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1 YUKON KUSKOKWIM DELTA SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 VOLUME II

7
8
9 TELECONFERENCE
10 March 2, 2022
11 9:08 a.m.

12
13
14
15 MEMBERS PRESENT:

16
17 Raymond Oney, Chair
18 Wasilly Alexie
19 Thomas Alstrom
20 John Andrew
21 Jackie Cleveland
22 Norma Evan
23 Robert Hoffman
24 James Landlord
25 Henry Parks
26 Phillip Peter
27 Alissa Rogers

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34 Regional Council Coordinator, Eva Patton

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Teleconference - 3/2/2022)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll go ahead and open the meeting. The time now is 9:08 a.m. Today is March 2, 2022. Again, welcome to our meeting this morning. We'll go ahead and do an agency checkup. If you could at least announce that you're with us I'll just go down the line. First on line we have Orutsararmiut Native Council.

MS. LOWERY: Good morning. This is Danielle Lowery with ONC.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: (Indiscernible)
Good morning.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, Quyana, thank you. Next is Native Village of Napaimute.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Native organizations, do we have Association of Village Council Presidents.

MS. JONES: Good morning. Paige Jones is on for AVCP.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, good morning. Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission.

MS. PELTOLA: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. This is Mary Peltola.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, Mary. Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission.

MS. PELTOLA: Mr. Chairman. They're doing their Yukon Salmon Summit.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. So they'll be on tomorrow, okay, thank you. Yukon River Drainage

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1 Fisheries Association.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: U.S. Fish and Wildlife
6 Service.

7

8 MS. CARROLL: Good morning. This is
9 Holly Carroll, Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager
10 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

13

14 MR. MOSES: This is Aaron Moses.
15 Subsistence Specialist for Yukon Delta.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, Aaron.
18 Anyone else.

19

20 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. This is
21 Frank Harris with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
22 Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

25

26 MR. ADERMAN: This is Andy Aderman,
27 Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, Dillingham. Good
28 morning.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

31

32 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill Klein,
33 Regional Subsistence Coordinator out of the Anchorage
34 office. Good morning.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

37

38 MR. TULIK: Good morning. This is
39 Chris Tulik with the Yukon National Wildlife Refuge.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

42

43 MR. BLIHVDE: Hi. This is Boyd
44 Blihovde, the Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta National
45 Wildlife Refuge.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

48

49 MR. NICORI: Hi. My name is Emmitt

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1 Nicori. I'm the newest Team Member for the Refuge as a
2 Refuge Information Technician in the Yukon Delta.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning. Do we
5 have anyone from Bureau of Land Management.

6

7 MR. WALKER: Good morning. This is
8 Walker Gussey out of the Anchorage Field Office.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning. Do we
11 have anyone from Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

12

13 MR. MCDEVITT: This is Chris McDevitt
14 with Subsistence Division in Fairbanks.

15

16 MS. JALLEN: Hi, good morning. This is
17 Deena Jallen with the Alaska Department of Fish and
18 Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries up here in
19 Fairbanks. I'm the Yukon River Summer Season Manager.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

22

23 MS. GLEASON: Good morning. This is
24 Christie Gleason, the Yukon River Fall Season Manager
25 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in
26 Fairbanks.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

29

30 MR. LARSON: Good morning. This is
31 Sean Larson with the Department of Fish and Game.

32

33 MR. RANSBURY: Good morning. This is
34 Shane Ransbury with Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, I didn't
37 get your name.

38

39 MR. RANSBURY: This is Shane Ransbury
40 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I'm the
41 Assistant for the Fall Season under Christie Gleason.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Good morning.

44

45 MR. BRAZIL: Yeah, good morning
46 everybody. My name is Chuck Brazil. I'm the AYK
47 Regional Management Coordinator for the Division of
48 Commercial Fisheries for the Department of Fish and
49 Game.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

2

3 MR. BURCH: Good morning. This is Mark
4 Burch representing also the Department of Fish and Game
5 from the Palmer Office.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning. Is there
8 anyone else that I might have missed that needs to be
9 introduced at this time.

10

11 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning, Mr.
12 Chairman and Council members. This is Greg Risdahl, I
13 am the USDA Forest Service Subsistence Program Leader
14 and InterAgency Staff Committee member.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

17

18 MS. MONCRIEFF: And, hi, good morning,
19 this is Catherine.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning,
22 Catherine.

23

24 MS. PETRIVELLI: Good morning. This is
25 Pat.....

26

27 MS. MONCRIEFF: Good morning.
28 Catherine Moncrieff with the.....

29

30 MS. PETRIVELLI:Petrivelli with
31 BIA.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pat, good morning.

34

35 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Good morning Ray.
36 Alakanuk Tribe.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning. Anyone
39 else I might have.....

40

41 MS. LAVINE: Good morning. This
42 is.....

43

44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, go ahead.

45

46 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
47 This is Robbin LaVine and I'm the Subsistence Policy
48 Coordinator for the Office of Subsistence Management.
49 Welcome to Day 2, yea.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

2

3 MS. KENNER: And, hello, Mr. Chair,
4 this is Pippa Kenner with the Office of Subsistence
5 Management. Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, good morning to
8 you.

9

10 MR. LIND: Good morning, Mr. Chair and
11 Council members. This is Orville Lind, Native Liaison
12 for the Office of Subsistence Management.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

15

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

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

21

22 MR. ROBERTS: Good morning everyone.
23 This is Jason Roberts, Anthropologist with OSM.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

26

27 MR. FOLEY: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
28 Members of the Council. This is Kevin Foley, Fish
29 Biologist, Office of Subsistence Management.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

32

33 MR. PLANK: Good morning. This is Tom
34 Plank, Wildlife Biologist with OSM.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

37

38 MR. LANDLORD: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
39 this is James Landlord, Mountain Village.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome. Good to hear
42 you, James.

43

44 MR. SHEPARD: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
45 This is Stan Shepard, Mountain Village.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, sir.

48

49 MR. PATTERSON: Good morning, Mr. Chair

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1 and members of the Council. This is Dillon Patterson
2 with the National Park Service, Regional Office
3 Subsistence Program.

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning.

6

7 MR. ALEXIE: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
8 This is Wasilly Alexie, Russian Mission.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Welcome aboard,
11 Wasilly. Good morning. Is there any other agencies
12 that I might have missed that need to introduce
13 themselves at this time.

14

15 MR. MASCHMANN: This is Gerald Maschmann
16 with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good morning, Gerald.
19 Well, I think that pretty much -- oh, go ahead, was OSM
20 going to announce themselves.

21

22 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Mr. Chair
23 and members of the Council. This is Eva, Council
24 Coordinator. And at this time I believe we have all
25 our Council members on that will be joining us today
26 except for John Andrew and, again, he did note that he
27 might be calling in just a little late when the tribal
28 office is open, to call from there. So thank you, Mr.
29 Chair and members of the Council.

30

31 And as we noted yesterday we were
32 planning to take up the Yukon River salmon management
33 discussion first this morning. And we have our Federal
34 and State managers online. And then Pippa Kenner was
35 going to introduce the fisheries special action after
36 that for the Council.

37

38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39

40 (Teleconference interference -
41 participants not muted)

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Eva. If
44 there's no one else to introduce themselves at this
45 time we could go ahead and follow through with the
46 agenda. I believe I'll turn it over to Pippa.

47

48 MR. ALSTROM: Mr. Chair, this is
49 Thomas.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thomas, go ahead.

2

3 MR. ALSTROM: Can we entertain maybe
4 the public and tribal comment on non-agenda items
5 before we go to the next item.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, thank you for that
8 reminder. We do hear public testimony every morning on
9 non-agenda items so at this time is there anyone from
10 the public or from tribes that want to comment on non-
11 agenda items at this time.

12

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, I'll go
17 ahead and turn the meeting over to Pippa to go ahead
18 and give her presentation. Thank you.

19

20 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21 This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. I think I might have
22 missed something, are we going to start with the
23 introduction of the special action request, Eva.

24

25 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Pippa. As we
26 had discussed earlier we were planning to provide the
27 discussion of the Yukon salmon management for the
28 Council so they have that latest information to
29 consider for the special action request. So if it
30 works for the Council to hear from our Yukon River in-
31 season managers we could take that up first and then
32 get to the special action request.

33

34 Quyana.

35

36 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
37 Through the Chair, thank you, Eva. Yeah, I'm prepared
38 any time, just making sure.

39

40 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, I'm happy to jump
41 in if that helps.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, please do, thank
44 you.

45

46 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, this is Holly
47 Carroll. Mr. Chair, thanks very much. I do have a
48 prepared brief update that I've been giving to all the
49 RACs. My name is Holly Carroll. I work for Fish and
50

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1 Wildlife Service out of the Fairbanks office but I am
2 based in Anchorage. I'm the Federal subsistence
3 manager for the Yukon River. And I'll focus this brief
4 update on the upcoming season because you were provided
5 updates of last season at the fall meeting.

6
7 The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has
8 a core mission to consult with Federal tribes and our
9 Yukon team has been working to expand and improve this
10 government to government consultation process. So in
11 the fall we held a series of formal tribal consultation
12 meetings with Yukon River tribes. And these
13 consultations were seeking feedback on how tribes would
14 like to be consulted in the future and we really
15 appreciated the direct communication our team had with
16 the tribal members to have meaningful participation in
17 decisionmaking. We recognize the importance of
18 coordination, consultation, and followup between the
19 Service's subsistence management team and the
20 Federally-recognized tribes living along the Yukon
21 River. And we look forward to creating and maintaining
22 effective working relationships.

23
24 To that end, we are also offering
25 formal tribal consultation meetings again this spring.
26 Right now we are looking at the week of April 18th and
27 we'll be sending out an email to all of the tribal
28 governments and Native Corporations offering
29 teleconferences again and we encourage your tribal
30 leaders or their designees to participate in these
31 meetings. So look for an email about that if you are a
32 tribal government.

33
34 Our formal salmon outlooks will be
35 published by the Yukon River Joint Technical Committee
36 about the last week of March, and you can find that
37 document on the Yukon River Panel website. But once
38 the outlook is published, the Service will work
39 cooperatively with the Alaska Department of Fish and
40 Game, fishermen and other stakeholders to finalize a
41 pre-season management strategy. And that 2022 outlook
42 and proposed management strategy will also be discussed
43 in-depth at the Yukon River Panel meeting and that's
44 going to be the week of April 4th. It's also going to
45 be discussed at Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission
46 meetings if they have a pre-season meeting again. And
47 we will also discuss that strategy at the Yukon River
48 Drainage Fishermens Association pre-season meeting
49 that's a public meeting March 24th. But in addition to
50

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1 that Yukon households can expect that outlook flier
2 detailing the outlook and management strategy to arrive
3 in their mailbox in late April, or early May.

4
5 So, while we don't have the official
6 outlooks yet, based on the past two seasons and
7 indications from our Bering Sea juvenile trawl survey
8 data, managers are expecting another very poor season
9 for chinook salmon with the run size potentially
10 smaller than what we saw in 2021 and as many of you
11 know that warranted full closures to harvest, that run
12 size.

13
14 Chum salmon forecast may or may not be
15 as accurate as they have been in the past, but based on
16 the last two seasons record low abundance it's likely
17 that fishing for summer chum will also be closed early
18 in the season until a harvestable surplus is projected.
19 But if the runs are as poor as we expect, it could be
20 that fishing restrictions will be like last year with
21 salmon fishing limited or closed even into the fall
22 season.

23
24 And so while this news is incredibly
25 disheartening and upsetting we are trying to make sure
26 that fishermen have the information to prepare for the
27 upcoming season.

28
29 Conserving the fish now, while the runs
30 may be low, will ensure that most of the fish will make
31 it to the spawning grounds and hopefully fishing will
32 improve in future seasons.

33
34 We're hoping that fishermen can plan to
35 harvest other species using 4 inch mesh gillnets, 4
36 inch or smaller, dipnets and possibly manned fishwheels
37 if the opportunity arises this coming season. Manager
38 will be watching the lower Yukon test fishery, Pilot
39 Station sonar, and listening to local fishermen to
40 assess the strength of the incoming salmon runs. If
41 they do come in better than anticipated additional
42 fishing opportunities may be added based on the amount
43 of surplus availability.

44
45 We do want to acknowledge the really
46 serious hardship that the last two seasons have caused
47 Yukon River families and we want to thank fishermen for
48 their compliance during these difficult years and also
49 commend those tribes and communities that are taking
50

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1 steps to provide fishing gear, freezers, come up with
2 creative solutions to compensate for loss of salmon.
3 Fishermen have shown incredible resiliency in adapting
4 to the changing environment and these changing salmon
5 run sizes.

6
7 And we may not be out of the woods yet
8 but we are doing everything we can to study what is
9 contributing to declines in chinook and summer chum,
10 well, in chum salmon in general. We've been partnering
11 with other agencies and scientists to collaborate on
12 marine and freshwater research.

13
14 One of our key areas is the Service's
15 Yukon team has undertaken a focus on studying the
16 disease ichthyophonus. This disease has been around
17 and studied for many years, but the levels of chinook
18 are cyclical and they had dropped quite low in recent
19 decades. However, fishermen in the middle river
20 reported an increase in ichthyophonus in chinook salmon
21 during the 2020 and 2021 seasons and suggested further
22 studies were needed. This motivated Fish and Game and
23 the Service to partner on a long-term study to look at
24 this disease in the lower river and how it compares to
25 the upper river and whether disease severity could be a
26 cause of mortality before fish spawn. The Fish and
27 Game has plans to sample chinook salmon at or near
28 their test fishery project at Pilot Station sonar and
29 Eagle sonar and the Service is going to sample in the
30 middle river at Rampart Rapids and the upper river at
31 Fort Yukon. Now, unfortunately sampling will require
32 that approximately 180 to 200 chinook salmon be
33 sacrificed at these four locations along the river.
34 This is necessary because there's no established
35 methods for detecting the disease, ichthyophonus or
36 measuring the severity in living fish. Some may feel
37 that sacrificing chinook salmon for a study is
38 unacceptable when subsistence fishers are being
39 restricted, all the chinook sampled at these locations
40 will be distributed within the local community. The
41 fish organs from the same fish that will be sampled for
42 ichthyophonus will also contribute to a few other
43 important studies that are going to look at fish
44 health. So one will examine the egg quality, looking
45 for thiamine in the eggs. One will look at heat stress
46 proteins. And another one is going to see if paralytic
47 shellfish toxins are present from the food they eat.

48
49 So the informational fliers on this
50

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1 study have been forwarded to various sampling
2 communities and we're seeking partnerships with the
3 tribes in these villages to distribute the fish
4 equitably. If anyone wants more information about the
5 ichthyophonous project please contact me or Fred West
6 with Fish and Game.

7
8 So, lastly, we know that Covid could
9 still disrupt field operations this summer but at this
10 time, the Service plans on operating our three main
11 projects; the Eastfork Andreafsky River weir, the
12 Gisasa River weir, and the Teedraanjik (ph) River sonar
13 project, formerly called the Chandalar Sonar. And so
14 those three will be operated as well as this
15 ichthyophonous study.

16
17 And I'll leave the update at that and
18 I'll stand by for any questions that anyone has about
19 our fisheries work.

20
21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Holly. Do
22 we have any questions or comments for Holly at this
23 time regarding the report. Thank you.

24
25 MS. CARROLL: And, Mr. Chair, if there
26 are or aren't questions usually I'll see if the Fish
27 and Game managers, Deena Jallen or Christie Gleason
28 want to add anything to the update. I've said a lot
29 here but they have some additions that might be useful
30 too.

31
32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Maybe we could
33 go ahead with that, if there's no questions at this
34 time I could go ahead and ask Deena or Christie to go
35 ahead and give us an update from Fish and Game if
36 there's no one else from Fish and Wildlife to give us
37 an update.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MS. JALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 This is Deena Jallen with the Alaska Department of Fish
43 and Game, the Summer Season Manager and, yeah, Christie
44 and I thank Holly for giving a very thorough report
45 and, yeah, we look forward to working with each other
46 again all season in these very difficult times, both
47 with Fish and Wildlife Service and with all the
48 residents along the Yukon River. This looks like it
49 could be another really tough year coming up for
50

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1 fishermen so just know that you can always reach out to
2 us, you can call us in our offices, you can speak to us
3 during any of the weekly YRDFA teleconferences. Even
4 though we know that people aren't fishing it's still
5 incredibly valuable to hear the observations that
6 people are seeing along the river, both in terms of
7 maybe different conditions, weather conditions, water
8 conditions, different movements of animals. Certainly
9 if you see any fish that have signs of disease or any
10 sort of kind of weird mortality events we definitely
11 find all that information from fishermen and people out
12 on the water extremely useful throughout the season.

13

14 Yeah, thanks, Holly for that very good
15 report.

16

17 MS. GLEASON: And, Mr. Chair, this is
18 Christie Gleason. I can provide a short fall season
19 addition. I just wanted to let fishermen know that
20 we've heard from you that you want to hear what
21 research we're doing and what we know about the decline
22 so far. And so for fall season for this coming summer
23 we're starting a coho salmon radio telemetry project
24 because we want to see where they go in the Yukon River
25 drainage. We're also restarting a Sheenjek River sonar
26 project in the upper Yukon area and so that will help
27 us monitor a spawning area for fall chum that we used
28 to monitor in the past. And we are pursuing funding
29 right now to study the specific roe stress and
30 reproductive growth of fall chum salmon during their
31 time when they spend in the ocean. And two other
32 projects that we're doing in the marine environment to
33 study salmon include continuing our surveys to study
34 juvenile salmon in the Northern Bering Sea and in the
35 southern Bering Sea, and we've been doing these surveys
36 with NOAA and they've occurred for about 20 years. And
37 what we're seeing in these surveys is that there's some
38 slightly warmer waters in recent years and it's kind of
39 changing, a shift in the prey that's available to the
40 juvenile salmon, the prey quality is more poor in
41 recent years. The prey has been smaller and less lipid
42 rich. And so chum salmon, in particular, have been
43 switching over to eating more jellyfish and smaller
44 copepods compared to what they have been in the past.

45

46 The second marine project that we're
47 doing right now is we're collaborating with Japan and
48 Russian and Canada and we're working to study salmon
49 during the wintertime in the North Pacific ocean. And
50

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1 so we have a couple of marine biologists on the water
2 right now, this spring and so we'll be providing some
3 updates on our Facebook pages if you're interested in
4 learning more.

5

6 GABRIEL: I got a question.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is that it for your
9 presentation?

10

11 MR. GLEASON: Yes, sir.

12

13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. I
14 believe I heard someone that wanted to ask a question,
15 go ahead and identify yourself.

16

17 GABRIEL: Gabriel. When we were
18 catching, it probably goes with -- about the salmon, do
19 they change the routes or do they really go back to
20 their spawning grounds or do they really change their
21 route, that is my question. Thank you.

22

23 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, I'm not sure -- Mr.
24 Chair, this is Holly at Fish and Wildlife Service. I
25 didn't quite understand the question. Were you talking
26 about fall chum or which -- can you repeat your
27 question, please, sir.

28

29 GABRIEL: Yeah. Spawning. Do they
30 change their spawning grounds, you know, because when
31 we were kids we were told that they go to the same
32 place or do they really go to the -- go to different
33 routes to spawn. Thank you.

34

35 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, through the Chair,
36 this is Holly Carroll. Each of the salmon species does
37 slightly different things but most of the salmon are
38 going to return to their main spawning grounds where
39 they were born. Some people may believe that they'll
40 go into new streams and look for new places to go but
41 that typically doesn't happen in the kind of numbers
42 that would explain the drop in population size that
43 we've seen recently. So while it may happen a little
44 bit, over long periods of times, for instance they're
45 seeing salmon way up on the North of Alaska where they
46 didn't see those before or, like how we're seeing
47 sockeye in the Yukon River where there wasn't large
48 populations and we're seeing more and more sockeye
49 trickling in. Some of that happens. But it's

50

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1 certainly not to the amount that would explain why our
2 chum runs, for instance, are a tenth of the size that
3 they should be.

4
5 So hopefully that answered your
6 question.

7
8 GABRIEL: Thank you.

9
10 MR. SHEPARD: Mr. Chair, I have a
11 question for Holly, this is Stan.

12
13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Stan go ahead.

14
15 MR. SHEPARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Good morning, Holly. What you had said earlier, this
17 is sort of a pattern that's going on. Can you -- do
18 you have records back when the chum crashed back in the
19 late '70s, early '70s maybe, is that similar to what
20 happened back then that's happening now. That's my
21 question.

22
23 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, through the Chair,
24 hi, Stan. So that's a great question. I actually
25 don't have data that goes back to the '70s. I know that
26 Bonnie Borba or Christie Gleason might for chum salmon.
27 But I do know that we had a similar crash of chum
28 salmon in 2000 and 2001 and maybe you remember it. In
29 that year the chinook salmon were quite low as well and
30 we saw run sizes sort of similar to what we saw this
31 last couple years. So we do know that the chum are
32 cyclical like that. But as far as the -- how small it
33 got in the '70s or that, I'm not sure we had good
34 enough counting projects so we wouldn't have the exact
35 same amount of run size information that we have now
36 because we count the fish at the sonar so I'm not sure,
37 maybe they want to add something about that. But it
38 would make sense that they've had boom and bust cycles
39 like this for hundreds of years because that is the
40 cycle of salmon, at least, specifically for chums.

41
42 (Teleconference interference -
43 participants not muted - echo)

44
45 MR. SHEPARD: Thank you. Followup
46 question. We -- there should be records of a lot of
47 meetings, proposals geared towards the Area M, False
48 Pass area overharvesting of the salmon, chum salmon,
49 geared for the Kuskokwim and the Yukon and so I imagine
50

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1 somebody should remember that information.

2

3 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair. Yeah,
4 I -- again, really I haven't seen data from the '70s or
5 those kind of reports. I know that Fish and Game does
6 monitor the harvest and the fisheries in Area M and so
7 maybe there's someone at the Department that could look
8 into those older reports. But it's certainly something
9 that not many of us would have handy or available to
10 us, we would have to look for that, I'm pretty sure, so
11 I certainly can't answer that at this time.

12

13 MR. SHEPARD: Thank you, very much,
14 Holly.

15

16 MR. NICORI: Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

19

20 MR. NICORI: This is Martin Nicori in
21 Kwethluk Incorporated. My question is is OSM or the
22 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, when you're talking
23 about all these restrictions and the upcoming
24 restrictions possible in-river, no mention of in the
25 Bering Sea. Last year over half a million chums were
26 taken in bycatch and this year there's no restriction
27 again on bycatch, what does your have to say about or
28 is it a no-no subject?

29

30 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this
31 is Holly Carroll, I can take a stab at that. I
32 definitely don't think it's a no-no subject, it's a
33 subject that's being brought up by a lot of concerned
34 fishermen at every meeting that I've been to. I do
35 think that there is a push now for people to push for
36 some chum bycatch limits. There are some bycatch
37 limits for chinook and I believe this very Council was
38 discussing bycatch limits. These kinds of comments and
39 suggestions to improvethat, those are best made
40 through the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
41 process. That process, they have meetings every few
42 months and, in fact, they're having a meeting this
43 coming June and they'll accept public testimony and
44 they'll have discussion on salmon bycatch. And so, you
45 know, I think you're hitting the nail on the head that
46 there's this fishery way out there outside of our in-
47 river jurisdiction and there's still some interception
48 of fish that's going on. So those other forums are
49 where you want to make those changes. There's not much
50

0159

1 us, as the in-river managers can do about that fishery
2 out there, but certainly this very Council is working
3 on a letter to address, I believe, chum bycatch.

4

5 (Teleconference interference -
6 participants not muted - echo)

7 1

8 MS. CARROLL: So, no, I think it's
9 definitely a good topic to keep working on so thanks
10 for bringing that up.

11

12 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair and members of
13 the Council if I may interject here. Sorry to
14 interrupt. If everybody could take a look at your
15 phones and make sure you're on mute, there's a big echo
16 in the background and often that happens when we've got
17 a number of phones that are not muted. So everybody
18 please just take a look and if you were speaking
19 recently check your phone and hit star, six to mute or
20 your mute button.

21

22 REPORTER: Thank you.

23

24 MS. PATTON: And hopefully that'll help
25 us with the echo.

26

27 Guyana.

28

29 GABRIEL: Gabriel, I got a question.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Gabriel, go ahead.

32

33 GABRIEL: Okay, on that bycatch,
34 there's a new -- they're implementing a new testing
35 trawling light technology for the trawlings and it's --
36 there's -- it's proven to reducing unwanted bycatch.
37 Is that all in the bycatch fishery boats or is it just
38 on one for reducing bycatch, and it only says for
39 halibut and sablefish, it doesn't even say salmon, you
40 know, like chum or king, or are you guys just planning
41 on just the halibut or sablefish, or is that going to
42 be recommended in another meeting, more information.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this
47 is Holly Carroll again. I think you've got some great
48 questions there, Gabriel, but I think they'd be better
49 for someone from NOAA like maybe Diana Stram or someone

50

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1 who works with the North Pacific Fisheries Management
2 Council or the fisheries out there in the Bering Sea.
3 You know my area of expertise and same with the Fish
4 and Game managers here is we're focused on Yukon in-
5 river so I really know nothing about those questions
6 you're asking and so maybe those could be directed at
7 -- for one of those other, when we're talking about
8 bycatch with those experts on the line.

9

10 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair, this is Eva.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Eva, go ahead. Eva, go
13 ahead.

14

15 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
16 just wanted to let the public know that we have the
17 Bering Sea reports on the agenda for tomorrow morning.
18 So we'll have the North Pacific Fisheries Management
19 Council Staff on starting tomorrow morning.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Eva, for
24 that reminder. If you could keep your questions to in-
25 river, please do, this is the salmon report that Deena
26 and Christie and Holly are giving, if you could keep
27 your questions to in-river I think that would be
28 helpful in trying to find some answers for our people
29 that are still having a hardship trying to get fish for
30 their freezer or even to eat. So if you could, like
31 Eva said, we'll be hearing from Diana Stram, I believe
32 tomorrow with North Pacific Fisheries Management
33 Council, and we'll also hear from other agencies that
34 relates to High Sea fishing, also the juvenile salmon
35 report that will be coming up. So if you could keep
36 your questions to in-river, the outlook for this coming
37 season, I think we could refer those questions to that.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 GABRIEL: Thank you, Ray.

42

43 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chair, may I add a
44 comment and a couple questions. This is Norma.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Norma.

47

48 MS. EVAN: I was wondering in the ocean
49 we have, you know, Fukushima still going, and warming

50

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1 areas, would that affect food chains, like the
2 phytoplankton that the salmon eat since they are eating
3 larger species on the food chain? Also, visually, this
4 summer, I rarely seen any salmon fry and conversing
5 with co-workers they did see methane bubbles in our
6 area when they were picking berries. And the last
7 comment, we did not get any eel this October, November
8 and this is our, I think, fourth year we did not get
9 them. Also Pilot Station, I don't think they got them.
10 And thank you for hearing my comments.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma.

13

14 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, through the Chair,
15 this is Holly Carroll. Norma, I really appreciate
16 hearing those observations about the salmon fry and
17 also about the lamprey or the eels. As far as your
18 questions about what the fish are eating in the ocean,
19 you know, they have found that that's changing and I
20 think when you guys get the Northern Bering Sea report
21 from Dr. Jim Murphy I think you're going to hear a
22 little bit more about that and he's a great one to ask
23 about the changes in their diet so I'll defer to that
24 conversation.

25

26 (Teleconference interference -
27 participants not muted - echo)

28

29 MS. EVAN: Thank you, Holly.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any more
32 questions or comments for Deena, Christie or Holly at
33 this time regarding any in-river.....

34

35 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY:season outlook

38 or.....

39

40 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Mr. Phillip, go ahead.

43

44 MR. PETER: I got a question concerning
45 about chinook. My first question will be maybe all the
46 rivers going up to the spawning area, you know, my
47 question, like in Kuskokwim we've been expecting first
48 run chinook and does Yukon have the same as Kuskokwim,
49 expecting first run of chinook, you know, right after
50

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1 melts we -- we've been expecting the first run chinook.
2 And, you know, and my other concern on your report,
3 restrictions in the river. We change our gear in
4 Kuskokwim for setnetting 6 inch. Last year when I
5 heard in fall meeting they were using whitefish net for
6 setnetting in Yukon. They need to change that gear too
7 for subsistence for consumption. That's my concern,
8 you know. It's really hard for us, you know, when we
9 expecting a first run, maybe it's going to be when we
10 first started in Kuskokwim we used that and when we
11 setnetting with 6 inch -- I mean whitefish net, we set
12 it up and then we watch it. If we left that net, we're
13 killing, we're killing the chinook. That's what we do.
14 Just watch the net. My question will be do they have a
15 first run in the Yukon.

16

17 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18

19 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, through the Chair,
20 this is Holly Carroll, Fish and Wildlife Service.
21 Thanks very much for those comments and observations.

22

23 I think I know what you mean about the
24 first run on the Kuskokwim and we have a similar thing
25 on the Yukon. We do have different stocks because
26 they're going a little bit further so they're so our
27 first run, I think as we would call it, is more of the
28 Canadian run, those fish that are going the furthest,
29 they're going to go all the way to Canada. Those come
30 in pretty early, they come in in the first two or three
31 pulses and they're more strong at the front, and, yes,
32 that part of our run has been quite weak these last few
33 years, maybe that's similar to the Kuskokwim.

34

35 And I hear your comments about using
36 the whitefish nets, the setnets, you know, we have also
37 had to restrict the fishing on the Yukon. We've been
38 restricting to 6 inch sometimes so that people could
39 get chum salmon but could get less chinook. But last
40 year, of course, it was closed to salmon nets and so
41 people only had whitefish nets and I think what I'm
42 hearing you say is that you can still kill chinook in
43 those nets and so you need to watch those nets, you
44 know. And I do think people are doing that. I think
45 they're checking their nets, they're moving them if
46 they need to. But on the Yukon it's really important
47 that if we have to close for salmon fishing, we,
48 managers, think it's really important to let people at
49 least use those whitefish nets to get those other
50

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1 species. There's so many sheefish, humpback whitefish,
2 broad whitefish, there's ciscos, there's burbot, we
3 want people to have opportunity to other fish so we're
4 going to try to continue to allow that, it's super
5 important to us.

6

7 But thank you very much for all those
8 comments.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any more
11 comments or questions for Holly, Deena or Christie at
12 this time regarding in-season outlook for chinook/chum.

13

14 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, Alissa Rogers.

15

16 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

17

18 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
19 have a couple questions for the Yukon Team. And the
20 first question is how is the environment in the
21 spawning grounds with all the mining, is that affecting
22 any of our spawning or known to give any contributions
23 to our survive -- what am I trying to say -- is the
24 mining affecting our fish?

25

26 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this
27 is Holly. Hi Alissa. I think I understand exactly what
28 you're trying to say. You know we don't -- typically
29 we have people who work with habitat division or stuff
30 like that, but in general, you know, when we've
31 consulted with those experts and I've done it here at
32 Fish and Wildlife Service and I know the State Fish and
33 Game Team has done this as well, we don't seem to have
34 the same amount of concern about mining because there
35 aren't any major spawning streams that have mines on
36 them. I know in Canada there is mining and chinook are
37 spawning in very many places within Canada but they
38 really do have a lot of good escapement projects where
39 we can kind of watch those escapements over time and I
40 don't think that any of us biologists have heard of any
41 like major concerns on the quality of the spawning
42 habitat as far as one of the reasons we might be seeing
43 a change for chinook.

44

45 I know with fall chum we've heard from
46 local knowledge that up in the Fishing Branch River up
47 near Old Crow, that they've seen a natural change in
48 the type of upwelling, the type of -- the water quality
49 up there and that may be affecting the fall chum that
50

0164

1 go to that system. But, again, that's -- I've never
2 heard that that's linked to anything -- or any kind of
3 any mining or anything like that.

4

5 So hopefully that answers your
6 question.

7

8 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Holly. Through
9 the Chair. For my next question, do we have any known
10 changes in the pH or chemical levels in our water that
11 could be contributing to determining salmon from
12 returning into the Yukon River?

13

14 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this
15 is Holly again. I mean maybe someone from Fish and Game
16 could jump in if they have anything. But, you know,
17 again, it's typically habitat staff that will monitor
18 streams like that. We typically aren't taking those
19 kind of measurements. But one study we are going to do
20 is looking at the thiamine levels in salmon eggs and
21 there's issues with salmon where if their thiamine
22 levels are low then those eggs don't survive well. So
23 that's not exactly answering your question because it's
24 not about the pH of the water but it is about something
25 that's affecting the salmon survival based on that
26 element in their eggs, that thiamine. So I believe Dr.
27 Howard is going to be studying that and that's going to
28 be really important research.

29

30 (Teleconference interference -
31 participants not muted - echo)

32

33 MS. CARROLL: But as far as the water
34 itself, I don't think through any of the normal water
35 monitoring we've seen any kind of drastic changes,
36 certainly I haven't heard of any through any of our
37 normal like habitat research that's going on. Not in
38 the mainstem Yukon.

39

40 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Holly. Through
41 the Chair. For my next question, for this upcoming, as
42 we know it's not going to be another great year for
43 fishing, are your priorities going to be subsistence
44 fishing before commercial fishing and possibly not even
45 having any commercial fishing to allow for subsistence
46 users to have the first priority?

47

48 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this
49 is Holly Carroll again. That's a really good question.

50

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1 So the answer is always yes, that subsistence users
2 always have the priority. So if we have a limited
3 harvestable surplus on let's say, for instance, chinook
4 salmon, the first priority for fishing goes to the
5 subsistence users. And even then we have had to
6 restrict that fishing because there's' been so few
7 fish, right. So we cannot have commercial fishing when
8 we've been limiting subsistence use.

9

10 When it comes to chum salmon, what's
11 interesting with that is usually when the chums are not
12 crashing, we -- we will always try to allow as much
13 harvest opportunity on chums as we can and, in fact,
14 normally for fall chum they're not restricted at all,
15 subsistence fishing is not restricted at all. But what
16 you will see is there will also be simultaneous
17 commercial fishing on chum salmon in the lower river.
18 And the only times that we do that is when we have a
19 projected fish run that says we're not going to limit
20 subsistence fishing and so we can go ahead and
21 commercial fish.

22

23 They're very different situations for
24 large chum runs than they are, for instance, for these
25 chinook runs. So, no, there would not be any
26 commercial fishing on the chinook run, there hasn't
27 been since 2010.

28

29 For the summer chum run, that chum run
30 would have to be a certain size and we would have to be
31 very sure of that projection to allow any commercial
32 fishing and we'd have to not limit the summer chum
33 subsistence harvest on that species.

34

35 So to answer your question with the
36 upcoming season, nearly everything is projected to be
37 closed for subsistence fishing even because there's not
38 a harvestable surplus. So absolutely there would not
39 be any commercial fishing on the stocks.

40

41 And the other thing we're seeing is
42 that the chum and the coho stocks are low across the
43 entire Yukon drainage, it's not just one stream or
44 area. They've been low for awhile now so that's, you
45 know, that's just something that we're pretty aware
46 that these are depressed stocks.

47

48 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. And through
49 the Chair, my last question. Has there been any

50

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1 studies in regards to the migrating fish or the fish
2 that are up in Hooper Bay. They haven't had any salmon
3 for the past couple years and are only relying on what
4 little pink salmon they get in Hooper Bay. I know it's
5 been such a hardship for them out there to actually get
6 any salmon at all especially if they don't have the
7 ability to go out by boat and we just beach -- we walk
8 beach seines to catch fish which is typically pink
9 salmon. Are there any -- do you guys have anything,
10 any studies or are there any -- what would you like me
11 to tell people who call me about the fish -- the salmon
12 fishing in Hooper Bay?

13

14 (Teleconference interference -
15 participants not muted - echo)

16

17 MS. CARROLL: Thanks for that question.
18 So that's an interesting one and I -- with Hooper Bay
19 or the coastal communities, you know, we are assuming
20 that the salmon that are going to pass through the
21 mouths out there are going to be headed to the Yukon
22 River and so we have been managing the coastal
23 communities similar to the river and so that means if
24 we've been restricting salmon fishing in the river
25 we're also restricting it on the coast. And one of the
26 reasons for that is that even though there could be
27 some fish heading to Norton Sound or coming -- going to
28 the Kusko, because those stocks have been so depressed
29 and we know that all the stocks are incredibly low we
30 can't really allow any fishing on the coast because
31 they could be intercepting the fish that are going to
32 come into the Yukon, and the whole Yukon drainage, the
33 runs are low requiring those restrictions.

34

35 So while the coastal communities have
36 not been restricted as much as the other communities in
37 the past, that's because the runs were never so poor
38 that it warranted zero harvest. And so unfortunately
39 this last summer the chinook and the chum runs
40 warranted zero harvest. And so what I'm telling people
41 on the coast is that, you know, while it's unfortunate
42 that you're having to not fish for salmon and that
43 you're having a hard time getting any salmon, I think
44 it's safe to say that every single community along the
45 Yukon would agree they felt the same, including some
46 drainages like the Koyukuk drainage, the Innoko
47 drainage, the Tanana drainage where sometimes we've --
48 we've been able to allow some fishing in there and even
49 all those drainages were closed as well.

50

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1 So I think we're just in an incredibly
2 severe situation with all three stocks being so
3 depressed that we can't allow any fishing. And so
4 unfortunately we're kind of all in that same boat,
5 whether we're on the coast or whether we're in the
6 river, or whether we're up an escapement drainage,
7 we're all in the same boat there. And that's what I
8 would tell them.

9
10 But, again, if people can get those 4
11 inch gear they can be fishing for non-salmon. They may
12 catch some pinks in that gear and they can keep those.
13 I know the Department of Fish and Game and myself, we
14 are working to figure out if there's ways that we can
15 allow opportunity for pink salmon, sometimes the
16 regulations can be kind of a limiting factor for us in
17 what we can and can't allow when we're trying to
18 protect all these other salmon but we're definitely
19 going to try to get creative. And last year we did
20 allow some hook and line opportunity, some dipnet
21 opportunity on pinks and other salmon, like sockeye,
22 even though they're rare. So we're going to keep
23 trying to wrack our brains to come up with creative
24 solutions to allow people to find these other fish but
25 certainly they should be going after non-salmon if they
26 can.

27
28 MS. ROGERS: Thank you. Through the
29 Chair. Just following up on what you just mentioned
30 about the regulations and not being able to help in the
31 situations for allowing for other fishing, what
32 specific regulations are you talking to about that
33 where we can come in and assist and put a proposal in
34 to remove or add language into the regulations that
35 will allow you to give opportunities for harvesting
36 subsistence food?

37
38 MS. CARROLL: That's an awesome
39 question. I'm going to defer to Christie and Deena
40 because I know that there is a State of Alaska Board
41 cycle coming up, there's also a Federal Subsistence
42 Board cycle coming up so it is a good time to be
43 thinking about proposals. We can offer -- from our
44 perspective as managers, we can offer proposal changes
45 that quote/unquote cleanup regulations or allow us more
46 flexibility. So I'll see if Christie has a better
47 answer than me for that on, like, what limits us in
48 fishing for pinks, for instance. I know it has to do
49 with our management plan so I'll just pass it off and
50

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1 see if those guys have something better to add.

2

3

4 MS. GLEASON: Yeah, hi, this is
5 Christie with Fish and Game and I'm the Yukon Fall
6 Season Manager. So I'm looking at the fall chum and
7 the coho runs and we also have a run of pink salmon
8 that occurs in the first half of our fall season. And
9 Alissa we opened up every gear that we could this year
10 to allow harvest of pink salmon with the dipnets and
11 hook and line while requiring the release of chum
12 salmon and king salmon. I mean I don't have any other
13 suggestions on what to open. We did allow for the 4
14 inch or smaller mesh knowing that people are targeting
15 non-salmon but the pink salmon swim really near shore
16 and so that's another opportunity for people to catch
17 salmon with a gear. But what we run into with these
18 salmon runs is we can't allow gillnets that are larger
19 than 4 inch nets for pink salmon because of our concern
20 with chum salmon and coho salmon. And unfortunately a
21 lot of people do not have 4 inch or smaller mesh
22 gillnet and so that's why, as managers, we were trying
23 to open up hook and line, we were trying to open up
24 dipnets and they were calling the Emmonak office and
25 talking to us and saying we don't have a 4 inch gillnet
26 but we do have a dipnet, can you open it, and we did.

26

27

28 And so I guess one of the suggestions I
29 have for all the communities on the Yukon River is try
30 to work with your tribes to see if there's any funding
31 sources available to help people get the 4 inch or
32 smaller mesh gillnets because that's the gear that we
33 can allow 24 hours a day, seven days a week because we
34 can't go larger mesh size than that because otherwise
35 we're going to be hurting the salmon that we have a
36 concern for.

36

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MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
That's all I have.

MR. ALEXIE: Mr. Chair, if I can
comment, this is Wasilly.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Wasilly, go ahead.

MR. ALEXIE: Yeah, talking about other
communities not getting any 4 inch net, there's a --
corporation has some grants going out to any individual
or organizations or communities, I'm pretty sure they
can get some net supplies, fishing supplies out of

0169

1 that. I think it's up to 5,000 for individuals and
2 10,000 for organizations.

3

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any
6 questions or comments at this time for Holly, Christie
7 or Deena regarding in-season outlook.

8

9

10 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chair, this is Norma, I
11 have a comment.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. I do have
some questions I'd like to bring up too. Thank you for
your updates on the outlook for upcoming, our salmon
season and thank you about your concerns about return
of chinook and chum salmon to the Yukon.

I know we've been dealing with this for
a long time and I'm very, very -- I'd like to, you
know, see more coordination between the in-season
managers that have commercial fishing such as False
Pass and Area M as Mr. Stan Shepard mentioned back in
the '80s, that was the same situation that we dealt
with when we didn't see any returns of that chinook to
the Yukon and elsewhere too as a result of the fish
that are bound for Yukon, Kuskokwim and the Seward
Peninsula. And as I mentioned, coordinating with Area
M to get data on the fish that they're catching to see,
you know, where, if any of those fish are matching the
data that we have on the Yukon because I know Yukon
Fish and Game biologists have been taking a lot of
samples from year to year. We have a long history of
that data already on the Yukon and it's, you know,
someone should know about that, you know, going back to
the '80s, mid-80s, early-80s about that situation that
we dealt with and it seems like we're dealing with the
same situation with the chum because, you know, a

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1 million fish can't disappear overnight so definitely
2 something's going on. And it may be intercept, that's
3 the reason why we ask that Fish and Game coordinate
4 with other biologists to see exactly where those fish
5 may be going to to spawn. And if that's the case,
6 would that trigger a pause in fishing to, you know, to
7 try and rebuild our stocks on the Yukon, or how are you
8 guys going to coordinate.

9
10 MS. CARROLL: Thanks very much, Mr.
11 Chair. This is Holly Carroll with Fish and Wildlife
12 Service. You're bringing up a great point. I mean
13 you're bringing up coordination between Fish and
14 Wildlife Service and the managers but you're also
15 talking about data needs, you know, we need to know
16 what is being intercepted, for instance, in Area M and
17 my understanding is that -- so that fishery is run by
18 -- mostly by Fish and Game and they have not been doing
19 genetic -- regular genetic sampling of those
20 intercepted fish. And, yes, they did it awhile back, I
21 think it was in '09, the WASSIP study. And so, you
22 know, one of the things that you might consider is
23 that, because that's a State-managed fishery, if you
24 want something specific, like you want sampling done
25 there, or you want the State to do something, you can
26 submit a Board of Fishery proposal, those are due by
27 April 11th. This is the year for submitting proposals,
28 at least, for the Yukon, Arctic, Yukon, Kuskokwim, I'm
29 not sure if that area is also included, but, you know,
30 it sounds like what you're asking for is for the State
31 to take some data there. And so I don't have
32 jurisdiction over any of that in my fishery, per se.
33 But, yes, if we could get some genetic information on
34 where those fish that are being intercepted are headed
35 then we would know more about if they're headed to the
36 Yukon or where they're going. And then you're asking
37 about are there caps, or are there limits to how many
38 they can catch of those species. And, again, if you
39 were going to suggest those kind of caps, or changing
40 those, I believe you would do that through the state of
41 Alaska, through their management process, through their
42 State regulatory process, that's what would possibly
43 needed. I may not be getting that exactly right but
44 that's kind of what you're talking about if you want a
45 cap developed, or some sort of interception amount.
46 But I do think that we would need more genetic data
47 first to know where those fish are headed because if
48 all the fish are Japanese, you know, hatchery fish,
49 then do you still want a cap in that fishery or not you
50

0171

1 know what I'm saying. So I think there's work to be
2 done there.

3

4 Gosh, now I'm rambling.

5

6 I guess I'll leave it there and see if
7 anybody wants to add anything.

8

9 (Teleconference interference -
10 participants not muted - echo)

11

12 MS. CARROLL: But if you want to talk
13 about changing a harvest limit or something, that is a
14 Board of Fishery process so you might consider a
15 proposal. It's not something the managers are going to
16 be able to just work together and bang out. We don't
17 manage that fishery so we can't coordinate with that
18 manager and tell them what they should do.
19 Unfortunately that's not how it works so.

20

21 (Teleconference interference -
22 participants not muted - echo)

23

24 MR. BRAZIL: Hi, this is Chuck Brazil.
25 I can clarify a little bit of what Holly was just
26 responding to as the AYK Regional Management
27 Coordinator. The South Peninsula fishery is outside of
28 our region, it's within the Westward region, and the
29 call for proposal, as Holly mentioned, is through April
30 11th and anyone can submit a proposal for fisheries
31 even outside of the area where you live if you feel
32 they may have an impact on your fishery. Area M is a
33 mixed stock fishery and there are ongoing discussions
34 within the Department right now to look into a sampling
35 program within that fishery. And that's about all I
36 can, you know, state at this time with respect to the
37 Area M fishery.

38

39 So if you guys do have those concerns
40 about the fishery, feel free and welcome to submit a
41 proposal to the Board of Fish to be addressed at the
42 upcoming Area M meeting, the Westward region meeting.

43

44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted - echo)

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.

48

49 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair, this is Eva.

50

0172

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Eva, go ahead.

2

3 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
4 members of the Council. So the Council does actually
5 have a draft letter and proposal to submit to Board of
6 Fish. At the fall meeting the Council had.....

7

8 (Teleconference interference -
9 participants not muted)

10

11 MS. PATTON:voted to submit that
12 proposal requesting what you have just stated here,
13 again, that there be a limit on the bycatch and that
14 Area M commercial fishery, management tools in place
15 to.....

16

17 (Teleconference interference -
18 participants not muted)

19

20 MS. PATTON:if that fishery run,
21 subsistence in Western Alaska is restricted and also
22 requesting the genetics testing for those salmon
23 stocks, to identify those salmon stocks. So the
24 Council does already have that proposal in the works
25 and it will be submitted after this meeting in time for
26 that April 11th deadline.

27

28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Eva, for
31 that update. Maybe for Deena or Christie, based on your
32 information that you've been receiving, I know every
33 four years or five years fish return to the Yukon to
34 spawn, what would be the outlook for both chinook and
35 chums returning to the Yukon.....

36

37 (Teleconference interference -
38 participants not muted)

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY:(indiscernible)
41 fish be returning.

42

43 REPORTER: Excuse me, before you answer
44 that, hang on. Could everybody take a second and check
45 your phone because I really didn't hear the end of what
46 Ray was saying. So somebody's unmuted and probably
47 working, could you please check your phone, star, six
48 or mute.

49

50

0173

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Tina.

4

5 REPORTER: Yep.

6

7 (Pause)

8

9 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I don't know if Deena
10 or Christie heard my question. I was asking based on
11 your data that you received on genetics for both
12 chinook and chum, I know the chum and salmon return
13 certain years. I know for chum they return every four
14 years and maybe for chinook every five or six years.
15 Based on that, what would be the outlook returns based
16 on what you received for those stocks that are supposed
17 to be returning this year.

18

19 MS. JALLEN: Hi, Mr. Chair, this is
20 Deena Jallen with the Alaska Department of Fish and
21 Game. My apologies, I did miss some of that question
22 due to background noise and then getting myself off
23 mute. I think if I understood your question, you were
24 asking what we would expect the runs to be like based
25 on genetics. That'd be something I'd have to talk to
26 our research biologists.

27

28 I think for chum salmon, looking back
29 at the parent years, we had quite good escapements in
30 the parent years for the chum salmon runs that we're
31 seeing so we met escapement goals, we had big runs
32 those years. So, you know, we definitely expected more
33 chum to come back just kind of based on run size. We
34 don't have really fine resolution in the genetics for
35 chum.

36

37 For chinook salmon, we do take genetics
38 and so we get an estimate of the percent of Canadian
39 origin chinook salmon that are coming back and then we
40 also have the Eagle sonar project that has the
41 escapement estimates for that portion of the run.

42

43 Yeah, I think I'll wait for a followup
44 just to see if I answered your question or if there is
45 a different component of it.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Do we
48 have any more questions or comments at this time
49 regarding in-season outlook for this coming summer for
50

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1 either Holly, Deena or Christie.

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MR. SHEPARD: Mr. Chair, this is Stan Shepard. I have a question for either Holly or.....

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Stan.

MR. SHEPARD: Yes, in regards to restricting the mesh size for subsistence, at fish camp, I hear over the VHF radio locals at fish camp and when the announcement come on about the restricting the mesh size down to 4 inch from 6 inch, and right after that the regulations continue reading on up the river like District 1, District 2, District 3, 4, 4B, 4A and then Innoko River, we're restricted down to 4 inch and Innoko River is still 7.5 inch or smaller. Okay. We all know or you guys got the general idea of Innoko River the size of Andraefsky drainage or bigger, we -- we're not allowed to set any kind of salmon net inside Andraefsky River and down here the lower river, we have about three or four major streams, drainages, that the coastal villages plus us, sometimes Pitka's Point, St. Mary's and Pilot come down to do their falltime and springtime whitefish hunt -- when the restrictions come in they're having to work extra, extra harder, you know, we're so used to these pretty narrow 5.5 to 6 pound whitefish or sheefish, when we're restricted down to 4 inch, they're what, under a pound, and we have to -- for instance, the 5 inch would put away maybe three or four, five buckets for an example. And then to make up for those five buckets of whitefish or sheefish for dry fish, the 4 inch mesh, you have to put at least put in there 20 to make up the equivalent of that and that's cost in fuel, more food from the grocery store, more days at camp, why would the Department restrict these streams. They don't have no information of salmon swimming up these rivers. For instance, I'll name off three that I know. You have the Five Finger Lake, they call that (In Yup'ik), we have that Borderline River that goes up to the hill -- they call that (In Yup'ik), that's both on the north side of the Yukon River. And the one I'm more -- I have more knowledge about this, inside Thirtymile, is called (In Yup'ik) Slough. We all know -- you know, for instance -- I know for sure you guys the difference of the quality of salmon, towards the fall they get mushy and turn color, ready to spawn, right. For the whitefish and sheefish, in the spring and in the fall their meat are more tender than during the summer months of June,

0175

1 July, they're kind of mushy.

2

3

4 So looking at that, I would like
5 Department -- you could go ahead and restrict to 4 inch
6 on the mainstem of the Yukon River but think about the
7 harvest of subsistence, trying to supplement the
8 salmon, try to increase their whitefish harvest or
9 sheefish or burbot. If there's a way not to restrict
10 those, at least these three main rivers I mentioned,
11 because you have Kotlik, Emmo, Alakanuk, Nunam, go up
12 to (In Yup'ik) that river. And sometimes they come up
13 to (In Yup'ik) and setnet. So what do we have to do to
14 address this problem of putting in a 4 inch way inside
15 the stream where salmon never swim, maybe cohos in the
16 late, late fall. For instance, later part of -- middle
17 part of November when the trail got safe enough, the
18 ice got thick enough for me to go setnet back here
19 under ice, ice was about four or five inches thick, I
20 set my whitefish where I historically set it every year
21 to get whitefish. I got about 40, I was happy. But
22 what really shocked me was I started to catch more coho
23 so that -- I -- at this point in time the way that the
24 salmon are, the cohos, I don't really have use for them
25 so I had to pull my net out and they're in that stage
26 where they're ready to spawn. Middle part of November.
27 Cohos coming in under the ice.

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30 So if we could lighten up the hardship
31 down here they're -- 4 inch is okay on the Yukon River
32 but not these -- not these main three drainages I
33 mentioned.

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33 Thank you, very much.

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35 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this
36 is Holly Carroll. tan, I thank you so much for these
37 comments. I think you've got some good ideas, I
38 definitely want some followup questions and maybe it
39 would be worth having you call us to talk about this
40 issue because it sounds like what you're talking about
41 is -- maybe we could reduce the restrictions once it's
42 under the ice fishing, not so much during the summer
43 months. You're saying that the bigger nets would be
44 better for getting these other species once there's
45 fishable ice and you can fish under the ice. And maybe
46 there is a way that we could relax some of the 4 inch
47 restrictions long after the salmon have passed through.

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49 (Teleconference interference -

0176

1 participants not muted)

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4 MS. CARROLL: I know that for some main
5 tributaries we did protect the fall chum because they
6 continued spawning way into December in the main rivers
7 but not so much these tiny sloughs. I think we're going
8 to have a hard time figuring out throughout the
9 drainage what are all the little sloughs that have no
10 salmon in them and which ones do. But that's not a
11 reason not to explore it, that's for sure. So maybe
12 you could give the managers a call and we could discuss
13 what options we have for relaxing some of these 4 inch
14 later in the season for the winter fishing for these
15 species. But during the summer, I think, we're going
16 to have a hard time -- because like you say, for
17 instance you mentioned the Innoko, we haven't allowed
18 7.5 inch gillnets in the Innoko once we went to these
19 full closures, that's what I was saying the Koyukuk,
20 the Innoko, some of these other drainages they were
21 restricted right down to 4 inch as well this past
22 season. So we're going to have to figure out what that
23 looks like because there are salmon that go up and
24 spawn in each of those main rivers. We got to protect
25 them, we can't just open it up to 7.5 or people will
26 just fish in the spawning streams which wouldn't be
27 good. So I like your ideas but I certainly have a lot
28 more questions and I bet the other managers do too so
29 maybe you should call us or maybe we can call you and
30 set up a meeting to chat about your ideas.

30

31 MR. SHEPARD: Through the Chair. Thank
32 you, very much, Holly. It's -- there's no information,
33 no data stating that salmon.....

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hello, Stan, are you
36 still there?

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, we might have
41 dropped him.

42

43 MR. ALEXIE: Mr. Chair, this is
44 Wasilly. Can I do that part of what Stan was talking
45 about too.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Wasilly.

48

49 MR. ALEXIE: Yeah, what he was

50

0177

1 mentioning about, too, we have the same problem here
2 but I live in Russian Mission. I called Fish and Game
3 last summer about restricting the non-salmon
4 tributaries, like we have four rivers on the south side
5 but there's no history of salmon going up those rivers
6 to spawn, and still they restrict us to 4 inch on those
7 rivers. I brought that up last fall, or last summer,
8 but what they told me was they still had to restrict
9 those. If there's a way that they can lift the
10 restriction on those non-salmon tributaries for
11 allowing us to get whitefish and sheefish for the
12 summer or fall season, I think that would be a good
13 thing that they should look into. I'm pretty sure
14 every village has a stream that they know of and
15 there's no record of any salmon entering or spawning in
16 those streams, yet there's still closures for those.

17
18 Another one is restricting the -- or
19 fishing right after the ice clears out, you know,
20 people try to go out and get as much sheefish as they
21 could because that's the first run that comes in after
22 the ice goes out. We probably have maybe a week or a
23 couple days before they restrict the whole Yukon, or
24 shut the Yukon down.

25
26 Thank you.

27
28 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: I'm sorry, who was
29 just speaking.

30
31 MR. ALEXIE: This is Wasilly from
32 Russian Mission.

33
34 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Thank you so much.

35
36 MR. ALEXIE: Anybody out there or was I
37 talking to myself.

38
39 REPORTER: I can hear you.

40
41 MS. CARROLL: Yes, this is Holly
42 Carroll, Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm sorry I didn't
43 understand if you were making comments or if you had a
44 question. I was actually booted off the line and dialed
45 back in but I heard your comments about each community
46 probably has streams where salmon are not going and if
47 each community could identify those, could there be a
48 way to have unrestricted fishing for whitefish in those
49 streams. I know that we've gotten those requests and
50

0178

1 we will address those requests when we get them if --
2 you know, if we can try to do things like that, we can,
3 I think trying to do this for every area of the
4 drainage would be quite challenging but I do think
5 we're receptive to it. So if communities do have an
6 area that they want to fish that don't have salmon they
7 can certainly talk to the managers. So definitely get
8 in touch with the managers and see if there's certain
9 areas we could do. I know we did open a particular
10 sheefish opening for a few days early in the season for
11 a part of Koyukuk drainage because we knew that there
12 were no salmon in there at that time.

13

14 So, yeah, it's always worth calling the
15 managers and asking.

16

17 So just like I told Stan, get in touch
18 with the managers, discuss your ideas for your specific
19 community and let us know if we can -- maybe there's
20 something we can do.

21

22 MR. SHEPARD: Through the Chair, this
23 is Stan. I disconnected earlier so thank you very much
24 Holly.

25

26 MS. CARROLL: Thanks, Stan.

27

28 (Pause)

29

30 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

31

32 MR. SHEPARD: Anybody there, must have
33 got dropped.

34

35 MS. ROGERS: Sounds like they got
36 dropped.

37

38 (Pause)

39

40 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair, this is Robbin,
41 I am here. But I am not hearing other OSM colleagues.

42

43 MS. KENNER: Pippa's here.

44

45 MR. SHEPARD: That's GCI.

46

47 MS. PATTON: Hello, Mr. Chair and
48 members of the Council. This is Eva. Sounds like we
49 lost our Chair, we'll give a moment for Ray to call
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0179

1 back in.

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(Pause)

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MR. SHEPARD: Eva, if I may, I can give Holly and any other Departments, if they're interested in what I said earlier, my phone number, contact number and that would be (907) 591-6925, that would be Stan Shepard. I would be happy if they called, or be happy to answer any questions and give more ideas.

Thank you.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Shepard. And just confirming, Holly, did you get that number okay.

MS. CARROLL: Actually I was just going to ask if he could repeat it, I got the 591 and then missed it.

MR. SHEPARD: Yes, Eva, that would be 591-6925.

MS. CARROLL: Thanks Stan.

MR. SHEPARD: You're welcome.

(Pause)

MR. SHEPARD: Eva, should I wait until the Chair comes back on to ask a little bit more questions to Holly or the Department of Fish and Game.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, yes, please do ask your questions and hopefully our Chair will be able to join us here again shortly.

Thank you.

MR. SHEPARD: Thank you. Even though the Chair's not here, through the Chair. Holly, there's been like a handful this past summer and I was thinking about it myself to run up north to Norton Sound, St. Michaels, Stebbins area, Romanof, to harvest salmon, chums for dry fish but I didn't get to do it. And this is the first or second year some of them do it. Now, is that going to be restricted from the Yukon for us to go up there and do that or am I going into a

0180

1 wrong question.

2

3 MR. BRAZIL: Yeah, hi, this is Chuck
4 Brazil with the Department of Fish and Game, again.
5 That's a great question. And right now the answer to
6 that is, no, you would be able to go up there and go
7 fishing.

8

9 MR. SHEPARD: Okay. Okay, great, thank
10 you very much.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: This is Ray, I got
13 dropped and now I'm back on. I know we spent a lot of
14 time this morning on this so if there's no other
15 questions or comments for Holly or Deena or Christie,
16 at this time we could ask for a 10 minute break. Thank
17 you for your report, thank you for, you know, giving us
18 an update and thank you for your work to continue to
19 listen to fishermen on the Yukon and look forward to
20 this coming season, hopefully it'll be good but we'll
21 have to have our fingers crossed.

22

23 So thank you again.

24

25 If there's no other questions or
26 comments then we could go ahead and take a 10 minute
27 break and take up Pippa. Would that be in order, Eva.

28

29 MS. PATTON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 That sounds like a good plan, give everybody a break
31 for 10 minutes and then we'll start with Pippa's
32 presentation on the fisheries special action requests
33 when we resume. So everybody stay connected on
34 teleconference and a 10 minute break.

35

36 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, 10 minutes, thank
39 you.

40

41 (Off record)

42

43 (On record)

44

45 (Teleconference interference -
46 participants not muted - many lines unmuted)

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. I'll call
49 the meeting back to order. The time now is 11:07 a.m.

50

0181

1 We're back in session. I'm still hearing a lot of
2 background noise, maybe that could be eliminated before
3 we get started.

4

5 REPORTER: If everybody would put their
6 phones on mute that is not currently talking that might
7 help.

8

9 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
10 everyone that is on teleconference right now, we can
11 hear quite a few discussions and sweet little kids
12 voices in the background so please take a moment to
13 look at your cell phones and hit the mute button or you
14 can push star, six on your phone to mute it.

15

16 Thank you. That helps eliminate the
17 background noise.

18

19 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, Eva, could you do
22 a roll call just to see if we have all our Council
23 members back online.

24

25 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26

27 Henry Parks.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MS. PATTON: Henry, are you back online
32 with us.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 MS. PATTON: Okay, so no Henry yet.
37 I'll try to send a text if he doesn't join us by the
38 end of roll call here.

39

40 Norma Evan.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MS. PATTON: Norma, are you on
45 teleconference with us here.

46

47 MS. EVAN: Hi, Eva, I'm here. Sorry I
48 had trouble with my phone.

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MS. PATTON: Great, thank you, Norma.

John Andrew.

MR. ANDREW: Here.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, John.

Thomas Alstrom.

MR. ALSTROM: Yes, hello, I'm here.

MS. PATTON: Great, thank you, Thomas.

Jackie Cleveland.

(No comments)

MS. PATTON: Jackie Cleveland, were you
able to join us yet.

(No comments)

MS. PATTON: She did email me she was
having problems, their phone lines were down and she
wasn't able to reconnect yet. Hopefully she'll be able
to join us again shortly here.

James Landlord.

MR. LANDLORD: Yes, I'm here.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, James.

Alissa Rogers.

MS. ROGERS: Present.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, Alissa.

Phillip Peter, Sr.

MR. PETER: Here.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, Phillip.

Wasilly Alexie.

(No comments)

0183

1 MS. PATTON: Wasilly, were you able to
2 rejoin us.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 MS. PATTON: We'll come back around to
7 Wasilly.

8
9 Raymond Oney.

10
11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Ray Oney here.

12
13 MS. PATTON: Myron Naneng, Sr., absent.

14
15 Robert Hoffman.

16
17 MR. HOFFMAN: Here.

18
19 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Robert. And
20 Richard Slats, absent.

21
22 Do we have Henry Parks back online with
23 us.

24
25 MR. PARKS: Yeah, I'm here.

26
27 MS. PATTON: Okay, great, thank you,
28 Henry.

29
30 And Wasilly Alexie.

31
32 MR. ALEXIE: Yeah, I'm here.

33
34 MS. PATTON: Okay, great, thank you so
35 much. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair, we have quorum and
36 hopefully Jackie will be able to -- hopefully the phone
37 lines will be back up and running and she'll be able to
38 join us.

39
40 MS. CLEVELAND: Hi, Eva, I'm back. I'm
41 not sure for how long this time but I'm back.

42
43 MS. PATTON: Okay. Wonderful, thank
44 you so much Jackie. And we were just going to begin
45 with the presentation of the fisheries special action
46 request. So we have all 11 of our 13 Council members
47 present now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Eva.

50

0184

1 I believe Pippa Kenner was going to introduce that so
2 Pippa you have the floor.

3

4 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How
5 am I coming across, am I too loud.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: You're coming in -- I
8 could hear you good.

9

10 MS. KENNER: Okay, thank you very much.
11 Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the Council. My
12 name is Pippa Kenner and I'm an Anthropologist at the
13 Office of Subsistence Management here in Anchorage.
14 I'm presenting three fisheries special action requests,
15 FSA22-01, 02 and 03 that requests the Federal
16 Subsistence Board to close the Yukon River drainage to
17 the harvest of chinook and summer and fall chum salmon
18 except by Federally-qualified subsistence users and to,
19 further, reduce the pool of eligible Federally-
20 qualified subsistence users based on an ANILCA Section
21 .804 analysis.

22

23 Now, I've been asked to describe who
24 are Federally-qualified users of salmon in the Yukon
25 River drainage. So for chum salmon -- for fall chum
26 salmon only, Federally-qualified subsistence users are
27 all permanent rural residents of the Yukon River
28 drainage and Stebbins, Chevak, Hooper Bay and Scammon
29 Bay who are situated outside of the drainage. Now,
30 this excludes residents of the Fairbanks Northstar
31 Borough, which is a nonrural area. So for fall chum
32 salmon, Federally-qualified include all permanent rural
33 residents of the drainage and residents of Stebbins,
34 Chevak, Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay, but this excludes
35 the Fairbanks Northstar Borough which is a nonrural
36 area.

37

38 So to continue at this time for all
39 other salmon except fall chum salmon, residents of
40 Chevak, Hooper Bay, and Scammon Bay are not Federally-
41 qualified subsistence users and would not be allowed to
42 move up and into the mouth of the Yukon River to take
43 salmon, other than fall chum salmon if these special
44 action requests were adopted.

45

46 Today we are requesting your Council to
47 make a recommendation to the Board regarding these
48 special action requests. These special action requests
49 were submitted by a resident of Rampart, the Holy Cross
50

0185

1 Tribe and the Eagle Village Tribe. OSM has received
2 these requests over the last couple of weeks.

3

4 And I'll read to you the proponent's
5 justification for all three requests.

6

7 The proponents say they are asking the
8 Board to uphold the conservation and priority,
9 consumptive uses provisions under Title VIII of ANILCA
10 by assuming management of Yukon River drainage chinook,
11 summer and fall chum salmon throughout the 2022 season.

12

13 They continue: Significant changes
14 have occurred since the Board last considered Yukon
15 River drainage salmon special action requests in 2015.
16 Yukon chinook and chum salmon populations have suffered
17 catastrophic declines in abundance in recent years. In
18 the 2021 season there were no opportunities to harvest
19 Yukon chinook and chum salmon creating significant food
20 security concerns along -- among Yukon River tribes and
21 residents. In the proposal, the proponent explains,
22 the current Yukon River salmon management system
23 wherein the State manages the chinook and chum salmon
24 fisheries with passive consent, but no direct
25 intervention by the Federal in-season managers for over
26 a decade is not working and has repeatedly failed to
27 uphold the provisions of ANILCA. Over the past decade
28 this pattern of passive and ineffective Federal
29 oversight of State management has allowed:

30

31 1. Other uses, including commercial
32 fishing to have priority over subsistence harvest,
33 including during years when our long-term average
34 customary harvest amounts of chinook salmon were not
35 achieved.

36

37 2. Escapement goals necessary for
38 conservation and rebuilding our declined chinook salmon
39 runs have not been met in a number of years, including
40 a failure to meet escapement goals to Canada in 2007,
41 '08, '10, '11, 2019, '20 and '21.

42

43 3. Inequity of harvest wherein some
44 portions of the Yukon River drainage were open for
45 chinook salmon harvest while other portions were
46 arbitrarily closed to harvest.

47

48 These proponents finish by stating,
49 Federal management is necessary to ensure the healthy
50

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1 conservation of chinook and chum salmon stocks as
2 required by ANILCA in order to support future
3 subsistence harvest. Without Federal management, when
4 a sustainable harvest of chinook and chum salmon is
5 available in the future, Federally-qualified
6 subsistence users will not be insured the priority and
7 opportunity for customary and traditional uses of the
8 Yukon chinook and chum salmon that is required by Title
9 VIII of ANILCA. Our customary and traditional
10 subsistence uses will be compromised by other
11 regulatory regimes that do not prioritize subsistence
12 uses.

13

14 So there we have the proponents'
15 justification for submitting these three special action
16 requests.

17

18 Next steps are to receive
19 recommendations from the four affected Councils, which
20 are the Western Interior, Eastern Interior, Yukon
21 Kuskokwim Delta and Seward Peninsula Councils. The
22 last of these Council meetings will end on March 9th.
23 Only the Western Interior Council has met and acted on
24 one of these special action requests that we had
25 received at that point, Special Action Request 22-01.
26 The Western Interior Council supported the special
27 action request with modification to include coho
28 salmon.

29

30 OSM is also in the process of
31 scheduling hearings to hear from the public and for
32 tribal consultation. These public hearings will be
33 announced in news releases and information will be
34 posted at OSM web page, Council Coordinators will send
35 these announcements to Council members. The public
36 hearings are scheduled on Tuesday, March 29th from 3:00
37 to 6:00 p.m., and Thursday March 31st from 6:00 to 9:00
38 p.m., and we'll have the teleconference number posted.

39

40 For the last step, OSM is in the
41 process of scheduling a public meeting of the Board to
42 act on these special action requests. This meeting is
43 anticipated to occur in early May. Again, Council
44 Coordinators will send this announcement to Council
45 members.

46

47 Holly Carroll, our Yukon Federal
48 Fisheries Manager is on the line to help me answer your
49 questions regarding these special action requests.

50

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1 Thank you for your time, Mr. Chair, and
2 members of the Council.

3

4 Again, this is an action item on the
5 Council's agenda. We are asking you to make a
6 recommendation to the Board to either approve, reject,
7 modify or defer these special action requests to the
8 next fisheries regulatory cycle. Again, these special
9 action requests are to close the Yukon River drainage
10 to the harvest of chinook and summer and fall chum
11 salmon except by Federally-qualified subsistence users
12 and to further reduce the pool of eligible Federally-
13 qualified subsistence users based on an ANILCA, Section
14 .804 analysis.

15

16 That's the end of my presentation,
17 thank you, again.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Pippa. Do
20 we have any questions or comments at this time for
21 Pippa or Holly regarding these special action requests.

22

23 GABRIEL: Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Gabriel, go ahead.

26

27 GABRIEL: I got cut off, can I request 4
28 inch for, you know, people that need -- for low income
29 and those in need. Thank you.

30

31 MS. KENNER: Thank you for the comment.
32 Through the Chair. I think you were requesting the use
33 of 4 inch nets for low income people, is that what I
34 heard?

35

36 GABRIEL: No, if we can request a 4
37 inch for low income. Thank you.

38

39 MS. KENNER: Yeah, thanks for the
40 question. This is Pippa, again, through the Chair.
41 Currently, this past year and probably in the future
42 year the Federal manager will allow the use of 4 inch
43 mesh nets that are used to target species other than
44 salmon. Holly might have more to say on that. Thanks
45 for the question.

46

47 GABRIEL: You're welcome. And plus
48 this is going to be a really long, long regulation of 4
49 inch nets. Thank you.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any
2 questions or comments for Pippa or Holly regarding this
3 special action request on Proposal 22-01, 22-02 and 22-
4 03. It sounded like there's two special action
5 requests that came in after our meeting started. The
6 only one that I received was from Rampart. I believe
7 that's 22-01.

8

9 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman, this is
10 Phillip.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Phillip, go ahead.

13

14 MR. PETER: And this Federally-
15 qualified tribal members, in our village, those people
16 that married, non-members, but my question will be if
17 I'm a non-member married to a community member am I
18 restricted and if female is married to non-member male,
19 this will be restricted or what. Thank you.

20

21 MS. KENNER: Yeah, thank you for the
22 question. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. Federally-
23 qualified subsistence users are defined by where they
24 live. So any permanent resident of a rural community
25 in the Yukon River drainage would remain eligible
26 regardless of their tribal affiliation.

27

28 Did that answer your question?

29

30 MR. PETER: Only when they're married,
31 okay, Pippa.

32

33 MS. KENNER: No, it depends on where
34 they reside. The individual would not have to marry
35 into the tribe if they were living within the
36 community, if it was their permanent residence.

37

38 MS. PELTOLA: Pippa, and Mr. Chairman,
39 could I clarify also, this is Mary.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Mary.

42

43 MS. PELTOLA: Okay. So if it doesn't --
44 race doesn't matter and tribal affiliation doesn't
45 matter. You don't have to be a member of a tribe to be
46 a Federally-qualified user. Like in Bethel, the
47 Koreans, the Albanians, and Gussucks, they're all
48 Federally-qualified users if they live there year-
49 round.

50

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1 MR. PETER: But -- Mr. Chairman,
2 through the Chair. But I always have a question
3 concerning that one, you know. We're all same, you
4 know, and sometimes the communities have restrictions
5 but I know that some communities, the tribes, we got
6 confused on this race, you know, that's what I want to
7 find out, what -- as long as that non-member is living
8 in our community, how long is it going to be to become
9 qualified. How long -- I mean.....

10

11 MS. KENNER: Okay, good question. This
12 is Pippa Kenner with OSM. So they have to be a
13 resident of the state of Alaska for one year, at least
14 one year and have their permanent residence in a rural
15 community. So resident of Alaska, one year, but any
16 permanent resident of a rural community is eligible.

17

18 Do you have a followup, was that
19 helpful?

20

21 MR. PETER: Yeah, through the Chair,
22 this is Phillip again. I know that law but on the
23 Federal side it's -- it's not different, right, the
24 race, right?

25

26 MS. KENNER: Are -- I think you're
27 asking about the difference between the State and
28 Federal regulations.

29

30 MR. PETER: Yeah. That's.....

31

32 MS. KENNER: And there's -- there is a
33 difference, but for the purposes of our discussion, I
34 think it's just important to keep in mind that only
35 people who are included in a customary and traditional
36 use determination that's been adopted by the Federal
37 Subsistence Board are eligible to fish for salmon in
38 the Yukon River drainage. So not all State residents,
39 just those residents recognized by the Federal
40 Subsistence Board. And right now that includes all
41 permanent residents that live in rural communities in
42 the Yukon River drainage. So that's the entire Yukon
43 River drainage except residents of the Fairbanks
44 Northstar Borough. The Fairbanks Northstar Borough is
45 considered a nonrural area.

46

47 MR. PETER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

48

49 MS. KENNER: I'd be happy to answer

50

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1 those questions further if I wasn't clear. Thank you,
2 Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Do we have
5 any more questions or comments relating to the -- if
6 there's any recommendations that you'd like to see
7 towards this special action request at this time, the
8 Council.

9

10 GABRIEL: I have a question, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

13

14 GABRIEL: I didn't hear, was the
15 coastal region able to fish during the closed seasons
16 and can we do that too in -- out, you know, from the
17 Yukon and go out to the Coast regions and do some
18 fishing and if that's possible can we do that. I think
19 they were doing that last year, too, but I don't know
20 if that's real. Just my question, thank you.

21

22 MS. KENNER: Yeah, that's a great
23 question, thank you. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM,
24 through the Chair. So the Federal jurisdiction is in
25 the non-marine waters, or the freshwaters of the Yukon
26 River drainage that are adjacent and within Federal
27 public lands. So, no, marine waters are not managed by
28 the Federal Subsistence Board for the purposes of
29 harvesting fish so one would be fishing under State
30 regulations and, of course, the State might have that
31 coastal district closed or it might be open. Our
32 Federal manager would not have jurisdiction on those
33 marine waters of the coastal area.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 GABRIEL: Thank you.

38

39 REPORTER: And just a reminder, please
40 state your name before you speak.

41

42 GABRIEL: Gabriel from Alakanuk Tribe.

43

44 REPORTER: Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any more
47 questions or comments for Pippa or Holly at this time
48 regarding the special action request submitted by
49 Interior to close Yukon River to harvest of fall and
50

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1 chinook salmon to only Federally-qualified users; I'd
2 like to hear what your thoughts are on this action item
3 that's going to be taken up. We need to at least make
4 some recommendations for the people in our area. So
5 I'd like to hear your comments related to that.

6

7

Thank you.

8

9 MR. ALSTROM: Mr. Chair, this is Thomas
10 Alstrom, if I may.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thomas Alstrom.
13 Thomas, go ahead.

14

15 MR. ALSTROM: Yes. I see that there's a
16 special action request maybe submitted by Holy Cross,
17 Rampart and Eagle, if I understood correctly. And it's
18 to close the whole Yukon River down to the summer chum,
19 chinook and fall chum. And I was going to, you know,
20 ask, you know, because maybe five, 10 years ago we had
21 millions of chums going up the river and, you know, I
22 do agree with the conservation and the special action
23 request to shut down the whole Yukon for the summer and
24 fall but, however, you know, a million fish -- like
25 they said a million fish don't go missing just like
26 that. So I believe that, you know, I do agree with
27 this special action request, however the whole Yukon
28 subsistence salmon users shouldn't take the full blame
29 of the whole million plus salmon going up the river.

30

31

32 I believe there should be some sort of
33 modification to this special request on the YKRAC side.
34 Maybe possibly opening up half of September and the
35 rest of October, possibly with 6 inch or smaller mesh
36 size to maybe target the tail end of the fall chum run.
37 Because I know there is a little -- you know, a little
38 bit of chum salmon that run in October, you know, and
39 if we can't have that subsistence harvest like we did
40 last year, you know, a lot of people last year were in
41 high hopes of, you know, possibly a subsistence opener
42 towards the end of the fall chum season with 6 inch or
43 smaller mesh size so they could jar some fish for the
44 winter.

44

45 So I believe I agree with that special
46 action request to shut down the whole Yukon River for
47 the catch of the summer chum and chinook with the fall
48 chum -- however with a modification to ask if we have
49 maybe 50 percent of September, last -- the last couple
50

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1 months [sic] of September and the rest of October to
2 possibly get a few fall chums to jar.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

9

10 MS. KENNER: Yes, I'd like to respond
11 in part to the speaker. For the record this is Pippa
12 Kenner with OSM. So the length of this closure in the
13 request is from June 1st through September 30th. Now,
14 the request includes a closure to non-Federally-
15 qualified subsistence users. The request is to keep
16 closed the commercial fishery and the State
17 sportfishery and to only allow Federally-qualified
18 subsistence users to harvest salmon.

19

20 Now, what that means is that our
21 Federal manager would be issuing special actions to
22 open and close to -- and to limit gear for harvesting
23 salmon in the Yukon River drainage.

24

25 So, again, the request is to close to
26 all users except by Federally-qualified subsistence
27 users. So it would stay open unless the Federal
28 manager closed it and the length of the closure would
29 be from -- to non-Federally-qualified subsistence users
30 would be from June 1st through September 30th.

31

32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Do we have
35 any more questions or comments for Pippa or Holly at
36 this time regarding this special action request or make
37 any recommendations from this Council.

38

39 MR. WASKA: Mr. Chair, are you
40 accepting public comments too?

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'd like to hear from
43 the Council on what kind of recommendations they'd like
44 to see in regards to the special action request for
45 closing the Yukon River to only qualified users. If
46 there's no other questions or comments from the Council
47 I will open it up to the public also. If you are
48 making recommendation.....

49

50

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1 MARILYN: Mr. Chairman.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY:only I will accept
4 that -- the lady that spoke, go ahead.

5

6 MARILYN: Hi, this is Marilyn
7 (Indiscernible) from Alakanuk Tribe. I'd just like to
8 say, you know, I ended up catching this YKRAC meeting
9 late but then from the bits and pieces I've heard the
10 last few questions and comments, I feel like I'm in
11 support of this -- this proposal being made or -- but
12 then I'd like -- what I'd like to see is longer
13 subsistence hours for people in our area and even to
14 open further down river longer, like Black River area,
15 too, because I know a lot of people in this area were
16 affected last summer and if -- if subsistence can be
17 opened have -- have earlier openings and longer I think
18 that would help too.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Marilyn.

21

22 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chairman.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

25

26 MR. LANDLORD: You said you had a copy
27 of this special action request, I believe, from
28 Rampart, did Wasilly and others get a copy of this?
29 Did I get a copy of it, in an email or.....

30

31 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Eva, go ahead.

34

35 MS. PATTON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair
36 and members of the Council. Yes, because the special
37 action request was only submitted recently there wasn't
38 time to get that to the Council in the mail. And
39 initially it was the first special action from Rampart
40 and then just recently an additional two special
41 actions were submitted. And those were updated in the
42 fact sheet online and had sent you that link, again, so
43 you would have the updated information of these
44 additional requests. As Pippa noted, the requests were
45 primarily identical between all three of those
46 fisheries special actions. So I did just resend an
47 email this morning that has that link and maps as well
48 showing the Federal lands and waters of the Yukon
49 River.

50

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1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3

4 MR. LANDLORD: Is there a deadline for
5 us to respond to when this is going to be submitted --
6 it's going to be submitted to the Federal Subsistence
7 Board, is there a deadline for us to respond to this?

7

8 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

11

12 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To
13 the speaker, this is Pippa Kenner with OSM. So right
14 now we're asking for recommendations from this Federal
15 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council so we're asking
16 them to take action on it today to recommend to the
17 Board to either approve or reject or defer. In
18 addition to that we're having two public hearings that
19 have been organized on March 29th and March 31st and
20 that information will be added to our web page and
21 distributed through other ways.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Does that answer your
26 question, James.

27

28 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, take action today.
29 Action for recommendations and take action today on 22-
30 01, 02, and 03.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes. Recommendations.
33 I'm hoping that the Council will at least give some
34 recommendations on how they want to approach this
35 special action request.

36

37 MS. PELTOLA: Mr. Chairman, this is
38 Mary Peltola again.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, Mary, I was just
41 going to call on you to maybe give us some ideas, you
42 know, of how the Kuskokwim dealt with this, maybe you
43 could give us ideas on how we could move forward here.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 MS. PELTOLA: Okay, thank you, Mr.
48 Chairman. so my name is Mary Peltola. I work for the
49 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission. A couple
50

1 weeks ago the Western Interior RAC met and that has --
2 that's compromised of the upper Kuskokwim and mostly
3 the Yukon. So their RAC had a lot of discussion
4 because most of their RAC are Yukon fishermen. Also at
5 their RAC meeting, Charlie Wright, who is the proponent
6 of 22-01, the Rampart SAR, he spoke really well and at
7 the end of like a one or two hour discussion with lots
8 of questions the Western Interior RAC voted unanimously
9 to support Federalizing the Yukon River. A lot of the
10 questions that they had were, I think, based on some
11 miss-information that they've received over the years.

12
13 One of the kind of myths that was out
14 there was that families can't come back and help if
15 they don't live -- if they're not designated as a
16 Federally-qualified user, and on the Kuskokwim, you
17 know, I use the example of our -- the fish camp that my
18 husband and his dad and I work on together and my
19 husband and my seven kids. I have one school that goes
20 to school in Bethel, he's 15, he's in the 10th grade
21 and I have an 8th grader, a girl who's 13 and then our
22 five other kids have -- they're in their 20s and
23 they're off, you know, either in the military or in
24 college of the beginning of their professional careers.
25 So the five older kids aren't really able to come back
26 as much as they used to help. So it's my father-in-law
27 who lives in Bethel year-round, me and my kids that go
28 to school in Bethel, and then my husband, he -- many of
29 you know him, his name is Gene Peltola, Jr., he works
30 for the BIA right now and he's stationed in Anchorage
31 so he is not a Federally-qualified user so he is not
32 able to participate in the take of the fish. That
33 means he can't drive the boat, he can't set the net, he
34 can't pull the net and he can't pull the fish out of
35 the net. But he does help with gas. He gets all of
36 our boats ready, and trailers, he makes sure our fish
37 camp structures are all good, he gets all the smoke
38 wood, he helps cut fish, he does everything except the
39 take of the fish, and then Gene, Sr., and I fish
40 together and our teenage kids help.

41
42 And then another question they had on
43 the Yukon is they had heard that if you are not a
44 Federally-qualified user you can't -- even if you're
45 helping, you can't take any fish home. And that is not
46 -- that has not been our experience on the Kusko
47 either. The way we divide our fish is in thirds.
48 Buzzy gets a third, or Gene, Jr., gets a third, Gene,
49 Sr., gets a third, and I get a third.
50

1 So, you know, for those of us who rely
2 on people who don't live -- who are not Federally-
3 qualified users, they can still participate in the
4 cultural components and everything except the actual
5 take. And I don't know how that would work with
6 fishwheels on the upper Yukon but, you know.

7
8 I guess for the folks on the Yukon, the
9 Western Interior RAC did support this unanimously. And
10 Charlie Wright's comments were, how bad does it need to
11 get before we do have a rural subsistence priority.
12 And the difference between State management and Federal
13 management is the State does not recognize any
14 difference, whether you live in Willow or Wasilla or,
15 you know, on our rivers, everybody's equal but under
16 Title VIII of ANILCA the first priority goes to rural
17 subsistence users.

18
19 And then the other thing is, under
20 Title VIII of ANILCA there is language in there that
21 says there has to be some allowance for customary and
22 traditional harvest. So under Title VIII of ANILCA,
23 under the Federal law, there has to be some amount of
24 subsistence fishing provided, even if it's a tacid
25 amount, even if it's like barely anything. There has
26 to be something, it can't just be completely shut down.

27
28 That's -- those are my comments, Mr.
29 Chairman, thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Mary, for
32 that clarification. Any other Council member have any
33 recommendations or comments relating to this special
34 action request at this time.

35
36 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

37
38 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair -- oh, go
39 ahead.

40
41 MS. KENNER: I'll defer to the speaker,
42 thank you.

43
44 MR. LANDLORD: This is James again. I
45 think I support that, that we can't be completely shut
46 down, we need to have some allowance for subsistence
47 users, I think we need some chum -- fall chum and some
48 chinook, we can't be completely shut down when it's
49 Title VIII. Those people that live out of town for a
50

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1 job or for some reason -- like example, leave Mountain
2 Village, totally leave Mountain Village and live
3 somewhere else, it's too bad but I kind of support that
4 idea, we need some allowance for rural users --
5 Federally-qualified subsistence users to subsist. I
6 live here year-round, everything I do I stay here,
7 hardship or not. Under ice fishing, even the gas is
8 high, we go out and try to fish as much as we can,
9 parts are high, oil is high, you use your 24 hours a
10 day, get wood.

11

12 I kind of support that idea that we
13 need some kind of allowance, we can't be completely
14 shut off, I think there has to be an allowance for us
15 for summer chum and fall chum, coho and maybe chinook.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Are you done James.

18

19 MR. LANDLORD: Yes.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you.

22

23 MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair, this is Holly
24 Carroll, Fish and Wildlife Federal in-season Manager. I
25 want to give you guys a chance to make your comments
26 but I also wanted to address some of the comments that
27 have been made and correct some misconceptions for sure
28 if I can.

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, please do, thank
31 you.

32

33 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, I think it's a very
34 complicated issue and I really appreciate everyone who
35 is jumping on and doing their best to explain what this
36 Federal special action will do and what the process is.

37

38 The Kuskokwim has a long history of
39 using this process to very good effect and people seem
40 to be quite happy with it. I do think it's really
41 important that the people of the Yukon understand some
42 minor differences. And one of them is that Pippa
43 brought up and it's something that, admittedly, I'm
44 just now learning as well about who is Federally-
45 qualified and who is not, and who has customary and
46 traditional use determinations. And I guess I was
47 surprised to learn that Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay and
48 Chevak are not going to be considered Federally-
49 qualified users for chinook or summer chum in the

50

1 river. So if fishing was allowed in the river they
2 would not be able to fish as Federally-qualified users
3 if this passed. They could fish out on the coast under
4 State management if the State has it open and so it may
5 not be a problem. But it is something that I wanted
6 those communities aware of because if they do want to
7 request a customary and traditional use determination
8 for chinook and summer chum, since they don't have one,
9 they can request that from the Federal Subsistence
10 Board and there are -- there are going to be the fish
11 cycle for the Yukon next season and so now would be the
12 time to submit that if they think it's something that's
13 important. They have the determination for fall chum
14 but it does mean that if the special action proceeded
15 and the river was closed to non-Federally-qualified
16 users but opened up for some fishing for chinook or
17 summer chum, those residents would have to stay fishing
18 on the coast.

19

20 So just wanted it to be clear to
21 members that there's that one tiny difference for that
22 customary and traditional use determination.

23

24 The other thing is that I also want to
25 clear up a misconception that if this special action is
26 passed by the Board, that that would somehow require
27 that fishing be open. I do not believe that is the
28 case. ANILCA, Title VIII does guide the Federal
29 manager to also take into consideration biological
30 concerns for future runs. It's in the same paragraph
31 that discusses the need for maintaining traditional
32 uses. And unfortunately the run sizes we've seen have
33 been so incredibly small, particularly the chums, you
34 know, when the chum run is supposed to be one million
35 and it's 150,000 every single fish we take could make
36 the difference between that run bouncing back or not.
37 And so when there is no harvestable surplus, you know,
38 to say that we can just open it up and allow some
39 fishing, what does that mean -- you know, we missed
40 meeting our escapement goals for chum, not by 10,000
41 fish, not by 20, we missed it by hundreds of thousands
42 of fish.

43

44 So I do think we need to be careful
45 that we do not make assumptions that if the Board
46 passes this fishing would be opened. We do have to
47 account for the biological run size of that return and
48 if there's any harvestable surplus of salmon whatsoever
49 we will provide opportunity on that. But if there is
50

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1 not, it may need to remain closed because we do need to
2 endeavor to meet those escapement goals.

3

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So I think it's important to clarify that just so people don't think that one outcome or another would ensure fishing, we can't ensure that at this time.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Holly.

MR. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Bobby, go.....

MR. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ONEY:ahead, Robert -- Robert go ahead.

MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, I just wanted to speak on what I just heard from that lady. According to her the fish count on the Yukon and Kuskokwim, if they're low there'll still be restrictions and that goes along with saying, why are they low. And we heard testimony, much testimony about False Pass intercepting the Kuskokwim and Yukon chums, that's why they're low. And I don't think -- I personally don't think that the numbers from the Yukon and Kuskokwim should -- I don't know how to say this but should be the reason why they're being closed. If that's true why isn't the -- you might say the False Pass industry that had over a million chums taken last fall, why isn't that in the reasoning why they're so low and what are they going to do about that, to increase future fish runs for the Kuskokwim and the Yukon.

Thank you.

MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair, James.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: I was going to ask if anyone cared to respond to Robert's comment.

MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is Holly Carroll again. I definitely want to defer to James. But, Robert, I hear your concerns 100 percent, this is not fair that subsistence should be closed down. Subsistence fishermen are not to blame for why the runs are low, that's 100 percent true. I don't

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1 think there's anybody out there that think these fall
2 chum runs and summer chums are the worse they've ever
3 been because of subsistence harvest, that's impossible,
4 that is not the reason. Same with chinook. But
5 unfortunately when it comes to how we manage the river
6 and the management authority that we're given, I can't
7 manage ocean fishing, or I can't manage, you know, Area
8 M, it just doesn't work that way unfortunately. Maybe
9 just like your elders would have done hundreds of years
10 ago when your runs come back very poorly you have to
11 make decisions about what is the best way to handle
12 this, should we take less fish, should we let more go
13 by. And that's essentially the same thing we're doing.
14 Unfortunately these runs are so small that sometimes
15 it's not a question of taking less fish, we know that
16 there's simply not enough to get to the spawning
17 grounds to be viable for escapement, you know, we
18 missed the spawning escapement goal by, you know,
19 almost 10,000 chinook. So if we had allowed some
20 fishing throughout the river all of that fishing would
21 have been too much.

22

23 So I'm sorry that it feels that way and
24 I can see why you feel that way, subsistence fishermen
25 have never been the problem. We don't know what the
26 problems are 100 percent but we know it isn't the
27 subsistence fishermen. So thank you for those
28 comments.

29

30 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, I'd like to respond
31 also to that. You know in my mind if you figure out
32 mathematically, in other words, the subsistence users,
33 where there is no return whatsoever of any sort versus
34 False Pass fishers going on who do have a return to the
35 Federal government and the State by their taxes, that
36 is very, very sad to hear that if False Pass continues
37 to fish we are going to -- we, the subsistence users
38 are going to continue to be hurt by that reasoning.
39 It's a personal response. So I might be wrong or
40 whatever but, you know, it's getting very, very
41 tiresome when the subsistence users that do not have
42 any return to the Federal government or to the State
43 are denied any type of action that is happening versus
44 the ones that do have a return to the State and Federal
45 government.

46

47 That's all, thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Bobby. I

50

0201

1 think Eva mentioned earlier that we are going to be
2 submitting a letter to the Federal Subsistence Board in
3 regards to your comments so we'll be reviewing that, I
4 believe either sometime today or tomorrow.

5

6 James, you had a question or comment.

7

8 MR. LANDLORD: I had a comment. The
9 reason why I said what I said was I received a lot of
10 angry people wanting chinook, summer chum and fall
11 chum, why -- why can't we just fish, it's not -- it's
12 for our family, we want fish to eat in the wintertime,
13 dry fish. Some people were -- a lot of people were
14 just angry that they're not able to fish even though
15 the runs were small, that they should be able to eat
16 least able to catch 20, or 25 chums to put away so they
17 could have a taste of it in the wintertime. So that's
18 why I said what I said.

19

20 You know when kings are coming in
21 through Hooper, even Scammon, they know that -- we know
22 that they run into the Yukon River, we can hear that --
23 we can hear when they're coming in and we estimate when
24 they're going to hit Mountain and Koyuk and start --
25 you know, going to catch summer chums or fall chums so
26 we get ready for those -- I'm glad that Holly explained
27 it more -- we know that a lot of people are hurting and
28 they're just angry why we can't even get just a few
29 fish even if the runs are low and that's why I said
30 what I said.

31

32 Quyana, Chairman.

33

34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, James. Is
35 there any other Council member that wants to comment on
36 this special action requests, do you have any ideas on
37 any recommendations that you'd like to see regarding
38 these special action requests that are coming before
39 us.

40

41 MR. ALEXIE: Mr. Chair, this is
42 Wasilly. I got a plane coming, if I can be excused but
43 I'll be in acceptance of what they're talking about.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, if you want to
46 comment before you go I think it'd be appreciated
47 because we don't know how long we're going to be
48 talking regarding this special action request. If you
49 could do that before you leave that would be

50

0202

1 appreciated, thank you.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any other Council
6 members. Any other Council want to comment on this
7 special action request.

8

9 MR. ALSTROM: Mr. Chair, this is
10 Thomas.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thomas, go ahead.

13

14 MR. ALSTROM: Oh, yes, I'd just like to
15 have a comment. I'm in support of this special action,
16 however with modification rather it being from July 1st
17 to September 30, rather July 1st to September 15.
18 That's one modification or recommendation I have.

19

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21

22 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

23

24 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

27

28 MS. KENNER: Yes, hi, Thomas, I needed
29 a clarification. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. The
30 request would run, if adopted, or if approved by the
31 Board, would run from June 1st to September 30th. In
32 your modification you said July 1st, did you mean June
33 1st or do you want it to be July 1st.

34

35 MR. ALSTROM: Mr. Chair, Thomas. Yeah,
36 excuse me, I meant to say June 1st to September 15th.
37 June 1st to September 15.

38

39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40

41 MS. KENNER: And, thank you.

42

43 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair, this is Eva.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Eva, go ahead.

46

47 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
48 members of the Council. I just wanted to touch base
49 and clarify if I'm understanding Thomas' request about
50

0203

1 the amendment. So the closure, when we're talking
2 about the closure in this fisheries special action
3 request, it's a closure to non-Federally-qualified
4 subsistence users. So that's what the closure would
5 mean during those dates. So it's not a closure to
6 fishing, specifically, it's a closure to non-Federally-
7 qualified subsistence users. So it would be a rural
8 subsistence priority for those communities with C&T on
9 the Yukon River. So I just wanted to clarify that.
10 What's being asked for during the fishing season is
11 closing to those people that are not rural residents
12 with a customary and traditional use determination for
13 the Yukon River. So shortening the timeframe that's
14 requested wouldn't mean that fishing would open. it's
15 just referring to those non-Federally-qualified
16 subsistence users would not be able to fish if there
17 was any fishing openings during that timeframe.

18

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20

21 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair, James.

22

23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

24

25 MR. LANDLORD: Eva, would that be --
26 with that closure for non-Federally-qualified
27 subsistence users, would there be a timeline, only
28 during the time when there's low run or would it make
29 it permanent.

30

31 MS. PATTON: The request that was
32 submitted was to close to all but Federally-qualified
33 subsistence users, so that restriction to non-
34 Federally-qualified users would be for the salmon
35 fishing season June 1 to September 30th.

36

37 So that's what the special action is
38 requesting. But, again, that's just -- if adopted, it
39 would only close to non-Federally-qualified subsistence
40 users but it doesn't mean that there would be a
41 management opening for subsistence, only a addressing a
42 subsistence priority if there was, you know, an
43 opportunity for fishing.

44

45 I don't know if that helps clarify your
46 question.

47

48 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49

50

0204

1 MR. LANDLORD: Then maybe it can be
2 modified to only during the low runs, like what we're
3 having now. I think the chums are eventually going to
4 come back and when they come back they will still --
5 then they won't be able to fish. When there's high
6 runs like the millions, you know, they could come in
7 and help just like that lady in Bethel said her husband
8 can't even fish but can help because of low run. But
9 when the million fish are passing through I think they
10 should still be able to come over from Anchorage area
11 and fish for themselves. Can there be a modification on
12 that.

13
14 (Teleconference interference -
15 participants not muted)

16
17 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

18
19 REPORTER: I would just going to remind
20 everybody to put their phone on mute if they're not
21 speaking.

22
23 MS. PATTON: Thank you, James, this is
24 Eva. I can try to respond to your question and Pippa
25 and others may be able to help as well. So I think you
26 were asking if how long this closure would be in place
27 and right now what's being requested, the dates that
28 are being requested is June 1st through September 30th
29 of this upcoming fishing season. So it's a temporary
30 special action which means it would only be in place
31 for this timeframe, if adopted.

32
33 And you are correct that if this was
34 adopted, nonrural family members or friends living in
35 Anchorage or Fairbanks could come and help at fish
36 camp. The distinction is actually fishing. So pulling
37 the net in, going out to fish, picking the fish out of
38 the net, that sort of activity would be restrictive
39 only to the rural residents if there was a fishing
40 opening. But family can come from elsewhere and help
41 at fish camp in other ways. Cutting the fish, you
42 know, once it's back at fish camp.....

43
44 (Teleconference interference -
45 participants not muted)

46
47 MS. PATTON:or hanging the fish.

48
49 GABRIEL: Mr. Chair.

50

0205

1 MR. LANDLORD: Okay, thanks. If it's
2 only for this summer I can support that for one season.

3
4 GABRIEL: Mr. Chair.

5
6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

7
8 GABRIEL: Yeah, if we heard it correct,
9 that would be a long time but I wanted to put on like a
10 one -- one little opening. It's not putting in with
11 the request that there would only be a -- subsistence
12 fishing only for non-salmon species and, you know,
13 because we'll still need to fish, you know, like
14 whitefish and other kind of non-salmon and king. But
15 that's a long -- non-opening, but we'll need that
16 subsistence non -- non-salmon.

17
18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you.

19
20 REPORTER: Can you please state your
21 name when you're speaking.

22
23 GABRIEL: Gabriel.

24
25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Do we
26 have any other Council members that would like to put
27 in their comments, any kind of recommendation regarding
28 this special action request for the Yukon River.

29
30 MR. ALEXIE: Hey, this is Wasilly, I
31 just had a question. Once that recommendation goes
32 through, would people -- like if we have family living
33 in Kuskokwim or another village which is in Federally-
34 recognized subsistence users, would they be able to
35 come and help us fish too if they needed to?

36
37 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

40
41 MS. KENNER: Yeah, hey, Wasilly, thanks
42 for the question. Did you say people who are
43 Federally-qualified, relatives who are Federally-
44 qualified, could they come help fish, was that your
45 question?

46
47 MR. ALEXIE: Yeah, if they're living in
48 another village, like in the Kuskokwim, or somewhere
49 down the Yukon that's within the Federally-recognized
50

0206

1 subsistence users and the are in that village, they are
2 able to come to us if we needed help or if they needed
3 to get some fish, they could come up to do that but not
4 the ones that are living out in Anchorage or Fairbanks
5 or other cities.

6
7 MS. KENNER: Thank you, again, for the
8 question, this is Pippa. Yes, that's correct, you
9 understand, uh-huh.

10
11 MR. ALEXIE: Okay, thank you.

12
13 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I believe I would be in
14 support of this special action request because it only
15 mentions during the 2022 season. And, again, hearing
16 Holly saying because, you know, the low runs that we've
17 been experiencing for the last 20 years and the stocks
18 are declining at an alarming rate and we need to try
19 and rebound some of these -- try and rebound chinook
20 and chum but in order to do that we need everybody at
21 the table because of the cycle of salmon, we need their
22 -- we need their support. We need National Marine
23 Fisheries to step up and to let them know what we're
24 going through in order to rebuild these stocks, we need
25 everybody at the table to come to terms with one mind,
26 even if it means moratorium, then that should be
27 considered. Because we can't fish until it's fished
28 out because that's -- we should be able to at least
29 fish when we can but, again, you know that'll be up to
30 the Federal managers. And a lot of the Federal
31 managers that are there now are old ADF&G members that
32 are retired from Fish and Game.....

33
34 (Teleconference interference -
35 participants not muted)

36
37 CHAIRMAN ONEY:and have moved
38 over to Fish and Wildlife, as you heard from Holly and
39 who else, there was Fred Bue and Tom Kron and those
40 people.....

41
42 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Yes.

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY:that took from the
45 Fish and Game and now they're continuing to control
46 that for our people so we need a lot of work, we need a
47 lot of support, we need more active efforts from North
48 Pacific to help us try and rebuild our stocks, you
49 know, that's what we need. We need to continue to
50

0207

1 advocate for our people on the Yukon, we can't let them
2 suffer the way we've been suffering for the last 20
3 years, we need everybody at the table. We need
4 everybody to come to one consensus to try and rebuild
5 the stocks on the Yukon. Not only on the Yukon but all
6 of Western Alaska where salmon spawn.

7

8 So I think we've discussed this long
9 enough and I believe it sounded like we are hearing
10 support for this special action request as long as it's
11 only for the 2022 season.

12

13 Those are my comments.

14

15 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

18

19 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. I appreciate that you're
21 kind of moving the conversation along but I've been
22 requested several times to make one clarification and
23 that clarification is this: The waters that would be
24 affected are the Federal public waters, which include
25 all navigable and non-navigable waters located within
26 and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of Federal
27 conservation units. Now Federal conservation units are
28 Wildlife Refuges and Parks, that kind of thing. So
29 Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage
30 include the mainstem and tributaries of Yukon
31 commercial fishing districts Y1, Y2 and Y3 up to
32 Paimiut, parts of Subdistricts 4A and 4C and most of
33 Subdistrict 5D.

34

35 Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to
36 make the clarification that there would be areas of the
37 Yukon River drainage in which this special action
38 request would not apply and would not affect.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. If
41 there's no other comments, I don't know what the next
42 procedure to followup on these three special action
43 requests.

44

45 (Teleconference interference -
46 participants not muted)

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: It sounded like they
49 are all similar, similar wording from different areas

50

0208

1 and I'm thinking that they're all asking just for the
2 2022 season.

3

4 MR. SHEPARD: Mr. Chair, this is
5 Stanislaus Shepard.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Stan, go ahead.

8

9 MR. SHEPARD: Yes, I heard you earlier,
10 somebody came on, is there going to be public comment
11 and then you said after the Council gave their comments
12 and this is -- is it open to the public.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, there's going to
15 be a public hearing that you heard from Pippa, March 29
16 and March 31, right now we're just asking for
17 recommendation from the Council, if they have any
18 recommendation to this special action request. But
19 again there will be a public hearing, the dates were
20 mentioned by Pippa, March 29, maybe she could give
21 those times again as to when so the public can put in
22 their two cents worth.

23

24 MR. SHEPARD: Yes, Mr. Chair. Even now,
25 now to help make the Council a little bit more --
26 because I have a comment to give some of the language
27 that was in this request.

28

29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, please do. I
30 think I'd like to hear from Evon Waska too because he
31 wanted to comments, I'll go ahead and let you comment
32 if you have recommendations what -- on the special
33 action request.

34

35 MR. SHEPARD: Yes, thank you, Mr.
36 Chair. My name is Stanislaus Shepard, I work for
37 Mountain Village Asa'carsamiut Tribal Council under
38 Natural Resources. This is very good for this season
39 only. But you need totake in consideration that the
40 villages, our neighboring villages, Scammon Bay, Hooper
41 Bay and Chevak, they're excluded, they're not allowed,
42 which they've been for generations coming up to the
43 Yukon River, Black River, the mouth, lower end, the
44 area now called Yl and this is going to cut them off
45 this season and we're going through hardship right now.
46 Everybody on the Lower Yukon River, no subsistence
47 harvest, you know, you need to -- if it'd be possible
48 just to remove excluding Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon
49 Bay, just leave them on -- just add it on there,
50

0209

1 they've been coming up for centuries or generations.
2 If they find out they're going to be excluded not to
3 come up here there's going to be a lot of angry people
4 so this RAC represents the YKDelta, and those Chevak,
5 Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay are part of the YKDelta and
6 they, through history, have been depending on salmon.

7

8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Stan.

11

12 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

15

16 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd
17 like to respond to the caller, making a great point by
18 the way. So I'm Pippa Kenner with OSM. I am in the
19 process of contacting the three communities. We are in
20 a fisheries proposal cycle right now and I would like
21 to work with them to put in a proposal to expand their
22 customary and traditional use determination for salmon
23 to include all species in the Yukon River drainage. So
24 we'll be doing that. The unfortunate thing is that
25 these customary and traditional use determinations are
26 changed during the regular regulatory cycle and they
27 cannot be modified through special action so they would
28 not be able to participate in-river fishing for salmon
29 other than fall chum salmon this year if this special
30 action request was approved by the Board. They would
31 be eligible next year, but not this year.

32

33 Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you for that
36 clarification. I was just going to mention that, too,
37 that they have an opportunity to, especially the
38 coastal villages to work with you to include the
39 customary trade [sic] for salmon that comes through
40 their village. So if Mr. Waska is still on, if you
41 have any recommendations that you'd like to see
42 regarding these special actions for the Yukon, I'll let
43 you comment.

44

45 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair, James.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

48

49 MR. LANDLORD: Yes, I think one of the

50

0210

1 ladies stated that Hooper, Chevak, Scammon can fish
2 using State regulations. They're able to fish.

3

4 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

7

8 MS. KENNER: Yeah, thanks for that
9 comment. So currently the three communities, these
10 three coastal communities can continue to harvest
11 salmon but to harvest them in the marine waters under
12 Federal or ADF&G management -- I mean under -- excuse
13 me I was interrupted. I what I meant to say is that
14 they are eligible to fish for salmon under State or
15 ADF&G regulations in the marine waters. They're only
16 restricted to harvesting only fall chum salmon within
17 the mouth of the Yukon River if the special action
18 request were approved.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 MR. SHEPARD: Mr. Chair, this is
23 Stanislaus Shepard.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Stan, go ahead.

26

27 MR. SHEPARD: Yes. Pippa, would that
28 be, because their main area of harvest and subsistence
29 is we -- we now all know is Black River. That wouldn't
30 be included. They're allowed to still go to Black
31 River and -- with the State and marine and harvest
32 subsistence there, it's just the Yukon River, mouth of
33 -- three mouths, south mouth, middle mouth and north
34 mouth, that's my question. Thank you.

35

36 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

37

38 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

39

40 MS. KENNER: Yes, my understanding right
41 now is that the Black River is managed in Subdistrict
42 Y1 so it would be affected by the closure. Holly might
43 be able to help me more with that.

44

45 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chair,
46 this is Holly Carroll. So the confusing part is the
47 Federal description excludes the -- anything outside of
48 the Yukon River drainage and so the question is whether
49 the Black River in Federal regs is considered part of

50

0211

1 the Yukon River drainage and I don't currently have
2 clarity about that. But in State regulations, District
3 1 is managed the same as the Black River. So if the
4 Black River is closed and District 1 is closed no one
5 can go fish in that river. So my understanding is that
6 because they don't have the customary and traditional
7 use determination for chinook and summer chum, if a
8 summer chum opening was allowed in Y1 in the Black
9 River, community members from Hooper Bay, Scammon and
10 Chevak would not be allowed to partake in that during a
11 Federal opening that is closed to non-Federally-
12 qualified users. When the State is managing that --
13 that's not an issue. So that's going to be the point
14 in question. I'm pretty sure the Black River, even
15 though it's managed under Y1, we need to figure out --
16 if it's under Federal regulation, if it's included part
17 of the drainage, but either way they would probably be
18 excluded for chinook or summer chum openings. Whereas
19 for fall chum they could be allowed to fish there
20 during those openings under a Federally managed opening
21 where non-Federally-qualified users are excluded.

22

23 MR. WASKA: Mr. Chair, Evon Waska.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Holly, for
26 that clarification. I'll recognize Evon Waska.

27

28 MR. WASKA: Yeah, before we go on lunch
29 break, my stomach's growling like the rest of you.
30 Keep in mind at the table of my people, all over rural
31 Alaska, especially on the Yukon, missing on the table,
32 smoked salmon strips. I know their freezers are empty
33 of salmon. But I'm happy to hear Federal Fish and Game
34 acknowledging we are not at fault. We've been placed
35 on restrictions, especially the Yukon people, and us
36 here on the Kuskokwim. It's good to hear we are not at
37 fault because we all know, all the fish, salmon, from
38 the Pacific Ocean and they head down to the Bering Sea
39 and on to Western rivers. On the previous -- before
40 you went on break, spawning. For the salmon to reach
41 these rivers you speak of special action request and
42 proposals, I want to make on that -- stop that bycatch
43 on continued bycatch in the -- dumping salmon, chum
44 salmon and halibut back into the sea. And on Area M
45 and False Pass, I don't believe there's data on that, I
46 don't believe that. Why. Our delegates on the Yukon
47 and Kuskokwim they passed on but their names are real.
48 Harold Spark, Mike Chase, Dr. John White, Lester Wilde,
49 David Bill, I believe they used to go to the Board of
50

0212

1 Fish meetings there in Anchorage, why, to allocate fish
2 escapement and it worked, their voices were heard.
3 Since 2014 we never commercial fished. We stopped it.
4 There's no more commercial fishing here on the
5 Kuskokwim except out in the bay, three villages out
6 there.

7

8 My heart throbs for them Yukon
9 fishermen, they never fished last year. For most of
10 Western Alaska Natives that's the only source of income
11 for the winter. Where's the special action request on
12 the bycatch and commercial fishermen out there at Area
13 M and False Pass. We need to have those escapement and
14 bycatch stuff, we're hurting. 500,000 chums. King
15 salmon. Halibut. I bet there's more than that that
16 they dump over. Those are bound for -- that's a food
17 source you're dumping overboard and those are our food
18 sources in interception, you go past (Indiscernible)
19 and past the Aleutian Chain and on to these rivers, the
20 Kuskokwim, Yukon, Norton Sound and Kotzebue Rivers. My
21 people are hurting. You're denying of the culture
22 right and our way of life from generation to
23 generation. for our winter food source that sustains us
24 through the long winter months.

25

26 Now I need to hear State Fish and Game
27 acknowledge we are not at fault. Here, we are always
28 on restrictions. When are the restrictions going to
29 start out there.

30

31 And we heard a Yukon fisherman going up
32 Norton Sound and going into the sea, that's happened
33 here and on the Kuskokwim, they go to the bay, they
34 risk their lives. Why don't you go on a 22 foot boat
35 or 18 foot boat and go out into the sea where men and
36 boys and all of our people risk their lives and go,
37 that's not right. They risk their lives and go get the
38 food to put food on the table. That's not right.

39

40 And like Stanislaus Shepard said
41 there's three mouths to the Yukon, Black River, Middle
42 Mouth and North Mouth. And that Black River that's
43 full of fish camps, you want evidence, that's where all
44 those Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay and all those coastal
45 villages go to Black River and put up smoked salmon for
46 the long winter months. So that should be evidence for
47 you, to not to exclude them.

48

49 On completely shutting down, no, that's

50

0213

1 not right. You got to give me and my people the
2 opportunity to fill our freezers and put food on our
3 racks. We don't want to wait for Bristol Bay to send
4 us fish, frozen fish, you have to give us that
5 opportunity to fish during closures and put food in our
6 freezers and we need to put some smoked salmon fish up
7 and dried fish. 4 inch, why are you telling us --
8 people -- who eats whitefish when the salmon are
9 running. That's not right. That's like telling you to
10 quit eating your New York steaks and go eat hot dogs
11 instead.

12

13 (Teleconference interference -
14 participants not muted)

15

16 MS. ROGERS: Point of order.

17

18 MR. WASKA: We're the first people,
19 fish our land and water. When the spring of 2021
20 Copper River fishermen, Anchorage, they go harvest them
21 king salmons.....

22

23 (Teleconference interference -
24 participants not muted)

25

26 MR. WASKA: Am I still on?

27

28 MS. KENNER: Yes, you're on.

29

30 MR. WASKA: Like I said, I watch the
31 Anchorage news when the king salmon hit the Copper
32 River, those people go get king salmon. King salmon,
33 those are four or five, the real king salmon, but then
34 I see two airline pilots get off the jet and go deliver
35 to a Seattle restaurant.....

36

37 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, point of order.

38

39 MR. WASKA:and then me and my
40 people can't even get one.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, Evon, point of
43 order at this time. We're trying to find some
44 recommendation on how we could address this special
45 action to make recommendations for us to move forward
46 otherwise we're just going around in circles. So if
47 you have any recommendations on this special action
48 request I'd like to hear them, if not, I think we're
49 ready to take action on these three proposals.

50

0214

1 MR. WASKA: Mr. Chair, I apolog.....

2

3 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

4

5 MR. WASKA:apologize -- Mr.

6 Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa. I'm sorry to
9 cut you off Evon, I know you always have a lot of good
10 comments regarding, you know, what we're going through
11 but right now we're trying to find recommendations as
12 to how we could address this special action request
13 submitted by Interior villages. So I'll go ahead and
14 recognize Pippa.

15

16 MR. WASKA: Yeah, I accept your apology
17 and to the delegates, I'm happy to hear what I'm
18 hearing.

19

20 Quyana.

21

22 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Pippa, go
23 ahead.

24

25 MS. KENNER: Quyana. Yes, thank you,
26 Mr. Chair, this is Pippa Kenner with OSM. The Council
27 does have the ability to modify the area closed in this
28 special action request. You might want to consider
29 removing the Black River drainage from the area that
30 would otherwise be closed to non-Federally-qualified
31 subsistence users.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, I think I would
38 take that route to exclude Black River users at this
39 time. What are the thoughts of the Council.

40

41 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

42

43 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

44

45 MS. KENNER: I think what I meant to
46 say is not to exclude the Black River users but the
47 Black River area from the special action request and
48 the area closed.

49

50

0215

1 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

4

5 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6 Alissa Rogers for the record. Through the Chair. At
7 this time.....

8

9 (Teleconference interference -
10 participants not muted)

11

12 MS. ROGERS:if Pippa could please
13 read the three special actions in a simple version
14 that's quick to understand and if we choose, maybe one
15 by one, if not, is there a way, Pippa, that we could
16 take them up all at once or is there specific language
17 in each special action that will -- I'm trying to
18 figure out which special action is best fit for what's
19 going on right now and if -- because there's three
20 special actions in front of us but usually we only have
21 two or one but they're exactly the same so I'm trying
22 to find out are these special actions different and, if
23 so, what makes -- what part of it makes them different
24 and, if not -- if not, I would like to motion that we
25 would support them all if there's no difference in
26 these special actions with the modification to remove
27 Black River area from the special action request so
28 those three communities on the Coast can go fishing in
29 that area.

30

31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32

33 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

36

37 MS. KENNER: Yes, boy, thank you for
38 that question, Alissa. This is Pippa Kenner with OSM.
39 So the three special actions, 22-01, 02, and 03 are
40 alike, they ask for the same things. I'm going to ask
41 Eva to help me out, Eva, would you prefer to see the
42 Council act on each of these special action requests
43 one at a time or all three at once.

44

45 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Pippa, and
46 members of the Council. As Alissa noted, since the
47 special action requests, all three are requesting
48 essentially the same thing, then the Council could make
49 a motion to support each -- all three in the same

50

0216

1 motion. And I would ask -- Alissa had also asked to
2 repeat what those requests are, of the special action
3 requests are so that we have that clear for the
4 Council, what the requests entail.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa
9 Kenner with OSM.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Pippa, go ahead.

12

13 MS. KENNER: Thank you. I'd like to
14 read that now. The three special action requests are
15 for the Federal Subsistence Board to close the Yukon
16 River drainage to the harvest of chinook and summer and
17 fall chum salmon, except by Federally-qualified
18 subsistence users and to further reduce the pool of
19 eligible Federally-qualified subsistence users based on
20 an ANILCA Section .804 analysis.

21

22 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

25

26 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 With that being said, thank you, Pippa; thank you, Eva,
28 for making those clarifications. At this time would
29 like to make a motion on the floor in support of
30 special actions 22-01.22-03, 22-04 with the
31 modification to remove Black River area from the
32 special action request.

33

34 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, there's a motion
37 on the.....

38

39 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair, this is Pippa.

40

41 CHAIRMAN ONEY:floor to -- Pippa,
42 go ahead.

43

44 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 This is Pippa Kenner with OSM. Alissa, I think you
46 meant Special Action Request 22-01, 02 and 03; is that
47 correct?

48

49 MS. ROGERS: Sorry, Mr. Chair. Through

50

0217

1 the Chair. Sorry, Pippa, yes, you are -- I stand
2 corrected, thank you.

3

4 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Thank
5 you for that -- yeah, I was going to ask you that too.
6 There's a motion on the floor by Alissa to accept
7 Resolution 22-0-1, 22-02 and 22-03, special action
8 request and to include remove Black River area, do I
9 hear a second.

10

11 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman, this is
12 Phillip. I second the motion.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Second by
15 Phillip Peter. I'll go ahead and do a roll call vote,
16 Eva.

17

18 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
19 members of the Council. All in support of the motion
20 to support Fisheries Special Action 01, 02, 03 with the
21 modification to remove the Black River area from the
22 special action request so that the three Coastal
23 communities can fish in that area. And a yes vote is
24 in support and a no vote would be in opposition to this
25 request.

26

27 I'll start with Henry Parks.

28

29 MR. PARKS: Mr. Chair, I vote yes.

30

31 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Henry.

32

33 Norma Evan.

34

35 MS. EVAN: I vote yes.

36

37 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Norma.

38

39 John Andrew.

40

41 MR. ANDREW: I say yes.

42

43 MS. PATTON: Thank you, John.

44

45 Thomas Alstrom.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 MS. PATTON: Thomas. Thomas, do we

50

0218

1 still have you on.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 MS. PATTON: Thomas Alstrom.

6

7 (Teleconference interference -
8 participants not muted)

9

10 MS. PATTON: Okay, it sounds like we
11 might have lost Thomas, we'll go through the rest of
12 the roll call and then I'll see if I can reconnect with
13 Thomas.

14

15 Jackie Cleveland.

16

17 MS. CLEVELAND: Yes.

18

19 (Teleconference interference -
20 participants not muted)

21

22 REPORTER: Just a reminder, if you're
23 not speaking please mute your phones.

24

25 (Teleconference interference -
26 participants not muted)

27

28 MS. PATTON: Yes, everybody take a
29 moment, there's a lot of background noise, it's really
30 difficult to hear. Please take a moment to look at
31 your phones, hit star, six to mute, or hit the mute
32 button.

33

34 And, I'm sorry, Jackie, I couldn't
35 quite hear you, what was your vote, please.

36

37 MS. CLEVELAND: I voted yes.

38

39 MS. PATTON: Yes. Thank you, Jackie.

40

41 James Landlord.

42

43 MR. LANDLORD: Yes.

44

45 MS. PATTON: Alissa Nadine Rogers.

46

47 MS. ROGERS: Yes.

48

49 MS. PATTON: Phillip Peter, Sr.

50

0219

1 MR. PETER: Yes.

2

3 MS. PATTON: Wasilly Alexie.

4

5 MR. ALEXIE: Yes.

6

7 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Wasilly.

8

9 Raymond Oney.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes.

12

13 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Raymond.

14

15 Robert Hoffman.

16

17 MR. HOFFMAN: Yes.

18

19 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Robert.

20

21 And, again, our Council members Myron
22 Naneng, Sir., is absent and Richard Slats is absent.

23

24 We'll go back to Thomas Alstrom, are
25 you connected online with us.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 MS. PATTON: We may have lost Thomas.
30 So with our current voting Council members we have 10
31 yes and three absent, motion passes.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair and Council
34 members.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Eva. Thank
37 you, Pippa. Thank you, everyone, for your input and
38 comments relating to these special action requests.
39 That'll end our agenda item for this. I believe I could
40 go ahead and call for a lunch break and come back at
41 2:00 o'clock unless there's anything that we need to
42 take care of before we go to lunch. Eva.

43

44 MR. PETER: Mr. Chairman, this is
45 Phillip. I'd like to excuse, I got a 1:00 o'clock
46 meeting and I will not be attending tomorrow's meeting.
47 I got 8:30 flight to Bethel going to Board of Game
48 meeting, if you don't mind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

49

50

0220

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you,
2 Mr. Phillip, for letting us know, you will be excused.
3 Make a note of that Eva.

4
5 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
6 thank you, Phillip. Have a safe flight.

7
8 MR. PETER: Okay. Quyana.

9
10 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. It is now 12:56
11 p.m., I would like to take a lunch break and come back
12 at 2:00 o'clock.

13
14 (Off record)

15
16 (On record)

17
18 (Teleconference interference -
19 participants not muted)

20
21 MS. PATTON: The information, if you
22 look on your agenda, yesterday where we left off under
23 new business Item 11, we left off with Item 11F,
24 Federal Subsistence Board annual report reply process
25 review and revision. And so all the rest of the
26 bullets under new business we're looking for Council
27 feedback but it's not necessary to have a formal vote
28 or a motion, we're really looking for that feedback and
29 discussion with the Council. And just a note on the
30 agenda, too, wanted to confirm with you, Mr. Chair and
31 Council members, we do have Rob Kaler from the
32 Migratory Birds Management Program available to present
33 on the Bering Sea seabirds status and he's available at
34 the end of the day today. So if we just keep an eye on
35 the agenda and, you know, try to get to him 4:30 or
36 5:00 o'clock, or, you know, right before the Council
37 would like to recess for the evening so that we can
38 give him a head's up to call in and provide his
39 presentation.

40
41 Thank you, Mr. Chair and Council. I'll
42 turn it back over to Chairman Oney.

43
44 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I'll call the meeting
45 back to order and the time now is 2:15 p.m. We could
46 go ahead and take under new business, the next item
47 would be G, receiving public testimony protocol, guided
48 discussion by OSM.

49
50

0221

1 MR. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman.

2

3 MS. LAVINE: Hello, Mr. Chairman.

4

5 MR. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Robert, go ahead.

8

9 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, I'm sorry to inform
10 you, I have a special important appointment at 3:00
11 o'clock and I'm asking to be excused until the morning,
12 I'll leave before 3:00 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you for
15 letting us know, you can be excused. I don't think
16 there's any action items that we will be looking at,
17 just mainly open discussion and hearing agency reports.
18 Thanks for letting us know, we'll see you in the
19 morning.

20

21 MR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

22

23 MS. LAVINE: Hello, Mr. Chair, this is
24 Robbin LaVine.

25

26 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Robbin LaVine you have
27 the floor.

28

29 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 And, Mr. Chair, I do believe that we are on Agenda Item
31 No. F, under new business, and that's the Federal
32 Subsistence Board annual report reply process, review
33 and revision. And we're looking for your discussion,
34 Council comments and feedback. So once again, for the
35 record, my name is Robbin LaVine and I'm the
36 Subsistence Policy Coordinator for OSM. This briefing
37 is about your annual report and, in particular, the
38 Board reply process. You finalized your annual report
39 yesterday afternoon on record.

40

41 During the Federal Subsistence Board's
42 August 2021 work session, the InterAgency Staff
43 Committee briefed the Board on the annual report reply
44 process and provided possible revisions to improve
45 responsiveness to Regional Advisory Council concerns.
46 This ISC briefing is part of a larger ISC effort to
47 improve workload efficiencies within the Federal
48 Subsistence Management Program. The Board reviewed and
49 discussed the report reply process and agreed to
50

0222

1 forward this topic to the Councils, to you, for your
2 input on the suggested revisions, including possible
3 ideas of your own.

4
5 So I'm going to start with just a
6 little background on annual reports.

7
8 So as you are aware, ANILCA Section
9 .805 authorizes the Councils to prepare an annual
10 report containing information related to important
11 subsistence resource issues within their regions.
12 These reports are invaluable as they provide the Board
13 with a broad holistic picture of local resource
14 conditions and the most up to date subsistence issues
15 facing communities across rural Alaska. With this
16 knowledge the Board can make informed decisions.

17
18 Historically, the Board has strived to
19 provide responses to every topic listed in annual
20 reports regardless of its authority to address the
21 issues raised. However, it is unclear if Board
22 responses on all annual report topics are helpful to
23 the Councils while also taking considerable Staff time
24 to complete. The ISC has suggested process revisions.

25
26 1. To maintain annual reports as a way
27 to inform the Board of local conditions, issues and
28 needs, and

29
30 2. To propose letter writing as a way
31 to request a response from the Board on topics of
32 concerns.

33
34
35 (Teleconference interference -
36 participants not muted)

37
38 REPORTER: I'm sorry, can we make sure
39 everybody mutes their phones who are not speaking.

40
41 MS. PATTON: Thanks. Just everyone
42 online, if you can please take a moment and check your
43 phones, hit star, six to mute, or your mute button, it
44 sounds like somebody's building a house.

45
46 MR. LANDLORD: I'm sorry, I forgot to
47 mute.

48
49 (Laughter)

50

0223

1 MS. PATTON: No worries, thank you so
2 much, James. All right, thank you, Robbin.

3
4 MS. LAVINE: So, once again, Mr. Chair
5 and members of the Council. I'll pick up with this
6 part of my briefing.

7
8 So we do recognize that Councils
9 already write letters to the Board and to other
10 agencies outside of the annual report process. You're
11 developing letters right now at this Council meeting.

12
13 Under this ISC scenario the only change
14 in the process is how the Board responds to issues
15 within your annual report. So this change might allow
16 some more substantive and timely responses from the
17 Board on topics of critical concern to the Council, for
18 example, a separate letter requesting Board response
19 could be written and submitted to the Board more
20 quickly than including the issue in the annual report
21 as the annual report requires a longer time for both
22 preparation of the report as well as for preparation of
23 the Board's response.

24
25 These suggested revisions are not
26 intended to diminish the ability of the Councils to
27 communicate with the Board. The Board relies on your
28 knowledge and expertise and annual reports are a way to
29 ensure the Board remains up to date on important
30 developments in your region.

31
32 So to that end, we are asking you to
33 think about what you want from the Board in response to
34 your annual report. And to help guide your discussion
35 I'm going to 1, review, again, the ISC's suggestions;
36 and then 2, open the floor to questions and Council
37 discussion, and, remember we're looking for your
38 feedback and input on the ISC recommendations or
39 suggestions, and these are that annual reports remain
40 to means to keep the Board informed of important
41 conditions, issues and needs and they propose that you
42 write a letter as a way to request Board response on
43 any important topics and concerns.

44
45 Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the
46 Council. I'm ready to respond to your questions and
47 take notes. Thank you.

48
49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robbin. Do
50

0224

1 we have any questions or comments for Robbin at this
2 time.

3

4

MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair, this is Robbin.
5 And I might further explain because I know we have some
6 new Council members at this meeting today. The annual
7 report, with its, I believe six topics that you just
8 reviewed yesterday, the annual report takes about --
9 takes two Council meetings to develop and it's a way
10 that you can inform the Board so once your annual
11 report is approved by the Council it will go to the
12 Board, along with Staff, will respond to the topics
13 you've developed. So you'll actually get to hear the
14 responses to your annual report when you come together
15 again in the fall. I'll let you know, because not all
16 Council members attend -- not everybody listens in --
17 but during the summer the Board has a work session and
18 during that summer work session, the Board reads and
19 reviews all the annual reports from the 10 Regional
20 Advisory Councils, and it's a tremendous opportunity to
21 be informed, as I said on the most up to date issues
22 from across the state of Alaska relevant to subsistence
23 and the subsistence way of life.

24

25

That would not change.

26

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The only thing that would be different
is how the Board responds to these annual replies and
it would -- the suggestion is that you would write
separate letters to -- regarding any issues, either in
your annual report or outside the annual report that
you want -- you're requesting a specific response to.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robbin. Do
we have any discussion right now regarding that from
the Board -- from the Council.

MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, Alissa Rogers.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Thank you, Robbin. I'm so happy to hear that there's
some type of process going on in regards to getting
comments and feedback. I do greatly appreciate it
because it will speed up our process. At this time I
don't have any feedback right now, but, thank you. I

0225

1 guess my feedback would be, I'm so happy to hear that
2 this is in the works right now and I really do
3 appreciate it because it allows for timely discussion
4 of things that we need to discuss and if we have to set
5 future meetings, I know to have a separate meeting or
6 another meeting, a special meeting in regards to
7 whatever topics we're talking about, we have to agree
8 at these annual meetings before we can even have
9 another meeting down the road. So I really appreciate
10 it, thank you so much.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Council members, any
13 comments related to this.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I know we discussed a
18 lot about the fisheries and the closures and we were
19 going to include in the letter what we mentioned
20 earlier and Eva could fill in what we talked about that
21 we were going to add to that letter. Would that be the
22 process we're looking for now.

23

24 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
25 this.....

26

27 MS. PATTON: Mr. Chair.....

28

29 MS. LAVINE:is Robbin -- oh, go
30 ahead, Eva.

31

32 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
33 Council members and I'll let Robbin follow up as well.
34 So this is actually seeking feedback. So we work
35 through the Council's annual report and we do have
36 those edits and additions that I will be completing and
37 getting your annual report back to you as the Chair for
38 your final review and approval to submit that to the
39 Board.

40

41 And then what Robbin is talking about
42 here was a proposal that came from the ISC to take a
43 look at how the Board replies to the Council's report
44 and any feedback on that. So in the fall, normally,
45 the Council receives the reply back from the Board that
46 has information -- you know, providing information that
47 was requested by the Council, responding to Council
48 concerns and recommendations. So that's what we're
49 talking about here is the actual reply that the Council
50

50

0226

1 normally receives from the Board. So over the years
2 the Board has responded to most of the Council's topics
3 in each annual report for each Council, or has done the
4 research to get the information if it's something
5 outside of the Board's authority to respond to a
6 Council request for information.

7
8 So that's what we're discussing here,
9 you know, how the Council feels about those replies and
10 the suggestion that's being made to, perhaps, not reply
11 to the Council on annual reports, but rather have the
12 Council write a letter to the Board directly if seeking
13 a reply. I don't know if that helps clarify the
14 distinction. We're talking about, you know, what the
15 Council thinks about getting the Board's response
16 directly to the annual reports.

17
18 Thank you, Mr. Chair. And Robbin might
19 have more to add as well.

20
21 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, this
22 is Robbin again. And I agree with everything that Eva
23 has said. One of the recommendations -- this process
24 was initiated by the InterAgency Staff Committee.
25 These are agency folks that are supporting each Board
26 member as they address subsistence issues as part of
27 the Board's members responsibilities. So they've
28 started this review process. And we often look at
29 different ways we do things at OSM and in the Federal
30 Subsistence Management Program and we're looking at
31 ways to improve efficiencies, improve communications
32 and this is one of those processes under review right
33 now. And recommendations and suggestions by the ISC
34 can be added to or countered by any comments that you
35 have and the Board really does look to the Councils for
36 their input and feedback on our public process, on our
37 communications back and forth between the Councils and
38 the Board and how we all work together in the Federal
39 Subsistence Management Program so anything you might
40 want to share is appreciated. It'll be summarized and
41 shared with the Board this summer after we review and
42 present your annual reports to the Board.

43
44 So, once, again, yeah, anything you
45 have to share would be greatly appreciated. And if --
46 if you don't want to share anymore that's fine, too, I
47 can move on to the next agenda item.

48
49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

0227

1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robbin. Do
2 we have any Council members that want to comment.

3
4 MR. ALEXIE: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is
5 Wasilly in Russian Mission.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Wasilly, go ahead.

8
9 MR. ALEXIE: Can I be excused, I have
10 an appointment -- if I can be excused the rest of the
11 day, I don't know when I'll be back, hopefully by
12 tomorrow's next session.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Eva, where would that
15 leave us as far as a quorum.

16
17 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
18 members of the Council. I think we would end up --
19 let's see -- we do have quorum still if Wasilly has an
20 appointment this afternoon, as well.

21
22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23
24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: And that would include
25 Robert, he will be leaving before 3:00.

26
27 MS. PATTON: That's right, Robert was
28 going to leave at 3:00.

29
30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. If we still have
31 a quorum then I'll excuse you until tomorrow morning.

32
33 MR. ALEXIE: Okay, thank you.

34
35 MS. PATTON: And, Mr. Chair and Council
36 members, thank you for the notification Wasilly. And,
37 again, this afternoon is mostly Council discussion and
38 then on to agency reports so we don't have action items
39 that require a full vote and quorum in order to do
40 that. So thank you Council members, and thank you
41 Wasilly, and we'll have everybody back on tomorrow
42 morning, I know a busy week for all.

43
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45
46 MR. ALEXIE: Okay, thank you.

47
48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: I think I'll be in the
49 same shoes with Alissa. I'm glad to see that the
50

0228

1 process is being considered. I know when we do submit
2 a letter it takes awhile for us to get feedback but if
3 there's any concerns that we have regarding the issues
4 that we've put on in a letter to the Federal
5 Subsistence Board during our annual report we still can
6 submit the letter if it needs urgent consideration or
7 action.

8

9

That'd be it.

10

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MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm taking notes. Mr. Chair, if there are no more comments, under new business, agenda Item No. F, I can move on to agenda Item No. G, receiving public testimony protocol, and this is another guided discussion for your feedback from you.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. If there is no other comments related to the reply process we could go ahead and take up the next item, G, receiving public testimony protocol, guided discussion. Go ahead, Robbin.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Once again, for the record, this is Robbin LaVine with the Office of Subsistence Management and I'm presenting a briefing to you for your input on receiving public testimony during your Regional Advisory Council meetings in the fall on regulatory proposals. That's what this briefing's about.

So all 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils were formed under Title VIII of ANILCA and they chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. ANILCA gives each Regional Advisory Council an authority to provide a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations by persons interested in any matter related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region. And encourage local and regional participation in the decisionmaking process affecting the take of fish and wildlife on public lands within the region for subsistence uses. So that's your authority under ANILCA.

Federal Advisory Committee Act stipulates that any member of the public is permitted to file a written statement or speak to the Advisory Committee if the agency guidelines allow. During each regulatory cycle, so that's like a fisheries regulatory

1 cycle where we're seeking calls for fisheries proposals
2 or our wildlife regulatory cycle where we have a call
3 for wildlife regulatory proposals and then we have the
4 analysis and we present those to you, that's our
5 regulatory cycles and we seek your recommendations. So
6 during each regulatory cycle there are four
7 opportunities for the public to provide their oral and
8 written testimony to the Federal Subsistence Board and
9 to you, the Councils.

10

11 First opportunity starts after the call
12 for the proposals, it's officially known as the
13 proposed rule it gets published in the Federal
14 Register. And this is an opportunity to submit
15 proposals, or any significant comments to the Board.

16

17 Second opportunity begins when the
18 validated regulatory proposals are published on the
19 Federal Subsistence Management Program website. So
20 people can write in provide comments on proposed
21 regulations.

22

23 The third opportunity for public
24 comment on regulatory proposals occurs during the
25 Council meeting, usually in the fall.

26

27 And then the fourth opportunity for
28 public comments on regulatory proposals occurs during
29 the Board regulatory meetings when the Board takes
30 action. And these comments are used by the Board in
31 their decisionmaking process.

32

33 So for the purpose of this briefing I
34 will explain the third opportunity for public comments
35 on proposals that happens during the Regional Advisory
36 Council meetings, and this is the subject of our guided
37 discussion today.

38

39 Public comments on proposals accepted
40 during Council public meetings inform the Councils in
41 making their recommendations to the Board. The Council
42 Chair or your Council Coordinator presents the Council
43 recommendations and any supporting data to the Board at
44 it's regulatory meetings. This round of public comments
45 and proposals are part of the record for the Council
46 meeting, not the Board of meeting. Public comments on
47 proposals are accepted after the presentation of each
48 proposal analysis, these include oral comments provided
49 by the public attending the meeting and written
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1 comments provided by the public during the meeting.
2 Written comments are read to or summarized for the
3 Council. And, again, these comments inform the Council
4 and will not be included in the Board proposal
5 analysis. Public comments on non-agenda items are
6 accepted at the start of each day of a Council meeting.

7

8 In the past when the Councils met in
9 person, the public brought their written public
10 comments to the meeting to be distributed to the
11 Council members and other meeting participants. During
12 the fall 2021 meeting cycle since all meetings were
13 held via teleconference, the OSM leadership deemed it
14 necessary to establish a temporary procedure for the
15 submission of written public comments during the
16 Council meetings. The public was directed to submit
17 written comments to the centralized OSM email during
18 the meeting as it was indicated in that years proposed
19 rule published in the Federal Register. The OSM Staff
20 read these comments into the record verbatim during the
21 meetings. This was an interim procedure.

22

23 Now, prior to the Councils fall 2022
24 meeting cycle, when the Councils are going to discuss
25 fisheries proposals and closure reviews we're
26 requesting the Councils input on how, you, the Councils
27 would prefer receiving written public comments
28 submitted to them after the proposed rule deadline. So
29 after that comment period in the summer. These are
30 comments that the Council may want to consider in
31 formulating their recommendations to the Board. Once
32 OSM receives input from the Councils on permanent
33 guidelines, we will then update the written framework
34 accordingly. So this isn't an action item but we
35 encourage your discussion and feedback.

36

37 For the Council's feedback we developed
38 a number of questions that we would like the Council
39 members to respond to. Remember, that we are talking
40 about the written public comments submitted only to the
41 Council. These comments are used by the Councils to
42 make their recommendations to the Board. The comments
43 themselves will not be shared with the Board.

44

45 So I have a list of five questions
46 here. And what I suggest is that I ask them -- I'm
47 going to read them all, one, two, three, four, five, so
48 you know what they are, you kind of got a head's up for
49 them, and then we can take them up one by one and see

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1 if you have any response to these questions. So I'm
2 going to read all five of them first and then we're
3 going to go back to No. 1, okay.

4
5 Okay, so here they all are, one, two,
6 three, four five.

7
8 No. 1. In the Council's opinion, what
9 are the best ways to encourage public feedback to the
10 Councils.

11
12 No. 2. Would the Council prefer to
13 receive comments from the public orally or in writing.

14
15 No. 3. Would it be helpful to the
16 Council if OSM requests the written public comments
17 submitted to your Council Coordinator prior to the
18 meeting within a certain time period and the
19 Coordinator, in turn, will summarize these comments and
20 present them to the Council during the meeting.

21
22 No. 4. Is it better for the Council if
23 received public comments are read verbatim into the
24 record or summarized.

25
26 No. 5. Do you have any other
27 suggestions regarding the ways of improving written or
28 oral public testimony procedures during the Council
29 meeting.

30
31 So those are all the five questions. I
32 know it's a lot guys so please be patient with me. I'm
33 going to read No. 1 again and then wait for your
34 comments and questions.

35
36 Question No. 1. In the Council's
37 opinion, what are the best ways to encourage public
38 feedback to the Councils.

39
40 MARILYN: What was the question?

41
42 MS. LAVINE: Question No. 1, through
43 the Chair, is:

44
45 In the Council's opinion, what are the
46 best ways to encourage public feedback to the Councils.

47
48 MARILYN: This is Marilyn from
49 Alakanuk. But one of the things I thought of was when
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1 organizations have meetings and updates on anything
2 like that has to do with like fishing or subsistence,
3 and like our ways of our -- like our ways of living out
4 here, if the like -- like for YKRAC meetings or
5 teleconference or -- and I know this is my first time
6 on here but I suggested like, you know, our tribes,
7 it's usually the organization that informs the tribe
8 that they're sending one person like to go meeting.
9 But then my thought was if the tribes -- if all these
10 other tribes -- tribes or corporation send in a person
11 as well, to me, that will cause more awareness and more
12 awareness for the rural communities.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council member.

17

18 MR. HOFFMAN: Mr. Chairman.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Robert, go ahead.

21

22 MR. HOFFMAN: Yeah, I feel that it's
23 more powerful and more, you know, more understanding if
24 we have public comment in person versus a letter. If
25 it's a letter, we just read it off, with no expressions
26 or anything. But in person they always answer with
27 their true self.

28

29 Thank you.

30

31 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council member.

32

33 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any other Council
34 members that would like to comment on this, on what is
35 the best way to get feedback from the public during our
36 Council meeting. I think for.....

37

38 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

41

42 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Through the Chair. Thank you, Robbin. I have a couple
44 things that I'd like to add. The first one would be
45 that we send our agenda out to the tribal offices as
46 soon as we get a draft agenda. And we try to get, at
47 least, the agenda items out three months in advance to
48 the tribal offices so they could conduct their meetings
49 with their tribes and their community, get feedback

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1 from them so that they can have a voice to voice their
2 opinions at our meetings.

3

4

5 The other one, too, would be, if we are
6 going to be having any huge topics like, for instance,
7 the chum fishery this year, we could also look at KYUK
8 announcements for our meetings with highlighted agenda
9 topic items, like we're going to be talking about chum
10 salmon, there's a proposal -- open for proposals for
11 the Board of Fish and the Federal Subsistence Board to
12 talk about fish management. Having those, at least,
13 three months in advance and keep them posted does make
14 a huge difference when having these meetings.

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Also if we could utilize the radio
stations and start sending out notifications two to
three weeks in advance to let them know about these
meetings that are taking place.

And to discuss with what public written
comments are. I know we only have the current online
written system but we need to be realistic, no one has
really good internet out here, not everyone's cell
phone works with data, my hand is being raised on that,
so being able to give comments via written dialogue
online does not work for rural Alaska. We used to
accept letters, written letters, anything by mail,
anything by fax and even ones that were hand delivered
and dropped off at any Fish and Wildlife Service
office. Any of those letters would get sent to the
Coordinator and the Coordinator would write them out
for us or put them with the associated public comment
section in our agenda. Now, if we could go back to
that I believe that we would be getting a lot more
feedback like we used to. I remember seeing letters
that were written by tribal Councils, that were written
by individuals, mothers at fish camps that were writing
about how their day went and how they felt because of
the restrictions when they first started, and how they
couldn't go fishing, you know, those type of things
that are sentimentally associated with being able to
hear what they have say, we have to open up those
avenues and not restrict them by saying, oh, we can't
accept this because you have to do it online. If we
can go back to doing that, it'd be really great,
especially for us folks out here and I especially
believe the northern region would appreciate that as
well because they're technically -- their technology
also is not that great, or reliable.

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1 So for the next thing would be -- I
2 would really love to see us going back to having in-
3 person meetings. And I know it's a dark barking dog at
4 this point, or a whistle in the wind because of Covid,
5 but having our meetings back in face to face meetings
6 would be really great because those folks who were able
7 to make it to our meetings and those folks who were
8 able to be there, we were able to get sideline
9 conversations, able to talk to each other, be able to
10 help each other understand what's going on and then
11 when we would come to deliberation of stuff like this
12 or things that we could have an impact on how we could
13 better serve the people out here, we really, really,
14 really need that face to face interaction with them.
15 Because I definitely can tell you, it beats trying to
16 text people right and left, or getting texts from
17 people and trying to keep up with who's texting me at
18 what point.

19
20 But those are things that I'd like to
21 see us go back to and be able to have these meetings in
22 the capacity to where the public can reach us and it's
23 not difficult for them to reach us.

24
25 And if need be -- if we need to put our
26 personal information out there for the public to
27 contact us I am more than happy to provide my
28 information. I love hearing from people and I love
29 giving them feedback and helping them out, writing down
30 their conversations or what their main topics are and
31 points of view are so when we go to these meetings I
32 can bring forth my notes that I took over the years, or
33 over the past couple months since our last meeting, and
34 if we have an open dialogue for people to call in and
35 who are making comments or letting U.S. Fish and
36 Wildlife Service know here in Bethel that, you know, we
37 had a tough time, blah, blah, blah, those are public
38 comments and those comments should be brought forward
39 to these meetings so we know what they're getting on
40 their end so that we can talk about what's happening on
41 our end.

42
43 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa.
46 Yeah, I feel the same way too. I think sending the
47 agenda well in advance will give tribes an opportunity
48 to at least come up with ideas on what they'd like to
49 see proposed on any of the agenda items that we have
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1 that come before us. So I think face to face meetings
2 is the best way to talk with people because you're
3 there and the recorder is there to record the public
4 testimony and I think I would go either way, either in
5 writing if there's tribes that want to submit a
6 proposal or a recommendation, it should come in writing
7 to specific topics that they want to address in our
8 agenda. I think we should keep that open for written
9 comments or in-person when we do meet in-person. And
10 like for now, I know we got our agenda probably about a
11 month before our meeting so that's -- if we think
12 about, you know, what we want to include in our agenda
13 and to put that in draft way ahead of time I think that
14 would give tribes and public to at least see what's
15 going to be discussed and hopefully they'd be able to
16 submit either written comments or proposals or to be
17 there in person.

18
19 Those are my comments, thank you.

20
21 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22
23 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Is there any other
24 Council members that would like to provide comments at
25 this time.

26
27 MR. PARKS: Mr. Chairman.

28
29 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Wasilly, go ahead.

30
31 MR. PARKS: Henry Parks from
32 Nunapitchuk.

33
34 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Oh, sorry, Henry, go
35 ahead.

36
37 MR. PARKS: Yeah, I want to make a
38 comment on this issue here on our agenda. About two
39 days ago -- I believe it was two days ago but anyways I
40 called my neighboring villages through VHF and I let
41 them know that we were going to have this RAC meeting,
42 so I just told them to -- if they want to be in the
43 teleconference with us I told them -- I gave them the
44 number and the passcode so right now we all know that
45 we're affected by this pandemic and we cannot meet in-
46 person so right -- so these are all important agendas
47 that we are dealing with right now, especially fishing,
48 subsistence fishing.

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1 But anyways just to let you guys know
2 that I need -- let my neighboring villages know by VHF
3 and I told him the teleconference number.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council member.

8
9 MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair, James.

10
11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: James, go ahead.

12
13 MR. LANDLORD: Yes. I think the public
14 comment, public comment is after the Council receives
15 some proposals and trying to get the public involved
16 and getting feedback. The Council members need to
17 receive the proposals in advance. Like Henry say,
18 nowadays Covid is affecting everybody in the United
19 States and even here in Alaska and here in the villages
20 that we can't gather together for any kind of meetings,
21 everything's done by teleconference. For now I think
22 if you have an opinion for feedback you can either
23 write a letter, fax it in, email it, I think that would
24 be the best way to do it.

25
26 I sit on the tribal council here in
27 Mountain Village for a long time and we are just busy.

28
29 MS. LAVINE: Hum.

30
31 MR. LANDLORD: When Covid first started
32 a couple years ago we had tribal consultation with the
33 Federal government, sometimes it's 5:00 o'clock in the
34 morning because of time differences in Washington,
35 D.C., got to get up early in the morning to accommodate
36 9:00 o'clock in the morning in D.C., so I think letter
37 writing -- the public needs to know in advance too that
38 proposals, what's on the table. So I think what I
39 mentioned, letter, email I think that would be the best
40 way to treat that since public meetings is almost gone
41 because of this pandemic.

42
43 Quyana.

44
45 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council
46 members. Mr. Chair, again, this is Robbin.

47
48 (Teleconference interference -
49 participants not muted)

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Robbin, go ahead.

2

3 MS. LAVINE: Your discussions have hit
4 a number of my questions and I greatly appreciate that.
5 There are a couple of questions that we didn't quite
6 touch on because you've given me such valuable
7 feedback. I do, though, want to ask Question No. 4,
8 and then maybe a wrap up question No. 5.

9

10 Question No. 4, what I'm hearing from
11 you is that there needs to be many ways for the public
12 to participate because not -- because some people may
13 not have good wifi, they may not be able to do email,
14 but they could do fax, or they could mail things in, et
15 cetera, so I'm hearing that we need many different
16 avenues for the public to provide their input to you,
17 the Council. I'm also hearing that all of you are
18 saying the best way to receive input is in-person, and
19 I agree. But if we were to receive written public
20 comments by the public who is not in attendance, is it
21 better for the Councils if the received public comments
22 are read verbatim into the record or summarized?

23

24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25

26 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robbin.

29 Alissa, go ahead.

30

31 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
32 personal preference. I like them when they were read
33 into the record as long as they're not three pages. I
34 believe the longest one we had was like three or four
35 pages long and it took a -- we kind of got lost in that
36 type of stuff but if it's a page or smaller, definitely
37 write [sic] them in, but if they're longer key points
38 of their main topic would be nice. I know that a lot
39 of our stuff that's given to us written are not being
40 put into the comments, but the other thing, too, that I
41 would like to see for public testimony and comments,
42 any type of material that we get, is if we can put them
43 on our web page under public comments. Like we could
44 have under our meeting then we have our agenda, we have
45 our additional information and then we have a specific
46 little section for public comments, and in those public
47 comments I'd like to see like a number of what -- what
48 number line did that public comment come in and then
49 their last name and then a quick blurb about what they

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1 -- what their main topic was, like our blue cards that
2 we used to have. That would be really nice to have
3 those because when we think about what someone said but
4 we can't remember exactly what they said, it's good to
5 go back in their language -- go back to that language
6 that we had just got done reading and be able to reread
7 what they wrote so that we can be better -- articulate
8 better what we're trying to say.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair, this is Robbin.

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Robbin, go ahead.

15

16 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 Through the Chair. Council Member Rogers, are you --
18 I'm really interested in this idea of yours. Are you
19 talking about in your -- on our -- in your -- your
20 Council's tab on our website where we have meeting
21 materials, so we have meeting materials, that there
22 would be a click for, you know, public comments and
23 then those public comments would they be listed there
24 verbatim or would they be summarized as in like the
25 green cards.

26

27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28

29 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Through the Chair. Thank you, Robbin. Yes, I would
31 like to see them verbatim. I don't believe in
32 summarizing or masking anyone's public comments.
33 Public comments, the term public means it's public for
34 everyone to see. So I'd appreciate to see what they
35 want to say because there's very many different ways of
36 interpreting a document. The way I interpret a
37 document and the way someone in Anchorage would
38 interpret a document versus someone in Alakanuk to
39 interpret a document, or even between me and my mom to
40 interpret a document is completely different. So each
41 person has their own individual interpretation of how
42 they want to come across or put their information out
43 there. So the ability to see exactly what they're
44 saying in the full verbatim would be greatly
45 appreciated and it will justice for our public to show
46 them that we are being transparent and we really want
47 to hear what they have to say.

48

49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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0239

1 MARILYN: Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

4

5 MARILYN: Hi, this is Marilyn from
6 Alakanuk. Another way to like awareness of what you
7 guys are doing, I believe, is to like get an advocate
8 to spread awareness for what you guys are trying to do
9 and for what you guys are trying to get feedback on. I
10 think -- I know a lot of places, companies or
11 organizations, they have board members, reps, but then
12 whatever information they have usually -- usually
13 doesn't get out there to the communities but then with
14 one organization they just -- that I know of they just
15 started hiring reps for their organization because for
16 so long they try to get -- spread awareness or get like
17 public feedback and how can they help people in the
18 communities and they were getting little to no help
19 spreading that awareness and now they have reps,
20 they're hiring reps for lower Yukon and upriver
21 villages. So I think that kind of need -- because, you
22 know, a lot of these companies or organizations they
23 have council members, they have people that sit on the
24 board and -- but then there's the -- the information
25 that's given to them sometimes isn't brought out or
26 maybe it's not -- they don't have that help to help
27 them bring out the information that needs to be passed
28 on to these communities. But if there's a rep, that
29 rep could focus on spreading that information, whatever
30 it is that needs to be given out to the communities and
31 organizations.

32

33 (Teleconference interference -
34 participants not muted)

35

36 MARILYN: And some lady earlier
37 mentioned KYUK and in our area we get KNON so that
38 would be one of the ways of spreading awareness or
39 spreading what you guys are trying to do.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council member.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, Ray Oney here. I
46 think for me, I think verbatim would be the way to go
47 because if we do summarize the written comments we may
48 be missing out on some key words that the presenter
49 might be trying to address. I think verbatim would be
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1 the best way and then incorporate them into a public
2 comment. So think verbatim would be my way of taking
3 public comments.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
8 members of the Council. Your feedback has been really
9 helpful. And I truly hope we are in person in the fall
10 but good to be prepared.

11
12 MR. SHEPARD: Mr. Chair, this is
13 Stanislaus Shepard with Natural Resources,
14 Asa'carsamiut Tribal Council. I feel that I may be
15 speaking out of turn but would it be okay to hear it
16 from a person that's -- over the years go attend the
17 Board meetings and do public testimony and sort of like
18 that. Would that be okay, Chairman.

19
20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, Robbin, you
21 have.....

22
23 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, through
24 the.....

25
26 CHAIRMAN ONEY:an answer for
27 that.

28
29 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair. Dennis
30 [sic], you're in the natural resources department for
31 which tribal council?

32
33 MR. SHEPARD: This is Stanislaus
34 Shepard for Asa'carsamiut Tribal Council, Mountain
35 Village Tribal Council. And since 1986 I've been in
36 this political arena for fighting for our subsistence
37 every time. We get proposals geared toward restricting
38 our subsistence harvest, it would require somebody to
39 go to the Board and testify. I've seen it many ways
40 via email, fax, letters, in person testifying. All
41 those -- out of all those two of them worked the best
42 in what I've experienced over the years since 1986
43 public testimony in person, letting the Board see you
44 giving that testimony, expressing how important it is,
45 black and white letter only express how it's important,
46 it'll just give you the facts, this means a lot to the
47 community, but if you're in person, that expression
48 will make them change their mind and decisions on how
49 they vote. So that's what I have experienced over the
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1 years. I was very afraid to go to the North Pacific
2 Fisheries Council to testify on the bycatch and after
3 about four or five meetings versus letter writing, it
4 -- it got into their minds that in order to cut down
5 the bycatch, I asked them, you guys fish eight months
6 out of the year and we, on the Yukon River, subsistence
7 for salmon less than two months out of the year, what
8 part of the eight months is your high bycatch, what
9 part of the month and they said October, November. I
10 said wouldn't it be -- wouldn't it make sense if you
11 cut down the fishing hours in those two months to cut
12 down the bycatch so that the Yukon River can have the
13 sustained salmon to come in to allow us to do
14 subsistence, not commercial, subsistence everybody -- I
15 seen their expressions on their face and low and behold
16 maybe a year after they cut down fishing in those two
17 months where the highest bycatch percentage was. So
18 when we go to North Pacific Fisheries and give public
19 testimony versus letters they look at that public
20 testimony and really see how hard it impacts us --
21 impacts the subsistence way of life on the Yukon and
22 the Kuskokwim versus a letter.

23

24 So that's what I've experienced over
25 the years, me giving testimony and coming up to the
26 Boards and trying to make them change their minds about
27 the restrictions they have on us.

28

29 Thank you, very much, Mr. Chair.

30

31 Thank you, very much, Robbin.

32

33 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chair, this is Norma,
34 may I add a comment.

35

36 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma, go ahead.

37

38 MS. EVAN: We also need to think about
39 our elders, the 10 to 15 percent that are not using
40 public media and internet. I think a good way to get
41 awareness out what be KYUK out of Bethel, they do make
42 announcements in Yup'ik, and also the Delta Discovery.
43 I know when the Delta Discovery gets here everybody is
44 waiting to review it and that would be a great way of
45 getting awareness for testimonies from our regions.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Norma. Is

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1 there.....

2

3 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
4 Council members -- Mr. Chair, please proceed.

5

6 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead. I was going
7 to ask if there was any other Council members that may
8 want to comment, if not, go ahead, Robbin.

9

10 MS. LAVINE: I was just going to
11 express my gratitude for the Council members and for
12 the members of the public who are giving their input on
13 public testimony. I really appreciate all the feedback
14 you've given us and, really much more, you've really
15 gone beyond the scope of -- in a good way, of the
16 questions I had prepared.

17

18 Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the
19 Council.

20

21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robbin. If
22 there are no other comments I think we could go ahead
23 and proceed. If you have the other questions that we
24 need to see how we could address it or are you going to
25 go ahead and move on.

26

27 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. Through the
28 Chair. The last question is, just really asking for
29 any additional information or ideas, which I believe
30 you, and the Council members and the members of the
31 public have already provided.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. If
36 there's no additional comments we could go ahead and
37 move on to the next item on the agenda.

38

39 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
40 next item on the agenda is a briefing on Council
41 comments -- it's a briefing and we're looking for
42 Council comments but they are not necessary and this is
43 on proposed actions to automate Federal subsistence
44 permits. This isn't an action item.

45

46 So once again, this is Robbin LaVine,
47 and I'll be providing a briefing on proposed actions to
48 automate Federal subsistence.

49

50

1 To begin with I'm going to introduce
2 two governing statutes that provide the impetus behind
3 this briefing. They are the Paperwork Reduction Act,
4 and the eGovernment Act. As a Federal Program we're
5 covered by these acts. The Paperwork Reduction Act
6 requires all Federal departments and agencies gain
7 approval through the Office of Management and Budget,
8 the OMB, prior to the collection of information from
9 the public. For example in our program, we collect
10 information from the public for subsistence permits,
11 Council member applications as well as information
12 needed for the signage used for fishwheels, nets and
13 buoy markers. Even the requirements to submit a lower
14 moose jaw, the sealing of untanned animal skins, and
15 other biological submissions are covered under this
16 statute.

17
18 This law was designed to protect you,
19 the public, from unreasonable requirements to provide
20 data and/or personal information without justification.
21 To gain approval an agency must provide reasons this
22 information will be collected, what it will be used
23 for, how it may be used outside of the original intent,
24 who will have access to the information, and how it
25 will be stored. The approval process often takes
26 between a year to a year and a half and will provide
27 clearance for three years.

28
29 So now we're moving on to the
30 eGovernment Act. So the purpose of the eGovernment Act
31 is to improve internet-based information technology and
32 citizen access to government information and services.
33 In our Program, this includes our webpage, providing
34 news releases, meeting materials, and other
35 information, and the use of social media which allows
36 for the swift notifications regarding special actions,
37 meetings, and submissions of regulatory proposals.
38 Our webpage and social media sites are monitored by DOI
39 24/7 to ensure we meet all requirements of the law and
40 departmental policies.

41
42 After our most recent OMB clearance to
43 collect information from the public, OMB tasked us with
44 exploring the use of automated permits within our
45 Program. We recognize that many issues would accompany
46 the use of automated permits, especially in Alaska and
47 these issues must be addressed before any attempt is
48 made to use internet permits.

49
50

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1 That's why we are asking you, the
2 Councils, and the public for ideas on issuing permits
3 in the future. Any and all ideas are welcome. There
4 are several overriding factors that must be understood
5 as we consider these ideas.

6
7 First, all Federal permits must be
8 issued by a Federal agency and cannot be delegated to a
9 non-Federal entity, such as a local or State entity or
10 a tribal government. The cost must be considered,
11 because our Program has limited budget and we
12 prioritize support for Board and Council meetings and
13 funding for the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.
14 Also a paper permit will still have to be carried into
15 the field for proof when addressing law enforcement or
16 field Staff.

17
18 Some of the questions we think we need
19 to answer while considering an automated permit system
20 include, and this is especially here in Alaska.

21
22 How can we verify a person is a
23 Federally-qualified user through an automated permit
24 system.

25
26 How do we address the lack of or
27 substandard infrastructure in rural communities if
28 internet permits are issued.

29
30 How will managers address quotas,
31 and/or limit the amount of permits issued in the case
32 of conservation concerns.

33
34 How will managers deal with the lack of
35 reporting of harvest results in the case of power
36 failures or lack of the internet. Especially when
37 reporting requirements are listed as 48 or 72 hours due
38 to severe conservation concerns.

39
40 How would this possible change affect
41 subsistence users.

42
43 What method of issuing permits would be
44 preferred by subsistence users.

45
46 While this is not a formal request for
47 comments, but you can send comments to our general
48 email box subsistence at fws.gov, we're accepting
49 comments through November 15th of 2022. More
50

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1 information will be provided to the Councils as this
2 process moves forward.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the
5 Council.

6

7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Robbin. I
8 know a lot of tribes issue tribal IDs. I think that'd
9 be a way to identify them as Federally-qualified users.
10 And also we have RITs that are employed by Fish and
11 Wildlife Service, I think that'd be one avenue of
12 utilizing them to go out to the villages, you know, and
13 issue permits if needed, I think, and incorporate into
14 that however they need to be presented to the proper
15 people. I think that'd be a way to do it, utilize the
16 RITs to gather that information. And like I said the
17 tribes, the majority of the tribes do have their own
18 IDs -- ID process to identify their tribal members,
19 that'd be the way to do it also.

20

21 That'd be my comments.

22

23 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Any other comments from
26 the Council.

27

28 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry, I
29 got disconnected and just got reconnected back on.

30

31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, Alissa, we're
32 talking about new business, under H, briefing and
33 Council comments on proposed action to automate Federal
34 subsistence permits, what's the best way to gather the
35 information and also identify who the real Federal
36 users are. Maybe Robbin can help if I misspoke.

37

38 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 Council Member Rogers. Did you hear any of my
40 presentation?

41

42 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 Through the Chair, Robbin, thank you, yes, I was able
44 to hear your presentation, I just missed the last --
45 like the last three minutes of it.

46

47 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council -- Mr.
48 Chair and Council members. So the last bit of my
49 presentation was letting you know that this isn't a
50

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1 formal -- this isn't a formal request for comments but
2 anybody that wants to provide comments on the idea, the
3 possibility of automated Federal subsistence permits in
4 Alaska, we'll be accepting comments through November
5 15th of 2022, we'll be providing more information to
6 the Councils as the process moves forward and this is
7 something that we are tasked with doing, you know,
8 we're tasked with often reviewing our processes and
9 finding ways of improving our services and that --
10 because we are a Federal agency that means something
11 different in Alaska than it might in other parts of the
12 United States. And so having, you know, your rural
13 Alaskan experience and comments to feed into this
14 process is always beneficial.

15
16 Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the
17 Council.

18
19 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair.

20
21 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead, Alissa.

22
23 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24 Through the Chair, thank you Robbin for that last bit.
25 I do have a few things that I wanted to add into this
26 which I'm really passionate about moving forward,
27 making sure everyone is connected and making accessible
28 to everyone as possible in regards to pretty much
29 everything that you just spoke about and having an
30 automated system is fantastic. Trust me. I'm so for
31 it. It gives the new generation to come and be able to
32 voice their opinions. It gives folks who aren't able
33 to travel to join in on our meetings or be able to get
34 access to stuff they need, permits, walrus tags, et
35 cetera, et cetera. But I'm sure later on down the road
36 they're going to have to make it work for rural Alaska.
37 I can totally see that in Washington, D.C., this means
38 something different than how we do it in Bethel.

39
40 The one thing we got to strongly
41 advocate for the rural area is that we do not have a
42 system, provided internet system that is reliable, that
43 is unlimited, that works consistently and is not the
44 fastest speed, because right now my phone is going off
45 of 3G, sometimes it goes to ZeroG, and the only form of
46 real -- being able to get these permits and being able
47 to get things tagged and being able to get our
48 applications in, that luxury is not in our best
49 interest or on our side at all but that doesn't mean to
50

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1 rule it out. Having that ability and something there
2 is great. But because of where we live and how
3 business is conducted out here in rural Alaska, we need
4 to have those, our old options, and our old system in
5 place even if we were going to do this automated
6 system.

7
8 Now, to get an idea of who actual
9 Federally-qualified subsistence users are, they're
10 going to have to show proof that they only own one home
11 in rural Alaska, they can't have two homes, let's say
12 you can't have a home here and you can't have a home in
13 Juneau and try to claim rural stuff out here in Bethel
14 as being a Federally-qualified user when you spend half
15 of your time in both locations, it doesn't work. So
16 they have to provide that they have a home here and
17 they have to show documented proof, like they're going
18 to have to scan their documents in and they're going to
19 have to show some form, let's say a voter registration,
20 you can only have one voting registration so a voting
21 registration it is. A mortgage on a home. Your rental
22 agreement. You know something that shows that you are
23 literally living here, you have been living here for a
24 year.

25
26 And then they have to fill out an
27 application online with the ability to upload pictures.
28 Let's say if someone wants to tag, a walrus tusk,
29 they're going to have to take a measurement of this
30 tusk, provide picture proof of this tusk and then we'll
31 be able to get the information down and then once it's
32 processed in the system then that person who has to
33 take care of those taggings can verify it and then ship
34 it out, ship the tag out to the person. And then to
35 complete that transaction that person is going to have
36 to send another picture in order to prove that that tag
37 has been placed on that item. That's something I was
38 thinking about as you guys were talking about.

39
40 Okay, I'll shut up now.

41
42 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Council Member
43 Rogers. Through the Chair, thank you.

44
45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any other
46 comments from the Council at this time.

47
48 (No comments)

49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, I believe
2 we could go ahead and go down to the next agenda item.

3
4 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
5 members of the Council. This is me, and hopefully this
6 is the last of me for awhile. This agenda item, No. I,
7 is a briefing on the Secretarial regulations proposing
8 the inclusion of identified submerged lands in the
9 Tongass National Forest. This is an informational
10 brief only and no action is required on the part of the
11 Council.

12
13 This is the second rulemaking on this
14 subject. The first taking place with the publication
15 of a proposed rule in June 2016 and the final rule in
16 May 2018.

17
18 To comply with a court order,
19 Peratrovich, et al., versus United State and the state
20 of Alaska, the Secretaries were directed to initiate
21 regulatory proceedings to identify those submerged
22 lands within the Tongass National Forest that did not
23 pass to the state of Alaska at statehood, and,
24 therefore, remain Federal public lands subject to
25 Federal subsistence provisions. This task was
26 forwarded to the Federal Subsistence Board by the
27 Secretaries. This proposed rule would add to the list
28 of submerged parcels in the Federal subsistence
29 regulations that have been identified through agency
30 review. The purpose of this proposed rule is to
31 complete regulatory proceedings addressing submerged
32 public lands within the Tongass National Forest, as
33 directed by the court.

34
35 The majority of these submerged lands
36 are low-water lines, reefs, rocks and very small
37 islands, 100 yards to a mile and a half in length -- or
38 to half a mile in length.

39
40 This document is expected to be
41 published in the Federal Register in February 2022 and
42 will have a 60 day comment period. The exact dates
43 will be announced by news release and social media.

44
45 If you or the public desires to comment
46 on this proposed rule you may submit comments
47 electronically or by mail. Information will be on our
48 website, also announced through news release and social
49 media or you can reach out to Staff if you want to know
50

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1 more. And as a Council if you desire to comment on
2 this proposed rule you may submit your comments to the
3 Council Coordinator.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the
6 public -- members of the Council.

7

8 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you
9 for that information. Does anyone want to comment on
10 that at this time.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, I guess
15 we could go ahead and continue if you have any more
16 presentations to make, Robbin, at this time.

17

18 MS. LAVINE: No, Mr. Chair, thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you. Thank
21 you, very much for filling us in on those agenda items.
22 I believe the next item on the list we have the
23 waterfowl report by Rob Kaler. Before we put him
24 online, maybe we should go ahead and take a 10 minute
25 break and I think that might end our day and then
26 tomorrow morning we could go ahead and take up the
27 agency reports. Would that be in order.

28

29 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, this
30 is Eva. And actually I have to give Rob just a little
31 bit more head's up, I thought we would be getting to
32 his report around 4:00 o'clock or 4:30. We.....

33

34 MR. KALER: Hi, this is Rob, I'm
35 available so thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you Eva.

36

37 MS. PATTON: Oh, wonderful, thank you,
38 Rob. Thank you, Rob, and go ahead, Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, let's go ahead
41 and take a 10 minute break since you're online, are you
42 leaving us any time soon or are you pushing for time.

43

44 MR. KALER: Mr. Chair, Rob here. I am
45 standing by. Enjoy your break, I'll be ready.

46

47 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. Let's go ahead
48 and take a 10 minute break and then we'll take up the
49 waterfowl report, thank you. 10 minute break and we'll

50

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1 come back at quarter to 4:00, thank you. Take a 10
2 minute break.

3

4 (Off record)

5

6 (On record)

7

8 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
9 members of the Council. So for Rob Kaler's seabird
10 report, that Powerpoint was printed and mailed to you
11 in your supplemental materials packet so that was the
12 priority mail envelope packet and that has the seabird
13 report and all the NOAA and North Pacific Fisheries
14 Management reports in that packet. Rob has a nice
15 Powerpoint for you all. And thank you Rob for
16 presenting the seabird report.

17

18 MR. KALER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
19 thank you Council members for taking time to listen to
20 me. I hope to share as much as I can learn from you
21 and I'll try to keep it brief and concise. Many
22 thanks, Eva, for distributing the Powerpoint and I know
23 many of you probably don't have it in front of you and
24 it's not very necessary but I will reference that as I
25 provide this update.

26

27 So my name is Rob Kaler. I'm with the
28 Migratory Bird Management Program with U.S. Fish and
29 Wildlife Service based in Anchorage. I am specifically
30 a seabird specialist and, in particular, I often just
31 back it out a little bit to say marine birds, and so
32 what I'll talk on today or talk about today, a little
33 bit about waterfowl that might interest this group in
34 addition to people interested in just the marine
35 environment.

36

37 The Powerpoint that was distributed,
38 the first one is it's got a name -- a list of names of
39 a lot of great people that have contributed. In Alaska
40 we've been experiencing seabird die-offs since 2015,
41 consistently, so every year we've been receiving
42 reports and really consistently since 2017 in the
43 Bering Straits and the Bering Sea region. So every
44 year since 2017. Thankful to all of the great partners
45 who have contributed reports as well as carcasses. So
46 there's a couple of angles that we're trying to
47 identify causes of these seabird die-offs so the first
48 slide that you might be looking at, many thanks to Gay
49 Sheffield from UAF-Alaska Sea Grant, Brandon and Austin
50

0251

1 Ahmasuk with Kawerak, and then our Park Service folks
2 Sasha Backensto and Heather Coletti have really helped
3 monitor some of the coastlines and then working with
4 the Coastal and Observation Seabird Survey Team based
5 out of the University of Washington but try to put all
6 these seabird die-offs into the broader perspective.
7 How many reports are we getting, where are they front
8 and how long are these die-off events happening every
9 year.

10

11 So the second slide that you might be
12 looking at, this is a map that is from COASST, the
13 Coastal Observation Seabird Survey Team, and what it's
14 showing is a map of Alaska and there's different size
15 circles indicating the number of birds that were
16 reported. If you look at the right side of the figure
17 it'll -- color refers to the month in which we got the
18 report and then it's broken down by the species, so
19 northern fullmers, auklets, puffins, kittiwakes and
20 shearwaters. Those are kind of the main ones that we
21 had in 2021. But we have similar maps like this since
22 2017 for the Bering Sea region. And what this is
23 really summarizing is, one, just the geographic range.
24 So we did have reports of birds from the Western
25 Aleutians into the Bristol Bay. There was a case that
26 I'll talk about in the Gulf of Alaska. And then there
27 was a report from Brian Daniels with Fish and Wildlife
28 Service, some shearwaters got blown up into Bethel.
29 But so the point of this figure here is really to kind
30 of indicate the number of species -- or sorry, the
31 number of birds is -- we had a little over 2,000
32 carcasses that were reported washed up on the beach.
33 And so for us to get that, for me, in Anchorage, in the
34 urban hub here, to get a report of a bird that died and
35 was reported, we know that there was a lot more
36 seabirds that were impacted and died. So the figure
37 shows kind of a breakdown, there was about 1,750
38 reports from the Bering and Chuckchi Sea, in
39 particular, so relevant to the Yukon/Kuskokwim Council
40 here. And then the species, a quick comment about
41 that, the species ranged from those that are eating
42 fish, like loons or cormorants but as well as species
43 that are eating the zooplankton, essentially the --
44 kind of what's feeding everybody. if you think of it
45 like cows or cattle or moose or caribou, what are they
46 grazing on, well, many of these forage fish, of course,
47 are eating the plankton, and so auklets are eating
48 plankton and so we've had just a broad range of seabird
49 species being affected by these die-offs. So those
50

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1 that eat plankton all the way up to those that eat
2 fish.

3
4 So the third slide that I included,
5 this is a summary of what we've been able to do, kind
6 of our response, and this is, again, working closely
7 with partners at Kawarek or at Alaska Sea Grant, but
8 getting fresh carcasses submitted to the USGS National
9 Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin and we
10 want to make sure that these events are not related to
11 like an emerging disease event, so an infectious
12 disease like Avian Influenza, Avian cholera or Avian
13 Botulism. So in general these birds are in poor
14 nutritional condition, you can see their breast bones
15 or their keel bones are really pronounced. They've
16 generally been determined cause of death was
17 starvation. But we're always testing these carcasses,
18 or as many as we can get to make sure that it's not an
19 infectious disease related die-off.

20
21 And so with that I do want to go into
22 two different cases that we had. One case -- so the
23 next, or the fourth slide, we had an Avian botulism
24 type event at Middleton Island in the Gulf of Alaska.
25 And this is a unique case, we've never had Avian
26 botulism in Alaska and it doesn't transfer to people.
27 This is generally -- it's just among the birds. But
28 it's typically found in the Lower 48 in the waterfowl
29 but here in late July, early August, we had this very
30 quick and punctuated die-off event -- we had at least
31 60 carcasses being reported dead. We were able to get
32 some of those and sent to the National Wildlife Health
33 Center and it turned out it was Avian botulism Type C.
34 So generally the environment for Avian botulism Type C,
35 -- and so now I'm moving on to my fifth Powerpoint
36 slide, if you can see that.

37
38 But this is Middleton Island in the
39 Gulf of Alaska. We had a die-off of Kittiwakes. And
40 the figure to the right, what it's showing, is,
41 generally we need warmer conditions than what we find
42 in Alaska for Avian botulism C to incubate in the
43 environment and for a duck to eat that coming through
44 maggots, for example, that they might have consumed in
45 a wetland and then it affects them, they die and then a
46 predator comes along, for example, gulls, or raptors,
47 eagles, come along and eat that animal and then it kind
48 of keeps spreading, but it's very, generally these die-
49 offs take care of themselves very quickly. But I want
50

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1 to raise this issue to the Council just so that you're
2 aware when birds are -- if you see unusual numbers of
3 birds that are dying, dead or dying, please make sure
4 that you alert, you know, either through the Council,
5 to the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council, for
6 example, or directly to us in Mig Birds. So this was
7 the first case, it does not transfer to humans, again,
8 I want to make sure that's clear. But, of course,
9 we're always -- I can't address whether something is
10 safe to consume. We know that you know, you know, if
11 you find a dead bird you don't want to eat that, if you
12 find a bird that's acting strangely you don't want to
13 eat that. But always cook your meat to 165 degrees
14 fahrenheit, you know, make sure that meat is cooked.
15 But, again, Avian botulism C has not been known to
16 transfer to humans.

17
18 Now, I don't have a slide for this, but
19 this was a recent update from the Nome region. We had
20 a case of Avian influenza in late October of spectacled
21 eider that was found in Nome at the harbor in Nome.
22 And so we tested that and it turned out it was a low
23 path Avian influenza so in general when you hear people
24 talking about Avian influenza they're referring to
25 highly pathogenic, HP, and that highly pathogenic, it's
26 highly pathogenic to poultry and poultry are not like
27 diverse, they're essentially kind of matching clones of
28 each other whereas the wild bird population is
29 genetically very diverse. So that's why it's -- if a
30 highly pathogenic Avian influenza bug or, you know, a
31 virus gets into a poultry farm and that's why there's
32 so much concern in the Lower 48 and not to say that
33 we're not concerned here in Alaska but we know that
34 there are low path Avian influenza viruses in our
35 waterfowl or in our seabirds but generally they don't
36 succumb to it and die. And it doesn't transfer to
37 people. Highly pathogenic is highly pathogenic, again,
38 to like poultry farms or turkey farms, and that kind
39 of thing. Now, it's something that we want to remain
40 vigilant about and why I mention it to the Council
41 today, but, again, if you see birds that are acting
42 strange, sick and dying, make sure that you elevate
43 that up so that we can know and respond to that quickly
44 and appropriately.

45
46 The next slide that I had was talking
47 about some of the Aleutian tern work, so Aleutian terns
48 as well as Arctic terns breed in your region and what
49 we are doing with many partners, with our Fish and Game
50

1 partners, U.S. Forest Service and then with support,
2 the USDA as well as our National Fish and Wildlife
3 Foundation, we're doing aerial surveys to try to count
4 the total number and come up with a population estimate
5 for Aleutian terns. So I raise this to the Council
6 asking for any reports that you might have of colonies
7 of either Aleutian or Arctic terns. In 2022, the
8 figure here that you might be looking at is from kind
9 of our pilot study so that we learn, you know, doing an
10 aerial survey and then getting somebody on the ground
11 to do a ground count, so we did this in June, we got
12 all the way from Goodnews Bay in the north all the way
13 down to Cold Bay in the south. Covered a lot of ground
14 and so this slide, if anybody on the Council or your
15 constituents know of tern locations we'd love to hear
16 that kind of incorporate it as we are scaling up to a
17 statewide Aleutian tern survey beginning in 2023, so
18 next year. So one more pilot year in the Bristol Bay
19 region and then we'll expand, hopefully our methods
20 will be adequate enough to get a whole population
21 estimate for Aleutian terns in all of Alaska.

22
23 The next slide is my seventh slide. We
24 do have a lot of vessel traffic increasing in the
25 Bering Straits. The Chukchi, you know, southern
26 Chukchi, Northern Bering but throughout Alaska so we
27 are working to try to try to get some of those data,
28 most of the very large vessels have automated
29 information systems, AIS, it's kind of like a GPS
30 sending out a beacon, they're required -- now, some of
31 them turn off that but there is a lot of vessel traffic
32 increasing especially with lack of sea ice in the
33 Bering Strait region, and that includes the fishing
34 fleet moving further north, the lack of sea ice has
35 resulted in smaller cold pool and that cold pool is
36 generally kept, pollock and Pacific cod, further south
37 and without that barrier, that cold pool or a curtain
38 of two degrees celsius water, the fish are moving
39 further north and, of course, the fishing fleet is
40 following them. So I just wanted to raise that
41 awareness.

42
43 There's certainly a lot of military
44 training activities. Very specific to the Bering
45 Strait region but you might be aware of people moving
46 off shore in your communities as well, Coast Guard and,
47 yes, other military efforts.

48
49 And with that I would like to thank
50

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1 you, again, for your time, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate
2 it, and Council members. I'd be available for any
3 questions but also that slide, my contact information
4 and email is there so I'm always happy to followup with
5 any questions.

6
7 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, thank you, Rob,
8 for that presentation regarding the marine waterfowls.
9 Do we have any questions or comments for Rob at this
10 time.

11
12 MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, Alissa Rogers.

13
14 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa Rogers, go
15 ahead.

16
17 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 Through the Chair, thank you for your report, I greatly
19 appreciate hearing it. On behalf of Mr. Bill, our late
20 Mr. Bill, we were trying to keep track of our murre
21 and our puffins out there. Do you have any update on
22 our murre because I know we had a huge die-off, has
23 that population recovered, are we seeing more decreases
24 in the murre population. How is our puffin population
25 doing. I know this past couple years we're having a
26 lot more puffins show up on Hooper Bay's beach. The
27 other one, too, what is our current update on our eider
28 ducks.

29
30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31
32 MR. KALER: Yes, thank you for that
33 question. Through the Chair. That is a lot of
34 question. I'd be happy -- is this Council Member
35 Rogers?

36
37 MS. ROGERS: Yes, correct.

38
39 MR. KALER: Thank you for the question.
40 Happy to have you followup with me. I can't so much
41 speak to the eiders, I think Julian Fischer with our
42 Migratory -- the Migratory Bird Management Waterfowl
43 Program might have a better idea. But with regard to
44 puffins I would love to stay informed on that. That is
45 a -- horned puffins are of interest but especially
46 tufted puffins. We're doing a lot of work with our
47 partners trying to identify breeding range and really
48 how to monitor tufted puffins. So observations that
49 you have -- and we are just beginning. So Fish and
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1 Wildlife Service with our partners and hopefully with
2 tribal partners as well, getting a better idea of how
3 we can better monitor the population of tufted puffins
4 in Alaska. There's a lot of concern in the Lower 48
5 for tufted puffins. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
6 was petitioned to list tufted puffins and that came
7 back as unwarranted to list it. But that doesn't mean
8 that there's not still interest in tracking the
9 population trends and getting a better idea of how
10 tufted puffins are doing.

11

12 With regard to murre, I rely on the
13 Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, they have, as
14 you likely know several different sites where they have
15 long-term monitoring. Population, I can say for
16 productivity how well murre were breeding last summer,
17 2021, was much better than the previous two or three
18 years. I think part of that has to do with the cold
19 pool and this push of, you know, in certain regions of
20 the Bering Sea where they previously were not competing
21 and this would affect marine mammals as well but
22 competing for the fish that they eat so whether that's
23 herring or capelin or juvenile cod or pollock, with
24 that large increase in biomass of walleye, pollock and
25 Pacific cod there's a lot of competition for resources.
26 We are mainly monitoring murre and puffins when they
27 are breeding on land and know a little bit less about
28 what's happening to them when they're off shore, which,
29 of course, is 10 months out of the year. They only
30 come ashore to breed and even then the puffins, for
31 example, are in burrows. So very hard to study.

32

33 That's not a very great answer, Council
34 Member Rogers and I apologize, but happy to followup. I
35 do think that the murre populations are doing much
36 better than the previous two years, productivity-wise.
37 I can't really say how population trend-wise. And then
38 puffins we are concerned and really putting some
39 resources into tracking how can we do better monitoring
40 of puffins, tufted puffins specifically in Alaska and
41 in the Bering.

42

43 So thank you for that question.

44

45 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Do we have any other
46 questions or comments for Rob at this time regarding
47 the waterfowl in the Bering Sea.

48

49 MS. EVAN: Mr. Chair, can I add a

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1 comment.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Norma, go ahead.

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MS. EVAN: This is Norma Evan. I live in Marshall. I think since 2005 I had a bird feeder out every year since my daughter was two years old and every year we always get birds that we wonder at -- or deep snow pack and this year I only have one bird feeder -- or one bird feeding, last year I know I had three birds and the year before I know I had about up to 18 and when they do migrate, and feed, something must be going on because I see less and less coming back.

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Last year we had no fishing, subsistence fishing, nobody was subsistence fishing and all the seagulls and local terns that we have, usually feed off the -- you know when we caught fish, our guts that we dispose of, they usually feed off them and this past summer I seen them -- most of them they were hanging out at the local sewage lagoon.

That's just an observation I just wanted to share. Thank you, I appreciate it.

MR. KALER: Yeah, thank you. Through the Chair, thank you for that. We're always interested in hearing reports, especially if you're seeing change -- you know you've been watching your feeder since 2005, and particularly seeing those changes, I'm always curious what people are feeding. I know folks that go through jars of peanut butter and bags of seeds. But, yeah, there definitely seems to be some shifts in populations and birds, with some birds overwintering and staying longer -- you know, land birds, the past range of the perching birds. But, yeah, always great. And a lot of resources -- a quick acknowledgement to the local environment observing network, LEO, I think that's a really neat resource to submit and share these observations. But, yeah, thank you for sharing.

MR. PARKS: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Go ahead.

MR. PARKS: Henry Parks from Nunapitchuk. I have a question regarding seabirds. There's all kinds of different seabirds down there in

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1 the Bering Sea so what kind of exactly birds are you
2 referring to here. And my next question is, recently,
3 not too long ago we had a volcanic eruption down in the
4 Pacific Ocean, or near the Pacific Ocean, now will that
5 ash affect the sea mammals and the fish are included,
6 and the seabirds.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 MR. KALER: Thank you for the question.
11 Through the Chair. I would say the species that we're
12 seeing affected, this year in 2021, we had loons,
13 puffins, we had murre and golden kittiwakes as well as
14 cormorants as I mentioned. And so those are all -- so
15 some of them feed on fish at the surface. So for
16 example the kittiwakes, but gulls will -- you know
17 they'll scavenge where they can, they're of course --
18 I'm sure everybody knows that. Puffins and murre are
19 mostly pursuit diving, they're, you know, swimming
20 under water pursuing fish, particularly during the
21 breeding season that they will bring back to their
22 young in their bills. And then the auklets are feeding
23 on the zooplankton, and some of that zooplankton, it's
24 really nutritious. And then shearwaters is one of the
25 species -- so in 2019 we had a large die-off of short-
26 tailed shearwaters and those shearwaters, they come
27 into our waters, the Bering -- the Bering Sea in the
28 millions, and they are one of our most abundant, they
29 don't breed here, they just come for the food. And as
30 all of you know who live in coastal communities, that
31 rich environment, the marine ecosystem, so they're just
32 coming up to eat our food, eat our ocean food. But
33 they breed in New Zealand and Australia, so they make
34 quite a significant migration.

35

36 So that's my quick -- well, it's not --
37 sorry, that wasn't quicker, but those are the species
38 that we're really seeing, those are the highest
39 numbers. So shearwaters where they come to our waters
40 in the millions, literally the millions and then the
41 other species, the murre, auklets, puffins,
42 kittiwakes, cormorants and loons.

43

44 And then with regards to the eruption,
45 I think there's so many effects that we don't quite
46 understand when Kasatochi erupted in the Aleutians in
47 2008 and how quickly that species were able -- in both
48 the -- the sea lions that had used it as a rookery for
49 breeding as well as the colony nesting birds, within a
50

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1 few years they made it back even though when the
2 eruption occurred in 2008 there was not much -- you
3 know, no vegetation on the island whatsoever. But with
4 regards to how the ash will affect the marine
5 ecosystem, I don't have a good answer. I know -- yeah,
6 I think initial impacts will be significant and then
7 over time it becomes less impactful. That's not a very
8 good answer, I apologize but that's the best I can do.

9

10 Thank you for the question.

11

12 MR. PARKS: Thank you, Rob.

13

14 MR. KALER: And always, through the
15 Chair, please never -- don't hesitate to reach out to
16 me directly, I'd love to find out more information
17 about puffins, or terns or any marine birds that you're
18 seeing and your interest, whether it's through
19 subsistence and eggging or just your observations when
20 you're heading out to your fish camps, or your hunting
21 camp, I'll always welcome your years of experience
22 seeing what is happening.

23

24 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Rob. Do we
25 have any more questions or comments for Rob at this
26 time regarding waterfowl in the Bering Sea.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN ONEY: If there's no question
31 or comments for Rob at this time, you do have his
32 number on his presentation if you feel that you need to
33 get a hold of him, any time, you could give him a call.
34 I appreciate your presentation Rob. I think this is one
35 of the issues we wanted to hear because one of the
36 things that we seen as a result of no Bering Sea ice
37 that one year which resulted in a lot of marine mammals
38 die-off. We appreciate your work and your presentation
39 to the Council and updating to us. I'm sure we'll
40 continue to be vigilant about our resources in our
41 area, that's why it's important that we talk to people
42 and see what they're seeing so that we could be able to
43 relay that message on to people that are doing studies
44 like you. Thank you for your presentation. I'm sure
45 we'll hear back from you again sometime, so appreciate
46 it.

47

48 If there's no other comments or
49 questions for you, I thank you again.

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1 (No comments)

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay. I think that concludes our presentation from Rob. I don't know what's the wish of the Council at this time or, Eva, do we have any other items that we need to take up at this time.

8

9

10 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and Council members. I don't know if the Council wanted to take up any more of the agency reports this evening. Next up we had ONC on the agency reports agenda, at the top of agency reports. And I know Alissa did text me wishing to revisit the special action she had brought up earlier in the meeting and thought we might be able to address that first thing tomorrow morning. But I believe we do have ONC on if the Council wanted to receive another report and then a really beautiful report with lots of pictures and good work of ONC.

20

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you, Eva. What is the wish of the Council at this time.

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MS. ROGERS: Mr. Chair, Alissa speaking. I'd like to hear the ONC report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you, Alissa. We could go ahead and.....

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MR. LANDLORD: Mr. Chair.

33

34

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hello.

35

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MR. LANDLORD: Yes, I was just going to say the same, we could take the ONC report.

38

39

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. ONC, are you available to give your report.

40

41

MS. LAWERY: Yes, Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay, thank you. Thank you for your patience and your time to make your presentation, we could go ahead and put you on the floor. Thank you.

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MS. PATTON: And, Mr. Chair, and members of the Council, you'll find the ONC Powerpoint

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1 presentation under Tab 6 in your meeting books full of
2 wonderful pictures. So that's in your binder under Tab
3 6.

4

5 Quyana.

6

7 MS. LAWERY: Hi, good afternoon
8 everyone, this is Danielle Lawery. Can everyone hear
9 me okay.

10

11 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yes, you're loud.

12

13 MS. LAWERY: Okay, awesome. So I'm the
14 Partners Program biologist with ONC here in Bethel and
15 I'll be co-presenting with Gisela Chapa today if she
16 would like to introduce herself now.

17

18 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Danielle. Good
19 afternoon, Mr. Chair and Council members. My name is
20 Gisela Chapa and I am the Natural Resources Director at
21 ONC.

22

23 MS. LAWERY: Thank you, Gisela. Today
24 we will be giving our agency report and as Eva
25 mentioned we submitted a presentation, if you have that
26 in front of you and wanted to follow along.

27

28 So to give a brief overview of what
29 we'll be presenting today is that I'll go over how the
30 post-season subsistence harvest survey project went,
31 results from the subsistence ASL data from 2021, and
32 summer projects that will be taking place this year.
33 And Gisela will go over winter and spring projects
34 currently going on, an update on the Kuskokwim
35 Management Strategy Evaluation Project and lastly an
36 update on our Natural Resource Department.

37

38 Okay, getting started, the post-season
39 harvest survey project took place this fall, or last
40 fall and this project is in cooperation with ADF&G, and
41 ONC helps to conduct surveys in Bethel. We have a goal
42 of completing 525 Bethel surveys and we met that and
43 completed 531 surveys. Our survey methods were similar
44 to 2020, in that, it was shortened only to collect
45 salmon harvest information and this was implemented to
46 reduce the contact time that we had with community
47 members.

48

49 Next up is results from our chinook

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1 salmon age sex length sampling program. This data was
2 collected by 14 local samplers in 2021. And 592
3 samples were aged by ADF&G. So 30.1 percent of chinook
4 salmon sampled in 2021 were age 4; 43.6 percent were
5 age 5; and 25.5 percent were age 6. 74.7 percent of
6 the sampled chinook were male, and their average length
7 were 635 millimeters. Lastly, 25.3 percent of sampled
8 chinook were female and the average length was 757
9 millimeters.

10

11 Next up is summer projects taking place
12 this year. First is our In-season harvest monitoring
13 project and we'll be continuing to conduct harvest
14 surveys, recruiting for the ASL program, and continuing
15 to distributing fish caught by ADF&G. We will also be
16 hosting our annual science and culture camp this year
17 and it'll be taking place at the end of July and it is
18 open to high school students located in the Kuskokwim
19 region. And students that participate will be able to
20 receive college credits.

21

22 And that is my last slide and I'll pass
23 it off to Gisela.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 MS. CHAPA: Thank you, Danielle. I
28 will give the Council an update on the 2022 winter and
29 spring projects. But I'd like to start by sharing my
30 gratitude and expressing my gratitude to all of those
31 people that are involved in the winter subsistence
32 distribution and the proxy hunts. These individuals
33 certainly make this possible and that includes Ms.
34 Kylie Ford, who is our natural resources technician and
35 Jesuit volunteer who takes care of all the logistics
36 and deliveries. Mr. Oscar MittyChaney* who does the
37 hunting and fishing for our elders. And the many proxy
38 hunters who also participate in the program. And,
39 Qu yana, again, for their involvement.

40

41 So for the 2022 winter proxy hunt,
42 those are still ongoing. So far moose has been
43 provided to six households and more households are also
44 being served as we speak. For the winter distribution
45 program, that is also ongoing. To-date the program has
46 provided a total of 122 ptarmigan, 30 pikes and served
47 a total of 36 households and counting.

48

49 If I could convey what I hope you can

50

1 see in those pictures is that when the foods are
2 delivered to the elders that receive these products, we
3 just see a lot of smiles and excitement and gratitude.

4
5 Additionally, we are also preparing for
6 the spring and the summer including the seed potato
7 program. So our department will be providing seed
8 potatoes to our community and we have already ordered
9 500 pounds of a variety of seed potatoes such as Yukon
10 Gold, (Indiscernible) red gold and yellow
11 (indiscernible) and we expect to start the distribution
12 in May. Likewise, I'm also happy to report that we are
13 able to secure -- were able to secure a food security
14 mini-grant provided by the Alaska Department of Natural
15 Resources to provide other seed starters and hopefully
16 provide some loaner equipment such as tillers as well
17 as meat grinders and bone saws for moose season.

18
19 At the moment we're still working on
20 the logistics but I hope that we may be able to start
21 the distribution of those seed starters and materials
22 in May.

23
24 Next up is an update on the Kuskokwim
25 Management Strategy Evaluation program. And just to
26 provide a very quick background about Kusko Neca, or
27 the Kuskokwim Management Strategy Evaluation project.
28 The objective ultimately of this effort is to try to
29 incorporate stakeholder involvement and traditional
30 knowledge into fisheries management on the Kuskokwim.
31 And this will be achieved by hosting a series of
32 workshops where we may be able to engage with certain
33 individuals that represent the interests of the people
34 across the YK region. So where does the project stand
35 today. There is a core group of individuals that have
36 participated in several virtual meetings, primarily
37 looking into the logistics of implementing the project
38 and one of the things that we've discussed has been the
39 best approach to try to meet and engage the
40 stakeholders in the project as we are dealing with
41 certain barriers, primarily due to Covid. For the time
42 being the group has identified a number of potential
43 individuals that may be invited to participate in this
44 workshop and the next step in the process after that
45 will be to host our first workshop which will likely be
46 in the early fall. The project is carried in
47 collaboration with Alaska Department of Fish and Game,
48 the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, AVCP, OSM,
49 the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission,
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1 University of Washington and University of Alaska-
2 Fairbanks.

3
4 And to also provide you an update on
5 the Natural Resources Department. Some of the Staff
6 that you might already know, Danielle Lowery, who is
7 co-presenting with me, and she is the Partners Program
8 Biologist. There's Mary Matthias who serves as the
9 Environmental Program Coordinator. New additions to
10 the team, as I mentioned her earlier, Kylie Ford, who
11 is our Natural Resources Technician, and a Jesuit
12 volunteer. Myself as the fairly new Natural Resources
13 Director within the organization. And we are hiring.
14 We are looking to fill vacancies for a couple of
15 positions. One of them, a second Partners Biologist.
16 A Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation
17 Program Coordinator, or NALEMP. And looking to procure
18 a contract for a tribal advocate and communications
19 position to help us on some advocacy issues primarily
20 relating around Donlin Gold. And, of course, I would
21 greatly appreciate if these opportunities could be
22 shared within your network.

23
24 And last, but not least, Quyanana, to our
25 project partners and community members of the Yukon
26 Kuskokwim Delta to help us do a lot of the work that we
27 try to do for our community and our tribe.

28
29 Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you
32 for your presentation. Do we have any questions or
33 comments for the two ladies that gave their
34 presentations.

35
36 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
37 Alissa.

38
39 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Alissa, go ahead.

40
41 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 Thank you guys so much. I love hearing about what's
43 going on with our tribe and what's going on with the
44 Natural Resources Department. It's a definitely a
45 heart and soul of mine, it's where I got my first kick
46 in the door back with Eva, back in the day. It's kind
47 of a long time ago.

48
49 So, yeah, it's great to hear all these
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1 great new developments that are happening and I loved
2 your presentation with all the pictures and letting us
3 know what's been happening and going on, especially
4 during times of Covid. I'm so glad you guys are still
5 reaching out to our elders, and mainly focusing on our
6 elders is one of the highlights of the good things that
7 we used to do.

8

9 So, thank you, I greatly appreciate it.
10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Anyone else
13 want to have any comments or questions for Danielle or
14 Gisela at this time.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, thank you
19 again for your presentation. It's always good to see
20 elders that are smiling when they receive their
21 subsistence foods. That's the heart and soul of the
22 elders, they're always relying on subsistence foods and
23 the younger people that recognize that and are able to
24 go out and provide for them, especially those that are
25 without the means to do it so continue your work for
26 your people and to come forward to us and update us on
27 any issues that we could offer support to. And like I
28 said, you're utilizing the four seasons to advocate for
29 your people so thank you for the good work you're
30 doing.

31

32 MS. LOWERY: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
33 good evening.

34

35 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Yeah, good evening to
36 you too. I think that will conclude our presentations
37 for today unless you want to take one more, I'll leave
38 it up to you Council.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Hearing none, we could
43 go ahead and break for the day -- recess for the day
44 and come back again at 9:00 o'clock in the morning to
45 continue our agency reports.

46

47 Eva.

48

49 MS. PATTON: Great, thank you, Mr.

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1 Chair and members of the Council. Sounds like a good
2 plan and everyone have a good evening and get some good
3 rest and good dinner and, yes, we'll resume tomorrow
4 morning. And, again, we had a request from Alissa to
5 revisit the special action request tomorrow and then we
6 have a time certain tomorrow starting in the morning
7 after that and after public comments for the NOAA and
8 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council reports. So
9 thank you so much Council for all your work and
10 persistence and patience with doing this by
11 teleconference and hope you have a good evening and
12 good rest.

13

14 Guyana.

15

16 MR. SHEPARD: Mr. Chair, this is
17 Stanislaus Shepard.

18

19 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Mr. Shepard, go ahead.

20

21 MR. SHEPARD: Yes, I was a slow, I do
22 apologize, I was a little slow, I was going to ask
23 those two ladies some questions, but I could do it
24 tomorrow since everybody's geared up to quit
25 teleconference. It's on the Natural Resource
26 Department concerning moose calves out here in the
27 Lower Yukon below Mountain Village, and that could be
28 addressed tomorrow if you have time.

29

30 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Thank you. Thank you,
33 Stanislaus, for your participation today and yesterday,
34 it's always good to hear from tribal members that have
35 issues of concern and are joining in on our YKRAC
36 meeting. So appreciate your presence and your
37 comments. So we could go ahead and take this up first
38 thing in the morning.

39

40 MR. SHEPARD: Okay.

41

42 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Right after we revisit
43 the special action request, so thank you again.

44

45 MR. SHEPARD: Thank you very much, Mr.
46 Chair, have a good evening.

47

48 CHAIRMAN ONEY: Good evening, see you
49 in the morning.

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MR. SHEPARD: Bye.

MS. EVAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank
you, Eva.

REPORTER: Have a good night.

CHAIRMAN ONEY: Okay.

MS. PATTON: Thank you, Norma. Thank
you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Council.

(Off record)

(PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

