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WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

TELECONFERENCE  
October 14, 2021  
9:05 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack Reakoff, Chair  
Arnold Demoski  
Don Honea  
Jenny Pelkola  
Goodwin Semaken  
Pollock Simon  
Kevin Whitworth  
Rebecca Wilmarth

Regional Council Coordinator, Karen Deatherage

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Teleconference - 10/14/2021)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're calling the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council back to order. You want to call the roll, Karen, and give any announcements.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to go ahead and make announcements first if that's okay with you so that we can give folks some time to call in if they haven't called in already.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure, go right ahead.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. This is Karen Deatherage with the Office of Subsistence Management. I want to, first, thank everyone again for your patience with our teleconference meeting, other than some echo issues everyone did really well yesterday with muting, and if you need to speak that's great, but if you're not speaking we'd appreciate it if you could put your phone on mute. On the cell phone it's located on the menu with the speaker button and the keyboard button, and on your landline you just need to press, star, six. Yesterday some folks had to do that two times to get it to catch. So just keep trying to star, six to mute you phone, appreciate it again.

Secondly, I need to make an announcement about the Council meeting opportunities for public and written oral testimony and comments.

There will be several opportunities for these throughout the meeting. At the beginning of each day there is an opportunity to provide testimony on non-agenda items. The Council Chair will announce these opportunities.

Then there'll be an opportunity to provide oral comments on the wildlife proposals and closure reviews during or after an analyst presents proposal analysis. The order of receiving the comments is outlined on Page 25 of your meeting materials. The Council Chair will call for this public oral testimony.

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There is also an opportunity to submit written public comments on these proposals. If you have a written comment please email it to subsistence@fws.gov., and please clearly indicate the number of the proposal or closure review you are commenting on in the title of the email. These comments need to be emailed prior to the proposal you are commenting on is presented to the Council.

With that, Mr. Chair, I thank you, and if you would like I could do roll call.....

(Teleconference interference - participants not muted)

MS. DEATHERAGE: .....to help the Council establish quorum. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're getting a lot of background feed.

MS. DEATHERAGE: I want to remind everybody again to please mute your phone, push, star, six or press the mute button on your cell phone. Somebody's got a line open and I think we're hearing a lot of background and we're getting the echo again.

So let's go ahead, with your permission, Mr. Chair, I can do roll call so that the Council members can go ahead and mute themselves.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Karen.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Rebecca Wilmarth.

MS. WILMARTH: Here.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

MR. HONEA: Here.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon, Sr.

MR. SIMON: Here.

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1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Welcome, Pollock.  
2 Pollock, did you get your meeting materials?

3  
4 MR. SIMON: No, there was no plane  
5 yesterday.

6  
7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, goodness, okay,  
8 thank you.

9  
10 MR. SIMON: Seems like there was a  
11 plane this morning.

12  
13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. Well, keep us  
14 posted and any questions please be sure to ask.

15  
16 Kevin Whitworth.

17  
18 MR. WHITWORTH: Here.

19  
20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Here.

23  
24 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

25  
26 MR. DEMOSKI: Here.

27  
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Tim Gervais.

29  
30 (No comments)

31  
32 (Teleconference interference -  
33 participants not muted - on hold)

34  
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.

36  
37 (No comments)

38  
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

40  
41 MR. SEMAKEN: Here.

42  
43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Great, welcome all.  
44 Mr. Chair, you do have a quorum. Thank you.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Karen.  
47 Two members that are new to the Council, Arnold and  
48 Rebecca, we took our Council member reports earlier in  
49 the agenda, which was No. 9 on the agenda. The Council  
50

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1 members give a briefing of -- you should give a  
2 briefing of where you live, and then sort of conditions  
3 or concerns that you might have for your area within  
4 our region. So I'll have Rebecca and Arnold do that  
5 right now because that's real important for each  
6 Council member on the whole Council to understand what  
7 your issues are for where you live.

8

9                   So we'll start with Rebecca, could you  
10 just give us a brief outline of the things I described.  
11 Go ahead.

12

13                   MS. WILMARTH: Okay, thank you, Mr.  
14 Chair. Good morning everyone, this is Rebecca  
15 Wilmarth. I live at Red Devil, kind of middle  
16 Kuskokwim area. Issues here are always the closures  
17 that we have with being in State fishing waters. A lot  
18 of folks here don't necessarily agree with what happens  
19 with the lower river and I know that sometimes that is  
20 being managed by the Office of Subsistence and being  
21 down there in Federal waters. So I would say that the  
22 most common issue that I hear is that, you know, that  
23 the State and the Feds work together to manage the  
24 rolling closures because a lot of the times that we are  
25 not allowed to fish up here and people are fishing in  
26 the lower river and vice versa, so it's kind of an up  
27 river versus down river issue.

28

29                   (Teleconference interference -  
30 participants not muted - on hold)

31

32                   MS. WILMARTH: And just for everybody's  
33 knowledge the population, the further you get up river  
34 it decreases dramatically. So there's not nearly as  
35 many people fishing up this way.

36

37                   As far as hunting goes, I don't hear a  
38 lot of issues on the hunting side of things, for the  
39 game management.

40

41                   (Teleconference interference -  
42 participants not muted - on hold)

43

44                   MS. WILMARTH: That's all I have, thank  
45 you.

46

47                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

48

49                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

50

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1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Karen, do you  
2 want to address.....

3

4                   MS. DEATHERAGE: I hate to interrupt  
5 but apparently there is somebody who has put us on hold  
6 and Tina is going to contact the operator and have them  
7 disconnected.

8

9                   (Online with Operator)

10

11                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So whoever's got  
12 your phone on hold you can put it on mute, or star,  
13 six, or whatever. So Arnold, do you want to give us a  
14 rundown.

15

16                   MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, so I don't have  
17 much issues for our area. People are just -- I just  
18 hear the issue about the fishing, there's not enough  
19 fish to fish but just pretty upset with the way it's  
20 managed and that's just the only issue I'm hearing.

21

22                   Our wildlife in the area is good. Our  
23 populations for the wildlife is good in our area. The  
24 population in our area is pretty good, there's no  
25 issues with nobody getting their moose -- well, I heard  
26 they had a few concerns but I think that was more for  
27 like (indiscernible) extra opener (indiscernible -  
28 beeping overriding the speaker)

29

30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You might  
31 want to get closer to the mic.

32

33                   MR. DEMOSKI: We didn't need that extra  
34 opening, everybody got their moose in the openings that  
35 we had. We didn't need that extra hunt. It was a good  
36 season.

37

38                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
39 glad to have you on the meeting this morning. Somebody  
40 was on hold, your phone was still beeping on -- we got  
41 a background beeping so whoever put us on hold, turn  
42 that off and put us on mute, that'd be star, six, or to  
43 mute on your cell phone. So okay we covered.....

44

45                   (Pause - online with Operator)

46

47                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're going to  
48 move back on to our agenda, which is WP22-02, that  
49 should be an 02 in the book, so who's presenting this

50

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1 proposal.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
4 Karen Deatherage. May ask that we allow for any quick  
5 introductions for anybody who did not introduce  
6 themselves yesterday who might be on the phone with us  
7 this morning from tribes or agencies or the general  
8 public. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead. Did  
11 anybody call in this morning that wasn't on the call  
12 yesterday that would like to introduce yourself.

13

14 MR. BLIHOVDE: Yeah, I wasn't on  
15 yesterday. This is Boyd Blihovde, the Refuge Manager  
16 at Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Boyd.

19

20 MR. BLIHOVDE: Good morning.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Anybody else.

23

24 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. This is  
25 Frank Harris, Fish Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
26 Service at what used to be the Kenai Fisheries Fish and  
27 Wildlife Field Office, it's now the Southern Alaska  
28 Field Office, we've been complexed with Anchorage.  
29 Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Who was that, I'm  
34 sorry.

35

36 REPORTER: Could you repeat your name,  
37 please.

38

39 MR. HARRIS: Frank Harris.

40

41 REPORTER: Oh, Frank, hi.

42

43 MR. HARRIS: Is this better?

44

45 REPORTER: Yes.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You need to be a  
48 little closer to your mic when you speak there, Frank,  
49 we're getting like a fan background noise also off your  
50

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1 phone. So anybody else on the call.

2

3 MS. MCMILLAN: Good morning. This is  
4 Jennifer McMillan, the Ecologist for Central Yukon  
5 Field Office for BLM.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Jenn.  
8 Anyone else.

9

10 MS. KLEIN: Hi, this is Jill Klein.  
11 I'm joining the call and just for an update I'm the  
12 Regional Subsistence Coordinator now at Fish and  
13 Wildlife Service. So good morning.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Jill.  
16 And anyone else, go ahead. It sounds like somebody's  
17 trying to speak but you're completely broken and  
18 unreadable, get closer to your mic if you can.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can't hear you,  
23 you're really static and broken.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, nope,  
28 unreadable. Not sure about that one. What do you want  
29 to do with that Karen.

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 I was unable to hear anything but for the person trying  
33 to introduce themselves, I would recommend that they  
34 hang up and redial into the meeting. Thank you, Mr.  
35 Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I was getting a  
38 little static of somebody trying to respond but whoever  
39 was trying to respond, you're not readable, so redial,  
40 call in -- log out and redial back in and you can  
41 interject who you are at some point when we have a  
42 slight break in the conversation. Anybody else on the  
43 phone that didn't identify from yesterday.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, okay, we're  
48 going back to the agenda, WP22-02. And who's making  
49 the presentation.

50



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1 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 This is Pippa, I'm on, can you hear me?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
5 fine.

6  
7 MS. KENNER: Great. Am I too loud?

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

10  
11 MS. KENNER: Okay, thank you. Well,  
12 good afternoon, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council.  
13 The analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP22-02 begins on  
14 Page 202 of your Council books that were sent to you  
15 and it is also available at the Federal Subsistence  
16 Management Program web page at  
17 doi.gov/subsistence/regions. Look for the Western  
18 Interior Alaska region meeting materials.

19  
20 So my name is Pippa Kenner and I'm an  
21 Anthropologist of the Office of Subsistence Management  
22 in Anchorage. I'm sorry. I've got lots of messages  
23 popping up and I need to -- sorry about that, it was  
24 just a little distracting.

25  
26 Okay, so Proposal WP22-02 was submitted  
27 by the Office of Subsistence Management and requests to  
28 clarify designated hunting regulations that currently  
29 prohibit the use of a designated hunter by a member of  
30 a community operating under a community harvest system.

31  
32 So earlier, yesterday afternoon we were  
33 talking about community harvest systems and now we're  
34 going to talk about our designated hunter system.

35  
36 So our current designated hunter  
37 regulation is on Page 204 of your Council book and it  
38 states -- okay, I have to modify something, just a  
39 minute please -- okay. Okay, they're telling me they  
40 can hear me on the Eastern Interior meeting -- they  
41 can't be.....

42  
43 REPORTER: So Pippa, excuse me, Pippa.  
44 Pippa.

45  
46 MS. KENNER: .....on the -- they're  
47 telling me they can hear me on the Eastern.....

48  
49 REPORTER: Pippa.  
50

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1 MS. KENNER: Yes.

2

3

4 REPORTER: Okay, this is Tina. So if  
5 you're monitoring both meetings, whatever you're line  
6 you're monitoring the Eastern Interior meeting on, you  
7 need to mute that line. Because, yes, Nathan, said he  
8 can hear you in their meeting.

8

9 MS. KENNER: I'm not on the Eastern  
10 Interior meeting.

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12 REPORTER: Right, you are because  
13 they're listening to you right now. It may somebody  
14 else who has two lines open.

16 MR. MASCHMANN: It's that there's  
17 another participant listening to both meetings who's  
18 not on mute.

20 REPORTER: Yes, there's somebody else  
21 that's listening to both meetings and they're phone is  
22 not muted. So I'm just telling you, Pippa, that, yes,  
23 Nathan said you're coming in loud and clear in the  
24 Eastern Interior meeting.

26 MS. KENNER: Okay. So they just  
27 figured out -- okay, just let me give them a message  
28 because they are very perplexed right now. So what's  
29 happening is that somebody is listening to both  
30 meetings and I'm coming through loud and clear, which  
31 must be very disconcerting, I can understand.

33 Okay so I am.....

35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Pippa.  
36 This is Karen Deatherage. So whoever is listening to  
37 both meetings, we want to repeat that you need to have  
38 your phone on mute so that what is said at each meeting  
39 is not overheard and disruptive. So thank you for  
40 that. Please don't put us on hold. You star, six, to  
41 mute or mute on your cell phone keypad. Thank you,  
42 very much.

44 REPORTER: Okay, so unless your name is  
45 Pippa Kenner or Jack Reakoff, everybody should be on  
46 mute right now. Go ahead, Pippa.

48 MS. KENNER: Okay, I'm really sorry for  
49 that, these meetings they get a little complicated for  
50

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1 everybody sometimes.

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REPORTER: Yes.

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MS. KENNER: I'm going to back up a little bit, we're on Proposal WP22-02. It was submitted by us, OSM, and I'm going to read our current designated hunter regulation, which is on Page 204 of your Council book so that everybody can become familiar with what these regulations say.

It says: If you are a Federally-qualified subsistence user you may designate another Federally-qualified subsistence user to take deer, moose and caribou on your behalf unless you are a member of a community operating under a community harvest system. The designated hunter must obtain a designated hunter permit and must return a completed harvest report. The designated hunter may hunt for any number of recipients but may have no more than two harvest limits in his or her possession at any one time. So that's the general regulation in our designated hunter system.

What we propose is to remove the language that says: unless you are a member of a community operating under a community harvest system.

This is because if a person does not register to participate in their community harvest system, that person retains, that person still has their individual harvest limit, one moose, for example, and that person should be able to designate that harvest limit to someone else to harvest for them through this designated harvester system.

So this is almost an administrative correction to the regulations. OSM preliminary conclusion is to support the Proposal WP22-02.

And, finally, this Council is the third to act on this proposal. Part of the proposal is to request a general regulation that affects all regions of the state. We are asking all Regional Advisory Councils to act on this proposal. The Kodiak/Aleutian and Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Councils supported this proposal. And the Southeast Alaska Council took no action primarily because they ran out of time.

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1 Thank you, Mr. Chair, that's the end of  
2 my presentation.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Pippa.  
5 Any questions for Pippa on this Office of Subsistence  
6 Management proposal, basically a housekeeping proposal.  
7 Any questions.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none from  
12 the Council members. Any tribal comments, ANCSA  
13 comments, Karen.

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
16 There were no tribal or ANCSA Corporation comments on  
17 WP22-02. Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Alaska  
20 Department of Fish and Game comments on Proposal WP22-  
21 02.

22

23 MR. MULLIGAN: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
24 This is Ben Mulligan at the Department. ADF&G did not  
25 take a position on this proposal as it viewed it as  
26 internal housekeeping.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
29 Any Federal comments.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tribal comments.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Advisory Committee  
38 comments. Other -- we've heard the Regional Councils  
39 two adopted, Kodiak and YKD.

40

41 MS. KENNER: That's correct.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. Fish and  
44 Game Advisory Committees or Subsistence Resource  
45 Commissions.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Written public

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1 testimony comments.

2

3 MS. KENNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We  
4 received no written testimony for this proposal during  
5 the public comment period. Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does anybody on the  
8 phone that would like to testify about this proposal.

9

10 MR. SIMON: Yes, Mr. Chair.

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: This is.....

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Is that you  
15 Jim, identify yourself.

16

17 MR. SIMON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
18 Jim Simon. I'm a consultant with the Ahtna InterTribal  
19 Resource Commission and Tanana Chiefs Conference and I  
20 encourage the Council to support this housekeeping  
21 proposal. In establishing the Ahtna InterTribal  
22 Resource Commissions administered community harvest  
23 system for moose and caribou in the Ahtna traditional  
24 territory, it came to light at OSM that people who  
25 chose not to participate in that Ahtna community  
26 harvest system would not be able to utilize Federal  
27 designated hunter permits and this proposal will help  
28 to ensure that the community harvest systems do not  
29 impact other community members who may not wish to  
30 participate.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate  
35 those comments.

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
38 Karen.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
43 This is Karen Deatherage. We did receive a public  
44 written comment.....

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh.

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: .....after the written  
49 comment deadline from Becky Schwanke who resides in

50

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1 Glennallen. And she stated she would ask that these  
2 OSM proposals be tabled, that was WP22-01 and WP22-02  
3 and defer to the proposer's request under WP22-36 to  
4 clarify their own requested regulation.

5

6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. She commented  
9 on the previous proposal also. So.....

10

11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, she did, that's  
12 correct.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....Regional  
15 Council recommendations. The Chair will entertain a  
16 motion to adopt Proposal WP22-02.

17

18 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
19 Kevin. I make a motion to adopt this proposal.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kevin. Do  
22 we have a second.

23

24 MS. WILMARTH: This is Rebecca, I'll  
25 second it.

26

27 MR. DEMOSKI: This is Arnold, I second.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Rebecca was in  
30 there one second before you, Arnold, so Rebecca  
31 seconded. And so Council discussion.

32

33 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this Kevin.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

36

37 MR. WHITWORTH: Not getting into the  
38 details in this proposal but I just think it's a  
39 housekeeping proposal, it makes a lot of sense.  
40 Looking to support our neighbors in the Ahtna region,  
41 so, yeah, I'll support this proposal as is, and the  
42 recommendation from OSM.

43

44 That's all, thanks.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kevin. I  
47 support the proposal in that it gives people to opt in  
48 or opt out of the community hunt and is equitable for  
49 the subsistence users statewide if these are

50

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1 implemented, so I support the proposal. Any other.....

2

3 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

6

7 MR. HONEA: Yeah, could you hear me

8 now?

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you now.

11

12 MR. HONEA: Okay. Hey, this is Don. I  
13 concur with you guys, with Kevin and yourself and it  
14 seems like this is mainly -- since this is already in  
15 place in their particular region, they have a different  
16 set of things than we do here in the Interior, but,  
17 yeah, I would certainly support this. We may need  
18 their vote in the future on something else.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, this is a  
23 statewide proposal, it would apply to.....

24

25 (Teleconference interference -  
26 participants not muted - typing)

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....any hunts that  
29 may -- you know, maybe a community wants a community  
30 hunt in our region at some point, this would affect  
31 that, this would actually affect this region  
32 futuristically, possibly.

33

34 And so any further comments.

35

36 MR. DEMOSKI: This is Arnold. I don't  
37 have any further comments, I just want to say I support  
38 this proposal though. Thank you OSM for doing the work  
39 on this.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Arnold,  
42 appreciate that.

43

44 MR. HONEA: Call for the question.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
47 You want to call the roll, Karen.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

0203

1 So the motion is to adopt WP22-02.

2

3 Rebecca Wilmarth.

4

5 MS. WILMARTH: Yes.

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

8

9 MR. HONEA: Yes.

10

11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

12

13 MR. SIMON: Yes.

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

16

17 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

24

25 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Tim Gervais.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

36

37 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's seven yes and  
40 the motion passes unanimously. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So the  
43 next proposal up is WP22-33 and who's presenting this  
44 on Page.....

45

46 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, this is Kendra  
47 Holman, I'll be doing this.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Kendra, go

50



0204

1 right ahead.

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MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. This is Kendra Holman and I'm a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. This proposal is Wildlife Proposal WP22-33 and was submitted by the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource Commission and can be found on Page 220 of your meeting books.

The proposal requests the elimination of the sealing requirement for black bears in Units 11 and 12.

The proponent states that people living in remote locations need to drive to an Alaska Department of Fish and Game offices to have bears sealed. The extra salvage necessary to seal subsistence black bears in Units 11 and 12 is an undue hardship for subsistence users who are mainly in the meat.

Currently, Federal regulations are more stringent than State regulations, which only require harvest tickets and not sealing. Harvest ticket reports provide sufficient harvest information to monitor and protect black bear populations without sealing and there is not currently a conservation concern for black bears. Additionally, the proponent requests that the harvest ticket and sealing requirements be included.....

(Teleconference interference - participants not muted - screeching)

MS. HOLMAN: Is everyone still there?

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm here.

MS. HOLMAN: Okay. I wanted to make sure I didn't get disconnected with that noise.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so people who are on the call, put your phone on -- star, six, or put on mute, and pay attention to what you're doing if you want to listen to our meeting.

So go ahead, Kendra.

0205

1 MS. HOLMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So  
2 additionally the proponent requested that harvest  
3 ticket and sealing requirement be included in the Unit-  
4 specific regulations instead of with the general  
5 provisions for -- in the front of the regulation  
6 booklet stating this would be clearer and easier for  
7 subsistence user to understand as the current layout of  
8 the Federal Subsistence Management Regulations Booklet  
9 is confusing. This portion of the request is outside  
10 the scope of the regulatory proposal, however, the  
11 suggestion has been forwarded to the appropriate  
12 reviewer.

13  
14 Since 2008 all Alaskan resident hunters  
15 must obtain a State harvest ticket and report their  
16 hunting effort. In 2010 the State of Alaska  
17 reclassified black bear as furbearing animals as well  
18 as game animals. The Alaska Board of Game removed the  
19 requirement for getting a bear hide or skull sealed for  
20 Unit 11 in regulatory year 20 -- 2001 -- 2010 and 2012  
21 and for Unit 12 in regulatory year 2010/2011 because  
22 the requirement for both the harvest tickets and  
23 sealing was determined to be redundant.

24  
25 (Teleconference interference -  
26 participants not muted)

27  
28 MS. HOLMAN: Sealing requirements for  
29 black bear in Units 11 and 12 have not changed and the  
30 Federal regulations since the inception of the program  
31 in 1990 adopting then current State regulations. Under  
32 existing Federal regulations the salvage of the hide  
33 and edible meat is required when sealing is required,  
34 hunters must additionally remove the skull from the  
35 field.

36  
37 Unit 11 has not had population surveys  
38 conducted. Through field observations and harvest data  
39 it is believed that the black bear populations are  
40 abundant within areas of suitable habitat. The  
41 National Park Service biologist estimated that there  
42 are 100 to 200 black bears per 1,000 kilometers squared  
43 around McCarthy area in 2001. Unit 12 has not had  
44 population surveys conducted. Through limited radio  
45 telemetry data the Unit 12 population was estimated to  
46 be 700 to 1,000 bears in 2012. While current  
47 biological data for black bears in these units is  
48 lacking, there is no current conservation concern  
49 regarding black bears in Units 11 or 12.  
50

1 Unit 11 is primarily limited to  
2 Federally-qualified subsistence users. The number of  
3 black bears reported harvested fluctuates yearly from 8  
4 to 31 annually between 1998 to 2012. These numbers can  
5 be found on Figure 1 on Page 225 of your meeting book.  
6 Unit 12 has historically low human use of black bears  
7 despite liberal hunting regulations. The number of  
8 black bears harvested fluctuates each year between 23  
9 to 68 annually from 1995 and 2017. These numbers can  
10 also be found on Figure 2 on Page 226 of your meeting  
11 book.

12  
13 The proposal, if adopted, would remove  
14 the requirement for Federally-qualified subsistence  
15 users to have the skull and/or skin of a black bear  
16 sealed in Units 11 and 12. The process of harvesting  
17 black bears for Federally-qualified subsistence users  
18 would be simplified by removing this unnecessary  
19 requirement. The State removed this requirement over  
20 10 years ago requiring -- resulting in Federal  
21 regulations being more restrictive which is contrary to  
22 the rural subsistence priority mandate by ANILCA.  
23 While Federally-qualified subsistence users can hunt  
24 under State regulations in parts of the units, they  
25 cannot in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park where  
26 only State subsistence regulations apply.

27  
28 If this proposal is adopted the State  
29 and Federal regulations for sealing would align with  
30 each other reducing the regulatory complexity and user  
31 confusion.

32  
33 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
34 support Proposal WP22-33.

35  
36 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the  
37 Council. I'd be happy to address any questions.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And the reason this  
40 is on our agenda for black bears.....

41  
42 (Teleconference interference -  
43 participants not muted)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....is because we  
46 have a customary and traditional use determination in  
47 those game management units, apparently? I don't have  
48 the reg book in front of me. All Alaskan rural  
49 subsistence users would have an eligibility if there is  
50

0207

1 no customary and traditional use determination. So I  
2 would assume that's why we're here.

3

4 So I support the proposal, though.

5

6 We're going to move down this list  
7 here. Tribes and ANCSA Corporations, Karen.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
10 There were no tribal or ANCSA Corporation comments on  
11 WP22-33.

12

13 And, again, I'd like to remind folks to  
14 put us on mute. I know I sound like a broken record  
15 but we are getting some background noise so please put  
16 us on mute if you are not speaking. Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And somebody's  
19 pounding nails, so that would be you, so mute your  
20 phone.

21

22 Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

23

24 MR. MULLIGAN: Hi, Mr. Chairman, Ben  
25 Mulligan here again. ADF&G supports this proposal as  
26 it does align Federal and State sealing requirements --  
27 or removing the sealing requirements for black bears in  
28 these GMUs. The information acquired during the  
29 sealing process has been deemed not critical by the  
30 Board of Game for the management of black bears in 11  
31 and 12 and a harvest ticket is still required which  
32 does capture some basic harvest information. And just  
33 a quick, FYI, not all sealing needs to take place at an  
34 ADF&G office. We do have certified sealing officers in  
35 other locations and I would encourage folks to reach  
36 out to their local ADF&G office to find out what those  
37 alternatives are.

38

39 Thank you, Sir.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for  
42 that clarification Ben. So the Federal comments.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tribal comments.  
47 Any tribe on the phone want to speak to this.

48

49 (No comments)

50

0208

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other Regional  
2 Advisory Council comments, or positions.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: None. Subsistence  
7 Resource Commission. This was the Wrangell-St. Elias  
8 Subsistence Resource Commission proposal, apparently  
9 they endorse their proposal.

10  
11 (No comments)

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Written comments.  
14 Any written comments on this Kendra.

15  
16 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, no, there were  
17 no written comments.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any.....

20  
21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

24  
25 MS. DEATHERAGE: I apologize for the  
26 interruption, we do have an additional written public  
27 comment that was received just prior to the meeting.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

30  
31 MS. DEATHERAGE: The public written  
32 comment comes from Becky Schwanke who is a resident of  
33 Glennallen. Becky writes: I support the request to  
34 eliminate black bear sealing for Units 11 and 12. The  
35 black bear harvest reporting system is adequate to get  
36 necessary biological data for this abundant local  
37 species.

38  
39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
42 that comment. And so Regional Council recommendation.  
43 The Chair will entertain a motion to adopt Proposal  
44 WP22-33. Do we have a motion to that effect.

45  
46 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
47 Kevin. I'll make the motion to adopt WP22-33.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Kevin.  
50

0209

1 Do we have.....

2

3 MS. WILMARTH: This is Rebecca, I'll  
4 second.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....a second --  
7 Rebecca seconds. So any further discussion.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The biological  
12 parameters of the black bear population in the Game  
13 Management Units 11 and 12 are adequate to support  
14 harvest with the current regulatory process would be  
15 the comments that the Council will submit to the  
16 Federal Subsistence Board. You want to call the -- any  
17 further comments by the Council members.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do we got a  
22 question.

23

24 MR. SIMON: Question.

25

26 MR. DEMOSKI: Question.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
29 You want to call the roll, Karen.

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 For adoption of WP22-33.

33

34 Rebecca Wilmarth.

35

36 MS. WILMARTH: Yes.

37

38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

39

40 MR. HONEA: Yes.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

43

44 MR. SIMON: Yes.

45

46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

47

48 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

49

50

0210

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

6

7 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

10

11 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 WP22-33 passes unanimously. Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Karen.

17 So the next proposal before us is WP22-40 and is that  
18 you, Kendra, again.

19

20 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is

21 Kevin.

22

23 MS. GREDIAGIN: Mr. Chair, this is Lisa

24 -- oh.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Lisa.

27

28 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, thanks, Mr.

29 Chair. I am presenting this proposal but Kevin had  
30 started if you wanted to address that first.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wanted to know who  
33 was presenting. Go ahead Kevin.

34

35 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, sorry about that.

36 Just wondering, you know, this is my first meeting so  
37 excuse my ignorance here. But I was wondering if Karen  
38 could change her order once in awhile for the voting  
39 just so it's not always Rebecca or some -- not --  
40 nothing against the order but just to change it up a  
41 little bit just so it's not -- I don't know if that's  
42 what we'd usually do in the past, so please just tell  
43 me if it's not a good suggestion. That's all, thank  
44 you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, that's usually  
47 the way it would go but we don't usually do  
48 teleconferences every year so -- usually when we vote  
49 in person we -- it's yea and nay and everybody can see  
50

0211

1 each other. So go ahead, Lisa, do you want to present  
2 the proposal.

3

4 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, thank you, Mr.  
5 Chair. Can you hear me okay?

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can hear you great.

8

9 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay. Hello, Mr.  
10 Chair. Members of the Council. For the record my name  
11 is Lisa Grediagin, I'm the Wildlife Division Supervisor  
12 with OSM. And apologies, but I'm actually the backup  
13 presenter for this proposal so I'll do my best  
14 addressing any questions. So I'll be presenting the  
15 analysis for WP22-40 which begins on Page 229 of your  
16 Council book.

17

18 Proposal WP22-40 submitted by the  
19 Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
20 requests that Federally-qualified subsistence users be  
21 allowed to use a snowmachine to position wolves and  
22 wolverines for harvest on Federal public lands in Units  
23 9B, 9C, 17B and 17C provided the animals are not shot  
24 from a moving snowmachine.

25

26 The proponent states that the use of  
27 snowmachines to position wolves and wolverines is a  
28 traditional practice in rural areas. And the proposed  
29 regulation will mirror Federal regulations in Unit 23.  
30 The proponent continues, in April 2020, the Federal  
31 Subsistence Board addressed Proposal WP20-26 to  
32 position wolves and wolverine on Bureau of Land  
33 Management managed lands in Units 17B and C. The Board  
34 deferred the proposal to a working group of the Council  
35 and Federal Staff and State Staff to develop and  
36 recommend language to define positioning of animals for  
37 the Board to consider. This proposal replaces deferred  
38 Proposal WP22-26.

39

40 In 2020 the Council submitted Proposals  
41 WP20-26 and WP20-27. Proposal WP20-26 requested that  
42 Federally-qualified subsistence users be allowed to use  
43 a snowmachine to position wolves and wolverines for  
44 harvest on BLM managed lands only in Units 9B, 9C, 17B  
45 and 17C and Proposal WP20-27, also submitted by the  
46 Bristol Bay Council, requested a unit-specific  
47 regulation for Unit 17 allowing use of a snowmachine to  
48 assist in the taking of a caribou and allowing caribou  
49 to be shot from a stationary snowmachine using the  
50



0212

1 language adopted by the Board of Game in February 2018.

2

3

That regulatory language read:

4

5

6 In Unit 17 a snowmachine may be used to  
7 assist in the taking of a caribou and caribou may be  
8 shot from a stationary snowmachine. Assist in the  
9 taking of a caribou means a snowmachine may be used to  
10 approach within 300 yards of a caribou at speeds under  
11 15 miles per hour in a manner that does not involve  
12 repeated approaches or that causes a caribou to run. A  
13 snowmachine may not be used to contact an animal or to  
14 pursue a fleeing caribou.

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During the April 2020 Board meeting,  
the Board took up Proposal WP20-27, the Board then  
considered Proposal WP20-26, the Board deferred  
Proposal WP20-26 and suggested further consideration of  
the proposal by the Council working group to; 1, expand  
the analysis to include all Federal lands in Units 9B,  
9C, 17B and 17C; 2, identify specific language that may  
reduce complexity between State and Federal  
regulations, and, 3, anticipate and address regulatory  
conflicts between proposed regulatory language and  
agency-specific regulations.

The local State Advisory Committee  
submitted Proposal 23 to the Board of Game for  
consideration at their January 2022 meeting. Proposal  
23 requests allowing the use of a snowmachine to  
position wolves or wolverines for harvest in Unit 17  
and that they may be shot from a stationary  
snowmachine. The Nushagak AC states Proposal 23 seeks  
to eliminate current conflicts between regulatory  
prohibitions and common local hunting practices and  
that this opportunity is already available to users in  
Units 18, 22, 23 and 26A.

Following direction from the Federal  
Subsistence Board, a working group formed to develop  
recommendations for deferred Proposal WP20-26. The  
working group met several times via teleconference  
between July 2020 and May 2021. At the February 2021  
Bristol Bay Council meeting, the working group reported  
to the Council they were in agreement to expand the  
analysis to include all Federal public lands in Units  
9B, 9C, 17B and 17C. Subsequently this proposal was  
submitted for the 2022 regulatory cycle.

0213

1                   However, after submitting this proposal  
2 the working group met again in May and agreed to  
3 further clarify the term, position, using the same  
4 regulatory language as proposed in WP20-27.

5

6                   When Proposal 20-26 was proposed, it  
7 requested changes to regulations on BLM lands only in  
8 Units 9 and 17. BLM lands only occur in subunits 9B,  
9 9C, 17B and 17C. When the proponent submitted Proposal  
10 WP22-40 the request was expanded to include all Federal  
11 public lands in the same subunits before. An  
12 alternative to consider is that leaving out Unit 17A  
13 was an oversight and the proposed regulatory changes  
14 should take place on all Federal public lands in Units  
15 9B, 9C and all of Unit 17. The Council may want to  
16 further consider this alternative.

17

18                   The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
19 support Proposal WP22-40 with modification, to utilize  
20 the same regulatory language as Proposal WP20-27 and to  
21 include all Federal public lands in Unit 17.

22

23                   Hunters using snowmachines to position  
24 wolves and wolverines is a traditional practice in the  
25 Bristol Bay area. As the means for travel, access and  
26 harvest continue to change over time, hunters persist  
27 in using traditionally methods purposefully meant to  
28 alter the behavior of wildlife in order to position and  
29 for harvest because these methods are efficient.  
30 Additionally, the Board adopted a similar regulation in  
31 Unit 23 in recognition of the snowmachine as a  
32 customary and traditional harvest method. The proposed  
33 regulation change might increase opportunity through an  
34 enhanced method for the harvest of wolverine and could  
35 result in more harvest. Impacts to wolverine  
36 populations are unknown at this time and are difficult  
37 to track.

38

39                   Finally, the proposed modification  
40 should align with similar regulations for the hunting  
41 of caribou on Federal public lands in all of Unit 17 as  
42 well as comply with agency-specific regulations.

43

44                   Thank you, Mr. Chair. That concludes  
45 my presentation and I'd be happy to field any  
46 questions.

47

48                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions on  
49 Lisa's presentation, which was very thorough, thanks,  
50

0214

1 Lisa.

2

3

(No comments)

4

5

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council questions.

6

This Council addressed this a couple three years ago  
7 and now it's been re -- the work group has worked this  
8 language out a little clearer for the Federal  
9 Subsistence Board. So I don't hear any Council  
10 questions on the proposal. Any tribe or ANCSA  
11 Corporation comments.

12

13

14

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
15 this is Karen Deatherage. There were no tribal or  
16 ANCSA Corporation comments received on WP22-40. Thank  
17 you.

17

18

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Karen.  
19 Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments.

20

21

MR. MULLIGAN: Hi, Mr. Chair, Ben  
22 Mulligan. ADF&G supports the proposal. As you heard  
23 from Lisa the efforts going on on our end as well and  
24 it seems like -- and the work of the working group, so,  
25 yeah, we'll support this when it comes up in April.

26

27

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
28 And Federal comments, any agency comments.

29

30

(No comments)

31

32

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any tribal comments  
33 from anybody on the phone.

34

35

(No comments)

36

37

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other Regional  
38 Advisory Council comments. Has any Council made a  
39 recommendation on this?

40

41

MS. GREDIAGIN: No, Mr. Chair.

42

43

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Advisory  
44 Committee comments, they're part of the process, these  
45 Fish and Game Advisory Committees.

46

47

(No comments)

48

49

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All affected

50

0215

1 committees were involved in this, I assume.

2

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

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Alissa.

6

7 MS. ROGERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We  
8 just recently had gotten a new Advisory Committee  
9 Coordinator out here in the Western region and our  
10 Bethel Advisory Committee has not met yet. Thank you,  
11 Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate  
14 that information. Subsistence Resource Commissions.  
15 Did Lake Clark comment on this, have they met, any NPS  
16 people on the phone.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Apparently not.  
21 Summary of written public comments. Do you have any  
22 Karen, or Lisa?

23

24 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, my apologies,  
25 just a moment, Mr. Chair. I don't believe there -- yes,  
26 correct, yeah, there are no written public comments.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And no new  
29 ones have come in, Karen? Are you there, Karen?

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thanks, yes, I am, Mr.  
32 Chair. No written public comments have been received  
33 prior to the meeting for WP22-40. Thank you.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any public  
36 testimony. Anybody on the phone want to comment on  
37 this proposal.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Advisory  
42 Council recommendation. I feel that the modified  
43 language that OSM, in their conclusion to support WP22-  
44 40 with a modification and the modification is on Page  
45 42 and 43 of our meeting books is the refined language  
46 that the Federal Subsistence Board was looking for and  
47 I support that refined language. The Chair will  
48 entertain a motion to adopt WP22-40 with modification,  
49 do we have a motion to that effect.

50

0216

1 MS. PELKOLA: Mr. Chair, can you hear  
2 me, this is Jenny.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead. Oh,  
5 Jenny, yeah, go ahead.

6  
7 MS. PELKOLA: I'll make that motion.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate  
10 that Jenny. Do we have a second.

11  
12 MR. DEMOSKI: I second, this is Arnold.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
15 Arnold. Discussion. Council members may be confused  
16 why we're discussing Unit 17 and 9, that's because we  
17 have people in Unit 19 that actually have customary and  
18 traditional use over on that side so this proposal  
19 would affect some our people of our region, you know,  
20 like down in the lower Kuskokwim area especially. So  
21 any further discussion on the proposal.

22  
23 (No comments)

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any. I  
26 support the proposal because of the refined language  
27 that was brought out by the work group and this seems  
28 to be equitable through both regulatory systems so  
29 that's the reason why I'm supporting the proposal. So  
30 any further comments.

31  
32 (No comments)

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got a question.

35  
36 MR. HONEA: Call for the question.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
39 You want to call the roll Karen.

40  
41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
42 Let's start with Jenny Pelkola.

43  
44 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Jenny,  
47 welcome back.

48  
49 How about Goodwin Semaken.

50

0217

1 (No comments)

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin, are you still  
4 on the phone with us?

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 MS. DEATHERAGE: I'll come back to

9 Goodwin.

10

11 Arnold Demoski.

12

13 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

16

17 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jack Reakoff.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

24

25 MR. SIMON: Yes.

26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Yes.

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Let's go back to

40 Goodwin Semaken, are you on the phone?

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

49 WP22-40 passes with a vote of six members unanimously.

50

0218

1 Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks Karen. So the  
4 next proposal is WP22-50 increase harvest limits to no  
5 limit for trapping beaver in Unit 23, and who's  
6 presenting this.

7

8 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, this is Kendra,  
9 I'll be doing this one.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,  
12 Kendra.

13

14 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
15 Board. This is Kendra Holman and I will be proposing  
16 [sic] Wildlife Proposal WP22-50 submitted by the  
17 Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council  
18 requesting the beaver harvest limit be changed from 50  
19 and 30 beavers in Unit 23, Kobuk and the Selawik River  
20 drainage and Unit 23 remainder respectfully to no  
21 harvest limit to both trapping areas. This proposal  
22 starts on Page 248 of your meeting book.

23

24 The proposal -- the proponent states  
25 that the proposed changes would align Federal beaver  
26 trapping regulations with the more liberal State  
27 regulations as well as provide increased harvest  
28 opportunity for Federally-qualified subsistence users.

29

30 There has been a general trend to  
31 liberalize trapping and hunting regulations in Unit 23.  
32 In 1999, the Alaska Board of Game adopted the year-  
33 round hunting season for beaver in Unit 23 with no  
34 harvest limit or sealing requirement. In addition, the  
35 trapping season was extended to year-round with no  
36 harvest limit and no sealing requirement. In 2007 the  
37 Board adopted Proposal WP07-51 requesting a hunting  
38 season for beaver in Unit 23 with no closed season and  
39 no harvest limit. Arctic landscapes are in transition  
40 due to changes in climate, increased warmth in the  
41 summers and longer growing seasons are contributing to  
42 increased tundra productivity and shrub dominated  
43 vegetation. Beavers have increasingly moved into the  
44 tundra areas during the past 20 years. Beaver numbers  
45 remain high in Unit 23 particularly in the Selawik and  
46 Kobuk River drainages where beavers have fully occupied  
47 high quality habitat and now widely occur in marginal  
48 areas as well.

49

50

0219

1 Current harvest data is limited because  
2 few folks have sealed pelts since ADF&G made beaver  
3 sealing requirements voluntary in Unit 23 in 2000. The  
4 most recent community harvest surveys in the community  
5 subsistence information system is 2014 and that data  
6 suggests that beaver harvesting varies greatly by year  
7 and community as seen in both Figure 1 and Table 1 on  
8 Page 252 of your meeting book.

9

10 If this proposal is adopted the beaver  
11 harvest limit would be changed from 50 and 30 beaver  
12 per season in Unit 23, Kobuk, and Selawik and the Unit  
13 23 remainder respectfully to no harvest limit in both  
14 trap areas. No impacts to the beaver population or user  
15 groups are expected as Federally-qualified subsistence  
16 users can already trap an unlimited number of beavers  
17 on most Federal lands under the more liberal State  
18 regulations. Additionally, adoption of the proposal  
19 would align Federal and State regulations reducing the  
20 regulatory complexity for users.

21

22 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
23 support WP22-50 with modifications to combine Unit 23  
24 trap areas.

25

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the  
27 Board. I'll be happy to field any questions.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kendra. Any  
30 questions on the proposal by the Council.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pretty  
35 straightforward. Tribal and ANCSA Corporation  
36 comments. Karen.

37

38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
39 There were no tribal or ANCSA Corporation comments on  
40 WP22-50. Thanks.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Alaska Department of  
43 Fish and Game comments.

44

45 MR. MULLIGAN: Hi, Mr. Chair, Ben  
46 Mulligan. The Department supports aligning State and  
47 Federal regulations to reduce user confusion.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Ben.

50



0220

1 Federal comments, or tribal comments, anybody on the  
2 phone care to comment on this proposal.

3

4 (No comments)

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other Regional  
7 Advisory Council positions. This is a Northwest Arctic  
8 Regional Advisory Council proposal, apparently they  
9 support it.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Fish and Game  
14 Advisory Committee comments, or Subsistence Resource  
15 Commission comments. There's Kobuk Valley,  
16 Krusenstern, Gates of the Arctic.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. Summary of  
21 written and public comments, Kendra or.....

22

23 MS. HOLMAN: No written comments.....

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....Karen.

26

27 MS. HOLMAN: .....Mr. Chair.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
30 There are no additional written public comments  
31 received after the comment deadline. Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Public  
34 testimony. Any person on the phone care to comment on  
35 this Proposal WP22-50.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none,  
40 Council recommendation. I support this proposal. The  
41 Chair will entertain a motion to adopt the Proposal  
42 WP22-50 with modification as outlined in OSM's  
43 preliminary conclusion on Page -- no, wait a minute I'm  
44 on the wrong page, on Page 248.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do we have a  
49 motion to adopt.

50

0221

1 MR. DEMOSKI: This is Arnold, I'll make  
2 that a motion to adopt WP22-50 with the modification.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
5 that Arnold. Do we have a second.

6  
7 MR. WHITWORTH: Second. This is Kevin.

8  
9 MR. SIMON: Second by Pollock.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock seconds. So  
12 comments on the proposal.

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I will comment on  
17 the proposal. I was on the Kobuk River probably 20  
18 years ago and there were guys from Kobuk Village way up  
19 the river harvesting beaver in the fall because there  
20 were no caribou and so beaver are widely used, and  
21 before the caribou migrations come, and the beaver  
22 population is really high. So within the Western  
23 Interior region beaver are used predominately for food  
24 source and so that would be my comment. Any further  
25 comments.

26  
27 (No comments)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do we got a call  
30 for question.

31  
32 MR. SIMON: Question.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called,  
35 you want to call the roll, Karen.

36  
37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair. To  
38 adopt WP22-50. Kevin Whitworth.

39  
40 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

41  
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

43  
44 (No comments)

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don, are you on the  
47 phone?

48  
49 MR. HONEA: Yes.

50

0222

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: I'll come back to him  
2 -- oh, is that Don?

3  
4 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Yes.

5  
6 MS. DEATHERAGE: All right, super,  
7 thank you. Rebecca Wilmarth.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: We must have lost  
12 Rebecca or she's having trouble muting and unmuting  
13 again, I'll come back.

14  
15 Pollock Simon.

16  
17 MR. SIMON: Yes.

18  
19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thanks, Pollock.

20  
21 Jenny Pelkola.

22  
23 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

24  
25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

26  
27 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

28  
29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thanks, welcome back,  
30 Goodwin.

31  
32 Arnold Demoski.

33  
34 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

35  
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

39  
40 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's seven yes, so  
41 the motion passes unanimously. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Karen.  
44 The next proposal is WP22-53, establish season and  
45 harvest limit for Arctic fox in Unit 25, and who's  
46 presenting on this one.

47  
48 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, this is Kendra,  
49 I'll be doing this one.

50

0223

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kendra, go ahead.

2

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MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair. Members of the Board. This is Kendra Holman and I'm a Wildlife Biologist with the Office of Subsistence Management. I will be presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP22-53 submitted by Mr. Korth of Fort Yukon requesting the establishment of a trapping season for Arctic fox in Unit 25. It can be found on Page 255 of your meeting book.

The proponent states that Arctic foxes are trapped in Unit 25 and in some years they are trapped more than red, cross or silver foxes. The State currently has a Arctic fox trapping season in Unit 25 and the proponent would like a Federal season to be legalized as well since many are already incidentally caught in Unit 25 traps intended for other species. Currently there is no Federal subsistence trapping regulation for Arctic fox in Unit 25 and the State has an established season for Arctic fox in Unit 25 that started in 2004 and has not changed since 2006.

Population dynamics of the Arctic fox in Unit 25 are not documented, they are considered to have stable and sometimes abundant populations and their preferred habitat in the treeless coastal areas of Alaska from the Aleutian Islands north to Point Barrow and east to the Canadian border. Young transient Arctic foxes have been known to cross the Brooks Range outside of their home range in Unit 25 and other adjacent units in search of prey. There are no reported Arctic fox harvest prior to the 53 reported in the 2018/2019 trapping season, however, reported harvest numbers may not reflect actual harvest since the sealing of Arctic fox is not required and incidental take of red fox traps is likely. The Alaska trapper report estimates the presence of Arctic fox is scarce in Unit 25 and other units south of the Brooks Range.

If this proposal is adopted no impacts of Arctic fox populations or user groups is expected as Federally-qualified subsistence users can already trap an unlimited number of Arctic fox on all Federal lands in Unit 25 under State regulations.

Unit 25 is not within the primary range and habitat of the Arctic fox and any Arctic fox

0224

1 harvest in this unit are likely transient individuals.

2

3 Adoption of this proposal would align  
4 Federal and State trapping regulations, reduce the  
5 regulatory complexity for users and incidental take of  
6 Arctic fox would become legal under Federal  
7 regulations.

8

9 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
10 support WP22-53.

11

12 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the  
13 Board. I would be happy to field any questions.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kendra. Any  
16 questions on the proposal. Council member questions.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tribal and ANCSA  
21 Corporation comments, Karen.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
24 There were no tribal or ANCSA Corporation comments on  
25 WP22-53.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: ADF&G comments, Ben.

28

29 MR. MULLIGAN: Hi, Mr. Chairman. ADF&G  
30 supports the alignment of these State and Federal  
31 trapping seasons and bag limits. You know as was  
32 mentioned by OSM, you know, trappers could be trapping  
33 under State regulations already but we understand the  
34 confusion that the differing regulations provide for  
35 folks so we support this proposal. Thank you, Sir.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Ben. Any  
38 Federal comments.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tribal comments.  
43 Anybody on the phone would care to comment on the  
44 proposal.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other Regional  
49 Advisory Council comments. Eastern Interior's meeting

50

0225

1 right now but I doubt that they've got to this proposal  
2 yet.

3

4 (No comments)

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Fish and Game  
7 Advisory Committee comments.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: SRC comments,  
12 there's no Parks over there.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Summary of written  
17 and public comments, Kendra.

18

19 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, there were no  
20 written comments on this proposal.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do you have any late  
23 comments, Karen.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
26 There were no written comments received after the  
27 comment deadline for this proposal. Thank you.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Public  
30 testimony, any member of the public care to comment on  
31 this proposal.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Regional Advisory  
36 Council recommendation. The Chair will entertain a  
37 motion to adopt WP22-53.

38

39 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
40 Kevin.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin.

43

44 MR. WHITWORTH: I was just wanting to  
45 ask a question of OSM regarding the -- before we adopt  
46 this -- regarding the season. It says last day of  
47 February, the State regs say February 28, just  
48 wondering if there's going to be confusion here if we  
49 should have it February 28th or the last day of  
50

0226

1 February because I don't know when Leap Year comes into  
2 it but there are times when February is longer than  
3 February 28th. So just wondering if we should modify  
4 that, that's all.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did OSM consider  
7 that, Kendra, or is this as the proposal is written?

8

9 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, I'm the back up  
10 on this so I don't know exactly how it was written.  
11 That's something we can take note of and take a look  
12 at.

13

14 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this  
15 is Lisa. And, yeah, that's how the proposal was  
16 submitted. And to be honest with you, I remember an  
17 ISC member bringing up that issue but I think OSM just  
18 supported the proposal as written versus making a  
19 modification.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. It's as the  
22 proponent has written it so we should stay with that.  
23 It's gone through the analysis like that, so is that  
24 okay Kevin.

25

26 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes, I'll make the  
27 motion to adopt 22-53.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Do we have a  
30 second.

31

32 MR. HONEA: Second, this is Don.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Don.

35 Discussion.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.....

38

39 MR. SIMON: Call for the question.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I wanted to make a  
42 comment, go ahead, Don.

43

44 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I'm sorry, I  
45 interrupted somebody there. But I actually wanted to  
46 state something about this because I think the numbers  
47 we're talking about are actually probably very low and  
48 in the proposal itself he says since many are already  
49 incidentally caught anyway. I didn't realize that

50

0227

1 Arctic foxes went down that far into the, I guess, the  
2 National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Yukon, but I have no  
3 problem with this. And like I said, I think the catch  
4 would be very low so I would support this.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I live in the  
9 upper Koyukuk drainage and trap every year for decades,  
10 I've caught Arctic fox at different times here, when  
11 the Arctic fox population is really high on the coastal  
12 plain, oddly enough around the Winter Solstice, mid-  
13 December to mid-January, right before the breeding  
14 season, I've caught one or two Arctic foxes that are  
15 just moving from north to south. Many get by me, they  
16 don't get caught. I've never seen one ever going the  
17 opposite direction. Once they go down into the main  
18 Interior they're inside the red fox population and they  
19 -- I assume that they're killed down there and don't  
20 ever come back. So these are just incidental harvest  
21 to -- I've caught older Arctic fox with worn teeth,  
22 I've got young ones, just random event, any foxes, and  
23 they move out. And so incidentally when I was selling  
24 carcasses to the National Park Service they were like,  
25 oh, you're getting Arctic foxes and so then this  
26 discussion of this actually opening seasons in other  
27 units on the south slopes of the Brooks Range actually  
28 (indiscernible - cuts out) that's sort of supplementary  
29 to the proposal. I support the proposal.

30

31 Any further comments.

32

33 MR. MULLIGAN: Mr. Chairman, this is  
34 Ben Mulligan, mind if I interject.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

37

38 MR. MULLIGAN: This is Ben Mulligan at  
39 Fish and Game. I reached out to one of our area  
40 biologists because you guys were discussing what to do  
41 on those leap years and the State extends the season on  
42 to the leap day when we have them. Just to let you  
43 know. Thank you, Sir, I appreciate it.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good,  
46 appreciate that. Other comment, did somebody else want  
47 to comment also.

48

49 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, Mr. Chair,

50



0228

1 this.....

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is.....

4

5 MR. DEMOSKI: .....is Arnold.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Your phone's  
8 breaking up, get closer to the mic, go ahead.

9

10 MR. DEMOSKI: Mr. Chair, this is  
11 Arnold, could you hear me?

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you  
14 better now, go ahead.

15

16 MR. DEMOSKI: Okay. No, yeah, I just  
17 wanted to say aligning the State and Federal  
18 regulations is a good thing and it prevents confusion  
19 and so that's all I was going to say. I support this  
20 proposal.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate  
23 that comment. Any further comments.

24

25 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
26 Kevin.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

29

30 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, I just want to  
31 say thanks to Ben for that clarification with the State  
32 regs aligning with this end of February confusion that  
33 I brought up. Thank you, Ben. That's all.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a  
36 question.

37

38 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by  
41 Jenny. You want to call the roll, Karen.

42

43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
44 For adoption of WP22-53. Kevin Whitworth.

45

46 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

49

50

0229

1 MR. SIMON: Yes.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

4

5 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

8

9 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

10

11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thanks, Goodwin, I  
12 heard a yes.

13

14 Jenny Pelkola.

15

16 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

21

22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

23

24 MS. WILMARTH: Yes.

25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: And Don Honea.

27

28 MR. HONEA: Yes.

29

30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

31 The vote passes eight to zero. Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We've covered  
34 the Federal proposals. Tom Kron gave us a real short  
35 briefing on annual report reply process yesterday.  
36 Should we cover that again, Karen, what's your feeling  
37 on that, just a real short one.

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, I would  
40 recommend that anybody who wasn't present to read  
41 through the one page document in the meeting book and  
42 just be prepared for the winter meeting, to have a more  
43 thorough discussion on this issue. Thank you, Mr.  
44 Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Highlight your book  
47 Arnold on Page 259. And so we were identifying issues  
48 for the 2021 annual report. Do you want to give a  
49 briefing for our new members on what the annual report  
50

0230

1 entails, Karen.

2

3

4 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
5 Through the Chair. Section .805(a)(3)(d) provides that  
6 the Council can submit an annual report to the Federal  
7 Subsistence Board, 1, identifying current and  
8 anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife  
9 populations within the region; 2, an evaluation of  
10 current and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and  
11 wildlife populations within the region; 3, a  
12 recommended strategy for the management of fish and  
13 wildlife populations with the region to accommodate  
14 such subsistence uses and needs; and, 4,  
15 recommendations concerning policies, standards,  
16 guidelines and regulations to implement the strategies.

16

17 So essentially the annual reports are  
18 generally issues that the Council believes affect  
19 subsistence but are not necessarily part of the  
20 regulatory process and the Council submits these  
21 reports every year. They are drafted at the fall  
22 meeting and finalized at the winter meeting and  
23 submitted to the Federal Subsistence Board who replies  
24 where requested.

25

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Karen.  
29 So we were developing -- do you want to read off -- I  
30 think we identified a couple things yesterday -- Karen.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank  
33 you, very much. The item that the Council wanted to  
34 include in the draft annual report was most notably the  
35 Yukon and Kuskokwim River chinook and chum salmon  
36 issue. The Council would like for something to be  
37 done, more to be done to rebuild these two stocks so  
38 that subsistence users can meet their needs in the  
39 regions. The Council would like to see more effort  
40 with Federal and State governments to help rebuild the  
41 in-river stocks and to take a look at the Bering Sea  
42 and Area M fishery impacts on these river stocks. The  
43 Council would like to include NOAA, NMFS, National  
44 Marine Fisheries Service, and the North Pacific  
45 Fisheries Management Council in this strategy. The  
46 Council requests that fishery managers do a better job  
47 of working together and acknowledging that there is a  
48 crises in both of these river systems and in some areas  
49 escapement goals are not always being met. The Council

50

0231

1 would also like to remark that other fish species, like  
2 whitefish, and sheefish, there needs to be more  
3 monitoring because they are being targeted more due to  
4 the chinook and chum salmon collapses. There's a shift  
5 in harvest to make up for other fisheries, but also  
6 land mammals. There's a higher need for terrestrial  
7 animals like moose due to low salmon stocks. So this  
8 all represents wider ramifications for the region.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Karen. Did  
13 you have an inclusion to that Kevin.

14

15 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
16 Kevin. No, I thought that was a great summary of the  
17 issue that I brought up. I was wondering -- yesterday  
18 we had a discussion also with this topic that it could  
19 be brought up, you know, throughout the meeting, issues  
20 that we want to add to the annual report. I do have a  
21 couple more that -- but I would like to hear agency  
22 reports first before I bring up another couple issues  
23 that I think should be in the annual report. If you  
24 guys don't mind, I could wait until the end of the  
25 meeting for that, or sometime later after agency  
26 reports.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's totally fine.  
29 So we can move this annual report call down to the end  
30 of our agenda after the agency reports. You want to  
31 make a note of that, Karen.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
34 so noted.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that will be  
37 right at the end of 13, and agency reports. So one of  
38 the issues cited was the Area M interception, that's an  
39 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, another agency that  
40 would need to be addressing that. I don't know what  
41 the totals were, Kevin, but Area M caught a lot of chum  
42 salmon this summer. What were those numbers, like a  
43 million chum salmon?

44

45 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this  
46 is Kevin. Are you asking for those numbers?

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

49

50

0232

1 MR. WHITWORTH: I don't have them in  
2 front of me.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, it's around  
5 985,000 chum salmon were caught in the Area M fishery,  
6 the South Alaska Peninsula fishery. The Yukon  
7 Kuskokwim went through the worst chum salmon returns  
8 and there needs to be discussion with the Alaska  
9 Department of Fish and Game in this issue that we're  
10 highlighting to the Federal Subsistence Board, that  
11 there needs to be more refined management regarding in  
12 -- not in-system harvest, but basically intercept  
13 harvest. That's another issue that needs to be  
14 addressed besides the ground fishery.

15  
16 So the Department of Fish and Game  
17 needs to be highlighted as another agency that needs to  
18 have conferencing with managers on that particular  
19 issue. That was a really high harvest this year on a  
20 really low return year, even if it's only 45 percent of  
21 Alaska stocks and the rest are Asian stocks, that was a  
22 significant number of chum salmon.

23  
24 So put that on there Karen, for agency  
25 consultation on management.

26  
27 And so you got a couple other things  
28 that you want to put on the list after the agency  
29 reports. I'm going to have one after the Bureau of  
30 Land Management report for dall sheep management and  
31 guide use.

32  
33 So at this time are there any other  
34 annual report topics that any Council member would like  
35 to highlight at this time, or you can highlight them  
36 again after our agency reports.

37  
38 (No comments)

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So okay, we're at  
41 Mulchatna Caribou Herd conservation strategy  
42 discussion. Todd Rinaldi and Mark Burch, Alaska  
43 Department of Fish and Game. Are you on the phone,  
44 Todd.

45  
46 MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

49  
50

0233

1 MR. RINALDI: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 This is Todd Rinaldi with the Department of Fish and  
3 Game, can you hear me okay?

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear great,  
6 go right ahead.

7  
8 MR. RINALDI: Good. So for the record  
9 my name is Todd Rinaldi, I'm the Regional Management  
10 Coordinator for Region 4, which includes Game  
11 Management Units 17 and 9, and we're also the primary  
12 managers for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd which is  
13 managed out of Region 4, and Unit 17, the Dillingham  
14 office.

15  
16 Thank you for providing this  
17 opportunity so I can provide an update to you all on  
18 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd and our ongoing efforts to  
19 conserve the herd. We currently have a Mulchatna  
20 Caribou InterAgency Management Group that I'll talk a  
21 little bit more about but it's comprised of Staff from  
22 not only Department of Wildlife Conservation but U.S.  
23 Fish and Wildlife Service as well. So I'm going to  
24 take a few minutes and give an overview on the range  
25 and history. We probably won't go too much in the  
26 history because I think you are all pretty familiar  
27 with the history, talk about the population objective  
28 status, what we're doing, monitoring and management-  
29 wise and as far as research goes and then our pitch to  
30 get your thoughts and to help get folks in your  
31 communities involved.

32  
33 So as you already know the herd has  
34 ranged widely over the years and obviously those areas  
35 include northern areas of 19A and areas of 18 and 19B  
36 and areas as far south as 9A and maybe into 9C. And,  
37 you know, and those periods were the periods of the  
38 highest population periods. The herd has thought to  
39 have peaked in the 1860s and then had a slower decline  
40 into the 1960s and then as most of us are aware the  
41 herd peaked again in the mid-90s and has since been  
42 declining. But those peaks are likely the time when  
43 the range was maximized at approximately 40,000 square  
44 miles. Now that the herd is much more retracted, as  
45 you know, and movements are far more minimal, there are  
46 two primary groups in the east in 17 and another  
47 primary group in the west in 18, and then there's some  
48 satellite groups that we keep track of off Quinhagak  
49 and near Iliamna.  
50

1                               So the population objective for  
2 Mulchatna Caribou Herd, as we've discussed in the past  
3 is 30,000 to 80,000 and that is IM, that is an  
4 intensive management objective. The population peaked,  
5 as we just mentioned, in the late '90s and has been  
6 declining since then. We're under the impression that  
7 we had information over the last few years that the  
8 herd was recovering and working its way up towards the  
9 minimum of the population objective of 30,000, but,  
10 since we've been able to get some additional accurate  
11 photo synthesis in 2019, 2020, 2021, and we've noticed  
12 a decline, and the population is half of the minimum  
13 objective. So in 2019 and 2020 we had two different  
14 surveys that estimated the population at pretty much  
15 13,500. That estimate in 2020 was a little bit more  
16 precise statistically and then we completed another  
17 survey this summer in 2021 and the population is still  
18 essentially at the same level of 12,850.

19  
20                               The composition information, we  
21 currently have Staff out in the Mulchatna conducting a  
22 composition survey on the Mulchatna as well as the  
23 Nushagak. The 2020 calf to cow ratio was 36 which is  
24 above the calf to cow objective of 30 calves to cows.  
25 And the 2020 bull to cow ratio was above -- which was  
26 above 42 and, you know, some additional flights that we  
27 took after the comp flights last year actually  
28 suggested that there might be higher ratios for both  
29 categories and a significant -- a significant bulk of  
30 the herd coming up as small and medium bulls and we've  
31 seen how that adds to population growth and we're  
32 expecting that to take place in a few years. So  
33 there's a lot of signs that the population is doing  
34 okay. But it's unclear as to where it's going to level  
35 out and ultimately what portion of the range they're  
36 going to be using, which I'm sure is on everyone's  
37 mind.

38  
39                               So much of the estimate (ph), the  
40 monitoring and management that we've been doing on the  
41 herd we've been conducting with our partners at Togiak  
42 National Wildlife Refuge. As I mentioned they monitor  
43 population and composition. The composition survey is  
44 going on currently. We also monitor productivity,  
45 movement of the herd and the Department -- the State  
46 has a same-day airborne predation control program in a  
47 10,000 square mile area in Unit 17 and a portion of  
48 Unit 19 and that is a program that allows for the take  
49 of wolves by permitted members of the public. That is  
50

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1 not an agency removal program.

2

3

4 And then also we have, as I mentioned  
5 earlier, this presentation has come out of the  
6 Mulchatna Caribou Herd InterAgency Management Group  
7 which is comprised of biologists, subsistence  
8 specialists and education specialists from Fish and  
9 Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We currently  
10 are in the stages of information sharing and conducting  
11 and wanting to expand outreach. One of the efforts of  
12 that -- I'm hoping that some of the folks listening  
13 today received information through the mail. We've had  
14 multiple mailings through the range of the Mulchatna  
15 Caribou Herd providing informational materials on the  
16 current status and we also released a Caribou Trails  
17 newsletter to some of them and I'm hoping you all  
18 received -- if you haven't received that or would like  
19 to get copies, they are available on our website, but I  
20 can also make them available to any points of contact  
21 if they want to contact me after this.

21

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We also -- another critical piece of  
this picture here is household survey data, which is  
conducted not only by Fish and Game Subsistence Staff  
but also federal Subsistence Staff, and I think there  
were plans to do some household surveys in the range of  
the Mulchatna coming up but I am uncertain as to where  
that is at considering there was no hunt for the  
Mulchatna this year and Covid is still inhibiting Staff  
and people's ability to move around and congregate in  
most of these areas. So that is an important piece and  
we encourage you to share your information during those  
household surveys with Staff. It gives us a far better  
understanding of the Mulchatna than we would have  
otherwise.

There's also a research component and  
the research component's been going on for a number of  
years. It was looking at predation and mortality  
previously and now it's focused more on body condition,  
diet, disease, and the genetics of the herd. As you  
may recall, I think the last time I spoke with you all,  
research monitoring efforts for the Mulchatna Caribou  
had a higher than expected prevalence of antibodies to  
a bacteria called brucella, when it's compared to other  
herds and this indicates exposure and likely incidents  
to the disease known as brucellosis and we've produced  
a pretty widespread information campaign to make sure  
we get that information out to folks in the range of



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1 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. And, again, I don't have  
2 any additional information on -- well, I guess I do,  
3 yes, so there were this year -- our research Staff,  
4 there were signs of brucellosis were noted during calf  
5 captures in the parturition survey and then a few  
6 calves were sent in for testing but it doesn't look  
7 like the field observations relative to previous years  
8 has increased. So -- and we have not got those results  
9 from the lab so standby for that.

10

11 And then, finally, you know, as we  
12 continue to do our jobs and attempting to -- and moving  
13 forward and conserving the herd, we want to know what  
14 the public thinks, we want to know what the RACs think,  
15 we want to know what the users of the resource think  
16 on, not only the current management of the Mulchatna  
17 Herd, but also how can we get the word out about the  
18 importance of conserving the Mulchatna Caribou Herd at  
19 this time. The feedback and the opportunities that  
20 we've had to speak at RACs and AC meetings and other  
21 remote community functions has been positive and we  
22 seem like we have the support from -- wide support from  
23 the communities but we'd like to hear from as many  
24 individuals and organizations as possible. There's a  
25 couple of ways of doing that. Obviously one is through  
26 these Regional Advisory Councils. We're in the second  
27 day of the Western Interior but there will be  
28 additional opportunities to make your positions heard  
29 at the Bristol Bay Regional Advisory Council that comes  
30 up at the end of this month. So in addition to the  
31 Regional Advisory Councils, there's also -- you can  
32 also submit comments, or general comments or comments  
33 on proposals to the Alaska Board of Game, through  
34 written comment or oral testimony and the deadline for  
35 the Board of Game written comments is January 7th of  
36 2022. We're pretty optimistic that the Board of Game  
37 is going to happen and it will probably be some kind of  
38 hybrid type of situation but that meeting is January  
39 21st through the 28th and is currently scheduled for  
40 Wasilla. And, of course, we'd love to hear your  
41 opinions one on one so if you want to contact us and  
42 ask us questions or share your thoughts, there's Staff  
43 in the Bethel office and Staff in the McGrath office,  
44 Staff in the King Salmon office, and, unfortunately we  
45 don't have an AB in the Dillingham office again so we  
46 are about to advertise for a Dillingham area biologist.  
47 I will be acting in capacity of the area biologist  
48 during that vacancy. We still have a lot of work  
49 that's ongoing and that's going to be picked up by  
50

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1 other Staff with agency assistance so we'll still be  
2 able to move forward on all the S&I (ph) and research  
3 that we need to do to understand the Mulchatna Caribou  
4 Herd.

5

6 So thank you for your time and I'll  
7 accept, answer any questions now.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do Council members  
10 have questions for Todd on his presentation.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Comments on  
15 management from the Council.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Hello.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello, go ahead.

20

21 MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair,  
22 this is Don. I had a question for Todd. I realize  
23 that Western Interior, I believe, goes either to lower  
24 Kalskag or at least Aniak because we had reps from  
25 Aniak before. But just looking at the Mulchatna  
26 Caribou Herd range, and a lot of these, Lime Village,  
27 Stony, they all have a customary and traditional use  
28 determination, like in the past, I mean I know this is  
29 the big concern for us even though we kind of  
30 borderline here, but how -- the villages that are in  
31 the Western Interior, are they taking advantage -- or I  
32 mean are they still able to harvest a caribou and what  
33 are the numbers coming in? Is it -- do they just  
34 concentrate in a certain area. I guess what I'm  
35 looking at is how dependent are people, like in Red  
36 Devil, Sleetmute, Lime Village and those areas, how  
37 dependent are they on the numbers and are they stable.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 MR. RINALDI: Yes, thank you. Through  
42 the Chair. Great question. Yeah, that 39,000 almost  
43 40,000 square mile range is pretty broad and we do have  
44 some question about what the herd was doing, if it was  
45 doing anything, north of the Yukon there. You know  
46 there was a herd that seemingly got absorbed by the  
47 Mulchatna during its largest phase there recently. But  
48 I think unless folks from Unit 19A and 19B, so the Lime  
49 Village and south and Aniak area, I don't think they're

50

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1 having opportunity to take Mulchatna Herd. I do  
2 understand that there are some caribou opportunities in  
3 19A but I don't think, unless someone finds a  
4 straggler, I think the harvest in 19B is low to non-  
5 existent, unless someone is taking a trip into 17 to  
6 harvest a caribou in the fall. As you know that permit  
7 is the same permit for the whole range, it's the  
8 registration caribou permit 503 and that addresses the  
9 whole range so that would be the same permit that  
10 everyone would use. But I don't think there's any  
11 animals in 19A. And there's certainly no other animals  
12 on the other side of the Yukon that are associated with  
13 the Mulchatna right now.

14

15 MR. HONEA: Okay, thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other questions or  
18 comments from the Council members.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My comments would  
23 be, as a Western Interior Regional Council member for  
24 nearly 30 years, I was very concerned about the high  
25 harvest of bulls back in the '90s and the component --  
26 the composition declined to one large bull per 100 cows  
27 with 14 bulls at one point, predominately one bulls.  
28 And everybody here that hunts caribou in the Arctic  
29 knows that those, what's referred to as, pagnets,  
30 they're large breeding bulls, young bulls are rejected  
31 by cows, we don't shoot large bulls when they're in rut  
32 because they're breeding cows, and young bulls -- you  
33 can take young bulls because they're basically not  
34 really breeding, the cows reject those. The history of  
35 this herd, there's trails that go up the Kuskokwim  
36 Mountains all the way to Ruby, so they're etched into  
37 the ground, that's the historical movements of the  
38 north/south movements of large herds over 100 years  
39 ago. All the gold rush communities were harvesting  
40 caribou, they were selling caribou meat for 33 cents a  
41 pound. We have no historical data on this herd, the  
42 range of this herd. In the '90s it went all the way to  
43 McGrath when it started to get up to 200,000. My  
44 concern is that we maintain -- so you want to comment  
45 on management, maintain large bull component for  
46 breeding structure. What happened in the '90s it's  
47 blatant apparent that there was a reproductive failure  
48 with the lack of bulls in the population.

49

50

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1                   My comment is to maintain, not just  
2 overall bulls, not baby bulls and young bulls, overall  
3 you got to have a breeding component. And in Norway,  
4 and Sweden and Scandinavia, they don't even breed a  
5 reindeer bull until it's 8 years of age, that's a  
6 breeding bull. So basically the ecology of the caribou  
7 is quite a bit different than moose, caribou don't have  
8 twins, moose have twins, and so these -- this herd  
9 needs some tender loving care. Those are really high  
10 calf production levels. Brucellosis doesn't seem to be  
11 the issue. Winter take seems to be the -- and large  
12 harvest of caribou in the winter would account for  
13 those mortalities. Brown bear predation is a major  
14 calf mortality but winter mortalities would be  
15 predominately wolf predation and when they get out on  
16 to the Unit 18, on those open plains they're fairly  
17 easy to target by snowmachine hunting. The eastern  
18 component of the Mulchatna declined -- showed a  
19 reduction but that's in conjunction with the dall sheep  
20 populations in Unit 19C. That's the rain event that  
21 decimated the sheep population also seemed to highly  
22 affect the caribou population. So winter range  
23 assessment is necessary in the management of this  
24 caribou herd. You can't sit in your office in  
25 Anchorage and decide what's happening on the range  
26 because there's considerably different conditions that  
27 affect grazing animals. Deep depth of snow, late  
28 winters going into the -- after the end of April, and  
29 icing events.

30  
31                   So those would be my comments to  
32 rebuild the bull component, maintain the bull component  
33 as we go into recovery and keep the season closed until  
34 we get this population turned around.

35  
36                   Thank you. Appreciate your work that  
37 you're doing.

38  
39                   Any other comments from the Council  
40 members.

41  
42                   (No comments)

43  
44                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's the  
45 conservation strategy discussion. So we're down to E,  
46 2022 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, OSM.

47  
48                   MR. GRAHAM: Hi, Mr. Chair, this is  
49 Cory Graham with OSM.

50

0240

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,  
2 Cory.

3  
4 MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
5 Council. For the record my name is Cory Graham, I am a  
6 Fisheries Biologist for the Office of Subsistence  
7 Management in Anchorage. I am accompanied by Hannah  
8 Voorhees who is an Anthropologist for OSM.

9  
10 I'm here today to present you with a  
11 brief overview of the Fisheries Resource Monitoring  
12 Program and its accomplishments to date. I'll give a  
13 short overview of the Monitoring Program, briefly  
14 describe the funding process, give an overview of your  
15 region and finish by requesting Council comments on any  
16 of the projects submitted for the Yukon and Kuskokwim  
17 region. This is not an action item. There is no  
18 motion necessary for this process. And you can find  
19 these materials -- or these materials start on Page 262  
20 of your Council book.

21  
22 The mission of the Monitoring Program  
23 is to identify and provide information needed to  
24 sustain subsistence fisheries on Federal public lands  
25 for rural Alaskans through a Multi-Disciplinary  
26 collaborative program.

27  
28 The Office of Subsistence Management  
29 administers the Monitoring Program and funds research  
30 and monitoring projects that are strategically  
31 important to the Federal Subsistence Management  
32 Program. The Monitoring Program also supports  
33 collaboration and cooperation among Federal agencies,  
34 the State of Alaska, and Alaska Native and rural  
35 organizations.

36  
37 I'll now describe how the Monitoring  
38 Program's funding process works.

39  
40 The program is divided into six  
41 regions, which are listed on Page 265 of your Council  
42 books. These regions correspond with Federal  
43 subsistence fisheries areas and generally hold stock,  
44 harvest and community issues in common. Some regions  
45 have multiple Councils, such as the Kuskokwim region,  
46 which has both the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta and Western  
47 Interior Councils. During the first step of the  
48 funding process the Regional Advisory Councils with  
49 support from OSM Staff and Federal and State fisheries  
50

1 and land managers ensure the Monitoring Program focuses  
2 on the highest priority subsistence fisheries  
3 information needs for the region. Councils ensure  
4 issues of local concern and knowledge gaps related to  
5 subsistence fisheries are identified for priority  
6 information needs development. And these information  
7 needs influence and guide the rest of the funding  
8 requests. Ideally, principal investigators will work  
9 closely with the Councils in order to develop strong  
10 proposals that are responsive to those needs. The  
11 Office of Subsistence Management provides technical  
12 assistance as needed.

13  
14 The second step in the funding process  
15 is requesting new project proposals, which the program  
16 does every two years. Submissions must be complete, on  
17 time, address the five criteria outlined in the notice  
18 of funding opportunity in order to be competitive. The  
19 five criteria are: strategic priority, technical and  
20 scientific merit, investigator ability and resources,  
21 partnership and capacity building and cost benefit of  
22 the project. A more detailed description of the  
23 criteria can be found on Page 267 of your Council  
24 books. Once submitted, the Technical Review Committee  
25 then evaluates and scores each project proposal  
26 package. The Technical Review Committee is a committee  
27 of senior technical experts brought together to  
28 evaluate project proposals and ensure the Monitoring  
29 Program is maintaining consistency with its mission.  
30 It is the responsibility of the Technical Review  
31 Committee to develop the strongest possible draft  
32 Monitoring Program for all regions across the state.

33  
34 Once a Draft Monitoring Program is  
35 developed it's brought before the Regional Advisory  
36 Councils for their input and comments. This is where  
37 we are in the current cycle and we'll come back to this  
38 in a moment.

39  
40 Additional comments on the Draft  
41 Monitoring Program will be provided by the InterAgency  
42 Staff Committee. These, along with comments developed  
43 by the Councils are all provided to the Federal  
44 Subsistence Board. The Board takes into consideration  
45 comments and concerns generated by the process and  
46 endorses the Monitoring Plan. Final approval of the  
47 Monitoring Plan is made by the Assistant Regional  
48 Director of OSM.

1                                 Now that I've discussed how the  
2 Monitoring Program works, I'll provide an overview of  
3 the Yukon and Kuskokwim regions. For the Kuskokwim  
4 region you can find the figures I'm about to reference  
5 on Page 271 of your Council books.

6  
7                                 Since 2000 the Office of Subsistence  
8 Management has funded 102 projects costing  
9 approximately \$28 million in the Kuskokwim region. As  
10 you can see from Figure 2 on Page 271 the project leads  
11 have been predominately the State of Alaska in this  
12 region. Because partnerships are important for the  
13 Monitoring Program most of these projects also included  
14 other agencies and Alaska rural organizations as  
15 research partners.

16  
17                                 For the 2022 cycle, there is an  
18 anticipated \$2.25 million available for new projects  
19 statewide. The available funding amount for 2022 is  
20 budgeted for each projects first year, not the total  
21 project request and this is subject to the final budget  
22 determined by the Assistant Regional Director of OSM.

23  
24                                 For the Kuskokwim region there were a  
25 total of eight projects submitted during the current  
26 cycle. The projects are listed in numerical order by  
27 project number on Page 273. Justifications for each of  
28 the proposed projects by the Technical Review Committee  
29 can be found on Page 274 and projects executive  
30 summaries which were submitted by the primary  
31 investigators start on Page 280.

32  
33                                 In the Yukon region 126 projects have  
34 been undertaken for approximately 25 million in funding  
35 since the beginning of the Monitoring Program. You can  
36 see from Figure 2 on Page 295 that project leads have  
37 been predominately Department of Interior agencies.

38  
39                                 Again, for 2022 there's an anticipated  
40 2.25 million available for new projects statewide. For  
41 the Yukon region there were seven projects submitted  
42 during the current cycle. The projects are listed in  
43 numerical order by project number on Page 297.  
44 Technical Review Committee justifications begin on Page  
45 298, and project executive summaries start on Page 304.

46  
47                                 That wraps up the overview of the  
48 Kuskokwim and Yukon regions.

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1                   As a reminder, today, we are asking for  
2 your comments on any of the proposed projects in the  
3 Yukon and Kuskokwim regions. Again, there is no action  
4 needed for today. We want to ensure is that selected  
5 projects have the greatest chance at successfully  
6 answering the Councils priority information needs as  
7 possible. And we also want to know if the Council has  
8 any specific concerns about a project based on the  
9 provided materials.

10

11                   That concludes my presentation and will  
12 take your comments on proposed projects in the  
13 Kuskokwim region first and the Yukon region second. As  
14 a reminder the projects for the Kuskokwim region can be  
15 found on Page 273 of your Council materials, Technical  
16 Review Committee justifications start on Page 274 and  
17 project executive summaries can be found on Page 280.

18

19                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20

21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Cory.  
22 Council members, questions or comments regarding this  
23 Fisheries Monitoring Program funding.

24

25                   MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

26

27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

28

29                   MR. HONEA: Yeah, is that -- is his  
30 name Cory?

31

32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

33

34                   MR. HONEA: Well, I guess he said he  
35 wanted to talk about the Kuskokwim River fishery  
36 projects first so maybe I'll hold my question until we  
37 have an open discussion.

38

39                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You want to discuss  
40 Yukon, you can.

41

42                   MR. HONEA: Okay. Cory, I appreciate  
43 that and I appreciate the Fisheries Monitoring Program  
44 because over the years it's -- I believe it's  
45 benefitted all of us in ways of employing people  
46 whether it's on the Kusko or on the Yukon. My question  
47 here is, you know, whether you work with local tribals  
48 like Tanana Chiefs Conference, or whether you've worked  
49 with tribes. I'm just concerned about -- you know we  
50



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1 have some of the things are kind of getting redundant  
2 and I would like to know if there is any -- or how do  
3 we go about doing studies or applying for something  
4 like the disappearance of our chinook, more so on the  
5 Yukon than anything because, you know, there are people  
6 putting in nets right now and doggone ice is running.  
7 And so I was just -- I really deem that important, I  
8 was just wondering if there was somehow a way to be  
9 able to apply for a grant or go through TCC. I realize  
10 you guys are OSM but I was just wondering how do we  
11 break into be able to apply for something like that  
12 that's a real concern for us.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. That  
17 was -- any other questions -- or Cory, you got a  
18 response.

19

20 MR. GRAHAM: Through the Chair. Thank  
21 you for your comments. I think part of the response  
22 would be to make sure whatever information you think  
23 needs to be -- whatever information is needed for each  
24 of the regions, to include those when we develop  
25 priority information needs, which will happen -- we'll  
26 call for a working group, or volunteers for a working  
27 group at your next meeting and priority information  
28 need development will occur in the summer or the fall.

29

30 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

31

32 MR. GRAHAM: You're welcome.

33

34 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
35 Kevin.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

38

39 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
40 And, Cory, thank you for that overview, lots of  
41 information you went through. I have a few questions  
42 -- I've got several questions but I'm just going to try  
43 to sum it up in a couple questions, or a few questions.

44

45 Just wondering if you could tell me who  
46 is on that Technical Review Committee and the agencies  
47 they represent. I'll start there, I do have more  
48 follow up questions, Mr. Chair, thanks.

49

50

0245

1 MR. GRAHAM: Through the Chair, this is  
2 Cory again. The Technical Review Committee, as I said  
3 it's an advisory group that specializes in fisheries  
4 biology, anthropology and statistics. It typically  
5 includes representatives from all five Federal agencies  
6 of the Federal Subsistence Board and it also typically  
7 includes three ADF&G scientists, one that represents  
8 the Division of Subsistence, Commercial Fisheries and  
9 Sportfish. And then the Office of Subsistence  
10 Management, Fisheries and Anthropology leads are the  
11 co-Chairs of the Committee.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other  
14 questions, Kevin.

15  
16 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
17 this is Kevin again.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

20  
21 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, the process that  
22 this program goes through to fund these projects with  
23 the TRC scoring the projects, you know, there isn't any  
24 representation on that TRC for Native and other rural  
25 organizations, or local people, local residents. They  
26 have a lot of power through that TRC. And it's just --  
27 I think it's unfair, you know, Don brought it up, how  
28 do we tap into this, rural communities, tribal  
29 organizations. I mean you could see it here on the  
30 Kuskokwim a lot of the funding is going to ADF&G like  
31 Cory said. Statewide, you could see it there on the  
32 figure a lot of the funding is going to agencies or  
33 ADF&G and not getting out to the rural communities even  
34 though there is a capacity building component. It's  
35 not fair the way it's been run.

36  
37 I do have other questions but I'm going  
38 to hold off on questions. But more comments, I'll just  
39 keep making comments about the program.

40  
41 I do think that -- I'm not going to  
42 make a comment on the proposals, just the program  
43 itself. I do think this is an issue we should bring up  
44 in our annual report. This program needs to be  
45 revised, prioritize research and monitoring projects by  
46 local tribes, TCC, you know, like Don says, or AVCP, we  
47 need more of a say in this program. There needs to be  
48 more tribal consultation before the TRC is able to  
49 speak on these proposals. It's just a -- there's lots  
50

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1 of layers within this program that goes against tribal  
2 consultation, tribal input and the funding getting out  
3 to rural places. There is funding that does get out  
4 there but it's very little. And anyways I think it's  
5 -- I can elaborate more but I'm going to leave it at  
6 that Mr. Chair. I think it is a subject that needs to  
7 be in our annual report and when we do draft the annual  
8 report, I think that we should put this in there.

9

10 That's all, thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Make that  
13 notation, Karen, composition of the.....

14

15 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: So noted, Mr. Chair.

20

21 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, real  
22 quickly. I'd just like to concur with what Kevin just  
23 said and I think that's very important and a good  
24 subject for our annual report. I would like to see  
25 more tribal consultation, I would like to see more  
26 input directly from the people affected. Like I  
27 mentioned, some of these fishery monitoring things are  
28 redundant and they've been going on a long time and  
29 exactly why, I don't believe that it's funneling down  
30 to give us any kind of economic opportunities.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
35 Any other Council comments.

36

37 MR. WHITWORTH: This is Kevin again.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

40

41 MR. WHITWORTH: You know, I mean it's  
42 in ANILCA, Section .812 here in the background  
43 information on Page 262, it even says in there  
44 cooperation with Native and other rural organizations,  
45 knowledge of local residents, engaging in subsistence  
46 should be part of this program. When -- I mean it's  
47 spelled out in ANILCA very clear but Cory's  
48 presentation also makes it clear that these projects  
49 are basically funding the Alaska Department of Fish and  
50

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1 Game and Department of Interior, not to pick on any  
2 Fish and Wildlife Service, DOI program, but it is  
3 funding their program when it should -- those programs,  
4 the Federal government, State government should be  
5 running their research with base budgets, whether it's  
6 Magnuson-Stevens, whatever their base funds come from,  
7 Native organizations, rural organizations should have  
8 more input into this program so that it's equal. It's  
9 not -- we don't have a base budget, for instance, for  
10 research not like the State or Federal government does.  
11 Anyways I could ramble on about this program, I've been  
12 involved with this program for a very long time and  
13 I've worked with Fish and Wildlife Service as a Deputy  
14 Refuge Manager here in Innoko and I wasn't part of the  
15 TRC but I reviewed program proposals and stuff like  
16 that. So anyway, I think this Program does need to get  
17 some attention, that's all.

18  
19 Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll hold my  
20 comments on this program for now.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And I  
23 appreciate those comments, they're very valid comments  
24 and so our annual report can highlight those, how the  
25 program is designed and formulated to make these  
26 decisions and so I do feel that there should be a  
27 tribal entity in the TRC. There has to be some kind of  
28 meaningful involvement in the Fisheries Resource  
29 Monitoring Program decisionmaking process also. So the  
30 Councils, they have a decisionmaking progress, but  
31 there needs to be a tribal entity also, so we can talk  
32 about that further in our annual report formulation.

33  
34 So does anybody have comments on Page  
35 -- you're asking for comments, Cory, Kuskokwim River.

36  
37 MR. GRAHAM: Yes, Mr. Chair.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I do feel the  
40 Takotna weir is a very important project, to know what  
41 the escapements are into the upper Kuskokwim River for  
42 salmon run and abundance and timing, composition of the  
43 escapement, quality of the escapement is a very  
44 important thing to know in the upper drainage with the  
45 amount of salmon that we have.

46  
47 You know the Kuskokwim River broad  
48 whitefish subsistence harvest and spawning abundance is  
49 also a very important issue as we're talking about how  
50

0248

1 the shift to other species is.

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The George River weir is a very important thing.

Bethel subsistence surveys, those harvested amounts are very important information. So I do feel that these post-season salmon harvest surveys, local traditional knowledge of salmon and harvest. I'm not sure that that's priority because we have a lot of people involved in traditional knowledge and we've gathered this information. I'd go along with Don on that one. That's sort of a more or less redundancy, you know, we know how people use the fish, we know what they do, we've done these surveys for many, many years now. That's a huge appropriation and I feel that could be -- what the actual harvest, in-season harvests are very important for the managers, to know what is taken on each opening, that's an important issue.

And there's these other natural indicators for salmon in the upper Kuskokwim, water temperature and spawning habitat and stream monitoring, which I know more of that is being implemented.

And so community based harvest monitoring network for the Kuskokwim River chinook salmon is an important project, to know what each community on the whole Kuskokwim River is actually getting. Like Rebecca's saying, she fishes in a completely different area, and we got to know what all of the people in the Kuskokwim River are harvesting to get an idea of what subsistence needs are being met and so forth.

Any further comments from the Council on the Kuskokwim River projects found on Page 273.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any disagreement with what I was discussion.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any. Did you want to move to the Yukon Cory.

MR. GRAHAM: Yes, Mr. Chair. The Yukon

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1 projects can be found on Page 297.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 297, all right. So  
4 any comments on these Yukon projects from the Council.

5

6 (No comments)

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any Council  
9 members want to comment.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Did you want to  
14 comment on the Yukon River projects, Don, you were  
15 saying you were.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Yeah, well, just one  
18 comment, if anybody from the TCC fisheries is -- I  
19 think it would be a great time to try to apply to work  
20 in conjunction with these, I mean if they were  
21 available. I mean I don't really know, you know, as a  
22 tribe how to really jump into one of these projects.  
23 Like I said I mean some of them are kind of redundant  
24 and some of them have been around a long time. I just  
25 -- the projects that I'm thinking of is maybe like the  
26 Yukon River non-salmon subsistence survey and that goes  
27 for -- well, I mean salmon survey and that's about it,  
28 Mr. Chair. Thank you.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
31 I'll comment on this list here.

32

33 These weir projects are necessary, it's  
34 really important to know what kind of smolt out  
35 migration of chinook that we have, and prey species  
36 assessment in the lower Yukon -- it should be a prey  
37 species assessment and predator assessment also. Lots  
38 of people talk about the numbers of pike increasing on  
39 the Yukon River drainage and how the number of pike is  
40 actually having a big impact on some of the smolt out  
41 migration so we need to get a more realistic outlook of  
42 what the out migration chinook salmon smolt are. I  
43 consider that a priority information need.

44

45 The coho salmon genetic baseline data,  
46 that's an important need also.

47

48 And the use of humpback whitefish and  
49 non-salmon fisheries, traditional knowledge and

50

0250

1 biological sampling in the upper Koyukuk, there's a lot  
2 of sheefish, whitefish that are used, as Pollock can  
3 attest to on the Koyukuk River. And I feel it's also  
4 -- again, going back to our request and our  
5 recommendation to the Federal Subsistence Board, that  
6 the non-salmon subsistence harvest of whitefish and  
7 other species should be reflected as shifting towards  
8 those, hopefully it would be towards pike, because  
9 those are a major predator of salmon smolt, out  
10 migrating smolt and the in-system smolt fry.

11

12 So any other comments from the Council  
13 on Yukon River, or the Fisheries Resource Monitoring  
14 Program, in general.

15

16 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, this is Don  
17 again.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

20

21 MR. HONEA: Hello?

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

24

25 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I don't know when I'm  
26 off mute or on or off, but, yeah, you bring up an  
27 interesting thing there. I remember years ago, if you  
28 remember the meeting we had in Holy Cross, our RAC  
29 meeting there and that was one of the big problems in  
30 the Innoko was pike being invasive and I've heard this  
31 on the Koyukuk River concerns and stuff like that. so  
32 I would like to kind of reinforce that and for that to  
33 be a study because I believe they are getting invasive  
34 and if it's not on the Koyukuk, it's -- they're  
35 affecting us here.

36

37 So that's just my thoughts, thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, when I was a  
40 kid we lived at Galena and people put nets in all the  
41 sloughs in the spring and fall and they caught a lot of  
42 pike and people had dog teams and people were feeding  
43 them to dogs but now with few dog teams around people  
44 are targeting predominately salmon for dog feed, or  
45 fishing in system for -- for chums and whitefish and  
46 sheefish in the main stem of the Yukon, but I don't  
47 think people are targeting the pike nearly enough and  
48 dog mushers should really shift towards fishing for  
49 those pikes a lot harder because they are real good dog  
50

0251

1 feed, they're really fat this time of the year, in the  
2 fall, and they're really a major predator for salmon  
3 smolt. So I feel that there needs to be -- I hear pike  
4 are invasive, well, they just through consistent  
5 harvest pike numbers were more at lower numbers when I  
6 was a kid and now are like at big numbers, there's lots  
7 of pike around.

8

9 Any other comments from the Council  
10 from the Council on the Fisheries Resource Monitoring  
11 Program.

12

13 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, this is Pollock.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Pollock.

16

17 MR. SIMON: Yeah, just concerns about  
18 catching the sheefish and whitefish right now, there's  
19 plenty of them on the Koyukuk River. We depend on them  
20 because there's no salmon. But people's biggest -- and  
21 there's concern here that we want to make sure that we  
22 don't take too much sheefish and whitefish because  
23 there's no salmon and what if this sheefish and  
24 whitefish population declines too, that'll be more  
25 problems, so that's a concern of the elders around this  
26 area.

27

28 So thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate those  
31 comments, Pollock. I do feel that it's important to  
32 monitor those harvest of the non-salmon species because  
33 we don't want to start affecting those also.

34

35 So any other comments.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think we've  
40 covered this issue fairly well. So we'll ask -- did  
41 somebody else want to make a comment.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the fall 2021  
46 Council.....

47

48 MR. SEMAKEN: Hello.

49

50



0252

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, who's this?

2

3 MR. SEMAKEN: It's Goodwin, Kaltag.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Goodwin, yes, go  
6 right ahead. You were kind of breaking up, get closer  
7 to your mic. Go ahead.

8

9 MR. SEMAKEN: How's that?

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's a lot better.

12

13 MR. SEMAKEN: Could you hear me?

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you.  
16 When you were kind of talk before I was just getting  
17 like one syllable, you got to get close to that mic.  
18 Go ahead.

19

20 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah. Back in the '80s I  
21 think they were doing (Indiscernible) and what was that  
22 the Bering Sea Fisheries Association, were doing some  
23 monitoring on the Kaltag stream here, and we did some  
24 counting but this last year there was some more fish,  
25 but we have a good spot here and there's no monitoring  
26 that's done in these creeks anymore, like there's one  
27 here in Kaltag and there's another one down there at  
28 Threemile and in the springtime you could see those  
29 smolts at the mouth and that's where you can catch --  
30 you can go out there and fish and catch sheefish but I  
31 was getting at if those are fish that are going down  
32 that are hatched already and is there a way to kind of  
33 get the genetics off of them or are they too small  
34 because I seen hundreds of them back there, right above  
35 Kaltag in the springtime before the ice goes out.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's actually an  
38 excellent idea taking a genetic sample of the smolt out  
39 migration to get apportionment of where they actually  
40 coming from in the various -- I took genetic samples  
41 from the Koyukuk River, they've got genetic sampling  
42 throughout the whole Koyukuk drainage, it's not super  
43 definitive but to get a good idea of where those are  
44 smolt are actually coming from and which ones are more  
45 productive than others. That's a good discussion  
46 point, thanks, Goodwin.

47

48 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah.

49

50

0253

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any further.....

2

3 MR. CHASE: Hello, Mr. Chairman.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

6

7 MR. CHASE: This is Ken Chase.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Ken. Get  
10 closer to your mic you're breaking up.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You still there, we  
15 don't hear you. I heard you for a second.

16

17 REPORTER: Ken, are you online still.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there,  
20 Ken?

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: His phone died or he  
25 dropped out or something. If you can hear me call back  
26 in and get my attention if you wanted to make a  
27 comment.

28

29 Any other comments.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to move  
34 into this fall 2021 Council application nomination open  
35 season, Karen.

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
38 I just wanted to quickly read a statement on the open  
39 season and a couple comments.

40

41 First and foremost, I do want to thank  
42 on behalf of OSM, the Council, all the Council members  
43 for your service, and on behalf of the user groups that  
44 you represent. I would like to particularly welcome  
45 our new Council members Rebecca Wilmarth, and Kevin  
46 Whitworth and Arnold Demoski, it's great to have  
47 Kuskokwim representation, and also from the village of  
48 Nulato. So thank you. Your knowledge and experience  
49 is of great value to the Federal Subsistence Management  
50

0254

1 Program.

2

3 We are going through.....

4

5 (Teleconference interference -  
6 participants not muted)

7

8 MS. DEATHERAGE: .....some difficult  
9 times during the pandemic -- sorry if somebody could  
10 mute their phone that would be great, we can hear you  
11 on the other end here.

12

13 REPORTER: Okay, hold on, Karen before  
14 you go on. Everybody take a minute and check your  
15 phone and put it on mute, please, star, six, or your  
16 mute button. We have a background conversation going  
17 on and I can't hear the speaker to record.

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Sounds like problem  
20 solved, thank you. Thank you, Tina.

21

22 We are currently going through some  
23 difficult times during this pandemic but at the same  
24 time we are constantly working to have robust Councils  
25 with full memberships. And we are looking to you, the  
26 Council members, for help because you are our are  
27 connection to the communities that you represent.

28

29 The 2022 Council application period was  
30 opened on September 17th. We are encouraging you to  
31 help us to spread the word about it in the region's  
32 communities and recruit new applicants throughout your  
33 region. You know the people in your region and you can  
34 also share the firsthand experience of what it means to  
35 serve on the Council, what is involved and how much  
36 time it takes.

37

38 You can also nominate the candidates  
39 if someone is interested in applying but is having a  
40 hard time, for example, filling out an application.  
41 The applications are available on our website, and  
42 there's a fillable copy that will be posted soon. We  
43 also plan on mailing a number of application packets to  
44 current Council members when we receive them from the  
45 printer so you can hand them out to interested persons  
46 or organizations and tribes. We mail around 2,000  
47 copies of the application packet to various addresses  
48 around the state.

49

50

0255

1 (Teleconference interference -  
2 participants not muted)

3

4 MS. DEATHERAGE: If someone needs a  
5 faxed copy, we can do that as well. We really are  
6 hoping to have a good number of qualified applicants  
7 applying this year. We expect to have, you know,  
8 timely appointments in December this year from the  
9 applicants from last year and for next year. And we  
10 also have alternates available now so it's more  
11 important than ever that we get more applicants than  
12 the open seats on a Council so that we can have some  
13 good candidates to serve as alternates in case of  
14 somebody leaving the Council or moving out of region,  
15 or passing.

16

17 We would really appreciate your help  
18 with recruitment this year.

19

20 I do want to note that the Western  
21 Interior Council has put in its charter its goal of  
22 having multiple areas throughout the region  
23 represented. Right now, all, but the GASH area, which  
24 is Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross are  
25 represented by a member on the Council. So I know that  
26 Ken Chase and others were working to try to promote  
27 participation from some folks in the GASH area to  
28 apply, we'd like to see that continue, and anything  
29 that the Council members can do to help, or the tribes  
30 would be greatly appreciated.

31

32 So thank you very much. If anybody has  
33 any questions about this process and applications I'd  
34 be happy to answer them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So would it be a  
37 conflict of interest for Ken Chase to put an  
38 application in since he lives up there in the GASH.

39

40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
45 I'd have to specifically ask that question of our  
46 person that handles this program because I'm not really  
47 sure at this time. Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Send him an

50

0256

1 application. We need to get somebody from that GASH  
2 area that wants to be on the phone or wants to go to  
3 meetings and will be able to speak. We used to have  
4 Jimmy and Robert Walker on the Council and they were  
5 very important members of this Council but both dropped  
6 off at the same time so we need to get somebody from  
7 the GASH area to be on this Council. But I don't have  
8 anybody other than -- I mean Ken's always trying to  
9 talk to us on the phone here but he's an RIT so the  
10 question is, is that a conflict of interest if he puts  
11 an application in, but he's a resident there. So I  
12 feel that he should be able to participate, or at least  
13 go through the analysis.

14

15 So any comments from the Council on --  
16 we have -- I was trying to get an applicant in last  
17 spring, we have applicants in the hopper, do you have  
18 any idea how many applicants we ended with this round,  
19 Karen, coming up in December.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there  
24 Karen?

25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
27 If you give me a moment I will look that up and share  
28 that with the Council when I get that information.  
29 Thank you.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So I think we  
32 covered that one. So we're moving on down the agenda  
33 to update and guided discussion on Wildlife Special  
34 Action Request WSA21-01, which was deferred. Hannah,  
35 are you on the phone.

36

37 DR. VOORHEES: Yes, Mr. Chair. And  
38 good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the Council. My  
39 name is Hannah Voorhees, I'm an Anthropologist with the  
40 Office of Subsistence Management. And my Wildlife  
41 Biologist colleague Kendra Holman is also on the call  
42 today. And I'm here to give you an update on Special  
43 Action Request WSA21-01 and if you would like, to seek  
44 feedback from you on this proposed closure and discuss  
45 the next steps for this request. This is not an action  
46 item. Relevant materials begin on Page 318 of your  
47 meeting materials.

48

49 I do understand that this Council may

50

0257

1 not want to spend much time on this item but I wanted  
2 to let you know that the Board has asked for feedback  
3 from all affected Councils, and as I mentioned  
4 yesterday this Council -- the region that this Council  
5 represents does include communities with customary and  
6 traditional use of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd in  
7 Unit 23 so that's why it's being presented to you  
8 today.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

11

12 DR. VOORHEES: So the Special Action  
13 Request WSA21-01 was submitted by the Northwest Arctic  
14 Regional Advisory Council in February this year and it  
15 requested closure of Federal public lands in Units 23,  
16 26A to caribou and moose hunting by non-Federally-  
17 qualified users from August 1st to September 30th,  
18 2021. The proposal was also supported by the North  
19 Slope Council. And this did not come before your  
20 Council because of the timeline of the special action  
21 requests.

22

23 So because this is the first time it's  
24 coming before your Council I can read the original  
25 proposal or just summarize it. So I'll go ahead and  
26 summarize it unless there's a request to read the  
27 entire proposal.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead and give  
30 the summary.

31

32 DR. VOORHEES: Okay. The Northwest  
33 Arctic Council expressed concern about the late  
34 migration of caribou through Unit 23. The caribou  
35 migration has been delayed in recent years. The  
36 effects that transporters and non-local hunters may be  
37 having on caribou migration is of particular concern to  
38 the Council. They hope that the closure would reduce  
39 activity and traffic creating an easier path for  
40 migrating caribou. The rationale for the closure  
41 request for moose was declining population.

42

43 Following submission of this request,  
44 OSM held a public hearing, opened a written public  
45 comment period and held two tribal and ANCSA  
46 Corporation consultations.

47

48 The original OSM conclusion was to  
49 support WSA21-01 with modification to only close moose  
50

0258

1 hunting to non-Federally-qualified users in Unit 23  
2 from August 1st to September 30th, 2021.

3  
4 In June 2021 the Board met to decide  
5 this request but deferred it until 2022. In the  
6 meantime the Board requested that OSM Staff seek  
7 additional input on concerns related to caribou from  
8 the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, Federal  
9 land managing agencies, local Fish and Game Advisory  
10 Committees, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
11 Regional Advisory Councils, such as the Western  
12 Interior, commercial guides and transporters and  
13 subsistence users in the area. The Board also asked  
14 OSM Staff to include comparisons of moose harvest by  
15 survey area within Unit 23 in their analysis.

16  
17 WSA21-01 is on the agenda as an  
18 informational and discussion item for Seward Peninsula  
19 Regional Advisory Council as well as this Council and  
20 it will also go back before Northwest Arctic Regional  
21 Advisory Council and North Slope RAC for discussion,  
22 and this item is also on the agenda for the Western  
23 Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group in December.

24  
25 Additional public meetings on the  
26 deferred closure will be held in November and December,  
27 although those dates are yet to be determined and OSM  
28 is working to coordinate these hearings with local  
29 scheduling preferences. There will also be outreach to  
30 the Advisory Committees.

31  
32 After OSM compiles feedback from all  
33 these groups, updates will be made to include this  
34 information in a revised analysis, which will then come  
35 before this Council at your winter 2022 meeting. The  
36 Council can make its final formal recommendation at  
37 that time. The Board will take action on this request  
38 in 2022.

39  
40 Before I move on is there any  
41 questions.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions from  
44 the Council.

45  
46 (No comments)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none,  
49 continue.

50

0259

1 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you. So at this  
2 meeting we would like to seek the Council's feedback on  
3 the proposed closure or you can also defer to the  
4 Northwest Arctic and North Slope regions.

5  
6 Are there any initial comments or  
7 feedback on the requested closure. I am happy to  
8 request the request as well, or a summary of it, where  
9 it would occur and in what month.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council members  
12 have comments on the closure in Unit 23 and 26A.

13  
14 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

17  
18 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I -- my only question  
19 was, is this an action item, are we going to vote on  
20 this?

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. They're just  
23 asking for comments on this closure.

24  
25 MR. HONEA: All right, thank you.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And so because this  
28 -- my comment would be, because this is out of our  
29 region and it's basically revolving around low numbers  
30 of moose, the Western Arctic Caribou Herd is a caribou  
31 herd, it kind of goes where it wants, when there is a  
32 lot of transporters affecting the migration a few years  
33 ago, that was an issue. Those caribou, last year,  
34 spent a heck of a lot of time inside the Gates of the  
35 Arctic Park and they didn't even go to the south. This  
36 year according to Alex Hanson they're moving across the  
37 Kobuk River right now. So I don't feel that I want to  
38 get involved in those Council's business over there,  
39 they can go before the Federal Subsistence Board with a  
40 position, but I would prefer to defer to region.

41  
42 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I am of the same  
43 opinion, I would defer to region. I don't know who  
44 we're talking to, Kendra here, but I thought this was  
45 something that was brought up a couple years back and  
46 on the books, I mean I don't know the history. But I  
47 would state the same opinion as you.

48  
49 Thank you.

50



0260

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
2 comments from the Council.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hannah just wanted  
7 -- they're taking comments at this time from Council  
8 members.

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't hear  
13 anymore. Update on Wildlife Special Action Request  
14 WSA21-03, Kendra.

15  
16 MS. HOLMAN: Mr. Chair, this is Kendra.  
17 So this is not an action item as well, it's not in your  
18 books. I was just going to give you a quick update.

19  
20 So Temporary Wildlife Special Action  
21 Request WSA21-03 was submitted by the Yukon Delta  
22 National Wildlife Refuge, request the fall moose season  
23 on the Yukon -- on the Kuskokwim -- I'm sorry, the  
24 Kuskokwim hunt area, Unit 18, be extended from  
25 September 1st through the 30th to September 1st through  
26 October 15th for the 2021/22 regulatory year. The  
27 Board has already met on this and approved this action  
28 so this season was extended for the 2021/2022  
29 regulatory year. And these -- these dates do fall in  
30 line with the WP22-44 that the Board had voted to  
31 adopt.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that's  
34 just an update.

35  
36 MS. HOLMAN: Just an update. If you  
37 have any questions.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Was that for Zone 1  
40 and Zone 2, or just Zone 2?

41  
42 MS. HOLMAN: Zone 2.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Zone 2. Thanks for  
45 that clarification. So any questions or comments on  
46 that, Council members.

47  
48 (No comments)

49  
50

0261

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, thanks  
2 for those updates ladies. And so we're -- we needed to  
3 address some Board of Game proposals, we penciled this  
4 in at this time. Karen are you there.

5  
6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair. I  
7 wanted to know if you wanted to either call a break or  
8 call lunch before we go into this, it will take some  
9 time. So I wanted to leave that up to the Council's  
10 discretion.

11  
12 Thank you.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So if we're  
15 going to take -- delve into these Board of Game  
16 proposals, is it agreeable with the Council to take our  
17 lunch break now and come back at 12:45, one hour,  
18 because we got a lot of agency reports and a lot of  
19 other stuff to go through after the Board of Game  
20 proposals, so we need to come back on at 12:45. Is  
21 that agreeable to the Council.

22  
23 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

24  
25 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
26 Kevin.

27  
28 MR. HONEA: Yes, Sir.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

31  
32 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, just a question,  
33 Karen, or Mr. Chair, how long do you think the Board of  
34 Game proposals will take?

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We reviewed a lot of  
37 these proposals at our past meeting and Karen has our  
38 notes on these, basically some of these proposals  
39 affect our region but need to be -- they deferred a lot  
40 of these and they're proposals that need to have  
41 comments for the upcoming Board of Game meeting for  
42 2022 here, and I'm not exactly sure. You got a feeling  
43 on how long that's going to take, Karen.

44  
45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
46 Given that we do not have to go through the proposal  
47 process that we do for the Federal Subsistence Board,  
48 barring any invite for public testimony, I think it'll  
49 go rather quickly. There are one, two, three, four,  
50

0262

1 five, six, seven, eight, nine proposals to review for  
2 potential comments. And two of those proposals the  
3 Council may decide not to comment on, but the bulk of  
4 them deal with the Mulchatna Caribou Herd and the  
5 Dalton Highway Corridor issues, which are both -- the  
6 Council is very familiar with and so I don't think  
7 those will take long. I would say at most an hour if  
8 we can flow through them quickly, or less.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Karen.  
13 So at this time we'll take a break for lunch and come  
14 back online at 12:45, sharp, because it's 11:45 right  
15 now. So is that agreeable to the Council members.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Yes.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other Council  
20 members, any problem with that.

21

22 MR. SIMON: It's okay with me.

23

24 MR. WHITWORTH: Sounds good.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, we'll see you  
27 back here in one hour.

28

29 (Off record)

30

31 (On record)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's about 12:45,  
34 46, I'm going to call the meeting back to order and  
35 what Council members are on the phone.

36

37 (No comments)

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have any  
40 Council members on the phone.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hey, there, this is  
45 Karen, we're looking for any Western Interior Council  
46 members, have you joined us on the phone yet? Thank  
47 you.

48

49 MS. PELKOLA: Karen, this is Jenny, I'm

50

0263

1 on.

2

3

MS. DEATHERAGE: Hi, there, Jenny.

4

5

REPORTER: Hi Jenny.

6

7

MS. PELKOLA: Hi Tina. Karen, I have a  
8 flu shot at 2:00 o'clock so I'll have to leave a little  
9 bit before then and I may rejoin after.

10

11

MS. DEATHERAGE: That sounds great,  
12 Jenny. Appreciate you joining after, there's a lot of  
13 stuff still on the agenda so it'd be great to have you  
14 on board.

15

16

MS. PELKOLA: Okay.

17

18

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thanks.

19

20

MS. PELKOLA: Okay.

21

22

MR. WHITWORTH: Hello, this is Kevin,

23

I'm on.

24

25

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin.

26

27

MS. DEATHERAGE: Any other Council  
28 members join us. We've got Kevin, Jenny and Jack on  
29 the phone so far?

30

31

(No comments)

32

33

MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca are you on, or  
34 Don, or Pollock, Arnold, Goodwin?

35

36

(No comments)

37

38

MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm pretty sure that  
39 Tim Gervais is still out on the boat so I would not  
40 anticipate his participation. I hope I'm wrong but I  
41 haven't heard anything from him.

42

43

(Pause)

44

45

MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock, have you  
46 joined us?

47

48

(No comments)

49

50

0264

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don, you on the phone,  
2 or Rebecca?

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin. Arnold.

7  
8 (No comments)

9  
10 MS. DEATHERAGE: We're going to need a  
11 quorum for the Board of Game proposal comments. Thank  
12 you.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we need to  
15 have the Council back.

16  
17 (Pause)

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We used to hear like  
20 a bleeping noise if somebody got on and off, so, that  
21 was kind of helpful. Any other Council members join  
22 the call, Jenny, Kevin and I are here.

23  
24 MS. PELKOLA: Jack, this is Jenny.  
25 Right before we broke for lunch my phone just made a  
26 whole bunch of crackling sound and it just went off so  
27 I didn't hear whatever happened at the end.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we were just  
30 breaking for lunch.

31  
32 MS. PELKOLA: Okay.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We didn't really do  
35 much else, we were talking about breaking for one hour.

36  
37 MS. PELKOLA: Okay.

38  
39 MR. SIMON: Pollock's back on.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Pollock, thank  
42 you. And Don or Rebecca, Goodwin, Arnold.

43  
44 (No comments)

45  
46 (Pause)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we can't move  
49 forward without the Council being back.

50

0265

1 MR. HONEA: Hey, could you hear me?

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We could hear you  
4 now, Don. Thank you.

5

6 MR. HONEA: Okay, great.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Goodwin or  
9 Rebecca.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 (Teleconference interference -  
14 participants not muted)

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So somebody's  
17 banging some stuff around, is that you Don?

18

19 MR. HONEA: No.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh.

22

23 MR. HONEA: Why do you always think  
24 it's me.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 REPORTER: Because you're not muted  
29 Don.

30

31 (Laughter)

32

33 MR. HONEA: I'm just a patsy for it,  
34 ugh.

35

36 (Laughter)

37

38 MR. HONEA: Hey, Jack.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

41

42 MR. HONEA: I'm going to comment here.  
43 It's too hard for me to go back and forth, I switched  
44 phones here, so bear with me, I mean I'm not making any  
45 noise but I'm not also not on mute.

46

47 REPORTER: We know.

48

49 (Laughter)

50

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1 MR. HONEA: All right, is that okay  
2 with you.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's fine, yeah,  
5 as long as you -- yes, we really need you on the call.

6  
7 MS. PELKOLA: Jack, this is Jenny, my  
8 phone cut out again so it'll probably be cutting out  
9 again, I don't know, I might have to recall.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Oh, gee.

12  
13 So Goodwin or Rebecca, are you there.

14  
15 (No comments)

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got Pollock, Don,  
18 Jenny, Kevin and me. How many do we need Karen?

19  
20 MR. HONEA: You got five.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we need five?

23  
24 MR. HONEA: Yeah, we have five.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

27  
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: We have one, two,  
29 three, four, five out of nine, yes.

30  
31 MR. HONEA: That's five, that's quorum.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, so we're going  
34 to start moving forward. So would you give us an  
35 overview of the State proposal packet you printed out  
36 here, Karen.

37  
38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
39 First I'd like to remind everybody on the phone to  
40 please mute your phones when you're not speaking, star,  
41 six. The star is located to left of the zero on your  
42 phone for your landlines, and then the mute button on  
43 your smartphone is on the smartphone menu where you  
44 have the speaker and keypad. So please mute your  
45 phones and please, please do not put us on hold. I  
46 know there's some folks that are bopping back and forth  
47 between the Eastern Interior and Western Interior  
48 meeting, but please just put us on mute and that'll  
49 work, you don't need to put us on hold. So thanks for  
50

0267

1 that.

2

3

4 I want to help the Council right now  
5 navigate through the paperwork that we sent as a  
6 supplemental for the Board of Game proposals and this  
7 was in a blue folder sent to you separated by blue  
8 sheets of paper. And so I want to direct your  
9 attention to the first document which is the Alaska  
10 Board of Game tentative meeting date, so folks can let  
11 me know if you have that document in your hand, Pollock  
12 you don't have your meeting materials, unfortunately,  
13 but I'll go ahead and make sure you're aware of the  
14 information I'm going to reference.

14

15 (Teleconference interference -  
16 participants not muted - screeching)

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: We may have lost  
19 somebody there.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So.....

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: So does everybody have  
24 this first document that has dates on it, meeting  
25 dates.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got that,  
28 tentative meeting dates, it was a single leaf paper.

29

30 MS. DEATHERAGE: Right.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

33

34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair. So I  
35 just wanted to point out there are two comment deadline  
36 dates, one January 7th and one February 18th, 2022,  
37 which is why the Council is addressing these proposals  
38 now so that we have enough time to get these comments  
39 in prior to both of those meetings. So that's the only  
40 purpose for this, is just to let you guys know about  
41 the comment deadline dates as well as the dates of the  
42 meeting if you wanted to weigh in on those meetings.

43

44 The second document that I want you to  
45 refer to, the top of the document says, Mr. Ted  
46 Spraker, Chairman, Page 5.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have that.

49

50



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1 MS. DEATHERAGE: It is basically a copy  
2 of one page of the letter of comments that the Council  
3 submitted to the Board of Game at their 2020 meeting  
4 for multiple proposals. But the two comments that were  
5 relevant to what we're going to be covering today were  
6 for Proposal 63 and 64 regarding the Dalton Highway  
7 Corridor Management Area. And so I wanted you to have  
8 these comments on hand because my suspicion is you will  
9 be wanting to submit similar comments, perhaps with a  
10 few amendments, but certainly similar comments as you  
11 did before when -- because those proposals are now back  
12 in front of the Board of Game for reconsideration.  
13 They were deferred.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do they have a  
16 different number, or did they maintain those numbers  
17 6.....

18  
19 MS. DEATHERAGE: No, they do have a  
20 different number, Mr. Chair, they're 172 and 173 on the  
21 agenda under statewide proposals but I'll go through  
22 that later and we can refer back to this page, I just  
23 want to make sure everybody has it available to them.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

26  
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: So it's Page 5, at the  
28 top right-hand corner it says Page 5 and Mr. Ted  
29 Spraker is the beginning of the page and it'll have  
30 Proposal 63 and 64 listed on it. Proposal 64 comments  
31 continue on to the back of that page.

32  
33 And then last, but not least, is a  
34 portion of the Alaska Board of Game 2020/2021 proposed  
35 changes to regulations. And what I want you to do is  
36 go ahead leaf through the beginning portions which were  
37 just provided for information and go to Page 25 of that  
38 little book where you'll see Proposal 19 and that's  
39 where we're going to start today.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

42  
43 MS. DEATHERAGE: On Proposal 19, Page  
44 25 at the bottom of that page it says Central and  
45 Southwest region proposals.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

48  
49 MS. DEATHERAGE: So I'd like to make  
50

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1 sure that everybody that is on the phone with the  
2 Council has this information in front of them for  
3 reference as we go through these proposals.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So does everybody  
6 have -- I know Pollock doesn't have it, but does  
7 everybody else have their packet that shows Proposal 19  
8 on Page 25 of the green Alaska Board of Game packet  
9 that Karen sent out?

10

11 MS. PELKOLA: This is Jenny, I can't  
12 find mine.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, it was a  
15 separate package.

16

17 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah.

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, it was.....

20

21 MR. HONEA: This is Don.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: .....a sent with the  
24 meeting book but it was in a folder as an -- a separate  
25 package to the meeting book.

26

27 MS. PELKOLA: Yeah, I probably.....

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: But it was sent with  
30 the meeting book.

31

32 MS. PELKOLA: .....got it, but.....

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So somebody had a  
35 comment.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I can't  
38 find mine either, it's going to take like 10 minutes  
39 for me to look through, if you want to.....

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Pollock doesn't  
42 have it, so we'll just quickly read the proposal.

43

44 MR. HONEA: Please.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's.....

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
49 I was intending to do that anyway just for the benefit

50

0270

1 of Pollock.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, then

4 we'll.....

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: So let's go ahead and  
7 move forward with your permission.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead,  
10 Karen.

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
13 The first proposal is Proposal 19 and the proposal  
14 reads, which is also on the agenda, establish new  
15 population and harvest objectives for the Mulchatna  
16 Caribou Herd in Units 9, 17, 18 and 19 as follows: And  
17 for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd, it looked like the  
18 previous population and harvest objectives were 30 to  
19 80,000 animals with 2,400 to 8,000 harvest objectives.  
20 This proposal was put forth by the Togiak National  
21 Wildlife Refuge. And here's what they would like to  
22 say. The multiple revisions and objectives over time  
23 have been a sensible approach to a management of a  
24 changing resource. We are requesting that the Board of  
25 Game review the intensive management population and  
26 harvest objectives with the goal of adjusting  
27 objectives to an ecologically sustainable level. We  
28 recommend this review include careful consideration of  
29 habitat quality, which almost certainly has changed in  
30 response to caribou grazing reducing population  
31 potential.

32

33 So what the Refuge is asking is for the  
34 Board of Game to determine a new population and harvest  
35 objective for this herd. There are no numbers but  
36 they're asking the Board of Game to approve that.

37

38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Karen.  
41 So this -- they're basically requesting a population  
42 objective of 25,000.

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: I think what they're  
49 asking is for the Board to actually come up with that

50

0271

1 population objective, but also they're strongly  
2 recommending that there be careful consideration of  
3 habitat quality when addressing that. So I don't see  
4 where the Togiak Refuge is actually requesting a  
5 particular population objective, they're just asking  
6 the Board to change the current population and harvest  
7 objectives.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. Well, I  
10 would prefer the herd to be rebuilt to the objective of  
11 30 to 80,000. The herd achieved 200,000 and it is my  
12 opinion, and I'm an opinionated person about this  
13 stuff, that the herd endured too much harvest of the  
14 bull component and crashed basically through  
15 reproductive failure. The population objective of 30  
16 to 80,000 is way within the realm of this herd's  
17 performance previously. And I feel that this should be  
18 the objective, is to maintain this herd, because it  
19 stays within its -- once it gets below a certain level  
20 then they have a harder and harder time sustaining  
21 against spring calf predation. There's Golden eagles,  
22 wolverine, wolves, and bears that eat caribou calves.  
23 And so I'm not really inclined to endorse this  
24 proposal.

25

26 Do we have Togiak Refuge on the phone,  
27 is there someone from the Refuge that was going to  
28 speak to this proposal since this is a Togiak Refuge  
29 proposal.

30

31 (Teleconference interference -  
32 participants not muted)

33

34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
35 We're asking if Kenton Moos or maybe Aaron Moses can  
36 speak to this if Aaron's familiar with the proposal.  
37 Otherwise there may not be anybody online at this time  
38 speaking to this proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: And keep in mind, Mr.  
43 Chair, that this -- that the Council does not have  
44 to.....

45

46 (Teleconference interference -  
47 participants not muted - dogs barking)

48

49 REPORTER: Okay, so wait a minute, hold

50

0272

1 on.

2

3

4

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Somebody's dog is barking like a lot.....

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

REPORTER: Wait a minute. Hey, hey, Karen, hold on a minute. So whoever has the dog barking in the background, please, could you mute your phone because I'm not picking up who's talking on the transcript, it is overpowering the recording. So I would appreciate it if you could mute, and I understand that muting is a challenge but it's star, six, or the mute button on your phone.

15

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49

50

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Salena.

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Karen, go ahead.

MS. DEATHERAGE: I would like to make a comment that the Council does not have to comment on these proposals, this is an option for them if they choose. As you and I discussed over email, these were proposals that may be of interest to the Council but they are not required to comment on these. And so if they choose not to as a Council, then that's certainly acceptable.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm actually inclined to oppose this proposal. I feel that just reducing the population objective is not an unrealistic number of 30,000 to 80,000 for that herd. That herd inhabits a phenomenally large Southwestern Alaska region. And the larger the herd, the more it wants to migrate, it gets into our region, so it's a disadvantage to restrict this herd to a small population number where it stays in the Mulchatna headwaters and in the Togiak Refuge and the Tikchik Lakes Country. I feel that it's more important to build this herd back up to its previous population performances in excess of 200,000, pre-contact, before the Gold Rush, before the caribou herd was wiped out, originally.

0273

1                               So I'm personally in favor of opposing  
2 this proposal.

3  
4                               So how does the Council feel about  
5 taking up the proposal and my intention is to oppose  
6 the proposal.

7  
8                               (No comments)

9  
10                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: How many Council  
11 members do we have left, did we lose somebody -- did we  
12 lose people?

13  
14                              (Teleconference interference -  
15 participants not muted)

16  
17                              MS. DEATHERAGE: Whoever has their  
18 phone line open could you please mute. We're hearing a  
19 conversation. Thank you. Female voices.

20  
21                              REPORTER: Hello. So I do have  
22 multiple conversations going on in the background, this  
23 is the recorder, and they're also coming in on the  
24 Eastern Interior meeting at the same time. So unless  
25 you're talking right now, to the Council, please mute  
26 your phone.

27  
28                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

29  
30                              MR. SEMAKEN: Hello. Hello.

31  
32                              MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
33 Kevin.

34  
35                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin, go ahead.

36  
37                              MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, I agree with your  
38 assessment, we should leave the population objective at  
39 30 to 80,000. Even though Togiak's not looking to  
40 change or -- they're just bringing it up as something  
41 to be looked at, most likely the Board of Game is  
42 probably going to lower that objective, they probably  
43 won't increase it. So it should just be the way it is.  
44 Yep, that's all, thanks.

45  
46                              MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, hey.....

47  
48                              CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like  
49 to.....  
50

0274

1 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, hey, Jack, this is  
2 Arnold could you hear me?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I could hear you  
5 now, Arnold, go ahead.

6  
7 MR. DEMOSKI: I'm having connectivity  
8 issues here but I agree with your assessment. I was  
9 trying to speak earlier but my phone keeps cutting out  
10 and I having to keep call back in. But I heard your  
11 assessment and I agree with your assessment.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we should  
14 take Proposal 19 up. So the Chair will entertain a  
15 motion to adopt Proposal 19, State Proposal 19 to  
16 adjust -- requesting an adjustment to the Mulchatna  
17 Caribou Herd population objective and harvest  
18 objective.....

19  
20 (Teleconference interference -  
21 participants not muted)

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and it's my  
24 intention of voting it down. So would somebody like to  
25 make a motion.

26  
27 MR. HONEA: I make that motion. This  
28 is Don.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Don.

31  
32 MR. DEMOSKI: Second it, this is  
33 Arnold.

34  
35 MR. SIMON: Second by Pollock.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Motion by Don,  
38 second by Pollock. Discussion on the proposal. The  
39 performance of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd has shown  
40 that it can achieve much higher objectives than the 30  
41 to 80,000 and maintaining proper harvest parameters  
42 will maintain the herd so it migrates in a wider  
43 area.....

44  
45 (Teleconference interference -  
46 participants not muted)

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....within the  
49 south -- the Bristol Bay, Southwest, and the Western  
50

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1 Interior regions. So we oppose this proposal on the  
2 basis that this current population objective is way  
3 within the performance of this herd previously. That  
4 would be the justification.

5

6 Any further discussion on the proposal.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we got a  
11 question.

12

13 MR. SIMON: Question.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by  
16 Pollock. You want to call the roll, Karen.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
19 For commenting on Proposal 19 there's a motion on the  
20 floor to approve establishing new population and  
21 harvest objectives for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd in  
22 Units 9, 17, 18 and 19.

23

24 Kevin Whitworth.

25

26 MR. WHITWORTH: Can you say that again,  
27 sorry, I was reading something. Sorry Karen.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Right now there is a  
30 motion on the floor to send comments approving  
31 establishing new population and harvest objectives for  
32 the Mulchatna Caribou Herd in Units 9, 17, 18 and 19.

33

34 MR. WHITWORTH: No.

35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you.

37

38 Jenny Pelkola.

39

40 MS. PELKOLA: No.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Is Goodwin Semaken on  
43 the phone?

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

48

49 MR. SEMAKEN: Hello.

50



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1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Hi, is that Goodwin?

2

3 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: How would you like to  
6 vote on this proposal, a yes vote approves it, a no  
7 vote opposes it. Right now we have two no votes.

8

9 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, I finally got  
10 connected too with a different phone -- between -- yes,  
11 moving it up because at one time we did see caribou  
12 over here on the Yukon from that herd, that was back in  
13 the '80s. Probably a yes vote on that one.

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: So Member Demoski  
16 [sic], I think you said that you would like to see this  
17 population objective moved up, there is a sense that  
18 the Board of Game would actually move it down and so  
19 opposing this proposal would maintain it at the 30 to  
20 80,000 herd level that it currently is at. So the  
21 question is, would you like the Board of Game to lower  
22 the current population objective or would you like the  
23 Board of Game to sustain the population objective at  
24 the higher numbers?

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Are you still with us  
29 Arnold?

30

31 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes, I'm having  
32 connectivity, you keep breaking up. I want to vote no  
33 on the proposal though.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
36 Arnold.

37

38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Arnold.

39

40 Pollock Simon.

41

42 MR. SIMON: No.

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

45

46 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, before I say yes  
47 or no here, I'm kind of confused about what saying a  
48 yes is, would it be making the number higher?

49

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

2

3 MR. HONEA: The objective number?

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, the request is  
6 to reduce the harvest objective and population  
7 objective. We -- I prefer -- my personal opinion is to  
8 maintain the current harvest objective and population  
9 objectives.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Okay, that being said, no.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank.....

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca.....

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....you.

18

19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Don.

20

21 Rebecca Wilmarth.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca, are you on  
26 the phone with us?

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 MS. DEATHERAGE: How about Goodwin  
31 Semaken.

32

33 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes, could you hear me?

34

35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes.

36

37 MR. SEMAKEN: Hello.

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, how would you  
40 like to -- how would you like to vote on comments for  
41 this proposal No. 19.

42

43 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, well, I finally  
44 heard -- well, I've been having trouble with this  
45 phone, but yeah I'll be voting no on there with the  
46 rest.

47

48 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, thank you very  
49 much Goodwin. So there's six nos. The motion fails,  
50

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1 or the motion doesn't fail, but the comments will  
2 oppose Proposal 19 on behalf of the Council. Thank  
3 you, Mr. Chair.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
6 Proposal 20 is to make a Tier II hunt for the Mulchatna  
7 Caribou Herd, you want to cover that real quick, Karen.

8  
9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
10 Proposal 20 was submitted by the Alaska Department of  
11 Fish and Game. And the proposal.....

12  
13 (Teleconference interference -  
14 participants not muted)

15  
16 REPORTER: Okay, so.....

17  
18 MS. DEATHERAGE: I keep hearing a child  
19 so if somebody could mute their phone that would be  
20 helpful.

21  
22 REPORTER: It would be very helpful,  
23 thank you.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That sounded like  
26 it, go ahead, Karen.

27  
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, again.  
29 Proposal 20 would establish a Tier II hunting season  
30 and bag limit for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd and the  
31 details following are with a different structure as  
32 well as different seasons. And this is a proposal by  
33 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. And they're  
34 also asking to change the hunt season to exclude  
35 harvest during the rut so that animals can breed  
36 without additional pressure exerted on the herd by  
37 hunters, and, two, standardizing the season across most  
38 of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd range to reduce hunter  
39 confusion and encourage reporting.

40  
41 So establishing a Tier II permit and  
42 excluding harvest of animals during the rut, maintain  
43 breeding stock, and then also to standardize the season  
44 to reduce hunter confusion and encourage reporting.

45  
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that  
49 proposal it would change -- a Tier II hunt is basically  
50

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1 a resident of Alaska State hunt, there'd be no non-  
2 resident harvest.....

3

4 (Teleconference interference -  
5 participants not muted)

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....under the Tier  
8 II system. So does the Council want to take up  
9 Proposal 20. This would allow, if there's any future  
10 hunting that it would go under a Tier II type  
11 structure, and also the Federal Subsistence Board would  
12 probably follow with a Federal Subsistence hunt  
13 following similar guidelines. The Chair will entertain  
14 a motion to adopt Proposal 20 for discussion.

15

16 REPORTER: So whoever's listening to  
17 the Eastern Interior meeting right now, could you  
18 please mute your phone, it's coming into the Western  
19 meeting, and on to this recording. We will not be able  
20 to transcribe this meeting with dual meetings coming  
21 through. So if you're tuning into this meeting, please  
22 mute.

23

24 MR. HONEA: I'll make that motion.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
27 Salena. Motion by Don. And do we have.....

28

29 MR. SIMON: Second by Pollock.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Second by Pollock.  
32 Discussion on the proposal. I feel that.....

33

34 MR. HONEA: Okay, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead. Go right  
37 ahead, Don.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, okay, thank you, Mr.  
40 Chair. I'm sorry to interrupt you. But I just thought  
41 that the Tier II was in times of low numbers and stuff  
42 so I -- I'd like to hear your take on that, thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, this caribou  
45 herd is in closure right now, the Mulchatna Caribou  
46 Herd is closed. And if there is hunting -- if the herd  
47 performance comes up to where they feel that there  
48 could be hunting it should be on a Tier II and Federal  
49 subsistence priority, there should be no sporthunting,  
50

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1 no non-resident hunting of the herd until it recovers  
2 to the point where that can be relaxed. So this is  
3 futuristic, basically setting out a Tier II process for  
4 if the herd was to recover and build back we would move  
5 into, instill certain protections for the herd, with a  
6 priority towards residents of Alaska and the Federal  
7 Subsistence Board would also sort of mirror that.

8

9 I'm in favor of Proposal 20.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Okay, so then Mr. Chair  
12 you're saying it's more of a safety precaution and we  
13 should support it.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It'll be a safety  
16 precaution. It would move away from a -- the previous  
17 hunt was a registration hunt, the RC503, it would move  
18 away from that permit which allowed unlimited numbers  
19 of applicants.

20

21 MR. HONEA: Okay. Mr. Chair, I  
22 appreciate that comment. I mean I could see that the  
23 numbers aren't really high and this is something to  
24 really consider. Thank you.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other comments from  
27 the Council.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a  
32 question on State Proposal 20.

33

34 MR. SIMON: Question.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called,  
37 you want to call the roll, Karen.

38

39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
40 To send comments to the Board of Game to approve  
41 Proposal 20 establishing a Tier II subsistence hunting  
42 season and bag limit for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd.  
43 And if you also recall, this would also change the hunt  
44 season to exclude harvest during the rut so that  
45 animals that breed can be maintained and also  
46 standardize the season across most of the range to  
47 reduce hunter confusion and encourage reporting.

48

49 So with that in mind I'll call roll. A

50

0281

1 yes vote would tell the Board of Game that the Council  
2 approves this proposal, a no vote would tell the Board  
3 of Game that the Council opposes this proposal.

4

5 So let's start with Pollock Simon.

6

7 MR. SIMON: Yes.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

10

11 MR. HONEA: Yes.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

14

15 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

16

17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

18

19 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: I think I heard a  
22 weird yes. Arnold, could you repeat your vote if that  
23 was you.

24

25 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

26

27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, gotcha.

28

29 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes. Okay.

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you.

32

33 Jenny Pelkola.

34

35 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca, have you been  
42 able to get on the phone yet?

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 MS. DEATHERAGE: How about Goodwin  
47 Semaken, are you still with us.

48

49 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

50

0282

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Great, thank you so  
2 much. Mr. Chair, the motion passes to approve Proposal  
3 20 with a 6-0 vote.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you're counting  
6 me?

7  
8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Oh, my goodness --  
9 well, actually -- I did not, sorry. So it's a 7-0  
10 vote, right, how do you vote, yes, I'm assuming based  
11 on your testimony.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Also Proposal  
14 19, I was assuming you were counting me because of my  
15 testimony but I was also -- I would vote yes for 19  
16 also.

17  
18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you so much.  
19 Sorry. You should see my roster sheet, it's pretty  
20 crazy with playing musical Council members for their  
21 votes. So please accept my apologies and I'll go ahead  
22 and include you on this vote as well. Thank you. So  
23 it's a 7-0 vote approving the Proposal No. 20.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Next  
26 proposal, 21. You want to outline that, Karen.

27  
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: One minute, Mr. Chair,  
29 thank you.

30  
31 (Pause)

32  
33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
34 Proposal 21 can be found on Page 27 of your meeting  
35 materials of the supplemental, if you have it. Is to  
36 establish a second predation program for Mulchatna  
37 Caribou Herd on Federal lands in Game Management Units  
38 17 and 18. The proposal came from the Alaska  
39 Department of Fish and Game. It does need to be noted  
40 that this proposal requires concurrence from the  
41 Department of Interior for implementation on Federal  
42 lands, and that the Board does approve -- anticipates  
43 this approval prior to the Board of Game meeting in  
44 January of 2021.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: 2022.

47  
48 MS. DEATHERAGE: I'm sorry, it says  
49 2021 on the paperwork so you are correct it's 2022. I  
50

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1 did add that comment and I'm not sure, so there may be  
2 some Federal representatives who could speak to this  
3 but I know that, in general, the Federal government is  
4 required, in most cases, to enact an environmental  
5 assessment of any major action taken on Federal lands  
6 and those can be time consuming, and so at this point  
7 I'm not sure when the Department of Fish and Game  
8 anticipated approval, prior to the Board of Game  
9 meeting in January of 2022. But I just wanted to let  
10 the Council know that there is a process at the Federal  
11 level. Thank you, very much, Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Would the  
14 Council like to take up this proposal, it's an  
15 intensive management proposal to establish another  
16 management -- encompass another area -- and this would  
17 be the area to the west of -- the Mulchatna's broken  
18 into two components now, east and west, I think this  
19 encompasses that portion also. So the Chair will  
20 entertain a motion to adopt Proposal 21 for discussion.

21

22 MR. SIMON: So moved.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Pollock.

25

26 MR. DEMOSKI: Second.

27

28 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is

29 Kevin.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

32

33 MR. WHITWORTH: I think there was a  
34 second there so I think we're in discussion now for  
35 this proposal. I'd be hesitant to support this without  
36 hearing from Boyd or Kenton.....

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I didn't --

39 Kevin.....

40

41 MR. WHITWORTH: Can you hear me?

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Standby one second.  
44 I didn't catch who that second was and we need that for  
45 the record.

46

47 REPORTER: It was Arnold.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Was that you Arnold?

50



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1 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes, that was Arnold.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Arnold as a  
4 second. Thanks, Salena. Go ahead, Kevin.

5

6 MR. WHITWORTH: Thanks. Yeah, I'd like  
7 to hear from the Federal managers, Boyd or Kenton  
8 there, at Unit 17 or 18 before we take this up. And  
9 Karen has a point there is a Federal process for -- on  
10 Federal lands, this proposal should have come to the  
11 Federal Subsistence Board I would think. So I'm going  
12 to not vote, or abstain from voting on this one until I  
13 can get more clarification on it. That's all, thanks.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there, Boyd,  
16 can you discuss this issue? He was on earlier.

17

18 (No comments)

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Since we don't have  
21 anybody to clarify the Federal management regime, can  
22 we table this, Karen, until we get somebody for this?

23

24 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
25 you certainly can. I will see if somebody from the  
26 Togiak National Wildlife Refuge or the Yukon Delta  
27 National Wildlife Refuge might be able to speak to  
28 this. I do want to clarify that any -- that any kind  
29 of proposal or any kind of move to send this to the  
30 Federal Subsistence Board as a proposal would not be  
31 accepted by the Board because of its policy so any  
32 request by the Council for any Federal agency to  
33 implement a predation control program would go  
34 specifically to the land manager in that area, so it  
35 would go specifically to Togiak or Yukon Delta Refuge  
36 managers. I just want to clarify that, Mr. Chair.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Could we table this,  
39 do we need a vote to table until it's clarified?

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair,  
42 yes, a vote to table pending a representative from the  
43 Fish and Wildlife Service and then if there is no  
44 representative available and the Council wishes to take  
45 no action then they'll have to withdraw the motion.  
46 Thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So a motion  
49 needs to be made to table.

50

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1 MR. HONEA: I make that motion. This  
2 is Don.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, motion to  
5 table. Got a second.

6  
7 MR. WHITWORTH: Second, Kevin.

8  
9 MR. SIMON: Second by Pollock.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Then go ahead  
12 and call the roll, Karen, to table.

13  
14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
15 Rebecca Wilmarth.

16  
17 (No comments)

18  
19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

20  
21 MR. HONEA: Yes.

22  
23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

24  
25 MR. SIMON: Yes.

26  
27 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

28  
29 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

30  
31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

34  
35 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

36  
37 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

38  
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.

40  
41 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

42  
43 MS. DEATHERAGE: And Goodwin Semaken.

44  
45 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

46  
47 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much.

48 The Council's voted to table this, a vote of 7-0.  
49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The next proposal is  
2 in regards to the Nushagak Peninsula Herd. I don't  
3 feel this Council should even address that, that's  
4 Proposal 22. That's a herd outside of our region, it  
5 never comes through our region. Proposal 23. You want  
6 to give the overview of that one, Karen.

7

8 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 Proposal 22 -- I'm sorry 23, which is located on Page  
10 29 of the materials, if you have those in front of you.  
11 Proposes to allow the use of snowmachine to position  
12 wolf or wolverine for harvest in Unit 17 as follows: A  
13 snowmachine may be used to position a wolf or wolverine  
14 for harvest and a wolf or wolverine may be shot from a  
15 stationary snowmachine in Units 17, 18, 22, 23 and 26A.  
16 This would add Unit 17 to the list of other already  
17 approved areas. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And this is  
20 the same redundant proposal that we reviewed this  
21 morning on the Federal proposals.

22

23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's basically the  
26 same thing, because it was inclusive of all of Unit --  
27 and that proposal actually included parts of Unit 9,  
28 and that was Proposal 22-40 and it was amended.

29

30 MS. DEATHERAGE: The proposal was  
31 amended by OSM. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. So the Chair  
34 will entertain a motion to adopt Proposal 23 -- State  
35 Proposal 23, to allow positioning of wolf and wolverine  
36 in Unit 17 by snowmobile. Do we have a motion to  
37 adopt.

38

39 MR. SIMON: So moved by Pollock.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock moved.

42

43 MR. DEMOSKI: Second by Arnold.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Second by Arnold.  
46 So the Council reviewed this same type of proposal this  
47 morning. I'm in favor of the proposal. Any further  
48 comments.

49

50

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1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a  
4 question then.

5

6 MR. DEMOSKI: Question.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That was you,  
9 Arnold.

10

11 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right,  
14 you want to call the roll there, Karen.

15

16 MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, Mr. Chair, thank  
17 you. For Proposal No. 23 to allow for the use of  
18 snowmachine to position wolf or wolverine for harvest  
19 in Unit 17. I'll call the roll here.

20

21 Jenny Pelkola.

22

23 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

26

27 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

30

31 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Yes.

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

42

43 MR. SIMON: Yes.

44

45 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

46

47 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: And Jack Reakoff.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 That would be a vote of 7-0 to approve Proposal 23.

5 Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Proposal 24 revolves  
8 around salvage of Alaska hare and we deferred this type  
9 of proposal back to region, this is a State proposal so  
10 we should skip Proposal 24. The next proposal that's  
11 in this meeting packet is description of game  
12 management units, Proposal 71, do you.....

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Karen.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: I think what I would  
19 like to request, if possible, is that we move into  
20 Proposal 201, this was a supplemental proposal.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

23

24 MS. DEATHERAGE: And because it has to  
25 do with the Mulchatna Controlled Use Area, it's to  
26 allow motorized vehicles for hunting moose and caribou  
27 in the upper Mulchatna Controlled Use area of Unit 17B.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yeah, we'll  
30 skip over that one, so we're at 172?

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay, I'm going to go  
33 ahead and cross this one out, thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Proposal.....

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: So give me one minute.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

40

41 MS. DEATHERAGE: Proposal 171 would be  
42 the next one on the list. Proposal 171 requests to  
43 divide Unit 19A into two subunits. The Division of  
44 Game Management Unit 19A into 19A west, to remain 19A  
45 and 19 east to become 19E. This came about because the  
46 residents in the area purportedly have very different  
47 views on moose management and it was proposed by the  
48 Stony/Holitna Fish and Game Advisory Committee. Thank  
49 you, Mr. Chair.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So would you like to  
2 deal with that Kevin.

3  
4 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair, I  
5 would really like to get Rebecca's input on this. I'm  
6 not familiar with that Advisory Council all that much.  
7 I'm on the McGrath Advisory Council but we didn't take  
8 this up so I'd like to hear Rebecca make comments on  
9 this. Hopefully she's on.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: She's not been on  
12 since before lunch. So.....

13  
14 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, then I think the  
15 conversation there, maybe there's fighting going on  
16 within that Advisory Council or something but they're  
17 divided on this issue it sounds like. I don't -- I  
18 would abstain from voting on this, I just don't know  
19 much about that reasoning for it and really I'd defer  
20 to Josh Pierce here in McGrath, ADF&G, would like to  
21 get his input too. So maybe just defer to what Fish  
22 and Game wants to do. I don't know, I would skip it.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, let's just  
25 skip it. We don't have enough input, we don't even  
26 have the Council member from that area to even discuss  
27 this one. So moving down to Proposal 172, Karen.

28  
29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
30 Proposal 172. This proposal would clarify the legal  
31 use of highway vehicles, snowmachines, and offroad  
32 vehicles in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management area  
33 for hunting and trapping. It would also clarify the  
34 use of firearms and transport of furbearers and  
35 trapping bait when trapping in the Dalton Highway  
36 Corridor Management area. And this proposal was put  
37 forth by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This  
38 proposal was before the Council at their March 2020  
39 meeting, the Council provided extensive comments which  
40 can be found on that Page 5, Ted Spraker document, and  
41 under Proposal 64. Again, Chairman Reakoff actually  
42 did an excellent job of providing distinct comments  
43 that the Council adopted at that meeting. And so the  
44 proposal could be to adopt similar comments or add to,  
45 or remove portions of those comments.

46  
47 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I will read the  
50

0290

1 comments that -- we deliberated this proposal at the  
2 March 2020 meeting in Fairbanks, I think it was the  
3 second day, on the 3rd of March, and so Proposal 64 has  
4 been renumbered to Proposal 72. The comments that we  
5 made for this proposal, was that the Council voted to  
6 support -- unanimously support this proposal with  
7 modification.

8

9

10 The Council comments are, and I'll read  
11 them for the record: The sole purpose of the described  
12 area in Alaska Statutes was to protect big game  
13 populations. The Council supports the premise of the  
14 proposal to clarify the parameters of the Dalton  
15 Highway Corridor Management Area and believes that the  
16 Board of Game is the best management body to address  
17 enforcement and other issues brought forth by law  
18 officers and the public. The Council voted to amend  
19 Proposal, and we'll change that to 172, by replacing  
20 language with the following, which are also discussed  
21 and submitted by the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee.

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1. Clarification to allow snowmachine  
use in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area for  
both access to trap lines and to transport of legally  
defined big game bait. Licensed trapping is a very  
important management tool to harvest furbearers under  
trapping regulations. Travel to and from homes within  
or outside the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area  
by licensed trappers should not be impeded. Firearms  
take free-ranging furbearers has always been allowed in  
the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area under a  
trapping license and should continue. Restricting  
trappers ability to take predators would be detrimental  
to big game populations and could cause the reduction  
of opportunity for subsistence and other users.

2. Clarification to allow residents  
north of the Yukon River to travel to their homes from  
the Dalton Highway. Residents of Wiseman, Coldfoot,  
Stevens Village, Anaktuvuk Pass, Allakaket, Alatna,  
Bettles, Evansville, and Nuiqsut should be permitted to  
travel from the Dalton Highway to their homes with  
legally taken big game. Access by residents using  
licensed tire vehicles should -- and it should say --  
be allowed on a year-round -- on year-round, or winter  
roads to these villages in order to transport game,  
game parts, hunters or hunting gear as defined in  
regulation. Specifically, residents should have access  
to oil field roads to Nuiqsut and winter roads to

0291

1 Stevens Village, Anaktuvuk Pass, Bettles, Evansville,  
2 Allakaket and Alatna and the year-round road to  
3 property and businesses in Wiseman.

4  
5 3. Clarification to allow licensed  
6 highway vehicles to transport hunters, game, game parts  
7 and gear within one mile of the Dalton Highway, the  
8 current one-quarter mile restriction does not allow  
9 subsistence and other hunters to access boat launching  
10 sites in the Koyukuk Sag River drainages that have side  
11 road access outside the quarter mile limit. Some  
12 hunters are currently accessing legal boat launch sites  
13 up to 18 river miles from logical access. The Council  
14 does not support additional clarifying language within  
15 the original proposal, namely the five bullet points on  
16 Page 75 and 76 of the Board of Game proposal book. And  
17 so we have to clarify those bullet points, Karen, in  
18 the past proposal, which was Proposal 64. There.....

19  
20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Which -- I'm sorry,  
21 what are you referring to?

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have to get the  
24 five bullet points from Proposal 64 in the old book,  
25 this is in reference to those five bullet points.  
26 These comments will revolve around those five bullet  
27 points.

28  
29 There is insufficient information  
30 provided as to what the clarifying language would be  
31 and the impacts of any such language to subsistence  
32 uses within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management  
33 Area. The Council requests the Board of Game to defer  
34 action on this proposal and return to the Fish and Game  
35 Advisory Committees and Subsistence Regional Advisory  
36 Councils with a proposal for comment that contains  
37 specific language that would clarify the legal uses of  
38 the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area.

39  
40 Finally, the Council wishes to convey  
41 its support for any clarifying language via Proposal --  
42 now Proposal 172 -- based upon the Alaska Statute  
43 protection of big game primarily, but also other fish  
44 and wildlife resources. The Council's concern is for  
45 the Federally-qualified subsistence users who reside in  
46 or near the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area  
47 whose homes and subsistence harvest is critical to  
48 their lifeway, as well as non-Federally-qualified users  
49 who are protected under ANILCA, Title VIII, Section  
50



0292

1 .815. Further, any actions or clarifying language  
2 proposed by the Board of Game under this proposal  
3 should not be interpreted as taking away the rights  
4 afforded to subsistence users under Alaska Native  
5 Claims Settlement Act and/or the Alaska National  
6 Interest Lands Conservation Act.

7

8 End of comment.

9

10 So those comments are to be included in  
11 the record on our comment on Proposal, now numbered  
12 172, to include the five bullet points which are  
13 referenced in this comment, Karen.

14

15 So the Council at this point can adopt  
16 our previous language and comment on this proposal  
17 since the Board deferred it and now they're taking it  
18 back up again, we need to be back on record with the  
19 same comment. Does that make sense to the Council.  
20 Comments at this point.

21

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any  
26 commen.....

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
33 This is Karen. I might suggest calling for a motion to  
34 approve sending similar comments because the comments  
35 both approve and oppose portions of this proposal, so I  
36 would just make the motion to forward the previous  
37 comments, with needed amendments. Thank you, Mr.  
38 Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. So the Chair  
41 will entertain a motion for State Proposal 172 to  
42 transmit those comments that I just read into the  
43 record which are our previous comments that we made in  
44 March of 2020 to the Alaska Board of Game. The Chair  
45 will entertain a motion to adopt those comments to be  
46 transmitted for Proposal 172. Do we have a motion.

47

48 MR. SIMON: So moved by Pollock.

49

50

0293

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Pollock.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Second. Don.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Don.

6 Any further discussion.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a

11 question.

12

13 MR. HONEA: Call for the question.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.

16 Call roll Karen.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19 To approve the motion for Proposal 172.

20

21 Don Honea.

22

23 MR. HONEA: Yes.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

26

27 MR. SIMON: Yes.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny may have left to

34 go get her flu shot. Jenny are you on the phone?

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. Goodwin

39 Semaken.

40

41 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

42

43 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Goodwin.

44

45 Arnold Demoski.

46

47 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Arnold.

50

0294

1 Jack Reakoff.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

6

7 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: And, Rebecca Wilmarth,  
10 are you on the phone?

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's 6-0, six in  
15 favor. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For Proposal 172 to  
16 transmit previous comments on this proposal for the  
17 Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area. Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the next proposal  
20 is 173, which is a Fairbanks Advisory Committee  
21 Proposal to completely repeal the Dalton Highway  
22 Corridor Management Area which is five miles on each  
23 side of the road, north of the Yukon River, which is  
24 how we control the amount of hunting pressure off of a  
25 road in an Arctic environment, sub-Arctic environment.  
26 So the Council previously voted to oppose Proposal, at  
27 the time was numbered 1 -- or correction -- Proposal  
28 63, we opposed the proposal -- Proposal 173, I'm  
29 distinctly opposed to this because it would basically  
30 revert to mayhem here. The road is open to the public  
31 right now and it would go -- the public would go wild.  
32 If you know anything about the Steese Highway in August  
33 in the caribou hunt, that's what we would see here, it  
34 would be absolute mayhem. So that was the intention of  
35 the proposal is to throw this area wide open but we  
36 don't want to go there so the Chair will entertain a  
37 motion to adopt Proposal 173 with my intention to  
38 oppose the proposal.

39

40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

41

42 MR. SIMON: So moved by Pollock.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Pollock.

45

46 MR. WHITWORTH: Second. Kevin.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Kevin.  
49 Any further discussion.

50

0295

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Karen.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: This is Karen  
6 Deatherage, you are motioning to oppose this proposal  
7 173, may I ask if this motion also includes to  
8 retransmit the proposal comments that were done under  
9 63 at the March 2020 Council meeting. Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
13 clarification. Yes. And the comments that we wrote,  
14 and I'll read those into the record -- thank you for  
15 that clarification. Thank you for pointing that out.

16

17 Council comments at the time was to  
18 oppose the proposal. The Council comments were:

19

20 The Council strongly believes that the  
21 Alaska Board of Game Dalton Highway Corridor Management  
22 Area regulation is the most effective way to ensure  
23 enforcement of game management. Hunters and others  
24 rely on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
25 regulations versus broad State statutes as a more  
26 reliable way to understand activities permitted in the  
27 Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area. Law  
28 enforcement can also enforce the Board of Game  
29 regulations for illegal activities. The Board of Game  
30 is tasked with game management within the statutorily  
31 delineated game management units comprising the Dalton  
32 Highway Corridor Management Area.

33

34 So that was our comment then which will  
35 be incorporated into our new comment on Proposal 173.

36

37 Any further discussion.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

42

43 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I guess  
44 my comment is, if it's anything like the open season  
45 that they had in August or whatever, up on the Steese,  
46 it was a -- it's a nightmare, and if we brought that  
47 same concept over to the Pipeline Corridor it would be  
48 a mess. So I'm all for -- so I'm a little confused on  
49 the voting on this, is it yes or no?

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're voting -- the  
2 proposal is 173 and I'm voting no for the Proposal 173  
3 and the Council comments for our justification.

4  
5 MR. HONEA: Sure, okay, thank you.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks Don  
8 for that clarification.

9  
10 MR. HONEA: Yep.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further  
13 comments.

14  
15 (No comments)

16  
17 MR. SIMON: Question.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called,  
20 you want to call the roll Karen.

21  
22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23  
24 We'll start with Goodwin Semaken.

25  
26 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

27  
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin.

29  
30 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

31  
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin, I want to  
33 clarify to make sure that you understand that the  
34 motion is to adopt repealing the Dalton Highway  
35 Corridor Management Area and that the comments that the  
36 Council will include with its motion will actually  
37 oppose repealing the Dalton Highway Corridor Management  
38 Area. I just want to make sure you're clear of that  
39 before you vote. Thank you, through the Chair.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
42 clarification. So you understand the vote, Goodwin. I  
43 am opposed to repeal of the Dalton Highway Corridor,  
44 I'm opposing the Proposal 173, so is -- but with that  
45 understanding, what's your vote.

46  
47 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes, my vote would be no  
48 on this one.

49  
50

0297

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Goodwin.

4 And thanks for your patience with this, it's rather  
5 confusing.

6

7 Is Jenny Pelkola back on the phone with  
8 us.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Okay. How about Kevin

13 Whitworth.

14

15 MR. WHITWORTH: Oppose. No.

16

17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Don Honea.

22

23 MR. HONEA: No.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

26

27 MR. SIMON: No.

28

29 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No.

32

33 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

34

35 MR. DEMOSKI: No.

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: I think that's a no  
38 from Arnold so that's 6-0 oppose with Council comments  
39 from the March 2020 meeting as justification. Thank  
40 you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And that  
43 completes our Board of Game proposals. And so now  
44 we're going to go to agency reports and there'll be a  
45 15 minute time limit. And so you'll be the timekeeper  
46 there Karen. Tribal governments, Native organizations  
47 and non-governmental organizations. Tanana Chief  
48 Conference, TCC, do you have comments or a  
49 presentation. Do we have TCC on the phone.  
50

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1 MR. STEVENS: Yes, Sir, Mr. Chairman,  
2 can you hear me?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you  
5 great.

6  
7 MR. STEVENS: All right. All right.  
8 Thank you, very much. I'm hopeful somewhere out there  
9 in the phone world is my colleagues, Brooke Woods,  
10 Bruce Irvine, Deborah Lind and a couple others out  
11 there. Several of us are going to join here and cover  
12 a broad range of things.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I recognize your  
15 voice but do you want to introduce yourself.

16  
17 MR. STEVENS: Oh, I'm sorry, yes. Mr.  
18 Chair. Members of the Council. My name is Ben  
19 Stevens. I am Koyukon Athabascan from Stevens Village.  
20 Stevens Village is on the Yukon River north of  
21 Fairbanks. I grew up there, raised by my grandma,  
22 grandpas, trained by my uncles in the ways of our  
23 people, and since then I have been carrying on those  
24 traditions. I spent most of every summer of my life in  
25 the fish camp harvesting fish for up to five, six,  
26 seven families sometimes. My education is in business  
27 and my training is in hospital and health care  
28 administration. I've currently spent the last couple  
29 of decades helping tribal folks develop tribal resource  
30 management programs, and I'll be available later if you  
31 have specific questions, I need to be respectful of  
32 time.

33  
34 Mr. Chairman. In terms of the  
35 organizational report that we have regarding the Tanana  
36 Chiefs Conference is that we have been -- we have been  
37 working very hard over the past six months to a year  
38 trying desperately trying to connect up with our folks  
39 out there in the villages, on the ground out there in  
40 rural Alaska. We've been listening to concerns that  
41 are start to rattle us because we're not having any  
42 type of respite in terms of how fast these concerns are  
43 coming at us or what we can do about it. We've been  
44 talking about representation at forums such as this,  
45 which is very difficult, as we all know, we're looking  
46 at representation at forums such as the North Pacific  
47 Fisheries Management Council all in an attempt to  
48 protect our way of life. But recently at the Tanana  
49 Chiefs Conference we underwent a reorganization and a  
50

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1 lot of you may remember the Yukon River InterTribal  
2 Fish Commission and the Hunting and Fishing Task Force,  
3 well, what we did is the reorganization created an  
4 umbrella entity that draws in both those entities  
5 underneath it. Combining those two huge efforts is --  
6 it's our hope that we improve our advocacy efforts, our  
7 communication and public outreach and allows us to be  
8 more responsive to the people when they call us on the  
9 phone and say, hey, this is our situation, you know,  
10 what are we looking at.

11

12 So we're constantly going through the  
13 painful process of improving our system to help our  
14 folks advocate for themselves. So that was the  
15 strategic planning process that we went through and  
16 I'll be brief.

17

18 Part of what we're looking at also is  
19 basically developing the tribal capacity and the  
20 capability to do resource management, a combination of  
21 Western Science and the Traditional Knowledge that was  
22 given to us by our ancestors.

23

24 Down those lines we're looking at  
25 bringing on a Wildlife Biologist, we're going to be  
26 searching out a Tribal Programs Coordinator here pretty  
27 soon to cover and spread our wings a little bit  
28 further.

29

30 Yesterday we heard some folks from  
31 ADF&G talking about the challenges of quality data,  
32 they're trying very hard, a bunch of professionals  
33 trying very hard to make policy and regulatory regimes  
34 without having good quality data, it's a challenge, so  
35 hat's off to them if they can do that they're amazing.  
36 But what we're trying to do is we're trying to develop  
37 that data management system to where we, as tribal  
38 folks, out there on the ground, will be able to collect  
39 and manage solid harvest data and help, I think, the  
40 State and the Federal managers develop quality policies  
41 and regulations based upon that quality data. So we're  
42 making progress and we're heading in that direction.

43

44 I think with the addition of some of  
45 our contracted professionals and our team, I think  
46 we're going to dig a little bit deeper into some of the  
47 issues doing analysis. I think providing a third  
48 perspective, sometimes to these issues, I think, could  
49 be an illuminating factor.

50



0300

1 I mentioned harvest data collection,  
2 we're aiming to collect and maintain data about what  
3 our people harvest across the region and that's going  
4 to probably involve a lot of localized resource  
5 management capabilities. Down those lines we're also  
6 looking to further enhance our assessment program.  
7 We're going to hear a little while down the agenda, the  
8 TCC Fisheries Report, I believe it's on Page 264 of the  
9 Eastern RAC agenda, but I'm not too sure if it's on the  
10 Western. We're also going to hear a little bit about  
11 maybe Gisasa, but some of our big plans involve a mid  
12 river sonar project. Currently we've got a huge gap  
13 between the Pilot Station sonar and the Eagle sonar and  
14 I think across the board, the State, the Feds, the  
15 tribes, they all are looking for an assessment tool  
16 somewhere in the middle part of the river.

17  
18 So with that I'm just going to hush  
19 from there and hand it over to Bruce because I did take  
20 more time than I was supposed to. I apologize to the  
21 Council and my colleagues. Bruce, are you on.

22  
23 MR. IRVINE: Thank you, Ben. Can you  
24 guys hear me?

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

27  
28 MR. IRVINE: Okay, thank you, Chair and  
29 Council members. This is Bruce Irvine. I'd like to  
30 just echo Ben and reiterate that the Fish Commission  
31 and the Hunting Fishing Task Force are in the process  
32 of being integrated into the Tribal Resource  
33 Stewardship Program through ongoing strategic planning  
34 and reorganization.

35  
36 Currently the plan is to have Brooke  
37 Wood lead the efforts in the Yukon InterTribal Fish  
38 Commission and myself, Bruce, to lead the efforts in  
39 the Hunting Fishing Task Force. We also team up with  
40 TCC's Deborah Lind and she's a great help with the  
41 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council and we  
42 offer any assistance to support their effort. Deborah  
43 and TCC's Migratory Bird Management Council is also  
44 going through a strategic planning process to ensure  
45 adequate regional representatives involvement in the  
46 co-managing the spring and summer subsistence migratory  
47 bird hunting and eggging opportunities.

48  
49 The Tribal Resources Stewardship  
50

0301

1 Program is researching, contacting ADF&G and FSB  
2 officials and looking for ways to extend the moose  
3 hunting season for tribes that are having a poor fall  
4 season harvesting moose. It is important that we  
5 continue to advocate for more opportunities for our  
6 rural Alaskans because they're facing uncertain (ph)  
7 times and food security, especially in light of no  
8 salmon fishing opportunities throughout the Yukon River  
9 and diminishing opportunities for alternative  
10 resources. We have already reached out to ADF&G to  
11 request an extended moose season this fall and we would  
12 also like to continue to work with ADF&G and the  
13 Federal Subsistence Board and the Office of Subsistence  
14 Management to ensure that such opportunities are  
15 available next hunting season given the likelihood of  
16 ongoing conservation concerns for all of our salmon  
17 species.

18  
19 The Tribal Resource Stewardship Program  
20 is currently updating our website as well and we want  
21 to make sure to include information on the Hunting and  
22 Fishing and Gathering Task Force, the Yukon River  
23 InterTribal Fish Commission, climate change and the  
24 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council.

25  
26 Lastly, in September the Hunting and  
27 Fishing Task Force teamed up with TCC's Realty and  
28 Legal Departments to advocate and support our upper  
29 Tanana tribes and their customary and traditional use  
30 lands of the Taylor Highway that are being selected in  
31 the (indiscernible - breaking up) decision. This was a  
32 topic that was brought up by our Tanacross tribal  
33 members at the upper Tanana subregional meeting. TCC  
34 met the deadline for the public comments and submitted  
35 a letter.

36  
37 So I just want to say thank you again  
38 for letting me report and I'm going to go ahead and  
39 pass it over to my colleague, Brooke Wood.

40  
41 MS. WOOD: Thank you, Bruce. Can you  
42 hear me okay?

43  
44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Brooke,  
45 you're loud and clear.

46  
47 MS. WOOD: So the Tribal Resource  
48 Stewardship Program received and partnered with several  
49 organizations for a competitive NASA (ph)\* grant to do  
50

0302

1 freshwater river ice monitoring. The project is called  
2 Fresh Eyes on Ice and the hope is to expand existing  
3 freshwater ice monitoring efforts that's culturally  
4 responsive. We partnered with UAF, the National  
5 Weather Service River Watch, NASA globe learning and  
6 observations and NASA Go.

7  
8                   Currently we are looking for tribal  
9 members to submit photo observations of freeze-up,  
10 winter open water areas and spring break up. There are  
11 three ways to submit photos. One, is to upload to the  
12 internet which is Fresh Eyes on Ice.org. Download the  
13 Globe Observers App, and you could also post photos on  
14 the Facebook page. Just Google, search Fresh Eyes on  
15 Ice. Feel free to call me, my work cell is (907) 347-  
16 0387.

17  
18                   Specifically for the Fish Commission in  
19 the spring of 2021 the Yukon River InterTribal Fish  
20 Commission selected -- actually elected an Executive  
21 Council and through the fishing season we met weekly  
22 throughout the dismal 2021 fishing season. The Fish  
23 Commission continues to expand its capacity and  
24 involvement as tribal partners in the Yukon River  
25 Salmon Management and decisionmaking. When we met, our  
26 meetings primarily were gathering local fishing reports  
27 and making management recommendations to both the State  
28 and the Federal managers. The Tribal Resource  
29 Stewardship Staff and Kuskokwim Fish Commission  
30 recently met with the North Pacific Fisheries  
31 Management Council voting member and ADF&G Commissioner  
32 Doug Vincent-Lang on both the Commission's request for  
33 the October 2021 North Pacific Fisheries Management  
34 meeting. We requested emergency action to the Council  
35 to limit chinook bycatch. Currently there is no chum  
36 bycatch so those were our main request from both the  
37 Kuskokwim and the Yukon River InterTribal Fish  
38 Commissions and we had roughly 26 testifiers which was  
39 greatly appreciated. The other thing we asked the  
40 Council is to support the amendment to Magnuson-Stevens  
41 Act to add two Alaska Native tribal seats to the North  
42 Pacific. And another important thing that we did was  
43 we wanted the North Pacific to better utilize the  
44 NOAA's tribal consultation. Commissioner Doug Vincent-  
45 Lang was very cordial and respectful during our  
46 consultation with both him and voting member Rachel  
47 Baker (ph), however the State of Alaska may be  
48 reluctant to support zero bycatch without additional  
49 information about how that action might affect other  
50

0303

1 resources.

2

3

4 We are currently in final stages for  
5 our post-season meetings. We would also like to host a  
6 salmon summit and we have outreach efforts with our  
7 tribes prior to our meetings to better prepare for  
8 another poor run. The Fish Commission partnered with  
9 YRDFA and we recently completed a mentor advocacy  
10 series in preparation for the North Pacific Fisheries  
11 Management Council. Currently we are (indiscernible -  
12 muffled) the North Pacific Fisheries Council process.  
13 The Council will be taking action on the request for  
14 the bycatch for 2022 and there is still time to sign up  
15 for testimony.

16

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The other thing I wanted to briefly mention is that we have established a strong working partnership with YRDFA, YDFDA and AVCP on the 2020 and 2021 Federal Fisheries Disaster Declaration.

And with that I will end my presentation, thank you so much.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Brooke. Do Council members have questions for the TCC presentations.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, I'd like to thank Ben, and Bruce and Brooke for their presentations. I realize -- I mean I think it's really important that we have somebody in these positions who are out there on the land and fishing and knowing the disaster it's caused us so I just appreciate each one of them. I am looking forward to whatever the ADF&G, their report, or whatever, as to what exactly we can do and I appreciate the Task Force and what they're doing. I guess the fish that we had got was maybe three or four fish from the tribe and that's -- I just think that's small compensation for the loss of all our fish throughout this summer. So if there was anything that you guys could do in maybe getting us a little more -- you know, a little better quality fish, maybe a little more of it or something. I mean I think three or four fish, you know, what will that last, a couple weeks.

0304

1                   But I'd just like to thank you guys for  
2 your presentation and especially for your hard work.

3

4                   Thank you.

5

6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Other  
7 Council members comments or questions.

8

9                   (Teleconference interference -  
10 participants not muted)

11

12                   MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, this is Pollock.

13

14                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Pollock.

15

16                   MR. SIMON: I'd like to thank the TCC  
17 for the presentation. We lost the fish but the moose  
18 -- we need to restock the wild stock of fish that --  
19 that's what we're used to. I know I pulled the fish  
20 from the river out there, that tastes better for than  
21 if I get a fish from someplace else. The key is for  
22 everybody to work together and try to restock the wild  
23 salmon. And the agencies and the peoples along up and  
24 down the river always work together and with some hard  
25 work maybe the fish would come back.

26

27                   Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28

29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Pollock,  
30 appreciate that. Any other comments or questions.

31

32                   MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
33 Kevin.

34

35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin. Go  
36 ahead.

37

38                   MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, thanks. Thanks  
39 Brooke, Bruce and Ben for your presentation, really  
40 appreciate it. TCC, you know, it's a huge region and I  
41 applaud you guys reaching out to all the villages, you  
42 know, upper Kuskokwim, GASH, Koyukuk, Nowitna all the  
43 way up to the border, near Eagle, it's a huge area and  
44 reaching out to all those tribes, it's a tall task and  
45 with your new organization I really applaud you guys  
46 and doing a good job.

47

48                   I would like to hear a little bit more  
49 about your assessment projects, Gisasa, mid river

50

0305

1 sonar. Is there other projects you guys are working on  
2 to assess the king and chum run?

3

4 MS. LIND: This is Deborah Lind.

5

6 MR. STEVENS: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
7 Chairman. I realize that the Henshaw Weir project that  
8 Kevin is referring to is not on your agenda and for  
9 that we apologize. If it's even remotely possible, Mr.  
10 Chairman, if we could give Deborah Lind a couple three  
11 minutes to give an overview of that Henshaw project, I  
12 think that you and the Council will be impressed with  
13 some of the capacity building that's going on here.  
14 So, Mr. Chairman, can I beg you a few minutes to hear  
15 that overview, just a few minutes.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Karen, so we're at  
18 how long on this one?

19

20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
21 It would be definitely my consideration to allow for  
22 this. TCC has been doing some amazing work.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

25

26 MS. DEATHERAGE: With that in mind, I'd  
27 also like to recognize TCC for their help this past  
28 fishing season to distribute Bristol Bay salmon to a  
29 lot of the villages along the Yukon River and Kuskokwim  
30 to help folks out as a result of the disastrous fishing  
31 season. So I think anything that TCC has to say about  
32 fish should be honored and they should be given the  
33 time to do so.

34

35 Thank you.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That's fine. So go  
38 ahead and give us a rundown on Henshaw. Deborah.

39

40 MS. LIND: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair.  
41 Yes, this is Deborah Lind with Tanana Chiefs Tribal  
42 Resource Stewardship Program. I'm speaking on behalf  
43 of Brian McKenna with our Fisheries Department. With  
44 the two RACs going on at the same time we're having to  
45 split our time. But I will give his report that he  
46 gave to me but I will cut it in half just for your  
47 time.

48

49 The main things that I want to cover is

50

0306

1 that we have two projects funded through the OSM  
2 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. The first is  
3 the Henshaw weir project. We installed the weir this  
4 season and it ran from June 28th through July 29th. A  
5 flash flood occurred on July 29th and ended the weir  
6 counts a few days early and the Henshaw crew had to  
7 evacuate to higher grounds. It only was a loss of four  
8 days of counting. We had originally planned to stop on  
9 August 7th. The weir counts for Henshaw were as  
10 follows: A total of 130 chinook salmon with a historic  
11 average count of 157 and a total of 3,729 chum salmon  
12 with a historic count of 140,000, which is only a 2.6  
13 historical average that passed through Henshaw weir.  
14 Those escapements were recorded the lowest for the  
15 history of the 20 year project. The water level in  
16 Henshaw Creek remained too high to remove the weir  
17 until late September. Steven Bergman from Allakaket  
18 was extremely helpful as he made numerous trips to the  
19 weir site to check and make sure water levels were what  
20 they were while Gladis Bergman took images to report on  
21 what the water levels were throughout August and  
22 September. On September 21st the water levels were  
23 finally low enough that we mobilized a field crew to  
24 return to the weir, however, the day after the arrival  
25 to the weir river ice was forming on the Koyukuk River  
26 so the crew had to abandon the weir and retreat to  
27 Allakaket. Some sections of the weir were safely  
28 removed and stored for winter but a portion of the weir  
29 will remain in the creek over the winter. Fish passage  
30 has not been blocked and we plan to make sure that the  
31 site is visited after break up next spring.

32  
33                   There was another project I will  
34 quickly talk about and that is the traditional  
35 knowledge of anadromous fish in the Yukon Flats. Brian  
36 McKenna and Nate Cathcart from ADF&G conducted a  
37 fishery survey, electrofishing and minnow trapping  
38 through -- for rearing juvenile chinook and coho  
39 salmon. Four tributaries were surveyed and coho salmon  
40 -- juvenile coho salmon were observed only in the  
41 Kevinjik Creek drainage, also known as the Nee'inlii  
42 Creek, as documented by traditional knowledge. These  
43 observations will result in nominations to the  
44 Anadromous Waters Catalog to help protect those  
45 important juveniles.

46  
47                   And there was one last survey that was  
48 conducted by Tanana Chiefs. It as a drone survey  
49 counting red salmon and it ends the last week of July  
50

0307

1 and the survey counted 210 reds, which is compared to a  
2 drone survey in 2018 that counted 828 reds and 2019 the  
3 drone survey counted 556, a significant decline in  
4 chinook salmon reds in the salmon -- in the Salcha  
5 River.

6  
7 This concludes my report.

8  
9 Thank you for taking -- for allowing us  
10 this time.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. So any  
13 other comments or questions, Council members.

14  
15 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, am I on?

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

18  
19 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, I just want to  
20 thank the TCC and Ben, Brooke, Bruce and Deborah for  
21 their presentation. I am familiar with the work that  
22 they are doing and I know it's a lot of work and for  
23 them to be doing all this work I just wanted to show my  
24 appreciation and I just thank them for their time today  
25 and calling in and, yes, that's all I wanted to say.

26  
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
30 And so any other comments.

31  
32 (No comments)

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
35 your presentations, Ben, Bruce, Brooke and Deb. Thanks  
36 for all the great work you're doing with TCC.

37  
38 MR. SEMAKEN: This is Goodwin Semaken,  
39 could I ask them a question?

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go right  
42 ahead, Goodwin, I didn't hear you there.

43  
44 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah. There's a mine  
45 over here at the Illinois Creek and are there fish  
46 swimming up there too, that's a long creek to be  
47 monitoring, or is it monitored? That's my question, I  
48 wonder.

49  
50



0308

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So does TCC  
2 have a monitoring program for Illinois Creek.

3  
4 MR. STEVENS: Mr. Chairman, Ben Stevens  
5 here. If I may I'll take that. Mr. Semaken, the Task  
6 Force and the Fish Commission don't necessarily delve  
7 too deeply into mining issues, that would lean more  
8 over into maybe some efforts that the NCR group is  
9 working on, the Natural and Cultural Resources group.  
10 They are doing things such as permitting applications,  
11 they're commenting in that regard. You guys up there  
12 probably are dealing with the Central Yukon BLM  
13 planning effort. Those are the things that those folks  
14 are involved in. And so what I'm going to do as soon  
15 as I get off this teleconference here I'm going to  
16 shoot an email over to Bob Sattler who, I know, is very  
17 good at this kind of stuff, and will light that torch.  
18 I can't promise you everything by tomorrow but since  
19 now it's on my radar we'll take it and run and see what  
20 we can do and we will get back to you.

21  
22 MR. SEMAKEN: Oh, great, yeah. Because  
23 it's been on my mind, I worked over there years ago and  
24 those fish swim up there in October so I was just --  
25 it's been there just about, what, 30, 40 years and it's  
26 still going and no monitoring.

27  
28 Thank you.

29  
30 MR. STEVENS: Yes, Sir. And if I may,  
31 what creek was that again?

32  
33 MR. SEMAKEN: Illinois Creek. It's  
34 right off of -- it runs into the Mud River and then the  
35 Mud River goes into Innoko I think.

36  
37 MR. STEVENS: Okay, thank you very  
38 much.

39  
40 MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We need to  
43 move along now, so thanks so much TCC. We have TCC  
44 InterTribal Fish Commission on the agenda here, was  
45 that covered with the discussion on the Task Force  
46 combination to the Tribal Resource Stewardship.

47  
48 MS. WOOD: It was, yes.

49  
50

0309

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Karen.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4 I would direct that question to Brooke Wood to see if  
5 she has any additional information to share about the  
6 Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission. Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Brooke.

9

10 MS. WOOD: My presentation is  
11 completed, thank you so much for asking.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I had two  
14 points on my agenda here. So Yukon River Drainage  
15 Fisheries Association is up next, thanks so much TCC.  
16 And so is Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association on  
17 the line.

18

19 MS. FITKA: Yes, good afternoon, this  
20 is Serena Fitka, can you hear me?

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
23 fine, go right ahead.

24

25 MS. FITKA: Well, thank you, Mr.  
26 Chairman and Council members for giving us the  
27 opportunity to present to the Western Interior Regional  
28 Advisory Council. I am pleased to represent the Yukon  
29 River Drainage Fisheries Association, my name is Serena  
30 Fitka, Executive Director of the Yukon River Drainage  
31 Fisheries Association. I'd like to bring your  
32 attention to our report in the meeting booklet on Page  
33 406 and in your supplemental material.

34

35 We would like to provide you with an  
36 update on our activities and key accomplishments since  
37 we last met. We'd like to provide a correction in our  
38 report about our vacancies on our Board. We currently  
39 have three seats vacant. District Y1-Alternate 2.  
40 District 2, Alternate 1. District 2, Y2, Alternate 2.  
41 Any nominations for these seats can be submitted to  
42 myself or Catherine.

43

44 Our Board meet in April of 2021 in  
45 Fairbanks where we began our meeting with our first  
46 annual river blessing. We felt the need to incorporate  
47 our traditional values into our meeting setting. We  
48 had a moment of silence for Andrew Firmin from Fort  
49 Yukon who served on the YRDFA for the past 10 years.

50

0310

1 Andrew's family joined us and we presented Andrew's  
2 award of service to them. Andrew will be greatly be  
3 missed on our Board and we send our condolences to the  
4 family. We also presented awards to our Board members  
5 who have served on the Board for 5-plus years, 10-plus  
6 years and 15-plus years. The YRDFA Board passes six  
7 resolutions, which are highlighted in the booklet.

8  
9 We will be having the EBoard meeting  
10 October 26th and 27th in Anchorage. At this meeting we  
11 will be discussing Area M and the ACR that was  
12 submitted by Gail Vik and Virgil Umphenour requesting a  
13 test fishery in Area M to assess the genetic origins of  
14 king, chum, coho and pink through False Pass. Since  
15 their ACR did not make the work session, that is being  
16 held later this month, the issue is on the Board of  
17 Fish's radar and we are encouraging support letters to  
18 the Board of Fisheries. We did submit our support  
19 letter to the Board of Fisheries for the ACR that was  
20 submitted by Gail Vik and Virgil Umphenour. YRDFA  
21 EBoard will also begin the process of Board of Fish  
22 proposals for the Yukon River that are due in April of  
23 2022.

24  
25 Our Yukon River salmon summer preseason  
26 preparation meeting was held a bit differently due to  
27 Covid19 and the inability to gather in large masses.  
28 Prior to the meeting we held district meetings to  
29 provide more opportunity for fishers to voice their  
30 concerns and provide input to managers for the upcoming  
31 season. For the 2022 preseason meeting we are planning  
32 to host it in person in Anchorage in March. We have  
33 begun the planning process and, again, we'll be doing  
34 things a bit differently so please keep your eyes out  
35 for our announcement.

36  
37 Our Yukon River Advocacy Series in  
38 partnership with Tanana Chiefs Conferences focused on  
39 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and  
40 Board of Fisheries. It is also in your supplemental  
41 report. We held a very successful series and prepared  
42 for testimony to the Council on the 6th of October. We  
43 had between 25 to 35 participants during each session.  
44 We had Legislative Staff from Senator Sullivan's and  
45 Murkowski's offices participating along with other  
46 organization representatives from the Alaska Federation  
47 of Natives, First Alaskans Institutes and Doyon  
48 Limited. We'll be looking to apply for adequate  
49 funding to make this a year long project and  
50

0311

1 highlighting other areas of management such as Board of  
2 Fisheries, ADF&G, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
3 Alaska River -- Yukon River Panel, Pacific Salmon  
4 Commission, Yukon River Salmon Agreement and, et  
5 cetera. We received a lot of positive feedback on the  
6 series. YRDFA did submit a letter to the North Pacific  
7 Fishery Management Council requesting the following:  
8 Zero bycatch in the Bering Sea; provide a letter to the  
9 National Marine Fisheries Service supporting funding  
10 for disaster declaration, and ensure Alaska Native  
11 tribes have a meaningful voice in management.

12

13 I also gave testimony to the Council on  
14 October 6th which is available on our website and our  
15 Facebook page. I will be giving another testimony  
16 tomorrow, October 15th (indiscernible).

17

18 And update on the fisheries disaster  
19 updates for 2020 and 2021. The U.S. Department of  
20 Commerce received letters from the Governor requesting  
21 a fisheries disaster for the Yukon River for 2020 and  
22 2021 fishing season. We have now turned our focus on  
23 urging the Secretary of Commerce to approve those  
24 disasters. I received an update from Senator Sullivan  
25 and Murkowski's offices that they, too, are urging the  
26 Secretary to move forward with the disaster  
27 declarations. We have been working with the Yukon  
28 Delta Fisheries Development Association, Yukon River  
29 InterTribal Fish Commission, Alaska Association of  
30 Village Council Presidents and Tanana Chiefs Conference  
31 to develop our tasks for the U.S. Delegation. We are  
32 hoping to plan a trip with all the organizations,  
33 hopefully in January or February 02 2022. We have also  
34 discussed preparing for next year's fishing season,  
35 which does include funding to purchase quality fish for  
36 our people. I will be traveling with the Yukon Delta  
37 Fisheries Development Association next week to D.C., to  
38 initiate conversations on the Yukon River fishing  
39 issue.

40

41 The State of Alaska coordinated fish  
42 donations with Kwik'Pak Fisheries in Emmonak and Tanana  
43 Chiefs Conference in Fairbanks to distribute to their  
44 respective communities they serve throughout the  
45 summer.

46

47 In Partnership with the Yukon Salmon  
48 Subcommittee and the Yukon River InterTribal Fish  
49 Commission we jointly submitted a funding proposal in

50

0312

1 hopes to have a salmon summit in November of 2022 in  
2 Alaska.

3

4 I will now hand it over to Catherine to  
5 give the remainder of the report and stay on for any  
6 questions or comments after hers.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,  
11 Catherine.

12

13 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay, hi, good  
14 afternoon Mr. Chair and Council members. Can you hear  
15 me?

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go right ahead,  
18 loud and clear.

19

20 MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you. Thank you  
21 for the opportunity to update you on our projects. For  
22 the record, my name is Catherine Moncrieff and I am  
23 YR DFA's Staff Anthropologist. I'm going to provide an  
24 update on four of our projects and the first two are  
25 funded by the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program.

26

27 The first one is the in-season  
28 subsistence salmon survey. This project hires a local  
29 person in 10 communities along the Yukon River from  
30 Alakanuk to Eagle to survey fishers for six weeks about  
31 their observations, experiences and harvest during the  
32 chinook salmon season. The surveyors report the  
33 results weekly and also share them on the YR DFA in-  
34 season teleconferences. A post-season summary of this  
35 program was included in your supplemental materials.  
36 Some highlights from this report include that we were  
37 able to safely hold an in-person training this year for  
38 our surveyors as opposed to the virtual one required in  
39 2020. And we were also able to fully hire for all 10  
40 positions with all 10 local hires being rehired for 100  
41 percent retention. Challenges this year included  
42 surveyors reporting greater difficulty than usual  
43 surveying fishers with was understandable with our  
44 current conditions and restricted fishing. Eight of  
45 the 10 surveyors were able to conduct their final  
46 interview survey which included a series of questions  
47 aimed at summarizing the season. Through these final  
48 interviews we learned that none of the fishers in the  
49 participating communities reported meeting their needs

50

0313

1 and most reported that fishing was worse in 2021 than  
2 2020. Some fishers were very appreciative of the  
3 managers efforts to protect the salmon run and some  
4 fishers reportedly did not have the allowable gear, a  
5 four inch net, for fishing this year. Concerns  
6 included food security for people, dog food for this  
7 winter and a general concern for the fishery. Finally,  
8 an evaluation was conducted with both the surveyors and  
9 the managers which helps us see what we do well and  
10 areas we can work to improve.

11

12 The next project, local and traditional  
13 knowledge of anadromous fish in the Yukon Flats with an  
14 emphasis on the Draanjik drainage is a project that  
15 YRDFA has been partnering with the communities of  
16 Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon and Venetie and the Tanana  
17 Chiefs Conference to update the anadromous waters  
18 catalog. Now, Deborah just gave you a really great  
19 report from my partner, Brian McKenna, on this project  
20 so I'll just add to that that they have some additional  
21 coho field work planned for later this month and once  
22 completed, we will be finalizing our reports, sharing  
23 them with the communities and making nominations to the  
24 anadromous waters catalog. This project will be  
25 wrapping up early in 2022.

26

27 Some other projects that may be of  
28 interest are the local and traditional knowledge of  
29 anadromous fish in select drainages of the Tanana and  
30 Yukon Rivers 2021 to 2022. This project is funded by  
31 the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund and is a partnership  
32 between YRDFA and the Alaska Department of Fish and  
33 Game. Our role in this project is to lead the local  
34 and traditional knowledge interviews in Tanana, Manley  
35 Hot Springs and Nenana. During the lull in the  
36 pandemic this summer, I was able to safely travel to  
37 all three study communities with one of our Fish and  
38 Game partners to conduct the interviews. We learned a  
39 lot through the 20 interviews we conducted and we will  
40 be using this information in preparation for the  
41 biological on the ground field work scheduled for next  
42 summer. We appreciate the welcome we received in each  
43 community and their assistance in collecting this  
44 important information.

45

46 And, finally, our project, They Told Us  
47 There'd Come a Time, Conserving Fish, Preserving  
48 Tradition on the Yukon River, a catalog of elders  
49 warnings. This project funded by the North Pacific  
50

0314

1 Research Board also made some progress this summer.  
2 Our research team, made up of myself and some rock  
3 stars from the TCC Emerging Leaders Program met at the  
4 University of Alaska, Rasmusson Library, Alaska and  
5 Polar Regions Collections and Archives and began our  
6 work digging through the already documented interviews  
7 and recordings of Yukon River elders. We will continue  
8 this archival work through the rest of this year and  
9 into next year. In 2022 we will move to interviewing  
10 today's elders to learn more from them about their  
11 knowledge and observations of salmon.

12

13 Updates on other YRDFA projects and  
14 programs are included in your materials and we would be  
15 happy to answer any questions about our report or  
16 projects. Thank you for the opportunity to provide  
17 this report.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Catherine  
20 and Serena. Does any Council members have comments or  
21 questions from Yukon River Drainage Fisheries  
22 Association.

23

24 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

27

28 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is posed to  
29 Serena, hey, it was good to see you at our culture camp  
30 this summer. I had a question here, you know, for  
31 years and years I have heard of the Area M or whatever  
32 it is and I just couldn't believe the amount of fish  
33 that was taken as bycatch or whatever as opposed to the  
34 bycatch numbers out in the Bering Sea. So I'm just  
35 wondering, you know, if there's any kind of headway  
36 here this summer, what are we looking for next year, is  
37 there any consultation with anybody that's going to  
38 make a difference and the Area M, I believe, probably  
39 is ADF&G stuff. Is there any bright spots in meeting  
40 like in Washington, D.C., with Young or whoever, I'm  
41 just trying to find -- actually I'm interested in the  
42 Area M thing and if there was a history kind of a thing  
43 on there I'd like to be added, or maybe I could go to  
44 the YRDFA website to learn about it.

45

46 Thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, for the  
49 comments Don. Go ahead.....

50

0315

1 MS. FITKA: Yes, through the Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead.

4

5 MS. FITKA: Through the Chair, this is  
6 Serena Fitka with YRDFA. It was great to see you too,  
7 Don, in Ruby. I had a great time with all the  
8 community members there and the young kids, it was a  
9 lot of fun, thanks for having me.

10

11 In regards to Area M. This summer,  
12 Virgil is very adamant about keeping track of chum  
13 harvest and I know one of the things he highlighted as  
14 of August 20th there was a chum harvest of -- it looks  
15 like 1.6 million -- well, I want to say in the average  
16 -- 10 year average but I definitely share the  
17 information and the ACR with you, it is public. And  
18 unfortunately the Board of Fisheries did not put that  
19 in their -- they're not going to be discussing it at  
20 their work session at the end of the month, however --  
21 and the reason for that is because they see that the  
22 Board of Fish cannot obligate any funds to -- for the  
23 test fishery. So with that said, YRDFA submitted a  
24 letter of support in regards to their ACR just to show  
25 that there is support and hopefully it will come up  
26 during the Yukon/AYK cycle. We are going to bring this  
27 to the Delegation as well as part of our issues that  
28 the Yukon River is facing along with North Pacific  
29 Fisheries bycatch and other issues that the Yukon River  
30 is facing. We will definitely bring to the U.S.  
31 Delegation.

32

33 Does that answer your question, Don.

34

35 MR. HONEA: Serena, I appreciate that.  
36 Yes. That -- exactly. I mean, you know, for years and  
37 years we've been attending meetings either with TCC or  
38 YRDFA and, you know, there's so many variables in this  
39 doggone thing that for awhile there, you know, that  
40 Area M, you know, I've heard about it maybe 10, 15, 20  
41 years ago but it's been kind of quiet and then it's  
42 really shocking the number of bycatch or whatever. So  
43 I was really interested in that .

44

45 I appreciate your response. Exactly  
46 you answered my question, thank you.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
49 Any other Council questions.

50



0316

1 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
2 Kevin.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

5  
6 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
7 And thank you Serena and Catherine for your report.  
8 Looking at your report on Page 406 at the bottom of  
9 that first page you have a list of resolutions that  
10 either failed or passed. I'm curious about 2021-03,  
11 escapement goals for one full life cycle. It's just  
12 the title of the resolution but I'd like to know a  
13 little bit more about that resolution, if you don't  
14 mind, just give a brief summary or maybe you can just  
15 share it with me later with email.

16  
17 That's all. Thank you, Serena.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kevin.

20  
21 MS. FITKA: Through the Chair.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

24  
25 MS. FITKA: This is Serena Fitka again  
26 with YRDFA. We can also send all the resolutions in  
27 full detail and for your information that resolution  
28 2021-03 states: Whereas the Yukon River Drainage  
29 Fisheries Association works on behalf of subsistence  
30 and commercial fishing families within the Alaskan and  
31 Yukon River drainage who depend on wild salmon for  
32 subsistence and commercial fisheries;

33  
34 And, whereas, chinook salmon runs have  
35 been very low in recent years;

36  
37 Whereas, although there has been  
38 conservation measures we have not met escapement goals  
39 for the past two years;

40  
41 And, therefore, be it resolved, YRDFA  
42 would like to see Yukon River salmon managed that they  
43 meet escapement goals for one full life cycle.

44  
45 And copies were sent to the U.S.  
46 Delegation and to Lisa Murkowski, Dan Sullivan and  
47 Representative Don Young, Alaska Commissioner of Fish  
48 and Game, and Board of Fisheries, National Marine  
49 Fisheries Service Science Center, and that's it.

50

0317

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
2 any other questions or comments for Yukon River  
3 Drainage Fisheries Association.

4  
5 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, this is Pollock.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,  
8 Pollock.

9  
10 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I just want to make a  
11 comment for Serena and Catherine, they made a good  
12 presentation. My concern and other elder's concern  
13 here is that the bycatch in the high seas fishing -- a  
14 few years ago when we were allowed to setnet for king  
15 salmon I caught 30, I think, that summer and I said  
16 kind of funny I thought I was catching too much, more  
17 than other peoples then I learned that they threw  
18 30,000 fish back in the ocean so -- but I was concerned  
19 for other peoples. If we could get -- like this summer  
20 there was no fish, we were not allowed to fish with  
21 four inch and if we could -- if the villages up and  
22 down Yukon River, Koyukuk River could get some of the  
23 bycatch, fine, but that's not the answer. So it was a  
24 good presentation, Serena, thank you. Bye.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
27 Pollock. So we need to be moving down the agenda, we  
28 got a lot of presentations. Thanks so much, Serena and  
29 Catherine, appreciate all the work that YRDFA's doing  
30 for the Yukon River drainage. Kuskokwim InterTribal  
31 Fish Commission, and who's making the presentation on  
32 that one.

33  
34 MS. PELTOLA: This is Mary Peltola, Mr.  
35 Chairman.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mary, yes, go right  
38 ahead.

39  
40 MS. PELTOLA: All right. Thank you,  
41 Mr. Chairman. This is Mary Peltola, not to be confused  
42 with Jenny Pelkola. I live in Bethel, I'm the  
43 Executive Director of the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish  
44 Commission. We're a consortium of 33 tribes along the  
45 Kuskokwim drainage. Our river has been Federalized  
46 since 2014, so this summer we were on year eight of  
47 having our river Federalized during the chinook run.  
48 We were in our seventh year of advising the Refuge  
49 while they had management of the chinook run. This  
50

0318

1 year was very different, however, because we now have a  
2 Refuge Manager who we have a very strong working  
3 partnership, relationship with. He has as his salmon  
4 team three of his employees at the Refuge who were born  
5 and raised in the region and along the river and that  
6 made the consultations and our working relationship a  
7 lot stronger. The Refuge also put their logo on our  
8 Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. We created  
9 that a couple summers ago but it really only had our  
10 logo on it for a few years. The Refuge also put their  
11 logo on the harvest strategy that we co-developed with  
12 them.

13

14                   And this year our annual meeting was  
15 April 6th and 7th. We have 33 commissioners who  
16 comprise the governing body, the whole body of the  
17 Commission. Of those 33 we have seven units and each  
18 unit elects their own executive council member and then  
19 also elected are four in-season managers and two elder  
20 advisors. And the four in-season managers are from  
21 four different portions of our river. So the in-season  
22 managers this year, we only had one new person join the  
23 in-season team and they were James Nicori from  
24 Kwethluk, Jackie Cleveland from Quinhagak, Megan Leary  
25 from Napaimute, Avery Hoffman from Bethel and the elder  
26 advisers are Robert LeKander from Bethel and James  
27 Charles from Tuntutuliak.

28

29                   This year presented new challenges for  
30 us. Federal management extended three weeks into July  
31 and usually State resumes management of salmon usually,  
32 you know, the end of June or certainly by the beginning  
33 of July, and because of the complete lack of return of  
34 our chum salmon the Feds retained management for  
35 conservation concerns for chum salmon.

36

37                   We did -- one of -- we ran a number of  
38 index projects. One of them is the Takotna weir, and  
39 Kevin Whitworth, who is one of your Council members, is  
40 the primary investigator, one of the principal  
41 investigators for that project. And the other program  
42 that we ran, and this is a recurring program since  
43 2017, is our community based harvest monitoring  
44 program. We had nine harvest monitors from Eek,  
45 Tuntutuliak, Napkiak, Napaskiak and Kwethluk who did  
46 surveys. The nine monitors collected 540 total  
47 interviews from subsistence fishermen. This is  
48 something we're very proud of. We hope eventually to  
49 qualify for FRMP funding. I know a few years now we've  
50

0319

1 been competing for FRMP funds. I do want to note that  
2 Fish and Game did receive FRMP funding for surveys of  
3 which they collected seven -- again, single digit,  
4 seven surveys, again, the Fish Commission community  
5 based harvest monitoring program collected 540 total  
6 interviews but we did not receive FRMP funding. So I  
7 just want to make sure that that's reflected in the  
8 record and that hopefully that will change. Clearly.  
9 Clearly that needs to change. We are hoping to receive  
10 funding for the Refuge for this important project.  
11 Those in-season monitoring surveys are critical  
12 information for our in-season managers that they use  
13 during the in-season management of both king salmon and  
14 chum salmon.

15  
16 Our chum salmon return was smaller than  
17 our king salmon return which has us very concerned.

18  
19 And the Kwethluk weir did not happen  
20 this year because of high water and Covid issues. This  
21 is the second year that the Kwethluk weir has not been  
22 in operation and we are concerned about that because  
23 that is a critical index for monitoring both king  
24 salmon and chum returns, but especially king returns.

25  
26 I think I'll stop there and allow any  
27 questions -- the only other thing I wanted to mention  
28 is that Kuskokwim fishermen did send a letter of  
29 concern to the Governor's office regarding the lack of  
30 chum salmon returning and what direct impacts Area M  
31 and other commercial fishing under the State's purview  
32 may have had on our chum salmon returns. We understand  
33 that in 2021 the Bering Sea pollock fishery, their  
34 bycatch of chum salmon was 528,000 chum salmon. The  
35 letter that we received -- that Kuskokwim fishermen  
36 received back from the Commissioner of Fish and Game  
37 indicated that their information shows that 65 percent  
38 of the chums are bound for Asia, but their WASSIP  
39 funding has been non-existent for years and I think a  
40 lot of the genetic information that they're depending  
41 on is quite dated, you know, older than a decade. So  
42 we're very concerned. We know that NOAA funding for  
43 research, genetic research project went from 5 million  
44 to 500,000 and we are very concerned about that and are  
45 looking for ways to build that genetic research funding  
46 back up and different projects that we might be able to  
47 partner with on that.

48  
49 Mr. Chair, could I ask Kevin Whitworth  
50

0320

1 if he would like to add anything, as he is our  
2 biologist for the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish  
3 Commission.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Mary, go right  
6 ahead. Kevin.

7

8 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mary. This  
9 is Kevin. Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I can add just one  
10 program. Mary mentioned that the Fish Commission on  
11 the Kuskokwim has this CBHM projects, community based  
12 harvesting monitoring project, the interviewers  
13 collected 540 total interviews. That program is part  
14 of a bigger program that's run on the Kuskokwim in the  
15 lower river, data is collected from this program, from  
16 the Fish Commission and also ONC, the Bethel tribe,  
17 they do something very similar in Bethel and in close  
18 fish camps near Bethel. At the same time, after an  
19 opener is closed -- actually during the opener the U.S.  
20 Fish and Wildlife Service is flying aerial boat surveys  
21 to collect the effort information from the air, and all  
22 this information goes into a program that Fish and  
23 Wildlife Service, among other people have developed,  
24 the Fish Commission, myself, Bill Becthel, Ben Staten  
25 -- we contracted Ben Staten, you guys might remember  
26 him from years ago and then ONC Staff, the four of us,  
27 we produced harvest estimates after each opener. So  
28 in-season real-time estimates for Federal in-season  
29 managers to assess the run, which is very valuable  
30 information. This has only been fun for five years, I  
31 think, now. And the Fish Commission played a bigger  
32 part this year in helping with that and leading a lot  
33 of that effort.

34

35 That's all.

36

37 Thank you, Mary and thanks for the  
38 opportunity.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kevin. And  
41 does any Council members have questions for Mary's  
42 presentation.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's very apparent  
47 that the funding reconfiguration for Kuskokwim  
48 InterTribal Fish Commission to make those in-season  
49 harvest reporting real-time, needs to change. I'll  
50

0321

1 reiterate Mary's words, needs to change, and it's  
2 imperative that that changes, sooner than later. This  
3 is so important to the management of the Kuskokwim  
4 River salmon stocks, it's pathetic to get seven  
5 surveys. And so I fully reiterate what the Executive  
6 Director had to say there. I really appreciate all the  
7 work that the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission is  
8 doing for the Kuskokwim River salmon stocks, and trying  
9 to meet the escapement needs to recover or at least  
10 stabilize these stocks -- the Area M interception was a  
11 hot issue with the Board of Fish, they relaxed their  
12 management structure -- the Department is fully  
13 responsible for additional chum salmon harvest at Area  
14 M. They knew that they were taking a lot of fish and  
15 they knew in real-time that the Kuskokwim and Yukon  
16 River drainages were in abysmal returns. We could pay  
17 for this under-escapement for decades. You can't take  
18 these fish down to these numbers. There's not a lot of  
19 overlap like king salmon. So I'm very very satisfied  
20 with the InterTribal Fish Commission's work to work  
21 with the Refuge Manager and Federalization to achieve  
22 escapements up the drainage.

23

24 Other Council member's comments or  
25 questions.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No other Council  
30 member questions or comments for the InterTribal Fish  
31 Commission.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So thanks so much  
36 for your presentation. Do you have any final words  
37 there, Mary.

38

39 MS. PELTOLA: You know I just want to  
40 say that, you know, our annual harvest of chinook  
41 salmon on average used to be 88,500, you know, on  
42 average 30 pound chinook, this year our estimated  
43 harvest was 21,560 chinook, 22,911 sockeye and about  
44 4,060 chum -- so, you know, even just looking at those  
45 other three species the cumulative was 48,530 of 11  
46 pound, on average salmon. So I just want to make sure  
47 that it's reflected that we are not coming close to  
48 meeting our annual need for subsistence and we maintain  
49 that we have a lot of concerns. And we are working

50

0322

1 with the processes -- you know, we've been testifying  
2 as well as Brooke and Serena and others to impress upon  
3 the Council how dire the situation is on our three  
4 rivers to try and develop some kind of resource to  
5 getting -- to, you know, abating this collapse of our  
6 ecosystem.

7

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Mary.  
11 And that's basically the weight average of one-third is  
12 also reflected in the spawning escapement, the  
13 productivity of chinook salmon at one-third the weight  
14 of previous averages, is a fecundity subtraction also.  
15 So it's across the board, meaning numbers on the  
16 spawning grounds is not always exactly what we're --  
17 you know, like the international agreement up into the  
18 upper Yukon, 42,500 to 55,000 of fish that are a third  
19 the size is not -- there needs to be a reassessment of  
20 what the needs are for spawning escapement because of  
21 the size reduction. So I appreciate all of the work  
22 you're doing and also YRDFA's work in trying to work  
23 towards addressing this Area M issue also.

24

25 Appreciate it, thanks so much.

26

27 MS. PELTOLA: Quyana.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who's this?

30

31 MS. PELTOLA: Just saying thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
34 we -- during this spring there was the Kuskokwim River  
35 work group, which is a completely different entity than  
36 the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission and I felt  
37 that this Council needed to be represented and I worked  
38 with Jenny and Karen to try to get an appointment for a  
39 Kuskokwim River user.

40

41 (Teleconference interference -  
42 participants not muted)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin volunteered to  
45 be that representative to the State working group. So  
46 I can read what the State work group is really all  
47 about, which is different and slightly different  
48 managed than the Federal management. Kuskokwim River  
49 Salmon Management Work Group was formed in 1988 by the  
50

0323

1 Board of Fisheries in response to a request from  
2 stakeholders in the Kuskokwim area who sought more  
3 active role in the management of salmon fishery  
4 resources. The working group is made up of 14 member  
5 seats representing elders, subsistence fishermen,  
6 processors, commercial fishermen, sportfishermen,  
7 Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission member at large  
8 and Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory.....

9  
10 (Teleconference interference -  
11 participants not muted)

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....the Alaska  
14 Department of Fish and Game, non-agency members  
15 participating in a voluntary basis and receive no  
16 compensation. Participation in the working group  
17 process requires a great deal of time from its members  
18 and agency Staff.

19  
20 So, as Chair, I would like to entertain  
21 a motion to confirm Kevin Whitworth's appointment to  
22 the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Work Group  
23 representing the Western Interior Regional Advisory  
24 Council. So the Chair will entertain a motion to  
25 confirm Kevin Whitworth appointment to the Kuskokwim  
26 River Working Group, do I have a motion to that effect.

27  
28 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I would make  
29 that motion.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. Do we  
32 have a second.

33  
34 MR. DEMOSKI: I'll second.

35  
36 MS. PELKOLA: I'll second, this is.....

37  
38 MR. DEMOSKI: I'll second, Arnold.

39  
40 MS. PELKOLA: .....Jenny.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Seconded by  
43 Arnold. Any further discussion on Kevin representing  
44 our Council to the Kuskokwim River Salmon Work Group --  
45 State Work Group.

46  
47 (No comments)

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No further  
50



0324

1 discussion.

2

3

MR. DEMOSKI: Question.

4

5

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.

6

7

MR. HONEA: Call for the question.

8

9

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Call roll, Karen.

10

11

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12

For the motion to confirm Kevin Whitworth's appointment  
13 to the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group  
14 representing the Western Interior Council.

15

16

Let's go with Jenny Pelkola, are you  
17 back with us Jenny.

18

19

MS. PELKOLA: Yes. Can you hear me?

20

21

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, we can.

22

23

MS. DEATHERAGE: Yes, I can.

24

25

MS. PELKOLA: Okay. That's a yes vote.

26

27

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Jenny.

28

29

How about you, Goodwin, Goodwin

30

Semaken.

31

32

MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

33

34

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Goodwin.

35

36

Pollock Simon.

37

38

MR. SIMON: Yes.

39

40

MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

41

42

MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

43

44

MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Rebecca.

45

46

Don Honea.

47

48

MR. HONEA: Yes.

49

50

0325

1 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

4

5 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

8

9 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

10

11 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's eight yes  
14 confirming Mr. Whitworth's appointment to the working  
15 group. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So  
18 now we're moving into.....

19

20 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....U.S. Fish and  
23 Wildlife Service reports.

24

25 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
26 Kevin.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're going to move  
29 up the Yukon River fisheries update with Gerald  
30 Maschmann up to the top as when we made the agenda.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you on the phone  
35 Gerald to.....

36

37 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead,  
40 somebody's trying to talk.

41

42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Go ahead, Kevin.

43

44 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this  
45 is Kevin, can you hear me?

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay, go ahead.

48

49 MR. WHITWORTH: Before we go on, first

50

0326

1 of all thanks for your guys' confidence in me in  
2 representing the Western Interior RAC at the working  
3 group meetings. This past year, if you guys don't mind  
4 I would like to give a real brief working group  
5 assessment, or my summary of the summer, as far as  
6 representing this group. I'll keep it brief, if you  
7 guys don't mind.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Please do, Kevin. I  
10 would appreciate that. Go right ahead.

11  
12 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, yeah, thanks.  
13 And I would like to do this every year for you guys and  
14 in-season feel free to call me if you guys have  
15 concerns or want updates for what's going on on the  
16 Kuskokwim as far as fisheries go.

17  
18 As you all know, like Mary was talking  
19 about, the Federal -- within the Yukon Delta Refuge the  
20 Refuge was managed by the Federal Fish and Service in  
21 cooperation with the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish  
22 Commission. Above Aniak, way up river boundary the  
23 Alaska Department of Fish and Game managed the fishery  
24 above Aniak. And so we met weekly, the Kuskokwim River  
25 Salmon Management Working Group, we met weekly through  
26 the summer season June, July, some into August, through  
27 teleconferences and we, as a group, the Kuskokwim River  
28 Salmon Management Working group -- or management  
29 strategy and a harvest strategy that Mary had mentioned  
30 in her report, we got that and as a working group  
31 members we reviewed that. The goal in that management  
32 strategy within Kuskokwim for chinook salmon was  
33 110,000 escapement goal. That's the upper end of the  
34 Alaska Department of Fish and Game's escapement goal  
35 range of 65,000 to 120,000. The working group endorsed  
36 the 110, if I'm correct there, to try to reach the 110  
37 escapement goal. It got very complicated once Federal  
38 management started. A lot of people started to get  
39 confused because the Fish and Game was not taking  
40 recommendations from the working group and we asked  
41 that Fish and Game not have concurrent openers with the  
42 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service openers which confused  
43 Federal management and there was lots of discussion at  
44 every single meeting, through June, at least, there  
45 seemed that there was a resolution that would pass,  
46 basically stating that we should not have mirrored  
47 concurrent openers between the two agencies and Fish  
48 and Game created a lot of confusion on the river.  
49 There was an opener announced on June 28th that was  
50

1 basically illegal harvest opportunity, Federally-  
2 qualified subsistence users were very confused if they  
3 could even go out during that opener. There was not a  
4 Federal opener at the same time so I would think  
5 through those community based harvest monitoring  
6 program we saw maybe a quarter of the people go out  
7 during that opportunity. Lots of people expressed  
8 their concern for getting a ticket because it wasn't  
9 Federally opened, it was only State of Alaska  
10 announced. So not only was there concurrent openers  
11 happening but there was a blatant illegal harvest  
12 opportunity. And the working group had recommended not  
13 to have this. And the data at that time towards the  
14 end of June was not looking good for chum salmon and  
15 there was a conservation concern for chum so we wanted  
16 to -- the working group did not want to fish, Fish and  
17 Game decided to fish anyway. And it was not very easy  
18 meetings in the working group, a lot of, like Rebecca  
19 said up river, down river discussions because there was  
20 State and Federal waters.

21  
22                   It just -- I really do think that this  
23 issue, should be part of our annual report -- the  
24 Western Interior annual report should be in our annual  
25 report that talks about concurrent openers, violation  
26 of ANILCA by ADF&G on June 28th and I've got language I  
27 could send to you Jack for that.

28  
29                   But the good news is even with all of  
30 the restrictions in place, we have area closures, we  
31 have gear type restrictions, we have -- we're limited  
32 to the amount of people fishing within the Yukon Delta  
33 Refuge to Federally-qualified subsistence users, the  
34 users were leading the way river-wide on conservation  
35 trying to rebuild and they really did a good job of  
36 trying to conserve. Even though we had openers, we're  
37 looking at about 101,000 maybe a little more, maybe  
38 about 101 escapement so very close to the Fish  
39 Commission and Fish and Wildlife Service escapement  
40 goal target, and it's a target, it's not like we could  
41 get within -- if we got within 9,000 that's a huge  
42 success. I mean even in-season when there's so little  
43 data to work on, the in-season managers on the Federal  
44 side have so little data to work off of, they got  
45 within 9,000 of their goal, which is a huge success and  
46 the working group actually endorsed that. So they,  
47 too, were successful. So a lot of that success was  
48 Kuskokwim harvesters foregoing their own harvest to try  
49 to rebuild this stock, the chinook stock. It's not  
50

0328

1 looking good this year, 47 percent below the long-term  
2 average in 2021.

3

4

5 Chum salmon as you heard was worse this  
6 year in 2021, was worse than last year. Last year we  
7 thought it was going to be the bottom of the barrel, we  
8 thought it couldn't get worse than that, it did get  
9 worse. The Bethel test fishery, there was 96 percent  
10 decline from the 20 year average cumulative catch per  
11 unit effort, 95 percent decline at the sonar site, 97  
12 percent decline at Kogrugluk, 95 percent decline at the  
13 George River. This is all 20 year data, except for the  
14 sonar, there's only a few years data there. But very  
15 obvious the disaster, can't describe how bad the chum  
16 run was. And we are not in the clear with chinook  
17 salmon on the Kuskokwim, it's been -- it's been over a  
18 decade now with the chinook salmon being so low.

18

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I'll leave it at that. I did get into  
Federal management more than I was expecting but  
there's a lot going on there at the working group level  
and a lot of it is because there's dual management on  
the river so we do get in a lot of the Federal  
discussion there at the working group.

That's all, thank you, Mr. Chair. And  
thank you all for your confidence in me, I think you  
guys got more confidence in me than myself -- just  
kidding. Thank you very much.

(Pause)

MR. WHITWORTH: Hello, Mr. Chair, can  
you hear me.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I accidentally had  
my mic on mute. I appreciate all the work you've done.  
If you wanted to put that on our annual report, the  
issue of disparate, or conjunction ADF&G openings --  
when the Federal Subsistence Board has closed the area  
to only Federally-qualified subsistence users and  
there's disparate openings like that, that's a  
violation of the Federal Subsistence Board and ANILCA  
process. That needs to be highlighted to the Federal  
Subsistence Board and that should be placed on our  
annual report. If you have language to that effect  
that can be transmitted to Karen.

How does the Council feel about putting

0329

1 that on our annual report.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I feel that that's a  
6 worthy issue, it's a Federal Subsistence Board issue.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So do we have any  
11 concurrence on this.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

16

17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
18 What I might suggest, if Kevin wants to send me  
19 language, if he has it, we can read that at the end of  
20 the meeting when we finalize the annual report. Thank  
21 you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead. So  
24 go ahead and transmit that to Karen, we'll take that up  
25 later on in the meeting. So at this point we're at  
26 U.S. Fish and Wildlife reports. We got Gerald  
27 Maschmann was going to give us the Yukon River  
28 fisheries update. Gerald, are you there.

29

30 MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair, it's actually  
31 Holly Carroll if that's going to be okay.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, well, it says  
34 Gerald on my thing here, cheatsheet, Holly, go right  
35 ahead.

36

37 MS. CARROLL: Thanks very much. Many  
38 of you may know who I am. I became the Federal  
39 manager, I replaced Fred Bue just about a year ago as  
40 the Federal manager. I came from being the State  
41 summer season manager for the Yukon so I have had the  
42 pleasure of working with a bunch of you for awhile.  
43 But I just wanted to let you know that we also hired  
44 another new member of our team and that's Keith Harren  
45 Ivy. He comes from Bethel, and he's actually -- he  
46 worked with us to help manage the fishery this summer  
47 and to learn the ropes, but he's also going to be  
48 getting a Master's Degree through UAF in indigenizing  
49 salmon management. So we're really excited to have him  
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1 as part of our managing program.

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I had a script that I was going to address and in light of all the time we need to make up and how much agenda you've got left, I want to keep it real brief. I think most of you know how the Yukon season went and there is a full detailed summary, I believe it's on Page 422 of your booklet. I'd rather just address a lot of the comments you guys have made.

So I guess one of the main things I'd like to start out with, I believe Member Honea mentioned that government to government consultation is important. And I personally believe that we can always be doing a better job of consultation. And to that end, this season, myself, and Keith, we worked on contacting all 55 of the Yukon tribes. At the beginning of the season we sent them an outlook flier letting them know about the potential for these closures for the bulk of the season, requesting consultation. Keith also followed up by phone with every single community to make sure we had updated tribal contact and to let them know where to find fishery advisory announcements, how to call us, the Staff, who to address when you had questions and also to just remind them that government to government can be as simple as calling the Federal manager. So we do want to remind folks that we are trying to engage in that process and so if you get an email from me and you want to talk about fisheries or you want to have a formal meeting we can do that. So you'll be getting emails this fall, if you're a tribal leader, or work in the tribal government of your community, looking for consultation. We'll be trying to have post-season consultations as well as pre-season consultations. So just throwing that out there that that's super important to us.

And then additionally, obviously we're talking to fishermen all season long. We learn a lot from sitting on those YRDFA teleconferences. And this summer I was really -- I don't know if any of the TCC Staff are still on, but I really got a lot out of working with Brooke Woods and the Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission. We found their management recommendations super helpful. I know that I work closely with the State team, it's a real different situation than Kevin just described, we co-manage the State and the Federal teams work together every single

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1 day to make the decisions and review the data. That's  
2 how we've been doing it for many years on the Yukon.  
3 And -- but to have the inclusion of the Fish Commission  
4 providing their management recommendations is super  
5 valuable to us and I look forward to that kind of  
6 collaboration continuing.

7  
8 To that end, I also wanted to touch on  
9 some things that Ben Stevens had brought up. Before  
10 they did their restructuring I was working closely with  
11 their former Executive Direction Stephanie Quinn-  
12 Davidson and I submitted a letter of support to the BIA  
13 to continue collaborating on co-management with the  
14 tribes but also to work on collaborating and building  
15 sonar capacity. So we do hope to partner on a sonar  
16 feasibility study in the mid-river if we can get that  
17 going with TCC. And Gisasa was mentioned. That's a  
18 weir project that we typically run at Fish and Wildlife  
19 Service, and we requested funding for that through OSM  
20 but in part of that proposal we have suggested that we  
21 would like to phase that project over to TCC in the  
22 next two years, or excuse me two years from now. So if  
23 that is funded and we can do some cross-training, we're  
24 hoping to have TCC take over that project because of  
25 their expertise in the Koyukuk drainage.

26  
27 So as far as the runs went, you guys  
28 have heard a lot about that already. I won't belabor  
29 the point except to say that the chinook run came  
30 within forecast, we were expecting this poor chinook  
31 run, we were expecting closures. The summer chum run  
32 is what was a surprise. The chum, you know, I think  
33 it's fair to call the chum run a crash and that was  
34 unexpected and partly that's because we don't have the  
35 same three year forecasting capabilities that we do for  
36 the chinook. Because of that there was no harvestable  
37 surplus predicted on the chum runs and, indeed, the  
38 chinook run, and so we had unprecedented closures in  
39 the summer and the fall season. We have never had  
40 these types of closures on the Yukon. The only fishing  
41 opportunity we really were able to provide was with  
42 four inch gillnets for non-salmon species and other  
43 non-salmon gears. So we recognize how hard that was,  
44 what incredible hardship that was. I don't want to dive  
45 into too many numbers but I will say that on the Yukon  
46 fishermen rely on over 170,000 every single year to  
47 feed their families. We're used to having chinook  
48 restrictions on the Yukon, though harvest has  
49 fluctuated over time but that loss of that 170,000  
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1 combined chum species has been horrible and we do want  
2 to acknowledge the incredible food security issues that  
3 that's creating.

4  
5 We do expect that next years chinook  
6 run will be lower than this year and will require  
7 similar closures. We don't have forecasts yet but I  
8 think it's safe to say we can also expect poor chum  
9 runs and the reason is is our four year old return was  
10 so bad that even if the four year old are better next  
11 year, we know the five year olds won't be great. And  
12 to that end we're hoping that tribes and communities  
13 can work together to come up with other solutions and  
14 can also find ways to get those available non-salmon  
15 gear for people that want them. You know if there's  
16 net exchange programs or purchasing programs, we're  
17 encouraging people to do that stuff. It's not going to  
18 be easy.

19  
20 One thing I want to touch on and  
21 hopefully I don't touch a nerve with something you said  
22 Jack because you've got a great point about escapements  
23 of chinook on the Yukon, but one thing I do want to  
24 highlight about these chum returns is that we had a  
25 very similar two year crash that occurred in 2000 and  
26 2001. These runs we saw this year were worse than  
27 that. But one thing that is heartening is that within  
28 two to four years of those low runs we saw record  
29 returns of summer and fall chum. So my hope is that  
30 the resiliency of these species is going to come  
31 through but, of course, we've also all heard about  
32 these factors going on in the ocean and the marine  
33 environment and when fish come back smaller we don't  
34 know what affect that has on the spawning grounds. And  
35 so the fact that we failed to meet spawning escapement  
36 goals on nearly every single system for all species on  
37 the Yukon that's disheartening, but to echo some of the  
38 stuff Kevin said, you know, our fishermen made the  
39 voluntary choice not to fish. Even some fishermen who  
40 had the opportunity to put four inch gear in they did  
41 not, because they did not want to risk getting  
42 incidental catch of salmon. So I can't thank the  
43 fishermen enough for being proactive in making the  
44 sacrifices now to make sure that we got the salmon to  
45 the spawning grounds that we could, and so, you know,  
46 we're going to see that kind of work next year as well.  
47 I do hope that people can start to harvest other  
48 whitefish, pike and other species like that. People  
49 can fish under the ice. And, again, like Mr. Reakoff  
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1 said, you know, some of those other species are  
2 predators, and we used to take them in greater numbers  
3 when there were more dog teams, and I think we're  
4 hearing some of that from the elders as well, and so  
5 we're encouraging people to just look for these other  
6 creative adaptations for these low salmon runs.

7

8 I'm going to leave it there for now.

9

10 I do want to make one personal request,  
11 hopefully this is not inappropriate. But I know you  
12 guys have heard all the administrative issues with  
13 having two simultaneous RAC meetings, but for me,  
14 personally, I have Staff I can assign to a meeting and  
15 we can be in two places at once, but I learn an  
16 infinite amount of stuff from you guys and I always  
17 learn unexpected things, I don't just tune in for the  
18 fisheries stuff because I learn so much. So for  
19 instance when I can't hear your reports or the comments  
20 that you make on other proposals or other topics I miss  
21 learning from you. And one of the things I learned  
22 during the YKDelta RAC was member Alissa Rogers talked  
23 about how even though people got moose right now you  
24 can only fit one moose in the freezer but a large  
25 family is going to need multiple moose. So just  
26 because you have a large limit of moose now you can't  
27 go get all those moose. And that was really  
28 enlightening to me to know that unless we think about  
29 everything holistically, you know, we might be missing  
30 a big part of the picture. So as a manager I value  
31 hearing everything that you guys have to say from your  
32 experience and so being able to sit in each RAC Meeting  
33 is helpful, if you would consider when you schedule  
34 your meeting dates, if you guys are in charge of that,  
35 not overlapping with the YKDelta or the Eastern  
36 Interior RAC, I would be able to much better learn from  
37 each of you. But I also want to acknowledge your huge  
38 work load, your huge task at trying to stay involved in  
39 these meetings, especially through telephone and poor  
40 communications, so I want to thank you for your  
41 patience with this virtual format. And I also want to  
42 apologize for how exhausting it is. So thanks again  
43 for your service on these RACs and for guiding us in  
44 our management.

45

46 With that I'll just standby for  
47 questions.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks so much

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1 Holly. Appreciate your comments. And do we have any  
2 Council comments or questions for Holly.

3

4 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Holly, thank you, Mr.  
5 Chair. This is Don Honea. I appreciate your take on  
6 this but it's, you know, it doesn't bring me much  
7 encouragement about next year. I'm just looking --  
8 trying to be -- you know we hear about the bycatch,  
9 whether it's the Bering Sea bycatch or it's the Area M,  
10 is that -- you know, I'm trying to get something on  
11 here, I'm trying to see on the next few years -- it  
12 looks like it's a dead issue, it's a moot point, I mean  
13 do you see any light at the end of the tunnel here how  
14 we can go about trying to, you know, maybe consult  
15 somebody about the problem or bring those numbers down  
16 somehow or do we just live with it. Because right now,  
17 I mean it's pretty.....

18

19 (Teleconference interference -  
20 participants not muted)

21

22 MR. HONEA: .....a person here with a  
23 dog team -- is somebody.....

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're getting a lot  
26 of background noise, I think somebody's got an open  
27 unmuted phone, we're hearing other meetings going on.

28

29 MR. HONEA: Okay. I just wanted to say  
30 that, you know, Holly, it's a tough position to be in  
31 but, you know, it's just -- it's just -- I was just  
32 wondering if you had anything toward how we could bring  
33 those numbers to somebody -- the State or whatever.

34

35 MS. CARROLL: Don. Through the Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Me.

40

41 MS. CARROLL: I can address that.

42

43 (Teleconference interference -  
44 participants not muted)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got an open mic  
47 there, is that you Ken Chase, you got an open mic.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Also, this is Karen,

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1 through the Chair, I think Don needs to mute as well.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead

4 Holly.

5

6 MS. CARROLL: Yep, thanks for that.

7 Mr. Chair. So I think a couple things, and hopefully

8 I'm not -- I'm speaking as a biologist now, not

9 necessarily on behalf of Fish and Wildlife Service.

10 But what I would say is that from what I've heard at

11 this meeting, what I've heard in the last few weeks,

12 the reports from YRDFA, the reports from TCC is

13 something is happening right now. I don't think it's a

14 moot point, and I think you've got incredible groups

15 banding together and advocating to address those

16 issues. So you've heard reports about how they're

17 advocating for better genetic studies in the Area M. I

18 think there's a lot of Staff internally that has asked

19 why don't we rerun the genetics in Area M, we don't

20 know if those fish are headed for the Yukon or the

21 Kuskokwim, but if we could get those samples we might

22 know and then we could act on that. So you do have

23 people advocating for that research. And that's

24 through the State process in getting that sampling

25 going. For the bycatch in the Pollock fleet issue, you

26 know, Brooke and Ben Stevens and many others gave very

27 powerful testimony at the Council. I think engaging in

28 that Council process, you know, about lowering bycatch

29 limits, that is exactly what needs to happen if that's

30 what you guys see as the solution, and that is

31 happening. I'm seeing that happening. I'm seeing more

32 advocacy on this issue than I have seen in years. And

33 that advocacy has actually been happening for almost

34 two decades now. I remember learning about the bycatch

35 issue from YRDFA when I was just a biologist running a

36 sonar project, I didn't know about the problem and it

37 was YRDFA that educated me on it and it was YRDFA that

38 got the first caps in place, or at least helped to work

39 on that. Your Yukon and Kuskokwim fishermen already

40 worked and advocated to get some caps in place, and so

41 if you want more work to happen there I think you're

42 doing that work. I think it's happening now and you

43 have great organizations working to that end.

44

45 So as far as me, as the Federal

46 manager, as the State in-river manager, there's nothing

47 we can do to address that, but I want to commend the

48 people that are working very diligently to address it.

49

50

0336

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks for  
2 that comment Holly.

3  
4                   (Teleconference interference -  
5 participants not muted)

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And my final comment  
8 on your presentation is I would encourage you to look  
9 at the 2000 and 2001 collapse chum salmon size  
10 fecundity compared to the escapement that we have  
11 currently for size and fecundity so that you can get  
12 back to us later on that one.

13  
14                   So I need to move down on this  
15 agenda.....

16  
17                   MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
18 Kevin.

19  
20                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Kevin, we got  
21 to get going here, go ahead.

22  
23                   MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, I'll be real  
24 quick. If I could ask Holly a question.

25  
26                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go right  
27 ahead.

28  
29                   MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
30 Thank you, Holly for your update here on the Yukon  
31 River for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I did  
32 hear something that was kind of a red flag for me when  
33 you were talking about chum salmon, you were basically  
34 managing on hope, hoping that they come back here in  
35 the next three or four years like they did in the past.  
36 I'm hesitant to manage -- I'm not a manager, but if I  
37 was I wouldn't want to manage on hope. I just want to  
38 point that out. That's something on the Kuskokwim that  
39 we are trying to do, is not manage on hope, what could  
40 potentially -- like they could come back -- so with  
41 that being said I do think that Fish and Wildlife has a  
42 very unique position to do a lot more than what you've  
43 described, you're putting the onus on the users to  
44 testify at the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
45 Council, testify at other boards, testify against Area  
46 M bycatch fisheries. The Fish and Wildlife Service has  
47 a seat at the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
48 Council and I'm just curious what they have done in  
49 that position -- I read the report to the Council from  
50

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1 the Fish and Wildlife Service, I'm curious what, Fish  
2 and Wildlife, at the Council level, is doing for us in-  
3 river for these stocks in Western Alaska for chinook  
4 and chum. Because I do think you guys have a powerful  
5 position, you are at the table, on the Council, and you  
6 should be able to pressure -- if you guys believed  
7 there was a chinook and chum crises, I think you guys  
8 would be doing some advocacy on our part as well. If  
9 you can help me with that, thanks.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good comment, Kevin.  
12 And I do think that Holly can speak to the Regional  
13 Director about that issue and the Fish and Wildlife  
14 seat on the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, but I  
15 do need to move down this agenda. We're just after  
16 3:30 here. Thanks so much Holly, appreciate all the  
17 work you're doing, you've always been a great manager.

18

19 So we're going to -- so where are we at  
20 here Karen, you need to give me some direction.

21

22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
23 no problem at all. Where we are next is in line with  
24 the conversations that are being had right now. The  
25 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council wanted  
26 to initiate a sign-in letter with other affected  
27 Councils regarding bycatch, and the impacts of bycatch  
28 on in-river fishing, particularly this past season.  
29 And so that letter has not yet been drafted but the  
30 Council would like for the Western Interior to sign on  
31 to a letter that not only requests that the bycatch  
32 issue be reduced -- or bycatch be reduced for both chum  
33 and chinook salmon, but also the letter will request  
34 that the issue be elevated to the -- or sent to the  
35 Federal Subsistence Board to be elevated to the  
36 Secretary of Interior office.

37

38 And so this is something that the YK  
39 Delta would like to ask the Western Interior to move to  
40 sign on to a letter, to the North Pacific Fisheries  
41 Management Council regarding bycatch and also to have  
42 that letter elevated by the Board to the Secretary of  
43 the Interior.

44

45 The Council can go ahead and move to  
46 adopt that, sign on, and then make selections of who  
47 would be the individuals, likely the Chair and perhaps  
48 Kevin Whitworth or Tim Gervais, and/or Tim Gervais  
49 could be reviewers of the letter on behalf of the  
50

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1 Council so that it could be submitted in a timely way.

2

3 So thank you, Mr. Chair, if there are  
4 any questions about that I'd be happy to try to answer  
5 them, otherwise you can call for a motion if you  
6 believe this is something that the Council should be  
7 signing on to. Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: One question, are  
10 they asking EIRAC for that sign on also?

11

12 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
13 They are indeed asking the Eastern Interior Council as  
14 well. Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The Chair will  
17 entertain a motion to adjoin or sign on to the letter  
18 with the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory  
19 Council to appoint Kevin Whitworth to work with  
20 Karen.....

21

22 (Teleconference interference -  
23 participants not muted)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and myself to  
26 draft -- work with the draftees of those executors of  
27 those different Councils, if EIRAC adjoins, the Chair  
28 will entertain a motion to that effect.

29

30 MR. HONEA: I would make that a motion.

31

32 MR. SIMON: So moved, this is Pollock.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I got Pollock is  
35 moving, and, Don, you want to be a second on that?

36

37 MR. HONEA: Second, yes.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any discussion on  
40 that letter to adjoin.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MS. PELKOLA: I call for the question.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Call for question by  
47 Jenny. Those in -- go ahead, call the roll Karen.

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, very much,

50

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1 Mr. Chair. For the motion to sign on to the Yukon  
2 Kuskokwim Delta letter to the North Pacific Fisheries  
3 Management Council and elevated to the Secretary of the  
4 Interior, and ask Kevin Whitworth to work with the  
5 draftees.

6  
7 Don Honea.

8  
9 MR. HONEA: Yes.

10  
11 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock Simon.

12  
13 MR. SIMON: Yes.

14  
15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.

16  
17 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

18  
19 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

20  
21 (No comments)

22  
23 MS. DEATHERAGE: Is Goodwin on the  
24 phone with us still?

25  
26 (No comments)

27  
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

29  
30 MS. WILMARTH: Yes.

31  
32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

33  
34 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

35  
36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

37  
38 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

39  
40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

43  
44 MS. DEATHERAGE: That's.....

45  
46 MR. SEMAKEN: This is Goodwin Semaken I  
47 vote yes.

48  
49 MS. DEATHERAGE: .....seven votes in  
50



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1 favor, thank you, Mr. Chair. Motion passes.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so where  
4 are we at now, Karen.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
7 We're going to be moving into Refuges. However, I can  
8 -- let me send a text to Kenton Moos is willing to  
9 address the issue of predation control in Units 18 and  
10 17 for the Board of Game proposal. And so if Kenton's  
11 on the phone he can address that so the Council can  
12 decide whether or not they would like to proceed with  
13 submitting comments to the Board of Game on that  
14 proposal.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we tabled that  
17 one. Is Kenton there to clarify that issue.

18

19 MR. MOOS: Yes, I am, Jack -- or Mr.  
20 Chairman.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead,  
23 Kenton. You want to clarify that for us.

24

25 MR. MOOS: Sure. Just very, very  
26 brief, I know this is a time crunch. So a little bit  
27 of history, the Commissioner of Fish and Game sent the  
28 Secretary of Interior a letter basically requesting  
29 that we assist with predator control for the recovery  
30 of the Mulchatna Caribou Herd. The Secretary of  
31 Interior, through the Director of the Fish and Wildlife  
32 Service responded and said we will work with them,  
33 however, there are steps that we have to take,  
34 including going through the NEPA process and so forth.  
35 So since that time we've been in conversations with the  
36 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We've requested  
37 that they provide a plan and because the request is  
38 very ambiguous and it's basically predator control with  
39 Units Federal lands within Unit 17 and 18, which is an  
40 enormous land base and so forth, so they have not  
41 provided us any details or any plan that specifies  
42 exactly where they're talking about and so forth so the  
43 proposal that's going before the Board of Game, we are  
44 opposing, because there's a lack of specificity or a  
45 plan. And to go along with anything that is that broad  
46 we just cannot do.

47

48 Any questions.

49

50

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1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So does that  
2 answer your questions, Kevin.

3  
4                   MR. WHITWORTH: Yes, that does, thank  
5 you, Mr. Chair.

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we tabled that  
8 proposal, we can maintain that as a tabled proposal, we  
9 don't actually have to adopt it or do anything to it.  
10 I would just rather let it lay there and let the  
11 details work out, it might pop up at a later date with  
12 a different number but we'll table that proposal, is  
13 that okay with the Council.

14  
15                   MS. PELKOLA: Okay with me, this is  
16 Jenny.

17  
18                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, you can  
19 maintain the tabling until a different date, thank you.

20  
21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So if that's  
22 agreeable to the Council give me an affirmative.

23  
24                   IN UNISON: Yes. Yea.

25  
26                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So now we're  
27 going to move -- thanks so much for clarifying that  
28 Kenton. So Koyukuk.....

29  
30                   MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, Pollock.

31  
32                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, go ahead.

33  
34                   MR. SIMON: Yes, I don't want to  
35 interrupt but I just got the meeting packet, and I want  
36 to thank Karen for her efforts to get it to me so I  
37 have the meeting packet now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38  
39                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you say you're  
40 not going to continue with the meeting?

41  
42                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, I think  
43 he.....

44  
45                   MR. SIMON: No. At this time I  
46 received the meeting packet right now.

47  
48                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you got it.

49  
50

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1 MR. SIMON: And I was saying thank you  
2 to Karen for getting it to me.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate  
5 that comment, Pollock. And Karen and Erin Julianus  
6 printed that out, BLM sent that up, so recognize and  
7 appreciate that effort.

8  
9 So we're going to move on now to the  
10 Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko National Wildlife Refuge, you  
11 there Bob or Jeremy.

12  
13 MR. HAVENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
14 Council members. I guess I just want to ask can  
15 everybody hear me okay?

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can hear you good.

18  
19 MR. HAVENER: Excellent. Thank you for  
20 giving us the time here today, I know we're kind of  
21 crunching on the agenda. And I'm just going to keep my  
22 few updates brief and I want to leave some time for  
23 some potential concerns on a transporter on the Refuge.  
24 And I think I should have Bob on here with me, Bob, are  
25 you here.

26  
27 MR. REBARCHIK: I am, Jeremy. And,  
28 yeah, that's how we want to do it, thanks.

29  
30 MR. HAVENER: Excellent. So I guess  
31 just starting off here, the first thing is we're trying  
32 to do as much field work as we can but we do have some  
33 restrictions kind of coming into place with Covid so  
34 right now we're not sure what we're going to be able to  
35 accomplish coming up here through the winter, that's to  
36 be determined right now. But we're trying to do what  
37 we can with the circumstances.

38  
39 Some Staff updates for our Refuge, and  
40 I think they called in yesterday, I'm not sure if  
41 they're still on here but we do have two new law  
42 enforcement positions, one of them is Rob Hershback and  
43 he's a patrol officer in Fairbanks, kind of a  
44 supervisory position, and we've also got a new law  
45 enforcement officer for Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko and that  
46 is Jared Long, he's been on for over a year now but he  
47 has been completing his training and had that finished  
48 up and actually came out here for this moose season.  
49 He spent probably 10 days with me at the Nowitna  
50

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1 checkstation so he was out checking out the area and  
2 looking for any kind of violations and all that stuff.  
3 So excited to have those guys on.

4

5

6 Also we have we a new WRS, which is a  
7 Wildlife Resource Specialist, kind of an assistant  
8 manager position that we've hired, and that selection  
9 is Lucas (Indiscernible) and he's going to be coming up  
10 from, I believe, Minnesota, so we expect him here in  
11 the next month or so filling in as our assistant  
12 manager.

12

13

14 I guess this leads me to my next point,  
15 this one is kind of an important one for me, and it's  
16 the Refuge Information Technician position that we're  
17 trying to hire here for the Galena area, or for the  
18 Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko Refuges. We had an announcement  
19 out, oh, over the summer and it was open for about  
20 three weeks, and unfortunately we didn't get very many  
21 applicants and so with that we decided to postpone  
22 hiring and we want to take the time and advertise this  
23 position as much as we can through the winter. And I  
24 was going to ask the Council for some help on that, if  
25 anybody knows anyone, you know, who's kind of a local  
26 resident, and has good knowledge of the resources,  
27 subsistence practices, culture, and would potentially  
28 be interested in working for Fish and Wildlife Service,  
29 if you could please pass that word on that we're going  
30 to be hiring a Refuge Information Technician position,  
31 which -- for those of you don't know, the Refuge  
32 Information Technician position is a liaison position  
33 kind of between Fish and Wildlife Service and tribal  
34 entities that we work closely with. And so I just  
35 wanted to get that out there and feel really strongly  
36 about that and hopefully we can get some good  
37 applicants.

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Jumping into a few subsistence hunts  
that have taken place since I last spoke with you. A  
hunt down in Game Management Unit 21E, we have a  
Federal hunt FM2104, and then also FM2105. And I guess  
some news updates on that. This is the first year that  
we held that hunt in conjunction with a State hunt that  
took place in that same game management unit at the  
exact same time. So what we kind of did up front,  
working with our RIT, Ken Chase, down there in the GASH  
communities, we got the word out to folks that  
essentially we were recommending them to get the State  
registration permit for that hunt and what that allowed

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1 them to do is to hunt on all lands in that game  
2 management unit instead of being restricted to Federal  
3 lands only and having to travel further from villages  
4 and no boundaries and, et cetera. So we did not issue  
5 out any Federal permits this year for that winter hunt.  
6 I got a hold of the area biologist out of McGrath,  
7 Joshua Pearce, and it looks like they issued out 11  
8 permits last year for that hunt and there were four  
9 bulls and two cows taken, which is pretty close to what  
10 we see on average for the Federal hunt. So I just  
11 wanted to update the Council on that.

12

13 And then finally on the Nowitna  
14 checkstation. We operate a moose hunter checkstation  
15 on the mouth of the Nowitna River within the Nowitna  
16 National Wildlife Refuge and we set that up on  
17 September 2nd and this year we ran it until September  
18 28th. And while we're there, you know, big things  
19 we're looking for is to educate folks on the  
20 regulations within the Nowitna River on the Nowitna  
21 Wildlife Refuge, we're issuing permits out, and we're  
22 looking at, you know, when folks are checking out, make  
23 sure they got all the meat, making sure they've taken  
24 good care of it and then, you know, also just following  
25 all the other regulations that are required in that  
26 area. And this year we had 95 hunters check in and a  
27 total of 29 moose harvested for the State season that  
28 goes from September 5th to September 25th. And then we  
29 also have a Federal subsistence hunt that takes place  
30 right after the State season there and that goes from  
31 September 26th to October 1, and this year we issued 15  
32 permits and had four bull moose harvested. And the 15  
33 permits is actually the most permits we've issued since  
34 that hunt began in 2007.

35

36 So with that that's my update and maybe  
37 I'll leave it there for questions.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
40 Jeremy. And most of those people were from Ruby and  
41 Tanana on the Federal hunt.

42

43 MR. HAVENER: Yep, absolutely. The  
44 majority was from Tanana and we did have, you know,  
45 four or five people from Ruby come hunt this year.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.  
48 So thanks for that update, any questions for Jeremy on  
49 Koyukuk/Nowitna.

50

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1 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead, Don.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don. I had a  
6 question for Jeremy. You know when you guys do your  
7 grid system or something, for the population, maybe in  
8 November or whatever, the population estimate, now is  
9 that a form of a counting system for the State to  
10 actually do or do you guys do that. I mean the  
11 population estimate. I think -- I guess the number's  
12 always been about 30 but I was just -- I'm just kind of  
13 concerned about some of the people that have gone up to  
14 Nowitna, up to the Novi, were not successful, and I  
15 know there's a lot of wolf packs in the area, about 20,  
16 30 miles up there. So I was just wondering the  
17 population estimate, is that something -- I was  
18 wondering if Mr. Stout was on, if Glenn was going to be  
19 on, but I guess I'll just pose that question to you  
20 Jeremy. Thank you.

21

22 MR. HAVENER: Mr. Honea, through the  
23 Chair. Yeah, I appreciate that question, Don, and, you  
24 know, we've got a good group of biologists here at our  
25 Refuge, unfortunately they're not on the call right now  
26 and they would be a lot better than me on giving  
27 specific details but I do understand, you know, a  
28 population estimate is a much more thorough survey,  
29 trying to get an actual count on an area, a population  
30 estimate. And, yeah, we definitely work through the  
31 State of Alaska on that with Glenn Stout, and just off  
32 the top of my head I want to say the last time a count  
33 estimate was done in the Nowitna was maybe around 2010  
34 but I could be wrong on that and I'd want to check with  
35 our biologists first.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Jeremy.

38

39 MR. HONEA: Jeremy, I actually  
40 appreciate that. Just one final comment there, Mr.  
41 Chair, I appreciate that. So is that something like  
42 maybe the Ruby Fish and Game Advisory Committee could  
43 pose to Glenn? Thank you.

44

45 MR. HAVENER: Mr. Honea, through the  
46 Chair. Yeah, absolutely, you know, I think if folks  
47 have enough concerns about the population and I've  
48 heard quite a few people already this year talking  
49 about the Nowitna moose numbers and, you know, in our  
50

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1 trend count surveys that we're doing we have kind of  
2 noticed a little bit of a dip as well. I think it  
3 would be appropriate to ask about that, absolutely.  
4 And, you know, hearing what I've heard today I'll talk  
5 to Brad Scotten, our supervisory wildlife biologist,  
6 and relay this information.

7

8 MR. HONEA: Okay, thank you. And thank  
9 you, Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks so  
12 much. And then there was an enforcement issue you  
13 referred to, so Jeremy.....

14

15 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair,  
16 this is Karen Deatherage. I'm just going to ask  
17 if.....

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Karen.

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: .....Bob Rebarchik is  
22 on the phone.

23

24 MR. REBARCHIK: Yes, Karen -- Mr.  
25 Chair, this is Bob Rebarchik, the Refuge Manager. Yes,  
26 and I guess I don't want to belittle or minimize the  
27 issue but I don't have all the information I need to be  
28 able to answer questions. What we have is a  
29 transporter that was issued a special use permit back  
30 in December of last year. And subsequently was  
31 transporting on the northern unit of the Innoko Refuge  
32 fall hunting season. Had a call from Goodwin Semaken,  
33 back, I believe on the 7th of September, and I  
34 attempted to contact that transporter by phone, both  
35 cell phone and landline and got a message that his  
36 mailbox was full and could not accept messages at this  
37 time on both lines. I subsequently emailed them and his  
38 secretary responded to me indicated that he was in the  
39 field and that he would get back with me when hunting  
40 season was over. I did call them again yesterday and I  
41 still have not been able to get any kind of response  
42 from this transporter. And so I don't have all the  
43 information that I need to effectively give information  
44 to you and to respond to the issue. My recommendation  
45 is that we address this and I would gladly address it  
46 with any of the Council members and anybody else that  
47 might be interested when I have more information, after  
48 I've been able to speak with the transporter directly.

49

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1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So you'll be  
2 prepared to provide that information.....

3  
4                   MR. SEMAKEN: Mr. Chair, this is  
5 Goodwin.

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....at our next  
8 meeting -- Goodwin, you have a comment.

9  
10                  MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah. Yeah, I think --  
11 having a meeting on this, was you going to include  
12 Doyon on this, because those are non-navigable waters  
13 that they're traveling and it's Doyon selection, I  
14 think, if I'm correct, getting into the Refuge, from  
15 Twentytwo Mile Slough.

16  
17                  MR. REBARCHIK: Yes, their access to  
18 the Refuge would be on navigable waters and those are  
19 actually controlled by the State.

20  
21                  MR. SEMAKEN: Yeah, but on the river --  
22 outside the river, Doyon owns those selections I think.  
23 I just thought non-navigable waters -- and they're non-  
24 navigable waters according to the map so how does Doyon  
25 address that, they're trespassing on Doyon lands  
26 because I think they're non-navigable waters?

27  
28                  MR. REBARCHIK: And this is part of why  
29 I think it'd be more appropriate if we can go through  
30 the discussions at another time. Time is limited here  
31 with a lot of other folks prepared to give testimony  
32 and.....

33  
34                  MR. SEMAKEN: Okay. Okay.

35  
36                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So maybe at our next  
37 meeting you can get all the ducks in a row with law  
38 enforcement, work all this out with the transporter and  
39 have a more thorough update at our next meeting?

40  
41                  MR. REBARCHIK: Most certainly. My hope  
42 is I can get this addressed in the next couple weeks  
43 but again I tried to contact that transporter yesterday  
44 and I'm still receiving the same messages and no return  
45 call so I'm disappointed.

46  
47                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we would  
48 expect some kind of a more thorough report at our next  
49 meeting.

50



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1 MR. REBARCHIK: Most certainly.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So thank you there,  
5 Bob. So that completes Koyukuk/Nowitna and so then  
6 we're going to go to Yukon Delta National Wildlife  
7 Refuge. Is that you Aaron Moses, or who's doing that  
8 one.

8

9 MR. MOSES: Mr. Chair, it's me, Aaron,  
10 I'll be doing the Refuge update.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go right  
13 ahead.

14

15 MR. MOSES: All right. My name is  
16 Aaron Moses, I'm the Subsistence Coordinator for Yukon  
17 Delta and I will be doing the Refuge update on behalf  
18 of Boyd Bilhovde, our Refuge Manager.

19

20 The Fish Commission -- and we heard a  
21 little bit about the fishing effort on the Kuskokwim,  
22 and just to add a little bit more, within the Refuge  
23 waters, we were able to fish for about a total of 144  
24 hours with setnet and 81 hours with driftnets during  
25 June and July. So we had really low chum -- lowest  
26 recorded chum run in our history but with all the  
27 sockeye that were able to come in, we were lucky that  
28 we were able to fish because of all of the sockeye that  
29 were in the Kuskokwim River.

30

31 For waterfowl. We were able to have  
32 our waterfowl crew go out for the summer. They were  
33 out at Kigak Island, they were doing the emperor goose  
34 nest ecology and survival and they were able to find  
35 280 goose nests and out of those 280, 247 of the nests  
36 had at least one egg hatched, so even with this wet  
37 weather we had -- it was pretty successful. They also  
38 did Black brant and cackler goose banding, they were  
39 able to band 1800 Black brant and also 770 cackling  
40 geese. Management issues for waterfowl, the population  
41 index for Emperor geese is only roughly a thousand  
42 above their closure threshold of about 23,000 so there  
43 is a 50/50 percent chance that the hunting season for  
44 emperors will be closed in 2023. The cackling goose  
45 population is below its population objectives. So down  
46 states, Washington and Oregon state are reducing their  
47 harvest opportunities from four per day to three per  
48 day so that population could get back up to its  
49 objectives.

50

0349

1                                 Staff updates.  Spencer Rearden who was  
2 our Deputy -- Assistant Refuge Manager is now our  
3 Supervisory Biologist.  Todd (Indiscernible) comes from  
4 the regional office and he's our new Park Ranger.  
5 Julie DeBois (ph) is our budget technician.  I have  
6 officially become the Refuge Coordinator.  I've been  
7 filling in for the last few years.  We got a new  
8 Wildlife Refuge Specialist coming in November.  And  
9 also we hired a new RIT, he lives in Napakiak, Emmit  
10 Nicori, but his family comes from Kwethluk, and so we  
11 are also looking for more representation of RITs  
12 especially on the Yukon.  So if you guys know anybody  
13 from the lowest -- lower Yukon that wants to be an RIT  
14 please send them our way.  And then in the summertime  
15 we had eight interns and two Youth Conservation Corps  
16 students work for the Refuge.  And we also had a  
17 seasonal Park Ranger that came for the summer.

18  
19                                 With that, I'll make it short and  
20 sweet.  If you guys have any questions.

21  
22                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:  Okay, thanks, Aaron.  
23 Congratulations on your upgrade.  Any questions for  
24 Aaron.

25  
26                                 (No comments)

27  
28                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:  Don't hear any from  
29 the Council.  Thanks so much Aaron, always appreciate  
30 knowing what's going on at YK Delta Wildlife Refuge.

31  
32                                 Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge, who's  
33 doing this one.

34  
35                                 MR. HARWOOD:  Good afternoon, this is  
36 Chris Harwood.  Can you hear me Jack.

37  
38                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:  I can hear you  
39 great, Chris, go right ahead.

40  
41                                 MR. HARWOOD:  Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
42 other Council members.  I'm Chris Harwood and I'm the  
43 Biologist for Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge and I'll  
44 be giving a biological report.  I'll be referring to  
45 surveys listed in Kanuti's report which starts on Page  
46 414 of your booklet.

47  
48                                 The first project is the Interior-wide  
49 lynx movement study.  Of the original 20 collars that  
50

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1 we deployed near Bettles over 2019 and 2020 only two of  
2 those collars are still active. These are the lynx  
3 that are shown in red and blue in Kanuti's report on  
4 Page 416. The lynx that moved to the Central Brooks  
5 Range remained there, while the lynx in the Northern  
6 Yukon Territory is still there but made a recent long  
7 trip back to Alaska just west of the Alaska/Canada  
8 border near Circle before returning to the northeastern  
9 Yukon Territory.

10

11 We were able to complete two summary  
12 aerial surveys for waterfowl. In June we, again, did  
13 our annual survey for breeding pairs of scaup and  
14 scotters, or black ducks as some local folks refer to  
15 them. Results suggested about a 1000 scaup in the  
16 study area which is on the low side compared to recent  
17 year estimates but is well within the range observed  
18 over the seven year history of the survey. The crew  
19 detected no surf scotters for the first time but did  
20 see a few white-wing scotters, which we don't always  
21 see.

22

23 Also in June we did a recon of a  
24 drained lake along the Kanuti River near the Johnson B  
25 Moses administrative cabin at Kanuti Lake. This  
26 originally large deep lake across the river from our  
27 cabin suddenly lost water last fall and had been used  
28 quite a bit by float planes to both drop off and pickup  
29 moose hunters. When we checked the lake this June it  
30 was too shallow to use for float plane, as two beaver  
31 dams had breached last fall which was what caused the  
32 water to spill out into the Kanuti River. We don't  
33 know yet if any planes tried to use the lake during the  
34 fall this year, during the moose hunting season,  
35 although we did hear that an early freeze-up required a  
36 helicopter evacuation for one set of moose hunters.

37

38 In July we did the annual molting goose  
39 survey. The crew concentrated in the Kanuti River area  
40 which is where most of our white-fronts molt. They  
41 observed about 250 white-fronts, all adults, that's  
42 similar to previous years as annually we see a few  
43 hundred white-fronts there.

44

45 And in October of 2020, not this year,  
46 but last year, we did an aerial survey for beaver  
47 caches or food piles. We use this beaver cache survey  
48 as a way to monitor beaver on the Refuge. The crew saw  
49 about 15, that's 1,500 caches which was about 30

50

0351

1 percent, that's 3-0 -- 30 percent more than what we saw  
2 last when we did the survey in 2010. And we try to do  
3 that survey every five years as survey conditions  
4 allow.

5

6 And finally ADF&G is currently planning  
7 to do a moose population estimate survey this fall on  
8 the near Kanuti Refuge and they hope to start as soon  
9 as snow conditions permit.

10

11 And with that I'll take any questions  
12 if you have any.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Chris.  
15 Any questions for Kanuti from the presentation.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's virtually no  
20 young greater white-front geese in the survey, they're  
21 just not having babies or there's too much predation or  
22 what's.....

23

24 MR. HARWOOD: Mr. Chair, we did observe  
25 young -- we did observe goslings on the Kanuti River  
26 proper, however, this was about a week or two before  
27 the aerial transect survey so the transect survey does  
28 not cover all available habitat and is not the best for  
29 those -- for families that are in the Kanuti River  
30 itself. It's hard to see them as they tuck into the  
31 bank. So we know that there was some production it  
32 just wasn't reflected in those large numbers that tend  
33 to molt out at the mud lakes, which is the area where  
34 we receive 95 percent of our molting birds.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Copy that.  
37 any other questions for Kanuti.

38

39 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, Pollock.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Pollock.

42

43 MR. SIMON: Yeah, my question is when  
44 was the last moose count, was it declining or going  
45 steady or what.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Chris.

48

49 MR. HARWOOD: Yeah, through the Chair,

50

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1 Mr. Simon. The last survey was in 2017 and I don't  
2 have the report up but I can get you that in one minute  
3 if you can stand by.

4  
5 MR. SIMON: Okay.

6  
7 MR. HARWOOD: I can get you the  
8 estimate at that time.

9  
10 (Pause)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've had 2018.  
13 2019, we had really deep snow, then rain on snow at the  
14 end of the winter in March, moose, south slope,  
15 including Kanuti went through six weeks of ice crush on  
16 top of the snow that was really hard on the moose  
17 population and dall sheep population. In 19/20 was  
18 almost a carbon copy with not as much snow at four  
19 feet, in some areas with mortalities, again mortalities  
20 and glazed snow. So 2017 data's pretty old for what's  
21 been occurring since that last survey.

22  
23 MR. HARWOOD: That's correct, Mr.  
24 Chair. I have that estimate.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

27  
28 MR. HARWOOD: Through the Chair to Mr.  
29 Pollock Simon. So the estimate in 2017 was 1,310 moose  
30 in the Kanuti area which was the highest over the  
31 period of which we had been doing this geospatial  
32 estimator survey type, which -- so that's over a period  
33 of about 10 years from 2007 to 2017. So it was, I  
34 guess you could say it was stable if not increasing a  
35 bit at that point. But as the Chair mentioned there  
36 have been a few rough winters between now, currently  
37 and 2017.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you've tracked  
40 those snow depths and rain on snow events in 2018, 2019  
41 and 2020 winters, have you documented those icing  
42 events on the Refuge.

43  
44 MR. HARWOOD: Mr. Chair. No, we would  
45 not have documented necessarily the icing events. We  
46 monitor snow -- or we attempt to monitor snow monthly.  
47 So between January -- or I'm sorry, between December,  
48 February, March, April and May we do a monthly survey  
49 at the beginning of the month in which they measure  
50

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1 snow depth but that does not capture rain on snow  
2 events.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would encourage  
5 the Refuge to look at the weather data for Bettles,  
6 which showed that we had a significant rain event  
7 around the middle of March, 18th, 19th of March,  
8 something like that. At Wiseman, I had .89 of an inch  
9 of rain but then froze into a crust that I could walk  
10 on for six weeks and the moose were breaking that  
11 crust, it was sad. There was blood, there was hair all  
12 over the place. The Refuge needs to take into account  
13 those kind of conditions. Deep snow is one thing, but  
14 crusted and firm that's resistant to moose movement is  
15 extremely detrimental and the wolves are on top of that  
16 snow.

17

18 Did you have a wolf survey was another  
19 question I had. Have you done any track -- you used to  
20 do those track inventories.

21

22 MR. HARWOOD: Mr. Chair. ADF&G has  
23 been doing wolf surveys and we -- I have -- I can look  
24 up those data, if you don't mind as well.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, if you don't  
27 -- that's okay. It's just a given that wolf numbers  
28 will increase with deep snow so that's okay.

29

30 MR. HARWOOD: Okay.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So thanks so much.  
33 I need to move down this agenda.

34

35 MR. HARWOOD: And one question for you,  
36 Jack, you said March 18, 19, 20, that was in 2020, the  
37 year, is that correct?

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We had rain on snow  
40 in October of 2018. I tabulated 146 inches of snow  
41 here at Wiseman. Then in mid-March we had another  
42 warming event and rain on snow, icing the mountains and  
43 the valleys with this crust that I could walk on and  
44 the moose were breaking crust. There was virtually no  
45 habitat in the mountains for those mountain birds. So  
46 in the spring of April of '19 the birds were on the  
47 valley floor, the moose were floundering in deep snow  
48 and there was a significant mortality on lighter moose  
49 in the population. 19/20, again rain on snow in  
50

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1 October, rain on snow in mid-April of '20. Down in  
2 Coldfoot, in the southern mountains there was around  
3 four feet of snow and there were -- I saw mortalities  
4 there. So there was mortalities and so if we could get  
5 a moose survey, it's super important to get data that  
6 reflects what our population is right now, and a comp  
7 is what we really need. So just stating those facts  
8 for the record here.

9

10 So I need to move down -- thanks so  
11 much, Chris, thanks for the good work you're doing.

12

13 MR. HARWOOD: You're welcome, thank  
14 you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Gates of the Arctic  
17 National Park and Preserve update, Will Deacy, are you  
18 doing this or is this Marcy.

19

20 MR. CAMERON: Hello, Mr. Chair.....

21

22 MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, this is  
23 Karen Deatherage. It's actually Matt Cameron who will  
24 be doing that on behalf of the Park Service. Thank  
25 you.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Mat.

28

29 MR. CAMERON: Yeah, thank you.

30

31 MS. DEATHERAGE: All right, Matt.

32

33 MR. CAMERON: Hello, Mr. Chair and  
34 members of the Council. Can you hear me.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, I can hear you,  
37 go right ahead.

38

39 MR. CAMERON: Great. My name is Matt  
40 Cameron and I'm a Wildlife Biologist with Gates of the  
41 Arctic. Marcy is on the Eastern Interior call today  
42 and so I will be presenting the Gates update which you  
43 can find in your supplemental packet.

44

45 I'll go over the SRC, caribou and moose  
46 updates and then I'll turn things over to Will Deacy  
47 who is also on the line and he will present the dall  
48 sheep update.

49

50

0355

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

2

3 MR. CAMERON: And after that I have a  
4 few last announcements to share.

5

6 So Gates of the Arctic SRC met on April  
7 14th, 2021 via teleconference. The SRC received  
8 updates on the Ambler Mining District Road project as  
9 well as management updates from Park Staff. The SRC  
10 sent a letter to Secretary Haaland sharing concerns  
11 about the SRC reappointment process and the length of  
12 time it takes. The SRC will also be submitting a  
13 comment letter to the Board of Game on proposals  
14 affecting the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area.  
15 The next SRC meeting is scheduled for November 16th and  
16 17th via teleconference. And lastly the SRC submitted  
17 a letter for Pollock's reappointment to the SRC which I  
18 understand was submitted to this Council.

19

20 Alex covered our Western Arctic Herd  
21 update earlier yesterday. Just to recap, we were happy  
22 to have a successful collar deployment this last spring  
23 working closely with ADF&G and are planning for collar  
24 deployments next spring of 2022.

25

26 We have four research project updates  
27 listed on the handout and I will briefly go over them.

28

29 The first was a project in which we  
30 worked with Alex from ADF&G and analyzed 10 years of  
31 Western Arctic Herd GPS data to better understand the  
32 seasonal patterns of range use of the herd. Besides  
33 using the calving grounds every year we found that the  
34 herd consistently uses the same area for insect  
35 harassment and winter areas change from year to year  
36 and fall migration was more variable than spring  
37 migration. There were a lot of other interesting  
38 aspects of how the herd uses its range and I'd direct  
39 you to the link on the handout for those.

40

41 The second were two projects that we  
42 worked on to develop new tools to better understand how  
43 potential development may impact the Western Arctic  
44 Herd. The first looked at how proposed roads may  
45 impact caribou migrations and the second measured how  
46 much different proposed EIS alternatives might impact  
47 range of species in the NPR-A. You can find both of  
48 those studies on the second link on the handout.

49

50



0356

1                   In the third project we worked with  
2 ADF&G and discussed how methods to detect calving and  
3 caribou found to work beyond just the Western Arctic  
4 Herd, for which these methods were validated in earlier  
5 work that we did. These findings highlight that these  
6 methods using GPS data may be more broadly applicable  
7 to other caribou herds around the state. The full  
8 article can be found on that third link.

9  
10                   And lastly the Park Service biologists  
11 are collaborating on a global initiative on ungulate  
12 migration which will work to document the movements of  
13 migratory ungulates on a global atlas. The goals are  
14 to address conservation needs of species and their  
15 habitats globally and you can find more about this on  
16 the fourth link.

17  
18                   Shifting to moose. We are planning a  
19 moose survey for this spring in late March of 2022 that  
20 will cover most of the Park. The last survey was in  
21 2015 and we are planning to be based out of Bettles and  
22 expect the survey to last about a week.

23  
24                   If there are any questions or comments  
25 on those updates I'd be happy to address them before  
26 turning things over to Will.

27  
28                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any questions for  
29 Matt on the issues that he's discussed so far Council  
30 members.

31  
32                   (No comments)

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I.....

35  
36                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair.

37  
38                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Karen.

39  
40                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Mr. Chair, thank you,  
41 this is Karen Deatherage. And I'm waiting to hear from  
42 Marcy but I have not been involved, yet, with this  
43 Council, with an appointment of a member to the SRC and  
44 my understanding is that there is a letter in our  
45 supplemental packet to appoint Pollock Simon to the SRC  
46 and that the Council needs to approve that, to take a  
47 quick vote to approve his reappointment to the Gates of  
48 the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission.

49  
50

0357

1 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

2

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. The Gates of  
5 the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission has three  
6 appointing sources. One is the Secretary of Interior,  
7 which I have a Secretary of Interior appointment, the  
8 Governor of Alaska and the Regional Corporation, so the  
9 Western Interior Council appoints one member, the  
10 Northwest Arctic one member and North Slope appoints  
11 one member. So Pollock has served on the Gates of the  
12 Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission for many years.  
13 The Chair will entertain a motion to submit Pollock  
14 Simon's name for reappointment to the Gates of the  
15 Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission.

15

16

(No comments)

17

18

19

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I need that in a  
motion.

20

21

MR. HONEA: I make that motion.

22

23

24

MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, I'll make  
that motion. This is Kevin.

25

26

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got Don.....

27

28

MR. WHITWORTH: Or Don.....

29

30

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and Kevin as a  
second. Further discussion.

31

32

33

(No comments)

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock has  
represented the Western Interior Regional Advisory  
Council very well and has represented the people who  
utilize -- have eligibility to hunt and fish within the  
Gates of the Arctic National Park to a high degree so  
he's a very valued member of the Gates of the Arctic  
Subsistence Resource Commission. So any other  
comments.

43

44

(No comments)

45

46

47

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a  
question on the motion.

48

49

MR. HONEA: I call for the question.

50

0358

1 MR. DEMOSKI: Question.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called,  
4 call the roll Karen.

5

6 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
7 For the reappointment of Pollock Simon, Sr., to the  
8 Subsistence Resource Commission. Let's start with  
9 Pollock Simon.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: Pollock, are you on  
14 the phone?

15

16 MR. SIMON: Yes.

17

18 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Pollock.

19

20 Don Honea.

21

22 MR. HONEA: Yes.

23

24 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

25

26 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

27

28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Rebecca Wilmarth.

29

30 MS. WILMARTH: Yes.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

35

36 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

37

38 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

39

40 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny Pelkola.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jenny, are you on the  
45 phone?

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 MS. DEATHERAGE: How about Goodwin

50

0359

1 Semaken.

2

3 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're breaking up a  
6 little bit Karen.

7

8 MS. DEATHERAGE: (Indiscernible -  
9 breaking up) Goodwin, please.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Goodwin was a  
12 yes.

13

14 MS. DEATHERAGE: You did hear that, I  
15 did not hear that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I heard that.

18

19 REPORTER: Goodwin said yes.

20

21 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes. I said yes.

24

25 MS. DEATHERAGE: So there are seven yes  
26 so the motion passes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any  
29 other questions for Matt on the presentation then we'll  
30 go to the dall sheep portion with Will Deacy.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So go ahead, Will.

35

36 MR. DEACY: All right, thank you, Mr.  
37 Chair. This is Will Deacy, Biologist with the National  
38 Park Service. Just kind of quickly go over our recent  
39 dall sheep survey. And for those who have it, I'll be  
40 referring to the map on the last page of the NPS  
41 supplemental handout.

42

43 So we conducted distance sampling  
44 surveys for dall sheep this summer, July 8th through  
45 the 14th in Gates of the Arctic Park and Preserve, and  
46 then also in partnership with the BLM, we surveyed BLM  
47 and State managed lands surrounding the Dalton Highway.  
48 Today I just have preliminary results to share that we  
49 just calculated over the last couple days but I'll have  
50

0360

1 a more thorough update ready for the Gates SRC meeting  
2 and then also the spring RAC meetings.

3

4

5 First, starting in the north, our  
6 preliminary estimates indicate approximately stable  
7 populations in the Itkillik Preserve at Northeast Gates  
8 and the area surrounding Anaktuvuk Pass. And this is,  
9 of course, following, this is stable since the large  
10 decline that we saw in sheep in 2013 and 2014. And  
11 also we observed approximately average number of lambs  
12 per ewe like sheep in those two areas.

12

13

14 And down in the Southeast Gates study  
15 area, and this is, for those who don't have the map, we  
16 surveyed the area between the John River and the Dalton  
17 Highway in the Park and then a little bit outside of  
18 the Park to the south, and that's the study area that's  
19 blue in your handout. Our preliminary results for that  
20 area indicate a population that's declined  
21 significantly since 2015. And like I said we'll have  
22 exact estimates at the next meeting but they're likely  
23 down 50 percent or more. And then for 2021 we saw  
24 approximately more lamb production in that area.

24

25

26 And then, finally, on the handout, the  
27 area that's shown in orange is a study area we surveyed  
28 in partnership with Jenn McMillan and BLM Ranger Pilot  
29 Seth McMillan, and Steve Masure (ph), and I think  
30 Jenn's on the line if you end up having specific  
31 questions about this area. So for that area, similar  
32 to Southeast Gates of the Arctic Park, our preliminary  
33 results are pointing to severe declines, likely greater  
34 than 50 percent since the last survey that covered that  
35 entire area in 2015, but we'll have more precise  
36 estimates at the next meeting.

36

37

38 And, then, finally, before I take any  
39 questions I just want to thank Beth Lenart at ADF&G and  
40 Tim Knudsen at Fish and Wildlife Service, they both  
41 helped us greatly with the logistical support for this  
42 big and complex survey.

42

43

44

45 Thank you.  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Will, and so  
48 the total numbers you're showing are showing a real  
49 high lamb to ewe-like ratio, which those numbers are  
50 not real actual population numbers those are just  
unrecruited lamb -- I saw almost 100 percent lamb

50

0361

1 production this year, but that doesn't mean that  
2 there's a lot of sheep, that just means that the few  
3 ewes that are here had a lamb. Whereas last year ewes  
4 that had a -- one ewe that had a lamb, she's gone and  
5 so is her lamb, so those are unrecruited numbers.  
6 Cautionary to the managers who are listening to me  
7 talk, those high lamb numbers that you see right now in  
8 the survey are not actually recruited or adult sheep.  
9 From inventorying the sheep population it appears to be  
10 mostly four, five and six year old sheep. That's the  
11 main component. There's a couple yearlings, and  
12 they're -- out of these large number of lambs. So that  
13 has to be modeled in. I told Fish and Game they needed  
14 to model this population and I've gotten no response  
15 out of them. So I appreciate the data -- or the  
16 presentation so far showing the significant decline.  
17 That was unrecognized up until this survey this year.  
18 And so the last survey was in 2015, 2015 was only just  
19 a couple years after the massive decline in 2013 and  
20 '14, '12, '13, and '14 was affected by the late winter  
21 and rain on snow events then. So the population has  
22 climbed to 2017/18 and took a nosedive after that, so  
23 you're comparing a low population in '15 to an even  
24 lower population right now, so that's to be considered.

25

26 I'm saying these things because the  
27 managers need to think about what I'm saying and stop  
28 ignoring what traditional knowledge says.

29

30 So I appreciate that presentation.  
31 When we get to the Bureau of Land Management update  
32 I'll discuss this further with Jenn McMillan. So any  
33 further questions for National Park Service.

34

35 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, Pollock.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Pollock.

38

39 MR. SIMON: Yeah, Jack, I appreciate  
40 you and all the Board members reappointing me to the  
41 SRC Commission. Thank you, I appreciate it.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, you're quite  
44 welcome.

45

46 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Jack.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're quite  
49 welcome, you're a very valued member. So no questions

50

0362

1 for Park Service, we're going to move down to the  
2 Bureau of Land Management presentation, Central Yukon  
3 Field Office update. Who's doing this one, is that Tim  
4 LaMarr or.....

5  
6 MR. LAMARR: Yes, Mr. Chair, this is  
7 Tim LaMarr, Central Yukon Field Office Manager so I can  
8 provide an update and I intend to speak a little bit to  
9 the dall sheep issues. If you have specific questions  
10 for Jennifer McMillan, I know she is on the line so if  
11 you want to address specific questions to her along the  
12 way that's fine, but I'd like the opportunity to share  
13 a few things up front if that's all right.

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That'd be great.

16  
17 MR. LAMARR: Okay. So, yeah, I wanted  
18 to start off by kind of touching on some of the  
19 questions and concerns related to the BLM Alaska  
20 statewide special recreational permitting process and  
21 I'll call that SRP process, and that just means hunting  
22 guide permits in this context, related to dall sheep.

23  
24 The overarching questions about the  
25 process that we use and BLM Alaska needs to be -- they  
26 need to be raised to our State Director for him to  
27 address. And currently we have an acting State  
28 Director, and so I have been coordinating with some  
29 other internal BLM Staff, including folks from the  
30 State office and we do intend to raise that issue to  
31 our acting State Director here soon after this round of  
32 RAC meetings winds down here before we get too much  
33 further into fall. So that overarching issue is  
34 broader than anything that I can address as the Field  
35 Manager for one field office. So that being said, I  
36 would like to speak to some of the dall sheep hunting  
37 guide SRP practices that we have in the Central Yukon  
38 Field office. Just as a reminder to this body that we  
39 did provide a summary of the field office program on  
40 this at last winter's meeting, and just wanted to  
41 remind folks of a couple of items from that summary.

42  
43 One, the 10 year annual average harvest  
44 by permitted guides on BLM lands is three sheep per  
45 year, those are our numbers from 2010 to 2020 based on  
46 post-use reports of what the guides have to report to  
47 us as well as the Big Game Commercial Services Board.  
48 Also Item, 2, the Central Yukon Field office does not  
49 permit geographically overlapping hunting guides for  
50

0363

1 dall sheep. Each guide has their own discreet  
2 geographic area in which they're required to operated.  
3 And the third point I'll make right now is that guides  
4 are only allowed a specific limit on the number of  
5 clients per year. Those numbers are spelled out in  
6 their permits, and so they're not allowed to deviate --  
7 or they're not allowed to exceed, and often they come  
8 in under those numbers.

9  
10 So I just wanted to remind everyone of  
11 some of those points kind of in the context of that  
12 discussion about our permitting process.

13  
14 And I will turn towards some of the  
15 very recent discussion of just a few moments ago.  
16 Obviously as Will Deacy reported, the Central Yukon  
17 Field office is partnered up with the Park Service and  
18 Jennifer McMillan has been a key player in that with  
19 the joint surveys that were done this summer, you know,  
20 and we're awaiting a full population analysis of those  
21 data. The initial numbers that we've seen from those  
22 survey -- excuse me, hold on one moment -- excuse me,  
23 sorry about that -- while the data aren't fully  
24 analyzed yet, because of the low numbers of sheep seen  
25 on BLM managed lands, one thing that we're going to be  
26 doing in the short-term, that'll be doing in the short-  
27 term is seriously looking at potentially amending the  
28 SRPs for dall sheep hunting guides on the BLM lands in  
29 that area, and I can do that without applying a NEPA  
30 process to it. I can modify the allowable use, you  
31 know, they're allowed under their permits, I can amend  
32 that without going through the NEPA process. And if  
33 the -- you know, the full analysis of the dall sheep  
34 population data suggests that we need to make some  
35 dramatic changes, you know, that's what I am taking a  
36 look at here in the near term given the numbers that  
37 I've seen so far. I'm very concerned about the numbers  
38 as a lot of folks are and so I just wanted to make sure  
39 folks understand that.

40  
41 Also another aspect that we're going to  
42 be looking at, so in the short-term the BLM can amend  
43 the existing permits without a NEPA process so by next  
44 year we can modify what they're permitted to do.

45  
46 But in the longer term, Central Yukon  
47 Field office, you know, we need to take a look at the  
48 programmatic environmental assessment, which was  
49 originally done in 2013 for dall sheep SRPs for this  
50



0364

1 area and we recognize the need to go back and revisit  
2 that based on some of the new information related to  
3 what's going on with the population. Again, circling  
4 back to the recent survey data as well as noting that  
5 there are likely a number of other variables that we  
6 need to take a look at in our analysis that were not  
7 initially addressed perhaps in the 2013 EA. The  
8 results of that type of analysis would identify, you  
9 know, potential conditions under which we might permit  
10 guided dall sheep hunts in this area and it would also  
11 identify limits, particularly on things like numbers of  
12 clients that we might permit for the area, and any  
13 sideboards that we would identify for such permitting,  
14 if we choose to do so.

15

16 So that's what I wanted to share at  
17 this point on the dall sheep issue and I'd be  
18 interested on any questions on that at this point.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So this is where I  
21 live.....

22

23 MR. LAMARR: Uh-huh.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....so the -- it  
26 was surveyed in conjunction with the Alaska Department  
27 of Fish and Game. As I discussed earlier, in other  
28 times, incorporates part of Unit 25A, which has a  
29 completely different weather pattern and mortality  
30 issues in 25A. So the BLM lands occur predominantly in  
31 Unit 24A, that's where the BLM lands predominantly  
32 occur so taking numbers from the Chandalar and applying  
33 those to the 25A is mixing apples and oranges. That  
34 bolsters the numbers that you're actually using and in  
35 reality the numbers that I've requested at different  
36 times, that the State utilizing part of Unit 25A  
37 muddies the water about what these populations are  
38 doing. I used to hunt a lot in the Northfork of the  
39 Chandalar, I know for a fact that there's more sheep  
40 over there than there is over here. But previously  
41 there -- when they were going to build the pipeline  
42 there were 2,000 sheep from Beecher Camp to the Pass,  
43 you can't find -- I would be surprised if you could  
44 find 100, 125 sheep in that whole country. The reality  
45 is these sheep population -- we're looking at a clip  
46 with the ram population. We have four, five, six year  
47 old rams. I watched hunters, not guides, I watched  
48 hunters with archery trying to kill 7/8th rams, they  
49 don't know a full-curl from the hole in the ground.

50

1 The reality is we don't only have guides which have a  
2 80 to 90 percent success rate and have three SuperCubs  
3 on floats and wheels attacking this population and  
4 pushing their harvest to other areas because they're  
5 liable to pay you three percent, we have -- we have big  
6 problems with this population. Under Title VIII of  
7 ANILCA and it says, specifically in .802, that there's  
8 cons -- that the people who subsistence uses of  
9 resources of such lands consistent with management of  
10 fish and wildlife in accordance with recognized  
11 scientific principles and purposes. You're under an  
12 ANILCA mandate to maintain scientific principles. I've  
13 told Fish and Game and I'll tell you at BLM, you need  
14 to model the population. When we run out of adult  
15 lambs here in about two years, we're not going to have  
16 any breeding component. Baby two year old lambs, or  
17 rams that may be recruited this winter are not going to  
18 be your breeding population. We're in a crises  
19 situation here. I would like to see an elimination of  
20 any guided hunters on the BLM lands until -- I did not  
21 take a sheep this year, I didn't feel good about taking  
22 a dall sheep this year, why's that, because I'm so  
23 concerned for the population -- we're allowed one ram,  
24 I could kill ram, but I didn't do it, the subsistence  
25 users are bearing the brunt of the conservation for  
26 this population. So when you analyze your special  
27 recreation permits, your guide permits, I want you to  
28 take into serious consideration the population basis of  
29 where you started back in 2010 when there was a lot of  
30 sheep, we hadn't had the die-off in '13, you're now  
31 allocating seven sheep to one hunting guide when  
32 there's not even seven legal rams in the whole country,  
33 that needs to be curtailed. You need to go into a  
34 moratorium stature with your model that shows that we  
35 can't harvest dall sheep for several years,  
36 commercially. That's what your model will tell you.

37

38 So we need to involve scientific  
39 principles and we have to get rid of Unit 25A in this  
40 analysis. I've said this before, that's not part of  
41 the Bureau of Land Management lands, that's part of the  
42 State managed lands and that's a completely different  
43 game management unit and management objectives over  
44 there.

45

46 So I would like this Council -- you  
47 said that the Regional Director has to address this, I  
48 would like this Council to write a letter to the Bureau  
49 of Land Management Regional Director stating that we  
50

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1 have a crises situation because of special recreational  
2 permitting processes that are affecting the subsistence  
3 harvest and risking, severely risking the resource  
4 itself. So we need to -- I would like this letter to  
5 be promulgated and written to the Regional Director  
6 stating our concerns for this population. And it needs  
7 to be CC'd to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
8 and the Federal Subsistence Board also. It should be  
9 an annual report topic. The dall sheep population  
10 issue here needs to be also addressed, an overview by  
11 the Federal Subsistence Board, they have to be aware  
12 that there's an issue here in our region. Not only in  
13 this area but also in Unit 19C in the Alaska Range, has  
14 some bleak population figures also.

15

16 So the Chair will entertain a motion to  
17 write a letter to the Regional Director of the Bureau  
18 of Land Management regarding this special resource  
19 permitting, SRPs.

20

21 MR. SIMON: So moved, this is Pollock.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Pollock.  
24 Do we have a second to that.

25

26 MR. SEMAKEN: Second, Goodwin.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have any  
29 discussion, Council members want to discuss this issue.

30

31 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, this is Pollock.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Pollock.

34

35 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I just want to make a  
36 comment, I wanted to mention that since the early  
37 1900s, our peoples from this area has been going up  
38 into the mountains with trolling boat or some in canoe  
39 to look for sheep in the mountain and today some young  
40 boys, including my boys always try to go up in the  
41 mountains and keep the tradition going and looking for  
42 sheep so my thought is to keep the sheep population  
43 healthy.

44

45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate those  
48 comments, those will be incorporated into our letter.  
49 The letter should also be requesting modeling the.....

50

0367

1 (Teleconference interference -  
2 participants not muted)

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....sheep  
5 population taking into account previous population dips  
6 that dictate what this population is right now. This  
7 by guess and by golly work, the sheep manage  
8 themselves, because we got full-curl, well, we're  
9 running out of full-curl. So we need to have  
10 recognized scientific principles involved with this and  
11 I'm going to be requesting -- we will be requesting  
12 that in this letter.

13  
14 Do we have a question on the motion.

15  
16 MR. DEMOSKI: I call for the question.

17  
18 MR. SIMON: Question.

19  
20 MS. PELKOLA: This is Jenny.....

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I believe Pollock  
23 called the question. Poll the Council, Karen.

24  
25 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
26 On the motion for sending a letter to the Regional  
27 Director of the Bureau of Land Management regarding  
28 sheep populations of the SRP permitting process.

29  
30 Member Pollock Simon.

31  
32 MR. SIMON: Yes.

33  
34 MS. DEATHERAGE: Kevin Whitworth.

35  
36 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

37  
38 MS. DEATHERAGE: Jack Reakoff.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

41  
42 MS. DEATHERAGE: Arnold Demoski.

43  
44 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

45  
46 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Arnold.

47  
48 Jenny Pelkola.

49  
50

0368

1 MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: Goodwin Semaken.

4

5 MR. SEMAKEN: Yes.

6

7 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Goodwin.

8

9 Rebecca Wilmarth.

10

11 MS. WILMARTH: Yes.

12

13 MS. DEATHERAGE: And Don Honea.

14

15 MR. HONEA: Yes.

16

17 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 That is a vote of eight Council members in favor, the

19 motion passes unanimously. Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that's the

22 letter you requested Tim. Did you have further

23 briefing for the Council.

24

25 MR. LAMARR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
26 do -- actually just to clarify, you know, I think I  
27 said -- I did mention in my update on the dall sheep  
28 that -- after preliminary numbers that I see, you know,  
29 I share the concerns about the population and I do have  
30 the capacity to amend current permit uses without a  
31 NEPA process and so that could be something I could act  
32 upon relatively quickly. And I would be -- you know,  
33 as you suggested in your comments, looking to rely on  
34 the model population data from the raw data that have  
35 been collected recently. So I want to wait and see  
36 what that looks like and then develop a rationale and  
37 justification for any action that I might take further.  
38 So the short-term measure could involve -- with the  
39 situation could include amending the SRPs that we have  
40 right now. The longer term solution of revisiting the  
41 2013 environmental assessment, for longer term approach  
42 to potentially, you know, permitted guides in this area  
43 would entail a robust public involvement process and so  
44 I would want to make that a robust process and allow  
45 for, you know, public comment and I would be interested  
46 in coordinating with the WIRAC on how to facilitate the  
47 opportunity for the WIRAC to chime in on that process.  
48 So that would be a more longer term process compared to  
49 the possibility of a shorter term process of modifying  
50

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1 existing permits if it comes to that.

2

3

So I just wanted to clarify that.

4

5

6 And then on a totally different topic,  
7 I thought I'd give just a couple sentences on updates  
8 on the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan. Folks  
9 might recall that the draft RMP EIS for the resource  
10 management plan was published last December. We held a  
11 public comment period that got extended essentially to  
12 a six month comment period until June 11th of this  
13 year. And we have been reaching out to the Biden  
14 Administration since they've kind of come in and filled  
15 positions and gotten Staffed up and we have been told  
16 by the new folks in our Headquarters that they will be  
17 giving us direction on how to proceed further with the  
18 proposed RMP Final EIS and we're still awaiting that  
19 direction. So that's where we are. We anticipate  
20 direction relatively soon and we anticipate crafting  
21 the proposed RMP Final EIS and releasing that in early  
22 calendar year 2022, that's our best estimate at this  
23 point. That's not a hard date.

23

24

25

(Teleconference interference -  
participants not muted)

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28

MR. LAMARR: So I just wanted to update  
everyone on that.

29

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I'll also just mention that folks are  
probably aware that the BLM issued a right-of-way grant  
to Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority  
on the Ambler Road project in January of this year.  
Since then we've been working with AIDEA on pre-  
construction phase work, the work that they've  
conducted this summer has consisted entirely of  
archeological survey and I believe some hydrological  
survey in certain stream channels. No ground  
disturbing work at all. So that's where we are on that  
project at that moment. We're awaiting end of field  
season reports from AIDEA on what they're findings were  
with archeological surveys that they did and then we'll  
move forward from there.

44

45

46

That concludes my comments.

47

48

Thanks.

49

50

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tim,

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1 appreciate your updates on the Resource Management Plan  
2 and where we're at on that issue. The Governor is  
3 requesting funding for capital construction -- if the  
4 State was to begin building the Ambler Road across the  
5 BLM land, they would notify you in advance, the public  
6 would be aware of that movement forward in actual  
7 construction?

8

9 MR. LAMARR: Yes, Mr. Chair, if that  
10 was a question. Yeah, AIDEA has indicated to the BLM  
11 that they have multiple years of pre-construction work  
12 to do, field surveys, and so they're not anticipating  
13 moving forward for another two or three years with any  
14 actual ground breaking on the project so there is still  
15 -- and in the meantime with pre-construction work they  
16 still have to work with us, with the BLM, at least, on  
17 BLM lands for any authorizations that they may need  
18 associated with pre-construction work if they propose  
19 any ground disturbing work.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

22

23 MR. LAMARR: So we are constantly  
24 working with them on that as we go.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And if you are  
27 notified about ground disturbing work, the people of  
28 this area would like to know about that.

29

30 MR. LAMARR: Okay. No, that's a good  
31 -- I appreciate that. I appreciate that.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

34

35 MR. LAMARR: Yeah.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think we've  
38 covered that, is there any questions from Council  
39 members for the Bureau of Land Management, Central  
40 Field office Manager Tim LaMarr.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, we'll  
45 move down on the list for BLM, at Anchorage Field  
46 office, are you there Bonnie.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0371

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We had Bonnie at  
2 some point in this meeting, Million.

3  
4 (No comments)

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we did go into  
7 overtime here so apparently she dropped off. So we're  
8 going to go to Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
9 customary trade in the middle and lower Yukon River  
10 communities, Alida Trainor, are you.....

11  
12 MS. TRAINOR: Yes, hello, Mr. Chair,  
13 and members of the RAC, can you hear me?

14  
15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I can hear you good,  
16 go right ahead.

17  
18 MS. TRAINOR: Okay, great. There was a  
19 labeling error on that -- on this agenda item. I'm  
20 just going to give a brief overview of all of our  
21 current work including the customary trade project.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.

24  
25 MS. TRAINOR: You should have received  
26 a PowerPoint with this information.

27  
28 So first I'd like to just give a brief  
29 overview of our.....

30  
31 (Teleconference interference -  
32 participants not muted)

33  
34 MS. TRAINOR: .....three current  
35 projects in the Western Interior region. The first is  
36 titled Yukon Salmon Network. This is a two year OSM  
37 funded project that included the communities of Pilot  
38 Station, Nulato and Beaver. We wanted to explore the  
39 ways in which wild foods, particularly salmon, are  
40 shared in these communities and how factors such as  
41 resource decline and fishing restrictions impact these  
42 significant sharing networks. We used a social network  
43 survey to document the scope and characteristics of how  
44 salmon are shared, bartered, and even sold or bought.  
45 We also conducted traditional ethnographic -- or  
46 traditional knowledge interviews (indiscernible -  
47 background interruption) -- our results show that  
48 sharing salmon is widespread within and outside local  
49 communities and is a primary way communities support  
50



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1 one another to maintain cultural ties with those who  
2 have moved away from their hometowns.

3

4 (Teleconference interference -  
5 participants not muted)

6

7 MS. TRAINOR: And that as salmon  
8 declines sharing networks are disrupted. Households  
9 described having to share less, limit who they share  
10 with or even switch from sharing to other forms of  
11 exchange such as customary trade. Sharing is the  
12 primary way that Yukon River communities ensure that  
13 all community members are provided for. It could be  
14 argued that reductions in harvest opportunity affect  
15 non-harvesting households even more than fishing  
16 households because they do not have direct access to  
17 salmon themselves and rely on sharing to access the  
18 resource. In times when harvest is limited fishers  
19 cannot adequately provide for others as they typically  
20 would.

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We also include some management  
implications and suggestions in our report. First  
management must account for the role that sharing plays  
in local communities. Second, reduction in fishing  
opportunity can impact non-fishing households more than  
fishing households. And, finally, if management does  
not account for the role of sharing and exchange more  
broadly the well-being of Yukon River communities will  
be in jeopardy and other unintended social and resource  
management consequences will emerge. Successful  
management of a fishery depends on understanding how  
communities experience and respond to management  
decisions. The report describes how more holistic  
management of all subsistence resources, such as salmon  
and moose together could be a more effective way at  
meeting the need of subsistence users.

The next project I'd like to give you a  
brief summary on is one we're just starting now. It's  
called customary trade in the lower and middle Yukon  
River. This is an OSM funded project that we had to  
actually delay a year, last year we chose not to deploy  
this project due to Covid and decided that because of  
the sensitive nature of this work we needed to do this  
work in person and so that's what we hope to achieve  
this year. Study communities include Nunam Iqua,  
Mountain Village, Kaltag and Galena. This project  
builds off prior work that documented that the selling,

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1 buying and bartering of salmon in the upper Yukon River  
2 region. Completing this project will fill a critical  
3 information gap regarding the traditional practice of  
4 customary trade and will better inform the  
5 conversations surrounding this form of exchange. The  
6 diagram on the right of this slide shows the resources  
7 that were exchanged in an earlier study community.  
8 Salmon appears at the center of the diagram because  
9 it's the most frequently exchanged resource. Moose,  
10 gas, berries and to a lesser extent, cash, were also  
11 exchanged for salmon. This is an example of the type  
12 of documentation we'll make during this project.

13

14                   The final project I will speak to is  
15 the Kuskokwim Management Area post-season subsistence  
16 salmon harvest survey. That's a mouthful. Which is  
17 funded annually by OSM. The Department has been  
18 gathering subsistence harvest information from  
19 Kuskokwim area families since 1960. For over the past  
20 two decades the Department has partnered with ONC to  
21 conduct surveys among Bethel area households. We  
22 typically survey about 28 communities throughout the  
23 Kuskokwim drainage to include south Kuskokwim and  
24 Goodnews Bay areas. This project seeks to document one  
25 of the primary pieces of information, the total harvest  
26 needed by managers and tribal organizations to inform  
27 the total run estimates and other pieces of the puzzle.

28

29                   Because of the ongoing circumstances  
30 with the Covid19 pandemic, for the 2021 season we are  
31 adhering to the same contingency plans which we  
32 deployed last year, that included using a shortened  
33 survey that can be administered by the phone or be sent  
34 out via mail. The use of PPE when in person conducting  
35 household surveys.

36

37                   This year our outlying village survey  
38 crew has visited a handful of Kuskokwim area  
39 communities, of which we received approval from each  
40 tribal council, households with the remaining  
41 communities currently being contacted by telephone.  
42 ONC technicians will be surveying Bethel households  
43 this season using the same abbreviated survey form we  
44 used last year. ONC technicians will begin surveying  
45 Bethel, or they did just a few days ago on the 10th.

46

47                   Also we have reintroduced the same  
48 alternative survey options for folks who are interested  
49 river-wide. Our sampling design this season is similar

50

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1 to last years. For communities that we cannot visit in  
2 person we'll conduct a census by attempting to contact  
3 every household. For communities that we visit in  
4 person we surveyed a percentage of the communities.  
5 For Bethel we will continue to sample approximately 25  
6 percent of the households there.

7  
8 Finally, I'll just briefly speak to the  
9 only proposal we submitted to OSM for the Western  
10 Interior region and this project is titled, Combining  
11 Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Biological  
12 Sampling to Enhance Understanding of Humpback Whitefish  
13 and other non-Salmon fisheries in the Upper Koyukuk  
14 River -- region. Brooke McDavid, Brian McKenna at TCC  
15 and Randy Brown at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are  
16 all co-PIs on this project. The first objective of  
17 this project is to update TEK of critical non-salmon  
18 fish by Alatna and Allakaket residents with attention  
19 to humpback whitefish. The second objective is to  
20 estimate non-salmon fish harvest timing and location  
21 and compare results with previous studies. And the  
22 third objective is to describe the demographics,  
23 composition, age, sex, length, weight and chromatic  
24 index of humpback whitefish spawning populations  
25 (indiscernible - cutting out) and Southfork Koyukuk  
26 River. We look forward to hearing from OSM about the  
27 status of this proposal.

28  
29 That concludes my abbreviated  
30 presentation and if there are any questions I will take  
31 them now.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're getting a  
34 big echo off of somebody's open mic and so that's  
35 probably driving Salena nuts. Does Council members  
36 have questions on Alida's presentation of the three  
37 different projects she outlined for Alaska Department  
38 of Fish and Game. Council members.

39  
40 (No comments)

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, we had your  
43 PowerPoint I was going over while you were speaking so  
44 I think you covered it. So thank you so much Alida.

45  
46 MS. TRAINOR: Thank you for your time.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

49  
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1 MS. TRAINOR: Goodnight.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Pacific Treaty  
4 Funding -- oh, is that a different one?

5

6 MS. TRAINOR: Oh, I don't think you  
7 should be seeing that in this presentation. Oh, I  
8 could speak to it just real briefly. The Pacific  
9 Salmon Treaty Implementation Funds were recently  
10 increased and the Subsistence Division was able to get  
11 some of that funding and will receive it annually in  
12 order to conduct comprehensive (indiscernible - cuts  
13 out) surveys on Yukon River communities. This year we  
14 are focusing on conducting the work in Chevak and  
15 Hooper Bay. And in going forward we will try to fill  
16 in data gaps that exist in a number of Yukon  
17 communities and so we might be coming to a community  
18 near you soon.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for  
21 outlining that. Appreciate that. Office of  
22 Subsistence Management.

23

24 MR. KRON: Yeah, Mr. Chair, yeah, Tom  
25 Kron here. And I've taken the liberty to cut the OSM  
26 report in half given the press of time for your meeting  
27 and I'll just dive in.

28

29 Mr. Chair. Members of the Council. On  
30 behalf of OSM I do want to thank all Council members  
31 for the exceptional work that you do on behalf of your  
32 communities and the user groups during these trying  
33 times. We value your expertise and contribution of  
34 your knowledge and experience to the regulatory  
35 process. It had been very difficult for all of us  
36 dealing with the Covid19 environment.

37

38 Teleconferences. As you've learned  
39 from Board Chairman Christianson's letter from August  
40 20th, 2021, we are holding all 10 fall 2021 Regional  
41 Advisory Council meetings via teleconference. The  
42 Federal Subsistence Management Program recognizes that  
43 in-person meetings are preferable, however, until we  
44 can ensure the safety of all participants we will  
45 follow current guidance and hold all meetings via  
46 teleconference. We thank you all for being willing to  
47 participate the lengthy teleconferences and participate  
48 and appreciate your patience.

49

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0376

1                                 Since your last Council meeting in the  
2 winter 2021 the following OSM Staff changes have  
3 occurred.

4  
5                                 We are very pleased to announce that  
6 Ameer Howard has joined OSM as our new Deputy Assistant  
7 Regional Director. Ameer previously worked for OSM as  
8 policy coordinator.

9  
10                                We are also very pleased that a number  
11 of Staff that worked at OSM grew with the program and  
12 got promoted.

13  
14                                Katya Wessels, who spoke earlier on  
15 this teleconference, was promoted from Council  
16 Coordinator to Supervisor of the Division.

17  
18                                Lisa Grediagin, was promoted from  
19 Wildlife Biologist to the Supervisor of the Wildlife  
20 Division.

21  
22                                Robbin LaVine was promoted from  
23 Anthropologist to Policy Coordinator position.

24  
25                                In addition we have good news on the  
26 wildlife front. We were able to hire three new  
27 wildlife biologist. One of them spoke earlier on the  
28 analysis, Kendra Holman came to OSM from the U.S. Army  
29 Corps of Engineers here in Anchorage.

30  
31                                We also had three departures at OSM  
32 through retirement and new opportunities.

33  
34                                OSM team is diligently working to build  
35 capacity and will be filling several new positions.

36  
37                                Also we've been talking to you the past  
38 couple years about the changing IDs required at  
39 airports. The latest we're seeing is beginning May  
40 3rd, 2023 every air traveler will need to present a  
41 RealID compliant driver's license or another acceptable  
42 form of identification to travel even on Alaska  
43 Airlines but also the Bush planes.

44  
45                                The final issue I'll talk about is the  
46 lawsuit from the State of Alaska. As you were  
47 previously briefed, on August 10th, 2020 the State of  
48 Alaska filed a lawsuit against the Federal Subsistence  
49 Board after it adopted Emergency Special Action WSA19-

50

1 14. This special action allowed the Village of Kake to  
2 engage in a community harvest of two antlered moose and  
3 five male Sitka black-tailed deer. Also included in  
4 the lawsuit was temporary special action WSA20-3 which  
5 closed Federal public lands in Units 13A and 13B to  
6 non-Federally-qualified moose and caribou hunters. As  
7 part of the lawsuit the State asked the court to issue  
8 two preliminary injunctions. One to prevent the Unit  
9 13 closure from taking effect and another vacating the  
10 Kake hunt and prohibiting the Board from allowing any  
11 additional emergency hunts related to the impacts of  
12 Covid19. On September 18th, 2020 the U.S. District  
13 Court denied the State's request for a preliminary  
14 injunction on the Unit 13 closure. The court found  
15 that, quote, because the State has not demonstrated  
16 either a likelihood of success or serious questions on  
17 the merits of its claims, the court need not consider  
18 the remaining elements of the preliminary injunction  
19 analysis.

20  
21 Two months later on November the  
22 18th, 2020 the Court also denied the State's motion for  
23 a preliminary injunction on the Kake hunt -- again,  
24 Kake is in Southeast Alaska -- after Judge Gleason  
25 concluded that the State had not demonstrated a  
26 likelihood of success on the merits, raised serious  
27 questions on the merits of its claim, or demonstrated  
28 any likelihood of irreparable harm.

29  
30 While these rulings are preliminary  
31 they did not resolve the litigation. Recent  
32 developments are that settlement negotiations between  
33 the Department of Justice, the DOI Solicitor's Office,  
34 USDA Office of General Counsel, and the State proved  
35 unsuccessful. A briefing was completed at the end of  
36 August 2021 and we are now awaiting the Court's  
37 decision.

38  
39 That concludes my report, Mr. Chair.  
40 I'd be happy to take any questions, thank you.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
43 report, Tom. OSM gets a few steps forward and then a  
44 couple back but I'm -- I was very satisfied and pleased  
45 with the performance of your Staff at our meeting. So  
46 any questions for Tom on OSM's sort of update.

47  
48 (No comments)

49  
50

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1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So don't hear any,  
2 thanks so much for that outline.

3  
4                   MR. KRON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It was concise. So  
7 we -- Karen, we have to revisit our annual report as  
8 one of our last topics here. Would you like to give us  
9 what you've got written down there.

10  
11                   MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
12 Yes, I have currently five items that the Council has  
13 requested have included in their annual report, please  
14 forgive me if I missed something.

15  
16                   The first issue is the Yukon/Kuskokwim  
17 chinook and chum salmon issue and the need to broaden  
18 the Federal and State government participation in  
19 rebuilding the in-river stocks, particularly by looking  
20 at the Bering Sea and Area M fishery impacts and the  
21 second issue is to -- because of the first issue look  
22 at other fish species, monitor other fish species like  
23 whitefish and sheefish because they are being targeted  
24 more due to the chinook and chum collapse. And also a  
25 higher need for terrestrial animal, like moose  
26 monitoring due to the low salmon stock. In other  
27 words, there's wider ramifications for the region as a  
28 result of this fishery disaster.

29  
30                   There's also a request to include that  
31 the Fishery Resource Monitoring Program should be  
32 revised to prioritize research and monitoring projects  
33 by local tribes and regional tribal organizations  
34 pursuant to the intentions of ANILCA, Title VIII and  
35 cooperative agreements with Alaska Native Organizations  
36 in ANILCA .809. State of Alaska and Federal agencies,  
37 which continue to experience cuts in their budgets are  
38 cost shifting to this competitive grants funding  
39 opportunity. Sustainable management of Alaska fish and  
40 wildlife populations should be funded through State and  
41 Federal base budgets, not through competitive grant  
42 programs like the FRMP. Furthermore the Technical  
43 Review Committee should be expanded to include  
44 technical expertise from Alaska InterTribal  
45 organizations who are best positioned to be able to  
46 advance traditional knowledge, research and management  
47 integration as well as employ biologists and  
48 anthropologists who should be involved in reviewing  
49 FRMP proposals. So that's Item 3.

50

0379

1                           Item 4 is entitled the current and  
2 blatant violation of ANILCA by Alaska Department of  
3 Fish and Game. WIRAC should include in the annual  
4 .805(c) report the Council's concern regarding the  
5 State of Alaska's violation of ANILCA, Title VIII, on  
6 June 28th, 2021 when the ADF&G opened gillnet fishing  
7 for salmon in Federal waters for all Alaska residents  
8 when the Federal in-season manager, in partnership with  
9 the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission had  
10 closed all salmon fishing with gillnets in Federal  
11 waters. This action, if unchallenged indicates that  
12 the Federal subsistence protections fought for so long  
13 and hard by Katie John no longer exist. The Federal  
14 Subsistence Board and Secretaries of Interior and  
15 Agriculture must take proactive actions to enforce  
16 ANILCA, Title VIII.

17  
18                           And then the fifth issue that the  
19 Council would like to include is an informative to the  
20 Regional Director of the -- informative issue to the  
21 Board that a letter will be going to the Regional  
22 Director regarding the SRP, or guide use permits,  
23 particularly pertaining to the extremely low sheep  
24 population in the Brooks Range, and so that will be  
25 fleshed out further as the letter is developed but the  
26 Board will be given an informational blurb on that  
27 action by the Council.

28  
29                           Thank you, Mr. Chair, that's what I  
30 have.

31  
32                           CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: That sounds good,  
33 Karen. Any Council member comments or inclusions to  
34 the annual report. We'll review this annual report at  
35 our winter meeting and we'll finalize it at that time.  
36 And so any Council comments at this point on the annual  
37 report topics identified.

38  
39                           (No comments)

40  
41                           CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any.  
42 That sounds good, Karen. We've covered our meeting  
43 dates earlier in the meeting so closing comments from  
44 the Council members and adjournment is coming up. So I  
45 would like to get the impression of our new membership,  
46 are you still there Arnold.

47  
48                           MR. DEMOSKI: Yes, I'm still here.

49  
50



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1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to have  
2 your closing comment with your impression of your first  
3 meeting.

4  
5                   MR. DEMOSKI: Yes. I just want to  
6 thank everybody for their presentations and all the  
7 information provided today. It was a really good  
8 meeting, I'm sorry I missed yesterday, I was traveling  
9 home yesterday on a plane and I couldn't call in. But  
10 for today, though, it was a really good first meeting,  
11 I really -- I mean I really enjoyed all the discussions  
12 and I look forward to the next meetings. I thank the  
13 other Council members for your knowledge that you  
14 provided, I look forward to learning a lot from you  
15 guys. It's just been a really good meeting and this  
16 has -- I've been trying since 2013 to be on this  
17 Council so it's just really good to be here and I look  
18 forward to learning a lot and can't wait for the next  
19 meeting.

20  
21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, appreciate  
22 those comments. Your willing to serve on this Council  
23 and we need your input and you're an articulate speaker  
24 so thanks for accepting and attending when you could.

25  
26                   So, Kevin, closing comments.

27  
28                   MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair, can  
29 you hear me.

30  
31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go right ahead.

32  
33                   MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, okay, I had to  
34 switch on my cell phone so it's not always a very good  
35 connection but, anyhow I'm on. Yeah, appreciate this  
36 meeting. Thanks to OSM Staff, Karen, thank you for  
37 coordination. It's my first meeting, you know, I've  
38 listened and sat in the public on these meetings when I  
39 was younger and really enjoyed being on the other side,  
40 actually part of the Council now. So look forward to  
41 the next meeting, hopefully it's in person. I did get  
42 a concern from a public member that they would like to  
43 see that we don't overlap the Eastern Interior and  
44 Western Interior RAC meetings like we did this time. I  
45 think they were trying to monitor both meetings at the  
46 same time and they would like to see us split those.

47  
48                   So that's it, thank you, very much,  
49 until next time.

50

0381

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Kevin. I  
2 think OSM should make that as a policy that it was  
3 commented on a few different times during the meeting,  
4 that the Yukon -- EIRAC, WIRAC and Yukon Delta should  
5 not overlap on the same timeframe, it's a very --  
6 unless they're a joint meeting, it's very disparate to  
7 the public and the managers to try to monitor both. So  
8 that should be like a blackout if a Council picked a  
9 week or a timeframe, that we don't have an overlap with  
10 another Council.

11  
12                   So then Rebecca, are you still on the  
13 phone, would you like to give your closing comment.

14  
15                   MS. WILMARTH: Yes, thank you, Chair.  
16 I appreciate everybody's time. It's apparent that you  
17 all put a lot of time into this, Karen, and as you --  
18 you as well, Jack. The work that you guys do is very  
19 important. Appreciate all of the other Council  
20 member's knowledge. I had some difficulty staying  
21 connected with the snow that we're having here in Red  
22 Devil. But I learned a lot and really appreciate the  
23 meeting materials being mailed ahead of time and all  
24 the thought and coordination to getting thee meetings  
25 together is really appreciated.

26  
27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for  
28 considering being on the Council and, yeah, I could  
29 tell your phone was dropping you all the time but I  
30 appreciate your diligence to stay to the end here and  
31 we needed your input at times and unfortunately you  
32 were offline at the moment, so hopefully we won't be  
33 forced into having these teleconferences in the future.  
34 Hopefully we'll be coming out of the black days of this  
35 Covid.

36  
37                   Then we'll move, Jenny, are you there.  
38 Jenny.

39  
40                   (No comments)

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Jenny's phone  
43 might have died, I'm not sure about that.

44  
45                   Pollock. Are you still here Pollock?

46  
47                   MR. SIMON: Yes, I'm here.

48  
49                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. You want to  
50

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1 give your closing comments.

2

3 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I'm here. Okay.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

6

7 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I'll make some  
8 comments. I hope the virus goes away. Having this  
9 teleconference, my arm is kind of tired from holding up  
10 the phone so I'm looking forward to sitting down and  
11 facing everybody next time, that would be good. And if  
12 the meeting is going to be in Galena, it's good that we  
13 go out to the villages once in awhile and have a  
14 meeting where the peoples -- the people are the ones we  
15 represent so it's good to sit down and meet them and  
16 talk with them and see what they want and that would be  
17 good to do again once the virus leaves us behind.

18

19 So that's all, Jack, thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for  
22 sticking in there Pollock. So, Don, are you there?

23

24 MR. HONEA: Yeah, could you hear me  
25 now.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.

28

29 MR. HONEA: Hey, I'd like to welcome  
30 those three aboard, Kevin, Rebecca and Arnold and this  
31 is really trying. I don't like these teleconference  
32 type of things and I guess Pollock just kind of summed  
33 it up right there about holding his phone and stuff and  
34 switching different phones and, boy, this is really  
35 trying and I appreciate everybody being on board, being  
36 online and it's not easy. And I just -- I'd like to  
37 see all the areas represented and the GASH area right  
38 now, just like when we didn't have anybody from Aniak  
39 or Red Devil or Georgetown or that area, I'm glad  
40 somebody is sitting in there and filling it and taking  
41 care of McGrath because we had a rep there that was  
42 really knowledgeable and Ray was just one of a kind  
43 and, you know, and also we had reps from -- Robert  
44 Walker and James Walker, I believe -- Jimmy Walker --  
45 those guys had a lot of knowledge on the board. I  
46 remember maybe 15, 16 years ago whenever I got on here  
47 it was almost overwhelming. So, you know, it takes a  
48 lot of time and even right now, you know, I don't know,  
49 you know, anything about what's going on up -- Jack, up  
50

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1 there with the sheep, everything, you know all about  
2 that and so it's -- so it's, you know, I think it's  
3 cool, I think it's vital that we have people from every  
4 area.

5

6 Appreciate you guys. I'll see you in  
7 Galena. Thank you.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for those  
10 comments, Don. Goodwin, are you there now?

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there  
15 Goodwin?

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Must have lost him,  
20 too. And I'll try Jenny again, Jenny are you there?

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So apparently we  
25 lost them. These teleconferences, I'm juggling phones,  
26 fortunately I've got two home phone landline cordless  
27 phones and I keep juggling them back and forth, I turn  
28 one on and turn the other off to keep a charge going.  
29 These teleconferences are a real challenge, not only  
30 because of the static and noise that occurred, the  
31 backfeed and all that, it's just trying to hear and  
32 trying -- the phone systems go in and out of these  
33 villages, they're not the best phone systems, and  
34 internet is almost abysmal, so trying to log in to get  
35 anything off the internet is almost impossible and a  
36 lot of people aren't even capable of that. But we're  
37 working it out, it's part of what we have to do with  
38 this virus and so we're making headway and I really  
39 appreciate all that OSM did for our support. Karen did  
40 a great job getting this meeting together and getting  
41 us the materials and thanks to Erin Julianus for  
42 getting that book printed out for Pollock and the  
43 coordination to get that up there.

44

45 I think that the dialogue with the  
46 State is very important and the other agencies to  
47 understand where we're coming from, where we would like  
48 -- in reality if you watch the Councils have more  
49 conservation ethic and a lot of time people are willing  
50

1 to conserve, willing to take closures to maintain  
2 populations and so why is that because when those  
3 resources are gone we're not going to have food, so  
4 it's food security. So we shift to another resource.  
5 I'm not hunting sheep, I'm going after caribou now so  
6 I'm conserving the sheep. There's people conserving  
7 salmon and harvesting pike or whitefish or some other  
8 species, beavers, muskrats. Elders told me that that  
9 was some of their primary food when they had problems  
10 with caribou or moose populations, was eating beavers  
11 and muskrats. And so these things are all interwoven,  
12 these resources, it's a holistic use of subsistence  
13 resources and so these elders that we have on this  
14 Council are vital to our long-term understandings and I  
15 feel that the State of Alaska is more -- is sometimes  
16 more driven by revenue. The Department of Fish and  
17 Game has told me that the sheep population is  
18 regulating, the full-curl, well, that's if you have a  
19 model that shows that you have consistent recruitment.  
20 If you don't have consistent recruitment this by guess  
21 and by golly methodology of management has got to end.  
22 There's got to be science-based sustained yield and  
23 science-based management involved. And so I might push  
24 some buttons, I might make people a little hot on the  
25 collar when I say certain things about bull/cow ratios  
26 going over a cliff in Mulchatna but I want everybody to  
27 realize this Council member is conservation-minded, we  
28 need to have healthy populations so that people that  
29 rely on them have a food source.

30

31 So I'll shut up now.

32

33 I appreciate all the State input, the  
34 presentations by the Subsistence Division, the Alaska  
35 Department of Fish and Game, and so I'm looking forward  
36 to our next meeting, I think we've got a real strong  
37 Council now, I'm looking forward to some new  
38 appointments before then. Hopefully we'll have a full  
39 10 member Council by that time and so I'm hoping for  
40 the best.

41

42 I hope everybody has a good winter,  
43 good holiday season and God bless, I'm signing out.

44

45 The Chair will entertain a motion to  
46 adjourn the meeting.

47

48 MR. WHITWORTH: Motion to adjourn.

49

50

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1 MR. DEMOSKI: Motion to adjourn.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm not sure who

4 said that.

5

6 MR. HONEA: I said it, Arnold.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Arnold.

9

10 MR. WHITWORTH: Second, this is Kevin.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sometimes I can --  
13 if you're phone is breaking I can't tell your voice so,  
14 Arnold.....

15

16 MR. HONEA: Okay, I second it.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and seconded by

19

20 Don.

21

22 MR. HONEA: Yes.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Further discussion  
25 by the Council.

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, you  
30 want to call the roll Karen.

31

32 MS. DEATHERAGE: I was just going to  
33 say all those in favor.....

34

35 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

36

37 MS. DEATHERAGE: .....say aye.

38

39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, just say aye.

42

43 IN UNISON: Aye.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, now we're  
46 good. I doubt there's any opposition to that one.  
47 Those opposed, same sign.

48

49 (No opposing votes)

50

0386

1 MR. HONEA: Roll call. Roll call.

2

3 MS. DEATHERAGE: I can't even read the  
4 roll anymore.

5

6 MR. HONEA: All right, goodnight  
7 everyone.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Goodnight, have a  
10 great evening, thanks so much.

11

12 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you.

13

14 MR. DEMOSKI: Thank you.

15

16 MR. HONEA: See you in Galena.

17

18 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Jack.

19

20 MS. DEATHERAGE: Sounds great.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sounds great. Thank  
23 you, Pollock.

24

25 (Off record)

26

27 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

28

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