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WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I  
TELECONFERENCE  
February 16, 2022  
9:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Jack Reakoff, Chair
- Arnold Demoski
- Timothy Gervais
- Don Honea
- Pollock Simon
- Darrell Vent
- Kevin Whitworth
- Rebecca Wilmarth

Regional Council Coordinator, Katerina Wessels (Acting)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Teleconference - 2/16/2022)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I got 9:00 o'clock now. So we're going to start bringing this meeting to order. Do we have our court recorder?

REPORTER: Hi, Jack, I'm here.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good to hear you Salena.

REPORTER: Good to hear you.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it's 9:00 a.m., February 16 and so we're going to work through the agenda that I have before me. So I'll call the meeting to order. We'll have an invocation. So which Council members are on here, let's find out who the Council members are here at this time. Any Council members on the phone.

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

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin. Other Council members.

MR. VENT: Yes, this is Darrell.

MR. SIMON: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got Darrell, who else?

MR. SIMON: Pollock Simon.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Pollock.

MR. VENT: Hey, Jack, this is Darrell.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, Darrell.

MR. VENT: Say, did Jenny or Tom Kriska call in.

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1                   REPORTER: Who was that talking,  
2 Darrell, was that you?

3  
4                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We need to have  
5 people speak up and who's on this call so we can start  
6 this meeting. So right now I got Kevin, Pollock,  
7 Darrell and myself.

8  
9                   MR. VENT: Okay. Yeah, Jenny and Tom  
10 are in Koyukuk right now, there's a mishap going on  
11 down there, or not a mishap but there's a -- her  
12 brother's not doing too good so they're not able to  
13 call in right now. Tom called me this morning.

14  
15                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who else is down  
16 there, Jenny and who else?

17  
18                   MR. VENT: Jenny and Tom Kriska.

19  
20                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Tommy, okay.

21  
22                   REPORTER: So this is the court  
23 reporter, Tina, I can hear some typing in the  
24 background and just general background noises. So  
25 before we really get started, if everybody could look  
26 at their phone or whatever you're calling in on and  
27 make sure you're on mute, you can do that by pressing  
28 the little star sign and number 6, or you can press the  
29 mute button on your phone. That way we can hear  
30 everybody speaking and when you are going to talk you  
31 can unmute yourself by doing the same thing and then  
32 put yourself back on mute.

33  
34                   Okay, thank you.

35  
36                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Appreciate that  
37 Salena.

38  
39                   REPORTER: Yep.

40  
41                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, I can still  
42 hear that paper shuffling so if you've got your -- if  
43 you're not going to talk mute it, star six or mute your  
44 phone.

45  
46                   So I'm going to call roll here because  
47 I need to know who's on this call.

48  
49                   Is Rebecca Wilmarth on here.

50

0004

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don Honea.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Hey, could you hear me now?

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I could hear you  
8 now, Don. Glad to hear your voice.

9

10 MR. HONEA: Okay, thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So then we have  
13 Pollock, we have Kevin, we have myself. Do we got  
14 Arnold Demoski.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we got Tim  
19 Gervais.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Jack, I'm here. I  
22 got dropped off three times so far. I don't know why  
23 it keeps -- it stays on for about 30 seconds and then a  
24 busy signal comes on and the call drops.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Yeah, I put  
27 in my passcode and it just blanked out, it didn't do  
28 anything. I had to redial in. So there's something  
29 going on with the phone too.

30

31 So Jenny's in Koyukuk with Tommy Kriska  
32 and my roster isn't complete. Do we have anybody else  
33 on the Council that I'm unaware of there, Katya.

34

35 MS. WESSELS: No, Mr. Chair. We -- you  
36 know we have 10 people on the Council and it looks like  
37 six of the Council members are currently present so  
38 that would constitute a quorum.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

41

42 MR. DEMOSKI: Mr. Chair.

43

44 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, so if -- I can try  
45 to reach out to Arnold and Rebecca and see.....

46

47 MR. DEMOSKI: No, Mr. Chair, this is --  
48 Mr. Chair, this is Arnold. I'm just calling in.

49

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1 MS. WESSELS: Okay, great.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that Arnold?

4

5 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

6

7 MS. WESSELS: I can still try to call  
8 Rebecca here in a little bit to see if she can join us  
9 so we now have seven Council members out of 10 which is  
10 a quorum.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Okay, so  
13 we're going to begin the meeting. And as Council  
14 members call in they should speak up if they're at the  
15 meeting. So we need an invocation, do you want to do  
16 that Don.

17

18 MR. HONEA: Not really. I would do it  
19 if I was present but I don't like to do this  
20 telephonically.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, let's see, Jenny  
23 usually -- so I could give one real quick.

24

25 (Invocation)

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So call to order.  
28 The Chair calls this meeting to order, we have seven  
29 members. We got Kevin, Pollock, Darrell, Don, Tim  
30 Gervais, Arnold Demoski and myself. So we'll be  
31 looking for -- Jenny and Tom Kriska are in Koyukuk  
32 Village for some reason, a situation down there,  
33 Jenny's brother's sick or something and we're looking  
34 for Rebecca. So we established a quorum at the  
35 beginning of this call because we're on a conference  
36 call, we can't see across the table, so we do have  
37 quorum.

38

39 And welcome and introduction for  
40 guests. So now we're going to go through and try and  
41 find out who's on this call. You have to unmute your  
42 phone, state who you are, who you're with and then mute  
43 again so we don't get a lot of racket in the  
44 background. So we're going to go through who's on the  
45 call here.

46

47 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya  
48 Wessels. And I am with the Office of Subsistence  
49 Management. I am the Council Coordination Division

50

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1 Supervisor. And I would like to make a suggestion  
2 regarding the introductions.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

5  
6 MS. WESSELS: If we could do it by  
7 agency and/or organization, like you call OSM, Fish and  
8 Wildlife, and so on like BLM, and this way we might  
9 have a little bit more order.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So let's  
12 start with the Office of Subsistence Management. Do we  
13 have OSM people on this call.

14  
15 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning. This is  
16 Cory Graham. I'm a Fisheries Biologist with OSM.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Cory.

19  
20 MS. HONIG: I'm Leigh Honig with OSM,  
21 Council Coordinator, new hire, my first meeting. Thank  
22 you.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

25  
26 MR. UBELAKER: Good morning. This is  
27 Brian Ubelaker, Wildlife Biologist with OSM.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Brian, good  
30 morning.

31  
32 MS. GREDIAGIN: Hi, this is Lisa  
33 Grediagin, the Wildlife Division Supervisor with OSM.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Lisa.

36  
37 MR. AYERS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,  
38 this.....

39  
40 MS. VOORHEES: Good morning. This  
41 is.....

42  
43 MR. AYERS: .....is Scott Ayers.....

44  
45 REPORTER: Okay, say your name again,  
46 please, I think it was Scott.

47  
48 MR. AYERS: Scott Ayers, Fisheries  
49 Division Supervisor.

50

0007

1 REPORTER: Thanks Scott.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Scott Ayers,  
4 good morning. Next one.

5

6 MS. VOORHEES: Good morning. This is  
7 Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist with OSM.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hannah.

10

11 MR. PLANK: Good morning. This is Tom  
12 Plank, Wildlife Biologist with OSM.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tom, good morning.  
15 Anybody else on.....

16

17 MS. LAVINE: Good morning.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

20

21 MS. LAVINE: This is Robbin LaVine,  
22 Subsistence Policy Coordinator with the Office of  
23 Subsistence Management.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
26 Robbin.

27

28 MS. WILLIAMS: Liz Williams,  
29 Anthropologist, OSM. Good morning.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Liz.  
32 Anybody else with OSM on here.

33

34 MS. PILCHER: Good morning. This is  
35 Nissa Pilcher, newly hired, Regional Advisory Council  
36 Coordinator.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Glad to hear your  
39 voice Nissa.

40

41 MS. PILCHER: Hey, Jack.

42

43 MR. ROBERTS: Hi, this is Jason  
44 Roberts, Anthropologist with OSM.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Jason Roberts?

47

48 MR. ROBERTS: Yes.

49

50

0008

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good morning,  
2 Jason.

3  
4 MR. ROBERTS: Good morning.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Other OSM people.

7  
8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any.  
12 We'll go with U.S. Fish and Wildlife.

13  
14 MR. BLIHOVDE: Hey, good morning. This  
15 is Boyd Blihovde, the Refuge Manager at Yukon Delta  
16 National Wildlife Refuge.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Boyd.

19  
20 MR. BLIHOVDE: Good morning.

21  
22 MR. MOSES: Good morning, Jack. This  
23 is Aaron Moses, Subsistence Coordinator for Yukon  
24 Delta.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Aaron.

27  
28 MS. FOX: Good morning, this is Joanna  
29 Fox.

30  
31 MR. HARWOOD: This is Chris.....

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got two at once.

34  
35 MS. FOX: This is Joanna Fox, Refuge  
36 Manager at Kanuti Refuge.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Joanna, good  
39 morning. Next.

40  
41 MS. MORAN: This is Tina.....

42  
43 MR. HARWOOD: Good morning, Chris.....

44  
45 MS. MORAN: .....Moran with Kanuti  
46 Refuge.

47  
48 MR. HARWOOD: .....Harwood.

49  
50



0009

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I got Tina  
2 Moran and then I heard Chris Harwood.

3  
4                   MR. HARWOOD: Yes, that's correct,  
5 sorry Jack.

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.

8  
9                   MR. HARWOOD: Good morning.

10  
11                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any more U.S. Fish  
12 and Wildlife.

13  
14                   MR. REBARCHIK: This is Bob.....

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

18  
19                   MR. REBARCHIK: .....Rebarchik with  
20 U.S. Fish and Wildlife out of Galena.

21  
22                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Bob. I'm getting a  
23 big echo, somebody's not -- we're getting an echo off  
24 of phones that are not muted.

25  
26                   REPORTER: Yep, okay, hang on. So did  
27 I get Gerald and Bob, were those the last two?

28  
29                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I heard Bob, I  
30 didn't get Gerald.

31  
32                   MR. MASCHMANN: Yeah, this is Gerald.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We're still  
35 getting quite a bit of echo behind -- so if you could  
36 mute out at star, six or mute your phone. So other  
37 Fish and Wildlife.

38  
39                   MR. HAVENER: Good morning. This is  
40 Jeremy Havener, I'm the Refuge Subsistence Coordinator  
41 for Koyukuk/Nowitna/Innoko National Wildlife Refuge out  
42 of Galena.

43  
44                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
45 Jeremy.

46  
47                   MR. TULIK: Good morning. This is  
48 Christopher Tulik. Information Technician for the  
49 Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

50

0010

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.

2

3 MS. CARROLL: Good morning. This is  
4 Holly Carroll, Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager.  
5 I'm based out of the Fairbanks Office Team, but I live  
6 in Anchorage.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good morning,  
9 Holly.

10

11 MR. HIRSCHBOECK: Good morning. It's  
12 Rob Hirschboeck. I'm a Federal Wildlife Officer, a  
13 Patrol Captain with U.S. Fish and Wildlife out of the  
14 Fairbanks Office.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Rob.

17

18 MS. KLEIN: And this is Jill Klein with  
19 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm out of the  
20 Anchorage Office and I'm the Regional Subsistence  
21 Coordinator.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Jill.

24

25 MS. KLEIN: Good morning.

26

27 MR. NICORI: Good morning. This is  
28 Emmitt Nicori, I'm the Refuge Information Technician in  
29 the Yukon Delta.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
32 Emmitt. Any other U.S. Fish and Wildlife people on the  
33 call.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any. So  
38 we're going to go for National Park Service.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Have any NPS people  
43 on the call.

44

45 MS. OKADA: Hi, good morning.

46

47 MR. CAMERON: Good morning, Mr. Chair  
48 and members of the Council.

49

50

0011

1 MS. OKADA: Go ahead, Matt.

2

3 MR. CAMERON: Sorry, go ahead Marcy.

4

5 MS. OKADA: Oh. Good morning. This is

6 Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator for Gates of the

7 Arctic National Park and Preserve.

8

9 REPORTER: Hi Marcy.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Marcy.

12 Matt, go ahead.

13

14 MR. CAMERON: This is Matt Cameron,

15 Wildlife Biologist with the National Park Service,

16 Gates of the Arctic. Nice to hear everyone's voice on

17 the call today.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good to hear you.

20 Any other Park Service.

21

22 MR. DEACY: Good morning. This is Will

23 Deacy, Biologist with National Park Service.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Will.

26

27 MS. JOCHUM: Good morning. This is Kim

28 Jochum, Acting Subsistence Program Manager at the

29 Regional Office in Anchorage.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Kim.

32

33 MS. FLOREY: Good morning. This is

34 Victoria Florey, Subsistence Program Analyst at the

35 Regional Office.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,

38 Victoria. Other Park Service people.

39

40 (Teleconference interference -

41 participants not muted)

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any.

46 Bureau of Land Management -- oh, go ahead, did we have

47 another one, Park Service.

48

49 (No comments)

50



0013

1 Ecologist for the Central Yukon Field Office.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good morning,  
4 Jenn.

5

6 MS. MCMILLAN: Good morning.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any more BLM people.

9

10 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, this is Erin  
11 Julianus, Wildlife Biologist, BLM Central Yukon Field  
12 Office.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Erin.  
15 Any more BLM.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Don't hear any.  
20 Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

21

22 MR. STOUT: Good morning. This is  
23 Glenn Stout, Galena Area Biologist for the Alaska  
24 Department of Fish and Game.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Glenn.

27

28 MS. JALLEN: Yeah, good morning, Jack.  
29 This is Deena Jallen, the Yukon River Summer Season  
30 Manager for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Deena.

33

34 MR. BURCH: Good morning. This is Mark  
35 Burch with the Department of Fish and Game in the  
36 Palmer Office.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Mark.

39

40 MS. LONGSON: Good morning. This is  
41 Sara Longson with the Alaska Department of Fish and  
42 Game, I'm the Assistant Galena Area Biologist.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Sara.

45

46 MS. GLEASON: Good morning. This is  
47 Christie Gleason, Yukon River Fall Season Manager with  
48 Fish and Game in Fairbanks.

49

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning,  
2 Christie.

3  
4 MR. RANSBURY: This is Shane Ransbury,  
5 the Assistant Manager for Fall Season on the Yukon  
6 River for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Shane.

9  
10 MS. STUBY: Good morning, everyone.  
11 This is Lisa Stuby with Division of Sportfish, Yukon  
12 Area Management Biologist.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning, Lisa.  
15 Any other Fish and Game people on the call.

16  
17 (No comments)

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't hear any  
20 more. Is there any more agencies, Katya, that I  
21 missed. Do we have TCC people on the call, tribal  
22 organizations.

23  
24 MR. ERVIN: Hi, can you hear me?

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead.

27  
28 MR. ERVIN: Thank you, Chair. This is  
29 Bruce Ervin with Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Tribal  
30 Resource Stewardship Program. Thank you.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Good morning.

33  
34 MR. SIMON: Good morning, Jack and  
35 Council members. Jim Simon with the Tribal Resource  
36 Stewardship Program at TCC.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good morning,  
39 Jim. Other tribal organizations.

40  
41 MS. PETRIVELLI: Mr. Chair, this is Pat  
42 Petrivelli with the Bureau of Indian Affairs,  
43 Subsistence Anthropologist out of Anchorage.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I didn't see that  
46 here, go -- yes, good to hear you Pat.

47  
48 MR. RISDAHL: Mr. Chairman, this is  
49 Greg Risdahl. The InterAgency Staff Committee Member  
50

0015

1 for the Forest Service and Subsistence Program Lead.  
2 Thank you.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Greg.

5  
6 MS. SCHOMOGYI: Good morning. This is  
7 Terese Schomogyi with the Kuskokwim River InterTribal  
8 Fish Commission.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I missed your first  
11 name.

12  
13 MS. SCHOMOGYI: My first name is  
14 Terese.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Terese. Good  
17 morning.

18  
19 MS. MONCRIEFF: Good morning. This is  
20 Catherine Moncrieff with the Yukon River Drainage  
21 Fisheries Association and Serena Fitka will also be  
22 joining the call. She'll be in and out today and  
23 tomorrow.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good morning,  
26 Catherine.

27  
28 MS. MONCRIEFF: Good morning.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other  
31 organization people on the call, individuals, any  
32 public members.

33  
34 (No comments)

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think that  
37 covers everybody. So we've had our introductions of  
38 guests. We'll do an adoption of the agenda, would you  
39 like to help me out on this one Katya.

40  
41 MS. WESSELS: Yes, thank you, Mr.  
42 Chair. Before we actually proceed with the agenda I  
43 would like to make one announcement, is that okay Mr.  
44 Chair?

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, please do.

47  
48 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I would like to let  
49 the Council members know and the meeting participants  
50

0016

1 that the Western Interior Council Coordinator, Karen  
2 Deatherage, retired as of yesterday and I also would  
3 like to introduce the new Council Coordinator for the  
4 Western Interior. She introduced herself earlier, this  
5 is Nissa Pilcher. She will be the new Coordinator for  
6 the Western Interior Subsistence Regional Advisory  
7 Council. So today Nissa will be -- I will be  
8 coordinating the meeting today. Katya Wessels will be  
9 coordinating the meeting today and Nissa just will be  
10 listening and then she will proceed with working with  
11 the Council after the meeting is over.

12

13 So now we'll move on to review and  
14 adopt the agenda. And there -- Mr. Chair, I think we  
15 need to have first the -- well, first I'll suggest to  
16 which additions we need to have to the agenda because  
17 the agenda that was distributed originally there are  
18 several other items that came up under the old  
19 business. It is proposed to add a presentation from  
20 AIDEA on Ambler Access Project update.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes.

23

24 MS. WESSELS: It is proposed to add  
25 under the new business after the call for Western  
26 Arctic Herd Working Group fish and shellfish proposals  
27 to add call for nonrural determination proposals and  
28 also fisheries closure review discussion. Those two  
29 items will be presented by OSM.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

32

33 MS. WESSELS: There are several items  
34 that are proposed to be added under the agency reports.  
35 We're proposing to add bycatch updates that will be  
36 given by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

37

38 Also the U.S. Fish and Wildlife is  
39 going to provide Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge  
40 Kuskokwim River Salmon and Refuge report.

41

42 Also a joint letter for review of the  
43 Council and adoption on bycatch. This is a joint  
44 letter between Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior  
45 and Eastern Interior Councils. We have a draft that  
46 was distributed to the Council.

47

48 Also we are proposing to add Fisheries  
49 Special Action Request 21-01. Closure to non-

50



0017

1 Federally-qualified users.

2

3 Then the BLM is going to provide  
4 information on the dall sheep, also proposed under the  
5 agency reports.

6

7 And additionally we are proposing to  
8 add under the agency reports Special Action Request for  
9 dall sheep in Unit 24A and 26B.

10

11 So these are all the additions that  
12 we're proposing to add to the agenda. I know that's a  
13 lot but that is the proposal.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Katya.  
16 Those are agenda items that came up after the original  
17 agenda was developed weeks ago. And there's some  
18 information that's come up recently during Advisory  
19 Committee meetings and so forth that we were trying to  
20 get like presentations and so forth. So those are the  
21 agenda insertions.

22

23 The Chair will entertain a motion to  
24 adopt this agenda as modified.

25

26 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I make that  
27 motion with the added items on the agenda. This is  
28 Don.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks Don.

31

32 MR. VENT: This is Darrell, I second  
33 it.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, Don moves  
36 to adopt the agenda as modified, do we have a second.

37

38 MR. VENT: This is Darrell, I second.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrell seconds.  
41 Any discussion or additions to the agenda.

42

43 (No comments)

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing no  
46 additions.....

47

48 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
49 Kevin.

50

0018

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: I don't know if I  
4 missed it. This is Kevin, Mr. Chair, I'm not sure if I  
5 missed it but the addition of the Special Action  
6 Request for dall sheep, was that part of the  
7 amendments, I don't recall? That was something you had  
8 brought up in a conversation, dall sheep.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. That was under  
11 the Bureau of Land Management on the third page, it'll  
12 be Special Action Request for dall sheep in Units --  
13 Game Management Units 24A and 24B.

14

15 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay. Got it. Sorry  
16 about that, thanks.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And during that  
19 discussion we will be talking about 19.....

20

21 (Teleconference interference -  
22 participants not muted)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....or Alaska Range  
25 sheep also so that will give a forum for that  
26 discussion also, Kevin. So those agenda additions are  
27 clear to the Council, do we have a question on the  
28 agenda.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Somebody want to  
33 call question.

34

35 MR. DEMOSKI: Question.

36

37 MR. VENT: Call for question.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
40 Those in favor of the agenda as modified read into the  
41 record by Katya Wessels, signify by saying aye.

42

43 IN UNISON: Aye.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

46

47 (No opposing votes)

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So agenda is

50

0019

1 adopted. We're moving to election of officers, the  
2 Chair's up for reelection so I turn that over to Katya  
3 for the selection process. So go ahead, Katya.

4

5 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
6 For the record my name is Katya Wessels, and I'm the  
7 Council Coordination Division Supervisor and I serve as  
8 the Designated Federal Officer at this meeting.

9

10 In accordance with the Council's  
11 charter, Council members elect a Chair, Vice Chair and  
12 a Secretary for one year term. The term usually starts  
13 at the beginning of the calendar year. So I would like  
14 to remind the Council that Council meetings are usually  
15 run under the Robert's Rules of Order and the Robert's  
16 Rules of Order instructs that when we open the  
17 nomination, the nominations need not to be seconded.  
18 So you can just nominate a candidate and that's it.

19

20 So at this point I would like to open  
21 the floor for nominations of the Council's Chair.

22

23 MR. VENT: This is Darrell, I nominate  
24 Jack Reakoff.

25

26 MS. WESSELS: Okay. There's a.....

27

28 MR. HONEA: This is Don, I second.

29

30 MS. WESSELS: .....nomination for Jack  
31 Reakoff. Any other nominations.

32

33 MR. HONEA: No, but this is Don and I  
34 second that nomination.

35

36 MS. WESSELS: Okay. So the nominations  
37 don't need to be seconded, but if there is no other  
38 nominations for the Council Chair, I would like to put  
39 this nomination to a vote. All in favor of nominating  
40 Jack Reakoff as the Council Chair say aye.

41

42 IN UNISON: Aye.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Those opposed, same  
45 sign.

46

47 (No opposing votes)

48

49 MS. WESSELS: There were no votes in

50

0020

1 opposition. Mr. Reakoff was elected as the Council's  
2 Chair. Now I will pass the gavel to Mr. Chair.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Katya.  
7 Thank you, Council. So we are moving to Vice Chair.  
8 So I'll open the floor for nominations for Vice Chair  
9 to the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. You  
10 don't need to second, just make a nomination.

11

12 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, I'd like to  
13 nominate Jenny Pelkola.

14

15 MR. SIMON: Second.

16

17 REPORTER: Who was that that seconded,  
18 Pollock, was that you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's no need for  
21 seconds. So Jenny Pelkola. Any other nominations.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So apparently none,  
26 so we'll come to vote. Those in favor of Jenny Pelkola  
27 being our Vice Chair to the Western Interior Regional  
28 Advisory Council signify by saying aye.

29

30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

33

34 (No opposing votes)

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none,  
37 unanimous Jenny as Vice Chair. Secretary. I'll open  
38 the floor for nominations for Secretary to the Western  
39 Interior Regional Advisory Council.

40

41 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tim.  
42 I'd like to nominate Darrell Vent.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, Darrell.

45

46 MR. SIMON: Second.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have any other  
49 nominations.

50

0021

1 (No comments)

2

3

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, we'll go to vote on that. Those in favor of Darrell as Secretary for the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council signify by saying aye.

7

8 IN UNISON: Aye.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: opposed, same sign.

11

12 (No opposing votes)

13

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that's the elections have been completed. So we have myself, Chair; Jenny as Vice Chair; and Darrell Vent as the Secretary.

So review and approve of the previous minutes that would be found under Tab 3. And all of the Council members, did you receive your meeting material book, I received mine awhile ago, maybe like two weeks ago, at least, plenty of time.

25 MR. HONEA: Same.

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So who didn't get their meeting packet of Council members. Did Rebecca come on this call, Wilmarth.

31 (No comments)

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is she still not present. Have you gotten a hold of her Katya?

36 MS. WESSELS: Sorry, I had my phone on mute. I have not gotten a hold of her yet.

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

41 MS. WESSELS: I am going to try again in a few minutes.

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So everybody has their packet because nobody said they didn't get their packet. So we have the minutes from our past meeting on Tab 3. These look fairly thorough. I don't see anything that I can -- need to address. Anybody see something to address in the minutes from the

0022

1 teleconference on October 13 and 14.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any insertions,  
6 deletions to these minutes, Council members.

7

8 MR. WHITWORTH: Looks good to me, Mr.  
9 Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Other Council  
12 member comments. So I've had these -- I got mine -- I  
13 got probably the slowest mail service and so I've had  
14 my book for two weeks so the Council should have had  
15 time to read these, plenty of lead time. So the Chair  
16 will entertain a motion to adopt the minutes from our  
17 October 13, 14 meeting 2021 by teleconference.

18

19 MR. GERVAIS: So moved by Tim.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim motions to  
22 adopt.

23

24 MR. VENT: Second by Darrell.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Seconded by Darrell.  
27 Any further discussion on the minutes.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MR. HONEA: Call for the question.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called by  
34 Don. Those in favor of adopting the minutes from our  
35 2021 October 13 and 14 meeting by teleconference  
36 signify by saying aye.

37

38 IN UNISON: Aye.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed.

41

42 (No opposing votes)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've adopted the  
45 minutes from our last meeting. Council members.....

46

47 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
48 Kevin.

49

50

0023

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, Kevin, go ahead.

2

3

4 MR. WHITWORTH: Before we start the  
5 next agenda item I've got a question about our new  
6 agenda -- sorry to go back to the new modified agenda.  
7 But I was just wondering, there was enough  
8 modifications to the agenda and my agenda just seems --  
9 I wasn't able to keep up, could somebody at OSM send us  
10 an updated agenda with those amendments by email. It  
11 would be helpful as new business items come up.

12

13 (Teleconference interference -  
14 participants not muted)

15

16 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go head, Katya.

19

20 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I can send the  
21 updated agenda to the Council members.

22

23 (Teleconference interference -  
24 participants not muted)

25

26 MS. WESSELS: I will do it within the  
27 next five to 10 minutes.

28

29 REPORTER: Okay, hang on. This is  
30 Tina, the court reporter.

31

32 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Tina. We have  
33 somebody who is not muted and are having a background  
34 conversation. Please, everyone on the meeting, mute  
35 your phones when you're not speaking. You need to  
36 press star, six to mute your phone, you need to press  
37 star, six to unmute yourself. Please be respectful to  
38 others that are speaking.

39

40 And to answer Mr. Whitworth's question,  
41 I will be able to email the agenda to the Council  
42 members the updated agenda within the next five to 10  
43 minutes.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And you can --  
48 Pollock doesn't have email so you can send that to the  
49 tribal office and maybe they could run that updated  
50 agenda over to him at Allakaket Tribal Office.

0024

1 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you very much.

2

3 MS. WESSELS: Okay. I will try to do  
4 that as well.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, is that the  
7 best way to get you an updated agenda.

8

9 MR. SIMON: Yeah, send it to the  
10 Council.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, send it to the  
13 Tribal Council, and so you have that email, Katya, for  
14 the Tribal Council at Allakaket?

15

16 MS. WESSELS: I do not. I do not.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, so it can be  
19 Googled, it's there somewhere.

20

21 MS. WESSELS: Okay. I will find it.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can somebody at OSM  
24 can transfer that email address for the Allakaket  
25 Tribal Council to Katya so she can send the updated  
26 agenda to Pollock. So thank you for pointing that  
27 Kevin, I appreciate that. It is considerably modified  
28 so it'd be good to have it before all of the Council  
29 members.

30

31 So we're into -- any other issues you  
32 want to talk about Kevin.

33

34 MR. WHITWORTH: No, that's it. Thank  
35 you very much, and thanks for doing that, appreciate  
36 it.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Not a problem. No,  
39 that was great. I should have said that. So Council  
40 members reports and so we usually go down our roster  
41 here. Rebecca hasn't called in yet. And, Don Honea is  
42 -- so, Don, you want to give your Council member  
43 report.

44

45 (No comments)

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You there, Don.

48

49 MR. HONEA: Hello.

50



0025

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Don, are you  
2 there?

3  
4                   MR. HONEA: Yeah, could you hear me  
5 now?

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can hear you now so  
8 go ahead and give your Council member report.

9  
10                  MR. HONEA: Okay. Hey, it's good to be  
11 back on. I don't like this and you know I'm just -- I  
12 do not like teleconferences. But, hey, this is -- I  
13 resigned for -- for this particular seat.

14  
15                  I'd like to thank Karen Deatherage for  
16 her outstanding work and contacting us throughout the  
17 year, throughout the few years she's been our  
18 Coordinator. She'd been really helpful, and helpful  
19 especially to me in the things that I needed  
20 information from.

21  
22                  And welcome Nissa aboard as our  
23 Coordinator. You know she used to be the ADF&G working  
24 there with our Advisory Councils, our local Advisory  
25 Councils and I appreciated her help.

26  
27                  We've had a pretty good fall season  
28 here. I think everybody got moose and such. And the  
29 winter, I guess is no different from where most of our  
30 Board members are from. We've got deep snow here. A  
31 lot of -- probably a lot of moose predation. Some  
32 locals have taken some moose and -- I mean taken some  
33 wolves. So you try to call those numbers and I -- I  
34 just know about the population and speaking with our  
35 local -- with the Refuge here, I'm keeping up on the  
36 numbers on the Novi, I -- and it's looking -- we've  
37 always been -- I've always been very cautious about the  
38 numbers but there's nothing to just -- well, seems  
39 wolf predation or something and I just hope that each  
40 village has their own kind of predation there, some  
41 kind of initiative to go out there and cull those wolf  
42 packs.

43  
44                  Okay, thank you, that's about it.

45  
46                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Don.  
47 And, Pollock, would you like to give us your Council  
48 member report.

49  
50

0026

1 MR. SIMON: Yeah, this is Pollock, can  
2 you hear me?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
5 great, Pollock, go right ahead.

6  
7 MR. SIMON: Okay. I'll give a report.  
8 It's been cold, January has been cold here and a lot of  
9 50 below every morning, it's been 50 below this morning  
10 and it's okay, we have to wrestle with the firewood a  
11 lot and getting tired of it.

12  
13 But this summer there wasn't much -- no  
14 fish, that's a problem. No chum salmon. No king  
15 salmon. And moose is population's down a little bit  
16 yet. It takes the wolf (indiscernible) hunts a little  
17 bit. Again, this year there's no caribou so kind of  
18 tough time for meat. Not everybody got moose so if  
19 somebody got moose they passed it around and share it.

20  
21 But otherwise it's okay here.

22  
23 I kind of don't like this phone  
24 teleconference. Sometimes I have a hard time to call  
25 in.....

26  
27 (Teleconference interference -  
28 participants not muted)

29  
30 MR. SIMON: Sometimes it's hard to dial  
31 star, six and I get too late -- I'll be glad when we  
32 sit down at a meeting face to face.

33  
34 Okay, that's it, Jack, thank you.

35  
36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
37 Pollock. Yeah, nobody likes these conference calls,  
38 they're really hard to deal with but that's what we  
39 have to do right now. So hopefully next meeting we'll  
40 have face to face. So thanks, Pollock, appreciate  
41 that.

42  
43 So then we got Kevin Whitworth, you  
44 want to give us your Council member report, how it's  
45 going there for you.

46  
47 MR. WHITWORTH: Hi, Mr. Chair, this is  
48 Kevin.

49  
50

0027

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Can you hear me?

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

6

7 MR. WHITWORTH: I'll just take a moment  
8 too, I'd like to appreciate everything Karen did for  
9 this Council, thank you, and good luck in your  
10 retirement. I also want to welcome Nissa, looking  
11 forward to working with her in the future.

12

13 Some of my concerns haven't changed  
14 from our last RAC but there are -- I do want to share  
15 them again.

16

17 You know the Mulchatna Caribou Herd out  
18 in the lower Kuskokwim is struggling. Pollock just  
19 mentioned the Northwest Arctic Herd is not doing well  
20 and he's not seeing caribou up in his area. That is a  
21 concern of mine also.

22

23 Also the sheep up in the Alaska range,  
24 east of McGrath here, most of that is Game Management  
25 Unit 19, it's been two years now, they've really  
26 struggled. That herd is struggling and it's just --  
27 this winter, December, during Christmas, we had -- I  
28 don't even know how much rain we had but I know rain  
29 events are hard on sheep, that's what I've been told by  
30 a number of hunters and guides and stuff, people who  
31 are more familiar than I am with sheep, but it was a  
32 significant event in December. Also we just had a  
33 couple, more rain just three weeks ago or so. So after  
34 two years of struggling, those sheep are, and this  
35 winter, I believe they're going to be -- it's going to  
36 be hard to grow that herd.

37

38 Also on top of all the wildlife issues  
39 there is some areas with low moose, like Pollock had  
40 mentioned, up in the Koyukuk, where he's from -- but,  
41 anyhow, I do have concerns with chinook salmon on both  
42 the Yukon and Kuskokwim River. It's been a decade now  
43 and we've got lots of restrictions up and down the  
44 Kuskokwim and the Yukon River. The Yukon River was  
45 shut down last year. The chum salmon crash, it's been  
46 two years, it's a drastic collapse basically of the  
47 chum salmon run. This is -- most people kind of turn  
48 their nose up on chum but it's a highly utilized fish,  
49 a lot of people use chum on the Yukon and Kuskokwim

50

0028

1 River. And not only that I believe the chinook and  
2 chum salmon, I've heard a lot of people say this, those  
3 are keystone species to these ecosystems. So not  
4 getting that nutrition up into those headwater streams,  
5 these areas are struggling. So grizzly bears are now  
6 targeting moose and caribou potentially. I've heard it  
7 on the Yukon and people here in the upper Kuskokwim  
8 saying that there was a lot of grizzlies up in the --  
9 in the falltime, they were hunting moose which is not  
10 usual. Just outside of McGrath, just a few miles,  
11 there was a grizzly bear hunting moose which is -- that  
12 is very unusual for this area and it's -- I really do  
13 think it's because of the salmon crash and collapse of  
14 the ecosystem.

15

16 All these issues are food security  
17 issues for the people up and down both rivers. That's  
18 very concerning to me, and I'm just going to leave it  
19 at that.

20

21 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
24 report. Yes, we heard that -- Koyukuk River Advisory  
25 met again yesterday, we hear that same thing, brown  
26 bears walking up and down the beaches way far away from  
27 salmon streams and targeting moose and other bears, you  
28 know, they were -- one of the bears was -- some hunters  
29 went to a black bear den and the bear was all tore up  
30 and chewed up by a grizzly, had been fighting with a  
31 grizzly and the meat was shot. We keep hearing this  
32 this year about the brown bear targeting other animals  
33 because of the salmon collapse.

34

35 So, Arnold.

36

37 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, that's.....

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin,

40 yes.

41

42 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, and that brings  
43 up another point, too, I forgot to mention. Normally  
44 there is a group of people here in McGrath they hunt  
45 black bears and last spring when a lot of people go out  
46 for black bears they were able to catch just one or  
47 two. I mean usually 10 to 15 black bears would be taken  
48 in the spring, but this year those numbers -- that's  
49 just off of memory of what I see on Facebook and people  
50

0029

1 I talk to so they're not real concrete numbers, but,  
2 anyhow, there was very few black bears and it could be  
3 because of these grizzly bears having to focus on  
4 different things.

5

6 But that's all, thank you, Mr. Chair.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. When we had a  
9 meeting in Galena probably five, six years ago, Sidney  
10 Huntington was 100 years old showed up at our meeting  
11 and so we had him come up to the mic and he wanted to  
12 tell us, right before he died, he says, you have to  
13 start controlling these brown bears, they're going to  
14 eat all the moose, then they're going to eat all the  
15 black bears and they're going to control your lives.  
16 And he said it several times. And when Sidney said  
17 something you sat up and listened. Sidney's words are  
18 coming true. The brown bears are going after the  
19 moose, they're killing a lot of moose calves, killing a  
20 lot of adult moose, they're digging out the black  
21 bears, they're going to control our lives. And the  
22 Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
23 Service, they're not going to fix this issue, people  
24 have to start taking more brown bears. We have lots of  
25 seasons and lots of bag limit for brown bears, people  
26 have to start locking into taking more brown bears as  
27 another resource.

28

29 So thanks for those comments, Kevin, I  
30 appreciate that. But I have to reiterate what Sidney  
31 said that are actually prophesied what we're seeing  
32 right now.

33

34 So Arnold Demoski, you have a Council  
35 member report.

36

37 MR. DEMOSKI: Mr. Chair, can you hear  
38 me?

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, speak up a  
41 little bit, move closer to your mic.

42

43 MR. DEMOSKI: Okay, how's that, can you  
44 hear me good?

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: A little better, go  
47 ahead.

48

49 MR. DEMOSKI: Okay. So everything is

50

0030

1 good around here. We're just hoping for some kind of  
2 fishing this summer, some salmon or some chum salmon at  
3 least. People are grateful for the salmon they got  
4 (indiscernible - cuts out) it's not the same as going  
5 out there and fishing for it though. People don't want  
6 to lose that part of their tradition. But they are  
7 grateful for the fish that we did receive.

8

9

10 So the Middle Yukon AC did authorize a  
11 winter hunt for moose hunting here in our unit, in the  
12 Kaiyuh Flats area. For the second straight year our  
13 moose population is doing fairly good, not great, but  
14 it's doing good. We're doing really good with our  
15 moose population because of the wolf hunters around  
16 here. We implemented a wolf bounty program last  
17 winter, the Nulato Tribal Council did, and we're  
18 implementing that for a second straight year so our  
19 wolf hunters around here are doing really good taking  
20 wolves. They -- I did talk to a couple of them, they  
21 did note -- they did tell me that there's brown bears  
22 moving into the Kaiyuh area now, I think they said  
23 there was six brown -- or six grizzlies over there. So  
24 they're knocking down the wolves but the bears are  
25 moving in now so that's a concern for us around here.  
26 I haven't seen many moose kills compared to last winter  
27 so hopefully they're doing good in that area unless I  
28 just haven't seen any -- the reason I see all of them  
29 is from Facebook posts so I haven't seen any so maybe  
30 -- maybe -- hopefully the moose are not taking a huge  
31 hit. That's the only reason I know about the moose  
32 kills is through Facebook or talking to people. But I  
33 haven't heard or I haven't seen much on Facebook so  
34 hopefully the moose are doing really good this winter,  
35 surviving, we are doing a really good job with wolves  
36 in our area for predator control, just knocking them  
37 down. There's a pack below Galena that is a really  
38 smart black wolf I heard that nobody can get, they said  
39 that leader of that pack is a black wolf and he's  
40 really big. They said it was a really smart wolf.  
41 They've been trying to get it for years now so  
42 hopefully they can get that wolf and, yeah, it just  
43 sounds like a really smart wolf from what I've heard.

44

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But everything else is good. We're  
just looking forward to -- we have a potlatch -- I'm  
sorry our annual traditional Stick Dance, looking  
forward to that. A lot of people will be here so I  
think we're approved for two moose to feed everybody to  
feed our villagers, to feed our family during that

0031

1 time. So, yeah, everything's good.

2

3

4 Nobody's really trapping any beaver  
5 around here yet that I know of. Maybe there's a couple  
6 people but I just don't know of it, but I haven't heard  
7 anything.

7

8

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Arnold.

11

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That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

So we have Tim Gervais, go ahead, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: Good morning, Jack. Good morning Council. Good morning Staff members. I'd like to start off with thanking in advance, Jack, Jenny and Darrell for their service as officers in this upcoming year. I'm appreciative that Darrell and Tommy reapplied and were reappointed to the Council. I feel their information and experience and communication abilities are really a big plus to what we discuss and what we get done as a Council. So that was a big win for everybody.

I'd like to welcome Nissa as our Council Coordinator. Known Nissa for decades now with her work with our State, ADF&G Councils, and does a really great job and she's going to carry forward good administration work for the WIRAC. So that's a big plus too.

And, Karen, I don't know what you do on your first day of retirement, probably celebrate a lot or something, but wished Karen would have stuck around one more day so we could have said goodbye to her, but appreciated all her work and I know she did a lot of extra effort on my part getting me materials in really remote places where I'd been traveling over the years and good communication and she did a great job. So I wish her good health and enjoyable retirement.

The State of Alaska set up this salmon bycatch task force, which is meeting basically monthly for another year. The make up of the task force is -- it's kind of skewed, it doesn't really have very much subsistence members, just -- as far as I can tell just one fellow out of Port Lions that has a subsistence background. There is one fellow from Yukon, from Emmonak with, what is that, the CDQ group for Yukon

0032

1 Delta, so I'm not familiar with that gentleman, I don't  
2 know how much he's going to push commercial fishing  
3 over subsistence or put in an equal effort for the  
4 subsistence community. But there's several -- several  
5 members on the task force are hard-core lobbyist and  
6 professionals in promoting the trawl industry and a  
7 couple people are actual framers of the Amendment 91  
8 that the North Pacific Management Council approved in,  
9 I believe it was 2009, spring of 2009 and what -- it  
10 took me a while for me to figure it out or realize it  
11 but the way these amendments, you know, it came up as a  
12 conservation proposal but as it came into regulation,  
13 what it really is is just a way to legalize prohibited  
14 species bycatch and it was a way for the trawl industry  
15 to carry on and continue business as usual and not  
16 affect their bottom line significantly but have the  
17 public appearance that they were actually taking  
18 conservation action. And here we are with 31 years  
19 into that Bering Sea trawl fishery and we all know how  
20 poor the king salmon stocks are on Kuskokwim River,  
21 Yukon River, Norton Sound rivers, so it's not that  
22 bycatch is the only thing but the bycatch out takes or  
23 catches in the -- in the '90s and 2000s were  
24 significant, Amendment 91 never had any provisions to  
25 make up for those horrendous levels of bycatch and now  
26 -- I mean it could -- it's just keeps kicking the can  
27 down the road on the conservation but the end result is  
28 Mother Nature doesn't lie and now the fish are gone,  
29 and our oldest year class or potentially two year  
30 classes are essentially extinct on the Yukon.

31  
32                   These are really bad, just terrible,  
33 terrible things that have happened during our watch,  
34 during our time as subsistence users on the river. So  
35 I -- there is, you know, naturally there's growing  
36 opposition to the bycatch but the trawl proponents are  
37 -- they're bringing up other issues such as global  
38 warming, the IUU, illegal under reported unregulated  
39 fishing, salmon sharks, I mean they all -- all these  
40 things have some level of effects on the salmon stocks  
41 but as a subsistence community and as a state there's  
42 only so much we can do with the global warming and  
43 climate change thing, it's really a problem, it's  
44 beyond us, other than probably it does save a lot of  
45 carbon monoxide production having us do these  
46 teleconferences instead of actually flying into a  
47 place, but, you know, out of those four main items that  
48 we talk about where it might be affecting the salmon  
49 stocks, the trawl bycatch in the Bering Sea and to an  
50



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1 extent the Gulf of Alaska, those -- that's the only  
2 avenue that's available to take action and eliminate  
3 some of the bycatch or the salmon laws. I've been  
4 surprised that, NOAA, North Pacific Management Council,  
5 ADF&G hasn't pushed for more of closing or severely  
6 restricting the trawl fisheries until we get something  
7 figured out because this -- the current way that the  
8 management and the public discourse is going where we  
9 just talk about it, and throw around ideas and keep the  
10 trawl fleet fishing nine or 10 months a year, that has  
11 pushed our salmon stocks in the wrong direction.

12  
13 So I hope that actions such as the NOAA  
14 denied -- let me look at this reference here --  
15 December 21st of last year was Kuskokwim River  
16 InterTribal Fish Commission, AVCP, Yukon River  
17 InterTribal Fish Commission, Bering Sea Elders Group,  
18 St. Paul Island, their petition was denied by the  
19 Secretary of Commerce and that was to -- let me get the  
20 wording here -- emergency action to eliminate chinook  
21 salmon bycatch and set up a cap on chum salmon bycatch.

22  
23 So what I would want to convey to the  
24 members of this Council is, even though we've all lived  
25 it and we're experiencing it and we can't believe that  
26 the state we're in with these low salmon stocks,  
27 there's other people that are -- they just regard the  
28 salmon as a nuisance species and they don't understand  
29 the significance of what subsistence is to rural  
30 Alaska. I mean we've heard it in our own WIRAC  
31 meetings where Bill Twiet, Tweet, I'm sorry, I don't  
32 know the correct pronunciation of his last name, he's  
33 telling us directly that the State of Washington, which  
34 is his -- you know, he's like the Fish and Game  
35 representative for the State of Washington, they have  
36 no -- hardly any incentive to slow down the amount of  
37 trawl fishing because they feel that the economic value  
38 to their state is so important that they don't need to  
39 reduce their fishing time to allow the salmon stocks  
40 and a subsistence harvest to recover up to historic  
41 levels.

42  
43 So I'm not an expert in all the public  
44 policy stuff but this -- the WIRAC, being on the  
45 Advisory Council, we -- that's all we are and we're not  
46 going to be able to dictate what happens but I would  
47 encourage all the members to discuss these issues with  
48 entities that do have more significant political powers  
49 such as the tribes and the communities and maybe with  
50

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1 their -- with a more higher level of political  
2 influence that these entities have maybe can make some  
3 change but we need to deal with this, right, we need to  
4 keep dealing with it. Like Kevin made a comment at the  
5 beginning of his presentation where he was bringing up  
6 some of the same issues as the last meeting, this  
7 bycatch issue's been -- we've been bringing it up since  
8 I joined the Council in the mid-2000s, I mean it's just  
9 -- for whatever -- the way the situation's unfolding is  
10 our arguments have been clear and reasonable but  
11 apparently at this time NOAA and the Administration,  
12 such as the Executive Branch of the State of Alaska,  
13 they don't want to slow down the trawl fishery. I'm  
14 just -- it's probably for economic reasons, I mean I'm  
15 not privy to their conversations or anything like that  
16 but we need to work with the Federal Subsistence Board  
17 and try to get as much -- convey as much urgency that  
18 we get our information on record with this salmon  
19 bycatch task force and we need to be beyond on the  
20 argument that we don't have any fish, we need to break  
21 out of this situation where we're talking, and studying  
22 and researching things while the bycatch is still  
23 occurring. I think the situation's drastic enough now  
24 that the fishing needs to be curtailed and then, yeah,  
25 have the public discourse and figure out how -- it's  
26 not sustainable.

27  
28 And I'm sorry I'm taking a long time to  
29 get this presentation across.

30  
31 But for a lot of years, especially like  
32 in North Pacific Management Council meetings people  
33 will go up and make testimony and say how these  
34 fisheries management in Alaska is model to the rest of  
35 the world, I mean it's a model, but some of the stuff  
36 we're successful with but one of the models that's  
37 being conveyed is that there's certain user groups and  
38 certain biologic populations of fish are insignificant  
39 to other stocks and other fisheries that make more  
40 money and are more economically powerful, have more  
41 political power and, therefore, they get thrown under  
42 the bus, not dealt with correctly or equitably, even  
43 when it comes to violating national standards.

44  
45 So I just want to salute those  
46 organizations that filed the petition with NOAA, I  
47 think it was justified and timely and I hope that the  
48 Federal Subsistence Board can have some kind of  
49 discourse with NOAA and not let the issue die there but  
50

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1 we need to stay on it, we need to deal with it and we  
2 need to get every -- we don't have enough spare fish  
3 right now to be giving them away as bycatch in the  
4 Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries.

5

6 All right, sorry to take so much time  
7 but it's an important topic that we're having a lot of  
8 trouble getting on top of.

9

10 Oh, and one final thing, I talked to a  
11 couple fellows that are subsistence users in Kuskokwim  
12 Bay and they were saying that they've seen some very  
13 substantial sockeye catches this summer, more than  
14 they've ever seen in their lives. So that is one  
15 bright spot in a really dismal summer with the king  
16 salmon and chum salmon, that potentially this sockeye  
17 abundance in the Kuskokwim region is going to be  
18 increasing.

19

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Tim. So  
23 I -- you're speaking about bycatch that affects our  
24 region, under .805, the Regional Councils provide --  
25 under 3(b) of .805 provide a forum for expression of  
26 opinions and recommendations by persons interested in  
27 any matter related to subsistence uses of fish and  
28 wildlife within the region. And you're -- we're fully  
29 within our statutory authority to discuss this issue of  
30 bycatch which people -- that's extraterritorial, it's  
31 like, no, it's not, it's affecting our region. And so  
32 you're fully within your authority to have a discourse  
33 on that.

34

35 I do have one question for you, we do  
36 have significant bycatch in Area M of chum salmon,  
37 950,000 chum salmon were taken in the June fishery.  
38 What's your opinions about that?

39

40 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, good question. I  
41 was in Area M in August and September and part of  
42 October and I was working out of False Pass and King  
43 Cove and got to meet a lot of those fishermen, the  
44 setnetters, drift fishermen and seiners and the general  
45 cure, I heard, is if they -- well, one thing is they  
46 said, if they can -- they had a lot of kings moving  
47 through their area in June so if they keep the fishery  
48 closed through early June and most of later part of  
49 June that allows most of the kings to travel through,

50

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1 whether they're going to Bristol Bay or Kuskokwim or  
2 Yukon. And then the chum, it's just -- they had a big  
3 year, they had a huge commercial year and it factors on  
4 the way the wind's blowing, the timing of the opening,  
5 it was -- they just -- it all just worked out for them  
6 the way -- with the weather and the opening and I don't  
7 know, basically, you know, you have to close.....

8  
9 (Teleconference interference -  
10 participants not muted)

11  
12 MR. GERVAIS: .....commercial fishing  
13 down if you were trying to eliminate some bycatch. I  
14 was surprised though the.....

15  
16 (Teleconference interference -  
17 participants not muted - expletives)

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: I'm just waiting for  
20 somebody -- can somebody mute their phones please.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We got people on the  
23 phone.....

24  
25 REPORTER: Excuse me. Hey, hey,  
26 whoever's having the background conversation please  
27 check and mute your phone. We'd really appreciate it  
28 so we could hear the presentation.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is anyone listening  
31 -- hello, hello, on that call.....

32  
33 REPORTER: Excuse me, I do not think  
34 you want people listening to your conversation, please  
35 mute your phone now.

36  
37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....can you hear  
38 me, mute your phone and stop your background  
39 conversation over the top of this meeting.

40  
41 Thank you.

42  
43 REPORTER: Thank you. It's star, six  
44 or mute on your phone. I mean I can go through and  
45 disconnect that line, I hate to do that but let's  
46 please be respectful of the people who are speaking.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's rudimentary,  
49 we're grown ups and we should be able to push star, six  
50

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1 to participate in this meeting or we're going to cut  
2 your line off.

3

4

5 So the issue is there was 950,000 chum  
6 salmon, my opinion is the Department of Fish and Game  
7 managers have to contemplate high bycatch, they start  
8 getting high bycatch of chum salmon when they have  
9 extremely suppressed populations on the Kuskokwim and  
10 Yukon. They need to adjust their openings, or work  
11 with this issue. This is a problem, losing that much  
12 fish to bycatch.

12

13

14

15 So I was asking you about that  
16 particular issue.

15

16

17

18 So that's.....

18

19

19 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I do have one thing  
20 I want to add to that Jack.

20

21

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead, Tim.

22

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23 MR. GERVAIS: Something, as I've  
24 thought about it, what could be done to figure it out  
25 is I wish that Fish and Game or whatever, some neutral  
26 entity or whoever, whatever is the best fit, there was  
27 more effort putting into the genetics on the -- if  
28 you're -- if you have a fish opening that targets  
29 sockeye or silvers or pinks and you end up catching  
30 kings or chums, whatever species you're trying to take  
31 the pressure off of, if the fishermen are catching  
32 those in significant quantities I would like to see  
33 genetic testing on that fish and find out who it is  
34 because every port you go into and every boat you talk  
35 with, they all have their own personal opinion on, oh,  
36 that fish is so and so's, or that fish is -- that's a  
37 Russian fish or that's a Columbia River fish, or that's  
38 a local fish, I was -- I was surprised and impressed, I  
39 didn't realize that those small streams, like the  
40 Fourmile, the Twentymile Sloughs that are in that area  
41 on the Lower Peninsula, they do have a lot of local  
42 production there. I didn't realize until I was down  
43 there but to get this bycatch -- one -- I don't know,  
44 sometimes like say in a commercial salmon fishery for  
45 Area M, that was maybe determined as interception and  
46 not bycatch because it is legal to catch salmon with  
47 these permits, but they have a potential interception  
48 issue I would like to see.....

0038

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, Tim.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: .....genetics done

4 on.....

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim.

7

8 MR. GERVAIS: .....on a reasonable  
9 amount of this fish so that the managers and the public  
10 would know who's fish it is and if it is interception  
11 or if it's locally caught. I think that's a good place  
12 to get some real data on where that fish belongs.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We've spent long  
15 enough on this one, it's warranted that we make a  
16 recommendation for genetic composition of that  
17 interception, the harvest of chum salmon and chinook  
18 salmon in Area M, the Department's gone away from that,  
19 they don't want to -- they want to stick their head in  
20 the sand but we need to have that data so we can make  
21 that recommendation.

22

23 But I appreciate your report but we got  
24 a lot of agenda in front of us and thanks so much, Tim,  
25 I'm glad you're back on the call here this meeting and  
26 you have important information for us.

27

28 So did we ever get Jenny or Tom Kriska  
29 on this call. Are you there Jenny or Tom.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I don't hear  
34 anybody else. So we -- we've covered the present  
35 Council members, did we get Rebecca on this call?

36

37 MS. WILMARTH: Rebecca is here.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Rebecca. We're  
40 taking Council member comments, and so as a Council  
41 member we would like to hear your comments from your  
42 perspective in your area, you represent your area on  
43 the Kuskokwim River. Go ahead.

44

45 MS. WILMARTH: I don't have any  
46 comments at this time. I just got on about 30 seconds  
47 ago.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh. So we started

50

0039

1 at 9:00 o'clock, we have had a lot of comments from  
2 Council members so far, we had elections, I was  
3 reelected as Chair of the Western Interior Regional  
4 Advisory Council, Jenny Pelkola is the Vice Chair and  
5 Darrell is the Secretary. So you -- do you have any  
6 issues -- I'm asking, do you have any issues, how  
7 deep's your snow, are people -- how is it going down  
8 there, that's the kind of stuff we like to know about  
9 from your particular area, your perspective. You don't  
10 have any comment?

11

12 MS. WILMARTH: That's actually the  
13 reason I wasn't on at 9:00. We got about 14 inches of  
14 fresh snow and we're out cleaning off the AT&T long  
15 distance dish to get the phones back on. So we've got  
16 over 100 inches of snow here this winter and it's just  
17 been one blast after another so we had a very cold 30  
18 to 40 below most of November and so the ice on the  
19 river is quite thick, four to five feet thick, I would  
20 guess the last time we checked, and we've got a lot of  
21 snow on top of it. So it's going to be a wet spring  
22 we're thinking.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So did you --  
25 are you still hearing me?

26

27 (No comments)

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello.

30

31 REPORTER: Yes, we are.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello.

34

35 MS. WILMARTH: I'm here.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. My phone made  
38 a ton and I'm not sure if I'm losing my battery, let me  
39 switch phones here. So if we're going to continue  
40 these teleconferences, I'm going to have to have OSM  
41 buy us some phones because I can't keep up with them  
42 with my battery going dead here.

43

44 (Pause)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can you hear me now?

47

48 REPORTER: Yes.

49

50

0040

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, good. So I  
2 switched phones, I got to charge this one up. So we --  
3 did you have any other comments, Rebecca, your moose  
4 are belly deep, are people seeing wolf kills there  
5 also?

6  
7                   MS. WILMARTH: Lots and lots of moose  
8 in the immediate area. It's not uncommon to see two or  
9 three or four or five even on the -- right on the  
10 river. We did have wolves hanging near the village,  
11 coming right into the village, a couple were taken  
12 right in the village. They seem to have moved on.  
13 They killed a moose on the river and didn't take  
14 anything but one hind quarter, and they haven't  
15 returned. So it looks like the growing population of  
16 moose have also brought the wolves in closer. But lots  
17 and lots of snow making it difficult, it looks like,  
18 for animals to move around.

19  
20                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So I  
21 appreciate your comments. And so we're on the Chair's  
22 report. And so I participated in the Western Interior  
23 Regional -- or Western Arctic Caribou Herd meeting  
24 which was in mid-December. The numbers of the Western  
25 Arctic Herd have fallen off, it was 206, went up to 249  
26 or something.

27  
28                   MR. VENT: Hey, Jack, this is Darrell.

29  
30                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

31  
32                   MR. VENT: Yeah, I could give a report  
33 after, too, whenever you are done.

34  
35                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, how did I miss  
36 you, oh, you're -- oh, you know what I got, I got an  
37 old roster, Darrell. Okay, yeah, Karen had an old  
38 roster here that's why you're not on my list. Go  
39 ahead, Darrell, sorry about that.

40  
41                   MR. VENT: All right. Up in the Huslia  
42 area we been noticing quite a few cow and calf kills.  
43 The packs have been getting a lot more in size. The  
44 snow is pretty deep so they're having an easier time  
45 gathering up, you know, it takes a few wolves to get a  
46 cow and calf together so we know there's quite a bit of  
47 them that take advantage of this snow this winter. So  
48 it's hitting them hard down around -- I think it was  
49 around Edwards Slough, down below Huslia, up above  
50



0041

1 Dulbi Slough, seen some of those, and then also up on  
2 the Huslia River side. So there's -- the snow is, you  
3 know, gotten deep and then it rained a little bit and  
4 so it's kind of cutting them up a little bit so they're  
5 kind of hindered when it happens like that and the  
6 wolves take advantage of that.

7  
8                   And the fish were, you know, talk a lot  
9 about bycatch, you know, I got some friends on the  
10 board for some of the fisheries out there and they're  
11 noticing that, you know, big money is talking, and  
12 we're having a hard time here because money beats all  
13 others right now and we're not able to compete for that  
14 fish for our cultural and traditional use. There's no  
15 way that you can go out into these international waters  
16 and say, you know, there's hatchery fish involved --  
17 not involved. I think there are more hatchery fish and  
18 they are real competitive when it comes to feeding on  
19 the natural Bering Sea area, or competing with our  
20 natural stocks. We're fighting a war -- I mean not a  
21 war, but we're fighting a big influence because other  
22 international areas are using hatchery stock fish to  
23 supplement their diets and it's really taking a toll  
24 with the bycatch, you know, it's just a piece of the  
25 problem. I think we have bigger problems; we have to  
26 learn to work together our there and try to solve these  
27 problems there.

28  
29                   Up in our area we're worried because we  
30 can't catch the chum no more. Which means we're  
31 getting more dependent on less foods available and to  
32 really give you a picture of what that means in our  
33 area is that about 1970s we lost our migration patterns  
34 for the caribou herds, we don't have caribou in our  
35 area no more, if we do have caribou, we have to go  
36 quite a ways to get it and it's not as fat as the fall  
37 caribou we used to have.

38  
39                   And then on another note, we had  
40 trouble with our moose back in the '80s, '70s and we  
41 had to do aerial wolf hunting to curb down the  
42 predation and try to get our moose population back up.

43  
44                   And now recently we used to catch  
45 kings, but now we're limited on catching kings and now  
46 our chum salmon, our main staple has been hit pretty  
47 hard. This summer there was no fishing. That means  
48 that we had to depend on other foods. So, you know,  
49 you're cutting our food population right in half when  
50

0042

1 you do that, if there's no management on it, we're  
2 having a tough issue here with this management problem.  
3 I think there's got to be an answer to it but we have  
4 to start working together to try to figure out this  
5 problem here. That means that, you know, we're relying  
6 on whitefish and sheefish and moose and we're having a  
7 tough year this year because the moose population is  
8 getting hit from two different types of predations. Up  
9 in the Huslia area the moose start coming out from the  
10 -- I mean the grizzlies start coming out from the  
11 mountains, they don't usually do that. They usually  
12 try to stay away from humans but now that they have to  
13 compete they have to come in and start looking for  
14 calves in our area and there's been some real -- I  
15 noticed, you know, that the cows, they've been coming  
16 out on the water and they've been staying there,  
17 there's a problem there. Those bears are getting those  
18 calves right away. So they're highly effective  
19 hunters. And the wolves, they've been getting the both  
20 of them.

21

22 Oh, hold on a second -- I'm in a  
23 meeting right now.

24

25 I'm sorry about that I had to answer my  
26 door here, I had -- I can't afford to use internet at  
27 home, I had to come into Fairbanks to use the internet,  
28 we're not fortunate to, you know, get all this  
29 information that we need here.

30

31 But, you know, speaking on top of those  
32 topics there, you know, I know how everybody else is  
33 being affected by this predation, money, you know, and  
34 it's really starting to show that we are having  
35 problems and have to try to correct these. So whether  
36 it's, you know, putting in emergency closures or if  
37 that's going to help or try to work at the  
38 international level.

39

40 Some of these are really important  
41 topics and we need to make sure that we discuss a lot  
42 of this and see what we can do for the village --  
43 people in the rural areas also, you know, but I think  
44 we're really getting hit because we really rely on  
45 these foods here for our staple and economy. We don't  
46 -- a lot of people I know that live in the villages,  
47 they don't have a lot of jobs there so they rely  
48 heavily on these traditional and cultural foods.

49

50

0043

1 I just want to stress, you know, that  
2 we need to start dialogue with the State and the  
3 Federal government on trying to sit together and hash  
4 out all these conversations, whether it be  
5 consultation, or -- because, you know, I notice the  
6 Kuskokwim, they're into consultation and on the Yukon  
7 River we have a variety of State and Federal, tribal  
8 and private lands.

9  
10 So I thank you, Jack, for letting me  
11 speak, you know. And also thank you for the  
12 opportunity to be on the WIRAC again, you know, I  
13 always had my heart into it to speak for our people  
14 here in the Huslia area, or the Koyukuk River area, I  
15 guess you could say, and it's -- I'm just glad to be  
16 back on.

17  
18 Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Darrell.  
21 Yeah, we were baffled why you were taken off to start  
22 with and it was a long process trying to get you back  
23 on here again. You're a real good Council member. So  
24 appreciate you serving again.

25  
26 I was in my Chair's report. I  
27 participated in the Western Arctic Caribou meeting on  
28 the phone and our representative, Pollock, wasn't  
29 there, and so then I actually participated in the  
30 meeting. That herd has gone from -- dropped to 207,  
31 went up to 249 or so and now it's back at 188,000.  
32 That's a real concern.d There's 12,000 harvest,  
33 there's lots of cow harvest. During that meeting one  
34 of the representatives, Charlie Lean, put a proposal  
35 forward for consideration to reduce the cow harvest to  
36 25 percent of the overall harvest, the villages of the  
37 NANA region voted against that. They got to get it  
38 through their head they can't keep killing cow caribou  
39 at these rates, that herd is going to go way down if we  
40 keep doing this. So I'm concerned about the Western  
41 Arctic Herd.

42  
43 The Porcupine Herd is large and the  
44 Porcupine Herd this year -- for four years it came up  
45 to the Dalton Highway and they don't like that road,  
46 they really don't like that road. You can watch them  
47 bounce back. Traffic comes, they move back. They try  
48 to sneak up, they get pushed back. There's constant  
49 traffic on this road with trucks and vehicles and so  
50

0044

1 forth. So this was the first year that the Western  
2 Arctic -- or the Porcupine Caribou Herd crossed from  
3 Coldfoot all the way to Finger Mountain, which is about  
4 an 80 mile section. And there was a few hundred, or  
5 possibly low thousands of caribou went, not too far to  
6 the west of the road and we got really deep snow here  
7 in December and those caribou went back.

8  
9 We had one snow fall in mid-December  
10 that was 41.5 inches in a 30 hour period. It was up to  
11 my chest in snow in one fall. The most snow I've ever  
12 seen fall. The wind didn't blow. These mountains were  
13 covered in snow. The sheep were basically over their  
14 backs in snow. And so they -- then the wind come up  
15 and -- we didn't get the rain and snow. We didn't get  
16 the rain like happened in the Lower Koyukuk and down to  
17 the Yukon River, the Yukon Flats didn't get that rain  
18 either. Fairbanks, and everybody to the south, and it  
19 was brutal in the Kuskokwim -- Upper Kuskokwim with the  
20 flooding, literally flooded lakes and flooded rivers.  
21 That was amazing. That's super detrimental for the  
22 sheep population. Our sheep population here took two  
23 bad winters, '18/19, 19/20 rain on snow in October,  
24 rain on snow in March and April, decimated the sheep  
25 population. And I'm super concerned about the Alaska  
26 Range sheep also within our region.

27  
28 So we had so far 99 inches of snow,  
29 just like Rebecca was talking about, and so -- but it  
30 settled down and the moose are -- it's drier snow, the  
31 moose are getting through the snow but there's  
32 virtually no calves here. You see very few moose  
33 calves. We have high bear predation. My wife and I  
34 killed a black bear up on the side of the mountain  
35 eating blueberries in September, but when I fleshed  
36 that bear skin there was moose calf hair coming out of  
37 the bear's fur. So those black or grizzly bears take  
38 moose calves and they're very good at catching those  
39 moose calves.

40  
41 So the old-timers used to say if you  
42 catch a moose or a caribou it's your obligation to take  
43 a bear or a wolf. So people are going to have to  
44 start, like if you see a bear, I got to go over there  
45 and get this bear, people have to start taking more  
46 bears. It's incumbent upon the subsistence users to  
47 take some of this predation off of our food resources.  
48 Just like Sidney Huntington was saying.

49  
50

0045

1                   So I see very few yearling moose, two  
2 year olds, three year olds, basically with the moose  
3 population, the bulls that we have here, which reflects  
4 the moose population, is basically four, five, six year  
5 old bulls. There's no older moose, there's no younger  
6 moose, not a whole lot, there's a few. And so our  
7 moose population is doing okay but the sheep didn't  
8 need another deep snow year here. And so we're going  
9 to be talking about sheep later on.

10

11                   Karen was locked in and was -- Karen  
12 Deatherage was doing really well here and was working  
13 with us routinely right up until yesterday when she  
14 decided to retire. I'm really happy that Nissa has  
15 been assigned to this Council because I worked with  
16 Nissa for years with the Koyukuk River Advisory  
17 Committee, she's worked with a lot of the Advisory  
18 Committees, everybody knows her because she's worked  
19 with all the Interior Advisory Committees. I'm really  
20 super happy, she's a very detailed oriented person,  
21 she's very on task and so I'm really happy to have  
22 Nissa as our new Coordinator, so welcome to our  
23 Council, Nissa.

24

25                   And so we -- that would be my report.  
26 And so any Council member comments on the Council  
27 member's reports at this point.

28

29                   MR. SIMON: This is Pollock.

30

31                   MR. DEMOSKI: Mr. Chair, this is  
32 Arnold.

33

34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Pollock.

35

36                   MR. DEMOSKI: Oh, go ahead, Pollock,  
37 yes.

38

39                   MR. SIMON: Yes.

40

41                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead Pollock.

42

43                   MR. SIMON: During the workshop meeting  
44 I had trouble with my phone, I couldn't star, seven and  
45 couldn't get on, I was there but you didn't hear me.

46

47                   And I wanted to comment on the caribou,  
48 the State needs to do some predator control on wolf and  
49 take some bears away, that's what keeps killing this  
50

0046

1 caribou.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, yeah,  
6 Caufield couldn't raise you at all.....

7

8 (Teleconference interference -  
9 participants not muted)

10

11 MS. WESSELS: Mr.....

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....and so I just  
14 stepped up to the plate there. So any other Council  
15 member comments on the discussions we've had with the  
16 Council member's reports this morning.

17

18 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is  
19 Arnold.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Arnold, go ahead.

22

23 MR. DEMOSKI: Thank you. Yeah, no, I  
24 just wanted to say -- I wanted to thank Karen -- for  
25 the record I just wanted to thank Karen for her years  
26 as the Coordinator for the WIRAC. I didn't get to know  
27 her very much but I just want to welcome Nissa too.  
28 I've known Nissa for a few years so it's good to have  
29 her aboard. Yeah, but, I just wanted to put that on  
30 record, that I wanted to thank Karen for her years.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks,  
33 Arnold. Did somebody else wanted to say something.

34

35 MS. WESSELS: Yes, Mr. Chair, this is  
36 Katya Wessels.

37

38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Katya.

39

40 MS. WESSELS: I was wondering if I can  
41 provide an update on the Council charter and the  
42 Council application and nomination open season, it'll  
43 just take a couple of minutes.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go right  
46 ahead.

47

48 MS. WESSELS: Yes, so as the Council  
49 members right remember last year you discussed your  
50

0047

1 Council charter, you reviewed it.

2

3

4 And what I would like to share with you  
5 is all 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils in  
6 Alaska, they were chartered under the Federal Advisory  
7 Committee Act. So charters are reviewed every two  
8 years. And last year the Councils, especially your  
9 Council also proposed some changes. So the Federal  
10 Subsistence Board supported most of the Council's  
11 proposed changes and forwarded its recommendations to  
12 the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture for  
13 review approval. So nine of the 10 Councils wanted to  
14 add the carryover term clause to all Council charters  
15 to avoid temporary vacancies on the Councils that occur  
16 between the expiration of the current member terms and  
17 the annual set of Secretarial appointments. The  
18 Secretaries supported this change request. Now, if you  
19 look at your charter, there is a clause on the  
20 carryover terms that was added. It can be found in  
21 Section 12, membership and designation, and the added  
22 language reads:

22

23

24 If appointments for a given year have  
25 not yet been announced, a member may continue to serve  
26 on the Council following the expiration of his or her  
27 term until such appointments have been made. Unless  
28 reappointed, the members service ends on the date of  
29 announcement, even if that member specific seat remains  
30 unfilled.

30

31

32 So what it basically means in lay  
33 language, if we don't get the appointments from the  
34 Secretaries by the time your winter meeting starts, the  
35 Council members, you know, that were serving on the  
36 Council the previous year and who's terms expired in  
37 December, they can still serve on the Council during  
38 the winter meeting until the Secretarial appointments  
39 are made.

39

40

41 There was also another change to your  
42 charter in the subsection 4(h) and 4(i), of Section 4,  
43 description of duties. The Secretary removed these  
44 sections from your charter because they were inserted  
45 by the previous Administration and there were several  
46 Executive Orders that they were either irrelevant or  
47 revoked by the newly issued Executive Order. So that  
48 was another change.

48

49

50

And now I will move on talking about

0048

1 2022 Council application nomination open season.

2

3 I would like to let the.....

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can I stop you there  
6 for a second.

7

8 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: When I looked under  
11 Tab 12 I don't find the charter here, there's a  
12 calendar. So is anybody else -- is mine just missing  
13 that or anybody else have the -- the charter is missing  
14 from Tab 12.

15

16 MS. WESSELS: I think Karen wanted to  
17 put your charters under a different tab and, you know,  
18 let me just look. Yeah, your charter should be under  
19 Tab 5. If it says on your agenda, Tab 12, that's a  
20 mistake, it should be under Tab 5.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

23

24 MS. WESSELS: Can you find it there.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I think you misspoke  
27 and said Tab 12, and so I see it now.

28

29 MS. WESSELS: Oh, did I.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

32

33 MS. WESSELS: No, I think what I said  
34 is it's Section 12 of the charter.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, all right, my  
37 misunderstanding.

38

39 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, that's.....

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

42

43 MS. WESSELS: .....where the new  
44 language was added.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'll make a comment  
47 on that.

48

49 MS. WESSELS: Yes.

50



0049

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: This carryover has  
2 been with the Subsistence Resource Commissions for  
3 years and I'm really super happy to see this carryover,  
4 a seated member can carryover until the Secretary gets  
5 around to making the appointments. That really messed  
6 up the Councils last year and so I'm really super happy  
7 to see that the Secretaries have adopted this new  
8 charter for us.

9  
10                   Thank you.

11  
12                   Go ahead.

13  
14                   MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Jack. Yes, I  
15 completely agree with your comments because last year  
16 was really difficult and we, at the Federal Subsistence  
17 Management Program do everything possible that all the  
18 Board's recommendations are submitted to the Secretary  
19 early on, but, you know, sometimes it just takes them  
20 time to make these appointments so that is a great  
21 addition to the charter.

22  
23                   Now, I'll talk about the 2022 Council  
24 application nomination open season.

25  
26                   The season is still open until February  
27 28th. And I would like to apprise this Council on the  
28 number of applications that was received for the  
29 Western Interior region. We currently have only one  
30 application. And in December of this year we are going  
31 to have four vacant or expiring seats on the Western  
32 Interior region. So I would like to appeal to the  
33 Council members and to the members of the public  
34 present on this call to spread the word that the season  
35 is open for applications and nominations and encourage  
36 the public to apply. I also encourage, there is three  
37 Council members whose terms are expiring in December of  
38 this year, if you would like to continue to serve on  
39 the Council you need to reapply before February 28th.

40  
41                   Also, you know, Council members, if you  
42 know of a good potential candidate to serve on the  
43 Council you can nominate them. You can fill out the  
44 application with their agreement and just nominate them  
45 if they are having a hard time filling out the  
46 application. If anyone needs any help with filling out  
47 the application or questions, they can always call me,  
48 you know, and I will provide this help and my phone  
49 number is 1 (907) 786-3885 -- 786-3885.

50

0050

1 Thank you for your attention, Council  
2 members and, Mr. Chair, thank you.

3  
4 I'm ready to answer any questions.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council members  
7 have questions for Katya's discussion.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, we're  
12 down on agenda Item 9, public and tribal comments on  
13 non-agenda items. Do we have anybody that's on the  
14 call from the public or tribal entities that would like  
15 to discuss items that are not on the agenda.

16  
17 (No comments)

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We do this once a  
20 day, to provide comments for non-agenda items.

21  
22 (No comments)

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I don't hear  
25 anybody speaking up. So we will drop down to Agenda  
26 Item 10, Old Business. There's Wildlife Special Action  
27 Request 21-01, and Hannah Voorhees is going to give us  
28 an overview of that. Are you there Hannah.

29  
30 MS. VOORHEES: I am, thank you, Mr.  
31 Chair.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go right  
34 ahead.

35  
36 MS. VOORHEES: Good morning. Members  
37 of the Council, this is Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist  
38 with the Office of Subsistence Management. And  
39 Wildlife Biologist Lisa Grediagin is also on the call  
40 today. I'll direct you to Tab 4 of your meeting  
41 materials and also note that supplemental materials No.  
42 3, 5 and 7 are relevant as well, that's the Western  
43 Arctic Caribou Herd overview, Western Arctic Caribou  
44 Herd migration fact sheet from National Park Service  
45 and the Northwest Alaska Caribou Update for 2022 from  
46 Fish and Wildlife Service. But the analysis itself is  
47 located behind Tab 4.

48  
49 I'm here to give you an update on  
50

0051

1 deferred Wildlife Special Action Request WSA21-01 and  
2 seek your formal recommendation based on revisions to  
3 the analysis that were conducted at the request of the  
4 Federal Subsistence Board.

5

6 The Northwest Arctic Council submitted  
7 temporary Wildlife Special Action, WSA21-01 in February  
8 2021. The Council requested closure of Federal public  
9 lands in Units 23 and 26A to caribou and moose hunting  
10 by non-Federally-qualified users from August 1st to  
11 September 30th. For clarity and simplicity, the  
12 analysis has now been divided into WSA21-01(a) for  
13 caribou and (b) for moose.

14

15 Because communities in your region have  
16 a customary and traditional use determination for  
17 caribou in Unit 23, but not for moose, only WSA21-01(a)  
18 is coming before this Council.

19

20 So when the Northwest Arctic Council  
21 submitted this request expressed concern about the late  
22 migration of caribou through Unit 23, and the possible  
23 effect of transporters and non-local hunters on the  
24 timing of this movement and the North Slope Council  
25 also supported this request.

26

27 Then in June 2021 the Board deferred  
28 WSA21-01 to the 2022/23 regulatory year and requested  
29 that the OSM seek additional input on concerns related  
30 to caribou from multiple entities. These included the  
31 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, Federal land  
32 managing agencies, local Fish and Game Advisory  
33 Committees, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
34 Regional Advisory Councils such as this one, commercial  
35 guides and transporters and subsistence users in the  
36 area.

37

38 This is a shortened proposal compared  
39 to what Northwest Arctic heard, simply because I know  
40 in the past that this Council has stated that they  
41 would prefer that these issues be directed to the home  
42 region, however, given some of the new developments  
43 that have occurred with the herd we thought that it  
44 would be best to give this Council a full chance to  
45 weigh in. Please do stop me if you would like more or  
46 less information on any of these points.

47

48 So to give you an update on the  
49 outreach process, OSM has now followed up on the

50

1 Board's direction. If you remember the topic was  
2 brought up at your fall 2021 meeting and I had posed  
3 some questions to you and that's when you decided to  
4 defer to the home region but, again, you can make a  
5 recommendation today.

6  
7 So feedback from local subsistence  
8 users, as requested from the Board, came from Regional  
9 Councils, testimony received during public hearings,  
10 correspondence submitted during an earlier written  
11 comment period, and Subsistence Resource Commissions in  
12 Unit 23. The Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group  
13 members also gave input, and at their December meeting  
14 the group voted to oppose WSA21-01, in part, because  
15 the moose and caribou proposals were still being  
16 together at that point and as the Chair has also  
17 mentioned the Working Group expressed concerns about  
18 cow harvest and stated that those concerns were more  
19 prominent for them at this time.

20  
21 So the Board meeting on deferred  
22 Wildlife Special Action WSA21-01 is scheduled for March  
23 30th at 1:00 p.m., via teleconference. The meeting  
24 will be open for the public to listen in and a news  
25 release will announce the call-in information.

26  
27 The biological background section of  
28 the analysis begins on Page 20. The Western Arctic  
29 Herd peaked at near 500,000 caribou in 2003, declining  
30 to about 200,000 in 2016. In recent years the herd  
31 seemed to be recovering with approximately 244,000  
32 caribou in 2019 but the most recent photo census in  
33 2021 estimated the herd population at only 188,000.

34  
35 The timing of fall migration has become  
36 more variable in recent years. Since 2017 there has  
37 been substantial delay before caribou crossed the Kobuk  
38 and Selawik River but crossing the Noatak River has  
39 remained average. The percentage of caribou crossing  
40 all three rivers has also declined in recent years.  
41 The proportion of caribou using certain migration paths  
42 also varies each year. Additionally, caribou  
43 demonstrate low fidelity to wintering groups, which  
44 have shifted over the past decade from the Seward  
45 Peninsula to the Brooks Range. Changes in wintering  
46 locations, herd size, vegetation and weather likely  
47 influenced these recent changes in fall migration.

48  
49 The harvest history section of the  
50

0053

1 analysis begins on Page 37. Given the current  
2 population estimate of 188,000 caribou the harvestable  
3 surplus is currently 11,280 caribou. While there's  
4 much uncertainty in harvest estimate for this herd as  
5 we've discussed, total harvest has generally been  
6 estimated at 12,000 caribou per year. Historically,  
7 local hunters account for approximately 95 percent of  
8 the total harvest and local community harvest parallels  
9 caribou availability rather than population trends.  
10 Between 1998 and 2020, reported harvest by non-  
11 Federally-qualified users ranged from 131 to 657  
12 caribou each year and 85 to 95 percent of non-local  
13 harvest occurs between August 25th and October 7th.

14  
15 I'll briefly go over some of the actual  
16 feedback we received from local subsistence users and  
17 this begins on Page 57 of the analysis. In summary the  
18 very late migration and lack of local caribou  
19 availability has continued for all communities in Unit  
20 23 except for Noatak and Point Hope. The situation is  
21 particularly critical in the Southwestern portion of  
22 the unit. There is agreement between traditional  
23 ecological knowledge and the scientific literature that  
24 changes in temperature, wind direction, snow depth and  
25 vegetation affects caribou migration. In addition, the  
26 Red Dog Mine Road does appear to delay or deflect  
27 migration for at least a portion of the herd.

28  
29 So whether caused by one, or a  
30 combination of all these factors mentioned testimony  
31 showed that the reduced availability of caribou in Unit  
32 23 is negatively impacting Federally-qualified  
33 subsistence users, nutritional, economic, cultural,  
34 social and spiritual well-being.

35  
36 (Teleconference interference -  
37 participants not muted)

38  
39 MS. VOORHEES: Following deferral and  
40 the revised analysis, the OSM preliminary conclusion on  
41 WSA21-01(a) is now neutral. The analysis outlines two  
42 main actions for consideration.

43  
44 No. 1. Approve WSA21-01(a) with  
45 modification to close caribou hunting to non-Federally-  
46 qualified users in Noatak National Preserve and BLM  
47 managed lands between the Noatak and Kobuk Rivers only  
48 August 1st to September 30th 2022, or

49  
50

0054

1 (Teleconference interference -  
2 participants not muted)

3

4 MS. VOORHEES: No. 2. Reject WSA21-  
5 01(a) resulting in maintenance of the status quo.

6

7 REPORTER: Hang on Hannah.

8

9 MS. VOORHEES: I'll go ahead and  
10 give.....

11

12 REPORTER: Hannah.

13

14 MS. VOORHEES: Yes.

15

16 REPORTER: I'm sorry to interrupt.  
17 This is Tina, the court reporter. Somebody else is  
18 trying to make a call on their line and we can hear  
19 that, if you could please mute yourself while you're  
20 doing that so we can hear Hannah's presentation, I  
21 would appreciate that.

22

23 Go ahead, Hannah.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Salena.

26

27 MS. VOORHEES: Thanks, Tina.

28

29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Hannah.

30

31 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, next I'll go over  
32 some of the justification behind each of these two  
33 options to approve with modification or reject and then  
34 my presentation will be present.

35

36 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go ahead.

37

38 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you. So under the  
39 approve with modification option:

40

41 Testimony about lack of local caribou  
42 availability in the Northwest Arctic converges with  
43 recent evidence of Western Arctic Herd population  
44 decline. The most recent population estimate indicates  
45 that the herd has declined 24 percent from 2019 to  
46 2021. The population decline may be contributing to  
47 lack of caribou availability in Unit 23.

48

49 So, again, this is justification for

50

0055

1 the option to approve with modification and to  
2 continue.

3

4

5 The herd is now being managed at the  
6 conservative declining level. And under the Western  
7 Arctic Caribou Herd Caribou Working Group Management  
8 Plan, recommendations at this level include closure of  
9 the non-resident season under State regulations as well  
10 as possible closure of some Federal public lands to  
11 non-Federally-qualified users. Furthermore, the best  
12 available data suggests that the harvestable surplus  
13 may be being exceeded.

13

14

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Feedback from local subsistence users  
-- oh, excuse me, wrong spot -- here we go.

Although the population decline affects  
the herd throughout its range, closing Noatak National  
Preserve and BLM managed lands between the Noatak and  
Kobuk Rivers would have the most direct benefit for  
those communities in Unit 23 who have been unable to  
continue to subsistence hunting for caribou and the  
most direct benefit for the herd itself, most likely.

The delay in caribou migration has  
primarily occurred between the Noatak and Kobuk Rivers  
based on local testimony and GPS collar caribou data.

Closing lands north of the Noatak River  
within Noatak National Preserve may also be necessary  
for the conservation of caribou populations.

OSM does not support a full closure of  
Federal public lands in Unit 23 and 26A. Just briefly,  
some of the other Federal public lands are rarely used  
by non-Federally-qualified users to harvest caribou and  
closing Unit 26A to caribou hunting does not appear  
warranted currently because the analysis process show  
that Federally-qualified subsistence users in this  
unit, 26A, are meeting their subsistence needs for  
caribou and are not facing the same challenges as those  
in Unit 23.

Finally, I'll give you OSM's points to  
consider under the other option to reject.

Currently it cannot be demonstrated  
that the requested closure alone would result in the  
desired effect of restoring the historical timing and

0056

1 extent of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd migration as  
2 other factors are likely at plan as well as I've  
3 described. If Units 23 and 26A are closed to the  
4 harvest of caribou by non-Federally-qualified  
5 subsistence users for August and September 2022, user  
6 conflicts and disruption of caribou movement may  
7 increase on State lands, particularly on those State  
8 lands surrounding Upper Kobuk River villages.  
9 Additionally, non-Federally-qualified users would still  
10 be available to access and harvest caribou on gravel  
11 bars below the mean high water mark and in navigable  
12 waters within Federal public lands as these areas fall  
13 under State jurisdiction.

14  
15 While the Western Arctic Herd Working  
16 Group's Management Plan recommends possible closure of  
17 Federal public lands to non-Federally-qualified users  
18 under the current preservative declining management  
19 level, the working group members did not think  
20 immediate regulatory action was necessary, in part, due  
21 to sufficient calf recruitment.

22  
23 Additionally, non-Federally-qualified  
24 user harvest accounts for only five percent of the  
25 total estimated Western Arctic Caribou Herd harvest and  
26 they could still harvest on State managed lands if  
27 Federal lands were closed.

28  
29 I want to also let you know that on  
30 February 14th the Northwest Arctic Council voted to  
31 support WSA21-01(a) as originally submitted with no  
32 modification.

33  
34 So now I'll turn over consideration of  
35 this request to the Council and I'm available to answer  
36 any questions.

37  
38 Thank you.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks, Hannah. Any  
41 questions from the Council about Hannah's presentation.

42  
43 (No comments)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none.  
46 There's a little bit more to this issue than meets the  
47 eye. And the Western Arctic Herd has declined  
48 significantly and the smaller the herd, the less  
49 distance they go. As of December 2021 most of the herd  
50



0057

1 was north of the Kobuk, most of the caribou that are  
2 harvested is either on the Noatak or the Kobuk River so  
3 the caribou aren't migrating as soon as they normally  
4 do and they're coming later in the winter. And so  
5 2021, in this -- in the handout, back in all those  
6 various slides, it shows where the caribou were  
7 wintering in 2020/2021, they were basically hardly any  
8 caribou near the Kobuk River, they were all in the  
9 Gates of the Arctic Park. So the issue -- the  
10 perception is, and I would have liked to have seen  
11 these mappings of where the herd is wintering, and I  
12 think the State has shot themselves in the foot by not  
13 even telling the public where the caribou is wintering  
14 and what the issue is, it's just not even migrating  
15 into the areas where most of the subsistence harvest is  
16 occurring.

17  
18                   Some of the -- one of the issues is  
19 that there's too much cow caribou harvest. And cows  
20 lead migration, it's common knowledge, and with  
21 subsistence users that know anything about caribou, the  
22 cows -- there's specific lead cows and that's all  
23 customary and traditional knowledge and that's not  
24 docume -- well, that's what happens and anybody who  
25 knows anything about caribou will watch those lead cows  
26 lead those migrations, they've dominant scent glands in  
27 their back hoof and other caribou just love to follow  
28 those around. Killing cow caribou is a bad thing  
29 during migration. There should be a closure for  
30 caribou when they're migrating, cow caribou, period,  
31 but that doesn't happen. Nobody wants to even restrict  
32 their caribou harvest. And most of the non-subsistence  
33 harvest is bulls. When the Western Arctic Herd Work  
34 Group reviewed this particular proposal, I voted  
35 against the proposal from the Western Arctic  
36 perspective because most of the caribou are bull and  
37 bulls tag along at the back end of those strings. In  
38 effect, the non-subsistence hunters are killing bull  
39 caribou, 2 -- 80,000 or 90,000 [sic] or whatever it  
40 was, it wasn't that many caribou, most of the harvest  
41 of cows is occurring on the front end of that as they  
42 come to the Kobuk and Noatak River.

43  
44                   So the reality is that if the  
45 Subsistence Councils wanted to have any kind of an  
46 effect, they would close cow caribou harvest in the  
47 non- -- for non-subsistence users in the Kobuk Preserve  
48 -- or correction, the Noatak Preserve, and those areas  
49 where those cow caribou are migrating. There should be  
50

0058

1 no cow caribou harvest that would defect those  
2 migrations.

3  
4 And that's where the State messed up is  
5 allowing non-residents and resident sporthunters to  
6 take cow caribou. So they land on a gravel bar, here  
7 comes all these cow caribou and they shoot the lead  
8 caribou for -- so they got a five caribou bag limit a  
9 few years ago, and they kill these cow caribou, they  
10 just killed the leaders and they can drive those herds  
11 way in circles, away from that area. If you got a lot  
12 of hunters doing that it can actually preclude the  
13 migrations quite a bit.

14  
15 So there should be a closure for cow  
16 caribou harvest period.

17  
18 Bull harvest -- killing bulls off the  
19 back of those strings through the end of September is  
20 not really doing anything about those -- it's not --  
21 that's not the deflection factor. The deflection  
22 factor has to be -- has to do with cow caribou leading  
23 migrations and allowing hunters to fly way out in front  
24 of those herds and kill cow caribou. If they wanted to  
25 have any affect on this deflection factor, those  
26 Councils should be talking about this cow caribou issue  
27 but nobody likes to talk about it.

28  
29 So there's more than meets the eye with  
30 this whole caribou thing. Personally, I say it's out  
31 of our region. The Western Herd is not even coming to  
32 our region anymore because it's too small and I would  
33 prefer to not get involved with this issue like I said  
34 last fall. But if the Council wants to take this issue  
35 up, Special Action Request, 21-01, the Chair will  
36 entertain a motion to adopt the -- or to put the  
37 special action on the table for discussion and make  
38 some kind of recommendation.

39  
40 The Federal Subsistence Board wants a  
41 recommendation from this Council, the Council should  
42 make some kind of a recommendation. So the Chair will  
43 entertain a motion to put WSA21-01 on the table for  
44 discussion. Somebody want to make that motion.

45  
46 MR. DEMOSKI: Mr. Chair, I make that  
47 motion, this is Arnold.

48  
49 MR. VENT: This is Darrell, I second.

50

0059

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Arnold and Darrell  
2 seconds. So discussion. Other Council members have  
3 discussion, I laid out some of the parameters and then  
4 Hannah gave what OSM's thing is.

5  
6                   (No comments)

7  
8                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council member's  
9 discussion on Western Arctic Caribou Special Action  
10 Request. Defer to region would be the options, defer  
11 to region or take a vote to adopt or -- or reject  
12 WSA21-01(a).

13  
14                   MR. VENT: Could we defer to region, I  
15 think that would work better.

16  
17                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can do that.  
18 Would you like to make a motion to defer to region  
19 since we have it on the table.

20  
21                   MR. VENT: Yeah, this is Darrell. I  
22 would defer.....

23  
24                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Katya.....

25  
26                   MR. VENT: Oh, go ahead.

27  
28                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Katya, is that  
29 proper etiquette to make another motion to defer.

30  
31                   MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya.  
32 I'm sorry, your first motion was.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: To get the proposal  
35 on the table with discussion to then go where -- are we  
36 going to vote for it, up or down or are we just going  
37 to defer to region. That's where we're at right now.  
38 So Darrell's inclined to make a motion to defer, is  
39 that proper etiquette.

40  
41                   MS. WESSELS: Yes, well, if you just  
42 had the first motion to get the proposal on the -- on  
43 the record, you can vote on that motion first and then  
44 you should have a motion to defer.

45  
46                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So we had a  
47 motion to put the proposal on the table, we'll vote on  
48 that one. Those in favor of putting -- we have a  
49 motion before us, those in favor of putting the  
50

0060

1 proposal on the table before us signify by saying aye.

2

3 IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Opposed, same  
6 sign.

7

8 (No opposing votes)

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Now, Darrell, if you  
11 -- and I want Council discussion if someone wants to  
12 vote for this proposal, you can make a motion to adopt  
13 this proposal and we'd go through a vote to adopt it or  
14 to reject or as, Darrell, is making a motion, to defer.  
15 So Darrell's made a motion to defer, do we have a  
16 second for that.

17

18 MR. DEMOSKI: I second.

19

20 MR. WHITWORTH: Second.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, who was that  
23 first second, was that Don?

24

25 MR. DEMOSKI: Arnold.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Arnold, okay. So we  
28 have a motion to defer to region -- regions, it'd be  
29 North Slope and Northwest Arctic so we're going to  
30 bring that to a vote, do we have any discussion on  
31 that.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do I have a question  
36 on that motion.

37

38 MR. VENT: Call for question.

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called,  
41 those in favor of deferral of WSA21-01 to region  
42 signify by saying aye.

43

44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed.

47

48 (Teleconference interference -  
49 participants not muted)

50

0061

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that a vote yes  
2 or no, aye -- so opposed, same sign.

3  
4                   (No opposing votes)

5  
6                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing no  
7 opposition, the Western Interior Regional Advisory  
8 Council defers Proposal WSA21-01 to regions. I do feel  
9 that our comments should be registered.

10  
11                   I made comments about the various  
12 issues. There should be more of a mapping of this,  
13 where the herd is going so even the other regions  
14 should -- they may not participate in the Western  
15 Arctic Herd Work Group, I have screen shots on my phone  
16 right in front of me that shows where that herd was in  
17 mid-December. There are caribou by Shungnak.

18  
19                   MR. VENT: Jack, this is Darrell.

20  
21                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

22  
23                   MR. VENT: Yes, I'd just like to make a  
24 few comments on that. Right now a lot of the caribou  
25 herd is around the village of Shungnak.

26  
27                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

28  
29                   MR. VENT: They're hanging out in that  
30 area between there and Kobuk. A little later they're  
31 going to be coming over the hot springs area which is,  
32 what they call it, around the Selawik River. That  
33 usually happens around the end of March. And usually  
34 what we've been seeing is they've been up in the hills,  
35 up in the mountains, they go way up there because  
36 predation. So there's a lot of predators that's  
37 following that herd. And I've been seeing pictures  
38 from some of my friends over in Shungnak and Ambler and  
39 they've been catching some pretty good sized wolves.  
40 Those are what they consider Timber wolves, those are  
41 the big type wolves, and so, you know, it's been  
42 probably just as hard for them with predation as it is  
43 in our area and I just wanted to comment on that.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, there are  
46 predation factors. But in reality when you used to get  
47 caribou at Hot Springs, that was because the Western  
48 Arctic Herd was on the Seward Peninsula and cows start  
49 to move in March, mid-March, late March, early April

50

0062

1 they start to move so you were actually seeing caribou  
2 coming up off the Seward Peninsula coming into those  
3 hills. We had a lot of snow here, got lots of snow to  
4 the west of us too and so the wind blows those ridges  
5 off and that caribou will stay up high. That's what a  
6 lot of these caribou are doing around here. So I don't  
7 think you're going to see a heck of a lot of caribou  
8 coming up to the Hot Springs because they don't go  
9 south, they go north, and what you were seeing was the  
10 Northeasterly -- north -- to go line up on the Selawik  
11 because they like to cross near Selawik Lake and go to  
12 the north.

13

14 And so most of that hear -- yeah,  
15 there's caribou at Shungnak and that's what the  
16 telemetry showed in December. And the Ambler area --  
17 that's that bottom edge of that Western Arctic Herd  
18 right now, that herd is -- and that's why Lisa and  
19 Staff, you need to have current mapping of where that  
20 herd is at and where the predominance of where it's  
21 overwintering, because the public -- the Councils don't  
22 get that information. I get it, I stayed on that  
23 Western Herd, but that herd management group, but not a  
24 lot of people see that and that should be -- you have  
25 -- in your Western Arctic overview, you show 2020/21  
26 but you should be showing this current data for the  
27 Board action, you should be showing the current data at  
28 least through current, where that herd is wintering.

29

30 What's the issue.

31

32 The herd is not migrating as far, it's  
33 not coming down near where it's -- it's not going to  
34 the Seward Peninsula anymore, it's not even there,  
35 there might be some in the Waring Mountains, but  
36 there's not a heck of a lot of caribou south of the  
37 Kobuk Valley right now. And they're going to keep --  
38 they're going to go north, they're not going to go  
39 south, they go north in the spring. Those cows start  
40 heading out, if they get a little bit of warm up, and  
41 the tundra starts to open up a little they'll start to  
42 move up and in mid-April they can have a melt on blown  
43 off ground and those tussocks start blossoming, and  
44 that's what they eat in the springtime, they don't eat  
45 lichen all year-round. They eat lichen up until the  
46 tussock blossom comes, then those cows switch over to  
47 eating a lot of high protein food and they kind of stay  
48 with that as they move to the north.

49

50

0063

1                   So there's some data lacks here that we  
2 need to have in this consideration and I'd like to see  
3 the Federal Subsistence Board provided with current  
4 migrations of the last two years, several different  
5 years, so that they understand when the timing of when  
6 these herds are getting to these locations or where  
7 they're not getting to these locations -- that's the  
8 issue, they're not getting there and the perception is,  
9 it's preclusion, well, not necessarily, the herd is  
10 just not that big, it's just not migrating like it used  
11 to. And it's not going to. As it gets smaller it'll  
12 get more contracted. It'll stay -- it doesn't have to  
13 go that far, they stay more regional then.

14  
15                   So any other discussion by the Council  
16 on this proposal.

17  
18                   (No comments)

19  
20                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, okay. We've  
21 addressed that issue. So we have this AIDEA  
22 presentation which is slated for 1:30, and so.....

23  
24                   MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya.

25  
26                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Katya.

27  
28                   MS. WESSELS: We actually reached to  
29 Charlene and perhaps she is already online so we.....

30  
31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh.

32  
33                   MS. WESSELS: .....need to check,  
34 Charlene Ostbloom are you online?

35  
36                   (No comments)

37  
38                   MS. WESSELS: Okay. I was getting a  
39 message that she's -- she's been messaged that she will  
40 need to call right now.

41  
42                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

43  
44                   MS. WESSELS: So hopefully -- maybe we  
45 can take a few minute break, Mr. Chair, and then she  
46 can.....

47  
48                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Sure.

49  
50

0064

1 MS. WESSELS: .....have a minute to  
2 call in.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We'll take about a  
5 10 minute break, it's 20 after and at 11:30 we're going  
6 to come back on session.

7  
8 MS. WESSELS: Thank you.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is that fine with  
11 the Council.

12  
13 MR. VENT: Yes, that's fine.

14  
15 MR. DEMOSKI: That's fine.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. 10 minute  
18 break.

19  
20 (Off record)

21  
22 (On record)

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So this is Jack  
25 Reakoff again. It's 11:30. Do we have Council back on  
26 the call and do we have Charlene Ostbloom with AIDEA on  
27 the call also.

28  
29 MS. OSTBLOOM: Hello, yes, this is  
30 Charlene Ostbloom on the call.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks  
33 Charlene. How many Council members do we have back.

34  
35 MR. DEMOSKI: I'm still here, Jack,  
36 this is Arnold.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Arnold.

39  
40 MR. WHITWORTH: This is Kevin.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Kevin, good.

43  
44 (Pause)

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're looking for  
47 Council members back on the phone, we got Arnold and  
48 Kevin and myself.

49  
50



0065

1 MR. GERVAIS: I'm here Jack, Tim.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tim.

4

5 MR. SIMON: Pollock Simon.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Pollock, good.

8

9 And so are you there Don Honea?

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You're there Katya?

14

15 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I'm here, Mr. Chair.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So I think I  
18 need one more, don't I. I got.....

19

20 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I think so.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We have Pollock,  
23 Kevin, myself, Arnold and Tim, and Darrell.

24

25 MS. WESSELS: Then actually you're  
26 okay, you have a quorum.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like  
29 Rebecca and Don to hear this, they've been on this call  
30 but they're out right now? So, okay, we'll proceed.  
31 So Charlene Ostbloom is on the phone and she's going to  
32 give us an Ambler Access update, go ahead, Charlene.

33

34 MS. OSTBLOOM: Good morning. Thank you  
35 so much for having me.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You have the floor.

38

39 MS. OSTBLOOM: My name is Charlene  
40 Ostbloom -- oh, I'm sorry.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead. The  
43 Council has in their supplemental packet, the Ambler  
44 Access update so it's a -- they should have received  
45 these documents and it's sort of your slide  
46 presentation so go right ahead. I'm just trying to  
47 point out to the Council.

48

49 MS. OSTBLOOM: Okay. All right.

50

0066

1 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry,  
2 this is Katya.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Katya.

5  
6 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I just also wanted  
7 to point out that the presentation is available on our  
8 website in the supplemental materials section of the  
9 materials. Thank you.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. For those who  
12 didn't get the packet of materials, that are on the  
13 phone, they can access those on the website, it's the  
14 Ambler Access Project update. Go ahead, Charlene.

15  
16 MS. OSTBLOOM: All right. Well, good  
17 morning and thank you, again, for having me. My name  
18 is Charlene Ostbloom. I am from Nulato. I am the  
19 daughter of the late Eddie Hildebrand and Annie  
20 Hildebrand and I'm a Doyon shareholder and a tribal  
21 member of Nulato Tribe. I have been working on the  
22 Ambler Access project since July and I'm the  
23 communications manager.

24  
25 I have been traveling out to several of  
26 the communities in Western Alaska and trying to get as  
27 much information out as possible and also working  
28 really hard to hire as many people as possible from the  
29 communities along the access route.

30  
31 So the Ambler Access Project is a 211  
32 Mile route that goes from the -- from the Dalton  
33 Highway to the Ambler Mining District. And in 2021 we  
34 had a field season. The 2021 field season fell within  
35 the pre-construction phase of the project that allowed  
36 for completing the front end engineering and design  
37 phase. We conducted cultural resources, hydrology,  
38 fish habitat and land surveys that were conducted at  
39 over 50 component sites and mostly related to water  
40 crossings. And we completed 39 of 59 cultural resource  
41 study areas with almost 600 -- almost 700 acres  
42 surveyed. For the project we had 22 hires including 22  
43 Doyon Ltd shareholders, one NANA shareholder and one  
44 ASRC shareholder. The total wages paid at the end of  
45 the 2021 field season were approximately \$190,000.

46  
47 Moving on to the next slide.

48  
49 The Ambler Access Project Team, they  
50

0067

1 have completed the draft of the annual work plan that  
2 has been submitted to the BLM and in it is data from  
3 the 2021 field season as well as the plans for the 2022  
4 field season. And please keep in mind that the  
5 information in the presentation was sent awhile ago and  
6 some information is dated.

7

8                   So to begin, AIDEA, we did establish a  
9 subsistence advisory committee as a result of the work  
10 put together by a subsistence advisory committee  
11 working group. We have representation on the committee  
12 from nine of the communities closest to -- the tribal  
13 communities closest to the access route. We have  
14 currently nine seated members. We are currently  
15 recruiting for a member from Evansville as well as  
16 recruiting for alternates for the committee in case the  
17 seated member is unable to attend. The process and  
18 selection for the committee members, we contacted each  
19 community to solicit applications for the subsistence  
20 advisory committee and the working group then selected  
21 who those committee members were based on the  
22 application received. In many cases we only received  
23 one application.

24

25                   I will point out that Governor Dunleavy  
26 did appoint the two co-Chairs, which were -- are Fred  
27 Bifelt of Huslia and Harry Westlake, Sr., of Kiana, and  
28 they were appointed because of their experience and  
29 leadership.

30

31                   So the membership of the committee --  
32 moving on to the next slide. The membership of the  
33 committee consists of from Alatna Harding Sam,  
34 Allakaket Clinton Bergman, Ambler Morgan Johnson, as I  
35 mentioned Evansville we still don't have a committee  
36 member, from Hughes Wilmer Beetus, Huslia Fred Bifelt,  
37 Kiana Larry Westlake, Kobuk Henry Horner, Noorvik  
38 Wilbur Howarth and from Shungnak Nellie Greist. We do  
39 have a seat from the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence  
40 Advisory Committee, and we are working to have that  
41 individual appointed at the next Subsistence Advisory  
42 Committee meeting in April. We also have two ex  
43 officio members from the NANA Regional Corporation and  
44 Doyon, Ltd., Liz Cravalho from NANA and Jamie Marunde  
45 from Doyon.

46

47                   Moving on to the next slide.

48

49                   The subsistence advisory committee

50

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1 provides recommendations to the Ambler Access Project  
2 regarding project development activities and the  
3 they're responsible -- or the Ambler Access project is  
4 responsible for responding to the committee on all  
5 formal recommendations made by the committee. Our  
6 meetings, we did hold our first meeting on January 11th  
7 in Anchorage, our next scheduled meeting is April 6th  
8 in Kotzebue and our third and fourth quarter meetings  
9 have yet to be determined.

10

11 Moving on to the next slide.

12

13 We have also established a work force  
14 development working group. And this working group is  
15 as a result of the subsistence advisory committee  
16 working group, their recommendation is that we  
17 establish this group because in today's environment it  
18 is very difficult for people to practice subsistence  
19 without having some type of income. And it was very  
20 important to the working group to -- for the Ambler  
21 Access Project to establish measures in which jobs and  
22 training opportunities are identified and made  
23 available to the community members along the access  
24 route. The employment and work force development  
25 group, they are looking at the different project  
26 phases. They are identifying -- they will be aware of  
27 the contractor functions and job types that are  
28 available. They expect the project to deliver a  
29 prepared work force for the project and part of that is  
30 that we will continue community outreach and building  
31 awareness and working with potential partners such as  
32 school districts, technical training centers  
33 (indiscernible - muffled)

34

35 Moving on to the next slide.

36

37 Our working group members are, again,  
38 Fred Bifelt and Larry Westlake, Wilmer Beetus, Stanley  
39 Ned, Nellie Greist, Henry Horner, Liz Cravalho, Jamie  
40 Marunde, Dave Heimke, and Kevin Torpey, and this  
41 working group is not set in stone. It is expected that  
42 more members will be added as the project moves  
43 forward.

44

45 Currently, the project, we are reaching  
46 out to the communities along the access route in  
47 January and February to host job fairs because it is a  
48 priority for the project to hire as many as community  
49 members as possible. And with that we have identified  
50

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1 approximately 50 jobs for the summer field season and  
2 we are bringing the job fairs to the communities to  
3 make it easier for the community members to have direct  
4 access to the hiring contractors. So we are  
5 introducing them to the hiring process, providing  
6 assistance with completing applications and resumes and  
7 using this as a way to identify potential applicants  
8 for other future opportunities.

9

10 Moving on to the next slide.

11

12 This is our schedule. We have traveled  
13 to Hughes and Allakaket and Alatna and expect to travel  
14 back to those communities. Due to Covid, our visits to  
15 the NANA region have been postponed however we are  
16 working on a way to provide the job fairs virtually for  
17 those that are in the NANA region and we are working on  
18 getting information (indiscernible) about job  
19 opportunities for the field season.

20

21 So that concludes my presentation. I  
22 am open to questions. And, again, thank you so much  
23 for allowing me to provide you with information on the  
24 Ambler Access Project.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
27 Charlene, appreciate the presentation. Does Council  
28 members have any questions about the Ambler Project.

29

30 MR. VENT: Jack, this is Darrell.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

33

34 MR. VENT: Yeah, I appreciate Charlene  
35 for going to be coming over to Huslia, she gave me an  
36 email and I appreciate that they're trying to hire from  
37 our region. We just need to hopefully get into  
38 negotiation on the contracts. But for right now I'm  
39 just thankful that somebody gave me some information on  
40 that.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 MS. OSTBLOOM: Oh, absolutely. And  
45 appreciate you replying to my email yesterday and, you  
46 know, we are very committed to hiring as many community  
47 members as we can.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,

50

0070

1 Darrell. Pollock Simon lives in Allakaket, do you have  
2 any comments Pollock.

3  
4 MR. SIMON: Yeah, Jack, can you hear  
5 me.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
8 great, Pollock, go ahead.

9  
10 MR. SIMON: Okay. Yeah, the peoples  
11 are concerned here about the road and peoples not too  
12 good experience with the road that was supposed to for  
13 commercial use only but it was later opened to public  
14 and lots of peoples come up the road and not only to  
15 look at the mountains but maybe hunt. And around Upper  
16 Koyukuk River around Allakaket area there's already a  
17 low number of wildlife, no fish and if these people  
18 come up the road and want to fish we can't compete with  
19 those so the peoples are concerned around here that we  
20 have to watch this (indiscernible) -- go alone -- we're  
21 pretty certain that we want to live here forever and we  
22 don't want too much impact on our way of life.

23  
24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
27 Pollock. Other Council members comments or questions  
28 for Charlene.

29  
30 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, I have a question  
31 for Charlene.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

34  
35 MR. GERVAIS: Hi, Charlene, this is Tim  
36 Gervais. Can you explain the -- they're terming this a  
37 road, is it for a mining district, or is it for a known  
38 deposit or is it -- is it like established mines or  
39 companies that say they already need this to make the  
40 economic, what's the -- who's the end beneficiary of  
41 the road?

42  
43 MS. OSTBLOOM: So the road will provide  
44 access to the Ambler Mining District and Ambler Metals  
45 is the mining company that is doing exploration in that  
46 area. And they need access -- a road to be able to  
47 transport the -- what is mined out of the district.  
48 And it is more cost effective to do so via road.

49  
50

0071

1 MR. GERVAIS: So they've established  
2 it'd only be economic if the road is built?

3  
4 MS. OSTBLOOM: They are currently  
5 working on studies now and so the work that the project  
6 is doing is to.....

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello.

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 REPORTER: Her call might have dropped.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there Tim?

15  
16 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I'm here but.....

17  
18 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, she might have  
19 dropped off.

20  
21 MR. GERVAIS: .....I lost the end of  
22 her answer there.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, she cut out.  
25 Katya, did you have something?

26  
27 MS. WESSELS: I said that she might  
28 have dropped off the call, Charlene might have dropped  
29 off the call.

30  
31 MR. VENT: Jack, this is Darrell.

32  
33 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, Mr. Chair.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Darrell. I -- I  
36 would rather have questions asked or comments when  
37 she's on the phone, she's probably dialing back in.

38  
39 MR. VENT: Okay. I just wanted to give  
40 you a little more in for on where the mining is going  
41 on.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would rather have  
44 Charlene listening to this Council.

45  
46 MS. OSTBLOOM: Hi, I am so sorry, my  
47 phone just dropped the call.

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, when you  
50

0072

1 dropped off you were in the middle of your comment to  
2 Tim. Continue.

3

4 MS. OSTBLOOM: Yes. So the project, we  
5 are in the study phase so -- which is why we're  
6 gathering as much information via the field work over  
7 the summer and trying to make the best informed  
8 decisions on how to proceed with the road. And Ambler  
9 Metals is also determining -- conducting their  
10 feasibility studies as well.

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Does that  
13 answer your questions, Tim.

14

15 MR. GERVAIS: Partially. I'm just --  
16 I'm kind of confused. We're going through all this  
17 elaborate road permitting process and she's saying that  
18 they don't know if it's economically feasible to move  
19 the minerals across the road so it seems like the  
20 mining company should establish the economic benefit of  
21 having the road before we all spend all this time  
22 discussing the merits of the road.

23

24 MS. OSTBLOOM: I don't want to speak  
25 for Ambler Metals.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And, Darrell,  
28 you were going to make a comment and I wanted Charlene  
29 to hear your comment. Go ahead Darrell.

30

31 MR. VENT: Yes. The topic on the  
32 Ambler Metals, there's more involved. There's three  
33 different companies that have interests up in the  
34 Koyukuk River area also because they found some  
35 deposits in there that have significant value to them.  
36 That is one of the reasons why that road is being built  
37 there. It's not only for the mine over there, there's  
38 other mines that they're interested in. So they're  
39 doing studies right now that we're seeing and they've  
40 been talking about it, you know, that their interests  
41 are not only one area, it's a whole bunch of areas that  
42 they're studying. They're doing a lot of archeological  
43 and trying to hire liaisons. So there's more involved  
44 to this and hopefully next time she comes on she has  
45 more people involved in this project.

46

47 So I just wanted to let you know that.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Darrell, you're

50



0073

1 referring to the South 32 Exploration and staking  
2 that's happening in the Wild River, John River country,  
3 they're paper staking. They're not drilling, they're  
4 not doing -- they're just paper staking. So they're  
5 staking a lot of stuff but there's no assessment,  
6 there's no drilling. I live in Wiseman, I watch those  
7 helicopters, they're not drilling, they're not doing  
8 anything, they're just staking. So don't get the idea  
9 that they've discovered anything, they're just staking  
10 ground where there is potential to have minerals there.

11

12 MR. VENT: Yes, they're at the point of  
13 testing right now.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like  
16 other Council member comments on this presentation.

17

18 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
19 Kevin.

20

21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

22

23 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair  
24 and thank you, Charlene for this presentation and  
25 update on this project. I'm curious about the  
26 subsistence advisory committee, you guys had a meeting  
27 in January, the first one it looks like. Did that  
28 group bring up any issues, concerns, recommendations to  
29 the AAP, can you share those, please. Thanks.

30

31 MS. OSTBLOOM: Oh, yes, thank you for  
32 the question. Yes, they did have recommendations.  
33 They are very interested in seeing baseline studies  
34 conducted so that there is an understanding of where --  
35 what is happening with the land and water and the  
36 wildlife today and they also have made -- one of the  
37 recommendations that they've made is like with the  
38 helicopters transporting crews to the field from the  
39 different camps, they are concerned about the  
40 helicopters and the noise and disruption during  
41 subsistence activities, especially in the falltime. So  
42 the project will be making adjustments to the  
43 helicopters and the timing. And to be mindful of when  
44 they are doing -- when they are transporting the crews.

45

46 So -- and please keep in mind that the  
47 first committee meeting that took place in January,  
48 that was their first, it really was about getting to  
49 know one another, establishing the ground rules and  
50

0074

1 going over the policies that the working group has --  
2 that the working group established.

3

4 So there's still a lot of work and  
5 recommendations that they will be putting forward to  
6 the Ambler Access Project.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Does that conclude  
9 your questions, Kevin.

10

11 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, that's it,  
12 thanks.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other  
15 Council member questions.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I have a couple  
20 questions, Charlene. You know this Council has been  
21 concerned about this road. I live in Wiseman, it's  
22 right next to the -- what's now the Dalton Highway but  
23 I lived here before the road. And when this road was  
24 built it was closed to the public and then it was  
25 slowly opened up and then the Board of Game opened the  
26 seasons from the road even though the public was  
27 precluded from accessing this area. But guess what,  
28 the hunters in Fairbanks figured out if they paper  
29 staked mining claims along this road way to the north,  
30 it was \$12.50 to the time, they bought their permit to  
31 go north. Has the subsistence advisory committee --  
32 council, committee discussed how the public is going to  
33 use this road. Yeah, it's a -- it's private road -- no  
34 it's not. If there's one dollar in Federal funding  
35 spent it will be opened to the public. And so I'm  
36 concerned that the committee is not actually discussing  
37 the industrial users as in sporthunters that buy their  
38 now \$38.50 mining claim on State land and they buy  
39 their permit to go on the road. They also -- it's an  
40 industrial road for mining and other industrial uses,  
41 the other, does that include hunting guides, has the  
42 subsistence advisory committee discussed hunting guides  
43 getting permits to travel the road and setting up great  
44 big tents on every drainage along the road, John River,  
45 Northfork, all the way over to the Kobuk; does that  
46 included guiding. Have they discussed those issues.  
47 Have they discussed the issues that I'm talking about?

48

49 MS. OSTBLOOM: Thanks for the question.

50

0075

1 No, they did not discuss that during the first meeting.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So they haven't  
4 actually discussed any issues, it was kind of meet and  
5 greet sort of thing?

6

7 MS. OSTBLOOM: Yeah, it really was just  
8 about establishing the committee, getting to know one  
9 another. Because many of them have never met before  
10 and, you know, they traveled from their communities and  
11 unfortunately some weren't able to attend in person as  
12 well.

13

14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So they did  
15 telephonic?

16

17 MS. OSTBLOOM: I can tell you that for  
18 many of the committee members, public access to the  
19 road is a top priority for them. So I'm sure that will  
20 be discussed.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, there's a  
23 Subsistence Resource Commission seat, I'm on the Gates  
24 of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission but our  
25 Chair is on vacation and she's not been in contact and  
26 so can the SRC have an interim voice telephonically at  
27 the next meeting, April, what is it, 7th, something  
28 like that -- 6th?

29

30 MS. OSTBLOOM: I can definitely -- I  
31 can talk to the Co-Chairs about that.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh. The Gates  
34 of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission has to be  
35 involved in that because it has a seat and we're not  
36 having a meeting until -- what is it, Marcy, something  
37 like April 16 or.....

38

39 MS. OSTBLOOM: Yeah, it's after --  
40 yeah.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would like to  
43 request.....

44

45 MS. OSTBLOOM: So I know that.....

46

47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm the Vice Chair  
48 of the Subsistence Resource Commission so I would like  
49 to get a response about someone from our Subsistence  
50

0076

1 Resource Commission participating telephonically at  
2 least.

3

4 MS. OSTBLOOM: Uh-huh, okay. So -- I'm  
5 sorry.

6

7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

8

9 MS. OSTBLOOM: So we did send a request  
10 to the Commission for a seat on the committee and we  
11 are going to followup and in the mean time I will talk  
12 to the Co-Chairs about participation in the next  
13 meeting.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So -- and  
16 when would you get something definitive, just before  
17 that meeting from the Co-Chairs?

18

19 MS. OSTBLOOM: No, I would imagine it  
20 would be in the next few weeks.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

23

24 MS. OSTBLOOM: Because we'd like to get  
25 as much information out to the committee a month in  
26 advance.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, okay. All  
29 right. So that sort of answers my question. Did you  
30 have any further input Charlene, and I really  
31 appreciate you coming here before the Council and  
32 discussing these various issues that have been -- and  
33 because the road starts 22 miles from my house.....

34

35 MS. OSTBLOOM: Uh-huh.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....down the Dalton  
38 Highway from Wiseman and it has a large footprint in  
39 the Western Interior region, sort of a shared  
40 footprint, half in our region, or maybe almost more  
41 than half and then part over in the Kobuk side, the  
42 Kobuk drainage. So I do appreciate you coming before  
43 the Council so look forward to future dialogue with  
44 you.

45

46 MS. OSTBLOOM: Absolutely. And, if  
47 possible, I'd love to visit Wiseman.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, please do, I'm

50

0077

1 easy to find.

2

3

MS. OSTBLOOM: Okay.

4

5

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's a small town.  
6 It's historical site, the first cabin built here is  
7 1905. It's older than Anchorage.

8

9

MS. OSTBLOOM: Oh, okay.

10

11

12

13

14

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easy to find.

MS. OSTBLOOM: Okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's a small town.  
It's historical site, the first cabin built here is  
1905. It's older than Anchorage.

MS. OSTBLOOM: Oh, okay.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So if you travel to  
the other road -- you actually should come up here to  
Wiseman -- Coldfoot is not Wiseman. Coldfoot is a  
truck stop with all of the left over Pipeline camp  
stuff moved across the road into that gravel pit,  
that's a truck stop. That's not a community, that's a  
truck stop.

MS. OSTBLOOM: Right.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: But here, this is  
actually a community with private property and there's  
people that live here and have for decades. I've lived  
here for over 50 years. And so I think it'd be  
beneficial for you to come to Wiseman, I invite you to  
come here.

MS. OSTBLOOM: Okay, great.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any further  
discussion by the Council.....

MS. OSTBLOOM: Well, I.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Charlene.

MS. OSTBLOOM: I was just going to say,  
you know, please feel free to contact me. I believe  
Nissa has my contact information that she can share  
with you and any questions, if I don't have the answer  
I can certainly find one.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, I  
appreciate your interaction with the Council. Look  
forward to future.....

MS. OSTBLOOM: All right.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you.

0078

1 MS. OSTBLOOM: Okay, thank you so much.  
2 Have a great day.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You too. Okay, so  
5 we're moving on to new business. Katya, do you have  
6 anything before we move into new business?

7  
8 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 No, I do not have any additional announcements before  
10 we move in to the new business.

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

13  
14 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
15 Kevin.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

18  
19 MR. WHITWORTH: I know you don't take  
20 lunch but I do, it's about 12:00 o'clock.

21  
22 (Laughter)

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, okay. So it  
25 is noon, it's practically noon, it's five after noon.  
26 So how long would the Council like to take a break for,  
27 one hour.

28  
29 MR. WHITWORTH: That sounds good.

30  
31 MR. VENT: Sounds good.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll come  
34 back on the call at about five after 1:00, how's that.

35  
36 MR. VENT: Five after 1:00 sounds good,  
37 thank you.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

40  
41 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I'll be on  
44 the call at five after 1:00.

45  
46 (Off record)

47  
48 (On record)

49  
50

0079

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hi, Jack Reakoff  
2 back on the call, it's 1:05. Do we have Council  
3 members here. Katya.

4  
5 (Teleconference interference -  
6 participants not muted)

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I hear typing on a  
9 computer, you want to mute your phone.

10  
11 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
12 Kevin.

13  
14 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, Katya is here.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Katya and  
17 Kevin. Other Council.....

18  
19 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I know that Don  
20 Honea is on as well.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....members.

23  
24 MS. WESSELS: He is just on mute.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Pollock.

27  
28 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Who else was that,  
31 was that you Arnold?

32  
33 MR. GERVAIS: It's Tim, Jack.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Tim, all  
36 right. And has anybody heard from Jenny or Tommy  
37 Kriska, they're still in Koyukuk I suppose.

38  
39 MR. VENT: Good afternoon, this is  
40 Darrell.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hello, Darrell.

43  
44 MR. DEMOSKI: This is Arnold.

45  
46 MR. VENT: Yeah, the last I heard from  
47 Tommy.....

48  
49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

50

0080

1 MR. DEMOSKI: Oh, no, this is Arnold, I  
2 just called in. I had difficulties calling in but I  
3 made it on now.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And do we  
6 have Rebecca Wilmarth.

7  
8 (No comments)

9  
10 MR. SIMON: This is Pollock, checking  
11 in.

12  
13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, good. So  
14 you had a comment there, Darrell.

15  
16 MR. VENT: Yeah, when I talked with  
17 Tommy this morning, I guess they were kind of waiting  
18 to see what happens and he said he might be able to  
19 make it back on tomorrow if not later today so if he  
20 calls in today so -- yeah, they're kind of waiting down  
21 there right now.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And Jenny is  
24 probably not going to be on the call this time, right.

25  
26 MR. VENT: Yeah, I don't expect her to  
27 be on with what's happening down there.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks for  
30 that update. So we're back from lunch now and -- let  
31 me do something here -- okay, we're back from lunch.  
32 It's about nine after 1:00 or so and we're going to be  
33 going into new business and call for Federal fish and  
34 shellfish proposals, OSM, Cory Graham. Are you on the  
35 call Cory?

36  
37 MR. GRAHAM: I'm here, Mr. Chair.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Cory.

40  
41 MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
42 Council. For the record my name is Cory Graham and I'm  
43 a Fisheries Biologist for the Office of Subsistence  
44 Management in Anchorage. I'm accompanied by Liz  
45 Williams whose an Anthropologist for OSM. Relevant  
46 materials for this presentation should be located in  
47 Tab 6 of your workbook. I will start by giving an  
48 update on our call for Federal fisheries and shellfish  
49 proposals. This is an action item for your Council.

50



0081

1                   The Federal Subsistence Board will be  
2 accepting proposals this winter and into spring to  
3 change Federal regulation for the subsistence take of  
4 fish and shellfish on Federal public lands and waters  
5 for the time period of 2023 through 2025 regulatory  
6 cycle. The Board will consider proposals to change  
7 Federal fish and shellfish seasons, harvest limits,  
8 methods and means and customary and traditional use  
9 determinations. The window of opportunity to submit  
10 proposals is not yet opened. However, as a Council,  
11 you may vote on fisheries proposals and submit them to  
12 your Council Coordinator. Once the window officially  
13 opens, Coordinators will submit the proposals on your  
14 behalf. The general public will need to wait until the  
15 window for fisheries proposals has opened, which should  
16 be sometime soon and will stay open for at least 60  
17 days. There will be a public news release from our  
18 office announcing the window once the dates are set.  
19 Proposals from the public will need to be submitted to  
20 the regulations.gov website. The proposals will be  
21 analyzed and presented to the Councils during their  
22 fall 2022 meeting for Council recommendations.  
23 Proposal analysis and Council recommendations will be  
24 presented to the Federal Subsistence Board for their  
25 actions during the January 2023 fisheries regulatory  
26 meeting.

27  
28                   This concludes my update on the call  
29 for Federal fisheries and shellfish proposals

30  
31                   Does the Council have any questions or  
32 regulatory proposals to put forward.

33  
34                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Council member  
35 comments or questions or do you have fisheries issues  
36 that would need a Federal subsistence proposal to the  
37 Federal Subsistence Board.

38  
39                   Any Council comments.

40  
41                   MR. VENT: Jack, this is Darrell.

42  
43                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

44  
45                   MR. VENT: Yeah, is this proposal  
46 period, is that for like, you're talking about  
47 shellfish and stuff, is that for like around the coast  
48 or maybe down there in the south area?

49  
50

0082

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, it's Federal  
2 fish and shellfish so it'd be all over Alaska, any  
3 Federal waters, which you live on Federal waters in  
4 Huslia so there can be Federal fisheries proposals. So  
5 that's what the call is for, any kind of fishery  
6 proposal, if you have a fisheries issue, the call is  
7 open and the Council can vote for and submit a proposal  
8 to be reviewed during the Federal Subsistence Board  
9 process, which would be next fall we would start to  
10 review those proposals that come forward.

11  
12                   MR. VENT: Okay. Okay, that doesn't  
13 deal with emergency closures or anything like that  
14 then, all right.

15  
16                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No, these are not  
17 for emergency closure, these are for basically  
18 regulatory changes under the Federal Subsistence Board  
19 process so for Federal waters like where you're at  
20 there.

21  
22                   So does any Council members have any  
23 subsistence proposals -- Kevin, in the Kuskokwim  
24 drainage do you have -- you don't have a heck of a lot  
25 of Federal waters up river there, though, right?

26  
27                   MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
28 Kevin. No, we don't have any Federal waters above Aniak  
29 on the Kuskokwim. Below that within Yukon Delta is our  
30 main area of Federal waters. But I don't have any  
31 proposals to put forward at this point. When it does  
32 open up though maybe we'll have some at that point.

33  
34                   That's all though, thanks.

35  
36                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. And so my  
37 question is when is the anticipated call? It's not  
38 open yet, it'll be open when, Cory, again, I missed  
39 that, I might have been writing or something.

40  
41                   MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
42 don't think -- yeah, it's soon but I don't think  
43 there's a set date yet.

44  
45                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right.  
46 So the Council is aware of the proposal call. This  
47 Council discussed a subsistence bag limit increase for  
48 the Jim River drainage but first we'd have to deal with  
49 the Jim River closure. And so that's a proposal  
50

0083

1 putting the horse in front of the cart. So that's the  
2 next fisheries closure review and so you going to lead  
3 that one, Cory.

4  
5 MR. GRAHAM: Yes, Mr. Chair, but I  
6 think the call for nonrural determination proposals is  
7 before that on the agenda.

8  
9 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, I skipped over  
12 one, yep, I see that one now. Yes, go ahead, Katya.

13  
14 MS. WESSELS: Yes, I think -- I would  
15 propose if Council is okay with it, to switch those two  
16 items in order because it seems more logical.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We will go  
19 through this fishery closure review and then come back  
20 to this nonrural determination. So you want to lead  
21 that one Cory.

22  
23 MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair, yes,  
24 I will. Again, for the record my name is Cory Graham  
25 and I'm a Fisheries Biologist with OSM. During the  
26 upcoming fisheries regulatory cycle OSM Staff will  
27 review closures to Federal subsistence fisheries  
28 similar to the wildlife closure reviews during your  
29 last cycle. Because the fisheries closure review  
30 process is relatively new I wanted to briefly describe  
31 OSM's closure review policy and provide the Council  
32 with a list of the fisheries closures that will be  
33 reviewed during the upcoming cycle. This is not an  
34 action item.

35  
36 So Title VIII of ANILCA establishes a  
37 priority for the taking of fish and wildlife on Federal  
38 public lands and waters for non-wasteful subsistence  
39 uses of the taking of fish and wildlife on such lands  
40 for other purposes. Under certain circumstances  
41 specified in Title VIII, the Board is authorized to  
42 restrict, close and reopen Federal public lands and  
43 waters to the taking of fish and wildlife. Like other  
44 Board established rules closures are subject to change  
45 during the regulatory cycle. It is the Board's policy  
46 that Federal public lands and waters should be reopened  
47 as soon as practicable once the conditions that  
48 originally justified the closure have changed to such  
49 an extent that the closure is no longer necessary. To  
50

0084

1 help ensure that closures do not remain in place longer  
2 than necessary, the Board has directed OSM to review  
3 existing closures.

4  
5 OSM will review half of all closures  
6 during each applicable regulatory cycle. Closure  
7 reviews will include analysis of all relevant  
8 considerations and OSM will recommend an action for the  
9 Council's consideration on the closure. The types of  
10 actions that the Council can recommend include, to  
11 retain, which means the closure remains in the  
12 regulations unchanged. A second option is to modify,  
13 which means a change directly related to the actual  
14 closure, for example, adjusting the dates the closure's  
15 effective, assigning an expiration date or broadening a  
16 closure to both subsistence and non-subsistence users.  
17 A third option is to rescind, which means to remove the  
18 closure from the regulations. If rescinded, applicable  
19 regulations from the closure area would apply. The  
20 last option is to defer, which means that the closure  
21 remains in place until that time the Board takes up the  
22 closure again, normally no longer than the next  
23 applicable regulatory cycle.

24  
25 I want to point out that changes to  
26 harvest limits and seasons or allowable gear types  
27 cannot be made through any of these options. These  
28 changes would require a parallel proposal to be  
29 submitted with the closure review.

30  
31 During the upcoming regulatory cycle we  
32 will be bringing forward fisheries closure reviews for  
33 the Council's consideration at the fall 2022 meeting.  
34 OSM will be reviewing three closures located in the  
35 Western Interior region. The three closures are Jim  
36 River, Bonanza Creek, and Kanuti River. OSM will also  
37 be reviewing two closures in the Eastern Interior  
38 region, the two closures are Nome Creek and Delta  
39 River.

40  
41 And this concludes my presentation of  
42 the closure review update. Are there any questions  
43 from the Council.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So to stay within  
46 the call for proposal, the Council could submit a  
47 proposal for the Jim River drainage to allow an  
48 increase in bag limit from five to 10; five under State  
49 now to 10 Federal. And then also comment on rescind  
50

0085

1 the Jim River closure, which was put in place long ago.  
2 So that would be the process to get that bag limit  
3 increase for the Jim River for subsistence?

4

5 MR. GRAHAM: Yes, Mr. Chair. And under  
6 your Council's original recommendation for the closure,  
7 I believe you also recommended modifying regulations to  
8 allow rod and reel only.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Yes, that was  
11 our recommendation but we cross-threaded with the  
12 closure review and didn't have a real proposal. So I  
13 would like to submit a proposal for the Jim River  
14 drainage when it comes for call to allow an increase in  
15 bag limit for the Jim River drainage for subsistence  
16 users from five to 10 grayling per day with rod and  
17 reel as the means.

18

19 I also want the Council to be aware  
20 that the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee is -- has  
21 submitted a State Board of Game proposal to allow hook  
22 and line or rod and reel fishing for subsistence, which  
23 has no bag limit, and up from the area by Nulato and it  
24 extends all the way up to the closed areas near the  
25 Dalton Highway, so under State regulations. We can't  
26 have unlimited bag limits, so would still maintain  
27 those closure areas on the MiddleFork, Jim River, et  
28 cetera. But under State regulations the proposal is  
29 for hook and line fishing for subsistence in the  
30 Koyukuk drainage up to those closed areas in the  
31 Koyukuk River drainage. So I want the Council to be  
32 aware of that, that's a State proposal and that will be  
33 -- will benefit all of the villages that use,  
34 traditionally -- customarily and traditionally use hook  
35 and line to catch grayling and various fishes to --  
36 with hook and line.

37

38 So I would like to submit the proposal  
39 through this process from the Western Interior Regional  
40 Advisory Council for the Jim River drainage, to  
41 increase the bag limit from five to 10 under Federal  
42 subsistence regulations and with a provision for the  
43 use of rod and reel, which is a customary and  
44 traditional practice here. When I was a kid people  
45 went and caught -- there was lots of grayling and they  
46 would catch lots of grayling with hook and line. It  
47 was the primary method of harvest in the upper drainage  
48 because the waters are clear and so it's -- and  
49 grayling are a tributary fish and easy to -- relatively  
50

0086

1 easy to harvest with hook and line.

2

3 So how would we do that if it's me  
4 making the recommendation, Katya.

5

6 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, you could  
7 possibly pass the gavel to the Vice Chair and then you  
8 can make a motion.

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: My Vice Chair is not  
11 present. So we can pass the gavel to the Secretary.

12

13 MS. WESSELS: Yes, you may.

14

15 (Teleconference interference -  
16 participants not muted)

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Darrell, I'm  
19 going to pass the gavel over to you because I want to  
20 -- for this Federal fisheries proposal.

21

22 MR. VENT: Yes.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Mr. Chair. I  
25 would like to make a motion to submit a proposal to the  
26 Federal Subsistence Board to increase the bag limit on  
27 the Jim River drainage from five grayling to 10 with  
28 the provision for using rod and reel or hook and line  
29 for subsistence harvest.

30

31 Do we have a second -- or can I get a  
32 second to that one.

33

34 MR. DEMOSKI: I second. Jack, this is  
35 Arnold.

36

37 REPORTER: Was that you Arnold?

38

39 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, that's.....

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So you want to  
42 clarify who that second.....

43

44 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

45

46 REPORTER: Thank you.

47

48 MR. DEMOSKI: Arnold. I second it.

49

50

0087

1 REPORTER: Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, you got to get  
4 closer to your mic, Arnold, you're barely audible and  
5 you break up if you get too far away from it.

6

7 So, Darrell, you can ask for discussion  
8 on that motion that's been seconded.

9

10 MR. VENT: Okay, Jack. There's a  
11 motion by Jack and seconded by Arnold. Is there any --  
12 is there a call for the question, or discu.....

13

14 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya.

15

16 MR. VENT: .....discussion.

17

18 MS. WESSELS: After the motion was  
19 called and seconded, you're supposed to call for  
20 Council discussion of the motion.

21

22 MR. VENT: Yes, I -- sorry about that,  
23 I was calling for discussion but I put it backwards  
24 there -- sorry about that.

25

26 MS. WESSELS: No problem. Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So through  
29 discussion. I would like to have some comments on the  
30 proposal. The Jim River drainage is a tributary used  
31 by people of this Wiseman, Coldfoot area for decades,  
32 since the construction of the road. When Councils were  
33 established we only had wildlife management and when we  
34 got fisheries the OSM, or some -- BLM or somebody  
35 immediately closed those waters to subsistence entry  
36 and so we -- you know, I've always felt that the bag  
37 limit should be more. When people go there it's like  
38 30, 40 miles to those drainages and so I feel that the  
39 bag limit can easily be supported but the bag limit  
40 increase for the limited number of subsistence users  
41 that would actually be taking grayling under the  
42 Federal regulation.

43

44 So when we get into the fall then we'll  
45 have this discussion for basically rescinding the Jim  
46 River closure. I'm not requesting the Prospect Creek  
47 drainage or the Kanuti River drainage which -- those  
48 are smaller drainages. S o the Jim River actually has  
49 an extensive watershed associated with the road.

50

0088

1 So that would be my discussion points  
2 on submitting the proposal.

3  
4 MR. SIMON: This is Pollock.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, go ahead.

7  
8 MR. SIMON: Yes, Jim River is about 50  
9 miles up from Allakaket. Fishing to 10 for subsistence  
10 purpose, who's going to fish up there are subsistence  
11 users, if you want to go fish for grayling you fish by  
12 Allakaket but the only peoples that are going to fish  
13 up there is somebody that's come up by the road and the  
14 road crosses the river someplace so you're giving  
15 opportunity to somebody from outside, and can you  
16 clarify that to me?

17  
18 Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Mr. Chair, can I  
21 clarify that for Pollock?

22  
23 MR. VENT: Yes.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the subsistence  
26 users would basically be the people of Wiseman and  
27 Coldfoot, that's basically that's closest to us. And  
28 so the subsistence users would probably be no more than  
29 seven or eight people, would be the subsistence user  
30 base. So it's -- and it's not a lot of harvest but if  
31 you go that far you want to be able to take more than  
32 the current bag limit.

33  
34 Is that clear Pollock?

35  
36 MR. SIMON: Yes, okay, thank you.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

39  
40 MR. VENT: Is there any other  
41 questions.

42  
43 (No comments)

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I call question on  
46 the motion.

47  
48 MR. VENT: Okay, question has been  
49 called for. All in favor of the proposal signify by  
50



0089

1 saying aye.

2

3 IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5 MR. VENT: Any opposition to the  
6 proposal.

7

8 (No opposing votes)

9

10 MR. VENT: Hearing none, unanimous for  
11 the proposal. It's back to you now, Jack.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, okay, thanks so  
14 much Darrell.

15

16 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
17 Kevin.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

20

21 MR. WHITWORTH: Thanks, Mr. Chair.  
22 This topic of fisheries closure review process or the  
23 discussion that Cory had brought up, I think it's still  
24 on the table. I just want to make a couple comments and  
25 ask questions here.

26

27 I think this -- this seems new to me,  
28 this review process, maybe it's not but it is something  
29 new to me. It's kind of brought up some questions.  
30 But I would think that if OSM is going to review these  
31 closures that it should probably go through the same  
32 regulatory process as a regular closure or a regular  
33 proposal would go through. So just wondering if,  
34 instead of it just coming to RACs, and then straight to  
35 the Federal Subsistence Board, it seems like they're  
36 missing some consultation from Native organizations  
37 like the Doyon and those sort of thing that regular  
38 proposals go through. So this is basically a proposal,  
39 if OSM finds that they want to reverse a closure then  
40 they should put in a proposal to review -- to reverse  
41 it. Anyhow, if Cory could clarify a little bit of  
42 that, some of the process. And hopefully it can go  
43 through the process.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, those are great  
46 questions, Kevin, I appreciate that. So Cory, can you  
47 answer those, how the closure review process -- it  
48 actually turns into a proposal if the Councils  
49 recommend it and is there a process for other entities

50

0090

1 to also make recommendations, that's pretty much the  
2 question.

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MR. GRAHAM: Thank you for the question. Through the Chair. My talking points may not have been clear and I apologize for that. But it goes through the same process as the proposals do. So we'll still get tribal consultation and we'll get input from the ISC and it's essentially the same process as the proposal goes through.

MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, Mr. Chair, that clarifies a lot. I mean I didn't hear that in the first go-around, thank you. That's all.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, those are very valid questions and good to review that step process. Any other questions from the Council on the fisheries closure review discussion. And then how that -- we will be, at the fall meeting, reviewing those various closures. Any other questions.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Comments.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any proposals.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none we're going to move to the call for nonrural determination proposals, Liz Williams. Are you there Liz.

MS. WILLIAMS: I'm here, thank you, Mr. Chair, and good afternoon to everybody. This is Liz Williams, and I'm an Anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence Management in Anchorage. I'm here to provide you with a brief overview of the current call for proposals for nonrural determination in Federal regulations. This is an action items. These materials are not in your Council book.

A nonrural determination is the process for formally changing in Federal regulation a community's status from nonrural to rural or from rural

0091

1 to nonrural. This is the second call for proposals for  
2 nonrural determinations since 2018. Any valid nonrural  
3 determination proposals submitted this year will be  
4 acted on by the Board in 2025. The call for nonrural  
5 determination proposals occurs every four years at the  
6 same time as every other fisheries regulatory cycle.  
7 The next call for proposals for nonrural determinations  
8 will be in 2026.

9

10 As you just heard from our colleagues  
11 in the Fisheries Division, the call for proposals has  
12 not yet published due to the lengthy clearance process  
13 in Washington, D.C. When it gets published the public  
14 comment proposal to change the regulations period will  
15 be open for at least 30 days.

16

17 There's a flier on our website on how  
18 to submit proposals to change nonrural determinations.  
19 The flier includes information on where to submit a  
20 proposal and lists items a proposal must contain to be  
21 accepted for consideration by the Board. The website  
22 address is [www.doi -- Department of Interior](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/faqs)  
23 [.gov/subsistence/faqs](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/faqs), which stands for frequently  
24 asked questions. This flier can be found near the  
25 bottom of the frequently asked questions page.  
26 Additional information may be found in the soon to be  
27 published proposed rule for the 2023 to 2025  
28 subsistence fish and shellfish proposed rule.

29

30 Again, this is an action item.

31

32 Thanks for your time.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, okay, thank you,  
35 Liz. Western Interior has no nonrural designations  
36 within this region and I know of no area that would be  
37 -- at this time would be determined to be a nonrural  
38 determination. If Donlin Creek goes big then it may  
39 need to be determined as nonrural but we'd have to look  
40 at Federal status there. But at this time I don't know  
41 of any -- any Council members have comments on this  
42 nonrural determination proposal process.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Is there a question  
47 or comment.

48

49 (No comments)

50

0092

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none, thanks so much Liz. So we're going to drop down to Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program information update. Cory.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, for the record my name is Cory Graham, I'm a Fisheries Biologist with OSM.

I will now provide the Council with an update regarding the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. This is not an action item.

We are currently in the final phase of the 2022 Monitoring Program funding cycle. The Federal Subsistence Board met in early February and endorsed the final Monitoring Program funding plan. Once OSM has a final budget the Assistant Regional Director will approve the funding plan and all applicants will be notified of the status of their submissions. With this cycle coming to an end, it's time for the Councils to begin developing priority information needs for the 2024. Priority information needs, which you may hear referred to as PINS are an important component of the Monitoring Program as they identify issues of local concern and knowledge gaps related to subsistence fisheries. Further, priority information needs guide the funding process by determining the type of projects that are submitted for funding and providing a framework for evaluating and selecting project proposals.

We are asking for several volunteers from the Council to meet by telephone this summer to identify knowledge gaps and information needed for management of subsistence fisheries in their region. The draft list of priority information needs that is developed by the volunteers will be presented to the Council for final approval during their fall 2022 meetings. Again, this isn't an action item but if there's anyone on this Council that would like to volunteer to help develop priority information needs for the next cycle it would be greatly appreciated. Because this Council covers both Yukon and kuskokwim regions it would be nice if there was at least one volunteer from each region.

And this concludes my presentation regarding the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program

0093

1 update.

2

3 Are there any questions or volunteers  
4 to help develop priority information needs.

5

6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do Council members  
7 have questions on prioritizing these information needs.

8

9 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

10

11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

12

13 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I don't have any  
14 questions but I worked with that group on the last  
15 cycle and didn't do that good of a job with it because  
16 I didn't quite understand the process that well but I  
17 would like to go back in with it and assist with  
18 commenting on what the priority needs might be.

19

20 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, so you'll be  
21 our volunteer for the Yukon.

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: Sure.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I'll question the  
26 Council, is the Council good with that -- I am.

27

28 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
29 Kevin.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

32

33 MR. WHITWORTH: You're a little bit  
34 quiet on your mic, but sorry to bother -- or butt in  
35 here, but I'd volunteer for the Kuskokwim on this  
36 priority information needs team or whatever you want to  
37 call it.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

40

41 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks for  
44 pointing out that I was a little quiet on my mic there.  
45 I'm making myself a cup of tea and I put it in my  
46 pocket. And so the Council is -- any opposition to Tim  
47 representing the Yukon from the Council.

48

49 MR. DEMOSKI: No, I'm okay with it.

50

0094

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So okay. And  
2 then Kevin volunteers to represent the Kuskokwim and so  
3 any opposition to that.

4  
5                   MR. DEMOSKI: No.

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So hearing none,  
8 consider those volunteers as our representatives to the  
9 Fisheries Monitoring Program, Cory.

10  
11                  MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12  
13                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So then Council  
14 charter update, you sort of went over that a little  
15 bit, Katya, that's E, did you want to go over it a  
16 little more.

17  
18                  MS. WESSELS: Yes, Mr. Chair, actually  
19 no, I -- it was my mistake, I apologize. I didn't  
20 notice it was on the agenda later so I jumped in  
21 earlier. But I completed the charter update unless  
22 Council has any additional questions.

23  
24                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, not a problem.  
25 You're doing great. It got dumped in your lap.

26  
27                  MS. WESSELS: Thank you.

28  
29                  CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we've reviewed  
30 our charter and I'm happy with the way the charter has  
31 moved forward. So review and approve the 2021 annual  
32 report, which is under Tab 7 and that was also going to  
33 be the Coordinator, are you going to review that for us  
34 Katya?

35  
36                  MS. WESSELS: Sure. Thank you, Mr.  
37 Chair. So under -- like Jack said under Tab 7 or on  
38 our website you can find the Council's draft fiscal  
39 year 2021 annual report to the Federal Subsistence  
40 Board. And the Council has the right to submit that  
41 report under ANILCA and bring topics -- subsistence  
42 topics of importance to the Board's attention. So  
43 right now the Council has five topics outlined in the  
44 draft annual report.

45  
46                  The first topic is poor return of Yukon  
47 and Kuskokwim River chinook and chum salmon in 2021.

48  
49                  Topic No. 2. Concerns about species  
50

0095

1 utilized by subsistence users as a result of poor  
2 salmon returns.

3

4 Topic No. 3. Tribal representation on  
5 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Technical  
6 Review Committee.

7

8 Topic No. 4. State violation of ANILCA  
9 Title VIII during a Federal closure on the Kuskokwim.

10

11 Topic No. 5. Bureau of Land Management  
12 guide use permitting for dall sheep.

13

14 The draft language for these topics  
15 were developed with the help of the transcripts from  
16 the previous meetings and also with some consultation  
17 with Council members. So at this point I'm going to  
18 pause and if Council members didn't have an opportunity  
19 to look through the draft yet, you have this  
20 opportunity at this time. And if you would like to  
21 change any language or, you know, add anything, or add  
22 any additional topics that will be your opportunity.  
23 So perhaps, Mr. Chair, we should take a five minute  
24 break so Council members have a chance to look at the  
25 annual report.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So I got.....

28

29 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair.

30

31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

32

33 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, I helped write  
34 this, you know, with you, Jack, Karen Deatherage as  
35 well working with the topics that we talked about at  
36 our last meeting in October. There was some emails  
37 going back and forth on drafting this. I'm comfortable  
38 with the way it is written now and ready to move on to  
39 the next annual report for '22. So I'm comfortable  
40 with the way it is and I don't think there needs to be  
41 any additions or edits or anything at this point, for  
42 me.

43

44 That's all, thanks.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. I appreciate  
47 that comment, Kevin. Yeah, I'm good with this annual  
48 report. And I think the present Council members that  
49 are here were present during the discussion last fall

50

0096

1 when we were outlining this annual report. And so any  
2 -- we'll give the Council a chance to comment if  
3 there's something you'd like to see slightly expanded  
4 or slightly retracted, this is your approval time.

5  
6 So does any Council member have any  
7 discussion on this annual report topics that are  
8 outlined here. They're fairly clear. Go ahead.

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I thought I heard  
13 somebody trying to say something.

14  
15 MR. DEMOSKI: Mr. Chair, this is  
16 Arnold. I read the draft report, it looks good to me,  
17 I don't have any changes.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Good, thanks  
20 for that comment, Arnold, appreciate it. So I want to  
21 give everybody a chance to weigh in. So we'd take a  
22 motion to adopt our annual report for submission to the  
23 Federal Subsistence Board Katya?

24  
25 MS. WESSELS: Yes, please.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the Chair will  
28 entertain a motion to adopt the annual report as found  
29 under Tab 7 in our meeting packet. It was reviewed by  
30 myself and various Council members, everybody had a  
31 chance to discuss it, so the Chair will entertain a  
32 motion to adopt that annual report to submit to the  
33 Federal Subsistence Board on the various topics of  
34 concern.

35  
36 MR. VENT: This is Darrell, I make a  
37 motion.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Moved by Darrell.

40  
41 MR. WHITWORTH: Second by Kevin.

42  
43 MR. DEMOSKI: This is Arnold, I second.

44  
45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Kevin second. So  
46 any further discussion.

47  
48 (No comments)

49  
50



0097

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a call  
2 for question.

3  
4 MR. VENT: Question.

5  
6 MR. DEMOSKI: Question.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question by Darrell.  
9 Those in favor of submitting the annual report as  
10 described and presented under Tab 7 of our meeting  
11 packet to the Federal Subsistence Board signify by  
12 saying aye.

13  
14 IN UNISON: Aye.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any opposition to  
17 that signify by saying -- same sign.

18  
19 (No opposing votes)

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So the annual report  
22 has been approved by the Western Interior Regional  
23 Advisory Council to be transmitted to the Federal  
24 Subsistence Board.

25  
26 (Teleconference interference -  
27 participants not muted)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're moving on  
30 to our next topic is Federal Subsistence Board annual  
31 report reply process review and revision, discussion,  
32 Council comments and feedback. Robbin LaVine, are you  
33 there.

34  
35 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I'm  
36 here. So hello, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council.  
37 For the record, my name is Robbin LaVine and I'm the  
38 Subsistence Policy Coordinator for the Office of  
39 Subsistence Management. This is an action item.

40  
41 During the Federal Subsistence Board's  
42 August 2021 work session, the InterAgency Staff  
43 Committee briefed the Board on the annual report reply  
44 process and possible revisions to improve  
45 responsiveness to Regional Advisory Council concerns.  
46 This ISC briefing is part of a larger ISC effort to  
47 improve workload efficiencies within the Federal  
48 Subsistence Management Program. The Board reviewed and  
49 discussed the report reply process and agreed to  
50

0098

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

4  
5 As you are aware, ANILCA Section .805  
6 authorizes the Councils to prepare an annual report,  
7 which you just passed, containing information related  
8 to important subsistence resource issues within your  
9 regions. These reports are invaluable as they provide  
10 the Board with a broad holistic picture of local  
11 resource conditions and the most up to date subsistence  
12 issues facing communities across rural Alaska. With  
13 this knowledge the Board can make informed decisions.

14  
15 Historically, the Board has strived to  
16 provide responses to every topic listed in annual  
17 reports regardless of its authority to address the  
18 issues raised. However, it is unclear if Board  
19 responses on all annual report topics are helpful to  
20 the Councils while also taking considerable Staff time  
21 to complete. So the ISC has suggested process  
22 revisions.

- 23  
24 1. To maintain annual reports as a way  
25 to inform the Board of local conditions, issues and  
26 needs, and  
27  
28 2. To propose that letter writing be a  
29 way to request a response from the Board on topics of  
30 concerns.

31  
32 We do recognize that Councils already  
33 write letters to the Board and to other agencies  
34 outside of the annual report and reply process. Under  
35 the ISC scenario the only change is how the Board  
36 responds to issues within your annual report. This  
37 change might allow for more substantive and timely  
38 responses from the Board on topics of critical concern  
39 to the Council, for example, a separate letter  
40 requesting Board response could be written and  
41 submitted to the Board more quickly than including the  
42 issue in the annual report as the annual report  
43 requires a longer time for both preparation of the  
44 report as well as for preparation of the Board's  
45 response.

46  
47 These suggested revisions are not  
48 intended to diminish the ability of the Councils to  
49 communicate with the Board. The Board relies on your  
50

0099

1 knowledge and expertise and annual reports are a way to  
2 ensure the Board remains up to date on important  
3 developments in your region.

4

5 To that end, we are asking you to think  
6 about what you want from the Board in response to your  
7 annual report. To help guide your discussion I suggest  
8 that; 1, we first review, again, the ISC's suggestions;  
9 2, we will open the floor to questions and Council  
10 discussions, and, then; 3, we will ask you to take  
11 action developing your comments to forward to the  
12 Board.

13

14 So with those three steps before us I  
15 will, again, remind you of the ISC suggested revisions  
16 and that will be: One, annual reports remain as a  
17 means to keep the Board informed of important  
18 conditions, issues and needs, and letter writing as a  
19 way to request Board response on important topics and  
20 concerns.

21

22 And now we're at step two and I'm ready  
23 to take your questions, clarifications and discussions.

24

25 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the  
26 Council.

27

28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Robbin.  
29 Does the Council members have questions for Robbin and  
30 comments on this annual report review and response to  
31 the Councils.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any Council member  
36 comments. So I got a few discussion points to make  
37 with this annual review process.

38

39 I've been on this Council since 1993  
40 and nobody knew what the annual report was. The first  
41 Councils developed the annual review -- report process  
42 to the Federal Subsistence Board about these various  
43 topics of concern and so we've done that from 1993, or  
44 nearly 30 years ago. But it's important for the Board  
45 to look at and review these various topics, that  
46 they're aware of these various issues throughout the  
47 various regions of Alaska, the 10 different regions.

48

49 The suggestion for letter writing to

50

0100

1 the Federal Subsistence Board with response, that's  
2 fair, we probably could go with that and -- under  
3 specific instances that need a response.

4  
5 But the other suggestion is to write  
6 letters to the agencies. If this is going to be  
7 reviewed before the Federal Subsistence Board, the  
8 agencies need to respond to the Councils. We wrote a  
9 letter to the Acting Regional Director for the BLM back  
10 in February 4, and as we do with many times we've  
11 written to the various agencies, we get virtually no  
12 response. We don't know what they think. We have no  
13 clue what they're going to do. It's like a shot in the  
14 dark, it never hits its mark, we don't get a response,  
15 we don't get -- they don't really want to say anything  
16 apparently. I don't expect a response on February 4,  
17 but we never get a response from the agencies. If the  
18 Federal Subsistence Board is going to not respond on  
19 every issue then maybe relegate it to the various  
20 agency that -- on the properties that it affects, that  
21 agency should be incumbent to respond as the Federal  
22 Subsistence Board should be incumbent to respond on our  
23 specific letters. We write a specific letter, we want  
24 a specific response and the agencies should be under  
25 agreement by the Federal Subsistence Board process to  
26 respond to the Councils. That's the only way this is  
27 going to go forward.

28  
29 So those are discussions clear, Robbin.

30  
31 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 Actually very informative and helpful. Thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any other Council  
35 members that want to discuss this issue. These are  
36 important processes that this is how the Councils,  
37 either through proposals or through this annual report  
38 process interaction with the various agencies, those --  
39 this is how the Councils -- and these Councils have  
40 deference and so there's deference to these Councils.  
41 If the Council writes to an agency and they don't  
42 respond, that's not deference, you're not getting a  
43 response. And we -- under ANILCA it's -- we're  
44 provided a forum for expression of opinions and  
45 recommendations of persons of interest for any matter  
46 related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within  
47 the region. That's .805(b) -- (3)(d). So these  
48 Councils have a deference and the agencies, if they're  
49 going to sign on with this annual report -- pushing  
50

0101

1 that off to the various agencies, we want response from  
2 the agency. We want responsibility taken by the agency  
3 to respond and if they don't want to do that we want  
4 response from the Federal Subsistence Board. That's  
5 the way this needs to happen.

6

7

So I've stated that twice.

8

9

Any other comments or questions.

10

11

MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair.

12

13

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead.

14

15

16

17

18

MR. SIMON: Hi, I'm not sure if you're  
taking any questions or comments from the public on  
this topic but this is Jim Simon if you would entertain  
a possible comment.

19

20

21

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, if you have a  
comment go right ahead.

22

23

24

25

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31

32

MR. SIMON: Yeah, thank you. I really  
appreciate the comments you just made, Chair Reakoff,  
because my understanding of ANILCA .805(3)(d) is that  
an annual report is really to be to the Secretaries,  
the Secretary of the Interior, in particular, and I  
think that the annual report going to the Federal  
Subsistence Board is a regulatory decision in order to  
administer that part of ANILCA, Title VIII but that  
that regulatory role for the annual reports could also  
be changed by regulation.

33

34

35

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41

I think it's important that the  
Regional Advisory Councils bring to the Federal  
Subsistence Board in the current process are intended  
to get to the Secretary level and I think the issue you  
just outlined with the lack of effective response to  
letters written by the RACs to the individual DOI  
agencies is problematic and compromises the original  
intent of ANILCA, Title VIII, Section .805.

42

43

Thank you very much.

44

45

46

47

And this is, for the record, Jim Simon,  
with the Tribal Resources Stewardship Program at Tanana  
Chiefs Conference.

48

49

50

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I've been in this

0102

1 game quite awhile and I've read ANILCA back and forth  
2 and I've listened to the discussion by the Solicitor,  
3 .808 of ANILCA gives Subsistence Resource Commissions a  
4 direct line to the Secretary of Interior but when the  
5 Federal Subsistence Program and the Federal Board was  
6 set up, the Federal Subsistence Board is actually an  
7 arm of the Secretary, they actually represent the  
8 Secretary. So we've been under the correspondence  
9 review process, we can't -- we're under the Hatch Act,  
10 we can't write letters to any kind of a political  
11 entity and so we actually are -- we have been precluded  
12 from speaking directly to the Secretaries for quite  
13 some time by the Solicitor's interpretation. So we're  
14 actually writing to an arm of the Secretaries by the  
15 Federal Subsistence Board but the RACs have deference.

16

17 And if our annual reports, they're not  
18 going to respond to everything, okay, we understand  
19 that you have this issue and maybe you're going to  
20 bring a proposal forward or they feel that you should  
21 write to the Forest Service, or the BLM, or the U.S.  
22 Fish and Wildlife, or whoever that land managing agency  
23 is, we want to see a response. I'm getting tired of  
24 writing letters to these agencies and they do not  
25 respond, so that's a problem.

26

27 So if we're going to go in this  
28 direction then these agencies are going to have to  
29 start to respond to the Council and then if we don't  
30 get recourse we can move forward to the Federal  
31 Subsistence Board with some proposal or some other  
32 remedy.

33

34 So that's my interpretation of what our  
35 Program entails, Jim. Response.

36

37 MR. SIMON: No, thank you, Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So that's  
40 what we've been told, over and over, that's the way  
41 this Program is run. Anybody at OSM have any different  
42 interpretation of what I just said?

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Apparently not.

47

48 MR. VENT: Hey, Jack, this is Darrell.

49

50

0103

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

2

3

4 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just had a -- you  
5 know, when this letter gets -- when they get on to this  
6 report and we, you know, say, for instance that, you  
7 know, we're not really pleased with the way the  
8 management is going, can they record this on there too  
9 or is that just informational?

9

10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, our annual  
11 report is informational to the Federal Subsistence  
12 Board but if an issue continues to burn then there may  
13 be a wildlife special action or, you know, a fisheries  
14 special action request and then it comes up to a  
15 different level so that would be our next recourse. We  
16 can write directly to the -- what OSM is saying, we  
17 could write direct letters to the Federal Subsistence  
18 Board about specific issues that might get responded to  
19 sooner -- that's valid. But then we also.....

20

21 MR. VENT: Okay. Ca.....

22

23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....the other  
24 double-edge to this sword is, if the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board is going to push this off to the  
26 agencies and we're going to write to the agencies, we  
27 have to have an assurance, there has to be an agreement  
28 among the Federal Subsistence Board, which all of those  
29 heads of -- the Board members, most of them are the  
30 agency heads and they have to agree among themselves  
31 that they're going to respond to these Councils because  
32 we have deference. The Secretary said that. The  
33 Secretarial Review of the Regional Councils gives the  
34 Council deference. And if the agencies, if they're  
35 going to -- if the Federal Board, which is the agency  
36 heads and some public members, they have to dedicate a  
37 response to the Councils.

38

39 If a Council writes to an agency, we  
40 want to see a response.

41

42 If you're not going to do it we're  
43 going to keep writing to the Federal Subsistence Board  
44 and we're going to do away with the agency letter  
45 writing thing.

46

47 Does that make sense, Darrell?

48

49 MR. VENT: Yeah, just that, you know,

50

0104

1 my interest right now is we have, you know, a real  
2 problem on Federal lands when it comes to predators and  
3 how do -- you know we keep asking uses on Federal lands  
4 to deal with the predation and it only goes so far.  
5 But if it's documented, you know, they'd be coming back  
6 and asking us questions on why do we keep talking about  
7 this when we know that some of the problems we're  
8 having in our villages. And, you know, we've been  
9 trying to deal with it at a local level but then we can  
10 only go so far as on State land -- but when it comes to  
11 Federal land it's a whole different type of -- and you  
12 know we keep trying to address this and they keep, you  
13 know, denying us to solve our problems, you know, it's  
14 hard for us to manage this kind of predation so, you  
15 know, I just want to make sure that, you know, we could  
16 try to maybe get a program going about how it's  
17 involved with our traditional and cultural use, that's  
18 how we always managed it before but, you know, it makes  
19 it harder when the Federal government doesn't recognize  
20 that.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Enabling legislation  
23 of the various Parks and Refuges and stuff that have  
24 been predominately used preclude predator control. The  
25 Federal Subsistence Board can allow, you know, expanded  
26 use, longer bear seasons, higher harvest limits for  
27 wolves and so forth and so on but the agencies  
28 themselves cannot fund predator control. That's been  
29 said over and over and over and so -- but that -- the  
30 State of Alaska, on State lands or Native Corp lands  
31 it's approved can do predator control. But the  
32 agencies, to date, I've seen no interpretation where  
33 they're inclined to fund predator control unless they  
34 have an absolute emergency where the population of  
35 whatever animal it is is going to be eaten by the last  
36 wolves and bears. So that's about the only recourse.  
37 It has to be a -- like an -- and it has to go through a  
38 huge amount of hoops to get to that point. But that's  
39 a.....

40

41 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, Katya, go ahead.

44

45 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I just want to  
46 address this last comment also. I just want to let you  
47 know -- the Council know, and remind you, you probably  
48 already have been told that in the past, but both the  
49 Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Federal  
50

50



0105

1 Subsistence Management Program and the Federal  
2 Subsistence Board Predator Management Policy note that:  
3 The Board's delegated authority under Title VIII of  
4 ANILCA only permits the Board to administer the  
5 subsistence take and uses of wildlife on Federal public  
6 lands. And predator control is not a subsistence use.  
7 The Board, therefore, is not empowered to engage in  
8 predator control and cannot direct land managers to  
9 engage in it.

10

11 Now Councils may submit a request to  
12 Federal land managers for agency sponsored predator  
13 control in their region. They also may submit a  
14 proposal to the Alaska Board of Game to modify  
15 regulations related to the intensive management of big  
16 game prey populations.

17

18 So that's what I would like to say  
19 about the predator control.

20

21 But I also wanted to address this  
22 topic, you know, what Robbin presented to you, that's a  
23 proposal that was developed by the InterAgency Staff  
24 Committee. That proposal was presented to the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board in August of 2021 and the Federal  
26 Subsistence Board wanted to hear the Council's opinion.  
27 And I think one of the reasons why the InterAgency  
28 Staff Committee had this proposal is because a lot of  
29 the times when we receive the annual reports, the  
30 Federal Subsistence Board receives the annual reports  
31 there are topics that are not within jurisdiction of  
32 the Board, not within jurisdiction of any agencies that  
33 compromise the Board so the Board is having a hard time  
34 replying to these issues. So it might be very good to  
35 have in the report for information purposes but the  
36 Board cannot reply, let's say for NOAA, or something  
37 like that or for the State really.

38

39 So I think the InterAgency Staff  
40 Committee proposal is an effort to alleviate these type  
41 of issues when we are puzzled on how the Board is going  
42 to reply to these kind of issues brought to its  
43 attention. So that's great that the Western Interior  
44 Council usually proposes some kind of action to the  
45 Board, how the Board can possibly act because you're  
46 not just presenting an issue of concern, you're also  
47 proposing solutions. So that's a great idea, you know,  
48 to help the Board in figuring out how to reply to the  
49 issues that you brought up.

50

0106

1                   You know if there is any other ways,  
2 you know, how the Council would like to the Board to  
3 address the issues that you bring up, or any  
4 suggestions that you would have in regards to the  
5 annual reports and how they should be formulated and  
6 what issues should go in. I mean I'm not going to read  
7 to you, you know, the .805(3)(d), -- or no, I'm sorry  
8 -- yeah, it's .805(3)(d) where it says what shall --  
9 the annual report shall contain, you guys can look at  
10 it yourself and you probably already know, but just  
11 take that into consideration while you're discussing  
12 this topic.

13  
14

Thank you.

15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate those  
clarifications about the policy, the predator control  
policy of the Federal Subsistence Board. And so that  
was -- so do you understand there is this policy that  
they -- the Federal Subsistence Board does not do  
predator management, Darrell?

22  
23  
24

(No comments)

25  
26

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you still there,  
Darrell.

27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38

MR. VENT: Yeah, I'm here, Jack. I was  
just listening in to, you know, the information.  
Because if we keep, you know, implying that we do have  
problems that eventually down the road, you know, these  
problems start appearing more and more. You know it's  
like you work with any agency and everything, they'll  
understand eventually how things evolve in the  
villages. It's something that, you know, they'll get a  
handle on if we keep explaining so that's what I'm  
trying to do is explain my thoughts on that.

39  
40  
41  
42  
43

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: You may want to  
explore community harvest incentives like Arnold. Get  
a hold of Arnold, he seems to be getting a handle on  
that issue down there in Kaltag and Nulato area.

44  
45  
46  
47

MR. VENT: Yeah, we do have an  
incentive program. I just, you know, it's some of the  
areas that we get involved in is a little different.

48  
49  
50

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. But, I mean  
so -- so that's off topic though so we're going to come

0107

1 back on task here. So we need to -- we spoke quite a  
2 bit about this discussion on the annual report reply  
3 process and so we made specific comments that can be  
4 refined out of our transcripts. So the Chair will  
5 entertain a motion to transmit those discussions to the  
6 Federal Subsistence Board as comment on the annual  
7 report -- did you have a comment there, Katya.

8  
9 MS. WESSELS: Yes, we're going to --  
10 yeah, once we receive the transcripts we're going to  
11 summarize the Council discussion and we'll present it  
12 to the Board whenever this topic is discussed by the  
13 Board but, yeah, since it's an action item a motion  
14 would be great.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, the Chair will  
17 entertain a motion to transmit our discussion topics to  
18 the Federal Subsistence Board, do we have.....

19  
20 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim. May I  
21 get a clarification before we do the motion.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, so go ahead.

24  
25 MR. GERVAIS: So the agencies, in the  
26 discussion, you're talking about the agencies within  
27 the Department of the Interior. I was wondering how --  
28 if this would have any affect on the way the WIRAC  
29 would communicate with NOAA or North Pacific Fisheries  
30 Management Council, which I believe are under Secretary  
31 of Commerce.

32  
33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can someone at OSM  
34 answer that one.

35  
36 MS. LAVINE: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is  
37 Robbin.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robbin.

40  
41 MS. LAVINE: Actually in the briefing  
42 when I -- you know when I mentioned agencies, it could  
43 be so many different governmental and non-governmental  
44 agencies that you area already writing letters to and  
45 just recognizing that letter writing is a tool in your  
46 tool kit for communicating, not only to the Federal  
47 Subsistence Board and the, you know, our agencies that  
48 are represented by the Board, but to NOAA, North  
49 Pacific Fisheries Management Commission and other  
50

0108

1 entities that you need to engage with because it's  
2 important for your subsistence way of life and your  
3 exchange of knowledge. And I think actually when we  
4 mentioned agencies in this briefing, we weren't  
5 necessarily suggesting that you, instead, write not to  
6 the Board, but to the BLM, or the Forest Service  
7 specifically on topics of concern unless doing so  
8 ensures more response and a more constructive exchange.

9

10 So I hope that clarifies.

11

12 I mean ultimately in the end, you know,  
13 this is just another way for you to communicate issues  
14 of great concern especially, first to the Board, if  
15 it's within our realm, you know, within the Board's  
16 realm of authority to take action on, but then, you  
17 know, encouraging and supporting you to write directly  
18 to agencies that are better equipped to respond to you  
19 because the Board has no authority over things like,  
20 let's say, NOAA, you know, bycatch, predator control,  
21 things like that.

22

23 And, again, also confirming that your  
24 annual reports are key to ensuring that the Board is  
25 kept up to date on what's happening in your region, as  
26 it's happening, the transcripts are important, your  
27 annual reports are important, your Council member  
28 reports that you share every time you meet are  
29 important. As a long time Staff member at OSM I go to  
30 those reports and I go to the transcripts all the time.

31

32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Robbin.  
35 I feel that there should be -- if the Federal  
36 Subsistence Board wants to push this off to the  
37 agencies, if the Council writes to an agency, does not  
38 get an adequate response and does that a couple times,  
39 at that point I feel that the Councils should then have  
40 the ability to write to the Secretary of Interior or  
41 the Secretary of Agriculture for recourse. If the  
42 Federal Subsistence Board doesn't want to deal with it,  
43 so we have to have a recourse because they're an arm of  
44 the Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Interior  
45 -- the Council should the ability at that point to  
46 write directly to the Secretaries themselves to get it  
47 clarified; of maybe the agency's reluctance, you know,  
48 maybe if we wrote to the Secretary of Interior or  
49 Secretary of Agriculture maybe it would have a little  
50

0109

1 more understanding at a higher level.

2

3 I don't feel that that -- I feel that  
4 if the Federal Subsistence Board is going to go in a  
5 different direction and doesn't want to talk about some  
6 of these things that affect specific agencies but a  
7 specific agency might not feel like or don't want to  
8 address the concerns that affect subsistence users, we  
9 should have the ability after two non-responses to be  
10 able to access the Secretary of Interior or  
11 Agriculture. Put that in the comments.

12

13 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm  
14 writing quickly.

15

16 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any further comments  
17 from the Council on this -- our annual report -- I need  
18 to have a motion to transmit the language, or -- are  
19 you satisfied now, can we -- and we should be able to  
20 write directly to the other Federal agencies, NOAA, et  
21 cetera -- does that satisfy your question, Tim.

22

23 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, that was great,  
24 thank you.

25

26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any further  
27 discussion.

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 MR. VENT: Call for question.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we want to -- who  
34 made the motion.

35

36 MR. VENT: Call for question -- or did  
37 we -- do we have to make a motion first.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we have to  
40 have a motion. We don't have a motion on the table.  
41 You want to make that motion Darrell.

42

43 MR. VENT: Yes, go ahead, I'll make the  
44 motion.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The motion.....

47

48 MR. DEMOSKI: I second it, this is  
49 Arnold.

50

0110

1                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF:   .....would be the  
2 discussion that -- the Western Interior Regional  
3 Advisory Council's discussion with Robbin LaVine  
4 regarding the annual report policy that the Board is  
5 requesting comments from the Councils. All of our  
6 discussion that we've outlined on the various aspects  
7 of this issue shall be transmitted to the Federal  
8 Subsistence Board for their next meeting when they  
9 review this. And who was that second?

10

11                   (No comments)

12

13                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I heard a second.

14

15                   REPORTER: Arnold seconded it.

16

17                   MR. DEMOSKI: That was Arnold.

18

19                   MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya,  
20 I think you already have the motion on the floor in  
21 regards to submitting your comments to the Federal  
22 Subsistence Board summarizing all this discussion and I  
23 did not write down who made the motion and who seconded  
24 it, perhaps Tina can.....

25

26                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, Darrell.....

27

28                   MR. VENT: Yeah, I made the motion  
29 earlier.....

30

31                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't think I had  
32 a motion.....

33

34                   MS. WESSELS: Darrell made the motion,  
35 did anyone second it.

36

37                   REPORTER: So wait a second, on this  
38 particular topic.....

39

40                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Wait a second, go  
41 ahead Salena.

42

43                   REPORTER: On this particular topic  
44 there was not a motion earlier, there just has been a  
45 motion by Darrell and a second by Arnold, that was just  
46 made.

47

48                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, that was Arnold,  
49 I couldn't hear him. So we have a motion by Darrell,  
50

0111

1 second by Arnold -- I was going to a motion but then  
2 Tim wanted to back up and have a little bit more  
3 discussion, which is fine, and so we have the motion on  
4 the floor, any further discussion by the Council  
5 transmitting the discussion.

6  
7 (No comments)

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Do we have a  
10 question on the motion.

11  
12 MR. VENT: Question.

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Question's called.  
15 Those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

16  
17 IN UNISON: Aye.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Opposed, same sign.

20  
21 (No opposing votes)

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Unanimous consent  
24 for that motion, we took our option. So we're at  
25 receiving public testimony protocol, guided discussion.  
26 Robbin LaVine, go right ahead.

27  
28 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
29 Members of the Council. Again, for the record this is  
30 Robbin LaVine, Subsistence Policy Coordinator for the  
31 Office of Subsistence Management. Please settle in,  
32 this is a little long but hopefully will be rewarding.

33  
34 All 10 Subsistence Regional Advisory  
35 Councils were formed under Title VIII of the Alaska  
36 National Interests Lands Conservation Act, ANILCA, and  
37 they were chartered under the Federal Advisory  
38 Committee Act. ANILCA, as you know, gives each  
39 Regional Advisory Council the authority to provide a  
40 forum for the expression of opinions and  
41 recommendations by persons interested in any matter  
42 related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife  
43 within the region. And to encourage local and regional  
44 participation in the decisionmaking process affecting  
45 the take of fish and wildlife on public lands within  
46 the region for subsistence uses.

47  
48 The Federal Advisory Committee Act  
49 stipulates that any member of the public is permitted  
50

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1 to file a written statement or speak to the Advisory  
2 Committee and may speak to the Advisory Committee if  
3 the agency guidelines allow.

4  
5                   During each regulatory cycle,  
6 therefore, opportunities for the public to provide  
7 their oral and written comments to the Federal  
8 Subsistence Board and to the Councils.

9  
10                   No. 1. The first opportunity starts  
11 after the call for proposals, and it's officially known  
12 as the proposed rule, after that is published in the  
13 Federal Register. This is an opportunity to submit  
14 proposals or any significant comments to the Board.  
15 The first comment window is open anywhere from 45 up to  
16 90 days or longer.

17  
18                   Second opportunity for public comments  
19 on submitted proposals begins when the proposal  
20 submission window closes and validated proposals are  
21 published on the Federal Subsistence Management Program  
22 website.

23  
24                   The third opportunity for public  
25 comments on proposals is during the Council meetings.

26  
27                   And the fourth opportunity for public  
28 comments on proposals is during the Board regulatory  
29 meetings. These comments are used by the Board in  
30 their decisionmaking process.

31  
32                   So I'll explain the third opportunity  
33 for public comments on proposals during Regional  
34 Advisory Council meetings in more detail because this  
35 is the subject of our guided discussion today.

36  
37                   Public comments on proposals accepted  
38 during Council meetings inform the Councils in making  
39 their recommendations to the Board. The Council Chair  
40 or your Council Coordinator presents the Council  
41 recommendations and any supporting data to the Board at  
42 its regulatory meeting. This round of public comments  
43 on proposals are part of the record of the Council  
44 meeting, not the Board of meeting. Public comments on  
45 proposals are accepted after the presentation of each  
46 proposal analysis. These include oral comments  
47 provided by the public attending the meeting and  
48 written comments provided by the public during the  
49 meeting. Written comments are read to or summarized  
50



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1 for the Council. Again, these comments inform the  
2 Council and will not be included in the Board proposal  
3 analysis. Public comments on non-agenda items are  
4 accepted at the start of each day of a Council meeting.  
5 So in the past when Council meetings were held in  
6 person, the public brought their written public  
7 comments to the meeting to be distributed to the  
8 Council members and other meeting participants. During  
9 the fall 2021 meeting cycle since all the meetings were  
10 held via teleconference, the OSM leadership deemed it  
11 necessary to establish a temporary procedure for the  
12 submission of written public comments during the  
13 Council meetings. The public was directed to submit  
14 written comments to the centralized OSM email during  
15 the meetings as it was indicated in that years proposed  
16 rule published in the Federal Register. The OSM Staff  
17 read these comments into the record verbatim during the  
18 meeting. This was an interim procedure.

19

20 Now, prior to the Councils fall 2022  
21 meeting, when the Councils are going to discuss  
22 fisheries proposals and closure reviews we are  
23 requesting the Councils input on how the Councils would  
24 prefer receiving written public comments submitted to  
25 them after the proposed rule deadline. These are  
26 comments the Council may want to consider in  
27 formulating their recommendations to the Board. Once  
28 OSM receives input from the Councils on permanent  
29 guidelines, we will then update the written framework  
30 accordingly. This is not an action item but Council  
31 discussion is encouraged.

32

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

40

41 So now I'm going to pause for just a  
42 moment and after all that information we're going to  
43 pivot to these questions, and with everything I've  
44 shared with you in mind, I'm hoping you'll respond to  
45 these questions. We have five of them and I can read  
46 them all out to you or we can take them one at a time.

47

48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I prefer to take  
49 them.....

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1 MS. LAVINE: What is wish of the  
2 Council.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I prefer to take  
5 them one at a time so the Council.....

6  
7 MS. LAVINE: Okay.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....can have  
10 discussion and respond. So question 1.

11  
12 MS. LAVINE: Question 1.

13  
14 In the Council's opinion, what are the  
15 best ways to encourage public feedback to the Councils.

16  
17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council member  
18 response to that question.

19  
20 (No comments)

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Anybody got a  
23 response to that. The question again is, what's the  
24 best -- say it again there, Robbin, way or.....

25  
26 MS. LAVINE: What are the best ways to  
27 encourage public feedback to the Councils. So  
28 basically public participation and public presenting  
29 their thoughts, their recommendations and, in  
30 particular, we are asking about this for the fall  
31 meetings when you will have an opportunity to solicit  
32 comments from the public on fisheries proposals and  
33 closure reviews. So if we're thinking about fisheries  
34 closures and fishery proposals to change regulations,  
35 what's the best way to encourage public feedback and  
36 comment to the Councils.

37  
38 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, first the  
39 public has to be informed, you know, the advertisement  
40 of the Council's meetings within the region should be  
41 published on the radio, in the news media and Facebook  
42 and various outlets so that the public knows that  
43 there's going to be a meeting and what the meeting's  
44 about. So we've had meetings, say, in Galena or  
45 somewheres and people are like, well, I didn't know  
46 there was a meeting. And so I've been in McGrath and  
47 actually gone down to the McGrath radio station during  
48 our -- during when we got there and actually was  
49 talking to -- and did the same thing in Galena, so  
50

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1 there needs to be a little more lead time for the  
2 public to be prepared about what the issues are, it  
3 can't happen like the day before it should be happening  
4 quite awhile out, you know, like a couple weeks out,  
5 especially in the village -- or community that -- if we  
6 go back to face to face meetings they should be aware  
7 that there's going to be a meeting. So that's -- and  
8 then they have to know what the issues are. So they  
9 have to at least know that there's certain proposals or  
10 something that might affect their community.

11

12 So we're never going to get -- we don't  
13 get a lot of comments if people don't know that these  
14 various issues actually affect them.

15

16 So is that generally what you're  
17 asking?

18

19 MS. LAVINE: Yeah, thanks. I mean,  
20 again, this isn't an action item but discussion and  
21 your thoughts, your expertise, especially as  
22 representatives of your region and people who've been  
23 on -- you, especially, Jack, who have been on this  
24 Council from the very beginning. Any comments you can  
25 share are tremendously valuable.

26

27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, any other  
28 Council comments.

29

30 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, Jack, this is  
31 Arnold.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Arnold, go  
34 ahead.

35

36 MR. DEMOSKI: Yeah, I was wondering, do  
37 you do outreach to tribes, tribal councils. I think  
38 that would be a good way of getting the information out  
39 there and maybe they can appoint somebody to attend the  
40 meetings.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's a Native  
43 liaison, Orville Lind, and OSM is supposed to be  
44 contacting the tribal councils about these various  
45 issues long -- with a real long lead and so there's  
46 actually call-ins to the -- tribal consultation calls,  
47 barely gets participation. I've been on the calls and  
48 not many people actually call in. But there needs to  
49 be a little better outreach. I do feel that -- and I've  
50

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1 said it many times, that if there's proposals or issues  
2 that affect communities in specific areas of a land  
3 manager, like Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, BLM  
4 lands, those -- they have subsistence coordinators, and  
5 those subsistence coordinators should actually get a  
6 hold of those communities and tell them this is what  
7 the issues are. They could send stuff out. But a lot  
8 of this stuff, paper stuff -- there has to be key  
9 individuals -- the tribal councils need to have key  
10 individuals that they are going to be point, they are  
11 going to be the contact for the agencies about Federal  
12 subsistence proposals or actions. There needs to be  
13 somebody responsible to take this stuff. Because paper  
14 gets sent to these tribal councils and it's like what  
15 are all these envelopes, what does this all mean and it  
16 gets thrown in some filing cabinet somewheres or thrown  
17 in the garbage. So there needs to be someone in the  
18 tribal offices that are actually the point for contact  
19 to receive this kind of stuff so they can put it on the  
20 tribal agenda. That's my opinion.

21

22 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes, Mr. Chair, this is  
23 Arnold.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Arnold.

26

27 MR. DEMOSKI: I do that here. I  
28 receive all the information. If it affects our area  
29 directly then I put it on the meeting agenda and I give  
30 the council all the information and then they give me  
31 recommendations of -- I do it here and I'm pretty  
32 involved with all this stuff so I -- I receive a lot of  
33 information and I give it to the council.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I'm glad to hear  
36 that but that doesn't happen in a lot of communities.  
37 There's not a lot of communities that are actually  
38 responding.....

39

40 MR. DEMOSKI: No, no, I know that. I  
41 was just stating that that's what I do. Yeah, I  
42 understand that there's not a lot of people that do  
43 that out there though. I wish there was more people out  
44 there that do that though.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. So I really  
47 appreciate that you're doing that Arnold.

48

49 So any other comments about how to get

50

0117

1 this information out so that we can get public  
2 comments, that's where we're going.

3

4

MR. VENT: Yeah, Jack, this is Darrell.

5

6

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

7

8

MR. VENT: Yeah, I do receive a lot of  
9 email and comments. You know it keeps us pretty busy  
10 and we have different organizations that try to deal  
11 with a lot of these topics that -- say, for instance,  
12 we have WIRAC, we have Koyukuk River Advisory, we have  
13 tribal meetings, we have also, you know, work with  
14 TCC's programs, the task force for hunting and fishing,  
15 also fish commission so, you know, we're getting more  
16 involved. It's just some of the villages have -- have  
17 limited internet availability and then also knowledge  
18 of how to attend these meetings. It may be difficult  
19 sometimes. But we are slowly getting more involved in  
20 the process and it's trying and, you know, in this  
21 Federal level we should be -- we should be able to have  
22 some kind of access to like, for instance, we have Zoom  
23 for meetings with TCC and other organizations, and at  
24 the Federal level I'm, you know, kind of surprised that  
25 we don't have any kind of capabilities that will allow  
26 us to interact together, whether there's, you know,  
27 something that needs to be shared. You know we have to  
28 do the email because we're not allowing that  
29 capability. Just my comments.

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Okay, question two, all right that was  
question one.

0118

1 MS. LAVINE: That was question one of  
2 five.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

5  
6 MS. LAVINE: So question two of five.  
7 Would the Council prefer to receive comments from the  
8 public orally, so like in person, from their mouths or  
9 in writing, or both.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would prefer to  
12 have oral comments from the public if they can but some  
13 people work and they can't be on the call. So for the  
14 first preference would be to have it orally because we  
15 could then have exchange of, if we have questions about  
16 for clarification, that helps. But written is the fall  
17 back.

18  
19 Other Council comments.

20  
21 MR. SIMON: Pollock has comments.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Pollock.

24  
25 MR. SIMON: Yeah, in the 1970s my  
26 friend, the late Ron Sam, made a motion to the  
27 Legislation to start the Koyukuk River Advisory  
28 Committee and the motion went through so we've had a  
29 committee since then. And the year it passed we have  
30 meetings twice -- twice a year, it was good. We were  
31 one of the first Advisory Committee meetings and other  
32 committees look at the proposals and we are a good  
33 sounding board for other committees and it was good but  
34 now things have changed, State cuts back on funds and  
35 we haven't had a meeting since maybe for years but I  
36 wish we could come back to meeting again for very  
37 important reasons to protect our fish and wildlife for  
38 next generation.

39  
40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So thank you,  
43 Pollock. Actually the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee  
44 had a meeting yesterday and the coordinator was  
45 supposed to send all the proposals and all that stuff  
46 to your Allakaket Tribal Council and so the tribe was  
47 supposed to tell people that we were having a meeting  
48 and Charles Ned was on the call, Shawn Bergman's on  
49 that committee, he wasn't there, Charles Ned was the  
50

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1 only one really from Allakaket, Harding he wouldn't get  
2 on there, Jared wouldn't get on there from Alatna, so  
3 somehow you got dropped out of the loop so we need to  
4 get -- maybe I'll have this Kyle send you directly the  
5 material because we had a meeting yesterday and we  
6 reviewed all the proposals that affect this area. So  
7 the problem is the tribal councils aren't getting the  
8 information out, that's kind of a major bottleneck in  
9 some communities.

10

11 But I do appreciate your comment.

12

13 MR. SIMON: Yeah, they should have  
14 passed the information out about advisory meeting  
15 because I didn't know.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right. There's a  
18 glitch in the system here. I tried for a month and a  
19 half, almost two months to get that meeting going. We  
20 had one on February 3rd and then we had one yesterday  
21 on the 15th so the Koyukuk River Advisory went through  
22 various management stuff with Glenn Stout and the  
23 fisheries manager and we also went through all of the  
24 proposals in the second meeting, yesterday, so that did  
25 happen, but see the information isn't getting out.  
26 That's exactly what we're talking about, Robbin,  
27 exactly what we're talking about.

28

29 MS. LAVINE: Uh-huh. Yep.

30

31 MR. VENT: Yeah, Jack, this is Darrell.

32

33 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

34

35 MR. VENT: Yeah, I -- you know I know  
36 it was kind of hard to get everybody involved there,  
37 it's a trying process because before, you know, we used  
38 to have meetings in each village and, you know, the  
39 recruitment was a lot better then because the people  
40 from the village felt that they were able to represent  
41 their villages and now that, you know, some places  
42 don't have good communication or tribal organizations,  
43 it's hard to get that information to them. Like you  
44 said Harding and Jared up there in Alatna, Allakaket  
45 you had Ben Simon and Charles Ned, usually you had Huey  
46 and Janet and Huslia was Jack and I and I think Shawn  
47 -- yeah, it's hard to get people involved, you know,  
48 when we don't have -- we don't have the public  
49 participation no more. So I think Huey mentioned on  
50

0120

1 that yesterday that, you know, we used to recruit them  
2 when the meetings come to our villages.

3

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Well, we've also  
6 been in this Covid thing for two years and Jackie was  
7 like, well, we don't have village -- we have to have  
8 face to face to meetings and I says, Jackie, we can't,  
9 we have to stay at the school, the schools won't let  
10 you in the door so that was a problem. So hopefully  
11 this next fall we'll be back to normal again at some  
12 point. It'll be nice to have WIRAC meetings in person  
13 again too.

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So question two, I lost track of what  
-- what's question two there, Robbin.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
Question Two. Would Council prefer to receive comments  
from the public orally, or in writing.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Right.

MS. LAVINE: And I think we all agree  
we'd rather receive them in person.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, definitely in  
person. But we have to be able to receive them in  
writing because there's people that work and cannot be  
on this call, or at the meeting or they can't travel to  
the meeting.

So any further comments on that.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Number 3.

MS. LAVINE: No. 3 of 5. Would it be  
helpful to the Council if OSM requests the written  
public comments submitted to your Coordinator prior to  
the meeting within a certain time period and that the  
Coordinator, in turn, will summarize the comments and  
present them to the Council during the meeting.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Written comments,  
that's pretty much.....

MS. LAVINE: So let's say.....



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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

2

3

4 MS. LAVINE: Yeah. That is something  
5 that we often do that people can -- if they can't make  
6 it to the meeting, they may email or submit written  
7 public comments to the Coordinator in advance and  
8 sometimes those comments are kind of long and involved,  
9 can they be summarized? So that's -- I think that's  
10 what we're asking for here. And, you know, should the  
11 -- because in the past, what was happening in person  
12 when we had in person meetings is people would mostly  
13 show up in person and they would either be able to get  
14 on at the public input at the beginning of each  
15 meeting, you know, on non-agenda items or they would be  
16 able to address the regulations, the regulatory  
17 proposals as they were taken up on the agenda during  
18 the meeting, but for people who can't make it, can they  
19 forward their comments in advance and can the  
20 Coordinator then summarize those comments, especially  
21 if they might be long.

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would like to know  
the summary, you know, that entails but I would also  
like to see the entirety. You know a synopsis of what  
it is, you know, they're opposing this for these  
specific reasons but they might have a longer comment  
that there may be something that the Coordinator misses  
in there, specifics. But I would like the.....

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MS. LAVINE: And actually.....

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

MS. LAVINE: And actually I think that  
this kind of dovetails into Question No. 4, so we can  
talk about both of these: Is it better for the  
Councils if received public comments are read verbatim  
into the record or summarized. And then also can --  
can the comments also be presented to you or handed to  
you, that's another option.

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CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I would.....

MS. LAVINE: So they could be  
summarized on record.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Summarized on  
record. I mean we can't read the entireties of a lot  
of these comments because sometimes they're really,

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1 really long, they got a lot of statistical information  
2 and stuff. But the summary of the comments, but the  
3 Council should also be able to -- if they're written in  
4 paper form, they're written comments, we should be able  
5 to look at those also but I do feel that they should be  
6 summarized for the Council record.

7

8 Council member's comments on that.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, that  
13 was number 3 and 4.

14

15 MS. LAVINE: Yeah. No. 4 is should  
16 submitted public comments be read verbatim into the  
17 record or summarized.

18

19 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I would prefer  
20 summary into the record.

21

22 MS. LAVINE: Uh-huh.

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Council comments on  
25 No. 4.

26

27 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
28 Kevin.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, Kevin.

31

32 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, I think on that  
33 third question there was something about a deadline for  
34 written comments. My thinking is there shouldn't be a  
35 deadline, even if it's within an hour of our meeting to  
36 receive it. I mean it's challenging because  
37 everybody's not going to be able to see it but I would  
38 hate to say that there's going to be -- that we should  
39 have a deadline on written comments, I mean there's no  
40 -- when you get public comments orally, people come to  
41 the meeting and we're hearing their comments live, so  
42 it's no different if we hear written comments come to  
43 us the day of the meeting, we have to digest it and  
44 work with that comment on the fly. So I don't think we  
45 should have a deadline.

46

47 That's the only comment I have, thanks.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I appreciate that

50

0123

1 comment, Kevin. I do agree with that fully. The  
2 person -- there should be an email address, you know,  
3 for our meeting, for the Council Coordinator, whoever  
4 it might be, if somebody wants to submit a comment  
5 during the deliberation and they can transmit it to the  
6 Coordinator and that could be read right into the  
7 record. So it should be at least for the specific  
8 agenda item and it should be a comment can be received  
9 electronically right up through the meeting or they can  
10 call into the meeting but if they can't and they can  
11 transmit electronically right up to the meeting. I  
12 don't want to exclude comment. There's things that  
13 have happened, things might be changing during the  
14 meeting and people want to make a comment on a  
15 proposal, new information has come out during the  
16 presentation and they might want to make a slightly  
17 different comment, they should have that ability under  
18 No. 3. I agree with Kevin on that.

19

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

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean it is -- it  
23 should -- there's Staff -- you know the comments could  
24 go through OSM directly to the Coordinator -- you know  
25 the Coordinator's busy during the meeting but there  
26 needs to be the ability for the public to be able to  
27 comment on specific issues because we're a forum for  
28 that.

29

30 So any other comments.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: No. 5.

35

36 MS. LAVINE: No. 5. Do you have any  
37 other suggestions regarding the ways of improving  
38 written or oral public testimony procedures during the  
39 Council meeting.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I've been on the  
42 other side of the table, you know, waiting to make a  
43 comment at the Board of Game meeting or whatever it may  
44 be, I don't want to leave out the public and so nothing  
45 was more annoying to hear the Chairman of the Game  
46 Board say at the conclusion of 100 comments, it's the  
47 end of the day, we hate to listen to all these comments  
48 but that's what we do here. I'm like, what, I couldn't  
49 believe it. So I want to be an open door policy to the  
50

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1 public, I would like to get as much public comment as  
2 we can and we have to be more accommodating of whether  
3 they want to -- even if they come in late at the  
4 meeting and we've passed the proposal, if they got  
5 additional information and want to call in, I feel that  
6 we should be able to back up and listen to what they  
7 have to say. I don't want to be preclusive.

8  
9 So those -- any further discussion by  
10 the Council on those five different questions Robbin is  
11 laying out for us.

12  
13 MR. DEMOSKI: No, Mr. Chair, this is  
14 Arnold. I just want to say I agree with you on that.  
15 We shouldn't exclude anybody from making public  
16 testimonies or commenting on proposals. I think people  
17 should be heard and they may have important information  
18 that needs to be heard too so I don't think we should  
19 exclude anybody and, yeah, just be open to the public,  
20 completely open. I agree with that.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
23 that comment, Arnold. And any further discussion on  
24 this topic item.

25  
26 (No comments)

27  
28 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So that answers most  
29 of your questions there, Robbin.

30  
31 MS. LAVINE: Absolutely, Mr. Chair,  
32 thank you.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Briefing and Council  
35 comments on proposed action to automate Federal  
36 subsistence permits. Robbin LaVine, I guess you're the  
37 lead on this one.

38  
39 MS. LAVINE: Yes, Mr. Chair. Again,  
40 for the record, this is Robbin LaVine and I'll be  
41 presenting the Council with a briefing on Council  
42 comments on proposed actions to automate Federal  
43 subsistence permits. This is not an action item. To  
44 begin with I'm going to provide you a brief overview of  
45 two governing statutes that are the impetus behind this  
46 briefing.

47  
48 One of the many governing statutes that  
49 cover the Federal Subsistence Management Program is the  
50

1 Paperwork Reduction Act, commonly referred to as the  
2 PRA. This law requires all Federal departments and  
3 agencies to gain approval through the Office of  
4 Management and Budget, OMB, prior to the collection of  
5 information from the public. In regards to our  
6 Program, this collection of information can be the  
7 information you provide on your permits, the data  
8 supplied to be nominated to serve, or to continue your  
9 service on the Regional Advisory Councils, but it also  
10 covers the signage used for fishwheels, and nets and  
11 buoy markers. Even the requirements to submit a lower  
12 moose jaw, the sealing of untanned animal skins, and  
13 other biological submissions are covered under this  
14 statute.

15  
16 This law is designed to protect you,  
17 the public, from unreasonable requirements to provide  
18 data and/or personal information without justification.  
19 The process to gain approval to collect information  
20 from OMB generally takes a year, but it can be as long  
21 as 18 months. An agency must, in short, provide the  
22 reasons this information will be collected, what it  
23 will be used for, how it may be used outside of the  
24 original intent, who will have access to the  
25 information, and how it will be stored. This clearance  
26 is valid for three years and must be resubmitted prior  
27 to the expiration date.

28  
29 Another governing statute that covers  
30 our Program is the E-Government Act. The purpose of  
31 this law is to improve the management and promotion of  
32 electronic government services and requires using  
33 Internet-based information technology to improve  
34 citizen access to government information and services.  
35 You see this is in our Program, in our webpage,  
36 providing news releases, meeting materials, and other  
37 information, and in the use of social media which  
38 allows for the swift notifications regarding special  
39 actions, meetings, and submissions of regulatory  
40 proposals. Our webpage and social media sites are  
41 monitored by DOI 24/7 to ensure we meet all  
42 requirements of the law and departmental policies.

43  
44 After the most recent OMB clearance to  
45 collect information from the public, OMB contacted OSM  
46 and tasked us with exploring the use of automated  
47 permits within our Program. Many issues would  
48 accompany the use of automated permits and must be  
49 addressed before any attempt is made to use internet  
50

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1 permits.

2

3

4 OSM is asking the Councils and the  
5 public for ideas as to how the issuing of permits might  
6 look in the future. Any and all ideas are welcome.  
7 There are several overriding factors that must be  
8 understood.

8

9 (Teleconference interference -  
10 participants not muted)

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(Teleconference interference -  
participants not muted)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're getting  
bleedover with somebody's open mic, you want to push  
star, six to mute out. Go ahead, Robbin.

MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,  
again, there are several overriding factors that must  
be understood.

All Federal permits must be issued by a  
Federal agency and cannot be delegated to a non-Federal  
entity, such as a local or State entity or tribal  
government. The cost must be considered, the Program  
has limited budget and excessive costs cannot be  
absorbed to the detriment of Board and Council meetings  
or the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program. And a  
paper permit will still have to be carried into the  
field for proof when addressing law enforcement or  
field Staff.

So as we move forward and if you care  
to respond, some of the issues that must be addressed  
include:

How can we verify a person is a  
Federally-qualified user through an automated  
permitting system.

How do we address the lack of or  
substandard infrastructure in rural communities if  
internet permits are used.

How will managers address quotas, or  
limit the amount of permits issued in the case of  
conservation concerns.

How will managers deal with the lack of  
reporting of harvest results in the case of power  
failures or lack of the internet. Especially when

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1 reporting requirements are listed as 48 or 72 hours due  
2 to severe conservation concerns.

3

4 How would this possible change affect  
5 subsistence users.

6

7 What method of issuing permits would be  
8 preferred by the subsistence users.

9

10 While this is not a formal request for  
11 comments, we ask that any comments, you can send them  
12 to subsistence at fws.gov by November 15 of this year.  
13 More information can be provided to the Councils as  
14 this process moves forward.

15

16 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Would you like  
19 comments from the Council now or do you want them all  
20 written and transmitted.

21

22 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair, this is Robbin.  
23 I think it's up to you, you're welcome to provide some  
24 comments now and if you have more detailed thoughts and  
25 guidance you can write them up and send them to us  
26 before November 15th, of 2022. For some of our  
27 Councils, in fact, I think for all of them, we will  
28 have concluded our fall meetings by that time and so  
29 you may decide you might want to consider it over the  
30 course of this summer and into the fall and to address  
31 it again at your next Council meeting.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So any  
36 comments on the automated Federal subsistence  
37 permitting that Robbin laid out. Any Council comments.

38

39 MR. VENT: This is Darrell.

40

41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Darrell.

42

43 MR. VENT: Yeah, just some information  
44 that might be useful later on in the future. Some  
45 tribal organizations are talking about issuing permits  
46 on Federal lands from their tribes. I don't know if  
47 she's heard of anything like that yet but I think that  
48 might be what some areas are trying to decide right  
49 now. And I don't know if that would be helpful to her  
50

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1 or how to report to her, I think it would be more  
2 relying on the people in the village to do their own  
3 reporting. So, you know, it's just something I've been  
4 hearing from people talking about it.

5

6 I just wanted to mention that.

7

8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tribes are issuing  
9 permits to Federal lands or to tribal lands? I know  
10 tribal.....

11

12 MR. VENT: I think it has to do with  
13 the way the tribes want to -- so they don't have to,  
14 you know, it takes a while for a permit to get back  
15 where they could issue there at the tribe and, you  
16 know, the permit is there already.

17

18 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So I -- my  
19 comments on this, you know, proposed automated Federal  
20 system, is, the State of Alaska is issuing like fishery  
21 permits and various things electronically, licenses and  
22 stuff like that, so there's already sort of templates  
23 about that and then there's a tracking system, if you  
24 don't send your fish permit you're violating  
25 regulation. So some of this is already in place in the  
26 State system, the Federal has eligibility requirements.  
27 And many years ago I said that, like here, we have to  
28 have Federal sheep permit, Federal moose permits, I  
29 said we should have like a.....

30

31 (Teleconference interference -  
32 participants not muted)

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....that shows our  
35 license or whatever, some registration so that  
36 enforcement would know who is actually eligible to get  
37 these permits, actually documented living there. I  
38 don't know if OSM would look into a sort of community  
39 -- you're a community and you have somebody that looks  
40 at that community, these people live in this community,  
41 this is their registration number and they can go  
42 online and get these permits and if people are new they  
43 would have to go through a different process to go  
44 through the eligibility process. But like me, I've got  
45 moose permits since they've been issuing moose permits  
46 here in 1991 so there's -- you don't have to reinvent  
47 the wheel, if the person continues to live there,  
48 maintains and signs that you -- you print this stuff  
49 out and sign it and transmit it back you actually have

50



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1 an intention of living there, just like you would on  
2 the real permit, so there's ways that this could be  
3 done. The State of Alaska is doing it, and part of it  
4 is in the way that the permits are actually issued  
5 themselves.

6  
7 So that would be my comments on this  
8 but I may formulate different -- additional comments by  
9 November 15th, 2022.

10

11 So any other comments from the Council.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: There's not a lot of  
16 places in the Western Interior where we have these  
17 Federal permits, I'm sure there are, but, you know,  
18 this is one of those places where we do have that  
19 because it's for management tracking.

20

21 Any other comments, Council members.

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I think we've  
26 covered that, Robbin. We're moving down to your next  
27 one, briefing on the Secretarial Regulations Proposing  
28 Identified Submerged lands in the Tongass Forest. Go  
29 ahead.

30

31 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 This is my last, I think for a little while.

33

34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right.

35

36 MS. LAVINE: This is an informational  
37 briefing only and no action is required on the part of  
38 your Council.

39

40 This is the second rulemaking on this  
41 subject. The first taking place with the publication  
42 of a proposed rule in June 2016 and the final rule in  
43 May 2018.

44

45 To comply with a court order,  
46 Peratrovich, et al., versus United State and the state  
47 of Alaska. The Secretaries were directed to initiate  
48 regulatory proceedings to identify those submerged  
49 lands within the Tongass National Forest that did not  
50

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1 pass to the state of Alaska at statehood, and,  
2 therefore, remain Federal public lands subject to  
3 Federal subsistence provisions. This task was  
4 forwarded to the Federal Subsistence Board by the  
5 Secretaries. This proposed rule would add to the list  
6 of submerged parcels in the Federal subsistence  
7 regulations that have been identified through agency  
8 review. The purpose of this proposed rule is to  
9 complete regulatory proceedings addressing submerged  
10 public lands within the Tongass National Forest, as  
11 directed by the court.

12

13 The majority of these subsistence [sic]  
14 lands are low-water lines, reefs, rocks and very small  
15 islands, 100 yards to a half a mile in length.

16

17 This document is expected to be  
18 published in the Federal Register in February 2022 and  
19 will have a 60 day comment period. The exact dates  
20 will be announced news release and social media.

21

22 If you or the public desires to comment  
23 on this proposed rule you may submit comments by one of  
24 the following methods:

25

26 Electronically. Go to the Federal  
27 rulemaking portal <https://www.regulations.gov>. In the  
28 search box enter the docket number FWS-R7-SM-2018-0013.  
29 Then, click on the search button. On the resulting  
30 page, in the search panel on the left side of the  
31 screen, under the document type heading, check the  
32 proposed rule box to locate this document. You may  
33 submit a comment by clicking on comment.

34

35 And you can also submit your comment by  
36 hard copy. Submitted by U.S. mail or hand delivery:  
37 Public comments processing, attention FWS-R7-SM-2018-  
38 0013; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, 5275 Leesburg,  
39 Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), Falls Church Virginia 22041-  
40 3803.

41

42 As a Council, if you desire to comment  
43 on this proposed rule you may submit your comment to  
44 your Council Coordinator.

45

46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0131

1 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. Is anyone  
2 available, did I fall off?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, excuse me, I  
5 muted myself.

6  
7 MR. DEMOSKI: No, no, we hear you.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So any Council  
10 comments on this, Item J.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: It's outside of our  
15 region so at this time I don't have any comments. So  
16 thanks so much, Robbin.

17  
18 And so we're dropping down to tribal  
19 governments, Native organizations, Tanana Chiefs.  
20 Tanana Chiefs, you going to speak to the Council at  
21 this time.

22  
23 MR. ERVIN: Hi, this is Bruce, can you  
24 hear me okay.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Bruce, go right  
27 ahead.

28  
29 MR. ERVIN: Hi. Tanana Chiefs has been  
30 listening to the concerns of tribes throughout the  
31 region and we are determined to ensure we have  
32 representation, a strong voice and a seat at the table  
33 to protect our way of life.

34  
35 Recently we recreated the Tribal  
36 Resource Stewardship Program, and it's combining the  
37 Hunting, Fishing Gathering Task Force and the Yukon  
38 InterTribal Fish Commission, and, you know, the goal  
39 for that is an effort to improve our advocacy,  
40 communication, outreach and responsiveness to those  
41 that we serve. And I' just like to reiterate that the  
42 Fish Commission and the Hunting Fishing Task Force,  
43 we're still in the process of being integrated into the  
44 TRSP, and we have a lot of planning and reorganizing  
45 that's going on right now. So currently the plan is to  
46 have Brooke Woods lead the Yukon River InterTribal Fish  
47 Commission and myself, Bruce, to lead the efforts with  
48 the Task Force. And we also team up with TCC's Deborah  
49 Lind and have her help us with Alaska Migratory Bird

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1 Co-Management Council. And we offer any assistance to  
2 support their staff, their effort, there's a lot a  
3 planning with that. And also.....

4  
5 (Teleconference interference -  
6 participants not muted)

7  
8 MR. ERVIN: .....we're currently  
9 updating our website to include information on the Task  
10 Force and the Fish Commission, climate change and  
11 Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council. We are  
12 working with our TCC communications department to  
13 figure out better ways to offer notifications of  
14 events, training and meetings that benefit all our TCC  
15 Interior Tribes. We will continue to look for ways to  
16 make our website more user friendly and provide  
17 important information that our tribes can access.

18  
19 The TRSP Team continues to attend  
20 various State Advisory Committee meetings with the  
21 focus on TCC, that impact our TCC -- Interior Tribes.  
22 We enjoy attending the various ACs. And we appreciate  
23 the ability to participate and learn about what these  
24 different AC areas say with hunting, fishing,  
25 gathering, ways of life. We will continue to reach out  
26 to our tribes that are impacted by these ACs and offer  
27 our help and support on any questions and advocacy  
28 efforts that they have and need.

29  
30 Also TRSP is gearing up for the  
31 statewide Board of Game and attend the meeting on March  
32 4th (indiscernible - cuts out)

33  
34 (Teleconference interference -  
35 participants not muted)

36  
37 MR. ERVIN: We will continue to reach  
38 out to our TCC Interior Tribes to provide training,  
39 meetings and help them get ready for the Board of Game.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We're getting a  
42 bunch of -- standby Bruce. We're getting a bunch of  
43 background noise, somebody's washing dishes and your  
44 phone is not muted, do you want to mute out, star, six.

45  
46 Go ahead, Bruce.

47  
48 MR. ERVIN: Okay, thank you. Our TRSP  
49 Team has been gearing up for statewide Board of Game

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1 and reaching out to.....

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(Teleconference interference - participants not muted)

REPORTER: Hello. We're getting a lot of background noise, somebody is not muted. If you could check your device and press star, six, or the mute button it would really be appreciated so we could listen to Bruce's presentation.

Thank you.

MR. ERVIN: Okay, thank you. And we'll be reaching out to the tribes for the Board of Game.

Also our Team's been working on getting information from the Federal Subsistence Board and State Alaska Department of Fish and Game and making sure that information goes out to our tribes, our TCC website and our different social media platforms. Some of our announcements and outreach were listed in the news and updates and also in the events and deadline section of our TCC website.

Some information that was shared, you know, a few examples are the Yukon River Panel meeting that was in January. The application deadline for the Federal Subsistence Board RAC membership that was this month, in February. Also for the statewide Board of Game meeting that begins March 4th, that was shared as well. And also just to wrap up the Task Force part we'd like to share that our TCC Annual Convention will take place March 14th through the 17th this year at the Westmark Hotel in Fairbanks and there's more information on the website to learn more.

And for the Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission, Brooke has been working diligently on the Fresh Eyes on Ice Project and she has a lot of meetings that she handles with them and we continue to work on their project. And with the Fresh Eyes on Ice Project is to expand the existing freshwater ice monitoring efforts using a culturally responsive citizens scientific model to increase the spacial extent infrequency of observations and expand the diversity of participants across Alaska. So basically this is a really great opportunity for, you know, all Alaskans to go out and, you know, get some really good

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1 photos of the river and, you know, document it, go on  
2 the website. And what they're really, really shooting  
3 for is when, you know, springtime comes around, the  
4 water starts opening it up and they want to try to get  
5 as much photos of the spring breakup as they can and,  
6 you know, a good thing would be if you take a picture  
7 of one area, just go back there in the same area and  
8 try to get the same picture. You could upload it to  
9 the Fresh Eyes.org. You could download the global  
10 observer app, you could post your photo with the date  
11 and some details on their Facebook group, Fresh Eyes on  
12 Ice, or you could also email or text Brooke at TCC.

13

14                   And also we received news that the  
15 2020, 2021 fisheries disaster declaration efforts are  
16 ongoing and we're continuing to work with our partners,  
17 YRDFA and a few others.

18

19                   And, lastly, for the Fish Commission,  
20 they are planning, scheduling and finishing up a few  
21 items for the 2022 Yukon Salmon Summit. It will be a  
22 hybrid virtual and in-person event that is scheduled  
23 for February 28th through March 2nd at Pikes Waterfront  
24 Lodge in Fairbanks. Just a little bit about the event,  
25 it'll be a summit led with indigenous knowledge and  
26 tribal governance to build ecosystem stewardship from  
27 the ocean to the headwaters. We seek inclusion on all  
28 voices on the Yukon, including fish families,  
29 scientists and policymakers. Day No. 1 will be, you  
30 know, it's entitled: Yesterday, will be leading with  
31 indigenous knowledge, what we know. Day No. 2., will  
32 be: Today, leading with tribal governance, what we  
33 need. Day No. 3., will be: Tomorrow, accountability  
34 to salmon and our people. For more information we  
35 advertise this on our website and Facebook and you can  
36 also reach out to Brooke Woods at her extension 3109.

37

38                   And for the fisheries program, Brian  
39 McKenna has a lot of great programs going on and doing  
40 a lot of research and, you know, some really great  
41 things. So we just wanted to mention that this summer  
42 will be a really active time for him and his program,  
43 and keep your eyes peeled for any job announcements  
44 that are going to be going out. It's a great  
45 opportunity to check out some of our weirs that he's  
46 been handling for such a long time so if you know  
47 anybody that's interested, have them reach out to Brian  
48 McKenna.

49

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1                                 And that's about it, I hope I didn't go  
2 over too far. Thank you for allowing TCC to give a  
3 report.

4  
5                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Appreciate  
6 that Bruce. Does any Council member have questions on  
7 TCC's presentation.

8  
9                                 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
10 Kevin.

11  
12                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

13  
14                                 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Bruce, for  
15 that report. Good to hear your voice on this call  
16 here. I was just curious what TCC leadership or you  
17 all are -- do you guys have priority fish or wildlife  
18 resource concerns, what are your -- just want to know a  
19 little bit more about some of your guys priority  
20 concerns as far as fish or wildlife resources goes.

21  
22                                 Thanks.

23  
24                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Bruce.

25  
26                                 MR. ERVIN: Yeah, you know, with these  
27 two big events coming up, I think right now it's kind  
28 of a good time that we're kind of really focusing on  
29 the State side with the Board of Game and then, you  
30 know, really trying to reach out to the tribes with the  
31 Yukon Salmon Summit to try and create some awareness,  
32 some educational information and, you know,  
33 possibilities through the Tribal Stewardship, various  
34 things. I don't want to build too much on the event,  
35 you know, because it's good to attend it and  
36 participate. And, you know, it's something that's been  
37 weighing heavily on Brooke and Ben and I and, you know,  
38 Jim, that, you know, we have a really big task ahead of  
39 us and we really feel, you know, the struggle that the  
40 tribes along the Yukon are facing and so we're doing  
41 the best we can to make sure that we're addressing some  
42 of their questions. And, you know, that's one of the  
43 goals of the Yukon Salmon Summit event is to try to  
44 address some of those concerns and, you know, try to  
45 plan for our future and, you know, try to cover the  
46 fish side.

47  
48                                 And then also on the game side, you  
49 know, we have -- you know, we've been over the years  
50

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1 posting trainings and, you know, getting advocates  
2 together and so we're just continually striving to  
3 improve the way we advocate with our tribes and, you  
4 know, looking for different and better ways to make  
5 sure they have everything they need to protect their  
6 way of life.

7

8                                 And so those two right now, I think,  
9 are a couple of things that we're really focusing on  
10 hard right now. I hope I answered your question.

11

12                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
13 Does that answer your question, Kevin.

14

15                                 MR. WHITWORTH: Yep, good enough,  
16 thanks.

17

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

20

21                                 MS. WOODS: Hi.

22

23                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: .....tribal -- go  
24 ahead, who's there.

25

26                                 MS. WOODS: Good afternoon, this is  
27 Brooke Woods with the Yukon River InterTribal Fish  
28 Commission. I do apologize to Bruce and to the RAC for  
29 being late. I am just getting out of class. But I'm  
30 also here to answer any questions. Thank you, Bruce,  
31 for providing a brief overview and update on our  
32 programs. And for those that don't know me, my name is  
33 Brooke Woods. I am from Rampart, Alaska. And I work  
34 for TCC Yukon River InterTribal Fish Commission and a  
35 fisheries scientist student at UAF.

36

37                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, thanks  
38 for the work you're doing there, Brooke, appreciate  
39 that. Any questions for Brooke.

40

41                                 (No comments)

42

43                                 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And, Jim Simon, did  
44 you have comments from TCC or anything from your side.

45

46                                 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
47 think Bruce did a very good job of summarizing many of  
48 the programs at Tanana Chiefs Conference and  
49 specifically the changes going on with the Tribal

50



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1 Resources Stewardship Program.

2

3

4 I think in response to Kevin  
5 Whitworth's question about Tanana Chiefs Conferences  
6 priorities, I think part of, you know, the benefits of  
7 this upcoming Yukon River Salmon Summit is to really  
8 have the opportunity to really start prioritizing the  
9 various concerns that have been brought to the  
10 attention of Tanana Chiefs Conference. We do have many  
11 TCC tribal citizens, member tribal citizens who  
12 participate in the local Fish and Game Advisory  
13 Committees so Bruce and I and Brooke and others at TCC  
14 have been hearing a lot of the concerns, the  
15 observations, like you have also shared, Mr. Chair,  
16 about how the -- and Kevin have shared, about the lack  
17 of salmon and how that's affecting grizzly bears, and  
18 sort of this whole ecological, maybe, crises, is too  
19 strong of a word, but these ecological changes that are  
20 really compounding resource shortages of multiple  
21 salmon species in certain areas because of predation,  
22 et cetera, ungulate populations being low, the lack of  
23 caribou availability, et cetera. So a lot of the  
24 tribal concerns that are being brought to the attention  
25 of the Tribal Resources Stewardship Program are  
26 focusing on the food security concerns and trying to  
27 assert tribal sovereignty on food sovereignty and to be  
28 able to make sure the continuation of Federal and other  
29 subsistence uses, customary and traditional uses.

29

30 Thanks.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Jim.

33 So any other TCC comments or presentations.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So on my list here I  
38 got Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association,  
39 Catherine, are you there.

40

41 MS. MONCRIEFF: Yes, I am, can you hear  
42 me?

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Can hear you fine,  
45 go right ahead.

46

47 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay, great. Okay,  
48 good afternoon RAC members. Thank you for the  
49 opportunity to provide this update on our projects. My

50

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1 name is Catherine Moncrieff and I am the YRDFA Staff  
2 Anthropologist. Serena Fitka, our Executive Director,  
3 apologies for not being available to give this report  
4 today but she's not been feeling well and is working  
5 minimal hours this week. You can email her at serena  
6 at yukonsalmon.org, or call her at 272-3141 if you have  
7 any questions that I'm not able to answer.

8

9 So I'd like to start with our upcoming  
10 meeting so please mark your calendars. The YRDFA  
11 annual board meeting will take place in Anchorage at  
12 the BP Energy Center on March 22nd and 23rd. Due to  
13 the lack of funding, we will not have the full Board in  
14 person. The agenda will be posted to our website and  
15 emailed to tribal offices for public posting. This  
16 will be a hybrid meeting with the option of in-person,  
17 virtual and call in options. The following Board and  
18 alternate seats that are open are as follows: Y1 Seat  
19 3, which is a two year term; Y2 Seat 3, which is a two  
20 year term; Y4 Seat 2, which is a two year term; and Y6  
21 Seat 2, which is a two year term. These are also up  
22 for renewal with our current members and seats. We  
23 have alternate seats, Coastal Alternate 1 is a three  
24 year term; Y1 Seat 2, which is a two year term; Y1 Seat  
25 3 which is a two year term; Y2 Seat 2 which is a two  
26 year term; Y4 Seat 2 which is a two year term; and Y6  
27 Seat 2 which is a two year term.

28

29 We are looking for a Koyukuk alternate  
30 to fill the remaining term which ends in 2023. If  
31 you're interested in serving on the Board or want to  
32 recommend somebody please contact our office at 272-  
33 3141 or email info at yukonsalmon.org.

34

35 The Yukon River salmon management pre-  
36 season meeting will take place on March 24th, 2022 at  
37 the Embassy Suites in Anchorage. A letter and  
38 registration form was sent to the tribal councils last  
39 month to designate a representative from their  
40 community to attend. Our administrative assistant  
41 Sherry Alstrom will be in contact with the tribes who  
42 have not submitted their registration. Travel, lodging  
43 and per diem will be covered by YRDFA. You can find  
44 the agenda on our website at [www.yukonsalmon.org](http://www.yukonsalmon.org). We  
45 encourage tribes to also submit their membership fees  
46 when submitting registration forms.

47

48 We encourage everyone to like our  
49 Facebook page and visit our website frequently as we  
50

0139

1 post other important meetings that take place, such as  
2 the House Fisheries Committee meeting, the Federal  
3 Subsistence Board, the North Pacific Fishery Management  
4 Council and other important meetings that discuss and  
5 affect the Yukon River fisheries.

6

7

8                   Next, the Comprehensive Salmon Plan.  
9 One of our Board members, Stan Zuray, has graciously  
10 resumed the Chairman of the Yukon River Committee and  
11 our director has been assisting with updating committee  
12 members to call a meeting to discuss the draft plan and  
13 review public comments.

13

14

15                   Next is the fisheries disaster update.  
16 The Department of Commerce approved the 2020 and 2021  
17 Yukon River Fisheries Disaster Request. In October,  
18 our Director, Serena, was fortunate enough to travel to  
19 Washington D.C., to meet with the U.S. Delegation, the  
20 Senior Advisory for the U.S. Department of the Interior  
21 to discuss the hardships the Yukon River people have  
22 been facing the last two years. With the hard work of  
23 the people who continuously voice their concerns, the  
24 communities who submitted resolutions and the many  
25 organizations supporting us, we are one step closer to  
26 receiving the necessary assistance our fishers need.  
27 The next step is to keep informed of what NOAA is doing  
28 and work with the U.S. Delegation and the State of  
29 Alaska to acquire the necessary funds to assist with  
30 Yukon River fisher needs.

30

31

32                   Next, I'd like to update you on some of  
33 our Fisheries Resource Management Program projects and  
34 then I'll follow with a couple other projects that may  
35 be of interest to you.

35

36

37                   The In-Season Salmon Harvest Survey  
38 program is gearing up for the 2022 season by rehiring  
39 our surveyors, or in a couple of communities hiring a  
40 new surveyor and preparing their travel arrangements  
41 for the annual surveyor training event which will take  
42 place on Wednesday on March 23rd in Anchorage. The  
43 surveyors will also attend the pre-season planning  
44 meeting on Thursday, March 24th. Surveyors who prefer  
45 participating virtually will have that option as well.  
46 This year we're updating some of our survey questions  
47 to reflect the needs of the current fishery and this  
48 program is funded through the Fisheries Resource  
49 Monitoring Program through March of 2024.

49

50

0140

1                   The next FRMP Project I'd like to  
2 update you on is Local and Traditional Knowledge of  
3 Anadromous Fish in the Yukon Flats with an emphasis on  
4 the Draanjik Drainage. This project is in its final  
5 stages. We completed our biological field work with a  
6 fixed-wing flight in November and a helicopter flight  
7 to attempt to document coho spawning salmon area that  
8 is not yet in the Anadromous Waters Catalog. And I  
9 should mention that this project is a partnership with  
10 the Tanana Chiefs Conference. This location that they  
11 were looking for has been identified by traditional  
12 knowledge and with positive EDNA analysis. In December  
13 the pilot spotted coho salmon but when the team landed  
14 in January they were not able to find any coho. So  
15 this location has been added to our recommendations for  
16 future work. We had planned to travel to Venetie, Fort  
17 Yukon and Chalkyitsik to provide a community review but  
18 cancelled due to Covid issues. Instead we sent the  
19 three communities a box of salmon strips and a draft of  
20 the brochure summarizing the project for their review  
21 and a binder of salmon-related school activities. We  
22 will be working with the communities to finalize the  
23 brochure before we print the final version to be shared  
24 with the RAC and others. The final steps in this  
25 project include nominations to the Anadromous Waters  
26 Catalog for the following species and location.  
27 Rearing juvenile chinook salmon in the Tahadjiik (ph)  
28 and Drifting Snow Creek, spawning adults and rearing  
29 juvenile coho salmon at Nehdiji Ni'inlii at Teedraanjik  
30 Creek drainage, presence of adult and juvenile  
31 roundfish in Kevinjik Creek, Drifting Snow Creek and  
32 Graylingfork Black River and presence of juvenile  
33 Arctic lamprey in Kevinjik Creek, Tahadjiik Creek and  
34 Graylingfork Black River, and this project will end on  
35 March 31st of this year, 2022.

36  
37                   Next, I'd like to update you on two  
38 projects that may be of interest to you. The first is  
39 titled: They Told Us There'd Come a Time, Conserving  
40 Fish, Preserving Tradition on the Yukon River, a  
41 catalog of elders warnings. This project funded by the  
42 North Pacific Research Board has YR DFA, again,  
43 partnering with the Tanana Chiefs Conference with the  
44 Young Adult Emerging leaders to document the research  
45 documented, local and traditional knowledge of salmon  
46 and search for advice or warnings from the elders.  
47 We're entering year two of this project and planning  
48 our second training event which will take place in  
49 Fairbanks in early March. At this event our team will  
50

0141

1 review the archival research we've been engaged during  
2 year one and prepare for our qualitative interviews  
3 with today's elders. This event will take place on  
4 March 9th and 10th.

5

6 Finally, I'd like to update you on our  
7 Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund Project titled:  
8 Integrated Local and Traditional Knowledge into the  
9 Anadromous Waters Catalog and Fish Inventories of  
10 Select Drainages of the Tanana and Yukon Rivers 2021-  
11 2023. This project is a partnership between YRDFA and  
12 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Last summer we  
13 traveled to Tanana, Manley Hot Springs and Nenana to  
14 interview knowledgeable fishers and hunters about fish  
15 locations. We've completed the transcriptions of the  
16 interviews and will be summarizing the results for our  
17 partners at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to  
18 prepare for biological field work this coming summer  
19 which will attempt to document fish presence, rearing  
20 and spawning locations. The research team hopes to  
21 stop in the communities to share information about  
22 these projects again, this summer, as they travel along  
23 the river in early June, in late July and at the end of  
24 September.

25

26 That concludes our report and thank you  
27 for the opportunity to provide this update and I'm  
28 happy to answer any questions if there are any.

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks,  
31 Catherine. Council members have questions on Catherine  
32 -- Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association  
33 presentation.

34

35 (No comments)

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Any comments from  
38 the Council.

39

40 MR. VENT: Yes, Jack, this is Darrell.

41

42 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, go ahead,  
43 Darrell.

44

45 MR. VENT: Yeah, I just had one. Just  
46 wanted a little information on this project they're  
47 looking at. Is that to possibly put in a testing site  
48 to see, you know, like, say for instance, they have one  
49 down by Pilot Station and one up by Eagle, are they

50

0142

1 trying to figure out if, you know, another avenue to  
2 have their fish acknowledged that there's actual fish  
3 going up that river. Is that one they're trying to set  
4 up in the Middle Yukon or something, I just wanted to  
5 ask that question.

6  
7 MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you for that  
8 question. Through the Chair. I think, I'm not sure  
9 but I think what you're asking about is a sonar because  
10 you mentioned Pilot and Eagle, and I would have to say  
11 that I have heard talk about that but that's not what  
12 our projects are, I don't think they're really working  
13 towards that. We have two projects that I discussed --  
14 or that I gave an update on that are looking to  
15 document presence of salmon -- of fish, all different  
16 kinds of fish and include them in the State of Alaska's  
17 Anadromous Waters Catalog which documents whitefish and  
18 salmon and fish that goes out to the ocean and then  
19 they also have a lack of fish inventory that documents  
20 presence and spawning and rearing locations of all  
21 types of fish and all of that is important information  
22 for knowing what habitat supports what kind of fish and  
23 what kind of protection we need to provide for that but  
24 it's not actually -- I don't think that we're  
25 specifically -- these projects are specifically working  
26 towards a sonar in the middle river if that's what I  
27 think you're asking about.

28  
29 And I hope that answered your question.

30  
31 MR. VENT: Yes, in part. And, also,  
32 you know, you're recording all these fish that are in  
33 the Yukon. My concern is that we don't have any kind  
34 of regulation on the whitefish or sheefish and we  
35 really relied on the chum but now we're relying more  
36 heavily on these other species. It's just, you know, I  
37 don't know if there's any kind of regulation or  
38 anything on these other fish that's -- you know it's  
39 just something that concerns me.

40  
41 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So, yes, that's --  
42 those are valid concerns, appreciate those comments,  
43 Darrell. Any other Council comments or questions for  
44 Catherine.

45  
46 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Tim, go ahead.

49  
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0143

1 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you for your  
2 presentation, Catherine. I had a question on this  
3 petition that the InterTribal Fish Commissions and some  
4 other associations put forward to NOAA asking for the  
5 elimination of bycatch, does the bylaws or charter or  
6 purpose of YRDFA keep YRDFA from getting involved in  
7 that style of petition?

8  
9 MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you for that  
10 question, Tim. Through the Chair. I think that the  
11 only -- I think we've been involved in the work around  
12 bycatch for quite many years and recently with the  
13 groups that put that petition together. I think the  
14 only reason we didn't sign on that petition is because  
15 it was tribally-based and our organization is fishermen  
16 based rather -- so we work with tribal people but we  
17 work with everyone as well. And so from my  
18 understanding that's why we weren't a signatory on that  
19 petition.

20  
21 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. That's all I had,  
22 thank you.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks, Tim,  
25 appreciate that comment. Anybody else.

26  
27 (No comments)

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks so much,  
30 Catherine. As usual a really great job.

31  
32 MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you. Thank you  
33 very much.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: And I hope Serena  
36 gets better soon.

37  
38 MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you, me too.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So Kuskokwim River  
41 InterTribal Fish Commission. We got a handout and is  
42 somebody going to be speaking for the Fish Commission  
43 for their hand out.

44  
45 MS. SCHOMOGYI: Mr. Chair.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, go ahead.

48  
49 MS. SCHOMOGYI: Hi, this is Terese

50

0144

1 Schomogyi with the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish  
2 Commission. I can deliver our report to the RAC today.

3

4 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead.

5

6 MS. SCHOMOYI: Awesome, thank you.

7 Yes, as you mentioned there were two handouts that

8 KRITFC provided to the WIRAC.

9

10 The first is a general report of some  
11 of our activities as we're gearing up for the 2022  
12 fishing season. The first that we discuss is Federal  
13 management. Our Fish Commission is continuing to work  
14 well with our Federal management partners at Yukon  
15 Delta National Wildlife Refuge. After a very  
16 successful 2021 season we are more confident and  
17 pleased with this collaborative management partnership  
18 than we have ever been. And our Staff are planning to  
19 work and utilize our joint salmon management strategy  
20 and harvest strategies for a second season. We are  
21 also looking forward to the Refuge Manager, Boyd  
22 Blihovde, using his existing delegation of authority to  
23 Federalize the Lower Kuskokwim River in the 2022  
24 season. This is because we believe that the chinook  
25 and chum salmon are likely to not come in strong this  
26 year and we are expecting Federal management to take  
27 place this year.

28

29 We also, as an organization, remain  
30 concerned that Federal agencies continue to defer to  
31 the State of Alaska and overlook their Federal  
32 responsibilities including their obligation under  
33 ANILCA, Title VIII.

34

35 The next point we discuss in this  
36 report is the Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim Tribal Consortium,  
37 AYKTC to which we recently invited with the Yukon River  
38 InterTribal Fish Commission, AVCP, TCC and Kawarek also  
39 composed this group. And, together, our five  
40 organizations have united the 118 tribes of the AYK  
41 region to work for salmon restoration. We have sent a  
42 letter to the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary  
43 of Commerce to petition against salmon bycatch and work  
44 towards salmon restoration and research.

45

46 Next, we discuss some of our salmon  
47 projects that we will be undertaking in the 2022  
48 season. We will be running our community based harvest  
49 monitoring program again for the sixth year. This

50



0145

1 program employs people from villages, often youth, to  
2 survey their community members after fishing periods to  
3 gather harvest information and on our Fish Commission  
4 as well as ONC compile all this information and create  
5 harvest estimates for our in-season managers and  
6 Federal in-season managers to use during the season.

7

8 We also will be running the Takotna  
9 River weir located two miles up stream of the village  
10 of Takotna. We'll be working with Takotna Tribal  
11 Council and Department of Fish and Game to operate this  
12 project.

13

14 We also, in the Lower River, will be  
15 operating the Kwethluk River weir with the Organized  
16 Village of Kwethluk and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.  
17 This weir did not operate the past two seasons so we're  
18 looking forward to installing and operating it in the  
19 2022 season.

20

21 And we also will be beginning a new  
22 salmon monitoring program with U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
23 Service. It's a freshwater productivity study or a  
24 juvenile smolt outmigration study. We will be using a  
25 screw trap to be able to count juvenile salmon as they  
26 are migrating out of the Kwethluk River system. We're  
27 looking for some people to install and operate this as  
28 fisheries technicians this summer between April and  
29 June. We sent out a job announcement also with the  
30 supplemental materials to this RAC, so if you know  
31 anybody who you think might make a good fish technician  
32 and be able to work on the Kwethluk River screw trap  
33 project between April and June this year you can let  
34 Kevin Whitworth know or Mary Peltola know, both of  
35 their contact information is on that job announcement.

36

37 And I believe that is it from the  
38 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission. I will  
39 answer any questions to the best of my ability but I  
40 might direct you to our Executive Director, Mary  
41 Peltola.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks so  
46 much. Council members have questions for Kuskokwim  
47 InterTribal Fish Commission.

48

49 MR. GERVAIS: I have a question, Jack,

50

0146

1 this is Tim.

2

3

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

4

5

MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Thank you for your presentation. On that petition for the elimination of bycatch of salmon that was denied in December, what's the InterTribal Fish Commission's analysis or reflection of the -- of NOAA's not allowing that petition? Do you have any future plans to resubmit or change the language on it or what's -- what, if you have a strategy that you can communicate to us going forward, I'd be interested to hear it.

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MS. SCHOMOGYI: Through the Chair. Thank you, Tim, for the question. I will let Mary Peltola know to be in touch with you. But essentially the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission's reflection is that NOAA is prioritizing commercial interests over subsistence fishermen's interests. At this point we don't have any plans to resubmit but we do have plans to continue for advocating for the elimination of salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea. So yeah that's all I will say but I will let Mary know to be in touch with you, or I can give you her contact information as well.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Any other questions, Tim.

MR. GERVAIS: No. I just wanted to express that I appreciate the InterTribal Fish Commissions and the other organizations working together on submitting that and making a stand that, yeah, that the commercial exploitation of the salmon isn't what needs to be happening right now based on our population in the rivers. So thank you for making that effort and, hopefully, get some more positive results in the future.

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, any other questions from the Council members.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Hearing none, thanks so much for doing a great job in your presentation and the good work that the Kuskokwim InterTribal Fish Commission is doing for the resources and the people on the Kuskokwim River.

0147

1 MR. BLIHOVDE: Mr. Chairman.

2

3 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

4

5 MR. BLIHOVDE: Hey, I'm not a Council  
6 member, but this is Boyd at Yukon Delta Wildlife  
7 Refuge, is it okay to make a statement.

8

9 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right. Yes,  
10 please do.

11

12 MR. BLIHOVDE: Okay, great. Yeah, thank  
13 you, Terese. It's so important to the Refuge that we  
14 have these strong partnerships with groups like the  
15 InterTribal Fish Commission on the Kuskokwim, and  
16 Terese mentioned the effort to try to hire some folks  
17 for field positions. And so I wanted to reiterate  
18 that, that we're trying to partner with the InterTribal  
19 Fish Commission to get some folks from the local area  
20 along the Kuskokwim but really anywhere in the local  
21 area that might be interested in a fisheries position.  
22 But also just wanted to announce while hopefully the  
23 Yukon conservation partnerships are on the line, that  
24 we're trying to hire two RIT positions which are the  
25 Refuge Information Technician positions for the Refuge  
26 that are, I think, vital positions for reaching out to  
27 the community and having a better connection with the  
28 local communities. One of those positions that will be  
29 advertised any day now is going to be on the Yukon  
30 River, we hope. And so I just wanted to include this  
31 sort of plea for the Yukon groups, the YRDFA, and the  
32 InterTribal Fish Commission for the Yukon, that if you  
33 know of anyone who might be interested in a position  
34 that is a paid position with the Refuge where you can  
35 work from your local community, my contact information  
36 is in the packet that everybody received under the  
37 Yukon Delta information. We'd love to hear from you  
38 and those positions will be coming out real soon and  
39 thanks to the InterTribal Fish Commission for helping  
40 on those as well. But just wanted to broaden the  
41 horizons and get more help if we could so that we could  
42 partner more effectively with all of you.

43

44 Thanks.

45

46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
47 So, yes, we do appreciate it'll make the management run  
48 a lot better and more informed. So any other  
49 questions, comments on the InterTribal Fish Commission

50

0148

1 Council members.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So we're dropping  
6 down here to the -- on the agenda we have the North  
7 Pacific Fisheries Management Council, bycatch update,  
8 Diana Stram, are you on the call Diana.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Apparently she's  
13 not. Karen sent out last week, by email, the salmon  
14 bycatch outreach 2022 for the RACs and it's sort of a  
15 slide presentation and I was wondering if Council  
16 members actually got that in their email, or did she --  
17 I'm not exactly sure if she snail mailed to Pollock or  
18 not. So did.....

19

20 MS. WESSELS: Mr. Chair, this is Katya.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Katya, go ahead.

23

24 MS. WESSELS: Yes. If Council members  
25 did not get a copy of the presentation it's also  
26 available on our website. I think it is. Now, when I  
27 said it I started thinking -- let's see, I'm just  
28 looking, yeah, it is available on our website and we  
29 will reach out to Diana Stram right now to see if, you  
30 know, she's available.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. Well, we --  
33 the question for the Council members, did you receive  
34 that email, did you get that bycatch slideshow if she  
35 comes up. I have it.

36

37 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair.

38

39 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

40

41 MR. WHITWORTH: You're talking about  
42 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council's  
43 slideshow with, I think it's 17 sheets.

44

45 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Okay.

46

47 MR. WHITWORTH: But if I could make a  
48 comment.

49

50

0149

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

2

3

4 MR. WHITWORTH: I'm not sure what  
5 Diana, her -- what her presentation was going to be but  
6 this presentation she's shared at a lot of meetings and  
7 it'd be nice if she would just share more of a bycatch  
8 update, that's the title of her presentation. I don't  
9 know if she's going to go through this slideshow but it  
10 has very little with 2021, or 2022 update as far as  
11 numbers go, as far as what's going on on the Council,  
12 and future stuff. So just encourage her to maybe  
13 elaborate a little bit more on that instead of going  
14 through the Council process and who's on the Council  
15 and all that sort of stuff. Just my comment, that's  
16 all.

16

17 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: The only real update  
18 is in the last page on Page 17, update -- Council  
19 update in 2022 -- June of 2022, update adult  
20 equivalency analysis for chinook salmon there's some  
21 stuff there, but, yeah, this is sort of how the Council  
22 works, that's not really what we're looking for. I'm  
23 not exactly sure, you know, Karen was communicating  
24 with her and I don't -- I was not in that loop.

25

26 So Katya was going to.....

27

28 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, we're trying to  
29 locate her phone number right now, Mr. Chair. So I  
30 just would advise maybe Council can take a five minute  
31 break while we're trying to figure it out. She might  
32 have been expecting to give a presentation tomorrow  
33 because the Council meeting is scheduled for two days  
34 and she probably didn't expect you'd be moving through  
35 the agenda so fast. My apologies.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yeah, we can take a  
38 five or 10 minute break here. I got 4:00 o'clock,  
39 we'll come back in 10 minutes, is that okay with the  
40 Council.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I guess we're on  
45 a 10 minute break.

46

47 MR. VENT: Yes.

48

49 MR. DEMOSKI: Yes.

50

0150

1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. We'll come  
2 back at 4:10 or so, about 10 minutes.

3  
4 (Off record)

5  
6 (On record)

7  
8 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So I got 10 minutes  
9 after 4:00 now. Did you find something out there,  
10 Katya?

11  
12 MS. WESSELS: Yes, Mr. Chair. We  
13 called her and sent her an email and there was no  
14 answer. So like I said, I think that she was thinking  
15 she was presenting tomorrow so my suggestion would be  
16 to rearrange this agenda item for later. You know I  
17 know that we're supposed to discuss the joint letter --  
18 joint Council letter on the bycatch a little bit later  
19 but perhaps we can move this item to tomorrow morning.

20  
21 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, yeah, we'll do  
22 that. We'll drop it down. We'll go back -- we'll go  
23 down the agenda here to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
24 Yukon River Subsistence Salmon Report. That's U.S.  
25 Fish and Wildlife Service and ADF&G. Is that you  
26 Gerald and Holly.

27  
28 MS. CARROLL: Hi, Mr. Chair, it's going  
29 to be Holly Carroll today.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. All right,  
32 Holly.

33  
34 MS. CARROLL: All right, well, thanks,  
35 Mr. Chair and Council members. My name's Holly Carroll  
36 and I work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service out  
37 of the Fairbanks office but I am based in Anchorage.  
38 I'm the Federal Subsistence Fishery Manager for the  
39 Yukon River. And to keep it brief I am going to focus  
40 more on the upcoming season. We did provide season  
41 summaries at your last RAC meeting.

42  
43 So I want to first talk about the U.S.  
44 Fish and Wildlife Service has a core mission to consult  
45 with Federal tribes and our Yukon team has been working  
46 to expand and improve that government to government  
47 consultation process. This fall we held a series of  
48 formal tribal consultation meetings with Yukon River  
49 tribes. And these consultations were meant to seek  
50

0151

1 feedback on how tribes would like to be consulted with  
2 in the future regarding fisheries management and we  
3 really appreciated the direct communication our team  
4 had with the tribal members to have meaningful  
5 participation in the decisionmaking process. We  
6 recognize the importance of coordination, consultation,  
7 and followup between the Service's subsistence  
8 management team and the Federally-recognized tribes  
9 living along the Yukon River. And we're looking  
10 forward to creating and maintaining effective working  
11 relationships.

12

13                   Formal consultation meetings are going  
14 to be offered again this spring to discuss the upcoming  
15 season. We are tentatively trying to schedule those  
16 for April so that we can discuss the fishing next  
17 season and any topic of concern to the tribes. We'll  
18 be sending out emails in March with proposed dates and  
19 times and we encourage the tribal leaders or their  
20 designated attendees to participate in these meetings  
21 if they can. They will be teleconferences.

22

23                   So, of course, the formal salmon  
24 outlooks will be published by the Yukon River Joint  
25 Technical Committee and that occurs the last week of  
26 March. That goes into the Joint Technical Committees  
27 report and that document can be found on the Yukon  
28 River Panel's website, which is just  
29 [www.yukonriverpanel.com](http://www.yukonriverpanel.com). So once the outlook is  
30 published, the Service will work cooperatively with the  
31 Alaska Department of Fish and Game, fishermen and other  
32 stakeholders to finalize our pre-season management  
33 strategy. The 2022 outlook and proposed management  
34 strategy will also be discussed in-depth at some  
35 upcoming meetings. We've got the Yukon River Panel  
36 meeting and that's going to be the week of April 4th.  
37 We'll discuss it at the Yukon River InterTribal Fish  
38 Commission meeting when we find out those dates. And  
39 then the YRDFA meeting that was mentioned earlier, the  
40 pre-season meeting on March 24th. And then also all  
41 the Yukon households can expect to receive a mailed  
42 flier that will detail the salmon outlooks and the  
43 management strategy and that should arrive late April,  
44 or early May.

45

46                   So, though, the official outlooks are  
47 not yet available, I think based on the past two  
48 seasons and indications from the Bering Sea juvenile  
49 trawl surveys managers are expecting another very poor

50

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1 season for chinook salmon and the run size could be  
2 potentially smaller than what we saw in 2021 and as  
3 many of you know that run size was so small that it  
4 warranted full closures to harvest. There essentially  
5 was no harvestable surplus on that run and even with no  
6 harvest we were not able to meet escapement goals.

7

8 Now, chum salmon forecast may or may  
9 not be as accurate as the chinook forecasts have been  
10 but based on last two seasons record low abundance it's  
11 very likely that fishing for summer chum would also be  
12 closed early in the season until a harvestable surplus  
13 is projected. It may be that the runs will continue to  
14 be poor this year, the chum runs, and so fishing  
15 restrictions could be like last year with salmon  
16 fishing limited or closed even into the fall season.

17

18 While I know this news is incredibly  
19 disheartening and upsetting for many, we are trying to  
20 make sure that fishermen have this information now so  
21 that they can prepare for the upcoming season.

22

23 Conserving the fish now, while the runs  
24 may be low, will ensure that most of the fish will make  
25 it to the spawning grounds and hopefully fishing will  
26 improve in future seasons. We're hoping that fishermen  
27 can plan to harvest other species using 4 inch mesh  
28 gillnets, dipnets and possibly manned fishwheels this  
29 coming season. As always, the managers will be  
30 watching the lower Yukon test fishery, the Pilot  
31 Station sonar, and then listening to local fishermen to  
32 assess the strength of the incoming salmon runs. If  
33 the runs come in better than anticipated additional  
34 fishing opportunities will be implemented based on the  
35 amount of surplus fish available.

36

37 We really want to acknowledge the very  
38 serious hardship that the last two seasons have caused  
39 Yukon River families. We'd also like to thank Yukon  
40 River fishermen for their compliance during these  
41 difficult years and commend those tribes and  
42 communities that took steps to provide fishing gear,  
43 extra freezers, and came up with creative solutions to  
44 compensate for loss of salmon meals. Yukon fishermen  
45 have shown incredible resiliency in adapting to these  
46 changing salmon run sizes and these environmental  
47 changes we've faced.

48

49 And we may not be out of the woods yet

50



0153

1 but we are doing everything we can to study what is  
2 contributing to the declines in chinook and chum salmon  
3 and we're partnering with other agencies and scientists  
4 to collaborate more than ever on marine and freshwater  
5 research.

6  
7                   The Service's Yukon team has undertaken  
8 a focus on studying the disease ichthyophonosis, and  
9 while this disease has been around and has been studied  
10 for many years, the levels of chinook are cyclical and  
11 they had dropped quite low in recent decades. However,  
12 fishers in the middle river reported an increase in  
13 ichthyophonosis in chinook salmon during the 2020 and  
14 2021 seasons and suggested further studies of this  
15 disease are needed. This motivated the Service and  
16 Fish and Game to partner on a long-term study to look  
17 at this disease in the lower river and how it compares  
18 to the upper river and whether disease severity could  
19 be a cause of mortality before the fish reach spawning  
20 grounds. So ADF&G has plans to sample at or near their  
21 test fishery project at Pilot Station sonar and Eagle  
22 sonar and the Service is going to sample in the middle  
23 river at Rampart Rapids and in the upper river at Fort  
24 Yukon. Unfortunately sampling will require that  
25 approximately 180 to 200 chinook salmon be sacrificed  
26 at these four locations along the river. This is  
27 necessary because there's no established methods for  
28 detecting the disease or measuring the severity in live  
29 fish. We have to extract the heart and do analysis on  
30 the heart to determine the disease severity. While  
31 some may feel that sacrificing chinook salmon for a  
32 study is unacceptable when subsistence fishers are  
33 being restricted, all the chinook sampled at these  
34 locations will be distributed within the local  
35 community. The fish organs from the same fish that  
36 will be sampled for ichthyophonosis will also contribute  
37 to other ground breaking studies that will look at fish  
38 health. One of them is going to look at egg quality,  
39 it's going to look at the thiamine levels in eggs.  
40 There's been indications that when they have poor  
41 thiamine levels there may be poor egg survival and so  
42 we get the opportunity to look at whether that's  
43 occurring for our chinook. We can also look at some  
44 gill tissue for heat stress proteins. This is ground  
45 breaking new research that could indicate whether fish  
46 are under stress and may be going to die before they  
47 spawn. In the future, if that technology is developed  
48 it could be a non-lethal form of looking at heat  
49 stress. Another thing we're going to look at is some  
50

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1 of the organs, like liver or kidney to see if paralytic  
2 shellfish toxins are present. They could be present  
3 from the food they eat in the ocean.

4

5 So informational fliers on this study  
6 have been proposed sampling communities. We're seeking  
7 partnerships with the tribes in these villages to  
8 distribute the fish equitably and if you would like  
9 more information about the project you can contact  
10 myself. I'll give you my phone number now, it's (907)  
11 351-3029. And you can also contact Fred West with Fish  
12 and Game.

13

14 Lastly, Covid still disrupt our field  
15 operations this summer but at this time we do plan to  
16 operate the Eastfork Andreafsky River weir, the Gisasa  
17 River weir, and the (Indiscernible) River sonar  
18 projects.

19

20 I'll standby for questions and comments  
21 but I do want to see if Deena Jallen has anything that  
22 she wants to add with the Alaska Department of Fish and  
23 Game.

24

25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes, Deena, do you  
26 have additions to that presentation of Holly's.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Are you there,  
31 Deena.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Apparently not --  
36 oh, was there someone, go ahead.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I thought I heard  
41 someone there for a second. So we're going to give  
42 Deena Jallen a chance to add anything but apparently  
43 her phone's not working or you're not off mute or  
44 you're not present.

45

46 So Council questions for Holly on her  
47 presentation.

48

49 MS. GLEASON: And, Jack, this is

50

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1 Christy Gleason, I also have a ADF&G fall season  
2 presentation -- or just a couple comments to make and  
3 that would allow Deena to hop online.

4

5 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, go right ahead  
6 Christy.

7

8 MS. GLEASON: Okay. Yeah, sorry to  
9 interrupt you there. I am Christy Gleason, I'm with  
10 Alaska Department of Fish and Game and I co-manage the  
11 Yukon River fall season with Holly Carroll and Gerald.  
12 And, yeah, that was a great summary from Holly and what  
13 we have coming up for this upcoming season.

14

15 I just want to let your RAC know that  
16 we share your same concerns about the low salmon runs  
17 and we recognize it's been a difficult last two years,  
18 especially during the fall season, not being able to  
19 fish for fall chum. And we did give a fall season  
20 summary, I believe it's in your packets. It explains  
21 last season. Some new information that we have is that  
22 we finished our subsistence salmon surveys from last  
23 season and with all salmon fishing closed for  
24 subsistence we did have a harvest of about 1,000 fall  
25 chum and 300 coho salmon and these fish were harvested  
26 in non-salmon gear and distributed from our test  
27 fishery assessment projects. So this just, again,  
28 shows the tremendous hardship that subsistence  
29 fishermen had this last season.

30

31 And, like Holly said, looking forward  
32 to the 2022 season we'll be finalizing our forecast for  
33 fall chum and we'll know more about the coho but how  
34 it's looking so far is that we're going to be well  
35 below our escapement goals and we'd like fishermen to  
36 know this in advance. If you have an opportunity to  
37 fish for other salmon this spring or participate in any  
38 of those winter or spring moose hunts that we've heard  
39 talked about, encourage people in your community to do  
40 so, we want to give people fair warning. And we'll see  
41 more how the fall season will shape up. We make a  
42 revised projection in early July once we see how the  
43 summer chum run comes in.

44

45 And just a couple research projects we  
46 have coming up for the 2022 season.

47

48 We are starting our coho salmon  
49 radiotelemetry project this year to see where coho

50

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1 salmon go in the Yukon River drainage. We have some  
2 new funding to start our Sheenjek River sonar project  
3 in the upper Yukon area. This was an older project  
4 that we're bringing back to life and we're excited to  
5 see that because we're going to be able to monitor some  
6 fall chum salmon spawning areas.

7

8 We also have a new project that's going  
9 to be looking at fall chum and we're pursuing funding  
10 for this project, but it will be looking at year  
11 specific growth, stress and reproductive growth during  
12 the time the fall chum spend in the ocean.

13

14 And a little bit about our ADF&G salmon  
15 ocean ecology program. We have some biologists an  
16 board and international salmon cruise right now in the  
17 North Pacific Ocean so they're working alongside  
18 colleagues from Russia, Japan and others to study  
19 salmon in the North Pacific ocean.

20

21 And, yeah, I just wanted to let your  
22 RAC know that we were listening to the opening comments  
23 that you guys had and you may be interested in learning  
24 more about some of the genetic testing that's coming up  
25 for Area M and you can contact Forest Bowers with the  
26 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. His phone number  
27 is (907) 465-6139.

28

29 Another thing you might be interested  
30 in is knowing that there's a Board of Fisheries  
31 hatchery committee meeting occurring March 23rd and  
32 there's a public comment deadline coming on for March  
33 8th for that.

34

35 And one other thing that's coming up is  
36 Board of Fishery proposal submissions are due April  
37 11th and that's for fisheries -- or fishing regulations  
38 for Bristol Bay, Arctic, Yukon, Kuskokwim, Alaska  
39 Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea, Chignik and  
40 statewide proposals.

41

42 So that's all I have, thank you.

43

44 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thanks so much  
45 Christy. And do Council members.....

46

47 MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead.

50

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1 MS. CARROLL: Sorry, I just -- I've  
2 been in contact with Holly Carroll, and she can't  
3 unmute her phone and so she just had a couple of things  
4 she wanted me to add to my report if that's okay.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Yes. Okay.

7  
8 MS. CARROLL: She wanted to clarify  
9 that this fall there was no commercial whitefish  
10 fishery and they did attempt a lamprey fishery but  
11 there was only one delivery of less than 400 pounds so  
12 very little non-salmon commercial fishing that  
13 occurred.

14  
15 She wanted to also remind people that  
16 the Yukon River Panel website has all of the  
17 presentations available online and those are a really  
18 great resource because they include the juvenile  
19 abundance forecast for chinook that I mentioned, and  
20 they also have presentations by Fish and Game on the  
21 subsistence harvest that occurred last year and the  
22 management actions and things like that. So that's a  
23 good resource if you go on the Yukon River Panel.

24  
25 And that's all that she wanted added.

26  
27 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, I appreciate  
28 that. I assumed she was having a problem, I felt she  
29 was probably there. So thanks so much for that  
30 presentation.

31  
32 MR. BLIHOVDE: Mr. Chairman.

33  
34 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

35  
36 MR. BLIHOVDE: Yes, this is Boyd at  
37 Yukon Delta. If the phone number for Frank [sic]  
38 Bowers could be repeated I'd appreciate it.

39  
40 MS. GLEASON: Hi, Mr. Chair, this is  
41 Christy again.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead.

44  
45 MS. GLEASON: I have that number for  
46 Forest Bowers at Alaska Department of Fish and Game.  
47 His phone number is (907) 465-6139.

48  
49 MR. BLIHOVDE: Thank you.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
2 Other Council member questions or comments regarding  
3 the Yukon River salmon season report and projections  
4 and various projects.

5  
6 MR. GERVAIS: Jack, this is Tim. I  
7 have a question for either the State or Federal  
8 managers.

9  
10 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go right ahead, Tim.

11  
12 (No comments)

13  
14 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

15  
16 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, I had my mute on.  
17 My question is what -- as managers, what are you seeing  
18 as the -- are you seeing any keys to increasing the run  
19 strength, what are some of the strategies or potential  
20 ways that we can recover these runs?

21  
22 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, thanks. Mr. Chair.  
23 Through the Chair, this is Holly Carroll.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

26  
27 MS. CARROLL: I can take a stab at your  
28 question there Tim. You know unfortunately when it  
29 comes to predicting what will create much stronger runs  
30 in the future, you know, our first line of defense is  
31 meeting biological escapement goals. So that's the  
32 number 1 thing we need to try to do. And what kind of  
33 confuses the situation that we're in now is, you know,  
34 we're seeing these terribly low summer chum runs and  
35 fall chum runs and, of course, those came off of parent  
36 years where we had massive escapements. Some of these  
37 chinook runs we're seeing now are also coming off years  
38 that we exceeded the top end of the Canadian origin  
39 escapement goal, for instance. So, you know, it's kind  
40 of a tough one because we definitely want to meet  
41 escapement goal so that, you know, enough healthy  
42 returning spawners will create an offspring and come  
43 back. But when that doesn't work we start to point to  
44 things that might be going on in the ocean that are  
45 affecting their maturity before they even come back. I  
46 mean when it comes to what is a strategy that we can do  
47 in-river, you know, the subsistence fishermen have  
48 everything they can do and more. You know we have  
49 foregone every type of harvest, we have foregone and  
50

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1 now we've foregone a fall subsistence harvest, I mean  
2 we can't really do any more in-river than we are trying  
3 to do now unfortunately.

4  
5 But I do think our approach at trying  
6 to look at what might be causing the decline. So for  
7 chinook, that's why we're so focused right now on  
8 ichthyophonous, we've seen a resurgence of the disease,  
9 a prevalence level that's nearly 40 percent. We  
10 started to see indications that we could be losing fish  
11 in-river to mortality and that's not something we've  
12 studied pretty heavily in the past and it's become  
13 clear that we really need to start studying that now  
14 because if it's occurring because at the very least  
15 that would help improve our management.

16  
17 So how do we rebuild these runs back  
18 bigger. When it comes to the chum, I believe that  
19 they're cyclic enough that in a couple of years we'll  
20 see what happened in the 2000s and we'll see that this  
21 crash will drive up their productivity and I think we  
22 will see million fish runs again from the chum. But  
23 the chinook problem has been an ongoing low  
24 productivity cycle and so I don't have an answer for  
25 that. Maybe there's someone on the line that has a  
26 better answer than me but that's pretty much all I got.

27  
28 MR. GERVAIS: No, that was a good  
29 answer Holly. I am wondering what would be the point  
30 where how many times do either the Kuskokwim or the  
31 Yukon not meet their escapement goal before State and  
32 Federal managers would suggest to the North Pacific  
33 Fisheries Management Council that the amount of fish  
34 we're giving up in trawl bycatch on the chinook is too  
35 much and we need to have those fish not taken through  
36 those commercial ventures. Has there ever been any  
37 kind of discussion on how poor the biologic escapement  
38 performances need to be before the Amendment 91 or  
39 whatever management program that the trawl fleet's on  
40 is curtailed or changed dramatically where these in-  
41 river stocks and take some precedence over the  
42 commercial bycatch.

43  
44 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this  
45 is Holly Carroll again, Fish and Wildlife Service.

46  
47 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Holly.

48  
49 MS. CARROLL: Yes, Tim, I think that's  
50

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1 an excellent question. So, you know, what you're  
2 touching on has it directly been addressed so far, it  
3 has in an in direct way, so the North Pacific Fisheries  
4 Management Council, they did -- I think you referenced  
5 the Amendment but there's also what's known as the 3-  
6 river index and when we show that the Western Alaskan  
7 stocks fall below a certain threshold then that cap is  
8 -- the overall cap is lowered for the North Pacific  
9 Fisheries Management Council, but that's something  
10 that's already occurred, right. So maybe what you're  
11 asking for is could we take it further because we have  
12 been in these low run sizes for a few years now, we're  
13 going to trigger that lower cap but it doesn't  
14 necessarily address failure to meet escapement goals or  
15 things like that.

16

17 So have those options been explored at  
18 the Council, and I'm unaware of whether those kinds of  
19 solutions have been suggested at the Council so that  
20 might be something to think about.

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. My question,  
23 Holly, is, you know, the Southeast hatcheries are  
24 dumping all these hatchery fish and there's no real  
25 tracking of biomass productivity of the North Pacific.  
26 I know a guy that dives for sea cucumbers in Southeast  
27 Alaska, last year the water was 10 degrees warmer than  
28 it is now, we had these super elevated temperatures,  
29 biomass declined, is the Department tracking the  
30 productivity of the ocean, it goes through these El  
31 Nino, La Nina events, and is the Department tracking  
32 that. Can the Department start to get into some  
33 methodology of regulating that release of hatchery fish  
34 that's -- it's my impression that a lot of the stocks  
35 for AYK, chum, go into the North Pacific and went into  
36 a desert. Is my perception true, is the Department  
37 checking -- monitoring the Pacific Ocean, especially  
38 the Gulf of Alaska and is the Department -- the ability  
39 and the Federal -- or the State Board of Fish process  
40 to modulate these releases of hatchery fish with  
41 staying in step with what the ocean productivity is.  
42 You can't keep dumping the same amounts every year,  
43 there's got to be sort of a flux to it.

44

45 So those would be my questions.

46

47 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is  
48 Holly. And, again, I'm with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
49 Service. And I just want to clarify that we don't

50



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1 particularly monitor the marine environment, that's  
2 more of a NOAA and Fish and Game thing so I'll  
3 definitely defer to any of the Fish and Game Staff that  
4 want to speak up but certainly Sabrina Garcia and Dr.  
5 Katie Howard are working on a lot of chum research in  
6 the Bering Sea right now and so I'm sure the Department  
7 could speak to that. But as far as like monitoring  
8 hatchery or other ocean stuff, Fish and Wildlife  
9 Service isn't directly involved in that marine research  
10 unfortunately so I'll hand it off to anyone else that  
11 has more to add there.

12

13 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I mean but as an in-  
14 season manager can't you advocate for the resource? Is  
15 it -- it's my impression that there's a lot of chums  
16 that come through the False Pass, the Southern Alaska  
17 Peninsula, coming into the Bering Sea, they're going  
18 somewheres, they're going into the AYK river system.  
19 Is there a percentage -- they used to take genetic  
20 sampling down there, they precluded that, they're going  
21 to restart that again now, is there -- as a manager,  
22 can you advocate with the State to try to get, you  
23 know, proper ocean management. You know the Bering Sea  
24 productivity is one thing, but the North Pacific and  
25 Gulf is another component of our runs that we have  
26 here, aren't they, chums and.....

27

28 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, Mr. Chair, you're  
29 bringing up really great topics. So you're talking  
30 about the Gulf of Alaska Fishery which is managed by  
31 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and you're right  
32 they haven't had a genetic sampling program there. I  
33 think the Commissioner had committed to expanding that,  
34 I know that we, at upper levels, have suggested  
35 reinstating that genetic sampling program there. We --  
36 that's a different situation than the North Pacific  
37 where they are actually sampling all those chum and so  
38 every year they're putting out those estimates of what  
39 that chum bycatch is and you hit the nail on the head,  
40 a lot of it is hatchery fish, or Russian fish, or  
41 coming from other areas. But there is a belief that  
42 some of the chum that go in the Gulf of Alaska may be  
43 Western Alaska stocks and if there is going to be large  
44 interceptions of those for commercial sale, we should  
45 probably have a more recent accounting of where those  
46 fish are headed. I believe one of your Council members  
47 just made that same suggestion during this same  
48 meeting.

49

50

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1                   So I mean, am I able to advocate for  
2 that, just as much as the State managers are probably  
3 able to say, hey, you know, can we sample for that and  
4 run it up the chain. We've certainly brought it up at  
5 meetings. I know it was discussed at the recent Salmon  
6 Summit that was held by the Delegation so we have made  
7 some suggestions that starting to do that genetic  
8 sampling in the Gulf of Alaska would definitely help us  
9 get a better understanding of what those fish are and  
10 where they might have been headed for sure.

11  
12                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Would a better  
13 avenue be the Yukon Panel to advocate for the hatchery  
14 reduction, you know, herring and various species in  
15 Southeast Alaska and the coastal areas reflect the  
16 biomass in the ocean. I think we got to get a little  
17 more fine-tuned about what's going on in the ocean as  
18 far as warm water events, reducing phytoplankton,  
19 zooplankton, the whole food chain goes down hill, but  
20 the State is allowing just dumping all these hatchery  
21 fish out because we always have done that. Well, there  
22 has to be sort of a give and take here and so, the  
23 Yukon Panel, should it be advocating for these stocks  
24 that transition into the North Pacific and into the  
25 Bering Sea that have to compete with the hatchery fish?

26  
27                   MS. CARROLL: Mr. Chair, this is Holly  
28 Carroll again. You know, and that's a tough question  
29 and I don't have an answer for that. I know that the  
30 Yukon River Salmon Agreement really specifies Canadian  
31 bound stocks and so they tend to focus more on chinook  
32 and fall chum, and I know at the recent meeting there  
33 was some discussion at that Panel about the hatchery  
34 issue. It is on everyone's mind. I don't know what  
35 the Panel plans to do as far as advocacy. I know there  
36 was some discussion about what we do and don't know  
37 about whether fall chum are likely to be intercepted in  
38 that fishery. And, again, I'm not an expert on that  
39 but I do believe that they think it's less likely that  
40 fall chum are caught there but I know that we do have  
41 some genetic baseline limitations on some of the chum  
42 stocks, as in our ability to go down and sample in the  
43 Gulf of Alaska and pull out all those individual summer  
44 chum stocks.

45  
46                   So I -- yeah, I'm not an expert on that  
47 but maybe someone from the State of Alaska could talk  
48 more to the Yukon River Panel's role but I think you'll  
49 find they're going to be more focused on the fall chum  
50

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1 or the Canadian origin chinook but I will say they have  
2 brought up the topic in their meetings. I don't recall  
3 if they have any plans to take action but it is  
4 definitely a topic of concern at every meeting that I  
5 go to.

6  
7                   CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: So it is  
8 coincidental that the summer and fall chum runs at AYK  
9 took a big nose dive, so coinciding with the blob event  
10 and so it's -- ocean productivity declines and so then  
11 maybe in cooler waters when we have better biomass the  
12 productivity is adequate to support additional hatchery  
13 fish but when it goes to these kind of conditions there  
14 needs to be an index that's like we got to stop dumping  
15 fish right now, we got to slow this down and the  
16 hatcheries get cut back. Everybody's got to -- it has  
17 to be a little more fine-tuned. We see what happened.  
18 If you track that temperature oscillation, the warm  
19 blob, that was a graphic as to what that did. Now the  
20 temperatures of the North Pacific and Bering -- and  
21 Gulf have cooled down and biomass is starting to  
22 rebuild again. I had a friend of mine who was fishing  
23 off the Fairweather ground says you could only see six  
24 inches into the top of the water, there was just all  
25 this krill and there was all these herring and all this  
26 biomass going on so that's really picked up. It's my  
27 impression that a lot of chinook and a lot of chums go  
28 into the North Pacific and then transition to South  
29 Alaska Peninsula. And so I feel that we need better  
30 genetic testing, we need better -- to know where these  
31 salmon are going, in which bodies of water, not just  
32 Bering Sea, which bodies of water they go to and then  
33 we need to be tracking the productivity of the Pacific  
34 Ocean and Bering Sea. I know the Bering Sea's cooling  
35 down too, slightly.

36  
37                   So that would be my comments.

38  
39                   I do feel that there needs to be a  
40 little more fine-tuning on the bigger, broader picture  
41 with climate change, and we get these warm water  
42 events, we can't just keep dumping off all kinds of --  
43 everybody in the whole Pacific Rim needs to get it  
44 through their heads, they're cutting their own throat.  
45 They're not going to get any returns out of that. And  
46 so we're decimating these wild stocks by putting out so  
47 much competition on the ocean.

48  
49                   Any other Council comments regarding  
50

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1 this Yukon River fishery issue -- I do feel that the  
2 Yukon Panel should be advocating with the State system  
3 for reduction in -- in this Board of Fish, I think it's  
4 March 8th, hatchery summit, or whatever it is, they  
5 need to be down there, on board, talking to them, we  
6 need to get this under control; so that's my opinion.

7

8 Any other Council member's questions or  
9 comments to Holly and Christy and Deena -- Deena will  
10 communicate through Holly, I guess.

11

12 MR. GERVAIS: I have a brief question,  
13 Jack.

14

15 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tim.

16

17 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, this is Tim. I  
18 would like to know how do the hatchery release numbers  
19 in Alaska compare to Russia and Japan and is there any  
20 -- is there like a big ramp up in hatchery releases on  
21 the other side of the Pacific that's compounding what's  
22 happening with the amount of releases in Alaska?

23

24 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair, this  
25 is Holly Carroll. Tim, I don't have that answer for  
26 you at all. I think the best thing to do with that  
27 question would be maybe to submit a request to Fish and  
28 Game to present some of that data if they know it.  
29 It's certainly way outside my area of expertise, I  
30 apologize, I have no answer for you there.

31

32 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay.

33

34 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, I'm done. Thanks  
35 for allowing my questions, Jack.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I really appreciate  
38 you, you know, taking you -- giving us a lot of  
39 information and really appreciate the Department of  
40 Fish and Game, Deena Jallen and Christy Gleason, you  
41 ladies are doing a great job on the Yukon River and  
42 we're trying to give you more ammunition in your ammo  
43 belt to get these fish runs to come back. So I think  
44 that the management was -- it was a tough deal. I had  
45 a guy on the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee,  
46 yesterday, he was like the Koyukuk took all this cut  
47 and they're fishing fall chums on the Yukon and I says,  
48 no, there's no fishing, nobody caught any fish. I  
49 think communities aren't really realizing that they're  
50

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1 not the only one targeted here, everybody took a huge  
2 cut on the Yukon and Kuskokwim drainages. But I do  
3 appreciate your dedication for conservation. I'm a  
4 conservation minded person, we save now and we will  
5 have fish in the future. We kill now, we're not going  
6 to have any more fish. It'll take decades if we have  
7 any worse returns than we're having.

8

9

So any other Council comments.

10

11

MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is

12

Kevin.

13

14

CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

15

16

17

MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
17 Thanks Holly and Christy for your presentation, very  
18 informative. Very concerning. The chinook numbers  
19 2021, I don't have to go through it again, chum  
20 numbers, coho, a lot of concerning numbers there as far  
21 as what is projected in 2022, people aren't going to be  
22 able to catch what they need and it sounds like there's  
23 not going to be any opportunities, possibly, a lot like  
24 2021. And so some people are going to be targeting  
25 with a 4 inch net, they're going to be targeting  
26 whitefish species and sheefish, whitefish -- I mean the  
27 sheefish aren't -- you don't catch as many with a 4  
28 inch net, you know, they catch a lot more with a 6 inch  
29 net -- that 4 inch net is very effective with broad  
30 whitefish and humpback whitefish, some of the ciscos,  
31 it's very effective. I use the 4 inch nets here on the  
32 Kuskokwim and it works very well. I think we all know  
33 that. But because people aren't catching what they  
34 need for chinook, chum and coho salmon, that's a lot of  
35 biomass that people aren't putting into their freezers  
36 and being able to eat, feed their families and so now  
37 they're relying on whitefish and we know very little  
38 about whitefish. And this isn't something new, this  
39 has been talked about for years, alternative species  
40 because of this salmon decline. So it's not something  
41 that we -- it's not new, I mean the pressure that's  
42 going to be on whitefish. I am happy to hear that  
43 there wasn't a commercial fishery in 2021 but there has  
44 been for 20 years, a commercial fishery or so -- I  
45 don't know how many years, there has been a commercial  
46 fishery on whitefish on the Yukon which is really  
47 concerning for me because if the subsistence people on  
48 the Yukon River are heavily reliant on whitefish and  
49 there's still commercial fisheries -- last year, I

50

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1 don't know why, maybe you guys can help me, if there  
2 was a State or Federal management decision to close the  
3 whitefish fishery -- commercial fishery or was that  
4 just Kwik'Pak's own decision just to close it.

5

6 But I am concerned. Darrell brings  
7 this up, these concerns here. These aren't new  
8 concerns, it's not something new. People have been  
9 relying on whitefish for a very long time and we know  
10 very little about it, the history or harvest data and  
11 the numbers of whitefish out there.

12

13 So if you guys can just help me, just  
14 the one question I have, is why did that commercial  
15 fishery for whitefish close in 2021, was that a State  
16 or Federal management decision.

17

18 MS. JALLEN: Hi, through the Chair, to  
19 Kevin. This is Deena Jallen. I was able to call back  
20 in, can you hear me?

21

22 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: We can hear you  
23 fine, go ahead, Deena.

24

25 MS. JALLEN: Okay, yeah, I had to call  
26 back in. Yeah, the commercial fishery didn't operate  
27 this season kind of for the same reason that we  
28 actually didn't see higher harvest of non-salmon fish  
29 and there wasn't a lot of effort, there wasn't a lot of  
30 activity on the river so Kwik'Pak didn't purchase --  
31 they didn't buy fish this year, there weren't people  
32 really going out and fishing for whitefish. They  
33 didn't have their plant open, so they didn't have  
34 people on the ground and keeping the plant, or the  
35 facility open so they didn't buy whitefish this year.  
36 The fishery was opened. It does have a harvest cap on  
37 that fishery that's been in place and it gets  
38 periodically reexamined and reevaluated and we haven't  
39 raised that cap. And, similarly, with the subsistence  
40 harvest, looking at the preliminary harvest estimates  
41 we might have expected to see a higher non-salmon  
42 species harvest this year but we actually saw that the  
43 harvest of species was lower in most cases. I can't  
44 pull the numbers up at the moment. But in large part  
45 that's due to people just not getting out and fishing.  
46 They weren't fishing for salmon and so they didn't have  
47 gear in the water and they may not have been fishing  
48 for anything and so harvests were actually rather low  
49 this year.

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1 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thanks for that  
2 Deena.

3  
4 MR. WHITWORTH: Mr. Chair, this is  
5 Kevin.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Go ahead, Kevin.

8  
9 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, thanks for that  
10 Diana [sic], I think it was, appreciate that. So it  
11 was not a State or Federal management decision to close  
12 the commercial fishery, is that right, it was.....

13  
14 MS. JALLEN: Yeah, that's -- the.....

15  
16 MR. WHITWORTH: .....a Kwik'Pak  
17 decision?

18  
19 MS. JALLEN: Yeah, we issued the permit  
20 to Kwik'Pak and then they didn't -- they didn't buy any  
21 fish so they didn't -- you know, they didn't encourage  
22 their fishermen to go out and buy fish, they didn't  
23 have their plant facilities open, it's hard to get fish  
24 shipped out of Emmonak so, yeah, they didn't purchase  
25 any fish this year.

26  
27 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, thank you.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you. Any  
30 other Council member questions for Yukon River  
31 subsistence salmon fishing and reports.

32  
33 MR. SIMON: Mr. Chair, this is Pollock.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Pollock, go ahead.

36  
37 MR. SIMON: Yeah, Jack, not much chum  
38 salmon and not much king salmon, but there's some  
39 whitefish and sheefish and we're depending on that but  
40 I'm saying we should be careful as to how much  
41 whitefish and sheefish we take because if we crash that  
42 stock too we're going to be in more trouble.

43  
44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45  
46 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Thank you, Pollock,  
47 appreciate that. So I would -- personally I would  
48 appeal to the Yukon managers to restrict that  
49 whitefish, you know, if the demand is there. I still  
50

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1 would be cautionary if the drivers of the reduction in  
2 salmon is a marine downturn is a predominant effect and  
3 so the salmon returns are down, a lot of those  
4 whitefish go into -- they go into brackish water, they  
5 actually would be affected by that when they go down  
6 low in the drainage and so I -- I would feel more  
7 comfortable with the Department being cautious with  
8 having commercial harvest for whitefish when that's --  
9 I mean people didn't get any fish and if we have  
10 another bad salmon run, people might fish a lot harder  
11 for whitefish and sheefish if they think we're not  
12 getting -- I mean we got three fish from salmon  
13 sharing, I don't have any fish for half the winter  
14 here, maybe I'm going to fish for whitefish and  
15 sheefish a lot harder and that is going to be a  
16 necessary biomass for subsistence. So that would be my  
17 comment regarding this whitefish and sheefish  
18 opportunities for commercial.

19

20 Any other questions from the Council.

21

22 (No comments)

23

24 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: I don't hear any.  
25 We're coming down at 5:00 o'clock, so, Katya, should we  
26 break for the evening and take up Yukon National  
27 Wildlife Refuge, Kuskokwim River salmon and Refuge  
28 report tomorrow morning -- I see that we have Diana  
29 Stram, is she going to be available at 9:00 a.m., is  
30 that what you said?

31

32 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
33 Yeah, that's what was indicated, yeah, at 9:00. Of  
34 course we have public comments on non-agenda items  
35 first thing but maybe 9:15 or something like that.

36

37 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Uh-huh.

38

39 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, and I would suggest  
40 that the Council breaks for the day and finishes the  
41 agenda tomorrow. Thank you.

42

43 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: Okay. So any  
44 Council member comments before we break for the  
45 evening.

46

47 (No comments)

48

49 CHAIRMAN REAKOFF: All right, so we're

50



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1 going to break for the evening now and we'll take up  
2 the rest of our agenda tomorrow. So have a great  
3 evening.

4

5

MR. SIMON: Thank you, bye.

6

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MR. DEMOSKI: Thank you.

8

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(Off record)

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(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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 ) ss.  
STATE OF ALASKA )

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

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THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

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Salena A. Hile  
Notary Public, State of Alaska  
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