocated equally between Yukon Territory and Alaska.  
41 This means roughly that seven caribou are available for  
42 harvest in Alaska.

43  
44                   Since the hunt was reopened in 2012 an  
45 average of just over one caribou has been harvested  
46 each year, indicating harvest levels are sustainable.  
47 The population estimate of the Chisana Herd appears to  
48 be stable since 2010. Current harvest levels appear to  
49 be sustainable, indicating no additional restrictions  
50



0041

1 are warranted.

2

3

4 The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park  
5 and Preserve superintendent has delegated authority to  
6 manage the hunt and can respond immediately to  
7 conditions as they change. Additionally, the low  
8 harvest quota cannot support the harvest pressure that  
9 may result from opening the area to all users.  
10 Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary conclusion to  
11 maintain the status quo.

11

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CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any questions for  
Brian. Go ahead.

MR. OPHEIM: I didn't pay attention in  
my quick reading of this. Is the Canadian side  
harvesting and how many?

MR. UBELAKER: Give me a minute and I  
can look into that. It's a crossover proposal, so I  
did not write the analysis, but I can read through it  
really quick and see if it's mentioned in there.

MR. OPHEIM: Thank you.

MS. CELLARIUS: This is Barbara  
Cellarius from Wrangell-St. Elias. I could answer that  
question.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead,  
Barbara. We'd love you to answer it. Thank you.

MS. CELLARIUS: So there is currently  
no harvest on the Canadian side.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Any  
further questions for Brian.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none. I  
think we're good on that one.

MR. UBELAKER: Okay. Moving along.  
Last closure review. : Wildlife Closure Review WCR22-42  
found on Page 59 of your meeting books reviews the  
closure to caribou hunting by all users in the  
southwestern portion of Unit 12. This closure targets  
the Mentasta Caribou Herd.

1                   In 1993 the western portion of Unit 12  
2 was closed to caribou hunting which had been allowed  
3 under Federal regulations since 1991 to protect the  
4 declining Mentasta Herd. Although this hunt remained  
5 closed there were changes made to hunt areas within  
6 Unit 12 and other nearby caribou seasons were closed.

7  
8                   Then in 2012 hunt areas in Unit 12 were  
9 again modified to protect the Mentasta Herd and a  
10 season was established on the neighboring Chisana Herd.  
11 In 2020 this closure was reviewed, which the Board  
12 maintained due to continued conservation concerns. In  
13 2022 a may-be-announced caribou season was established  
14 and authority was delegated to the Wrangell-St. Elias  
15 National Park and Preserve Superintendent.

16  
17                   The Mentasta Herd population declined  
18 from an estimated 3,100 animals in 1987 to less than  
19 1,000 animals in 1993, when the area was closed for  
20 conservation concerns. Since then the population  
21 continued to decrease to an estimated 495 caribou in  
22 2021. Very poor calf recruitment due mostly to  
23 predation is the primary reason for the decline.

24  
25                   The population has remained stable at  
26 relatively low levels since 2004 as evidenced by low  
27 calf survival. The bull:cow ratio has generally been  
28 well above the management objectives of 35 bulls to 100  
29 cows, but may be inflated due to mixing with the much  
30 larger Nelchina Herd. The ranges of Mentasta and  
31 Nelchina Herds significantly overlap in winter,  
32 although the two herds have distinct calving areas.

33  
34                   There's been no targeted harvest of  
35 Mentasta Caribou in Unit 12 since the 1993 closure.  
36 However, some Mentasta Caribou may be incidently  
37 harvested in the winter when they mix with the Nelchina  
38 Herd. In Unit 11 there was a small Federal subsistence  
39 harvest from 1996 to 1998 due to management objective  
40 criteria in the Mentasta Caribou Herd Management Plan  
41 being met for calf production and recruitment. Only  
42 one caribou was reported harvested.

43  
44                   One alternative considered is to  
45 delegate authority to the Wrangell-St. Elias National  
46 Park and Preserve Superintendent to announce season  
47 dates, harvest quotas and the number of permits to be  
48 issued, to define harvest areas and to open and close  
49 the season for caribou on Federal public lands in the  
50

0043

1 southeastern portion of Unit 12, similar to the  
2 may-be-announced caribou hunt just established in Unit  
3 11 in 2022. However, this is outside of the scope of  
4 the closure review and would require a proposal be  
5 submitted.

6  
7 The Mentasta Herd population remains  
8 low and any harvest would constitute a conservation  
9 concern. Protection of the Mentasta Caribou Herd  
10 remains necessary to assure its continued viability.  
11 Therefore, it is OSM's preliminary conclusion to  
12 maintain the status quo.

13  
14 Thank you.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you.  
17 Questions.

18  
19 MR. HOLSTEN: I have a quick one.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead, Ed.

22  
23 MR. HOLSTEN: Are you aware of any  
24 predator control efforts going on in that area?

25  
26 MR. UBELAKER: I am not certain. Once  
27 again I was not the author of this, but I can  
28 definitely look into it and get back to you.

29  
30 MR. HOLSTEN: Thanks.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any other  
33 questions for Brian on the closure.

34  
35 (No comments)

36  
37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I believe that's  
38 it then. Okay. Thank you. Good job. Got it. At  
39 this time we're going to take a break and we're going  
40 to take a 10-minute break I think if that's sufficient.  
41 We'll get back in about 10 minutes. Thank you.

42  
43 (Off record)

44  
45 (On record)

46  
47 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. We're down  
48 to -- Brian, I see you're there, but are you the.....

49  
50

0044

1 MR. UBELAKER: I'm done. Muskox.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Muskox.  
6 You're out of here. I'm to agency wildlife reports.  
7 We're going to give each agency with a wildlife report  
8 an opportunity to present survey results and permit and  
9 harvest information now instead of during the agency  
10 reports. They can still talk at their agency report,  
11 but this is just if they want to present their findings  
12 now and their statistics.

13

14 Go ahead, Jessica.

15

16 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
17 believe Barbara Cellarius and Kyle Cutting are online  
18 for the Wrangell-St. Elias wildlife report.

19

20 MS. CELLARIUS: This is Barbara --  
21 okay, go ahead, Kyle.

22

23 MR. CUTTING: Okay. Good morning, Mr.  
24 Chair and Council members. My name is Kyle Cutting and  
25 I'm a new wildlife biologist at Wrangell-St. Elias  
26 National Park and Preserve since last fall. Today  
27 Barbara Cellarius and myself will provide a wildlife  
28 report update for Wrangell-St. Elias.

29

30 I will first start with the wildlife  
31 report and then Barbara will discuss hunt information.

32 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. It sounds  
33 good. You go right ahead.

34

35 MR. CUTTING: Okay. Thank you. I'm  
36 going to start with a couple key updates. I'll start  
37 with the Mentasta Caribou Herd first. The Mentasta  
38 Caribou Herd is a small herd occurring on the northern  
39 and western portion of Unit 12 in the northeastern  
40 portion of Unit 11 within Wrangell-St. Elias National  
41 Park and Preserve. The Mentasta Caribou Herd overlaps  
42 the Chisana and the Nelchina Caribou Herds during  
43 portions of the year.

44

45 During winter the Mentasta Caribou herd  
46 disperses across Unit 12 and into southern Unit 20E,  
47 while in the summer the herd is located at the north  
48 and west side of Mount Wrangell in the northern portion  
49 of Unit 11 and the southwest portion of Unit 12.

50

0045

1 Since 1993 there has been no open hunting season for  
2 Mentasta Caribou for any users in the far southwest  
3 corner of Unit 12 and then also the adjacent Unit 11.

4  
5 This past fall GPS collars were  
6 deployed on 10 female Mentasta Caribou on September  
7 18th by a wildlife biologist from Gates of the Arctic  
8 and Wrangell-St. Elias. This brings the total number  
9 of GPS collared caribou in the herd to 13. Information  
10 from these collared caribou are being used to assist  
11 with estimating population size and then also to inform  
12 in-season management of hunts that target the Nelchina  
13 Herd.

14  
15 Our goal for monitoring the Mentasta  
16 Caribou Herd is to increase the total number of GPS  
17 collared caribou to 30 over the next two years to  
18 improve the quality and amount of information for  
19 management decision-making. Location data will help  
20 inform in-season management of hunts that target the  
21 Nelchina Herd to avoid incidental harvest on the  
22 Mentasta Caribou when and where the two herds occur.

23  
24 Of the 10 collars we deployed last fall  
25 nine currently remain in winter ranges in Alaska while  
26 one individual migrated to the Yukon and their fall to  
27 winter migration distances are quite variable, ranging  
28 from 33 miles to 303 miles. This coming June we'll  
29 conduct a post-calving population census. The last  
30 Mentasta Caribou census was conducted in 2021 that  
31 resulted in 672 individuals, which is similar to the  
32 previous four-year average of 622 individuals.

33  
34 We are currently exploring  
35 opportunities for collaboration with local partners  
36 around the role of ecological and subsistence factors  
37 of Mentasta Caribou.

38  
39 So for the Chisana Caribou they occur  
40 to the east of the Mentasta Herd. The Chisana Caribou  
41 Herd is a small international herd occurring in Alaska  
42 and Yukon and the Klutlan Plateau and near the  
43 headwaters of the White River. In the U.S. the herd  
44 spends most of its time in Wrangell-St. Elias Preserve.  
45 Because of the small herd it has never supported a  
46 large harvest. For the Chisana Caribou Herd the season  
47 was closed last year due to population estimates below  
48 our stated management objectives.

49  
50

0046

1                   So this past fall aerial surveys were  
2 flown on Alaska and Yukon on October 14th to conduct a  
3 population census of the Chisana Caribou Herd. This  
4 was the first census since 2013. Biologists from  
5 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Yukon Department  
6 of Environment in partnership with Wrangell-St. Elias  
7 and Gates of the Arctic conducted these surveys. The  
8 resulting estimate for total population size was 582  
9 individuals compared to an estimate of 701 individuals  
10 in 2013.

11  
12                   Although last fall's estimate was lower  
13 than the estimate in 2013, the ranges of uncertainty  
14 around these estimates overlap, indicating that the  
15 population size is likely stable and has not changed  
16 substantially since 2013. Currently 17 GPS collars and  
17 40 VHF collared individuals are marked in the herd,  
18 which helps with estimating population size and  
19 evaluating movements.

20  
21                   So our goal for the Chisana Caribou  
22 Herd over the next three years is to increase the  
23 number of GPS collars to maintain enough on the herd to  
24 conduct surveys and monitor movements. Currently 14 of  
25 the 17 GPS collared caribou are currently wintering in  
26 the Yukon and the fall to winter migration distances  
27 are much less in the neighboring Mentasta ranging from  
28 6 to 47 miles for the individuals currently marked.

29  
30                   (Online background talking)

31  
32                   MS. GILL: For those online could you  
33 please mute yourself if you're not muted.

34  
35                   (Online background talking)

36  
37                   MS. GILL: We've got some feedback here  
38 in the room for someone who is not muted on the  
39 teleconference line. If you can mute yourself, please.  
40 Thank you.

41  
42                   (Online background talking muted)

43  
44                   MR. CUTTING: Okay. Let's see. For  
45 the Chisana Caribou Herd the three-year rolling average  
46 of calf recruitment is 16.7 calves per 100 cows and the  
47 three-year average adult sex ratio is 46 bulls per 100  
48 cows, which are both currently above our management  
49 goals for this herd.

50

0047

1                   The working group for the Chisana  
2 Caribou Herd is currently updating the management plan  
3 and International Working Group has met this past  
4 winter for a two-day working group in Tok and is  
5 actively updating that plan currently.

6  
7                   So this coming summer Wrangell-St.  
8 Elias also intends to conduct Dall sheep surveys in the  
9 Nabesna area on the north side of the Wrangell  
10 Mountains. We'll be conducting these surveys starting  
11 this summer for the next three years.

12  
13                   The last sheep survey the National Park  
14 Service conducted in Wrangell-St. Elias was from 2020,  
15 which revealed a healthy and stable population.  
16 However, given the severe winter of 2022, it remains  
17 unknown if they will follow the similar declining trend  
18 as other neighboring areas.

19  
20                   To gain additional insight into local  
21 knowledge we're coupling these aerial population  
22 surveys with local interviews of sheep hunters and  
23 hunting guides who spend a significant amount of time  
24 on the ground each year searching and observing Dall  
25 sheep to document their views in recent trends and  
26 sheep abundance and composition and potential factors  
27 that influence that.

28  
29                   So that concludes my portion of the  
30 wildlife report and I'd be happy to answer questions  
31 now, but I will turn it over to Barbara to provide  
32 information on the hunt update.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thanks,  
35 Kyle. Is there any questions for Kyle before we get to  
36 Barbara here?

37  
38                   (No comments)

39  
40                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Kyle,  
41 thanks. Barbara.

42  
43                   MS. GILL: Barbara, you appear to be  
44 speaking. We can't hear you.

45  
46                   MS. CELLARIUS: Yeah, the  
47 teleconference line is cutting out. I'm sorry. I  
48 tried changing phones and that didn't help. So I will  
49 get started. My name is Barbara Cellarius. I'm the  
50

0048

1 cultural anthropologist for Wrangell-St. Elias National  
2 Park and Preserve. My report begins on Page 101 of the  
3 meeting book. If you haven't found it, Kyle's report  
4 was a supplemental handout.

5

6 I'm sorry I can't be there today.  
7 We've been working with Fish and Game and AITRC in  
8 doing community subsistence surveys this week, so I was  
9 in the field yesterday and it didn't make sense to try  
10 and come in in person.

11

12 Anyway I wanted to let you know that  
13 last year Wrangell-St. Elias staff along with some help  
14 from Tetlin Refuge we issued 193 Federal subsistence  
15 hunting permits for moose, goat and sheep hunts on  
16 Wrangell-St. Elias lands in Units 11 and 12. The most  
17 popular permit was the fall moose hunt in Unit 11  
18 Remainder. We issued a total of 139 permits for that  
19 hunt, 65 people hunted, and 15 moose were harvested.

20

21 The second most popular permit hunt we  
22 have is Unit 11 elder sheep hunt and for that hunt we  
23 issued 25 permits, 10 people hunted, and two sheep were  
24 harvested. If you look at the following pages, my  
25 report on Page 102 and 103, there's tables with  
26 additional details, including some trend information.

27

28 The other popular permit that we issue  
29 is the joint State/Federal permit for a moose hunt in  
30 portions of Units 11 and 12 in the northern part of the  
31 Park. That includes the Nabesna Road, which is a  
32 really popular hunting area. For the 2022 season, a  
33 total of 340 permits were issued, 197 people hunted,  
34 and 16 moose were harvested, including 10 moose by  
35 Federally qualified subsistence users.

36

37 I will stop there and see if there are  
38 any questions.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any questions for  
41 Barbara so far.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I don't see any,  
46 Barbara. Go ahead.

47

48 MS. CELLARIUS: I'm done. So I will  
49 have a little bit more for you at the end of the

50



0049

1 meeting about some other projects, but that's what I  
2 have on wildlife. So thank you very much.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you  
5 and Kyle both. Thank you.

6

7 MR. CUTTING: Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Jessica, who's  
10 next?

11

12 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Next  
13 we have Pat Owen from Denali National Park and  
14 Preserve. Her report can be found on Page 105 of your  
15 meeting book.

16

17 MS. OWEN: Good morning, Mr. Chair and  
18 members of the Council. My name is Pat Owen. I'm a  
19 wildlife biologist at Denali National Park and I'll  
20 share with you some wildlife projects that we have  
21 ongoing in the Park and some things that we have coming  
22 up that will be new for us this year.

23

24 I'll start out with bears. We've had a  
25 long-term bear monitoring project in the northeast  
26 corner of Denali National Park and Preserve mostly  
27 looking at movements of mostly grizzly bears. There  
28 were a few black bears thrown in there as we could  
29 catch them. I'm looking at movements across the  
30 boundary of the Park in that northeast corner. I'm  
31 trying to determine how much time bears were spending  
32 in the Park and compare that with how much time they  
33 were spending outside the Park boundaries where they  
34 might be available for harvest.

35

36 So we just gathered the last four  
37 collars from that study. Most of those were GPS  
38 collars, but store on board which means that the  
39 location data was stored in the collar. The last of  
40 those collars came off in September of last year.  
41 We've collected those collars, downloaded the data and  
42 we will be continuing to work on analyzing the data  
43 from those collars and work on the final report for  
44 that project.

45

46 Probably the big news for us is that we  
47 will have a new bear project starting up this spring.  
48 We had planned to do this last spring, but delayed for  
49 a number of reasons. I would guess that you might have  
50

0050

1 heard that the Denali Park road is closed roughly  
2 halfway out due to a landslide.

3

4

5 What that means is that about half of  
6 the road on the west end will have basically no  
7 traffic, so we're going to take advantage of that  
8 condition and collar a bunch of bears to see what the  
9 difference might be if we can detect any between how  
10 they move and behave when there is no traffic as  
11 compared to when there is traffic on the road.

11

12

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So the plan is that we will start two  
capture periods, one in May and one in June, to catch a  
number of bears, put radio-collars on those and keep  
those collars functioning for the next two years in  
2023 and 2024 while there is no traffic on the road.  
Then in 2025 we will switch those collars out on those  
same bears for new collars because the batteries will  
be ready to quit by then. We'll put new collars on the  
same bears when hopefully by then the bridge will be  
finished that spans the landslide and traffic will  
resume.

So we'll have a traffic condition in  
'25 and '26 and then the collars will fall off at the  
end of the season in '26 and we'll be able to do the  
comparison between those two different conditions. So,  
as I said, that will start in May and June of this  
spring and it will be at minimum four years of data  
collection before we have a whole lot to say about what  
we're seeing out there.

Also in terms of what's going on with  
bears, as you probably realize in Denali National Park  
with the road and the amount of visitation that we  
have, we've got bears and we do a lot to prevent  
human/wildlife conflict of all sorts, but especially  
conflict with bears. So we do a lot to educate our  
visitors about how to be safe and how to recreate in  
places where bears are present.

We do track interactions between bears  
and people in a system that we call BHIMS. It's our  
Bear Human Incident Management System. I don't think I  
need to throw all the numbers out there, but for the  
2022 season you can read the report and see the number  
of BHIMS that we collected, what those look like. We  
categorize those lots of different ways. There is a  
full report that explains all of that in great detail

0051

1 for 2022. If anyone is interested in reading that  
2 report, please contact me and I would be glad to  
3 provide that to you.

4  
5 Moving on to moose monitoring. The  
6 moose monitoring that we have typically done in Denali  
7 usually falls into two different camps. One is that we  
8 do a very large survey on the north side of the Park.  
9 That is usually part of our Central Alaska Network  
10 Inventory Monitoring Program. Then we also do a  
11 smaller survey around the Cantwell area in anticipation  
12 of what we're going to see with our subsistence users  
13 down there in GMU 13E.

14  
15 The Cantwell surveys we typically do  
16 about every five years, so we're coming up on being due  
17 to conduct one of those. The surveys on the north side  
18 of the Park are actually on hold and they've been on  
19 hold for a number of years. There is a lot of question  
20 about the protocol that we've been using and whether or  
21 not it's really giving us the information that we want.

22  
23  
24 So the Central Alaska Network decided  
25 that rather than continue to dump money into a protocol  
26 that we were a little unsure about that we would just  
27 put those on hold. So at some point we should be  
28 getting back into doing those once the protocol review  
29 is completed and tweaked possibly or someone decides  
30 that they've got a better way for us to do those.

31  
32 I will just mention that based on the  
33 extraordinary snow and rainfall that we had in late  
34 December of 2021 it seemed like over-winter mortality  
35 was high and spring calf survival was low, but we don't  
36 have the hard numbers to substantiate that.

37  
38 Moving on to caribou. Most of this  
39 you'll see the information here is from last year.  
40 We're just getting geared up to start work on caribou  
41 again this year. Of course we've been monitoring  
42 radio-collared caribou all through the winter, but  
43 generally we catch and re-collar or collar new caribou.  
44 Part of that happens in March and part of that happens  
45 in May.

46  
47 So in a couple weeks we'll have some  
48 capture work coming up, but you can see the preliminary  
49 herd size for last September decreased a bit from the  
50

0052

1 2021 number and also that the productivity for cows  
2 initially seemed pretty high. It was a little bit  
3 higher than the long-term average.

4  
5 If you look down through this, you can  
6 see that in mid June when we did our post-calving  
7 surveys 22 calves per 100 cows, but by late September  
8 that had declined down to about 8 per 100. So calf  
9 production and survival is low. The numbers seem to be  
10 trending downward a little bit. We'll have a lot more  
11 information on that once we get through another season.  
12 We've had pretty good snowfall here this year and we'll  
13 see how that may have an impact on the caribou numbers.

14  
15 For sheep we do two different kinds of  
16 sheep surveys here. We do ground-based surveys as well  
17 as aerial surveys. Unfortunately last year due to  
18 weather and pilot availability the aerial surveys that  
19 we typically do did not get conducted.

20  
21 So the only thing that we had to go on  
22 last year was the ground-based surveys and then one  
23 aerial survey that was just -- it wasn't really done  
24 the way our typical aerial surveys are done in terms of  
25 protocol. It was just sort of a let's go look see kind  
26 of an aerial survey. Not nearly as rigorous as the  
27 other aerial surveys that we typically do.

28  
29 But it seems as though sheep numbers  
30 are trending down a little bit as well. We do have  
31 plans to do a more rigorous aerial survey this year and  
32 we'll see how that compares with what we've seen in  
33 past years.

34  
35 We continue to monitor wolves. We  
36 always attempt to keep what we determine to be the  
37 alpha male and female collared from all the packs that  
38 we're able to find residing within the Park. There  
39 were captures conducted this past November as well as  
40 March a year ago. As I said, there will be some  
41 capture work coming up at the end of this month.

42  
43 Eighteen new radio collars were  
44 deployed over the course of 2022 and that was in an  
45 effort to track 13 packs that were mostly within the  
46 Park. Pup production was good and recruitment was  
47 really good. Out of 38 pups detected, 37 of those pups  
48 were still alive. They recruited into the population  
49 by October. So good news there for wolves.

50

0053

1                   Just a couple other projects that I  
2 will mention quickly. This Alpine Wildlife Project we  
3 had going on for a couple years here. It's looking at  
4 some key alpine species. Mostly Arctic ground  
5 squirrels, collared pikas, hoary marmots and also Dall  
6 sheep. There's been a graduate student working on this  
7 project doing some detection work and presence/absence  
8 work mainly with surveys, motion sensor cameras and  
9 that sort of thing.

10

11                   One big component of this project, the  
12 field work for this project is completed. The other  
13 component of this project that is ongoing and will  
14 continue to be for a while is the Citizen Science  
15 portion of this where we're asking visitors to the Park  
16 to download an app and then record their observations  
17 of the species that we're targeting and report those  
18 back to us. So that will be ongoing. The data  
19 analysis for all of the fieldwork and the reporting are  
20 ongoing with this grad student and we hope to see a  
21 final report and her to finish up that project here  
22 within the next year.

23

24                   Then the last thing that I'll just  
25 mention quickly are some of our avian projects. We do  
26 nest occupancy surveys in April and productivity  
27 surveys in July. Those will happen again this year.  
28 We've done those since roughly about 1986 with  
29 regularity.

30

31                   Occupancy of known territories was  
32 really high. Reproductive success of females was low.  
33 Probably because of a lack of snowshoe hares. Eagles  
34 do better when the hare cycle is hitting the peak and  
35 if we're not there already, we're on our way to the low  
36 in the hare cycle. We will continue those surveys in  
37 2023.

38

39                   We do some on-road breeding bird  
40 surveys in June because half of the road is not easily  
41 accessible to us. We only did last year those surveys  
42 on the east end of the road, but we're hoping that we  
43 might be able to get out west and do one of the on-road  
44 breeding bird surveys out on the closed section of the  
45 road.

46

47                   One of the things that I will just  
48 mention here is that we're getting a lot of anecdotal  
49 reports from areas to the south, mostly at Cantwell,  
50

0054

1 where we're starting to see the effects of spruce bark  
2 beetles. There's been a big influx of woodpecker  
3 species and nuthatches and brown creepers. So that's  
4 some pretty interesting stuff.

5

6 We have plans to do a lot more  
7 detection work on spruce bark beetles and what else is  
8 going on out there. Our botanist is putting together  
9 sort of a summit for us to talk about what sort of  
10 things we should be looking at, what we're going to be  
11 watching for with these spruce bark beetles.

12

13 One last thing I'll mention is that  
14 we've been working with the USGS crew. They've been  
15 doing a nest predation study. Unfortunately they were  
16 not able to get to the Park in 2022. They were here in  
17 2021. In this study they're using camera traps and  
18 site visits to detect predation on bird nests and  
19 document that predation for a whole variety of avian  
20 species.

21

22 We expect them back in the Park in  
23 2023. I would imagine that after -- if they're able to  
24 get here in 2023, after that we'll probably see a  
25 report from them within a year after they finish.  
26 Carol McIntyre is our wildlife biologist that oversees  
27 our Avian Program, so if you have any questions about  
28 any of those her contact information is in this report.  
29 My contact information is at the end.

30

31 That's it for me and I'd be happy to  
32 take any questions if anyone has any.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Pat.  
35 Questions.

36

37 MS. SELANOFF: Actually I have one.  
38 When you get the reports -- because it seems like a lot  
39 of overwinter mortality rates. So when you get those  
40 reports, you said you don't have them now, can you make  
41 them available to us?

42

43 MS. OWEN: Which report exactly are you  
44 looking for?

45

46 MS. SELANOFF: Actually it's with the  
47 moose, it's with the caribou. It just seems like a  
48 trend we've been hearing recently about the low  
49 numbers.

50

0055

1 MS. OWEN: Got it.

2

3 MS. SELANOFF: But in particular the  
4 moose and the caribou.

5

6 MS. OWEN: Okay. We won't have any  
7 hard numbers on the moose because we're not doing any  
8 survey work, but we will have information on caribou,  
9 so I will be able to provide that, yeah.

10

11 MS. SELANOFF: All right. Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Others.  
14 Pat, I've got a question for you. You've got a lot of  
15 bears moving around you. Wolves are doing good and  
16 you're getting lots of young ones. How is the  
17 predation on the -- is there any monitoring of the  
18 caribou and the moose in the Park?

19

20 MS. OWEN: Yeah, not so much on moose.  
21 We might be able to do a little more of that once we  
22 get some collars out on these bears again. In addition  
23 to using GPS collars we will be doing intermittent  
24 radio-tracking flights. Because we'll be getting  
25 frequent data from the collars, if we see clusters of  
26 locations we can always go there and determine what was  
27 going on at that spot. That's one of the things that  
28 we do with wolves.

29

30 So I don't have the numbers right in  
31 front of me, but we do have some information on that  
32 with respect to caribou. Predation on caribou and  
33 mainly from wolves. Not so much from bears. But if we  
34 can determine any of that, that will be included in any  
35 of the reports that we've got, yeah.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Very fine.  
38 Go ahead, Gloria.

39

40 MS. STICKWAN: I was wondering about  
41 the bear management study. You said there's  
42 interaction between public. I was wondering are these  
43 from people camping out there or are they hunting or  
44 bear baiting. What's the interaction?

45

46 MS. OWEN: Gloria, I'm sorry. The  
47 audio cut out and I missed the first part of what you  
48 were asking. If you could repeat it, I'd really  
49 appreciate it.

50

0056

1 MS. STICKWAN: I was listening to you  
2 on your bear management and you said there was  
3 interaction between the public and bears and I was  
4 wondering dividing into backcountry and frontcountry.  
5 Is that because of bear baiting or people are out there  
6 just for recreation or is it hunting or what is it?

7  
8 MS. OWEN: Most of the bear/human  
9 interaction data that we collect the majority of that  
10 comes from our backcountry users. So folks that come  
11 into the Park and get a backcountry permit they are  
12 instructed that if they have an interaction with a bear  
13 that they are to report it on one of our BHIMS forms  
14 when they return from their trip. So we get a lot of  
15 reports.

16  
17 The majority of those are things like  
18 people surprising bears or bears surprising people  
19 sometimes. You know, we have a whole -- I'd be glad to  
20 provide you the end-of-season report because it  
21 explains a lot of this. There's a lot of terminology  
22 that's defined. There's a breakdown between the number  
23 and the types of reports we get from the backcountry as  
24 opposed to the frontcountry. It gets pretty  
25 convoluted. Probably way more than you want to hear me  
26 explain right now.

27  
28 We do not get -- as a matter of fact, I  
29 can't remember if or ever we've gotten a report from a  
30 hunter or somebody bear baiting that reported an  
31 interaction with a bear. You know, baiting takes place  
32 outside the Park boundary so there would be no  
33 requirement or even encouragement from anybody out  
34 there to report that kind of stuff to us. The only  
35 hunting that we generally have going on are our  
36 subsistence hunters in the TUA down by Cantwell.  
37 Honestly, I don't get any reports from them. I don't  
38 recall that anybody has really had any major  
39 interactions down there.

40  
41 So, yeah, by far the majority of the  
42 interactions that we get reported to us either come out  
43 of the backcountry or they come from somewhere in  
44 proximity of the Park Road, which we call the  
45 frontcountry.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Andy.

48  
49 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: A quick question.

50



0057

1 Considering the population dynamics of the caribou in  
2 Unit 13E, which kind of consists of food sources for  
3 our subsistence users, the herd coming out of the Park.  
4 On a 10-year average seeming to be, especially the past  
5 couple years, a decline, what can you attribute the  
6 lesser caribou herd numbers to?

7  
8 MS. OWEN: I'll tell you unfortunately  
9 again right after you said 13E you cut out. The  
10 cutting out of the audio is so frustrating. I think  
11 maybe you're asking what we were attributing this  
12 decline in caribou to? Is that where that question was  
13 going?

14  
15 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's correct.

16  
17 MS. OWEN: Okay. Yeah, some of it has  
18 to do with predation. You know, I think much of it  
19 might have to do with some of the snow events that  
20 we've had in the past couple years. Obviously last  
21 year was sort of an outlier, but we have had pretty  
22 good snow cover the past couple of years.

23  
24 You know, when there's deep snow the  
25 wolves do well and the caribou don't do as well. It's  
26 a whole lot easier for predation events like that to  
27 take place when there's deep snow. I think there's  
28 probably a lot of factors involved and predation is  
29 probably one of them. It might be the big part.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Very good.  
32 Anyone else questions for Pat before she leaves?

33  
34 (No comments)

35  
36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I was going to  
37 make a comment, but you'll probably get a laugh out of  
38 it. I think I could tell her about the traffic and no  
39 traffic on the bears.

40  
41 MS. OWEN: I'd love to hear it.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, you're  
44 going to see a lot less bears when there's traffic.  
45 Anyway. Okay. Thank you, Pat.

46  
47 MS. OWEN: Oh, yeah. (Laughs)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good job. If you  
50

0058

1 hide out in the woods you'll see those bears. They  
2 roam freely with no traffic. Anyway.

3  
4 MS. OWEN: Yeah. Well, I'll tell you,  
5 you know, we get a lot of bears that become habituated  
6 to that traffic and spend a considerable amount of  
7 their time along the road. So it's just going to be  
8 really interesting to see what they do in the absence  
9 of any of that traffic, how much it really changes.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You always have  
12 that curious showboat ones, but yeah. Okay. Very  
13 good.

14  
15 MS. OWEN: Well, we've always had some  
16 theories about why some bears tend to want to be near  
17 the road. You know, there is some good habitat near  
18 the road, but probably not as good as some other places  
19 and some bears may -- and this is all conjecture at  
20 this point in time. This is, you know, one of those  
21 kind of things that maybe we'll get a better handle on.

22  
23  
24 One of the things that we've always  
25 thought about is are there certain bears that are using  
26 less desirable habitat near the road to avoid those  
27 other bears that are happier in that -- or taking over,  
28 you know, that more desirable habitat. You know, we  
29 see a lot of sows with cubs along the road and  
30 sub-adult bears as well.

31  
32 So it's hard to say, but, you know,  
33 this is the kind of thing that we're thinking that  
34 because we're probably not going to ever have a no  
35 traffic condition on this road again, that we should  
36 probably take advantage of it and see if we can't  
37 figure this out.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, it sounds  
40 very interesting. It would be good. Okay. Thank you.

41  
42 MS. OWEN: Thank you.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I think that was  
45 it. Do we have -- Todd, are you still on the phone?  
46 You're next, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

47  
48 MR. ESKELIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
49 Council members. Todd Eskelin from Kenai National  
50

0059

1 Wildlife Refuge. Can you hear me okay?

2

3

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hear you fine.

4

5

6 MR. ESKELIN: Great. I put in the  
7 supplemental materials that was at the very end there  
8 our somewhat final numbers from last hunting season. I  
9 kind of spoke to an initial interim fall report. The  
10 early portion of the moose season was just raining a  
11 lot. I think if you look at the bottom of the table  
12 for the moose information for 2022 the main thing to  
13 see is that there was a huge bump up in the numbers of  
14 permits issued. A portion of that was attributed to  
15 the inclusion of Moose Pass.

15

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For me as an administrator the big  
number I look at is the number of outstanding harvest  
reports, which over the course of five or six years  
have done a really good job of everybody working  
together and getting their harvest reports in on time.  
So now we have a new crop of users that need some  
additional reminders to get their reports in and stuff.  
But we'll get that cleaned up and get that number down  
to a good number that helps me inform you on how many  
people hunted and stuff like that.

Ultimately very few people hunted  
during the early season even though this is the first  
year that we moved the early season a little bit later  
and I thought there would be a big push of hunters  
trying to get out and take advantage of that 10 days  
early before the State season opens.

Again it was raining and most of the  
popular areas of 15B that I visited usually have two or  
three subsistence hunter vehicles there and they were  
pretty much empty all the time when I was out there.  
You can see that's also reflected in the number of days  
hunted.

We're trending down and I think part of  
that is some of our we'll say older, more experienced  
Ninilchik hunters are having trouble getting out there  
and just physically hunting the whole season until they  
get their moose. So I think that's contributing to our  
number of hunting days going down.

We were fortunate this fall for the  
late season, that the snow held off just a little bit

0060

1 longer than it typically had been and it gave hunters I  
2 think probably two extra weekends to get out and access  
3 the refuge of 15C and that resulted in a bump up in the  
4 late season hunt and ultimately brought us back to what  
5 I would consider a normal level of harvest based on our  
6 last five years or so.

7

8                                 That was the moose season. If you bump  
9 back up, you can see the drawing hunt results. I think  
10 the only thing that I would point out that's kind of  
11 been pretty typical what we've seen since we started  
12 offering the drawing hunt. The goat permits, there was  
13 four permits issued and zero hunted. Just to poke a  
14 jab at Brian, I'd say maybe they all thought they were  
15 going to get a muskox permit.

16

17                                 (Laughter)

18

19                                 MR. ESKELIN: I'm just kidding on that.  
20 I think the access is difficult and there's a lot of  
21 folks that put in for the drawing and then maybe they  
22 get a moose or they have other opportunities and they  
23 end up not utilizing those permits they drew.

24

25                                 I think that's it for the 2022 season.  
26 Again, I want to really clean up the number of permits  
27 that aren't reporting on their harvest, but we'll get  
28 that worked out and get a better relationship going  
29 with those folks. We currently have the application  
30 period open for the drawing hunts for this year, for  
31 2023. So if anybody in those communities haven't heard  
32 that, there's press releases and OSM Facebook page has  
33 it out there as well, but you can contact myself or the  
34 Forest Service for getting your application in for Unit  
35 15 and Unit 7 drawing hunts.

36

37                                 I think it was Greg that mentioned that  
38 Board of Game is meeting here in Soldotna starting on  
39 Friday. We all know that a lot of our subsistence  
40 users harvest a lot of their game under their State  
41 hunting license and hunt opportunity. So just a good  
42 thing to pay attention to.

43

44                                 It seems like there's a large number of  
45 proposals this year for moose, brown bear, wolverine,  
46 sheep on the Kenai. So it will be something we're  
47 tracking very closely to see what happens on those  
48 State hunts in Unit 15 and then working with the State  
49 and with the RAC and with the tribes to see if there's  
50

0061

1 any adjustments or anything we need to look at making  
2 subsistence hunts.

3  
4 I think that's it for me, but I'm  
5 available for any questions anybody has.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Does  
8 anyone got questions for Todd besides me?

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Todd, I've  
13 got a couple questions for you. One, those elders in  
14 Ninilchik getting around, can't say too much about  
15 that, but I'm getting a shot in my back, so I want  
16 another shot at that caribou. How late is that drawing  
17 open?

18  
19 MR. ESKELIN: I believe it's -- I don't  
20 have the press release right in front of me, but it's  
21 at least the end of March, so you'll want to contact me  
22 sooner than later so you don't forget and get your name  
23 on that drawing list.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. I'm  
26 contacting you now in front of all these people, so  
27 please put my name on that list.

28  
29 MR. ESKELIN: We'll need to verify all  
30 your personal information on the transcript as well.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Oh, good God,  
33 you've got it all for many years. Okay, I'll get it to  
34 you. Thank you. Yeah, that's interesting with the  
35 State proposals coming up because it could affect --  
36 you might have to give us some more opportunity on the  
37 Federal side. Thank you.

38  
39 MR. ESKELIN: Thank you.

40  
41 MS. GILL: Mr. Chair, I just got a note  
42 that Friday, March 31st is the deadline for that draw.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. That  
45 was quick. I'll put it on the record. I'm ready for  
46 Dave Pearson, Chugach National Forest. Thank you.

47  
48 MR. PEARSON: Good morning. For the  
49 record David Pearson with Chugach National Forest. I  
50

0062

1 am the acting Subsistence Program Manager and I'm going  
2 to be reporting on our '22 subsistence seasons.

3

4

5 Starting over in Cordova with the Unit  
6 6C draw hunt from last season. There was a total of  
7 764 applicants with 60 moose permits issued. Of those  
8 30 were cow and 30 were bull. 26 out of 30 bulls were  
9 harvested with a success rate of 86 percent. Of the  
10 cows 29 of 30 antlerless moose were harvested with a  
11 success rate of 96 percent.

11

12

13 I should have said this material is  
14 located in the supplement material on Page 100. There  
15 is a blurb about a composition survey that was flown in  
16 December, but last month Alaska Department of Fish and  
17 Game did fly a full population estimate. I don't have  
18 that data with me today, so I will not be reporting on  
19 it, but that is more recent and better data. So we're  
20 going to skip over this for now and I could get you in  
21 the future better data on that population estimate. It  
22 will be more helpful than what's included here.

22

23

24 Also on the Prince William Sound area  
25 we are helping fund Alaska Fish and Game's black bear  
26 Prince William Sound habitat study. The field work is  
27 complete, so right now they're just working on data  
28 analysis and report writing. So that process is  
29 continuing and I believe there will be papers coming  
30 out from that for the next few years.

30

31

32 The Sitka black-tailed deer season  
33 concluded January 31st. We do not currently have any  
34 harvest data associated with that. The mountain goat  
35 season concluded on February 28th. Two goats were  
36 harvested in Unit 242 near Cordova this season.

36

37

38 Moving over to the Kenai Peninsula,  
39 this year only one -- we'll start with caribou. Only  
40 one caribou was harvested this year and that's a  
41 drawing hunt -- it's not a drawing hunt. It's a hunt  
42 with five total -- a quota of five and I believe last  
43 week the Alaska Department of Fish and Game flew a  
44 population survey for that. So we should be getting  
45 those numbers pretty soon here.

45

46

47 We do have the -- Todd was just talking  
48 about the currently open period for the mountain goat  
49 drawing hunt. Our season last year had three permits  
50 available. Of those three one was harvested in the

50

0063

1 Grant Lake area.

2

3

4 Moose in Unit 7. This is the first  
5 year we've had no Federal harvest of moose. It seems  
6 to be a small but stable population. I saw moose but  
7 nothing legal for what that's worth. We've had reports  
8 from hunters that they're seeing a lot of moose, just  
9 not legal ones. Again, some people harvest those --  
10 subsistence users do harvest those under the State as  
11 well. The Federal priority is of season and a fork.  
12 So lots of times when people do harvest them under the  
13 State they just report with the State.

13

14

15 So last year concerning Dall sheep in  
16 Unit 7 we did not hold a sheep drawing hunt for Dall  
17 sheep at Round Mountain or Crescent. It was closed  
18 under delegation of authority. State survey showed  
19 there to be no legal sheep in those two areas, so using  
20 the delegation of authority we did not hold that hunt  
21 as there were no legal animals.

21

22

23 That is all I have.

23

24

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MR. MCLAUGHLIN: So the survey still is  
a joint effort, State, Fed?

MR. PEARSON: Yes. Through our cost  
share agreement we do provide funding and we can

0064

1 request areas, but it still has to fall within their  
2 prioritization.

3

4 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Okay. A few points  
5 I'd like to make about the Kings Bay. It was mentioned  
6 earlier, but this seems to be the appropriate thing  
7 since you guys are the Federal managers for that  
8 resource similar to the WCR 24-03 thing. Well, if  
9 there's muskox over there, I really would like some  
10 surveys.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: It's not stellar moose  
15 habitat over there, you know, historically-wise, just  
16 for your information from me as a local person. Back  
17 in the day when we only flew like 175's and 206's on  
18 floats, we flew at lower elevation and that's the route  
19 to Anchorage from Chenega. So very commonly we would  
20 see large bulls, cows and calves, whatever, at very  
21 high elevation out in the middle of the mountains,  
22 sometimes in the snow field and just be -- or in the  
23 ice field, Sargent Ice Field. It would be like, wow,  
24 look at these moose here.

25

26 Right now these days everybody is  
27 flying in twins, twin engines, and it's much higher  
28 elevation and nobody gets to see all that or see the  
29 tracks anymore. So immigration and emigration I think  
30 is highly underestimated in some of these reports that  
31 I see written, you know.

32

33 An .804 analysis was done quite a long  
34 time ago when I first got on to the Southcentral RAC  
35 and the customary and traditional use for Chenega Bay  
36 and Tatitlek was established. So this joint survey  
37 thing for getting to fly it and whatnot and I would  
38 like to point out that the last time that the flight  
39 took place was on like one of the worst snowpocalypse  
40 weekends and the snow was about eight feet deep.

41

42 On that exact same weekend I was  
43 driving looking for a deer, going all around it.  
44 Almost the circumference of two full islands and not  
45 even saw one deer track. That wasn't to say those deer  
46 didn't exist. That was just to say those deer were not  
47 active at that time.

48

49 So the last survey that happened in

50



0065

1 Kings Bay was flown on a day -- and I think this was  
2 Milo and Todd or somebody -- some Federal with Kenai  
3 was working in with that and maybe some State stuff was  
4 involved. They said, oh, we didn't see any tracks.  
5 There's no moose.

6  
7 So right now we're doing somewhat of a  
8 disservice to the Federally qualified subsistence user  
9 groups that are allowed to be making a harvest in that  
10 area by not doing an update. So at the last meeting  
11 with Michael I said, hey, when is the next survey,  
12 okay. At the last meeting I asked that and they said,  
13 oh, 2024 is the next one and then the person earlier  
14 today was like, oh, no, we don't even know when the  
15 next one is going to be, okay.

16  
17 So at some point in time it would be  
18 nice to see that -- I know we follow conservation  
19 concerns. That's why we had to vote it down to have  
20 the closure and that's why that closure exists right  
21 now. So anyhow I'd just like to make those points.  
22 Thanks.

23  
24 MR. PEARSON: For what it's worth, I  
25 hear you and I am bringing this to leadership and we  
26 are trying to move forward on this.

27  
28 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Very good, Dave.  
31 Any other questions for him?

32  
33 (No comments)

34  
35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Okay.  
36 Next we've got Bureau of Land Management, Glennallen  
37 Office, Caroline.

38  
39 MS. KETRON: Good morning, everyone.  
40 For the record my name is Caroline Ketron. I'm the  
41 anthropologist for the Bureau of Land Management in  
42 Glennallen Field Office. I'm presenting numbers for  
43 the Unit 13 Federal subsistence moose and caribou hunts  
44 for regulation year 2022.

45  
46 For the Unit 13 Federal subsistence  
47 moose hunt last fall we issued 1,190 permits, which is  
48 about normal for us. The number of harvested moose  
49 reported is 54 moose, so a little low, but the success  
50

0066

1 rate of 11 or 12 percent is within our normal range.  
2 That's based on 88 percent of hunt reports being  
3 returned.

4  
5 AITRC is working through some database  
6 issues, so they only issued a handful of permits for  
7 their community harvest system this year and no harvest  
8 for either moose or caribou. So that total is zero for  
9 our report this year.

10  
11 For the Unit 13 Federal subsistence  
12 caribou hunt we encouraged Federal subsistence hunters  
13 to take bulls only in 13B and 13A, but didn't change  
14 anything for that. We continue to track harvest and to  
15 share information with AITRC and with the Alaska  
16 Department of Fish and Game.

17  
18 We issued 2,672 permits total. There's  
19 still a few days left in the caribou season so that  
20 number could go up a little bit, but I'm not expecting  
21 it to. At this point we've issued permits to folks  
22 that are going to hunt in that area.

23  
24 Harvest reported as of this morning for  
25 this hunt are 96 bull caribou and 41 cow caribou for a  
26 total of 137 caribou. Again, that number could go up  
27 slightly, but we're about done.  
28 We'll know hunter success rate and again maybe a  
29 handful more harvest after the season ends March 31st.

30  
31 Most caribou were harvested in the last  
32 week of the September season and the last 10 days of  
33 October when the season reopened. So that was the bulk  
34 of that 137 harvests. We had a handful over the winter  
35 and about a little over 20 reported for the last part  
36 of February. I talked to Fish and Game about it.  
37 There's a small localized group and as the light  
38 started to come back those got targeted a little bit.  
39 Again, the bulk were harvested this fall.

40  
41 Just as a heads up the BLM is drafting  
42 a proposal to give the Glennallen Field Office more  
43 in-season management authority for the Nelchina Herd.  
44 The goal is so we have faster options in years where  
45 the population counts are low. Right now we have the  
46 delegated authority to change -- so it's any caribou in  
47 13B and 13A and we have the delegated authority to  
48 potentially change that to bulls only. That letter of  
49 authority does require us to consult with the RACs  
50

0067

1 prior to any decision on that. So I'm expecting the  
2 proposal that will be before you to consider this fall  
3 would include that as well.

4

5 Again the goal is just -- if numbers  
6 are really low, in order for us to do anything we would  
7 need to issue -- or go through the Board to do a  
8 special action and sometimes the timeliness of that is  
9 an issue, but the goal is again to consult with  
10 everybody and make sure we make good decisions for the  
11 resource.

12

13 I think that's actually about it for  
14 me. If you have a Federal subsistence permit out for  
15 caribou for 13 and you're done hunting, please go ahead  
16 and turn that in for us.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Questions for  
19 Caroline. Anyone.

20

21 MS. STICKWAN: I have a question.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Gloria, go ahead.

24

25 MS. STICKWAN: I didn't understand what  
26 you said about this fall you could ask for in-season  
27 management. I didn't understand what you said. You  
28 asked for more authority to do what?

29

30 MS. KETRON: Yeah, so we're submitting  
31 a wildlife proposal to you all to consider to expand  
32 what the Glennallen Field Office can do quickly in  
33 season for the Nelchina. So, for example, right now we  
34 have the authority and we could restrict it to bulls  
35 only in 13B. So this would expand that a little bit to  
36 allow us to.....

37

38 MS. WESSELS: I'm sorry for  
39 interruption. Just anyone on the phone cannot hear  
40 anything at the moment. I just wanted to let all of  
41 you know. Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We'll just pause  
44 for a second here and see if we get it cleaned up.

45

46 (Pause)

47

48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We could probably  
49 break for lunch, but I was thinking we've got that 1:30  
50

0068

1 presentation so I was hoping to do a little more. Give  
2 him a couple minutes. If he doesn't get it soon, we'll  
3 go.

4

5 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. Could Caroline  
6 finish responding to Council Member Stickwan.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: As far as I'm  
9 concerned she certainly can. If you guys are good.  
10 Someone said they needed it recorded, but I don't see  
11 that that's necessary. Go ahead.

12

13 REPORTER: Greg, everything is being  
14 recorded what she's saying. It's just the phone people  
15 can't hear.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Go right  
18 ahead then. Yeah, absolutely.

19

20 MS. KETRON: Great. Thank you. This  
21 proposal will be before you to consider in more detail  
22 this fall. So this is just sort of a heads up that  
23 it's coming down the pipes. The goal would be to  
24 expand the scope of delegation for the Glennallen Field  
25 Office so we could do things like adjust season dates  
26 or set harvest limits.

27

28 We had such a low population this year  
29 that there was concern that if something did come up  
30 and we did need to make a quick decision in order to,  
31 you know, preserve the population that the timeliness  
32 of that would be a concern with the way it's set up, so  
33 it's kind of administrative for that. Again there  
34 would be a requirement that we would consult with the  
35 RACs and I think with AITRC too if there were any  
36 decisions like that to be made.

37

38 I don't know if that -- does that help?  
39 There was a gap.

40

41 MS. STICKWAN: (Nods affirmatively)

42

43 MS. KETRON: Great. Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, good. Any  
46 other questions.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0069

1                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Sounds good,  
2 Caroline. Thank you. Okay. With that I think we'll  
3 go.....

4  
5                   OPERATOR: There are 11 parties in  
6 conference including you.

7  
8                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Now we've  
9 got them all. We've got 11. Okay. We have -- before  
10 we go to lunch here I just want you -- Brian, after  
11 lunch, he's going to ask us about opening up call for  
12 wildlife proposals. So, Council members, you can think  
13 about that if you have any.

14  
15                   We do have a couple that were proposed  
16 by Michael Rego. He's since resigned, but those two  
17 proposals that were on there, the one was to ban  
18 automated moose calls and he had another one for a  
19 timeframe of claims for rural residency. So I don't  
20 know if you got that letter sent. That was sent to  
21 everyone. It was sent to all the Council members. So  
22 those two proposals there and, Andy, I think you might  
23 have a proposal.

24  
25                   But if you guys think over lunch. I  
26 think we're going to go ahead and take a little longer  
27 lunch. I'd like you to be back before 1:30. If you  
28 could be back about 1:20, something like that, we'll  
29 get ready for the DOI. Sound good? Okay. Adios.

30  
31                   (Off record)

32  
33                   (On record)

34  
35                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. We're  
36 going to get ready to start here shortly. I hope  
37 everyone had a great fulfilling lunch. We found some  
38 nice places. Some even worthy of pictures. Anyway,  
39 we'll get over that and we're going to go ahead and  
40 move on now. We had a time for the DOI to give us a  
41 talk and we've got that. They're on the phone.  
42 Jessica, if you want to check in and see if you've got  
43 them, we'll go ahead and get them and we'll let them do  
44 the presentation. I'm going to turn it over to you.

45  
46                   MS. GILL: Okay. Great. Thanks, Mr.  
47 Chair. So on the phone we have Department of Interior,  
48 Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Bryan Newland  
49 on the line. Hopefully he can talk to some proposed  
50

0070

1 changes with the Office of Subsistence Management. Is  
2 Bryan Newland on the phone?

3

4 MR. FREIHAGE: This is Jason Freihage,  
5 Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management and Indian  
6 Affairs. I know he was planning to be here at 5:30.  
7 So maybe he hasn't popped on yet. I'm just checking.  
8 He might be on in a minute. I'll check.

9

10 MS. GILL: Okay. Thank you. We'll  
11 just give it one more minute here. Do I have Bryan  
12 Newland on the telephone line?

13

14 (No answer)

15

16 MS. GILL: Do I have someone from the  
17 Department of Indian Affairs to speak to Office of  
18 Subsistence Management?

19

20 MR. NEWLAND: You do.

21

22 MS. GILL: Okay. Can you state your  
23 name for the record. Thank you.

24

25 MR. NEWLAND: Hi. This is Bryan  
26 Newland. I serve as the Assistant Secretary for Indian  
27 Affairs here at the Department of the Interior.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Welcome.  
30 I'm going to turn the floor over to you. This is the  
31 Chair. You go ahead and make your presentation. We  
32 look forward to hearing it. Thank you.

33

34 MR. NEWLAND: Thanks, Mr. Chair and  
35 members of the Council. I don't know who is all on the  
36 line, but I want to first extend my gratitude to you  
37 all for allowing me some time to speak with you and  
38 hear from you a little bit today. My name is Bryan  
39 Newland. Again, I serve as Assistant Secretary for  
40 Indian Affairs here at the Department of the Interior.

41

42 I'm here to talk a little bit about the  
43 Department's proposal to move the Office of Subsistence  
44 Management from the Fish and Wildlife Service to the  
45 Office of the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.  
46 I think as many of you are aware this proposal was  
47 included in the President's proposed budget for the  
48 upcoming fiscal year, which was released last week.

49

50

0071

1                   You all know very well that the  
2 Department of the Interior along with USDA and  
3 Department of Commerce through NOAA posted a number of  
4 tribal consultations as well as user listening sessions  
5 on how to improve the Federal Subsistence Management  
6 Program so that we can better meet the subsistence  
7 needs of Alaska Natives across the state.

8  
9                   A top ask of the participants was to  
10 move the Office of Subsistence Management from the Fish  
11 and Wildlife Service to the direct supervision of the  
12 Office of either the Secretary or the Assistant  
13 Secretary. This is consistent with what the Department  
14 heard during the 2010 statewide review of the Federal  
15 Subsistence Program back when I was with the Department  
16 of the Interior the first time.

17  
18                   I don't think I have to belabor the  
19 point for all of you as you all understand how  
20 important these subsistence practices are to the way of  
21 life for Alaska Native communities of people. Also to  
22 non-Native rural Alaskans. Alaska Native people depend  
23 heavily on subsistence practices for their nutrition as  
24 well as their social and traditional cultural ways of  
25 living.

26  
27                   The comments we heard during the  
28 consultation sessions last year pointed to a number of  
29 things that were impacting subsistence, including  
30 climate change and other factors that are impacting  
31 ecosystems and a number of species. We do recognize  
32 that all of these factors affect all subsistence users  
33 in Alaska. Comments during the consultations also  
34 highlighted the need for us to expand tribal  
35 partnerships and improve the incorporation of  
36 indigenous knowledge into our Subsistence Management  
37 Program.

38  
39                   We believe that elevating this office  
40 to the level of an Assistant Secretary Office here at  
41 the Department of the Interior will ensure that it gets  
42 high level visibility and access to the resources it  
43 needs to carry out its mission. If the proposal is  
44 adopted by Congress, OSM will continue to provide  
45 support for the Federal Subsistence Management Program  
46 for the benefit of all rural users consistent with the  
47 requirements of Title VIII under ANILCA.

48  
49                   We also believe that this is going to  
50

0072

1 strengthen the program and all users will benefit from  
2 the additional opportunities here in our office, Indian  
3 Affairs, to leverage indigenous knowledge and enhance  
4 the program's partnership in collaboration with tribes  
5 across Alaska.

6  
7                   The details that we can share today,  
8 which are also included again in the budget proposal,  
9 all of OSM's functions and funding would move from the  
10 Fish and Wildlife Service to the Assistant Secretary's  
11 Office here in Indian Affairs. All OSM staff would  
12 retain their positions and responsibilities unless they  
13 choose to remain at the Fish and Wildlife Service.

14  
15                   The budget is also requesting an  
16 additional \$2.5 million for OSM, which would add \$1.5  
17 million to the existing FRMP program and \$1 million to  
18 begin a Wildlife Resource Monitoring Program similar to  
19 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

20  
21                   I also just want to make sure before I  
22 wrap up that I make it clear that this proposal will  
23 not go into effect unless it's enacted by Congress in  
24 the FY24 appropriations bill. That's the proposal as  
25 I've outlined it. It has been submitted to Congress  
26 and we are going to continue working with Congress over  
27 the next several months as we work on the budget.

28  
29                   So I'm going to stop there, Mr. Chair  
30 and members of the committee, and stay on the line here  
31 for a bit to answer any questions. Lastly I'll say  
32 there are a number of questions that I'm not going to  
33 have answers to today, particularly those questions  
34 that get really deep into the weeds. I'll do my best  
35 and if I don't have an answer for you, I'll just be  
36 straight up with you and tell you that.

37  
38                   So thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate  
39 your time.

40  
41                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Bryan.  
42 Yeah, very interesting. I'm going to open it up to our  
43 Council here to direct questions to you and I'm sure  
44 we're going to have some questions for the OSM staff  
45 and see how they feel with U.S. Fish and Wildlife. I'd  
46 like to hear from them. Go ahead.

47  
48                   MS. GILL: Just a reminder if you can  
49 keep yourself on mute if you're not speaking. Thank  
50



0073

1 you. We're getting some feedback here in the room.

2

3

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I thought that  
4 was Bryan flipping papers. Who would like to ask the  
5 first question? Ed, anyone. Kind of caught us off  
6 guard, I think. My question would be -- Andy, you got  
7 one, go ahead.

8

9

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Not quite necessarily  
10 a question, but it seems to me that ANILCA providing a  
11 rural subsistence priority does not really regard race  
12 as something to do about subsistence. Granted, tribal  
13 relations seem to need more input and improvement in  
14 that area.

15

16

The regulations that we help provide  
17 counsel on are regarding proposals that involve  
18 wildlife management issues, which to me seems like a  
19 no-brainer that that's reflective of something that the  
20 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Office of  
21 Subsistence Management within that agency would be  
22 doing and wildlife management issues to me are not  
23 something related politically to Bureau of Indian  
24 Affairs subjects.

25

26

Thank you.

27

28

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Now we here in the Assistant  
Secretary's Office under Indian Affairs we do offer a  
program that directly relate to or impact non-Indian  
people in other contexts. So we, for example, through  
the Bureau of Indian Affairs have a number of power,  
utility and irrigation systems that serve primarily  
non-Native populations.

0074

1                   The other part of this is that the  
2 subsistence users across Alaska an overwhelming  
3 majority of those are Alaska Native people and we also  
4 have a Trust obligation. Now when I say we, I don't  
5 mean Indian Affairs. I mean the entire United States  
6 Federal government. A Trust obligation to provide the  
7 Native people to protect their way of life.

8  
9                   Our obligation to comply with ANILCA  
10 will not change with this move. That is the law the  
11 OSM Staff will be operating under. Their general --  
12 their day-to-day duties won't be changing as part of  
13 this move, but what this will do is better align, we  
14 believe, the subsistence program with the people who  
15 rely on it and also better align OSM with the  
16 Department's overall trust responsibility to the tribes  
17 in Alaska and Alaska Native people. So it's not at the  
18 exclusion of non-Native rural subsistence users.

19  
20                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Are you going to  
21 stop the noise? Go ahead, Robbin.

22  
23                   MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
24 Through the Chair. Thank you so much, Assistant  
25 Secretary Newland. For all of you listening on the  
26 phone I think there are a handful of you. Someone is  
27 clanging and banging and rustling and we can hear you  
28 and so can Assistant Secretary Newland. Please check  
29 and see if your phones are muted. Thank you so much.

30  
31                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, we got  
32 silence. That's good. Something worked. Okay. Andy,  
33 did that answer your -- okay. Gloria, you had a  
34 question. Go ahead.

35  
36                   MS. STICKWAN: I'm not really sure how  
37 to ask this question. My understanding of what you said  
38 so far was that basically the OSM program would stay  
39 the same. It would just be under the Indian Affairs  
40 program and nothing would change other than that.  
41 Instead of being under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
42 it would be under Indian Affairs and nothing else will  
43 be changed. Is that correct?

44  
45                   MR. NEWLAND: Thank you for your  
46 question. I didn't catch your name, ma'am. I'm sorry.

47  
48                   MS. STICKWAN: Gloria Stickwan.

49  
50

0075

1 MR. NEWLAND: Hi, Gloria. I want to  
2 make sure that I'm answering your question as directly  
3 and as best I can. This proposed organizational change  
4 does not change ANILCA. It does not change the law  
5 that we have to comply with. It doesn't change -- it's  
6 not a move that is going to result in staff changes for  
7 individuals. The day-to-day work that our team at OSM  
8 does would largely be the same because we're talking  
9 about compliance with ANILCA.

10

11 What we believe -- so that I understand  
12 it would then cause people to ask why, if nothing is --  
13 if that stuff isn't going to change, why do this. We  
14 believe that this proposal is responsive to the  
15 overwhelming comments that the Department has received  
16 over the last 13 years directly from the hundreds of  
17 tribes across Alaska that we've heard from and better  
18 aligns the operations of OSM with the Department's  
19 trust obligations.

20

21 So it's not about supplanting ANILCA in  
22 favor of tribes. What it's about is making sure that  
23 we are in the big picture better harmonizing our work  
24 under ANILCA with our trust obligation to tribes and  
25 Alaska Natives.

26

27 MS. STICKWAN: I have another question.  
28 So the five agencies have an agreement in place. I  
29 understand they work together. Maybe not an agreement  
30 in place, but working together to manage subsistence.  
31 And now we're going to have another -- Indian Affairs  
32 stepping in. Are you going to be another party  
33 managing lands in Alaska? How is the management of  
34 lands going to affect subsistence? The management of  
35 lands will stay the same, but somehow Indian Affairs is  
36 going to be involved.

37

38 I'm not saying I'm against it. I'm not  
39 saying I'm for it. I'm just asking how is Indian  
40 Affairs going to manage subsistence from Washington,  
41 D.C. while we live in Alaska? We know our state. How  
42 is Washington going to be interacting and assisting?  
43 It's just another -- to me it's -- I'm not against it,  
44 but I just wonder how it's all going to work out with  
45 another Federal government involved in the process.

46

47 MR. NEWLAND: I appreciate that  
48 question. We do, through Indian Affairs, engage with  
49 OSM and with other bureaus here at the Department of  
50

0076

1 the Interior all the time, both formally and  
2 informally. As we've made this proposal, would not  
3 move OSM physically from Alaska. The OSM team would  
4 still be there.

5  
6 It's really the line of authority or  
7 organizational chart would change so that the OSM  
8 director rather than reporting up to Fish and Wildlife  
9 Service leadership in Washington, D.C. would report  
10 directly to my position. That's a change because the  
11 Assistant Secretary position is a policy level position  
12 here at the Department of the Interior and it would we  
13 believe create a stronger policy relationship between  
14 the Department and OSM.

15  
16 The work that our great team at OSM  
17 does will still be based -- they'll still be based  
18 where they're at. It will still be Alaska centric and  
19 Alaska focused. It's again a part of trying to better  
20 align our work under ANILCA with our overall trust  
21 responsibility.

22  
23 MS. STICKWAN: So we have agreements in  
24 place and none of those agreements will be changed or  
25 taken away? I just wonder about.....

26  
27 MR. NEWLAND: You know, I -- thank you  
28 for that question. I don't have -- I don't want to  
29 misspeak, so I don't have a direct answer to that  
30 question. I would be happy to see if we can follow up  
31 and provide that. So whenever you do any type of  
32 organizational changes there are a lot of detailed  
33 things that need to be addressed. I don't have all of  
34 the details and we don't have all of the details ready  
35 to discuss today. A lot of this again will also depend  
36 on Congress as well in their response.

37  
38 So I'm not trying to be evasive from  
39 your question. I'm trying to be honest and straight up  
40 with you guys. I just don't have a good answer and I'd  
41 rather not shoot from the hip.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Is there  
44 other questions? Michael.

45  
46 MR. OPHEIM: I might have missed it.  
47 When was this proposed change going to Congress?

48  
49 MR. NEWLAND: Yes, so the way that  
50

0077

1 we've set it up is it's included in the President's  
2 annual budget request. Congress has to approve the  
3 budget, so this is the proposal we've made to Congress.  
4 I think the clearest and cleanest way to -- again, I  
5 know I sound like a broken record at this point, but  
6 try to align all of our obligations here at the  
7 Department. But Congress does have to -- as we've  
8 structured this, Congress does have to approve it.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Is there  
11 any other Council member got a question? Gloria's got  
12 a follow-up question.

13  
14 MS. STICKWAN: I just know that Ahtna  
15 Indian Tribal Resource Commission has an agreement with  
16 Department of Interior and I don't know if you've seen  
17 that document, but hopefully that will be acted on if  
18 you do do this process because it's been like over 10  
19 years practically before -- we were told when we signed  
20 it that the Secretary of Interior would approve it.  
21 Nothing has been done on it yet.

22  
23 The document doesn't really change much  
24 that's already existing in law. It just gives Ahtna  
25 people additional opportunities to follow their  
26 traditional ways. It doesn't hinder anybody from  
27 hunting for large game. It just allows Ahtna people to  
28 follow our traditional ways.

29  
30 For that reason I support this right  
31 now, but I'm really not sure because there's too many  
32 unanswered questions. I don't want to say whether I  
33 support or not, but I would like to see that document  
34 adopted by the Secretary of Interior finally.

35  
36 MR. NEWLAND: Can you repeat the name  
37 of that document. I'm sorry.

38  
39 MS. STICKWAN: We have somebody here  
40 who -- maybe he doesn't. It's the Ahtna Intertribal  
41 Resource Commission Memorandum of Agreement with the  
42 Department of Interior. It was passed back in 2006, I  
43 believe, or 2007.....

44  
45 MS. LAVINE: '17.

46  
47 MS. STICKWAN: '17. Sorry. I'm  
48 getting old. But it hasn't been approved by the  
49 Secretary since that and we were told it was going to  
50

0078

1 be passed within the year when it was approved and all  
2 the eight presidents signed it and still nothing has  
3 been done on it.

4

5 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you for raising  
6 that.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Bryan, I  
9 know the devil is in the details. This is Greg  
10 Encelewski, the Chair. Not to make fun of it, but with  
11 Congress and the President I don't see any action quite  
12 rapidly. We'll have to wait and see. I do, as a  
13 Council member and as a tribal member, think there's  
14 definitely room for inclusion with the tribal voice and  
15 anything that supports getting subsistence to the rural  
16 users under ANILCA is a good thing. So I look for to  
17 see how it is.

18

19 I would like to hear -- if the Council  
20 members are done here, I would like to hear from a few  
21 of you in the OSM, just with the Fish and Wildlife, and  
22 see how that may affect you. Sue, maybe you could talk  
23 to that or any feelings there.

24

25 MS. DETWILER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
26 This is Sue Detwiler, Assistant Regional Director for  
27 the Office of Subsistence Management. This proposal is  
28 new to our OSM staff as well. It was just released  
29 last week. So we're just now getting familiar with it.  
30 There are still a lot of details to work out. I think  
31 our staff as individuals are still trying to, you know,  
32 grasp what the proposal is. There's still a lot that  
33 we don't know.

34

35 So I think as individuals people will  
36 have to understand more information as it comes out,  
37 but I would also say OSM as an entity, as an office, is  
38 part of the Administration. This is the President's  
39 budget. This proposal was put out by the Department of  
40 Interior and so as part of the Department of Interior  
41 our position would be to support whatever the  
42 Administration puts forward.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Okay.  
45 Gloria Stickwan has one more question here or a  
46 comment.

47

48 MS. STICKWAN: I just want to state  
49 that I think Secretary of Interior must hopefully will  
50

0079

1 consider Alaska and know that Alaska is different from  
2 the Lower 48 states. The tribes are different. The  
3 setup here is different. All the monuments and the  
4 regulations in the State of Alaska is all different  
5 from the Lower 48. That kind of concerns me because I  
6 don't want to see Lower 48 regulations adopted up here.  
7 I mean I don't want any influences from the Lower 48  
8 brought up here any more than it already is.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. That's  
11 clear. That's good. Bryan.

12

13 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you. Mr. Chair, I  
14 want to emphasize one point that I said at the top  
15 because that's a good point that you just raised.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You go ahead and  
18 emphasize.

19

20 MR. NEWLAND: The proposal that we put  
21 forward to Congress is in direct response to a series  
22 of tribal consultations that we've had over the past  
23 two years, which is consistent with what we heard from  
24 tribes across Alaska in 2010.

25

26 Both the Secretary and her team,  
27 including me, understand very well that Alaska is  
28 different and that not only different legally but  
29 different culturally and on the ground. We're trying  
30 to be respectful of that. One way that we aim to show  
31 that respect is by listening to the people who have  
32 told us loud and clear that this is something they  
33 believe is important.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Bryan.  
36 Thank you. I think we'll definitely be looking forward  
37 to further information as it comes about and see where  
38 the budget goes and approval. Is there any last  
39 questions? If not, we'll go ahead and let you go and  
40 we'll move on to our next item of business.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MR. NEWLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
45 Council members. I appreciate your time and the  
46 invitation to be here. And thank you, Sue, for being  
47 on as well.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you,

50

0080

1 too. Thank you, Sue. Alrighty. Interesting stuff.  
2 Let's go ahead and get Brian back up here. We're going  
3 to talk about action item to call for proposals. He's  
4 going to open up a call for wildlife proposals and I'll  
5 let him talk to that. It's on Page 74 I think of your  
6 meeting book.

7  
8 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 Good afternoon again, Mr. Chair, Council members. For  
10 the record my name is Brian Ubelaker. I'm a wildlife  
11 biologist with OSM.

12  
13 Now is the call for wildlife proposals  
14 and the Council's opportunity to submit proposals to  
15 change Federal subsistence wildlife harvest  
16 regulations. An informational flyer on how to submit a  
17 proposal to change Federal subsistence regulations can  
18 be found on Page 74 of your meeting books.

19  
20 Proposals need to include the  
21 regulations you wish to change, the specific changes  
22 you are proposing, an explanation of why the regulation  
23 change should be made and any additional information  
24 that may help in evaluating the proposed change.

25  
26 The window to submit proposals opened  
27 February 27th and closes April 12th. The Council can  
28 vote to submit a proposal during this meeting and your  
29 Council coordinator will then officially submit it.  
30 Also the opportunity for Councils to submit proposals  
31 is available during this entire meeting. If a Council  
32 member thinks of a proposal later or in response to  
33 another agenda item, they are welcome to suggest  
34 submitting a proposal then. Of course anyone can  
35 submit a proposal as an individual before the  
36 submission window closes.

37  
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm happy to  
39 answer any questions about the proposal process and  
40 will stand by while Council members discuss possible  
41 proposals to submit.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. First of  
44 all any questions on the process of the proposal.

45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I think we're  
49 good on that. Let's stand by for proposals. Let's see  
50



0081

1 what we've got. I will make a reference just for the  
2 Council here. As I mentioned earlier, there were two  
3 proposals sent in by Michael Rego and he was asking the  
4 Southcentral RAC's conference. He has since resigned.

5

6 I don't know how that affects his  
7 proposals, but his two proposals were a ban on  
8 automated calling calls during moose season. That was  
9 one of the proposals in August and September statewide.  
10 Then listing a designated timeframe to claim rural  
11 residency was the other one. So it was up to us, of  
12 course, if we wanted to bring them forward to the  
13 Council.

14

15 I'm mentioning to you it was sent out  
16 to all of you as Council members. So if someone wants  
17 to introduce that, that would be fine. Andy, I think  
18 you may have one too that you're working on or thinking  
19 about.

20

21 I'll open up the Council to proposals.  
22 Like Brian said, we could bring them up any time the  
23 rest of this afternoon. For those of you who plan on  
24 being here in the morning you could do it then also. I  
25 plan on being gone. But, anyway, we'll see. Just  
26 looking at my schedule here we'll see how it works out.

27

28 Anyway, anyone got a proposal?

29

30 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: I thought this was  
31 kind of a done deal, what we talked about earlier  
32 today, but in typical fashion like following these  
33 other things kicked the can down the road a little ways  
34 and make it take a little more time. It seemed like a  
35 housekeeping process to me.

36

37 I'm not quite sure that when this  
38 delegation of authority letter came to us it was  
39 submitted in the form of wildlife proposal, but I'm  
40 being informed that a good way to handle this, what we  
41 already passed a motion on today that was seconded, was  
42 to bring this whole thing to the Board in the sense of  
43 us doing a wildlife proposal that is going to not be  
44 processed by the Board until April of 2024 by us  
45 requesting this rescinding of the letter of delegation  
46 of authority for Unit 6 moose and deer in the Unit 6.

47

48 Does that require a motion now to  
49 another one other than -- it's not something that the  
50

0082

1 Office of Subsistence Management can bring straight to  
2 the Board from what happened earlier? We need a motion  
3 to do what?

4

5 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I'll let Robbin  
6 talk to it, but I believe that's up to you if you want  
7 to make a proposal motion. Let her speak first. Go  
8 ahead, Robbin.

9

10 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
11 Through the Chair. Yeah, the best way to move forward  
12 on your request to rescind the delegation of authority  
13 letter is to put in a wildlife proposal, which we just  
14 made a call for. If you wish for assistance, you can  
15 direct staff to help draft a proposal. Per your  
16 discussion earlier and some of the statements you've  
17 made on record, we can huddle perhaps on a break so  
18 that before you adjourn we might have a draft for you  
19 to review and approve.

20

21 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Okay.

24

25 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Yes, please. I would  
26 request that.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. So Andy  
29 requested a proposal to rescind moose and deer  
30 delegation of authority. That's formal on the record.  
31 We'll work on writing it up, I guess.

32

33 Go ahead, Brian.

34

35 MR. UBELAKER: I can definitely help  
36 Council member with some language on drafting that and  
37 getting it ready.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. So you've  
40 got one. We thought we could vote and just do it. So  
41 the wheels turn. Anyone else got a proposal they want?  
42 Anyone else want to entertain anything that was brought  
43 to us before?

44

45 (No comments)

46

47

48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: If not we'll go  
49 ahead and we'll move on. If we come up with a

50

0083

1 proposal, we'll bring them to you, okay. Anyone come  
2 up with one any time we'll just interrupt and -- don't  
3 interrupt, but anyway request to be heard and we'll go  
4 ahead and take it up. Okay. Thank you, Andy.

5

6 At this time, Jessica, I have a Council  
7 Charter review. I believe you were going to do that.  
8 I'll just turn it over to you here. I think it's Page  
9 132.

10

11 MS. GILL: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
12 I actually wanted to see if we could move on to the  
13 individual C&T proposals. I have Amy Craver on the  
14 line. Let me just make sure that Amy is online. Amy,  
15 are you on the teleconference line?

16

17 MS. CRAVER: Yes, I am, Jessica.

18

19 MS. GILL: So if that would be amenable  
20 to the Council, we could review the individual  
21 customary and traditional proposals for Denali National  
22 Park.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: If I would have  
25 read my note, I would have saw 2:00. Okay. Thank you.  
26 Yeah, let's go ahead, Amy, if you want to do that.

27

28 MS. CRAVER: Okay. I appreciate you  
29 moving me forward. Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and  
30 members of the Council. For the record my name is Amy  
31 Craver and I'm the subsistence coordinator for Denali  
32 National Park and Preserve.

33

34 Today I'll present to you two  
35 individual customary and traditional use determination  
36 analyses for Blaine and Kevin Mayo and members of their  
37 household. These proposals are located in your  
38 supplemental meeting materials.

39

40 The first proposal ICTP 23-01 submitted  
41 by Blaine Mayo and members of his household request an  
42 individual customary and traditional use determination  
43 -- I will refer to this as an individual C&T  
44 determination from here on out -- for caribou, grouse  
45 and ptarmigan in Game Management Unit 13 in areas  
46 managed by the National Park Service where subsistence  
47 uses are allowed. Blaine Mayo and members of his  
48 household currently reside in Healy and already have a  
49 C&T determination for moose in GMU 13 in areas managed

50

1 by the National Park Service.

2

3

4 The second proposal ICTP 24-01  
5 submitted by Kevin Mayo and members of his household,  
6 requests an individual C&T use determination for moose,  
7 caribou, grouse and ptarmigan in GMU 13 in areas  
8 managed by the National Park Service where subsistence  
9 uses are allowed. Kevin Mayo currently is a resident of  
10 Healy and has an individual C&T use determination for  
11 moose and caribou in GMU 13 in areas managed by the  
12 National Park Service.

12

13

14 In order for someone to qualify for an  
15 individual C&T use determination they need to  
16 demonstrate the following: Pre-ANILCA pattern of use  
17 in Park and Preserves, must remain a Federally  
18 qualified rural resident. If they move out of the  
19 resident-zone community, they must still reside in a  
20 rural community to qualify. If they move to a  
21 non-rural area, they do not qualify. For family  
22 members of the applicant to qualify, they must actually  
23 reside in the residence of the applicant.

23

24

25 According to the National Park Service  
26 regulation if a person has a 13.440 subsistence  
27 eligibility permit, lives in the Park or lives in a  
28 resident zone community, that person must also live in  
29 a community or area that has a C&T use determination  
30 for the desired species and harvest area and they must  
31 be a rural resident. If a person has a 13.440 permit  
32 and lives in a community without a C&T use  
33 determination for the species they wish to hunt, they  
34 may submit a proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board  
35 for an individual C&T use determination.

35

36

37 Federal subsistence regulations allow  
38 the Federal Subsistence Board to make individual C&T  
39 use determinations in National Park and Monument areas.  
40 National Park Service regulations include unique  
41 subsistence eligibility requirements for National Park  
42 Service lands. Requests for individual C&T use  
43 determinations are analyzed in the same way that a  
44 community or area request for C&T is analyzed.  
45 Subsistence harvests are authorized only in the ANILCA  
46 additions to Denali Park.

46

47

48 The proponents have described a history  
49 of C&T use of moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan in  
50 Denali National Park and Preserve, part of GMU 13E

50

0085

1 where subsistence uses are allowed. Blaine and Kevin  
2 Mayo and their families are from Cantwell, which is a  
3 resident zone community of Denali National Park.

4  
5 In 2022, the Federal Subsistence Board  
6 determined that Blaine Mayo and his household had  
7 substantial evidence to support the issuance of an  
8 Individual C&T use determination for moose. Currently  
9 Blaine Mayo's family members are unable to harvest  
10 caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan because they now reside  
11 in a rural community, which is Healy, which does not  
12 have a positive C&T use determination for caribou,  
13 grouse, and ptarmigan.

14  
15 In 2010, the Federal Subsistence  
16 Board determined that Kevin Mayo had substantial  
17 evidence to support the issuance of an Individual C&T  
18 use determination for moose and caribou. However, this  
19 C&T request for moose and caribou to the Federal  
20 Subsistence Board did not extend to his family members.  
21 Currently Kevin Mayo's family members are unable to  
22 harvest moose, caribou, grouse and ptarmigan because  
23 they now reside in Healy, which does not have a  
24 positive C&T use determination for moose, caribou,  
25 grouse, and ptarmigan.

26  
27 The community of Cantwell is located  
28 near the Alaska Range at the confluence of the Parks  
29 and Denali highways, which is north of Broad Pass and  
30 28 miles south of Denali National Park and Preserves.  
31 Within Denali National Park, Cantwell subsistence users  
32 harvest moose and caribou on the southwest 7 boundary  
33 just outside the designated Denali Wilderness. This  
34 area, where subsistence hunting is permitted under the  
35 Federal program, is referred to by local subsistence  
36 users as the Cantwell Traditional Use Area.

37  
38 In January 2021 the Federal Subsistence  
39 Board adopted a revised policy on individual customary  
40 and traditional use determinations to follow the  
41 procedures described in the National Park Service's  
42 "Standard Operating Procedures for Issuance of  
43 Subsistence Eligibility Permits and Individual  
44 Customary and Traditional Use Determinations." The new  
45 policy allows for proposals to be submitted on a  
46 continuous basis, and also provides for concurrent  
47 application for 13.440 Subsistence Eligibility Permits.

48  
49 The Federal Subsistence Board makes C&T  
50

0086

1 use determinations based on a holistic application of  
2 eight factors. In addition, the Board takes into  
3 consideration the reports and recommendations from  
4 appropriate Subsistence Resource Commissions and  
5 Regional Advisory Councils regarding C&T use of  
6 subsistence resources.

7  
8                   A community or area's customary and  
9 traditional use is generally exemplified through the  
10 following eight factors:

- 11 (1) a long-term, consistent pattern of use, excluding  
12 interruptions beyond the control of the community or  
13 area;
- 14 (2) a pattern of use recurring in specific seasons for  
15 many years;
- 16 (3) a pattern of use consisting of methods and means of  
17 harvest which are characterized by efficiency and  
18 economy of effort and cost, conditioned by local  
19 characteristics;
- 20 (4) the consistent harvest and use of fish or wildlife  
21 as related to past methods and means of taking: near,  
22 or reasonably accessible from the community or park  
23 unit;
- 24 (5) a means of handling, preparing, preserving, and  
25 storing fish or wildlife which has been traditionally  
26 used by past generations, including consideration of  
27 alteration of past practices due to recent  
28 technological advances, where appropriate;
- 29 (6) a pattern of use which includes the handing down of  
30 knowledge of fishing and hunting skills, values, and  
31 lore from generation to generation;
- 32 (7) a pattern of use in which the harvest is shared or  
33 distributed within a definable community of persons;  
34 and
- 35 (8) a pattern of use which relates to reliance upon a  
36 wide diversity of fish and wildlife resources of the  
37 area and which provides substantial cultural, economic,  
38 social, and                   nutritional elements to the  
39 community or area.

40  
41                   Since 1964, the Mayo families have  
42 hunted, harvested, and shared moose, caribou, grouse,  
43 and ptarmigan. Historically the Mayo families traveled  
44 to their hunting/trapping areas by foot, Coots,  
45 Weasels, off-road vehicles and snowmachines. Today the  
46 Mayo family continues to maintain a reoccurring pattern  
47 of use within the area by foot, ORVs and snowmachines.

48  
49                   For over four generations the Mayo  
50

0087

1 families have hunted and harvested animals by  
2 reasonable ground access in areas near their residence  
3 within GMU 13E. The extended family hunts moose,  
4 caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan together every hunting  
5 season in the Cantwell Creek and Foggy Pass area. The  
6 Mayo family's camp borders the New Park and is located  
7 on state land. To access the camp, the Mayo family use  
8 ORVs and walks.

9  
10 Moose and caribou are gutted, skinned,  
11 and quartered in the field and then packed by foot to a  
12 designated ORV trail and transported to camp. The Mayo  
13 family uses all edible parts of the moose and caribou.  
14 Much of the moose and caribou meat is canned or stored  
15 in the freezer to preserve it and some portions of the  
16 moose and caribou are processed by drying. Usually the  
17 combination of a moose and a caribou will feed two to  
18 three families.

19  
20 The Mayo family uses the following  
21 methods for processing meat: a vacuum sealer, smoker,  
22 meat grinder, pressure cooker, and sausage stuffer.  
23 Processing meat is a family event. Grouse and  
24 ptarmigan are brought back to camp and cleaned and  
25 immediately consumed. The breast is targeted for  
26 consumption, marinated and grilled over the campfire.

27  
28 The most important aspect of grouse  
29 and ptarmigan hunting is that it provides an  
30 opportunity to introduce hunting to the kids. This is  
31 an important aspect of subsistence that is often  
32 overlooked in that it introduces kids the skills and  
33 knowledge of subsistence. Kids are able to practice  
34 aiming the .22 rifle and become familiar with using a  
35 gun. Grouse and ptarmigan hunting is one of the  
36 highlights for the kids, providing them with an immense  
37 amount of pride when they are able to provide food for  
38 the family.

39  
40 The Mayo family hunts are a family  
41 event, often including several generations who  
42 participate together in activities such as hunting,  
43 establishing camps, and processing harvested meat.  
44 Extended family members always share in the harvest. It  
45 is the Mayo's family tradition to share meat and  
46 equipment. If a family member or friend does not get  
47 enough meat during the season, it is expected that the  
48 Mayo family will share their harvest with that person  
49 or household.

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The family utilizes a variety of subsistence resources such as berries, moose, caribou, bear, ptarmigan, fish and furbearers such as beaver, marten, fox, wolf, and lynx. Approximately fifty percent of the Blaine Mayo family's meat comes from moose meat. Typically, wildlife and other subsistence foods provide meals four out of seven days per week.

The effect of these proposals. If adopted, these two proposals would recognize Blaine and Kevin and their household family's C&T use of moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan in GMU 13E in areas managed by Denali National Park and Preserve and allow the Mayo brothers to pass their traditional subsistence lifestyles onto their children.

Because these C&T determination are only for two households, both of which have a history of moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan in the area, the effects on other subsistence users should be minimal.

So the NPS conclusion is to support Proposals ICTP 23-01 and 24-01. Justification: The proponents exhibit a clear long-term and consistent use of moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan in GMU 13, in areas managed by Denali National Park and Preserve. This pattern has been repeated for many years and through several generations. Methods and means are characterized by efficiency of economy of effort and cost based on local characteristics.

The pattern is consistent with past methods and means of harvests at or near the family s hunting camp within the Unit in question. Knowledge of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing moose meat is shared among and between generations, as is knowledge of the skills, values, and lore associated with hunting moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan, which are regularly shared with family and community members such as elders.

The proponents demonstrate a pattern of use that relates to reliance on a diversity of wild foods that provide this family with cultural, economic, social, and nutritious benefits. All eight of the factors associated with C&T determination are evident. Furthermore, this family's pattern of use is also



0089

1 evidenced through the Federal Subsistence previous  
2 determination for Blaine Mayo for moose and Kevin Mayo  
3 for moose and caribou.

4  
5                   There is substantial evidence to  
6 support the issuance of an individual C&T determination  
7 for caribou, grouse and ptarmigan within GMU 13 of  
8 Denali National Park and Preserve where subsistence is  
9 allowed for the proponents.

10  
11                   So the Denali Subsistence Resource  
12 conclusion is to support Proposals ICTP 23 and 24-1.  
13 Justification: According to the Denali SRC, due  
14 diligence has been achieved in documenting Blaine and  
15 Kevin Mayo's family's pre-ANILCA history of using the  
16 Park addition for subsistence established by ANILCA.  
17 The SRC believes that C&T requests need to be expedited  
18 to allow for subsistence customs and traditions to  
19 continue so that qualified families can carry on their  
20 participation in subsistence activities to future  
21 generations.

22  
23                   The Eastern Interior Regional Advisory  
24 Council unanimously supported the Denali National Park  
25 and Preserve individual C&T use determination on  
26 Proposals ICTP 23-1 for Blaine Mayo and ICTP 23-02 for  
27 Kevin Mayo at their Council meeting on March 2nd, 2023  
28 in Fairbanks.

29  
30                   In their justification the Council  
31 referenced the comments provided by the Denali SRC and  
32 the Park Service's conclusion, both of which were in  
33 support of the proposal presented by the NPS were  
34 considered thorough and the Councils agree that  
35 long-term and consistent patterns of use have been  
36 determined by the Mayo brothers.

37  
38                   That concludes my presentation.

39  
40                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you.  
41 That was a good presentation.

42  
43                   MS. CRAVER: Are there any questions?

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I'm getting  
46 there. Good presentation. Any questions for her on the  
47 presentation side?

48  
49                   (No comments)

50

0090

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you,  
2 Amy. We're going to go into our routine here to get  
3 this thing on the table here. The proposal has been  
4 introduced and been presented. An analysis, a report  
5 on Board consultation.

6  
7 Orville, is there anything on tribes or  
8 ANCSA corps? Orville is shaking his head no.

9  
10 Agency comments. Alaska Department of  
11 Fish and Game want to comment? No.

12  
13 How about Federal agencies, any  
14 comments. No.

15  
16 Tribal entities. You guys could speak  
17 individually for tribes. Any tribal entities? No.

18  
19 Okay. Advisory groups. Other Regional  
20 Councils. We heard about the Eastern Interior support.

21  
22 Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

23  
24 (No response)

25  
26 Subsistence Resource Commission we  
27 heard.

28  
29 Summary of written public comments.  
30 Any Orville? No. Jessica, excuse me. You too.

31  
32 MS. GILL: I believe there are no  
33 public comments.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Good.  
36 Anyone got a public testimony on this thing at this  
37 time.

38  
39 (No response)

40  
41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Regional  
42 Council's recommendation. I'll open up the floor for a  
43 motion to adopt.

44  
45 MR. OPHEIM: I'll make a motion to  
46 adopt Proposals 23-01 and 24-01.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.

49  
50

0091

1 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Second.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by Andy.

4 Any discussion. We do have a motion on the table and  
5 seconded. Under the justifications, is there any  
6 conservation concerns. We don't believe so. Is there  
7 any recommendations for it that substantiates the  
8 evidence, such as biological knowledge. No. Will the  
9 recommendation be beneficial or detrimental to the  
10 subsistence user. It will benefit them, so yes. Will  
11 the recommendation unnecessarily restrict other users.  
12 We don't believe so. I think we're good on that.

13

14 I don't need to restate the motion  
15 because I think it's clear. Is there any discussion on  
16 it?

17

18 MS. STICKWAN: I was wondering if those  
19 words should be added.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: What was that?

22

23 MS. STICKWAN: The written proposals.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, I think he  
26 added that. It's ICTP 23-02 and.....

27

28 MS. STICKWAN: He didn't say that part.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Oh, yeah. Yeah,  
31 he stated it.

32

33 MS. STICKWAN: Did you?

34

35 MR. OPHEIM: 23-01 and 24-01.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, my ears are  
38 still good.

39

40 MS. STICKWAN: ICTP?

41

42 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah.

43

44 MS. STICKWAN: Okay.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. All in  
47 favor aye.

48

49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

0092

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

2

3 (No opposing votes)

4

5 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Motion  
6 passes. We've got an action item, but can we go back  
7 to the charter review first?

8

9 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
10 the record my name is Jessica Gill. I'm the  
11 Southcentral Regional Advisory Council Coordinator.  
12 Your Council's 2021 Charter can be found on Page 132 in  
13 your bound meeting book.

14

15 All 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory  
16 Councils were chartered under the Federal Advisory  
17 Committee Act. Under the Act each Council charter  
18 needs to be renewed every two years. So approximately  
19 a year before it's renewed each Council can have a  
20 discussion to see if there's anything you want to  
21 change.

22

23 Most of the language that's currently  
24 in the charter is required by the Federal Advisory  
25 Committee Act and its implemented policies so you can't  
26 request a change to this language, but you can request  
27 a change, minor modifications such as the name of your  
28 Council, the number of seats on your Council, estimated  
29 number or frequency of meetings and adding language on  
30 desired geographic group membership balance. Any type  
31 of these requests must be accompanied by a detailed  
32 justification of the need to make this modification.

33

34 Specifically speaking to membership  
35 balance, that's a balance that would allow the Council  
36 to achieve more equal representation of members across  
37 the region, but if you have -- even if you add this  
38 type of language to the charter in the end it will  
39 depend on the number and diversity of the applications  
40 that the Board receives for your region.

41

42 For example the Kodiak Aleutians  
43 Council has a geographic membership balance to indicate  
44 that their goal is to have four members from the Kodiak  
45 Archipelago, three from the Alaska Peninsula and three  
46 from the Aleutian Pribilof Islands. Because that  
47 region is so spread out the Council wanted to state  
48 having that broad geographic representation as a  
49 volume. The Western Interior Council has some of their

50

0093

1 language.

2

3

4 So other changes that we've made in the  
5 last couple years have been that carryover terms where  
6 Council members can continue to serve until the  
7 reappointment letters come in especially if they  
8 haven't been made before the winter Council meetings.  
9 Luckily that didn't happen this year, so that worked  
10 out well.

11

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Another language that was added as a clause on out of cycle alternate appointments that allows us to fill seats out of cycle that was vacated due to a member resigning, moving out of the region or passing away. These two language additions allow us to have less vacant seats on the Council during our meeting cycles.

So if the Council is satisfied with the language on Page 132 and 133 and request no changes, then the Council can just simply vote to move forward the Charter to the Board. If the Council makes a recommendation for modification and provides justification, then I will provide it to the Interagency Staff Committee for review. That will then in turn provide this request to the Federal Subsistence Board, review it and then if they decide to move it forward, then it goes up to the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture for their approval.

So, with that, I'll turn it back over to you.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All right. You heard Jessica. We've got a motion to move it forward or do we want to amend it or add to it.

MR. HOLSTEN: I'll make that motion.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Ed. Is there a second? And then I'll let you.....

MR. OPHEIM: I'll second that.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by Michael. Okay, it's on the table. Gloria, go ahead. She's got a question.

MS. STICKWAN: So Rego's seat it can't

0094

1 be refilled, right?

2

3

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: It can be.

4

5

MS. STICKWAN: Can be?

6

7

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah.

8

9

MS. GILL: Thank you, Ms. Stickwan.  
10 Yes, it can be filled. We are in the process of going  
11 through the alternates that we had for appointments for  
12 this last round. If we have someone available for that  
13 and is still interested, we send that on to the  
14 Secretaries and they approve or not approve.

15

16

Oh, Katya has something.

17

18

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead, Katya.

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I just also wanted to apprise the  
Council that other Councils already had their meetings  
and I think at least a couple of Councils requesting a  
change to their Charter to add a young adult advocacy  
seat, which would be an unvoting member on those  
Councils, but it will help to bring youth -- or not  
necessarily youth, but like young adults into the realm  
of the Federal Subsistence Management Program.

They would have an opportunity to  
travel to the meetings, learn about how the Federal  
Subsistence Management Program works and hopefully they  
would be interested in applying for a permanent seat on  
the Council in the future because a lot of the Councils  
have members that are older and, you know, they would  
like to pass their knowledge to the younger people.

So we don't know if the Secretaries

0095

1 will -- even if the Board will support these requests.  
2 I'm just letting you know that two Councils, Southeast  
3 and Eastern Interior, is making that request to the  
4 Board to forward to the Secretaries.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Katya.  
9 Southeast and Eastern Interior must be older than we  
10 are.

11

12 (Laughter)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We do have some  
15 elders here, a few elders. Anyway, if anyone wants to  
16 make that a part of our motion, we'd have to amend it.  
17 If not, we'll get it next round.

18

19 MR. OPHEIM: I'd like to see that  
20 amendment added so that we have some youth involved.

21

22 MS. ROBERTS: I agree.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. We need to  
25 go back to the maker of the motion if you want to  
26 accept that modification.

27

28 MR. HOLSTEN: My motion was to --  
29 originally was to okay our Charter as written. I'd  
30 like to add an amendment and the amendment was to bring  
31 in younger people, non-voting positions, that can learn  
32 about subsistence and traditional ways of life. Does  
33 that cover it?

34

35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: The second, do  
36 you agree with Ed?

37

38 MR. OPHEIM: Yes.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I've got a motion  
41 and I've got a second and an amendment. Can we vote on  
42 the amendment.

43

44 MS. STICKWAN: You said to learn, so I  
45 was wondering -- you know, if they're going to be  
46 learning, why don't they get credit for it. If we  
47 could work on that somehow. They're here to learn.  
48 Why not get credit for it. It will give them an  
49 excuse. I mean they'll be able to take time off from  
50

0096

1 school then.

2

3

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, that's got  
4 to be figured out by who would accredit it, who would  
5 agree to do that. I don't know. I don't know that we  
6 need to put that in there, but you guys could look into  
7 that.

8

9

10 going to vote on the amendment. We're  
11 going to vote on the amendment. The amendment has been  
12 made and seconded. All in favor of the amendment to  
13 add youth to a non-voting seat on our Charter say aye.

13

14

IN UNISON: Aye.

15

16

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

17

18

(No opposing votes)

19

20

21

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
22 We'll move on. The original motion was to send it the  
23 Charter as amended. So all in favor of that aye.

23

24

IN UNISON: Aye.

25

26

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

27

28

(No opposing votes)

29

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CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, you've got  
36 your Charter and you've got your amendment. Thank you.  
37 If anyone needs a break, we'll take a break in about a  
38 half hour unless you need it sooner. We're going to go  
39 ahead and review and approve the annual 2022 report.  
40 That's in our book, Jessica, Page 77 to 79.

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The report is a chance to bring  
44 subsistence issues that are not regulatory in nature up  
45 to the Federal Subsistence Board. It covers several  
46 topics discussed at the last meeting in October. I  
47 believe you've all had a chance to review it, but I can  
48 give you an opportunity here like a minute or so to  
49 take a look to see if there's any additional edits



0097

1 you'd like to add or additional topics you'd like to  
2 report on.

3

4

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Do you  
5 want to just highlight what we reported on again for us  
6 or do you want -- everyone I'm sure has read it. We do  
7 have six points on here.

8

9

MS. GILL: Sure. Thanks, Mr. Chair.  
10 Yeah, I'll just quickly highlight the things that we  
11 talked about in October. We discussed adding the  
12 process of reporting anticipated needs of subsistence  
13 as stated in the Council Charter. We also added  
14 customary and traditional use determination process  
15 review and competition for Federally qualified  
16 subsistence users for the Copper River salmon.

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We talked about climate change impacts  
on methods and means of use and the need for  
flexibility in seasons affected by climate change. We  
also added climate change impacts on ocean resources  
including paralytic shellfish poisoning and ocean  
acidification impacts on clams, salmon and ocean food  
webs.

We asked about the Ahtna Intertribal  
Resource Commission memorandum of agreement on  
cooperative management of customary and traditional  
subsistence uses in the Ahtna region. We also asked  
about jurisdiction on subsistence shellfish resources  
in Prince William Sound and concerns over stock size  
and closures of subsistence shellfish seasons.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Very good,  
Jessica. Thank you. It's just to refresh everyone  
here. Is there anything else we need in that letter?  
Andy, go ahead.

MR. MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
A couple things. Maybe right back to that youth thing.  
You know, I think that would be great to just say we  
would support anything that can bring the youth in for  
pre-training purposes or whatever. Educational things  
that can help groom them for positions that go vacant  
when they age.

Another suggestion of including the  
delegation of authority. Have some type of four-year  
review process the same way these closures do every

0098

1 four years. It would be great if that is an automatic  
2 sunset. Come back, let's take a look at this thing,  
3 make sure it's going the way as an automatic four-year  
4 review process so that newcomer people that are  
5 wondering about on the RAC here will be able to be  
6 familiar with what some of those closures are in those  
7 places that they don't know about.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. You heard  
10 the fellow Council member here, Andy. He wants to add  
11 to the list here of the youth being included in the  
12 report that we would like to see that. We would like  
13 to see them get credit for it. We'd like to see them  
14 get involved and we would like the delegation of  
15 authorities to be reviewed on a four-year cycle.

16

17 So if the Council generally agrees with  
18 that, I guess we could just request that, Jessica. If  
19 anyone is objecting to it, speak now or forever hold  
20 your peace. Is that good enough?

21

22 MS. GILL: I believe we need a motion  
23 to include those two other things.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You're always  
26 difficult. Okay. Would someone please make a motion.  
27 Go ahead.

28

29 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: I so move as mentioned  
30 a minute ago.

31

32 MR. OPHEIM: I'll second that.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Is your  
35 motion in compliance with all the rules and regulations  
36 of making a report to the Board without being frivolous  
37 and foolish? Okay. Okay. We all discussed it. Any  
38 questions.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All in favor aye.

43

44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

47

48 (No opposing votes)

49

50

0099

1                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Is there anything  
2 else that we would like to add to the Annual Report?  
3 And I was kidding. You're not difficult. Anyway.  
4 You're fine. Okay. As long as we got it on record.  
5 Very good. We're going to get replacements, so that's  
6 hopeful. Thank you.

7

8                   Next item I have is Federal Subsistence  
9 Board Updated Draft Council Correspondence Policy, OSM.  
10 Robbin, I think that's you.

11

12                   MS. GILL: Sorry, Mr. Chair. We also  
13 just need a motion to approve the Annual Report to move  
14 it forward.

15

16                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Come on now. We  
17 approved it last time.

18

19                   MS. GILL: We added the language and  
20 now we have to approve the report.

21

22                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Picky,  
23 picky. Go ahead, Diane.

24

25                   MS. SELANOFF: I'll make a motion to  
26 approve the Annual Report.

27

28                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Thank  
29 you. Second.

30

31                   MR. OPHEIM: I'll second that.

32

33                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by  
34 Michael. That's the new and improved report. Any  
35 discussion.

36

37                   (No comments)

38

39                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
40 All in favor aye.

41

42                   IN UNISON: Aye.

43

44                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's why you  
45 have a coordinator. Thank you. Okay. Now Robbin.

46

47                   MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
48 Members of the Council. For the record my name is  
49 Robbin Lavine, Subsistence Policy Coordinator for OSM

50

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1 and the LT lead for this Council meeting.

2

3

4 The materials for the Subsistence  
5 Regional Advisory Council Correspondence Policy Update  
6 are on Page 83 of your Council books and you can also  
7 find a suggested updated version of the policy on Page  
8 4 of your supplemental materials.

8

9 The Office of Subsistence Management  
10 would like your review and comments on a suggested  
11 update of the current Council Correspondence Policy.  
12 The Correspondence Policy has been in effect and  
13 unchanged since 2004. So you've been working with this  
14 since that time.

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The update is meant to streamline and clarify the policy. Hopefully the suggested edits eliminate any unnecessary language or information, clarifies the guidance on the official scope of Council correspondence to whom Councils may or may not correspond directly and the process for correspondence.

The draft updated version as I said is on Page 4 of your supplemental materials. Any new language is presented in bold although proposed removed language is not represented. For comparison you can look to the existing policy on Page 83 of your meeting materials.

Primary changes in the Draft Policy include a shortened preamble, the introductory paragraphs of the policy, summarizing the intent of the policy and the authorities foundational to the Councils. Element 1 uses clear language to define the content and focus of Council correspondence.

Element 5 -- and we're looking at Page 4 here of your supplemental materials. Element 5 combines elements that define the correspondence process.

Element 7 confirms that Councils can submit comments on State regulatory proposals directly to the Board of Fish and Board of Game without review by the OSM ARD.

Element 9 clarifies the Councils may not write directly to Federally elected or appointed officials due to Hatch Act restrictions. Finally, and

0101

1 most importantly, these changes will not prevent you,  
2 the Council members, from writing to whomever you wish  
3 as private citizens or in any other capacity.

4

5 So please take a moment to review these  
6 suggested changes or, if you prefer, I can read the  
7 policy into the record. Once again please share your  
8 comments and questions if you have any and they will be  
9 noted. I'll take direction from you all.

10

11 I'd finally just say that the Board  
12 will take action on this policy during the summer work  
13 session and you'll be update on the final version of  
14 the policy during your fall meetings. I am here and  
15 Council Coordination Division Lead Katya is here as  
16 well to answer any questions.

17

18 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. You  
21 pretty well got it outlined here and I think everybody  
22 read it. There's some good changes here, I guess.

23

24 Okay, Council members, do you got  
25 anything on your mind that you want to add or clarify  
26 or get the Hatch Act on you.

27

28 (Laughter)

29

30 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I think you've  
31 done a good job with it actually. It's up to the  
32 Council though. We need to take an action on it to  
33 support it. We should make a motion to support it then  
34 if someone would like to with the changes. Andy.

35

36 MR. MCLAUGHLIN: I'll make a motion to  
37 approve with these dark changes that are highlighted  
38 there, Page 4 as written, the Regional Advisory Council  
39 Correspondence Policy.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Second.

42

43 MR. OPHEIM: I'll second.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by  
46 Michael. Any discussion.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0102

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none.  
2 All in favor aye.

3  
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

7  
8 (No opposing votes)

9  
10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Motion passes.  
11 Jessica, I'm just checking with you. You had someone  
12 down here for 3:00 o'clock. Okay. Did we have time to  
13 do this? They're going to be here right at 3:00? I  
14 was going to take a break around then or should I take  
15 a break now?

16  
17 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. He's  
18 willing to go after the break if you want to break at  
19 3:00.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. All right.  
22 Next item I have is Fisheries Resource Monitoring  
23 Program update, OSM Fishery Division. I think Justin  
24 is going to do that, correct?

25  
26 MR. KOLLER: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.  
27 My name is Justin Koller. I'm a fisheries biologist  
28 with the Office of Subsistence Management. I'll be  
29 providing an update on four fisheries program topics  
30 this afternoon, including the Fisheries Resource  
31 Monitoring Program, the recently concluded Fisheries  
32 Regulatory Cycle and finally an update on Request for  
33 Reconsideration RFR 22-01. These will be brief updates  
34 and none of them are action items.

35  
36 So first up is an update on our  
37 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. The mission of  
38 the Monitoring Program is to identify and provide  
39 information needed to sustain subsistence fisheries on  
40 Federal public lands. The Monitoring Program also  
41 supports meaningful involvement in fisheries management  
42 by Alaska Native and rural organizations and promotes  
43 collaboration among Federal, State, Alaska Native and  
44 local organizations.

45  
46 These funding opportunities seek  
47 applications for projects that address priority  
48 information needs developed by the Councils. For the  
49 2024 funding cycle it is anticipated that approximately  
50

0103

1 2.25 million will be available for the first year of  
2 new projects. Applications will be reviewed by the  
3 Technical Review Committee and summaries of project  
4 proposals submitted for your region will be presented  
5 to you at your next meeting for your input.

6  
7 That is our update on the FRMP program.  
8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Questions anyone.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 MR. KOLLER: Next up is an update on  
15 the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring and the funding  
16 opportunity that closed on February 24th. This winter  
17 the Office of Subsistence Management sought proposals  
18 for the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program to  
19 strengthen Alaska Native and rural involvement in  
20 Federal subsistence management.

21  
22 The Partners Program funds salaries for  
23 biologists, social scientists and educator positions  
24 and Alaska Native and rural non-profit organizations  
25 with the intent of increasing the organization's  
26 ability to participate in Federal subsistence  
27 management.

28  
29 The Program also supports a variety of  
30 opportunities for local rural students to connect with  
31 Subsistence Resource Monitoring and Management through  
32 science camps and paid internships.

33  
34 For this funding cycle it is  
35 anticipated that approximately one million dollars will  
36 be available annually. There were 15 proposals  
37 received for this cycle. The review panel met in mid  
38 February to determine which applications would be  
39 funded. More information about that will be provided  
40 soon through a news release from OSM. Our very own  
41 Karen Hyer is the lead for the program and she's best  
42 able to answer questions.

43  
44 That concludes the Partners update. I  
45 can try and answer questions if you have any. Thank  
46 you.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Questions.

49  
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0104

1 (No comments)

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CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I don't believe there's any. Thank you.

MS. STICKWAN: Was that 15 for us or for everybody?

MR. KOLLER: Statewide. Okay. Before I move on to the next update we have Partners Program enthusiast, Mr. Matt Piche, with the Native Village of Eyak. He is going to present some information about Copper River chinook salmon. His ongoing monitoring work has direct ties to the Partners Program.

Thank you.

MR. PICHE: Hello. For the record my name is Matt Piche. I'm the Natural Resources Coordinator and fish biologist for the Native Village of Eyak Tribal Government. I work in NVE's Department of the Environment and Natural Resources. This meeting marks my 10th year presenting to the Southcentral RAC and I thank you for the continued opportunity.

The data that I'll be presenting can be found in this handout and there are also handouts in the back for anyone that may want to follow along.

Funding for my position and my ability to be here today is provided by OSM's Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program. For the sake of brevity to eliminate our agency report, I'll briefly mention that the Copper River 2022 in-river abundance estimate has been finalized. A total of 34,480 chinook salmon with a standard error of 2,960 migrated through Baird Canyon this past summer.

This in-river abundance estimate represents escapement past the commercial in lower river subsistence fisheries, but prior to any harvest in the Upper Copper River District. This data is detailed in your Council packet on Page 85 to 90 along with preliminary data from our joint NVE and Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission FRMP funded Klutina River Sonar Pilot Study.

Now that that's out of the way. The following set of slides were handed out this morning.



0105

1 They should be in front of you. Again additional  
2 copies are in the back of the room. On page 1 of your  
3 slideshow handout you'll see the total returning run  
4 sizes of chinook salmon from 1999 to 2022.

5

6                   Spawning escapement is shown in blue at  
7 the bottom of the stack bar graph, followed by  
8 subsistence harvest in green, commercial harvest in  
9 gray, personal use harvest in yellow and sport harvest  
10 in red. This figure depicts the shift in run size and  
11 harvest starting in 2008.

12

13                   This also demonstrates the response of  
14 fishery managers to decreasing run sizes in order to  
15 achieve a sustainable escapement goal. During a period  
16 of low abundance harvest opportunity was reduced and in  
17 periods of high abundance harvest opportunity can be  
18 increased.

19

20                   The data set on Copper River chinook  
21 salmon is relatively small in terms of achieved  
22 spawning escapements. Run failure is not represented  
23 in the data set and it's also likely that peak  
24 productivity has not occurred during this period of  
25 study. Therefore the data collection needs to continue  
26 long term to determine trends in abundance especially  
27 in light of climate change.

28

29                   As the longevity of this data set grows  
30 it should encompass a greater range of spawning  
31 escapements and productivity response allowing managers  
32 to continually refine productivity models, forecast  
33 models and better understand the production potential  
34 of the Copper River watershed.

35

36                   What this data has documented so far is  
37 that prior to 1999 the lack of abundance estimates  
38 prevented run size estimates, but from 1999 to 2007  
39 annual run size averaged 82,986 chinook salmon. Since  
40 2008 run size has declined by 43 percent to an annual  
41 average of 47,398 chinook salmon.

42

43                   During this time aggregate annual  
44 harvest averaged 56,645 chinook salmon from 1997 to  
45 2007. However, since 2008 annual aggregate harvest has  
46 been reduced by 61 percent to 18,757 chinook salmon.

47

48                   A period of low abundance starting in  
49 2008 has impacted harvest opportunity in all fisheries

50

0106

1 from 2008 onward. Average annual commercial harvest  
2 has been reduced by 72 percent. Sport fish harvest has  
3 been reduced by 74 percent. Personal use harvest has  
4 been reduced by 65 percent and subsistence harvest has  
5 remained near the long-term average but this is mainly  
6 because of 2018 historical peak average bringing that  
7 overall average up. However, this does demonstrate the  
8 subsistence priority that's in place on Copper River  
9 chinook salmon.

10  
11 If you go to the next page, page 2, the  
12 following slides will provide a brief overview of  
13 results from NVE and ADF&G study on spawning  
14 distribution and stock specific run timing on Copper  
15 River chinook salmon.

16  
17 I won't have time to get deep into the  
18 methods or stats, but I'm happy to chat with anyone  
19 between breaks and after this. This study was funded  
20 by the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund through the NOAA  
21 Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. NVE  
22 investigator's salary is partially funded by the  
23 Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program and this  
24 study leveraged substantial funding in place for NVE's  
25 mark/recapture study, which is a long-term FRMP funded  
26 program.

27  
28 The paper for this study is currently  
29 being prepped for release and anticipated to be  
30 available this year and I'd be happy to distribute that  
31 to the Council once it's available. I will state that  
32 the views in my interpretation of this data come to you  
33 as NVE staff. While ADF&G was a partner on this study  
34 they're not here today to present with me and the  
35 following discussion does not represent any ADF&G  
36 views.

37  
38 If you look on the next page, we can  
39 also see the percentage of spawners returning to the  
40 nine aerial index streams that are flown annually by  
41 ADF&G. Aerial index streams are indicated by the  
42 bright pink on the map there. These are clear water  
43 tributaries that have been flown regularly since 1970s  
44 and represents one of our longest running chinook  
45 salmon data sets. As you can see, the proportion of  
46 spawners utilizing these drainages varies from year to  
47 year and the majority of chinook salmon spawning occurs  
48 elsewhere.

49  
50

0107

1                   It becomes difficult to compare the  
2 finer scale proportion estimates such as the aerial  
3 index tributaries due to the small sample size of  
4 radio-tagged fish going to the tributaries.  
5 Collectively, these nine tributaries accounted for  
6 34-46 percent of the total escapement from 2002 to 2004  
7 and 39-47 percent from 2019 to 2021.

8  
9                   On the next page you'll see our  
10 accumulative run timing curves. Run timing at the  
11 capture site at Baird Canyon was consistent among years  
12 in terms of order from earliest to latest. Fish that  
13 spawned higher in the Copper River drainage typically  
14 had earlier run timing. Cumulative run timing curves  
15 consistently showed the Upper Copper River fish being  
16 the earliest in every year, clearly followed by the  
17 Gulkana River.

18  
19                   The Chitina River fish were next in all  
20 three years of the study followed by the Tazlina, the  
21 Klutina and the Tonsina River fish. The same trend was  
22 true with individual drainages where fish traveling  
23 further up tributaries had earlier run timing than  
24 those spawning in the main stem lower portions of those  
25 tributaries. For example the Klutina and the Tonsina  
26 River.

27  
28                   Comparing previous mean run timing  
29 between the two studies showed no significant trends  
30 across years. This is not unexpected considering the  
31 myriad of annual variables such as ice out and water  
32 discharge which affect run timing in a relatively short  
33 duration of the study, just three years. Run timing at  
34 Baird Canyon did not appear to change between studies.

35  
36                   Other data that was collected was stock  
37 specific length data which would be another entire  
38 presentation, so I'll chat about that in the future if  
39 anyone is interested. But I'll stop here and take any  
40 questions that you may have.

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Questions  
43 for Matt. Man, this is some good stuff you put out.  
44 Questions. Yeah, you bet, Dennis.

45  
46                   MR. ZADRA: Yeah, Matt. Just looking  
47 at the run timing stuff on this last 2019, 2020 and  
48 2021. It seems and I know this, but the run timing in  
49 '21 was, what, about a week later than what it  
50

0108

1 traditionally was.

2

3

4 MR. PICHE: Yeah, and really early  
5 season conditions heavily influenced this as you likely  
6 know. Yeah, later ice out versus an early ice out,  
7 colder conditions down low in the river. You know, the  
8 Copper -- we have this thing going on where usually the  
9 Upper River all this snow is melting and everything is  
10 starting to already green up a bit and the Lower Copper  
11 River is still locked up and covered in white snow. So  
12 you kind of have this situation where tributaries might  
13 be opening up, but the lower the Copper River is so  
14 cold and Miles Lake is still frozen. So that often  
15 influences run timing early season.

15

16

MR. ZADRA: Yeah, thank you.

17

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CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any other  
questions for Matt.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Great report.  
Thank you.

MR. PICHE: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. I think  
Justin you've got some more work here.

MR. KOLLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
Once again Justin Koller here. Fish biologist for  
Office of Subsistence Management. This next one is an  
update on the recently concluded fisheries regulatory  
cycle. The Federal Subsistence Board took action on  
all of the fisheries proposals and closure reviews at  
their January fisheries regulatory meeting. We expect  
the new regulations to be published in the Federal  
Register in late spring or early summer.

The following is a summary of actions  
on fisheries proposals that your Council provided input  
on. For the Cook Inlet area the Board recognized the  
customary and traditional use of all fish in the Kenai  
Peninsula District by residents of Moose Pass. The  
Kenai Peninsula District includes waters north of and  
including the Kenai River drainage within the Kenai  
National Wildlife Refuge and the Chugach National  
Forest.

0109

1                   The Board also rejected a proposal to  
2 match State sportfishing limits and gear restrictions  
3 for Kenai River chinook salmon.

4  
5                   In the Prince William Sound area the  
6 Board rejected a proposal to recognize customary and  
7 traditional use of salmon in the Chitina Subdistrict of  
8 the Upper Copper River District by residents of  
9 Richardson Highway from Milepost 45 to 47.

10

11                   The Board rejected a proposal to  
12 recognize customary and traditional use of salmon in  
13 the Chitina Subdistrict of the Upper Copper River by  
14 residents of the Alaska Highway from the Canadian  
15 border to Dot Lake.

16

17                   The Board rejected a proposal to  
18 rescind regulations for the Lower Copper River salmon  
19 fishery along the Copper River Highway.

20

21                   We will begin our next fishery cycle  
22 during the winter 2024 meeting. At that time we will  
23 solicit proposals to change the Federal subsistence  
24 fish and shellfish regulations.

25

26                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

28                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any questions for  
29 him on that, from the action from the Federal Board.  
30 Pretty much was in collusion with us.

31

32                   (No comments)

33

34                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All right. Thank  
35 you.

36

37                   MR. KOLLER: Our last update is on RFR  
38 22-01. The request for reconsideration of Board action  
39 on FP21-10. Ahtna, Inc. requested the Board reconsider  
40 action on FP 21-10, which opened a Federal subsistence  
41 salmon fishery on the lower Copper River.

42

43                   The Board recently acted on the  
44 threshold analysis for RFR 22-01. The Board found  
45 potential merit with one of the eight claims made in  
46 the request. That claim was that the Board based its  
47 approval on FP 21-10 on an erroneous interpretation of  
48 information regarding the estimated impact and  
49 popularity of and participation in a new Federal  
50

0110

1 subsistence fishery.

2

3

4 Since the Board found potential merit  
5 with this claim the Office of Subsistence Management  
6 will conduct a full analysis of that claim. Our goal  
7 is to present the full analysis to you at your fall  
8 meeting where you will make a recommendation to the  
9 Board and then the Board will then consider RFR 22-01  
sometime during the winter.

10

11 That is the end of that update. Thank  
12 you, Mr. Chair.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Is there  
15 any other questions for that.

16

17

(No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Very good. Thank  
20 you, Justin.

21

22

MR. KOLLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We're going to  
26 take a break. We're a little after -- let's take 10  
27 minutes and stretch or whatever and we'll come back and  
we'll invite the next guest.

28

29

Thank you.

30

31

(Off record)

32

33

(On record)

34

35

36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, folks.  
37 We're going to go ahead and get started here. Jessica,  
38 I've got a question. Is that -- we're on Number K, is  
that person here?

39

40

41 MS. GILL: Yes, Mr. Chair. That person,  
Grant Hilderbrand is here in person.

42

43

44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Great. We  
45 are ready. Okay. We're on Number K here, National  
Park Service, and, Grant, you're up.

46

47

48 MR. HILDERBRAND: Okay. Good afternoon,  
49 Mr. Chairman, member of the Council. Thanks for your  
time today. I greatly appreciate it. For the record

50

0111

1 my name is Grant Hilderbrand. I'm the associate  
2 regional director for resources at the Park Service  
3 here in Alaska.

4

5 I visited with this group last fall to  
6 let you know that we would be eventually publishing a  
7 proposed rule on hunting and trapping in national  
8 preserves in Alaska. And so since the time that we met  
9 that proposed rules has published. It's open for  
10 public comment now through the 27th of March. And so  
11 what we're really seeking or encouraging is for this  
12 body to provide written comments to us on the proposed  
13 rule so we can fully consider those and in addition for  
14 you to send us some as individuals or as part of  
15 whatever organization you're affiliated with.

16

17 I thought if with you, I can spend  
18 about five minutes just sort of covering the background  
19 and what's in the rule, and I'm happy to answer any  
20 questions you have.

21

22 So the short version is Park Service  
23 first addressed some of these topics in 2015 and it was  
24 called the 2015 Rule. Once that rule was passed pretty  
25 quickly we were sued by the state of Alaska and some  
26 other interested parties. Through time with the change  
27 of administration we revisited that rule and passed the  
28 2020 Rule. As a result of that the litigation on the  
29 2015 Rule went away, but it brought about a new suite  
30 of litigation on the 2020 Rule, and we're still under  
31 litigation on the 2020 Rule. In that case the judge  
32 has basically pause on the lawsuit, has not made a  
33 ruling. The 2020 Rule stays in effect with the  
34 understanding that we will revisit this rule.

35

36 So there's probably two or three major  
37 topics that I wanted to bring your attention to.  
38 Obviously focus on anything in the rule that you have  
39 interest on, but I want to spend time on a few of  
40 those.

41

42 The first is the proposed rule does not  
43 affect Title VIII subsistence use. It's focused on a  
44 subset of authorizations that exist under state hunting  
45 regulations. That said, we fully understand that some  
46 folks in rural Alaska are harvesting under those state  
47 regulations. In addition family members that you may  
48 have that live in urban areas would also be hunting  
49 under those regulations.

50

0112

1                   I think the three things that we hear  
2 the most feedback and probably areas to -- I don't say  
3 areas to focus on, but areas where I know we would  
4 benefit from feedback from individuals. The first one  
5 is bear baiting, and our decisions base for what we'll  
6 ultimately do on the proposed rule is really anything  
7 between the 2015 Rule and the 2020 Rule.

8  
9                   What we've heard through the years with  
10 bear baiting and probably why it's a challenge for us  
11 is when we hear from folks in particular in rural areas  
12 is -- there's a combination of concerns and they're not  
13 uniform in one particular area. One is that some folks  
14 express concern about additional non-local folks coming  
15 into areas to harvest for any particular reason. Some  
16 folks have concern about potential public safety  
17 issues tied to baiting. But there's also folks that  
18 appreciate folks coming in to harvest predators. So  
19 we're hearing a variety of perspectives on this  
20 particular topic. I think a place where it's most  
21 complicated and one of the reasons -- we want to hear  
22 from everybody, but this is one of the bodies we  
23 clearly appreciate input from -- is Wrangell-St. Elias  
24 and especially the McCarthy Road. It's one of those  
25 places where due to access and the road being there, we  
26 do get a convergence of different types of uses. And  
27 so relative to the rule in of itself and certainly the  
28 bear baiting, it's useful for us to hear whether you're  
29 in favor of it, whether you're opposed to it, but also  
30 any perspectives or ideas that you may have in terms of  
31 how to mitigate or regulate that particular activity is  
32 really useful to us. I think we have a strong desire  
33 to come up with something that would work for enough  
34 people that we don't have to revisit it again in the  
35 future.

36  
37                   So maybe I'll list the other couple of  
38 topics, then I'm happy to take questions on any of them  
39 going forward. The other is in the rule itself, and  
40 there's copies on the back table, there's a table that  
41 I would, you know, recommend you spend particular time  
42 looking at. And it lists sort of the different  
43 activities and prohibitions we're looking at. And  
44 again the vast majority of harvest of predators under  
45 state regulations would remain untouched by this rule.  
46 It does relate to bear baiting. It also relates to the  
47 harvest of sows with cubs and cubs, so that's in there  
48 explicitly. It also has to do with taking of wolves  
49 and coyotes during sort of the summer pupping period.  
50



0113

1 Other things that are in there include  
2 shooting from, on, across a roadway, use of poison, use  
3 of taking with aircraft or from aircraft and the like.  
4 So there's sort of a long list, most of which have long  
5 been prohibited by the state. So we appreciate  
6 feedback on all of those, but I think again bear  
7 baiting is one that seems to be particularly  
8 challenging, the harvest of black bear and brown bear  
9 females with offspring and the take of offspring, and  
10 then again the timing of the taking of wolves and  
11 coyotes are ones that keep coming up for us over and  
12 over.

13  
14 The final one that's in here that we  
15 also would really like to get feedback on relates to  
16 use of a firearm as a trap, and so under National Park  
17 Service regulations in general trapping is limited to a  
18 snare or a trap if you will. A firearm is not  
19 explicitly authorized. And so one of the ways that the  
20 Federal Board has addressed that is they've authorized  
21 hunting seasons that coincide with trapping seasons so  
22 folks can use a firearm while they're out trapping.  
23 That being said, we'd love to get feedback on how  
24 people actually functionally use a firearm are part of  
25 trapping activities to see if we can find something  
26 that works a little better for people.

27  
28 So I think those are the primary topics  
29 of interest, and so I'm just going to pause there and I  
30 close with we really want to hear feedback from this  
31 group and from you as individuals, so please provide  
32 that if you can, if you have the interest.

33  
34 I'll pause for questions.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Alrighty. Andy's  
37 got the first question for you. Go ahead, Andy.

38  
39 MR. HILDERBRAND: Sure, you bet.

40  
41 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, I just wanted to  
42 comment about the firearm type thing. I can speak from  
43 experience historically trapping in the Lower 48 and  
44 here, if you're trapping muskrats and you have a .22 at  
45 season's end, it's a furbearer.....

46  
47 MR. HILDERBRAND: Yeah.

48  
49 MR. McLAUGHLIN: .....and that is  
50

0114

1 something that -- it's just a normal practice for  
2 trappers to be able to. So, yeah, if you have your  
3 trapping license, it makes it a viable and very  
4 legitimate way for you to obtain and harvest that  
5 animal. I don't find a difference between them, you  
6 know.

7

8 MR. HILDERBRAND: I think that's exactly  
9 the type of feedback in terms of the context that will  
10 be really useful for us, so appreciate it.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Other  
13 comments or questions. Go ahead, Dennis.

14

15 MR. ZADRA: Yeah. Like I said in my  
16 introduction, I did participate in a bison hunt upriver  
17 and that was the first time that, you know, I had been  
18 up there in a long time especially in the wintertime,  
19 and talked with quite a few long-term residents that  
20 are friends of friends and all of that. But the  
21 general consensus I get is that the bear baiting is a  
22 pretty necessary and valuable thing for them to do  
23 that. One guy does happen to be a guide and, you know,  
24 part of his business comes from, but, you know, it  
25 seems like it's a pretty thick country and it's hard to  
26 just walk around and hope that you're going to bump  
27 into bear let alone be able to size the bear up, make  
28 sure you're not shooting a female or anything like  
29 that.

30

31 And I do also agree with Andy with, you  
32 know, firearms with trapping. That seems like a no  
33 brainer.

34

35 MR. HILDERBRAND: Thank you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Other comments or  
38 questions. Andy's got some more. Go ahead.

39

40 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
41 Chair. Just the public safety aspect you were saying,  
42 you know, I mean you obviously know the state regs.  
43 You know there's -- you know, I'm a registered bear  
44 baiter and you post a sign. You know, I mean your name  
45 is on there, your permit is on there, you're  
46 registered, you've had a formalized certificate, you're  
47 trained for those type of things. So it's Alaska.  
48 There's wilderness and there's bears, and if you're out  
49 there, you run the risk of running into a sign that  
50

0115

1 says, uh-oh, I shouldn't be here because -- or I should  
2 be more alert right now because there can be more bears  
3 present.

4

5 MR. HILDERBRAND: Appreciate the  
6 comment.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any others.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, I'll give  
13 you a couple just instances we have bear baiting on the  
14 Peninsula, state regs. And the biggest problem we get  
15 is disrespect for other bear bait stations and jumping  
16 in the area, the same one, and sometimes public is not  
17 notified properly or there's a danger to them, too, you  
18 know, on the trails or whatever from the use, and so I  
19 hear that. We do have some that locally bear bait,  
20 some very good and successfully use it for good  
21 reasons. Most of the bear baiting that I'm more  
22 familiar with especially with the Native association is  
23 for predator control, so it's a little different than,  
24 you know, dining or wanting a bear for other reasons,  
25 but that's what I know about that.

26

27 As far as shooting a rifle, trappers  
28 have used rifles since the time immemorial, so I mean I  
29 don't have a problem with that.

30

31 Other comments.

32

33 MR. HILDERBRAND: All right. Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Wait a minute.

36

37 MR. OPHEIM: It could be a useless  
38 comment, but, yeah, I think in Seldovia there we don't  
39 have the Federal, but we have the State, and the issue  
40 we have is with the bear baiters trespassing, you know,  
41 and not getting any kind of permissions to be on lands,  
42 and whether it's private or corporate lands. So, you  
43 know, that's something but, yeah, I think guns are part  
44 of their equipment because it's just kind of always  
45 been going together I think for trapping and guns.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Plus it's fairly  
48 ethical if you're trapping if you need to dispatch  
49 something, so.....

50

0116

1 MS. STICKWAN: I just want to say these  
2 are for the national preserve lands? National preserve  
3 regulation?

4  
5 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Uh-huh. Okay.  
6

7 MR. HILDERBRAND: Okay. Thanks for your  
8 time, I appreciate it.

9  
10 MS. STICKWAN: I wasn't sure about the  
11 process, but.....

12  
13 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead, Gloria.  
14 Gloria's got an action item for this after our  
15 presentation, and we also got a letter here, so go  
16 ahead, Gloria.

17  
18 MS. STICKWAN: I would like the  
19 Southcentral Regional Advisory Council to adopt what  
20 Wrangell-St. Elias sent us. The Resource Commission  
21 wrote up on the comments. We went through this whole  
22 regulation and made comments on it. We disagree with  
23 some of the things that are said that, you know, it  
24 would not affect subsistence users, because subsistence  
25 users do hunt on national preserve lands. People come  
26 back from urban areas and some people have families  
27 that live in urban areas so they do hunt on preserve  
28 lands and that would affect their ability to be able to  
29 hunt with them. So it would affect subsistence users.  
30 We should be able to continue that practice and we  
31 will.

32  
33 But we think some of the changes are  
34 too burdensome, and a lot of these regulations are  
35 already in state regulations and we don't want -- we  
36 want to keep them there the way that some of them are  
37 written. We want to change the definition for firearm  
38 to include -- trapping to include firearm.

39  
40 I was hoping Barbara would be here or  
41 somebody from Wrangell-St. Elias to better explain this  
42 than what I could, but -- what we went through.

43  
44 MR. HILDERBRAND: Barbara might be on  
45 the phone.

46  
47 MS. STICKWAN: Is Barbara on the phone?

48  
49 (No comments)  
50

0117

1 MS. STICKWAN: No, I guess not.

2

3 MS. CELLARIUS: I am on the phone.

4

5 MS. STICKWAN: Can you explain this  
6 document to them, because I know you can do a lot  
7 better job than me.

8

9 MR. HILDERBRAND: Yeah, we can read it.  
10 Does everyone have this, or does someone else need this  
11 copy here?

12

13 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Everyone -- all  
14 the Council Members have it.

15

16 MR. HILDERBRAND: Barbara, do you want  
17 to go ahead and give us the overview on it that  
18 Gloria's working on here?

19

20 MS. CELLARIUS: Yeah, just give me a  
21 minute. I didn't actually -- I had something else open  
22 on my computer so it will just take me a minute to open  
23 up those comments. And here we go.

24

25 So as Gloria said -- and this is just  
26 for the record Barbara Cellarius with Wrangell-St.  
27 Elias, but I'm describing the comments that were  
28 written and submitted by the Wrangell-St. Elias  
29 Subsistence Resource Commission, so they're their  
30 comments and not something from the Park Service.

31

32 So as Gloria stated, the SRC disagreed  
33 with the assertion that the proposed changes will not  
34 impact subsistence and they provide some examples.  
35 Like Gloria said, people come back -- come home.  
36 People who have moved to urban areas might come back to  
37 where they're from and want to hunt and then they would  
38 do that under state regulations. In some cases they're  
39 not a Federal season so that if the subsistence user  
40 wants to hunt or trap they must do that under state  
41 regulation. So that was sort of the first paragraph.

42

43 The next paragraph is commenting on the  
44 burdensome nature of commenting on regulations and it  
45 makes some suggestions about providing more information  
46 about how regulation changes relate to existing state  
47 and Federal regulations to help with that burden of  
48 commenting.

49

50

0118

1                   There's a discussion about the value of  
2 having regulations that are consistent across the  
3 landscape, that that would be easier for users to  
4 understand and to follow.

5  
6                   And then a statement that each national  
7 preserve is different and that applying the same  
8 regulations statewide -- and a suggestion that instead  
9 of applying the same regulations statewide there should  
10 be different regulations tailored to each preserve and  
11 that those regulations be made to the Board of Game.

12  
13                   As Gloria mentioned, there's a  
14 recommendation to add use of a firearm to the  
15 definition of trapping as proposed in the proposal.

16  
17                   And then moving on to the taking of  
18 wildlife in national preserves the SRC not adopting the  
19 provision that would prevent -- prohibit predator  
20 control or predator reduction activities.

21  
22                   And then Grant mentioned the table and  
23 the -- and Gloria really did it, she did a good job of  
24 describing the comments about the table, that many of  
25 the prohibitions already exist in state regulations and  
26 it's not needed to repeat those prohibitions in NPS  
27 regulations, and if there are exceptions in the state  
28 -- to the prohibitions in the state regulations the SRC  
29 thought that those should continue to apply. And then  
30 they're also questioning to add prohibitions that don't  
31 exist in state regulations.

32  
33                   And then they also had some specific  
34 comments about bear baiting. They disagree with the  
35 justification in the proposed rule relating to public  
36 safety concerns and also note that, you know, bait  
37 stations aren't up very often in the experience from  
38 one of the SRC Members who is baiting. When the food  
39 source is gone, the bears don't come back. And then a  
40 suggestion that rather than increasing public safety  
41 concerns, bear baiting is a mitigation measure that  
42 increases safety by reducing bear numbers which also  
43 benefits subsistence by reducing the number of bears  
44 that prey on other species including caribou.

45  
46                   And then finally there's a comment  
47 about the season for wolves and coyotes which is bullet  
48 number 12 in the table. It talks about fur sellers  
49 attest each other fact that the fur of wolves harvested  
50

0119

1 in May can be used for handicrafts and garments, and  
2 notes that coyotes have moved into Alaska and are not  
3 native.

4

5 And so that's a summary of the SRC  
6 comments.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Very good.  
9 Thank you.

10

11 Gloria, did you want to add these  
12 comments.

13

14 MS. STICKWAN: Yes. Yes, I want to add  
15 these. And I just want to say again that these are for  
16 national preserve lands and national preserve lands are  
17 off the road system, most of them are that I know.  
18 They're in remote areas, it's not like you can walk out  
19 there to bear baiting. They're -- I can look at this  
20 map, it's off the road system. It's mostly -- as far  
21 as I can tell most the preserves are off the road  
22 system so it doesn't -- bear baiting wouldn't affect  
23 people that live close to the road system is what I'm  
24 trying to say. And so that's why we supported baiting.  
25 And it's also a safety issue because we do have bears  
26 there. One person was attacked in that area. I mean  
27 it's just a way people believe the bear baiting,  
28 continue that practice. It's always been their way of  
29 life.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You do? Go ahead.  
32 Go ahead.

33

34 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Just I've hunted myself  
35 under state regs in the preserve, up in the region.  
36 They're not near my home. Sometimes subsistence users  
37 go to other places in order to use resources there, and  
38 I think that's a valid point that these regulations  
39 shouldn't become more restrictive for even a user like  
40 myself.

41

42 I can say I would support this entire  
43 comments of proposed changes that came from Wrangell-  
44 St. Elias Subsistence Resource Commission.

45

46 And specifically one thing I feel  
47 strongly about, we are not the Lower 48 and down there  
48 it's a chaos with their wolf regulations. Idaho, how  
49 the wolf have expanded from Yellowstone and have taken  
50

0120

1 out ungulate populations. Lolo Valley in Idaho,  
2 whatever, there's places where it used to be, you know,  
3 6,000 elk, now there's a few hundred, you know. So  
4 there's things where I don't think there should be any  
5 restrictions on predator control, we are not the Lower  
6 48, we are not those states. Those states have big  
7 challenges right now because Federal-wise when these  
8 things get listed and delisted it bounces back and  
9 forth whether Michigan can now control -- has the state  
10 itself is allowed to manage their wolf populations or  
11 not, or Wisconsin or Minnesota, where there are some  
12 states like Idaho are still allowed to, but other  
13 states aren't and it keep flip-flopping back and forth  
14 between whether they're allowed to even enact their own  
15 hunting season. And it's a little creepy to me that it  
16 seems like that kind of train of thought is coming up  
17 to Alaska to get on us about the wolves, so.....

18

19 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Yeah, move.

20

21 MS. STICKWAN: I make that a motion to  
22 adopt the written comments submitted by Wrangell-St.  
23 Elias Subsistence Resource Commission.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Is  
26 there.....

27

28 MS. SELANOFF: I'll second the motion.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Got seconded by  
31 Diana. Is there any discussion, question.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All in favor of  
36 submitting them in support.

37

38 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Who are we  
39 submitting them to?

40

41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: To the.....

42

43 MS. STICKWAN: National Park Service.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Along with the  
46 rest of the stuff. They're asking for comments and  
47 we're going to submit these comments along with the  
48 comments we gave.

49

50



0121

1 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Okay.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Everyone good?

4 All in favor aye.

5

6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

9

10 (No opposing votes)

11

12 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Just  
13 looking at the agenda. Okay. Let's see. Amy -- we  
14 did Amy so we're going to skip over that. Okay.  
15 Agency reports, 15 minutes unless pre-approved. Okay.

16

17

18 Ninilchik Traditional Council. Where  
19 is the Council? Well, in lack of the Council being  
20 here, I will give their report. I am the president of  
21 the tribal council, so I think I'm authorized to give  
22 their report, and I'll make it brief.

23

24 As you know, they have a fishery on the  
25 Kenai River and they reported to us at the last year,  
26 and so I'm just going to let people know that hadn't  
27 heard about it at our last meeting, we did have a  
28 pretty good fishery for the reds. We got close to  
29 3,000 and some odd reds and we -- it's for community-  
30 wide rural residents and we distributed all those fish  
31 and we were able to almost fill all the permits there.

32

33 Under the hunting the tribe does some  
34 hunting for the potlatch and they were able to get a  
35 couple moose this year that were really helpful. The  
36 moose hunting went fairly well. They also fished an  
37 educational net and stuff like that. And they have a  
38 local guide that's helping do some training for  
39 trapping. They've taken out a few wolves and stuff,  
40 continue to work.

41

42 The other thing on subsistence there is  
43 they share all this stuff. We have a wonderful chef in  
44 Ninilchik that's one of the shareholders that cooks all  
45 these wild games and stuff and berries and pies and  
46 moose and we get it every Monday. That's why I put on  
47 weight this winter, but anyway it was pretty good.

48

49 So that's it for Ninilchik. They got

50

0122

1 trouble like everyone else. The fish, the kings are  
2 closed, the fishing's going down, clams are no more,  
3 crabs are no more. You know, things are getting tough.  
4 But that's my report.

5

6 So next we'll go to Native Village of  
7 Eyak. That -- you got it? Okay. You're done.

8

9 Ahtna InterTribal Resource Commission.  
10 And you're going to go ahead and give that, okay.

11

12 MR. GILLIKIN: Yeah.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.

15

16 MR. GORZE: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair,  
17 Members of the Board. My name is Dan Gorze. I'm the  
18 fisheries biologist for Ahtna Intertribal Resource  
19 Commission. The rest of our crew is out at other  
20 meetings and Board of Game 7-2.

21

22 I'll give a brief update, very brief,  
23 keep it short. Executive Karen Linnell, she serves on  
24 one of two tribal -- serves as one of two tribal  
25 representatives at the National Fish Habitat  
26 Partnership Board. She continues to participate in  
27 protecting our ways of life as well as sitting in on  
28 the fish and wildlife committees and other -- many  
29 other things. I'm just trying to highlight what's new  
30 since last we spoke.

31

32 I'll go into wildlife now. The 2022  
33 carnivore stewardship was the final season of bear hair  
34 snare collection. So we're waiting on DNA analysis to  
35 get back on that. Again I'm a fisheries biologist so  
36 I'm just presenting what the crew is doing.

37

38 They applied for a harvestry grant to  
39 allow -- provide tools to tribal members. It was on a  
40 proposal basis. There's an overwhelming amount of  
41 applicants, and the goal is to re-grant money for  
42 machines to get out in the woods and harvest  
43 subsistence resources.

44

45 The wildlife department as offered to  
46 buy collars for the Mentasta caribou herd studies for  
47 NPS. They're in discussions.

48

49 There was a moose browse training held

50

0123

1 looking at the Seaton method as well as more  
2 importantly architectural data collection. So looking  
3 at where moose has historically browsed.

4  
5                   Migratory birds funding was received.  
6 Part of the funding will go towards a regulation  
7 specialist for AITRC.

8  
9                   We'll skip fisheries, come back to that  
10 again.

11  
12                   Ecology. We have an ecologist working  
13 with the University of Alaska Fairbanks to continue the  
14 moose health monitoring program which is looking at  
15 heavy metals and other things that are found in  
16 subsistence -- or could be found in subsistence moose  
17 harvest and road kill as well. There's a lot of road  
18 kill out there.

19  
20                   AITRC is working on a proposal to CRNA  
21 and UAF to test for zoonotic diseases in fish as well  
22 as heavy metals. And the ecologist is also exploring  
23 the potential for community gardens, food security is  
24 our goal at AITRC.

25  
26                   In the anthropology department we just  
27 added a new anthropologist. He's working on the  
28 administrative for Native Americans, grant on the Ahtna  
29 cultural preservation capacity building project.

30  
31                   Our cultural preservation project  
32 coordinator is working to develop traditional cultural  
33 district geo database, working with Ahtna's cultural  
34 resource technician and DOD archaeologists on  
35 protecting and preserving cultural sites during  
36 improvement on the Brand and Halley Creek trails or  
37 trail.

38  
39                   They are currently working with  
40 Northern Latitude Use Research Alaska, LLC on  
41 pedestrian and geo-spacial surveys for the area.

42  
43                   IGAP special projects grant awarded,  
44 key subsistence species body condition of salmon and  
45 other subsistence species. I completed the background  
46 literature review, started working on that project this  
47 field season. NPS ethnography nearly ready for  
48 publication.

49  
50

0124

1                   TEK on snow and ice. The ice and snow  
2 report is nearly complete. An article summary will be  
3 coming out in the NPS publication soon. The interviews  
4 of the use of caribou within the park and surrounding  
5 areas will be transcribed and prepared for analysis.

6  
7                   Community household surveys are  
8 underway working with Wrangell-St. Elias and ADF&G in  
9 Chistochina, Mentasta and Slana in '24. Sorry, I don't  
10 know why that was written here. Household surveys are  
11 currently being done in Mentasta and Chistochina right  
12 now.

13  
14                   We have a new GIS specialist and ISN  
15 coordinator, indigenous sentinels network coordinator.  
16 He began in January. Received funding through the  
17 Alaska Conservation Foundation to develop and ap and  
18 database for the indigenous sentinels network. Working  
19 on a harvest ap that we can use to issue our hunt  
20 permits from the community harvest, and allow hunters  
21 to report their harvest. Also in that ap -- well, a  
22 separate ap, but also in that program there's a pantry  
23 ap which is used to document sharing of subsistence  
24 harvest.

25  
26                   Now on to fisheries, the part that I  
27 understand. So our ADF&G contract to sample  
28 subsistence-caught salmon in the Glennallen subdistrict  
29 wrapped up last year, and that was to look at the  
30 Gulkana hatchery return. It was successful. ADF&G has  
31 the data.

32  
33                   The Klutina River sonar, partnered with  
34 NVE, has proven successful and ready to move past the  
35 pilot study stage and become a long-term index. We  
36 applied the fisheries -- we have re-applied to the  
37 Fisheries Research and Monitoring Program to extend the  
38 duration of this tributary, especially escapement  
39 monitoring project, excuse me, as well as acquire a  
40 second area's unit for far shore counts. In this year,  
41 for this past season, we had a near shore counts and we  
42 expanded those estimates to be 85,092 salmon on just  
43 the near shore of the Klutina with a high degree of  
44 confidence between June 16th and August 11th, which was  
45 the entirety of the run. We intend to estimate both  
46 salmon -- or sockeye and chinook escapements in the  
47 future study years.

48  
49                   Overall we hired good employees, great  
50

0125

1 employees and collected really good data. Down time  
2 was only 1.3 percent of the total operating hours over  
3 the entire season. Most important right there.

4  
5 I applied for the Partners in Fisheries  
6 Monitoring Program to fully fund my biologist position  
7 at AITRC and as I see it, there should be more emphasis  
8 on the upper Copper River studies. That's where the  
9 fish spawn and I think that there's data sets lacking  
10 in the area. Matt's done a great job, but AITRC is in  
11 the area, too, and ready to help. We've built capacity  
12 and we've proved it that we're able. Part of that  
13 position would be -- and even if that's not funded --  
14 helping Dave here with the Tanada weir, helping set up  
15 and operate the site for a potential partnership or  
16 transition of project investigators and duties.

17  
18 Other than that, meetings were held  
19 with NPS, ADF&G, NVE, Prince William Sound Science  
20 Center, Copper River Watershed Project, and other  
21 entities to plan for upcoming field season, conducting  
22 work on the Klutina sonar, Tanada weir, potentially  
23 collecting biological and energetic samples of salmon  
24 in the Glennallen subdistrict.

25  
26 A couple other projects are baseline  
27 hydro-acoustic surveys in Klutina Lake for juvenile  
28 assessments, biomass assessment. It's a feasibility  
29 study at this point.

30  
31 Potentially using a small trap in the  
32 Klutina River. It's a feasibility study as well. We  
33 don't know if we can yet. We're going to try hopefully  
34 to estimate out-migrating salmon. Juveniles.

35  
36 And on top of that the basin-wide  
37 temperature monitoring, that work is kicking off this  
38 year with the Copper River Watershed Project leading  
39 the way. And we're all -- we're rolling. We've got a  
40 lot of work to do. I have a lot of work to do.

41  
42 Any questions.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any questions for  
45 Dan.

46  
47 (No comments)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, I'd just  
50

0126

1 make a comment. You guys are doing great. You're  
2 really performing a lot of information data and good  
3 rock and rolling work with that. Good stuff.

4

5 MR. GORZE: Thank you.

6

7 MR. OPHEIM: Yeah, I can give just a  
8 little anyway for Chugach Regional Resources  
9 Commission. One of the project that we're working on  
10 is the bear -- or not bear, but moose survey counts in  
11 the lower Cook Inlet across Kachemak Bay trying to get  
12 the -- for that moose hunt area for GM549 area. And it  
13 hasn't been flown in some years and so we want to get  
14 some information taken and I think they're working on  
15 that. So that should be a good project once it's up  
16 and running. I think they're going to do some camera  
17 traps so it should be fun.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. They've got  
20 more cooking but they're not -- that's it.

21

22 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE: I was just  
23 looking at him to put pressure on for his.....

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Oh, for his  
26 report. Okay. Very good. We had a 4:00 o'clock and  
27 it's just a little after for the next one, marine  
28 biology University of Alaska. And I hope she prepared,  
29 Maria Kantor.

30

31 MS. GILL: That presentation will be at  
32 4:30.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: At 4:30. Come on,  
35 I'm all geared up for it.

36

37 MS. GILL: I know, I'm sorry.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, the reason I  
40 said I hope she's prepared, I had a daughter-in-law  
41 that did a real thorough study that did her thesis, and  
42 I helped her present it to the University of Alaska a  
43 few years back so she's not going to fool me, I hope.

44

45 And then I had my grandson study it.  
46 He's 14 years old, and so grandkids come home for  
47 spring break, so I said I've got to go to this meeting.  
48 I said, okay, one of you is assigned this clam study,  
49 one of you is assigned the Federal -- tell me what

50

0127

1 they're up to. And you'd be amazed at their analysis  
2 of this quick report they did. Very, very thorough.  
3 And the first thing the grandson said, he said, well,  
4 the clams will grow faster with warming weather. I  
5 said, B.S., you know, because I was thinking of the  
6 shells around, so anyway I shouldn't give away my  
7 thunder, but the shells get softer, but they actually  
8 do grow quicker, and he picked up on it. He's 14. So  
9 anyway.

10

11 MS. STICKWAN: He needs to apply for  
12 that seat.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: What?

15

16 MS. STICKWAN: He needs to apply for  
17 that seat.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: He should. He's  
20 here. He's here in Anchorage very, very shortly.  
21 Okay.

22

23 We're going to wait until 4:30 for --  
24 yeah, that's a little bit, so let's go to the U.S. Fish  
25 and Wildlife Service.

26

27 Todd, you got anything else?

28

29 MR. ESKELIN: Thanks, Mr. Chair. No, I  
30 don't have anything else, but again I'm available if  
31 any questions pop up that anybody had throughout the  
32 meeting.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thank you,  
35 Todd. U.S. Forest Service. Any law enforcement  
36 update? That's the presentation that -- that's the one  
37 that my granddaughter did, and she actually did  
38 pretty.....

39

40 MR. RYMER: Oh, is she into it?

41

42 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: She did pretty  
43 good.

44

45 MR. RYMER: So I've got it on a  
46 PowerPoint here, Mr. Chair. And you've got the copy in  
47 there. Public, I apologize. You can try to look at  
48 this tiny little screen if you'd like to, or I can plug  
49 it in. It's up to you, Greg.

50

0128

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Sure.

2

3 MR. RYMER: Do you want it plugged in?

4

5 MS. GILL: So, Mr. Chair, we can either  
6 plug it in or we can follow along in our books,  
7 whichever is easiest.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: It's up to the  
10 Council. Do you want to follow in the books or do you  
11 want it here on the screen?

12

13 MR. RYMER: Okay. That will probably be  
14 the easiest way. All right. Mr. Chair, Members of the  
15 Board, my name is Jordan Rymer. I'm a law enforcement  
16 officer with the United States Forest Service, and I am  
17 the subsistence lead for the region.

18

19 So we'll just pop over to Page 2. The  
20 Forest Service is.....

21

22 MS. GILL: Jordan, I'm sorry, one  
23 second. So you're -- the presentation will be found on  
24 Page 70 of the supplemental book, yeah. It's a pretty  
25 green presentation.

26

27 MR. RYMER: Sorry about that. All  
28 right. So I'm on slide 2. So the Forest Service's  
29 mission, to serve the people, protect natural resources  
30 and property within the authority and jurisdiction of  
31 the Forest Service.

32

33 Our vision, the law enforcement and  
34 investigation organization is an integral part of the  
35 Forest Service, recognized as leaders in public and  
36 employee safety, natural resource protection, and as a  
37 professional cooperater with other law enforcement  
38 agencies. The law enforcement organization is a  
39 diverse workforce committed to integrity,  
40 responsibility and accountability.

41

42 Our objectives are to protect the  
43 public, employees, natural resources, and other  
44 property under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service,  
45 investigate and enforce applicable laws and regulations  
46 which affect the national Forest system, and prevent  
47 criminal violations through informing and educating  
48 visitors and users of applicable laws and regulations.

49

50



0129

1                   A little history on Slide 3. The  
2 ranger service was established first by General Land  
3 Office in 1987 and later by the Forest Service in 1905  
4 to patrol, to prevent fire and trespass, issue miner  
5 permits, build cabins and trails, enforce grazing  
6 regulations, investigate claims and when necessary  
7 arrests for violation of Forest laws. In 1907 the  
8 Chugach National Forest was established by  
9 proclamation. In 1990 the Federal government began  
10 managing subsistence hunting, trapping and fishing on  
11 Alaska's Federal public lands and non-navigable waters.  
12 And today the U.S. Forest Service law enforcement  
13 officers across the Chugach National Forest conducts  
14 subsistence focused patrols to ensure regulatory  
15 compliance and resource protection.

16  
17                   Chugach National Forest facts. The  
18 Chugach consists of approximately 5.4 million acres on  
19 the Kenai Peninsula and Prince Sound in Southcentral  
20 Alaska. The Forest encompasses a 210-mile arc around  
21 Prince William Sound. It has more shoreline than the  
22 entire continental U.S. Law enforcement personnel face  
23 logistical challenges as most of the Forest is only  
24 accessible by small plane or boat. Fortunately they  
25 give us boats and planes and snowmachines and  
26 fourwheelers to access those areas. Weather on the  
27 Chugach can be severe and unpredictable due to its  
28 vicinity near the Gulf of Alaska.

29  
30                   There's some cool pictures of my boat  
31 there at -- I can't think of what that falls is called  
32 right off the top of my head.

33  
34                   U.S. Forest Service law enforcement  
35 chain of command on slide 5 if you're following along.  
36 So there's a special agent in charge, Tim Walther.  
37 He's in Juneau. Under him is the patrol commander,  
38 which Chad also in Juneau. And then there's a patrol  
39 -- we don't have a -- you'll see up there there's not  
40 any assistant special agent in charge. But we have two  
41 patrol captains, one on the Tongass, one on the  
42 Chugach. Then you have law enforcement officers  
43 throughout those Forests. On this Forest we've got two  
44 on the Seward Ranger District, two on the Glacier  
45 Ranger District, and then one over in Cordova. And  
46 then under that we've got Forest protection officers.  
47 FPOs are -- you may have made contact with them at some  
48 point. They are regular employees that are given the  
49 authority to issue violation notices, warnings, things  
50

0130

1 of that, kind of similar to the VPSO program for the  
2 state of Alaska.

3  
4 They devote a large portion of their  
5 time to the program by spending time in the field  
6 conducting subsistence-focused patrols, attending  
7 meetings such as the RAC meetings, Federal Subsistence  
8 Board meetings, et cetera.

9  
10 Slide 6, enforcement statistics is  
11 probably more or less what you guys want to hear. 89  
12 warning notices were issued for fish and wildlife  
13 violations on the Forest, 10 of which were directly  
14 issued to Federal subsistence users for various  
15 violations. 29 violation notices, which are Federal  
16 citations, were issued for fish and wildlife violations  
17 on the Forest. No violation notices were issued to  
18 Federal subsistence users. And our fiscal years go  
19 from October 1st through September 30th.

20  
21 Slide 7, subsistence hunting and  
22 fishing in the Seward Ranger District. The Seward  
23 Ranger District which covers the majority of GMU 7  
24 hosts several Federal subsistence hunts for big game to  
25 include black bear, caribou, goat, moose, sheep, fur-  
26 bearing animals and birds are also covered under  
27 subsistence regulations in this area. LEOs conduct  
28 routine subsistence patrols, residency investigations  
29 and assist with issuing hunt and fishing permits. The  
30 main subsistence opportunity for fish in this area is  
31 at the Russian River, but the LEOs conduct patrols  
32 during the winter for subsistence ice fishing as well.

33  
34 You'll see some slides on slide 8 -- or  
35 some tables on slide 8. No moose were harvested, but  
36 many subsistence users reported seeing sub-legal moose  
37 in Unit 7 this year. One caribou was harvested in  
38 2022.

39  
40 This is the third season for the  
41 mountain goat hunt in Unit 7. Three drawing permits  
42 were given out for three subunits, Cecil Roads,  
43 Mountain/Crescent Lake area, and Grant Lake area. And  
44 one mountain goat was harvested in the Grant Lake area.

45  
46 Slide 9, permit numbers and  
47 participation doubled in 2022 following Moose Pass C&T  
48 for moose and caribou. No moose were harvested, but a  
49 lot of people reported seeing sub-legal moose as I said  
50

0131

1 before. Many are hopeful that next season will be  
2 better.

3

4 Slide 10, you're going to see a bunch  
5 of photos. They're probably hard looking at them  
6 through your -- on your slides there, but this is kind  
7 of some of the stuff we ran into at the Russian and  
8 other places, but that one picture in the upper left-  
9 hand corner is a guy fishing with a treble hook, which  
10 we run into every once in a while. It's mostly just  
11 misinformed people that aren't use to the area.

12

13 Obviously we've got lots of bear issues  
14 on the Russian River. And the guy in the bottom right  
15 corner actually got mauled. He was able to walk out,  
16 but that's a photo of his side after he was mauled by a  
17 brown bear last season.

18

19 The Russian River hosts upwards -- I'm  
20 on slide 11. The Russian River hosts upwards of  
21 150,000 visitors a year. The river has a large number  
22 of -- a large run of sockeye and silver salmon with an  
23 early run generally arriving by June 15th and a late  
24 run beginning mid July through August. Sport fish  
25 regulations allow for the taking of sockeye salmon June  
26 11th through August 20th, silver salmon July 1st  
27 through September 30th, and trout fishing June 11th  
28 through April 30th.

29

30 I don't know if I mention it in the  
31 next slide, but we do -- generally are able to have  
32 extra LEOs come up either from the Lower 48 or other  
33 areas within the region and help us out with patrols on  
34 the Russian River.

35

36 Federal subsistence dipnet fishery at  
37 the base of the Russian River allows for a household  
38 take of 25 sockeye, plus five for each additional  
39 household family member. There are on average 80  
40 Federal subsistence permits -- Federal subsistence  
41 permittees that use this fishery. The season runs from  
42 June 15th through August 15th. Permits are available  
43 through the U.S. Forest Service office at the Kenai  
44 Lake work center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife offices and  
45 through community meetings held in Hope, Cooper  
46 Landing, and Ninilchik.

47

48 Let's see. Permits used and days  
49 fished, this is just some graphs to look at for kind of

50

0132

1 when the fish are running and what's being caught out  
2 there. Permits for the 2022 season are not due until  
3 January 15th, so some of this data isn't up to -- it's  
4 not up for the 2022 season. You'll see it next year.

5  
6                   On the Russian River there are several  
7 -- well, there's one Forest order for the Russian  
8 River, but it creates several regulations. Those  
9 Forest orders are regulations that are put in place by  
10 the Forest supervisor for a certain area or a specific  
11 concern. The Forest Service orders which you might be  
12 familiar with are equipment other than animal  
13 attractants must remain within three feet of a person  
14 on the river or trail. Fish whole or in part must  
15 remain with 12 feet of a person on the Russian River or  
16 trail, so stringers got to be attached to you and  
17 within 12 feet.

18  
19                   Dogs must -- pets must remain on leash.  
20 We have some issues with dog off leash down there.

21  
22                   And then discharge of firearms is  
23 prohibited except in cases that involve defense of life  
24 or property. So we try to avoid people just blasting  
25 at bears trying to scare them off down at the Russian  
26 River, because generally there's somebody on the other  
27 side of the river and we don't want them to get shot.

28  
29                   Fishing on the Russian River versus  
30 bear activity. Fishing on the Russian River has a  
31 direct correlation with bear behavior and human/bear  
32 encounters. Probably most is due to fish waste. The  
33 bears do become very habituated to fish waste and we  
34 struggle with having a regulation that actually would  
35 prohibit somebody from flaying out -- from throwing  
36 their carcasses into the river, so we try to get folks  
37 to go down to cleaning tables to flay out those fish,  
38 but technically they aren't required to, and it becomes  
39 an issue throughout the season. And it's really  
40 important that all fishermen, including subsistence  
41 users at the Russian River work together to mitigate  
42 that fish waste gathering in the river as well as  
43 follow those special orders regarding storage of fish  
44 and them being within 12 feet of you.

45  
46                   I'll just say it, I mean, the  
47 subsistence users when they fillet out 25 reds and then  
48 throw carcasses in the river, wash down, pile up, and  
49 the bears in the canyon become pretty habituated to  
50

0133

1 that.

2

3

4 We'll move over to GMU 6. This was  
5 created by Andy Morris, the LEO over in Cordova. His  
6 is a lot more photos and some quick words.

7

8 But spring migratory bird hunting,  
9 April 2nd through 30th, the egg gathering May 1st  
10 through the 31st. Spring black bear opportunity in 6D,  
11 sport hunting season closes June 15th, subsistence  
12 season allows for hunting between June 16th and June  
13 30th. Subsistence season extends use of bait to June  
14 30th on Federal lands. Copper River subsistence  
15 fishing, newly established harvest opportunity this  
16 year. Copper River delta subsistence salmon fishing  
17 opportunities in Eyak River, Alaganek Slough, Ibeck  
18 Creek, and their tributaries, rod and reel is the  
19 primary method, but dipnet and spear and gaff is also  
20 authorized. U.S. Forest Service LEI enforces permit  
21 compliance and limit checks on both fisheries. There's  
22 a photo of one of our trainees next to a pack raft  
23 there after they floated the Ibeck Creek.

23

24

25

26

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49

50

36 The 60 drawing subsistence moose hunt,  
37 some information on that. 75 -- and we've already  
38 talked about this today, but 75 percent of all moose  
39 tags per the surveyor allocated to Federal subsistence.  
40 In 2022 30 bull tags and 30 tags were offered. Other  
41 25 percent were allocated for Alaska residents by  
42 drawing, DM167 tag, cow season was -- it looks like cow  
43 season and bull season are both September 1st through  
44 December 31st, and on average an approximate -- the  
45 Federal subsistence hunt has a 90 percent successful  
46 harvest rate.

36 Some photos of folks with their moose.  
37 A lot of photos there.

39 The Federal subsistence deer, GMU 6D is  
40 January 1st through the 31st. Regulatory change to  
41 either sex with a bag limit of one.

43 And then back to my slide. So the  
44 commonly observed subsistence violations I think is  
45 importance to bring up, because you saw earlier that no  
46 violation notices were issued and just 10 warnings were  
47 issued this season. Generally subsistence user tend to  
48 -- their violations tend to be pretty minor. It's  
49 usually like, hey, man, did you fill out your permit

0134

1 after you caught your 25 fish, and they're like, oh,  
2 shoot, you know, they're just up the stream bank and we  
3 hand them a pen and they fill out their subsistence  
4 permit real quick. We take their information, we write  
5 a warning for it, but we're not really issuing tickets  
6 for stuff like that.

7

8 So most violations are for failing to  
9 properly fill out permits, failure to carry permits in  
10 the field, failure to obtain the proper permits, i.e.  
11 getting designated hunt fish permits, failing to return  
12 harvest reports -- that is a citable offense. We don't  
13 generally do that. Most of the time the permit  
14 administrators call you, you know, 10 or 15 times and  
15 eventually somebody gets around to getting it to us.  
16 Subsistence hunting off of Federal lands, i.e. hunting  
17 state, local or private land, and then abandoning  
18 equipment at the Russian River falls. It's become an  
19 issue. People bring a flay up there and then they're  
20 like, hey, somebody else will use this, and next thing  
21 we know we have 10 flay tables up at the Russian  
22 stashed in the woods.

23

24 That's pretty much it unless you guys  
25 have some questions for me.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead, Andy.

28

29 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, thank you. Was  
30 there was a high 60 Federal subsistence deer harvest,  
31 the January, that extended season like Hawkins Island I  
32 know there was a big, oh, no, Cordovans are going to  
33 come over here on Hawkins.

34

35 MR. RYMER: Yeah, I don't know that it  
36 was any much higher than it has been. I know that the  
37 Cordovans -- it appears that most Cordovans do like to  
38 do that later season hunt because they can hop in the  
39 boats, drive out there, gear on the beach, taken --  
40 hitting them all at once, load them in the boat and  
41 call it a day.

42

43 And that tends to be -- Andy does get  
44 out there and patrols that. It's a little harder for  
45 us to patrol that because it gets so deep in the season  
46 we generally like to have the Whittier boat out of the  
47 water, so -- but I know Andy does get over there. He  
48 leaves his boat in year round and go out and patrols  
49 that and makes sure everything's going good.

50

0135

1 MR. McLAUGHLIN: So you don't know the  
2 numbers?

3  
4 MR. RYMER: I don't know the numbers. I  
5 can get them for you.

6  
7 MR. McLAUGHLIN: I'll be curious to  
8 know.

9  
10 MR. RYMER: Yeah, I'll check in with  
11 Andy and see if we can get those numbers for you.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Other  
14 questions? Go ahead, Mike.

15  
16 MR. OPHEIM: Yeah, I was just curious.  
17 Is it you have to have a paper copy of the permit or  
18 can they have an electronic copy on their phone?

19  
20 MR. RYMER: Tech -- I believe that they  
21 have to physically have that permit for like the  
22 Russian River. Because you're supposed to be recording  
23 it physically on that permit, you have to have that  
24 permit in possession, the actual physical permit. If  
25 there was some way that a guy could PDF it to his phone  
26 and then digitally do it, maybe, but we're just not set  
27 up for that. Like the state's getting there with their  
28 ap, I don't know that we'll see that on the Federal  
29 side for a while I'd imagine.

30  
31 MR. OPHEIM: All right. Thanks.

32  
33 MR. RYMER: Yep.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Other questions?

36  
37 (No comments)

38  
39 MR. ENCELEWSKI: What size is this  
40 rack? Is that legal for.....

41  
42 MR. RYMER: Yeah, yeah, that's over  
43 there in Cordova. Man oh man do they produce some big  
44 bulls over there.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's one of my  
47 granddaughter's questions. I know some of these other  
48 ones are just little guys. Some of these other racks  
49 are small, so they've got different requirements over  
50

0136

1 there.

2

3 MR. RYMER: Yeah. Well, and then it's  
4 any bull over there, so.....

5

6 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any bull?

7

8 MR. RYMER: Yeah.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, that's  
11 we.....

12

13 MR. RYMER: Yeah, most of the photos  
14 that are in there (indiscernible - simultaneous  
15 speech).....

16

17 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's what we use  
18 (indiscernible - laughter).....

19

20 MR. RYMER: Yeah. Agree.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, that would  
23 be real good for subsistence. Okay. Any other  
24 questions for Jordan?

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That was a good  
29 report, a lot of stuff there.

30

31 MR. RYMER: All right.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You know, my  
34 granddaughter concluded that you guys do a lot.

35

36 MR. RYMER: Yeah, that sounds right.  
37 Yeah, we're out there quite a bit. And I know that's  
38 actually come up in proposals over the years, how is  
39 law enforcement going to patrol this, stuff like that.  
40 We'll find a way. You know, you guys make the  
41 proposals, we'll find a way to patrol them. That's  
42 what we love to do. Resource protection.

43

44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, thank you.  
45 You know, Andy has his phone on again. Did you have a  
46 question, Andy?

47

48 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Uhn-uhn. Oh, sorry.

49

50



0137

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Are we  
2 ready for the clam presentation gal?

3  
4 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll  
5 check to see if Marina Alcantar is on line here.

6  
7 MS. ALCANTAR: I am. Can you guys hear  
8 me okay?

9  
10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We sure can.

11  
12 MS. ALCANTAR: Okay. I'm not sure who's  
13 controlling the slide deck, so if we could just start  
14 on the title slide and I'll just say slide when trying  
15 to move on.

16  
17 MS. GILL: One second, Marina. So the  
18 Council has an option here to review the proposal --  
19 sorry, the presentation that's in the meeting book on  
20 Page -- or the supplemental book on Page 36. There's  
21 some copies in the back of the room as well. Or we can  
22 plug in the projector whichever is preferred.

23  
24 MS. ALCANTAR: They have like a booklet  
25 of the slides?

26  
27 MS. GILL: They do, yes.

28  
29 MS. ALCANTAR: Okay. Then I'll just  
30 talk through them and if anyone thinks I've gotten off  
31 where they are, just let me know. I guess should I go  
32 ahead and get started?

33  
34 MS. GILL: It looks like we're ready,  
35 yeah, thank you.

36  
37 MS. ALCANTAR: Alrighty. Hi, everyone.  
38 My name is Marina Alcantar. I'm a Ph.D. candidate at  
39 the University of Alaska Fairbanks, College of  
40 Fisheries and Ocean Sciences and I work in the lab  
41 there. Today I'm going to be talking about some of the  
42 experimental work that I've done looking at the impact  
43 of ocean acidification on larval Pacific razor clams  
44 and juvenile pink salmon. And please feel free as I'm  
45 going to stop me if you have any questions or anything  
46 you want me to repeat or go over again.

47  
48 Also just some quick background on  
49 ocean acidification or OA, this is a long-term process  
50

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1 in which we see atmospheric carbon dioxide increasing  
2 as a result of anthropogenic forces. As a result of  
3 this we see increasing CO2 levels in the ocean. And  
4 with this increasing oceanic CO2 we see concomitant  
5 decrease in oceanic pH. And this decrease as been  
6 shown to negatively impact biocalcific organisms like  
7 clams and corals as well as certain species of fish.  
8 And there's a lot of evidence that suggests that OA is  
9 particularly an issue for early life stages of  
10 organism.

11

12 Alaska has a couple of extra things to  
13 consider when it comes to OA. Cold water can hold more  
14 gas and so Alaska has plenty of cold water. That  
15 unfortunately just means that our pH is capable of  
16 going a lot lower. We also have a lot of coastline,  
17 and coastlines are really dingy (pH) in negative  
18 terms of their acidity and how that will change on  
19 daily, even an hourly basis, and so that's something to  
20 really take into consideration. And then we also have  
21 relatively limited studies that have been done here, so  
22 we're still kind of laying the baseline in terms of OA  
23 research in Alaska.

24

25 So the objective of the razor clam  
26 research was kind of two-fold. On the front side it  
27 was to be able to determine the impacts of ambient and  
28 variable as well as elevated P CO2, or reduced pH on  
29 larval razor clams. And then on a larger scale it was  
30 potentially to help answer questions about why we've  
31 been seeing that decline in razor clam populations  
32 along the east coast of Cook Inlet. There's a lot of  
33 theories out there as to why the population is in  
34 decline and our hypothesis was that it might be due to  
35 acidic conditions on the east side compared to the  
36 west.

37

38 To do this we were going to look at  
39 shell composition, shell mount elevation, and  
40 intercellular response.

41

42 So step one of our experiments was to  
43 make some razor clams. We unfortunately had no record  
44 of this being done successfully in a hatchery  
45 environment and so that was kind of our first hurdle to  
46 get across. We used a really old school strip spawning  
47 method for this and we were able to successfully spawn  
48 razor clams, and we did two different batches. So we  
49 did a developmental assessment batch and then an  
50

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1 experimental batch. And this is what that process  
2 looked like of just physically excising the gametes in  
3 the middle of that slide there.

4

5                   And this allowed us to produce  
6 something really exciting. So no one has ever put  
7 together a developmental time line in terms of timing  
8 of razor clam development and what these different  
9 figures look like. And so we were able to do this.  
10 And so that's what this really big figure here is --  
11 you might be able to see that looks like a bunch of  
12 different circles. Here we're essentially tracking the  
13 development of the razor clam from initial  
14 fertilization which is that letter A all the way  
15 through to pediveliger at letter X, and so we go  
16 through early cell division, we go through hatching, we  
17 see filialy (ph) development in terms of the  
18 trochophore stage. Around O and P you can actually see  
19 the first shell begin to develop. And then we have  
20 like actually pediveliger clam stage by letter Q.

21

22                   So this was really exciting and we're  
23 actually getting this published currently, and we're  
24 really excited to have this out in the literature just  
25 because we think it will really help inform management  
26 and any hatchery practices that are ongoing.

27

28                   The experiment itself was conducted  
29 over 28 days at the Alutiiq pride marine institute in  
30 Seward. We ran three treatments, an ambient, a high  
31 and a variable. The ambient was based on current  
32 levels in Resurrection Bay, Alaska.

33

34                   The high was based on the future  
35 predicative values for the year 2100 based on the  
36 IPPC's RCP 8.5, so that behavior is usual. We don't do  
37 anything to current carbon emissions. That's the level  
38 of ocean acidification we expect to see in the year  
39 2100.

40

41                   And then we also ran a variable  
42 treatment. So this fluctuated between the high and the  
43 ambient every 12 hours. And as I mentioned, you know,  
44 coastal environments are really dynamic in Alaska in  
45 terms of their carbonate chemistry and so being able to  
46 capture the response to this variable treatment was  
47 really vital to seeing, you know, really what a razor  
48 clam is truly experiencing during this stage of their  
49 life.

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1                   So we ran our study and we took the  
2 samples back to UAF and we looked at them under  
3 scanning electron microscopy. And our first thought  
4 was unfortunately razor clam are really ugly. This  
5 here on the left if you're looking at this slide is a  
6 razor clam. You can see it's really wrinkly, it's not  
7 with a comb (ph), and then on the right we have an  
8 example of another bivalve species, *Latua Alitica* (ph),  
9 and it's gorgeous right? It's perfectly symmetrical,  
10 it's got an actual shell there. And unfortunately the  
11 razor clam, these individuals are in the same stage of  
12 development, so razor clams are just ugly, and we had  
13 kind of become resigned to that fact during their early  
14 development. But they're not ugly forever, so over  
15 time we were actually able to track the development of  
16 this really wrinkly odd looking shape into a  
17 traditional bivalve shell that we would expect to see  
18 from other species. And this really began around day  
19 21 of development is when we started to see, you know,  
20 our first true shell emerge.

21  
22                   And so, you know, why is this  
23 happening? How are we getting from that first early  
24 stage where they look nothing like a clam to an actual,  
25 you know, productive razor clam? And so we found this  
26 one individual, and this was our first. We actually  
27 found a few of these. But we named this one the  
28 missing link clam, and here we can actually see a shell  
29 in transition. And so we have that really wrinkly  
30 globular shell close to the hinge and then along the  
31 leading edge of the clam we actually see a really  
32 defined mineralized shell structure. And when we  
33 looked even deeper at the elemental composition of the  
34 shell at these two different locations, we actually see  
35 that they are significantly different from each other.  
36 So point one which is in that really odd globular phase  
37 of shell, there's a really diverse elemental thing that  
38 you would see compared to point two which is with a  
39 leading edge which is 98 percent calcium.

40  
41                   And so then the question became, why  
42 are razor clams different, and what does that mean for  
43 razor clams? So I went to the library and I.....

44  
45                   Sorry, is somebody asking a question?

46  
47                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: No.

48  
49                   MS. ALCANTAR: Okay. Sorry. So I have  
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1 figured out that razor clams use what's called a  
2 concretion during their early shell development. And  
3 this is a process that was only figured out in 1971,  
4 and it's most commonly used by gastropods. And so  
5 essentially what happens is an individual organism  
6 that's developing due to a number of factors, maybe  
7 they want to have a more flexible shell or they have  
8 limited resources available, they won't lay down a  
9 fully calcified shell. Instead they'll build a  
10 flexible structure called a concretion that's composed  
11 of whatever they can get their hands on. So they'll  
12 throw in any elements and organic matter into this  
13 shell concretion structure that they can and then as  
14 they mature and they're more able to distinguish  
15 between specific minerals and ions, then they'll build  
16 a fully calcified shell.

17  
18 And this is common in gastropods, but  
19 it's been found in really just a limited number of  
20 bivalves. And so that's really exciting for us, and we  
21 were actually able to kind of confirm this using a  
22 concretion signal from another species of clam called  
23 Propadu -- or excuse me, a species of gastropods and  
24 then also just a visual comparison of concretion  
25 topology comparing to another bivalve that uses the  
26 concretion.

27  
28 So when we look at composition of these  
29 shells over time, right. We know we're undergoing a  
30 transition from a concretion to a fully calcified  
31 shell, but what does that mean in terms of actual  
32 elements over time? And if you're looking at this  
33 figure, it looks really busy. There's just a couple of  
34 things I want to kind of highlight. And that is that  
35 over time we saw a really diverse elemental  
36 constituency, but by day 21 the high treatment had  
37 predominantly more calcium than the other elemental  
38 distribution (pH) and then on day 28 the variable  
39 treatment followed the high treatment. And so what  
40 this suggests is that those clams had been exposed to  
41 elevated PCO<sub>2</sub>, whether it be consistently or on a  
42 variable basis have earlier onset of shell  
43 mineralization. And so it looks like OA is actually  
44 accelerating this development for razor clams.

45  
46 We also had to address the calcium  
47 question, and this is pertaining as to whether or not  
48 -- what kind of calcium we used, because they are more  
49 soluble than others. And so we're looking to see if  
50

0142

1 we're using calcite, aragonite, vaterite or amorphous  
2 calcium carbonate. And this is important because  
3 they're more soluble than others. So ACC is the most  
4 soluble, meaning it's most likely to dissolve in acidic  
5 conditions compared to calcite. And so when we looked  
6 at our clams what we found was that early on they're  
7 using amorphous calcium carbonate to make up their  
8 shells. And then later on, by day 21, when we start to  
9 see that mineralization beginning, we see vaterite  
10 occurring. And this was really surprising to us,  
11 because we expected to see calcite. That's what  
12 bivalves usually use as their polymorphous calcium  
13 carbonate.

14  
15 So what does this mean? Well, ACC is a  
16 known precursor phase for other polymorphous calcium  
17 carbonate, so it's not totally weird that we would find  
18 it in our shells. But why is vaterite there, right?  
19 We would expect to see calcite. We find vaterite in  
20 major -- in a myriad of strange places. It's found in  
21 larval snail shell, in certain species of bivalve  
22 purls, it's found in certain species of fish otoliths,  
23 and then also in turtle egg shells. And so a lot of  
24 random places. Also there's an alcrane (ph) plant that  
25 has vaterite in it. And when we went and looked at the  
26 geochemistry research it looks like it's the ratio of  
27 ions that is informing whether or not vaterite is  
28 favored over calcite. And why this is important in  
29 terms of OA is that we expect to see ionic ratios  
30 change in future, and this will actually lead to  
31 conditions where vaterite is favorable to be formed  
32 over calcite. And so whether or not this is a species-  
33 specific trend or if this is something that we would  
34 expect to see in the future for a myriad of species is  
35 kind of a question we're still trying to answer, but  
36 definitely an important one.

37  
38 We also had the chance to look at adult  
39 razor clam crystalline morphology and here we were able  
40 to identify a aragonite. Again, not what we expected  
41 to see. We expected it to be calcite or vaterite and  
42 it wasn't. It was aragonite. And so it turns out that  
43 Faraday clams, which is the group which razor clams  
44 belong to, it's kind of not uncommon for aragonite to  
45 be found. It is a concern when you think about the  
46 fact that aragonite is more soluble than calcite. Does  
47 that mean that they will be more, you know, vulnerable  
48 to dissolution under acidic conditions? Potentially.  
49 However, there are some people who suggested that razor  
50

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1 clams compensate for the use of aragonite by having a  
2 really fixed periostracum, so if you've held a razor  
3 clam, you know, it has that really thick layer around  
4 it's shell, and so that is kind of unique to razor  
5 clams and potentially could be why they're okay using  
6 aragonite. We still aren't positive.

7

8                   So razor clams undergo a really crazy  
9 mineralogical journey. They start from ACC, amorphous  
10 calcium carbonate, will transition into vaterite and  
11 eventually will end up with aragonite. And so we're  
12 still trying to figure out what exactly this means and  
13 why it's happening and what might be some of the  
14 drivers here, but it's really interesting and it's  
15 something that hasn't been really known until now which  
16 is I think really important to inform, you know,  
17 management for the species moving forward.

18

19                   Okay. Really quick, I have -- left --  
20 I'm just going to run through the pink salmon work that  
21 we've done. This is an experiment that we ran in 2021,  
22 and we were looking at the indirect and direct effects  
23 of ocean acidification on juvenile pink salmon. And we  
24 did this by looking at exposure to elevated PCO2 and  
25 then reduced feed availability. So in the future we'd  
26 expect terrapod conditions and other zooplankton to  
27 decrease under ocean acidification condition and this  
28 makes up a major food resource for juvenile pinks and  
29 so that was our thought process of an indirect sector  
30 that pinks might experience.

31

32                   And we looked at everything, so we  
33 examined these fish top to bottom, every metric use  
34 system center we looked at. So organism quality, we  
35 looked at their otoliths to look at how those would  
36 change under the conditions. We looked at hormone  
37 response. We also measured their metabolic response.  
38 And we're also looking at their intracellular sex  
39 response. So from top to bottom we are going to know  
40 exactly how pink salmon will -- pink salmon juveniles  
41 will respond to ocean acidification.

42

43                   The experiment was conducted for 42  
44 days. That's the longest anyone's been able to hold  
45 pinks in culture which was really exciting and then we  
46 ran four separate treatments. So fully across looking  
47 at elevated PCO2 and then reduced feed availability.  
48 And what we found was that condition index and mass are  
49 both a significant negative effect of elevated PCO2.

50

0144

1 But what this means is that fish that were reared under  
2 elevated PCO2 conditions or future ocean acidification  
3 condition caused both a reduced conditional index and a  
4 reduced mass. And so this is really important when  
5 thinking about, you know, commercial stocks, that we  
6 expect there to be smaller fish at this stage. That  
7 could be -- it could be a really big deal.

8

9 In terms of otoliths, real quick I just  
10 want to run through here, so we would expect to see  
11 either vaterite or aragonite. And this is important as  
12 I mentioned, they have different solubility levels.  
13 Most salmon -- all salmon should have aragonite.  
14 However, we know that sometimes hatchery fish can have  
15 vaterite in their otolith. And what this looks like  
16 is, if you're looking at the vaterite versus aragonite  
17 flag, a normal otolith will be kind of opaque, it won't  
18 have any clear and it will be a pretty smooth  
19 structure. When you have vateritic growth on an  
20 otolith, it's going to be a clear mineral, and then  
21 it's also going to look really weird, so it's going to  
22 become kind of lumpy. It might grow giant spikes. It  
23 will just look off. And so that's what these bottom  
24 otoliths are here.

25

26 And what we saw was that over time  
27 there's a significant increase in vaterite present for  
28 these pink salmon juveniles. So what that means is  
29 that vaterite levels are increasing across all  
30 treatment over the time that they're being held in  
31 culture. And so whether or not this is an artifact of  
32 our experimental conditions being structural or if it's  
33 just something that naturally happens in hatchery fish  
34 during this time frame is still a question that we're  
35 trying to answer, but we are getting a lot closer to  
36 knowing when that onset of vaterite growth occurs in  
37 hatchery fish essentially.

38

39 We also a really interesting  
40 relationship between mortality of the salmon and  
41 vaterite level, so we did have fish that died  
42 unexpectedly across the treat -- across the experiment.  
43 And what we found was that fish that died unexpectedly  
44 had more vaterite present in their otolith than fish  
45 that died at the same time point during the study. And  
46 so whether or not this is, you know, just a correlation  
47 or if this truly is causable in nature if having more  
48 vaterite leads to mortality is something that we're  
49 still teasing out. We're hoping that our intracellular  
50

50



0145

1 data will kind of paint a better picture for us. But  
2 it is a really interesting result that we hadn't  
3 expected to see.

4  
5 In terms of endocrine response, there's  
6 a really interesting trend here in terms of increasing  
7 cortisolic expression, and cortisol is a stress hormone  
8 that's been pretty prolifically looked at across fish.  
9 And what we saw was that over time it really increases,  
10 and then around week three the cortisol levels really  
11 drop. And we also saw that there was a significant  
12 affect of elevated PCO2 on cortisol levels, so fish  
13 reared under those acidic conditions had more cortisol  
14 level than -- excuse me, higher cortisol levels than  
15 fish that were reared under ambient condition.

16  
17 The reason I mention the timing is  
18 because it correlates really well with our mortality  
19 data. And so we started seeing mortality occur really  
20 significantly between weeks three and four, and we  
21 didn't know why. We looked at everything with the  
22 fish, so we looked at oxygenation, we looked at nitrate  
23 levels, ammonia, we looked at bacterial growth. Full  
24 necropsies were performed on the fish. There was  
25 nothing wrong with them except that they were dead.  
26 And we're not sure why this happened, we're still  
27 working through that. But this timing relationship  
28 between that endocrine response to the cortisol dropped  
29 between weeks three and four and then this onset of  
30 mortality is really interesting. So we're hoping again  
31 that the intracellular stress response data will paint  
32 more of picture for us here.

33  
34 In terms of metabolically, we saw a  
35 significant of elevated PCO2 on the routine metabolic  
36 rate of juvenile pinks, so being in acidified  
37 conditions causes their metabolism to increase. They  
38 will have a higher food demand. And this could be  
39 especially bad if your living in an environment where  
40 there is not enough food available. And so that's a  
41 really interesting thing that we've seen across the  
42 study.

43  
44 Okay. Really quick, going back to the  
45 take-aways, we were able to assemble the first  
46 developmental time periods for razor clam and that  
47 should be in print soon.

48  
49 We identified that razor clams are  
50

0146

1 concretion users and that they use three different  
2 polymarks of calcium carbonate throughout their  
3 development. And whether or not this is, you know, a  
4 phenotypic response for the region or if this a species  
5 characteristic, we're still not sure. We're hoping  
6 future research will help answer that, but it's  
7 definitely a question that should be resolved.

8

9                   Also questions about whether or not  
10 we'll see increasing vaterite presence across bivalves  
11 due to ocean acidification, that's a really big area  
12 that need to address. To date there's no research  
13 looking at that, and so that's something that we're  
14 hoping to dive into.

15

16                   And then we also see that OA appears to  
17 speed up development, and so unfortunately this could  
18 mean that there could be further consequences down the  
19 line for razor clams. That's been seen in some other  
20 species. But unfortunately we don't have any answers  
21 regarding that.

22

23                   In terms of pinks, elevated PCO2  
24 exposure results in reduced conditional index and mass.  
25 We also saw alterations to morphological characteristics  
26 as a result of exposure to ocean acidification  
27 conditions. I didn't talk about those in the study,  
28 but that was another thing that we saw.

29

30                   So overall it looks like in the future  
31 under OA conditions we can expect to see smaller and  
32 lower quality fish which is unfortunate.

33

34                   Also we might potentially have  
35 identified that there's an impact of vaterite on  
36 mortality. We're still kind of teasing this out.

37

38                   And then it looks like elevated PCO2  
39 exposure does increase their cortisol level, so it  
40 increases their stress. And then it also increases  
41 their metabolic demand.

42

43                   And so pinks are experiencing a lot as  
44 a result of ocean acidification stresses in addition to  
45 just kind of trying to survive as a juvenile pink  
46 salmon.

47

48                   So I have my acknowledgments in there.  
49 If you're really -- if you're interested more in the

50

0147

1 salmon project, there was a video done about the  
2 project that's on U-tube that is a QR curve on the  
3 slide. And then if you have any questions, I'm happy  
4 to take them now, but you are also free to email me  
5 further.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. That was  
8 very, very detailed and great length and it was  
9 educational, and we probably helped our understanding a  
10 lot. There's probably a lot of questions. Time-wise  
11 I'm not sure how much we want. We can contact her and  
12 do stuff, so whatever questions you guys might want to  
13 entertain while we've got her is good with me.

14  
15 I do have a question myself. I know  
16 through clam studies that we've done for many years on  
17 the Cook Inlet side and just recently and they do --  
18 they go down and they do their studies to see how  
19 they've grown and produced and Mike Bose, the biologist  
20 at Homer, they check them yearly and all the tides.  
21 And long story short, they don't appear to be growing  
22 much after the third year. And I have a pretty good  
23 reason why, but I'm not going to go into it at this  
24 point. But anyway there seem to be tons of the little  
25 new juvenile clams and they grow very rapidly and they  
26 are sustaining, but they reach level three or four-year  
27 and then they quick. We don't have the big clams any  
28 more. They go back, do their study, why they could  
29 open clams and all they find is these little bitty  
30 things. And anecdotal knowledge, we went down and  
31 tested it to just make sure these biologists knew what  
32 they were talking about, and, yeah, that's what you  
33 get.

34  
35 Anyway, I don't know if you got that  
36 coordinated to some, but that's what we're seeing.

37  
38 MS. ALCANTAR: Yeah, I mean, that's  
39 really interesting and I will say that, you know, a  
40 stress response is common in organisms and if you're  
41 undergoing a really stressful environment, you aren't  
42 going to waste energy on continuing to grow if you're  
43 just trying to survive. And so, you know, that's kind  
44 of just my physiology, quick, short answer for you.  
45 I'm sure that, you know, the boots on the ground may  
46 have better ideas, but it definitely is something that  
47 we are concerned about in the Kelly lab and it's  
48 something that we are continuing to kind of hypothesize  
49 about how to answer, you know, what stressors and what  
50

0148

1 obstacles razor clams are currently facing in Cook  
2 Inlet because, you know, it is a big deal.

3  
4 And, you know, my family, I'm born and  
5 raised, fourth generation Alaskan. My family has been  
6 harvesting razor clams for over 100 years and, you  
7 know, the fact that I can't do that any more is really  
8 hard to an Alaskan. So it's an important thing we're  
9 trying to address.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: It's very  
12 important and very costly. I made it to three-quarters  
13 of a century and I've been harvesting them all my life  
14 and probably two, 300 years of my family, but even  
15 going on the west side now as you know the clams are  
16 getting harder to even find over there. And I fly to  
17 the secret clam cove every year and they're getting  
18 harder, but anyway.....

19

20 Andy's got a question for you.

21

22 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. Thank you. I'm  
23 just kind of curious, are there hypothesized or  
24 researched differences that you know of in concretion  
25 at early larval stages of not just the soft-shell clams  
26 like the razors that you just studied, but the hard-  
27 shell clams, you know, like butters and steamers as  
28 well as other things that are non-bivalve like crabs  
29 and shrimps and things that have an exoskeleton?

30

31 MS. ALCANTAR: Yeah, that's a great  
32 question. We -- so I would say the predominant number  
33 of studies has been done on traditional -- I would call  
34 traditional clams, so clams like butter clams that have  
35 a fully mineralized shell really early on in  
36 development and then just continue to grow it. Butter  
37 clams, oysters. I know that the Kelly lab has done  
38 research looking at little mags and cockles, and so  
39 those have been studied, I won't say enough, but  
40 they've been studied more than concretion user. I've  
41 been in constant chats with Jeff Hetrick who runs the  
42 Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute about doing a similar  
43 study looking at soft-shelled clams. There's been some  
44 research published about their shell composition but  
45 cause me very, very, very suspicious that they are in  
46 fact the concretion user. I don't have definitive  
47 evidence, but based on what the study kind of  
48 published, I would be fairly confident in saying that  
49 they do use a concretion and so that's kind of maybe

50

0149

1 next on our list in terms of a species to look at would  
2 be the soft-shelled clams.

3

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I do not study crabs, but I know that it's a super hot topic for the lab down in Kodiak, especially with, you know, how things are looking in the crab fishery right now. But I do know that their exoskeletons respond differently than, you know, than a concretion would in terms of potential issues during development, so I don't think that would necessarily be an issue we would expect to see with shellfish.

But doing these studies for bivalves and for, you know, other gastropods -- and we've also looked at the darkbees (ph) so it's just important to characterize, you know, these species so that we can know these facts about them to direct these experimental studies we're doing.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, thank you very much. It's kind of definitely going to be researched I'm sure. Another quick question. Did I hear you right, you said ocean acidification when it accelerates it increases food demand on specifically the pink salmon?

MS. ALCANTAR: So it increases their metabolic rate, and so essentially they're having to work a lot harder, and the common physiological relationship there is that if you're working a lot harder, you're going to have to eat a lot more. And so we would expect then -- we didn't measure, you know, food uptakes between the different treatments, and so -- but we would expect to see an increased food demand for the fish that are exposed to that elevated PCO2 just because they're having to work a lot harder so they're going to need to eat a lot more. And so that, like I said, is especially a concern when we hypothesize that there will be a reduction in their food availability.

MR. McLAUGHLIN: Does that do with clams, too, then?

MS. ALCANTAR: You know, we haven't looked at the metabolic rate of clams, so I -- I don't have an answer for you there. It's an interesting question. Clams tend to, I mean, work a lot less than fish would. I know that there's been some studies in

0150

1 the Arctic done with the clam metabolic rate and they  
2 pretty much are static regardless of the conditions you  
3 drove them into, but that actually is a good question  
4 and I think would be something really interesting to  
5 look at factually given, you know, the growth issues  
6 that we are kind of seeing right now in Southcentral.  
7 I think it would be really interesting to look at.

8

9 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Anything  
10 else? If not, additional questions could be -- there,  
11 she's got her email address there and we'll get some.

12

13 That was a very good presentation,  
14 quite detailed, quite lengthy. We appreciate. We  
15 didn't really plan for that long, but that's okay. We  
16 may have to go another day, but we'll see.

17

18 Okay. Thank you. We're' going to move  
19 on then if there's no other questions there.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 MS. ALCANTAR: Thank you so much.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, let's make a  
26 decision here. We have a few reports to go and we  
27 really don't have much. We've got a few -- probably 15  
28 minutes apiece. I don't know, it would probably be  
29 another 45 minutes to finish up today or we go into  
30 another day tomorrow. So it's the wishes of the  
31 Council if we want to keep rolling, we'll knock it out.  
32 Do you want to keep going?

33

34 (Council nods affirmatively)

35

36 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Okay.  
37 We're going to move on. The next one I have, Chugach  
38 National Forest I believe. Dave. You noticed I said  
39 45 minutes. That was for all of them.

40

41 MR. PEARSON: That got me clamming up  
42 over here. I couldn't help myself. No.....

43

44 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: No, we want to get  
45 what you've got, so don't worry about it.

46

47 MR. PEARSON: Yeah. This is David  
48 Pearson with the United States Forest Service.

49

50

0151

1                   So what we currently have now is a lot  
2 of movement within our staff. The Forest has a vacant  
3 wildlife biologist, a vacant fisheries program  
4 managers. We're about to have another vacant fisheries  
5 biologist.

6  
7                   But what we do have is Dan Swouzer  
8 (ph), he's new. He's our subsistence technician over  
9 in Cordova. He started just a few weeks ago. He's  
10 lived in Cordova for a while, has worked for the Forest  
11 Service for the watershed project.

12  
13                   And we also have Heather Thamm who's  
14 our other subsistence technician over here on the  
15 Kenai.

16  
17                   I'm in this detail until May and we're  
18 hoping -- well, a few weeks ago I probably would have  
19 said that Milo's position, the program manager, would  
20 have been filled by May, now I'm going to say by June.  
21 And hopefully we're just going to stick with that June  
22 time frame. So there was an eight-month vacancy of  
23 that position with no one in it, and so we're just  
24 doing a little catch up right now.

25  
26                   Otherwise all our district rangers are  
27 pretty new. Steve's been here about a year, Ruth's  
28 been here about a year. Steve might be about two years  
29 now. And then our Glacier District ranger has been  
30 here like two weeks. His name is Christopher Stuart.

31  
32                   So there's just a lot of new faces on  
33 the Forest and we're hiring up right now with a lot of  
34 people, so with that I'm going to leave the subsis --  
35 I'm not actually leaving this. I'm going to talk about  
36 a bunch of different things.

37  
38                   The Forest Service is really busy right  
39 now. Over in Hope we have a creek restoration project.  
40 We're going to restore two miles of Resurrection Creek  
41 over the next two to three years. It's a very large  
42 scale restoration project. It is in mined areas. It's  
43 very similar to the one we did just upstream of there,  
44 so that will be a total of four miles restored from  
45 mining in the early 20th century.

46  
47                   If anyone's been down on the Kenai, and  
48 I know you guys up north of here have a lot, too,  
49 spruce bark beetle that has changed our landscape. And  
50

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1 so the Forest is currently undertaking a three-phased  
2 approach with spruce bark beetle. We're actively  
3 mitigating fuel hazards currently in the wild  
4 land/urban interface, so around communities and around  
5 campgrounds we're having active management for the  
6 spruce bark beetle. And that's phase one.

7

8 Phase two is going to be moving one to  
9 a larger scale area where we're going to do quite a bit  
10 more with trying to manage for wildlife habitat. So  
11 it's going to be a long-term effort, and hopefully in  
12 the long run we'll be improving wildlife habitat across  
13 the Chugach National -- well, the Kenai Peninsula, then  
14 the Chugach National Forest.

15

16 The Great American Outdoors Act was  
17 signed a few years ago and those projects are coming on  
18 line throughout the Chugach, and that means there's  
19 going to be a lot of recreation improvements throughout  
20 the Forest, trails, roads, culverts. They're going to  
21 end up building I think 12 new cabins on the Chugach in  
22 the next five years.

23

24 We are currently wrapping up the  
25 (indiscernible) over in Cordova, so that's been a  
26 multi-year study and we have -- I believe this will be  
27 the last field season and then there will be data  
28 analysis after that.

29

30 Our dusky geese habitat improvement  
31 project, which is artificial nest island program to  
32 increase nesting success, is still rolling along.

33

34 And starting right about now we are  
35 working on improving the Russian River road entrance.  
36 It's -- the road was essentially sloughing and it's  
37 going to be I believe a three-year process to bring  
38 that road back up to standard. And with that, there  
39 are closures. Actually with the spruce bark beetle and  
40 the Russian River project there are area closures  
41 associated with it and we are working through -- we are  
42 working on those closures to mitigate for subsistence  
43 users where we can.

44

45 We also currently have the Unit 7  
46 mountain goat drawing applications open now. Todd  
47 talked about it earlier. We have 20 currently?  
48 Somewhere around 20 applications in right now. I think  
49 last year we had a total of 31. It's open through  
50



0153

1 March 31st and we are hoping to have the drawing for  
2 that the following week.

3

4                   There is a lot going on in the Forest  
5 right now, so -- yeah.

6

7                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I've got a  
8 question for you on the Forest. Okay. I've watched,  
9 you know, and I see the Russian River entrance there.  
10 You've done a tremendous job there. I know the road  
11 being moved, but there's stacks and stacks and tons and  
12 tons of firewood. I mean I'm not sure, I was wondering  
13 what you're doing with it all? I see there's trucking  
14 and moving around and it's really going to be beautiful  
15 there, but it also is going to change your whole  
16 Forest. It's going to change the animal migra -- all  
17 kinds of stuff. So we see an impact on the lower  
18 Kenai, too. You know, we went through it years ago in  
19 Ninilchik area and it's kind of coming back, but that  
20 Kenai area, it just wiped it out, and north Kenai just  
21 unbelievable, and there are little bits and pieces  
22 they're going stuff here, but even after the burn -- it  
23 looks like that whole Forest needs to be rebuilt is  
24 what I'm trying to say, and which will drastically  
25 change our subsistence uses in my opinion. But, anyway  
26 (indiscernible - microphone off).....

27

28                   MR. PEARSON: I agree. No, there's I  
29 think a two-part question. Some of that wood is going  
30 to commercial sales and then some of it does become  
31 firewood. Depending on the specific area you're  
32 interested in, you'd have to call the front desk to  
33 find out which is which.

34

35                   As far as the landscape-wide effect on  
36 subsistence users and -- there was NEPA done for all  
37 this in the past and we tried to cover all that there.  
38 And I mean the times they are changing and we just have  
39 to manage with it. It's essentially adaptive  
40 management. And the only adverse subsistence uses in  
41 the area is some of these long-term impacts could be  
42 positive for some of us. It's just not -- I don't like  
43 to think in positive or negative. It will just be  
44 different.

45

46                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: It will be change.  
47 It will be grasslands and rabbits and different things  
48 and maybe more caribou will move our way or something.

49

50

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1 MR. PEARSON: Sure.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah.

4

5 MR. PEARSON: Less the opposite I  
6 believe.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any more questions  
9 for Dave there? Go ahead, Michael.

10

11 MR. OPHEIM: Yeah, I just have one. Are  
12 you replanting in that area with native wood or what?

13

14 MR. PEARSON: I do know that there is  
15 hardwood seed collection occurring for that purpose. I  
16 am not intimately involved with the project so I don't  
17 know if they're also planting spruce. I could find out  
18 more information for you, I just don't have it with me  
19 now. I could get back to you in the next week or two.

20

21 MR. OPHEIM: Okay. That would be great.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good. That's your  
24 area. Yeah.

25

26 MR. HOLSTEN: I just have an  
27 observation. I know everybody in Cooper Landing has  
28 first hand experience with what's been going on with  
29 the bark beetle. And I know a year or two ago a big  
30 push was coming out from the Chugach on some fairly  
31 large scale proposed activities. I know some of which  
32 you've done and can get by with through NEPA through a  
33 categorical exclusion. Makes it a little simpler to  
34 get it through. But there's large areas that are being  
35 proposed to be treated. I guess my questions come back  
36 down to staffing issues that the Chugach may have in  
37 terms of NEPA coordinators. How is the Chugach staffed  
38 for that or are they?

39

40 MR. PEARSON: We currently do have a  
41 NEPA coordinator. She's remote, but she is helping us  
42 with that. And then for not necessarily this project,  
43 but a lot of our projects I mentioned they have hired  
44 four recreation planners who we plan on shouldering a  
45 bunch of the NEPA load on in the coming years. But for  
46 -- as I said, they broke that spruce bark beetle up  
47 into three phases and I haven't seen a NEPA for the --  
48 those large areas is phase three and I don't believe  
49 we're there yet. The CE they use I think just covered  
50

0155

1 phases one and maybe two. But I could also get you  
2 that information.

3

4

5 MR. HOLSTEN: Another quick one  
6 concerning the Russian River campground effort and the  
7 closure that's been going on. I can understand the  
8 closure if there's work going on. However, I haven't  
9 seen any tire tracks going up there through the snow,  
10 so what's happened this winter, it shut down our ski  
11 trail system that we groomed, et cetera. Do you have  
12 an answer for that?

13

14

15 MR. PEARSON: I'll do my best and, you  
16 know, none of my supervisors are here, so my  
17 understanding that is was that the contract went out  
18 with a wide range of dates so they can start any day,  
19 and the decision was -- you know, there was  
20 (indiscernible - microphone off) So the contract went  
21 out with a long range of dates that were -- allowed  
22 them start at any point during the winter season. The  
23 road needs to be open during the summer for subsistence  
24 and sport use, so the decision was made just because we  
25 didn't know when they were starting just to shut it.  
26 That's my understanding of it. And I can maybe get you  
27 more information as well.

28

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CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Anyone else.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: I have the  
National Park Service next. Wrangell-St. Elias, is  
that Barbara?

MS. CELLARIUS: Yes, Mr. Chair, I am  
here. This is Barbara Cellarius. Again for the record  
I'm the cultural anthropologist and subsistence  
coordinator for Wrangell-St. Elias.

I wanted let you know that on Page 104  
of the meeting book there's a list of some of the  
projects that I am working on with various partners,  
and already mentioned several projects we're working on  
with the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission and one  
of which we go through with Fish & Game. So I'm not  
going to speak about those. Just let you know that  
they're listed on that page of my report.

And also wanted to let you know that

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1 Kyle was able to cover everything from the wildlife  
2 report. So we can just turn it over to Dave unless  
3 there's questions for me.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay, Dave.

6

7 MR. SARAFIN: Good afternoon. Yeah,  
8 this is Dave Sarafin, the fisheries management  
9 biologist at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and  
10 Preserve, and I have a winter/spring fisheries reports.  
11 I believe it's in your supplemental materials, maybe  
12 Page 102 I think. And much of this material I  
13 presented at the fall meeting so I'll try to be brief  
14 on this as much as I can.

15

16 Just starting out with some summary of  
17 key updates. So we were pretty happy we got the Tanada  
18 Creek weir back in operation again this year, so it's  
19 good after dealing with Covid and other staffing --  
20 lack of staff issues and different matters. So we  
21 actually documented a passage of 29,350 sockeye salmon  
22 and three Chinook salmon. And that's a preliminary  
23 count. We still have some -- got to cross check some  
24 of the video review, some of it was done at a slightly  
25 high speed so I think we missed a few and the count  
26 will actually be a bit higher than what it was. In  
27 perspective this is the third highest count that we've  
28 had in over 20 years of weir operation there and it's  
29 considered the largest stock for the farthest upriver  
30 group of sockeye salmon amongst the stocks up there so  
31 it's a key index. So it is good to see fish actually  
32 making it up there in solid numbers this year.

33

34 They were pretty late, considerably  
35 late. The first salmon was June 28th when typically  
36 they might be closer to the 10th to the 15th when we  
37 first see them get there. Half of the run passed the  
38 date at which 50 percent of the run was August 11th and  
39 there's a large group of fish between August 10th and  
40 14th that had actually about 8,000 fish come through  
41 during that period.

42

43 And two Copper River salmon research  
44 projects began this year, on looking at the use -- or  
45 evaluating the use of genetic stock identification for  
46 in-season management decisionmaking and one looking at  
47 various factors affecting migratory success.

48

49 2022, yeah, the Copper River salmon run

50

0157

1 in general was pretty -- it started out weak, delayed,  
2 and, you know, increased in strength as the season  
3 progressed. Harvest opportunities in the river  
4 continued throughout the season, you know, for Federal  
5 season throughout the entire season.

6  
7 And it appears the sustainable goals  
8 were met. The Miles Lake sonar provided a season total  
9 passage estimate of 785,609 salmon which is 27 percent  
10 above the state's management objectives.

11  
12 And the upper Copper River subsistence  
13 fishery permits that were issued, 177 Chitina, 297 for  
14 the Glennallen subdistrict, and two for Batzulnetas.  
15 And historical, Federal subsistence harvest through '21  
16 plus preliminary estimates on '22 are provided Tables 1  
17 through 4 in these materials. And the 2022 season was  
18 below average for sockeye salmon and near average for  
19 Chinook salmon. And for upriver harvest Table 1's a  
20 pretty good reference for actual harvest that do occur  
21 by Federal subsistence fishermen. Some fishermen, you  
22 know, get harvest from both Chitina and Glennallen.  
23 The same users might. So this combines them just for  
24 the whole upper Copper River. So you can kind of look  
25 at the total harvest by species to see what they're  
26 doing relative to the five and 10 year averages below.

27  
28 In the new Federal subsistence fishery  
29 in the lower Copper River, it was open from June 1  
30 through September 30th. 69 permits were issued, and  
31 total reported harvest, this is preliminary again, for  
32 the season was 111 sockeye salmon and three Chinook.  
33 There's some harvest reports that haven't been returned  
34 so there's a chance that some could be slight -- slight  
35 variation from the in-season reporting.

36  
37 And Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
38 has forecast 2023 -- I've got an error in the handout.  
39 It's the total run for wild sockeye salmon was the  
40 1,646,000, for total sockeye salmon return they're  
41 forecasting 1,695,000 and that's the numbers that would  
42 be 10 percent below their 10-year average. And then  
43 53,000 Chinook salmon, which is 15 percent above that  
44 average.

45  
46 So key concerns for the subsistence  
47 management, you know, are the Federal subsistence  
48 opportunities and harvest and also sustainable  
49 escapement goals, so with the majority of harvest  
50

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1 coming, you know, typically from the commercial and the  
2 second coming from the personal use fishery, the Alaska  
3 Department of Game does have an allocative management  
4 plan for the various fisheries, and, you know, it's  
5 based a lot on the sonar and historically, you know,  
6 they've done a really good job I believe of meeting  
7 escapement goals and the fishery that -- it tends to be  
8 the commercial fishery that can harvest a high -- they  
9 have a high potential of harvesting, way more than the  
10 other fisheries. And they've limited them to meet  
11 these goals, so it's -- they also limit the personal  
12 use, so, you know, it's a tight balancing thing with  
13 everything, but the sustainable goals have typically  
14 been met. There's been a couple years that have been  
15 close.

16

17 And, you know, in the Federal  
18 management, you know, we're seeing what's going on in  
19 that and the Federal fishermen do have the opportunity  
20 for several months of fishing, and part of the reason I  
21 think that might affect that could be high water levels  
22 we had this year affected in-river fishing as well as  
23 down in the Cordova and the lower area. You know, I  
24 heard -- we were getting reports during June that  
25 tapered off to nothing as of the -- you know, right at  
26 the end of June. And that's when the waters were  
27 rising significantly and I heard that typical at the  
28 end of the road people just weren't catching the fish  
29 and efficiency dropped off.

30

31 I think that's -- you know, the lot --  
32 yeah, the high waters also affect fishwheels. They  
33 might -- there were some challenges keeping the  
34 fishwheels in as well.

35

36 And that concludes my report and I'm  
37 open for questions.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Questions.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: No questions.

44

45 MR. SARAFIN: Okay. Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good job. Okay.  
48 I know I have some stuff for us to do. I haven't  
49 forgot about the draft language, but we'll get to it.

50

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1 We've got a few more reports here. Are we into the  
2 wildlife report now? That was done?

3

4 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yeah,  
5 that one's been completed as well as the Denali  
6 National Park and Preserve wildlife report.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, I don't --  
9 well, then are we on to the Bureau of Land Management?

10

11 MS. GILL: Yes, we are, but I believe  
12 that Caroline has left for the day, so I don't know if  
13 she's on line.

14

15 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, we heard  
16 some stuff. I know that the Alaska Department of Fish  
17 & Game's still around. We'll go there next. Okay.

18

19 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Mr. Chair, I don't  
20 have much for you right now. I was hoping that one of  
21 the researchers from the Division of Subsistence would  
22 be able to call in, but she hasn't contacted me yet,  
23 but I will point out that you have a one-page summary  
24 of some of their work in your supplemental materials.  
25 So I draw your attention to that and let you continue  
26 on.

27

28 Thank you.

29

30 MS. GILL: And, Mr. Chair, that written  
31 report is on Page 115 if your supplemental book.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you. Okay.  
34 Then we've got OSM. Robbin.

35

36 MS. LAVINE: All right. Thank you, Mr.  
37 Chair, Members of the Council.

38

39 On behalf of OSM I would like to extend  
40 my sincere gratitude for you all showing up, working  
41 with us, bringing your expertise and helping us  
42 implement Title VIII of ANILCA. It is a delight to  
43 work with you all and it's great to be here in person.

44

45 Last fall we held our first in-person  
46 Regional Advisory Council meetings since the beginning  
47 of Covid three years ago. All 10 Councils were able to  
48 meet in person as scheduled and again it's been a  
49 tremendous honor to work with you all, our Council

50

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1 volunteers, our OSM Staff, our inter-agency colleagues  
2 in subsistence to accomplish our goals of informed  
3 subsistence management. And barring any hiccups, and  
4 we've had a few this particular season and cycle, all  
5 10 Regional Advisory Councils are also meeting in  
6 person in our rural and hub communities.

7  
8                   So over the past few years we've  
9 reminded you all that Council Members need to change  
10 their ID for travel. The real ID is going to be  
11 required for any air travel, including small commercial  
12 flights beginning May 7th of 2025. I know they've kept  
13 pushing the date out, thank goodness, but at this point  
14 in time, barring another pandemic, that deadline is  
15 looming. So we do hope that all Council Members will  
16 need to make sure that you have the required real ID  
17 for travel to the fall 2025 Council meetings. And you  
18 can find more information on real ID requirements on  
19 the State of Alaska's Division of Motor Vehicles web  
20 site.

21  
22                   The Federal Subsistence Board recently  
23 held their fisheries regulatory public meeting in  
24 Anchorage the week of January 31st of 2023. This was  
25 the Board's second in-person meeting and it was the  
26 first regulatory meeting the Board held since the  
27 beginning of Covid about three years ago.

28  
29                   The Board had a packed agenda. They  
30 addressed fisheries proposals, closure reviews,  
31 deferred wildlife proposals, and agenda items touching  
32 on important subsistence and regulatory issues across  
33 the state. We also listened to you, the Councils,  
34 through your participating representatives at the  
35 meeting. The Board is always better informed when you  
36 participate and you bring yourselves in and your  
37 knowledge.

38  
39                   As for changes in staffing at OSM,  
40 there is not much new information to report since last  
41 time we met, gratefully. OSM has advertised for a  
42 cartographer position to help with our mapping needs.  
43 And the closing date for those applications was  
44 February 24th, so we hope during our fall meeting cycle  
45 we'll be able to introduce you to that new staff person  
46 at OSM.

47  
48                   So while there have been no new  
49 additions since we met in the fall, there has been one  
50



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1 great subtraction, and that is our wonderful colleague  
2 Tom Kron. So after 22 years of working in the Federal  
3 subsistence management program with OSM and actually  
4 even longer in resource management with the state, Tom  
5 Kron retired. So he's leaving a big hole in our  
6 office. No more sushi at our all staff meetings. He  
7 would always bring sushi. So we'll miss him and we're  
8 grateful for his assistance and his knowledge and his  
9 support all of these years.

10

11 That is my report. I'm happy to answer  
12 any questions.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Questions for  
15 Robbin, anyone?

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good job. Thank  
20 you. And we miss Tom, too, and the sushi.

21

22 Before I move on to the next one, which  
23 is future meeting dates and a bunch of housekeeping  
24 stuff to finish up on, we do have some draft language  
25 for -- Andy made a proposal earlier and we'll get to  
26 read that draft language now and we could pass that  
27 before we move on. Can you do that for us, Jessica,  
28 please?

29

30 MS. GILL: Yep. Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
31 For the record this is Jessica Gill, Southcentral  
32 Council coordinator.

33

34 So the proposal we discussed earlier,  
35 I've got some draft language for that proposal to  
36 rescind the delegated authority to the Cordova district  
37 ranger for in-season management of moose and deer in  
38 Unit 6.

39

40 And then the justification is the  
41 original delegation of authority letter was born from a  
42 wildlife special action that should never have become a  
43 permanent fixture. The Southcentral Subsistence  
44 Regional Advisory Council supported the action and  
45 resulting delegated letter of authority contingent on a  
46 sunset clause of two years that was never incorporated  
47 into the DAL.

48

49 Members of the Council feel the DAL is

50

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1 too broad in regulation and is not necessary due to the  
2 small amount of Federal harvest and RAC Members are  
3 left out of the consultation process when management  
4 decisions are made.

5

6 If that language is acceptable, we can  
7 vote on this. We can have a motion and vote on this  
8 and I can send it to the Board.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Very good.  
11 Andy, does that meet your understanding of what you  
12 wanted?

13

14 MR. McLAUGHLIN: You nailed it, yeah. I  
15 make a motion as read.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. I will  
18 entertain a motion to accept that and send it.

19

20 MR. HOLSTEN: I'll make that motion.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Go ahead, Ed.  
23 Thank you. A second.

24

25 MR. OPHEIM: I'll second that.

26

27 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by  
28 Michael. Any discussion.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: You all heard it,  
33 you all understand it. All in favor aye.

34

35 IN UNISON: Aye.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

38

39 (No opposing votes)

40

41 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: No opposition. It  
42 carries. We will send that on.

43

44 So now we're going to move on to future  
45 meeting dates. We need to confirm the fall 2023  
46 meeting date. There is an action item there for  
47 changing the date one day. We had it the 2nd and 3rd  
48 to Andy's flights. He can't get out only on Mondays  
49 and Thursdays usually, so if we could make it the  
50

0163

1 Tuesday.

2

3 Jessica, those would go to the 3/4; is  
4 that the correct date? I could look at the calendar.  
5 I'm just reading my cheat sheet.

6

7 MS. GILL: Mr. Chair. Thanks. Yeah.  
8 So that -- my proposed suggestion is to move it to  
9 Tuesday, October 3rd, and Wednesday, October 4th. And  
10 right now the meeting is scheduled for Kenai.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. One day, is  
13 that going to make your calendars? I don't know. It's  
14 good, I hear nods. Is that going to work, Ed? Andy,  
15 working for you. Gloria, I guess one day will make it,  
16 one day at a time. I think everyone's in agreement  
17 with that, so we'll take care of that one.

18

19 MS. GILL: Thank you. We need a motion  
20 for that.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We just told you  
23 we agreed to do it for sure. Okay. Let's make a  
24 motion so she can paint it in the calendar.

25

26 MS. SELANOFF: I'll make a motion to  
27 change the fall 2023 meeting date to October 3rd and  
28 4th.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: In Kenai. Is  
31 there a second to that?

32

33 MR. HOLSTEN: Second.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by Ed.  
36 Any discussion.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none, all  
41 in favor aye.

42

43 IN UNISON: Aye.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed same  
46 sign.

47

48 (No opposing votes)

49

50

0164

1                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Carries. Now  
2 you've got it. Okay. Now I suppose you're going to  
3 want one for the next one, too. The next one I have is  
4 select the winter '24 meeting date and location. We  
5 could do that at our fall meeting, but.....

6  
7                   MS. GILL: Sorry. Yes. Mr. Chair. So  
8 there are actually -- we are in discussions with all  
9 the other Councils to hold an all Council meeting in  
10 March next year here in Anchorage. And the idea behind  
11 the all Council meetings, because I don't think all of  
12 you were around in 2016 when we had the last one is so  
13 that all Councils can get together, talk about  
14 subsistence issues, talk about issues everyone is  
15 dealing with. There will be some trainings on ANILCA  
16 and other topics of interest. If there's something  
17 that you guys find interest -- that you want to have  
18 training on at the meeting, let us know, we can  
19 incorporate that into our scheduling. And right now  
20 we're proposing March 4th through the 8th, but it's up  
21 to you, the Council. If you guys have big conflicts  
22 with that, we can work around that. There was a  
23 suggestion from the Eastern Interior RAC to move the  
24 meetings onto the weekend schedule so like a Saturday,  
25 Sunday, Monday, Tuesday kind of thing just to  
26 accommodate some flights for the Eastern Interior,  
27 Western Interior regions, they don't fly on the  
28 weekend.

29  
30                   With that I'll let you guys discuss.

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: 4th through the  
33 8th, that's -- is that what you said?

34  
35                   MS. GILL: That's correct.

36  
37                   CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: The whole week,  
38 yeah, somewhere in that week they'll schedule it.  
39 Okay.

40  
41                   I have a comment for you -- or a  
42 request for you. Do not schedule any training. Do not  
43 schedule anything that will compromise our ability to  
44 meet with the RACs and have a good time and really get  
45 into thorough discussion. It's our only opportunity,  
46 so I would prefer, me, alone -- I've been to one of  
47 these and they're really helpful, and it's really time  
48 consuming, so if we could keep it to the context of the  
49 joint meeting would be better to me. Gotcha, you're  
50

0165

1 going to tell me we can't do that.

2

3 MS. WESSELS: No. As you might recall,  
4 Greg, last time all the Councils met together as one  
5 body, you know, I think for a day and a half.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Then you meet  
8 individually.

9

10 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, then you had  
11 individual meetings that were staggered, but there are  
12 also staggered training, and training were repeat  
13 sessions so if Council Members were in the meeting,  
14 they still could attend the training the next day, and  
15 it was over the course of five days so Council Members  
16 had opportunities to attend any training they wanted  
17 to.

18

19 And, you know, there was very positive  
20 feedback from man Councils. I think your Council was  
21 one of the ones that's saying let's do it again, so  
22 we're trying to do it again.

23

24 You know, we ultimately will be  
25 deciding the dates, but we want at least some feedback  
26 what part of the month you would prefer, so we'll try  
27 to accommodate most of the Councils as much as we can,  
28 but we also have to contend that the Board meeting is  
29 in April, because it's wildlife -- you know, the end of  
30 the wildlife cycle. So we don't want to schedule your  
31 meeting very close to the Board meeting because it will  
32 be pretty difficult for us and, you know, for the  
33 Chairs who will have to come to that meeting then to  
34 allow them to come to the Board meeting.

35

36 So that's all I have for now. Thank  
37 you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah. It's  
40 complicated, we get the training. Okay. Go ahead I  
41 guess. If you can just keep it brief if we can. We've  
42 got to move on.

43

44 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This  
45 is Robbin.

46

47 And really briefly, I do hear what you  
48 said about having an opportunity for the Councils to  
49 freely meet with each other and have slightly less

50

0166

1 structured, more informal opportunities to talk about  
2 the issues and the experience of being Council Members  
3 across the state. A lot of Councils expressed a  
4 similar desire so for this particular thing -- well,  
5 this is a wonderful opportunity to conduct trainings,  
6 especially for new Council Members. We'll also try to  
7 schedule in those opportunities for all of the Council  
8 Members to meet and learn from each other, meet with  
9 them, learn from each other. Thanks.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, when I made  
12 that request I didn't know that we were going to be all  
13 week with the opportunity for the other things. That  
14 makes it a whole -- the whole thing is different. I  
15 mean, that would allow for training days other days.  
16 As I recall we had to train while the other one was  
17 meeting and what we did is we went shopping and we  
18 filled up our cars and then we came back and had to  
19 wait a day for the next meeting. But that's all good.  
20 Okay.

21

22 Are we going to have to take some  
23 action on this or not?

24

25 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So  
26 just to confirm, I would like a motion on the meeting  
27 dates for the winter all Council meeting.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We can make a  
30 motion. I'm not sure I can make that week, but we'll  
31 find out.

32

33 MS. SELANOFF: I think we need to remain  
34 flexible so I'm going to go ahead and say that we  
35 should schedule out winter 2024 meeting for the week of  
36 March 4th and possibly through the 8th,

37

38 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Very good. Is  
39 there a second.

40

41 MR. HOLSTEN: Second.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by Ed.  
44 Any discussion.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Hearing none, all  
49 in favor aye.

50

0167

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed?

4

5 (No opposing votes)

6

7 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. That  
8 carries. Okay. That took care of the two meeting  
9 dates, correct, Jessica?

10

11

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MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have one more meeting date for fall 2024. This is earlier than we typically plan this meeting, but we're trying to keep in schedule with the Federal Register posting which has been quite delayed and it's taking them a while to get through to the Federal Register, and we want to make sure that we have those dates ahead of time for that posting.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Is that what you just passed out?

MS. GILL: Oh, sorry. Yes. So the calendar I just passed out is the current calendar as the other Councils have added onto their scheduling. So the North Slope Regional Advisory Council proposed to meet early in the cycle, August 19th and the 20th, and then Eastern Interior is meeting October 8th and 9th, Southeast Council October 22nd through 24th, Northwest Arctic is meeting October 28th through 29th, and Bristol Bay is meeting October 29th and 30th.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That said, I can't commit to any of that, but anyway someone will have to make a motion. We'll see what happens. I have a tremendous amount of meetings that time of year, in October with the Southcentral Foundation, et cetera, AFN, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Okay. Then, Diane, do you want to take a stab at it?

MS. SELANOFF: Yeah.

CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We might have to adjust later, but I think we need some dates.

MS. SELANOFF: Yeah. I'm just looking at the AFN schedule, but it's not giving it to me. So I'm thinking it's usually the third week in October, so.....

0168

1 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: October, yeah.

2

3 MS. SELANOFF: .....I don't know if we  
4 can do October 10th and 11th, and I guess I'll just put  
5 that forward for now and then we can make changes as  
6 necessary going forward.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, that will  
9 work. You know, that's my -- it'll make it if I  
10 survive that long. My 53rd-year anniversary on the  
11 10th. I missed it last month, so -- I missed it this  
12 month.

13

14 MS. SELANOFF: Oh, no.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, I did. I  
17 might be single. Okay. Anyway, the 10th and 11th is  
18 the proposed. Okay. Is there a second to that. Is  
19 that a motion you made, Diane?

20

21 MS. SELANOFF: Yeah.

22

23 MR. HOLSTEN: Second.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Seconded by Ed.  
26 Any discussion.

27

28 (No comments.)

29

30 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: All in favor of  
31 those dates aye.

32

33 IN UNISON: Aye.

34

35 (No opposing votes)

36

37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Sounds  
38 good. If you have more dates or not, you're not going  
39 to get them. Okay.

40

41 So we have other business to attend to  
42 here, so just bear with me a minute. We're going to  
43 turn the page and we're going to go to the end. And at  
44 the end we generally do closing comments.

45

46 But before we do that, Jessica, did I  
47 miss anything that I need to cover?

48

49 MS. GILL: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I

50



0169

1 believe we've covered every agenda item that I had, so  
2 thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. And anyone  
5 that we missed, any reports, we're short of time,  
6 please send them out and please contact the Council  
7 Members any time or we'll work on it, because we have a  
8 policy. We can't be in the Hatch Act, but we can talk.

9

10 Good to see all of you and we're going  
11 to do comments now. So we'll just go around the table.  
12 Diane, if you want to start, it would be fine.

13

14 MS. SELANOFF: First of all I'd like to  
15 say congratulations to you for being back on the Board  
16 and to the vice chair, secretary/treasure, so  
17 congratulations.

18

19 It was a good meeting. The information  
20 we received today was extremely detailed and as tired  
21 as I was, I found myself getting into it and wanting to  
22 read more and try to get a head's up. So thank you for  
23 the detailed reports and congratulations to you and  
24 good luck. Get lots of fish this summer.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Thanks.  
27 Good to see you here and you get to tell a story now.

28

29 MR. KOCAN: Thanks. Yeah, I really  
30 appreciate all the reports today. They were all very  
31 informative. This is my first in-person meeting so I  
32 learned a lot. I'm excited that there will be some  
33 training in the fall. I think that will, at least for  
34 me, be very good. Maybe not for everyone else, but for  
35 me it will help a lot. Yeah, look forward to the next  
36 meeting.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Well, great. I  
39 hope it was all what you expected and then some.

40

41 Michael, you're getting to be an old  
42 timer here, so I know you've got something. Go ahead.

43

44 MR. OPHEIM: Yeah. No, the same thing  
45 as I heard from Diana. Yeah, it was great information.  
46 I always enjoy the learning part of our meetings. It  
47 just kind of blows my mind as to what's going on out  
48 there and how it helps subsistence. So it's great to  
49 see everybody and hopefully the fall meeting -- that's  
50

0170

1 great, an all RAC. I do remember -- the one thing that  
2 sticks out about the all RAC the last time was Anthony  
3 Christensen getting robbed. That was the on thing that  
4 really stuck out to me. Somebody as big as him got  
5 robbed, but I think he finally get his check back. But  
6 it was a good meeting here. Glad everybody made it.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Dennis.

9

10 MR. ZADRA: Well, for the sake of  
11 brevity I will just say thanks for the reports,  
12 everyone, and safe travels home.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you, Dennis.

15 Hope.

16

17 MS. ROBERTS: I'm here. I agree.  
18 Thanks for all the reports and all the work that  
19 everybody's done. You know what, I'm not sure if this  
20 has ever been suggested before, but like a working  
21 lunch might help next time, you know, like if it's a  
22 two-day thing. That's just a suggestion.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: That's a good one.

25 Gloria.

26

27 MS. STICKWAN: So it was a good meeting.  
28 Glad to have a new vice chair and a  
29 secretary/treasurer. And you're still the Chair, which  
30 is good. I'm glad you are.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Thank you.

33

34 MS. STICKWAN: Thank you for the  
35 reports, they were good.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Good. Thank you,  
38 Gloria, and thank you for all your service, too, as  
39 vice chair.

40

41 Okay. Andy.

42

43 MR. McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, thank you. I'm  
44 looking forward to the next King's Bay area moose  
45 aerial survey of course, and really nice to be all  
46 together in-person post-Covid. Last meeting we were  
47 kind of getting it figured out. Looking forward to  
48 working in tandem with folks here. And a huge thanks  
49 to all the agency reports and all the stuff that goes  
50

0171

1 to make this, especially also including OSM office, you  
2 know, Jessica, Robbin. Without all these documents,  
3 none of this stuff would flow, and you guys do a  
4 fantastic job with that, so thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Ed.

7

8 MR. HOLSTEN: Yeah. Well, first thanks  
9 really for pushing this all through in one day.  
10 Appreciate that. And again thanks to OSM Staff, other  
11 staff, for all they do. I liked the agency report,  
12 although I think learned more than I ever wanted to  
13 know about clams.

14

15 (Laughter)

16

17 MR. HOLSTEN: I may have a tough time  
18 thinking about that picture of the ugly clam.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Yeah, went a  
21 little long.

22

23 MR. HOLSTEN: Yes, but anyway it was a  
24 good meeting. I hope everybody has safe travels.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Do we still  
27 have Donna Wilson on the line?

28

29 MS. WILSON: Yes, we do.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Could you go ahead  
32 and make your comments, Donna. Thank you.

33

34 MS. WILSON: Yep. Yes, I just was going  
35 to reiterate what everybody said about the reports and  
36 I found them very interesting. In spite of the fact I  
37 missed a lot, I still found it very informative and  
38 just wanted to thank everybody, and it was a good  
39 meeting, and hopefully we'll meet together in the next  
40 one.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Okay. Sounds  
43 good. Well, I want to thank all the Staff and everyone  
44 here, and, you know, Katya and Sue, they're going to be  
45 here and Robbin, you know, there's some changes and  
46 we're changing and we've got changes on the Board and  
47 that's all good. And I'm going to give a little shout  
48 out here to Jessica, because, you know, I'll just show  
49 you, there's things constantly going on here, but she

50

0172

1 is very kind about helping me out with this cheat  
2 sheet. And you can see it's all highlighted, but it's  
3 also very confusing at times.

4  
5 But I'm all for all the training we can  
6 get, but one thing that I've done as Chair, and I've  
7 stuck with it, it's kind of an old time thing, but I've  
8 always believed in getting the proposals and the meats  
9 and potatoes done first. And the reason being is  
10 that's our -- you know, we have to do that. If we have  
11 to go into the reports by either mail or what, so I  
12 just try -- I tend to do that. And I know we try to  
13 accommodate everyone, but as we do that it gets more  
14 and more hard to do, so it would be nice to have people  
15 on a set schedule. But no complaining, it's all great.

16  
17 We could have done it in a couple days  
18 here, I'm prepared for it, but I really didn't see a  
19 reason in it. And I think everyone had plenty time. I  
20 hope they did.

21  
22 And I hope we have a wonderful spring.  
23 And even though time is changing, you know, life  
24 marches on, something good will come out. There's  
25 always positive things in the change in the system and  
26 the ecosystem, and so good thoughts and prayers for us  
27 all and safe travels and thank you very much. And I  
28 will entertain a motion to adjourn.

29  
30 MS. STICKWAN: I'll make that motion.

31  
32 MS. SELANOFF: I'll second it.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: It's moved and  
35 second. All in favor aye.

36  
37 IN UNISON: Aye.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: Any opposed.

40  
41 (No opposing votes)

42  
43 CHAIRMAN ENCELEWSKI: We stand  
44 adjourned.

45  
46 (Off record - 5:54 P.M.)

47  
48 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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0173

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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 SOUTHCENTRAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, taken electronically on the 15th day of March 2023;

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 18th day of April 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Salena A. Hile  
Notary Public, State of Alaska  
My Commission Expires: 09/16/26