

0154

1 WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6
7 VOLUME II

8
9 Pikes Waterfront Lodge
10 October 20, 2022
11 Fairbanks, Alaska
12 9:04 a.m.
13
14
15

16 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

17
18 Jenny Pelkola, Acting Chairman
19 Timothy Gervais
20 Don Honea
21 Tommy Kriska
22 Jack Reakoff
23 Pollock Simon
24 Darrell Vent
25 Kevin Whitworth
26
27
28
29
30

31 Regional Council Coordinator, Nissa Pilcher
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40

41 Recorded and transcribed by:

42
43 Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
44 329 F Street, Suite 222
45 Anchorage, AK 99501
46 907-227-5312/sahile@gci.net
47
48
49
50

0155

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks, Alaska - 10/20/2022)

(On record)

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, let's get started.

MS. PILCHER: Good morning. This is Nissa Pilcher, Council Coordinator for the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council. We're going to get going here in a little bit. Those on the phone if we could get -- actually we'll let Chairwoman Pelkola call the meeting to order and then we'll do a quick introduction of those that are on the phone. All right.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. I think the meeting was already called to order, but we just reconvened at 9:04. You can do what you have to do.

MS. PILCHER: All right. Jack, are you online?

MR. REAKOFF: Yes, I am.

MS. PILCHER: All right. So I think we need to do a quick forum check. We do have a forum, but just roll call because we're reconvening for the morning. So Rebecca Wilmarth, were you able to join us?

(No comment)

MS. PILCHER: Don Honea.

MR. HONEA: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Pollock Simon, Sr.

MR. P. SIMON: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Kevin Whitworth.

MR. WHITWORTH: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Jack Reakoff. Jack?

0156

1 (No comment)

2

3 MS. PILCHER: He might be having some
4 mute problems, but we know he was just there.

5

6 MR. REAKOFF: I'm here.

7

8 MS. PILCHER: There he is. Tim
9 Gervais.

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: Here.

12

13 MS. PILCHER: Darrell Vent.

14

15 (No comment)

16

17 MS. PILCHER: Oh, that's right.
18 Darrell, were you able to call in?

19

20 (No comment)

21

22 MS. PILCHER: Jenny Pelkola.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Here.

25

26 MS. PILCHER: Then Tommy Kriska.

27

28 MR. KRISKA: Here.

29

30 MS. PILCHER: All right. So if we
31 could have introductions of those that are online. Are
32 there any tribal governments that are online this
33 morning.

34

35 (No comment)

36

37 MS. PILCHER: Native organizations.

38

39 MS. MONCRIEFF: Madame Chair. This is
40 Catherine Moncrieff with the Yukon River Drainage
41 Fisheries Association. Good morning.

42

43 MS. PILCHER: Good morning. Any
44 others.

45

46 MS. GOSSELIN: Hi, this is Monica
47 Gosselin for the Americorps for the Tanana Chiefs.

48

49 MS. PILCHER: All right. Good morning.

50

0157

1 So if we move too fast, you can always speak up later.
2 How about anybody from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
3 Service.

4

5 MS. FOX: Good morning. This is Joanna
6 Fox. I'm a refuge manager for Kanuti National Wildlife
7 Refuge.

8

9 MS. KLEIN: This is Jill Klein,
10 Regional Subsistence Coordinator out of Anchorage
11 Regional Office. Good morning.

12

13 MR. HARRIS: Good morning. This is
14 Frank Harris, fisheries biologist with U.S. Fish and
15 Wildlife Service, Kenai Fisheries Office.

16

17 MR. LONG: Good morning. This is Jared
18 Long, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Officer stationed out of
19 Fairbanks.

20

21 MS. PILCHER: All right. So anyone
22 from the National Park Service online.

23

24 MR. DEACY: Good morning. This is Will
25 Deacy with National Park Service.

26

27 MS. PILCHER: Anyone from BLM online.

28

29 MR. MCKEE: Good morning. This is
30 Chris McKee, Statewide Subsistence Coordinator for BLM
31 at the State Office in Anchorage.

32

33 MS. PILCHER: Good morning, Chris.
34 Anyone from Alaska Department of Fish and Game online.

35

36 MR. CHYTHLOOK: John Chythlook with
37 ADF&G Sport Fish Division. Good morning.

38

39 MS. PILCHER: Good morning, John.

40

41 MS. COLEMAN: This is Jesse Coleman
42 with Division of Subsistence.

43

44 MS. PILCHER: All right. Then anyone
45 from OSM online.

46

47 MS. LAVINE: Good morning, Madame
48 Chair. Members of the Council. This is Robbin Lavine,
49 Subsistence Policy Coordinator with the Office of

50

0158

1 Subsistence Management here in Anchorage. Hello,
2 everybody.

3

4 MR. UBELAKER: Good morning. This is
5 Brian Ubelaker, wildlife biologist with OSM calling
6 back in from Anchorage this morning.

7

8 MR. ROBERTS: Good morning. This is
9 Jason Roberts, anthropologist with OSM.

10

11 MR. AYERS: Scott Ayers, Fisheries
12 Division Supervisor at OSM. Good morning.

13

14 MR. FOLEY: Good morning, Nissa, Madame
15 Chair and Members of the Council. This is Kevin Foley,
16 fish biologist with OSM here in Anchorage. Hello
17 everyone.

18

19 MS. PILCHER: All right. That
20 concludes online introductions.

21

22 MR. RISDAHL: Madame Chair. This is
23 Greg Risdahl. I'm the Subsistence Program Leader for
24 the U.S. Forest Service and the Interagency Staff
25 Committee member. Thank you.

26

27 MS. PILCHER: Thank you, Greg. I need
28 to add that acronym to my list of ones to go over.
29 Apologies for forgetting you again this morning. Is
30 there anybody else online that wasn't able to introduce
31 themselves or is representing a member of the public --
32 or is a member of the public.

33

34 MR. PATTERSON: Good morning, everyone.
35 This is Dillon Patterson with the National Park
36 Service, Alaska Regional Office, Subsistence Program.
37 I apologize. I missed the Park Service introduction
38 earlier.

39

40 MS. PILCHER: No worries. We won't
41 necessarily go around the room again this morning, but
42 if there's anyone new in the room that would like to
43 stand up and introduce themselves so people online know
44 who's here.

45

46 MR. CHRISTIAN: Good morning, Madame
47 Chair. My name is Peter Christian with the National
48 Park Service, Regional Office in Anchorage. I'll be
49 talking earlier -- or later today.

50

0159

1 MR. SEPPI: Good morning. My name is
2 Bruce Seppi. I came in late yesterday. Bruce Seppi
3 with BLM Anchorage Field Office. Thanks.

4
5 MS. PILCHER: All right. Thanks. Just
6 as a reminder for those that are in the room if you
7 could please remember to sign in on the sign-in sheet
8 by the front door. We'd really appreciate that as
9 well. Thanks.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Good morning,
12 everyone. Good to see you again. We do have a long
13 agenda today. Hopefully we can get done by 5:00. So
14 we'll try. Right now we're going to go to the
15 non-agenda items. We have Jim Simon, public testimony.

16
17 MR. J. SIMON: Thank you. For the
18 record my name is Jim Simon. I'm a consultant with the
19 Tanana Chiefs Conference Tribal Resource Stewardship
20 Program and the Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish
21 Commission, but I'm just speaking on my own behalf this
22 morning.

23
24 I really appreciated the concerns
25 raised by a couple of the Council members about
26 non-salmon and the needs for information and monitoring
27 of those species. There was some discussion about how
28 non-salmon subsistence harvests are documented in the
29 post season salmon household survey programs that the
30 Department of Fish and Game and Partners do on both the
31 Yukon and Kuskokwim.

32
33 It's important to recognize -- and I
34 believe Holly mentioned this -- that a lot of those
35 non-salmon harvest opportun -- or harvests occur in the
36 winter. So in order for those post-salmon season
37 surveys to really adequately document non-salmon
38 harvest people would have to remember all the way back
39 to the previous winter and what they harvested.

40
41 Caroline Brown did a study like 15-plus
42 years ago in the GASH region, the
43 Grayling/Anvik/Shageluk/Holy Cross Region, where she
44 was focused specifically on documenting indigenous
45 knowledge about non-salmon as well as harvest, doing
46 household harvest surveys in those four communities.
47 She compared those estimated harvests to the
48 post-season salmon survey estimates and found those
49 lacking. So that's something important to keep in
50

0160

1 mind.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

The projects that I spoke about yesterday, and there's one happening in the Upper Koyukuk, going to be happening, you know, those are just small snapshots in time documenting non-salmon harvest. I really encourage this Council and the Federal Subsistence Program to really think about the needs for annual monitoring of both the biology of those various stocks as well as the harvest monitoring.

Twenty years ago when I was hired to work at the Division of Subsistence for the Department of Fish and Game one of the directives I received from then Director Mary Pete, the late Mary Pete, was that there should be developed a State Management Plan for whitefish on the Yukon because there have been commercial fishery opportunities for those.

I do know that occasionally those also take place on the Kuskokwim and there are no management plans to ensure the sustainable management and harvest and commercial sales of those whitefish species. To my knowledge that has not yet happened. The same for arctic lamprey. There is for lamprey in the Lower Middle Yukon River. There's a commercial opportunity there.

The way it was explained to me by Mary Pete was that we get a lot of information from those commercial fisheries and that that information should be used to then develop these management plans. In the absence of State management plans ensuring the sustaining utilization of these non-salmon fish, I would encourage this Council to encourage the various Federal agencies to develop fishery management plans for both salmon and non-salmon in their conservation units.

There's many refuges along the Yukon River. Many of the comprehensive conservation plans are woefully out of date, you know. From those are step-down fishery management plans, which are also woefully out of date. The Federal Subsistence Management Program appears to be here, you know, since the State is no longer pursuing implementing ANILCA Title VIII on its own. So I would encourage you to encourage -- you know, as a RAC to encourage the Federal agencies to get on it.

0161

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Any questions for
4 Jim.

5

6 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Madame
7 Chair. Jim, you brought up some interesting points.
8 Made me think about -- so this fall in the Kuskokwim
9 River starting August 16, I believe, the Kuskokwim
10 River was shut down because of the low coho numbers.
11 Completely closed for all gear types; fishwheels,
12 fishnets, rod and reel on the mainstem.

13

14 The State couldn't -- because their
15 management plan for the coho didn't allow them to have
16 openers for -- you know, window openers for coho salmon
17 using other gear types. But anyhow. The question I
18 have -- so if the State had a -- so we couldn't target
19 whitefish either during the coho salmon closure, which
20 was a big hardship for people in McGrath and Upper
21 Kuskokwim when they rely on these species a lot.

22

23 So if there was a State-managed plan
24 for whitefish on both the Yukon and Kuskokwim River,
25 would it help the State of Alaska to have an opener
26 during that closure for targeted whitefish? I remember
27 in the working group there was a discussion that
28 because they don't have a working management plan that
29 they couldn't really do -- you know, they didn't have
30 much in their toolbox to do this.

31

32 Can you elaborate on that?

33

34 MR. J. SIMON: That's a very good
35 question and I don't think I'm going to be able to
36 adequately answer it. It would be good for someone
37 from the Department of Fish and Game to tackle that,
38 but I do know that the management plan that you
39 referenced is lacking the conservation tools on the
40 Kuskokwim for coho. That is specifically a salmon
41 management plan. So how those salmon management plans
42 articulate with non-salmon management plans is
43 difficult to assess because of the lack of non-salmon
44 management plans for the most part.

45

46 You know, there is a Minto Flats
47 Northern Pike Management Plan that really focuses on
48 providing reasonable opportunities for subsistence and
49 that shuts down the sport fish harvest in order to

50

0162

1 ensure those subsistence opportunities and then when
2 the subsistence opportunities get shut down for
3 sustainable management purposes, conservation purposes.

4

5

6

7 Then there's the wild Arctic Grayling
8 Management Plan, which seems to be more focused on
9 trophy fish management versus sort of regular
10 recreational. But again I'm not an expert on those
11 management plan issues especially when resources are
12 being commodified in commercial fisheries. I think
13 that's really important that those are guided by a
14 management plan.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

 With respect to this particular issue
you raised, I did talk to some of my colleagues at
Tanana Chiefs Conference yesterday to see if we have
ever heard back from the commissioner about the
concerns that Tanana Chiefs Conference expressed to the
Commissioner about the complete shutdown of all
subsistence gear types in the Middle and Upper River
and the lack of reasonable fishing opportunities for
non-salmon species despite the conservation concern for
coho and, to our knowledge, we have not received a
response from the Department of Fish and Game
Commissioner at this time.

 Thanks.

 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Jenny.
Thank you, Jim. The reason I asked that is because
there are gear types as you all know where you can
target whitefish for instance with fishwheels. You can
release the non-target species like coho, chinook
salmon. But these are all closed down so the Department
of Fish and Game did not allow for fishwheels. If you
wanted to use it and have a live release box for coho,
you just release the non-target species and then catch
other species for your freezer.

 So that's why I bring it up because I
think there needs to be some changes there so that
these other gear types can be used when there is
conservation concerns. It has been done for chinook
salmon. Beach seines are used, fishwheels are used,
rod and reel are used. They're used for targeting
species that are relatively healthy like whitefish.

 That's all. Thank you, Jim.

0163

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
2 Kevin. Anybody else? Tommy.

3
4 MR. KRISKA: Hey, Jim. I like what you
5 brought up there. I really hope that the Federal or
6 the State or whatever kind of adjusts to making
7 something happen to allow some of the Natives and not
8 only the Natives. There's a lot of rivers along the
9 Yukon, Koyukuk River, all that. The fish that they're
10 protecting they don't go up in those.

11
12 There's a lot of sloughs. Probably
13 maybe 60 percent of the sloughs are not -- salmon don't
14 really go up there. They don't even go in the sloughs
15 at all. It's kind of really heartbreaking to see your
16 own people and OSHA, everybody look at, you know, the
17 people -- we're all different races. It's hard to look
18 at your people and tell them, no, you can't fish, but I
19 think there's ways to do it.

20
21 Some of these rivers where the salmon
22 they don't go up, I know right at my camp they don't go
23 up there, they don't go into Nikolai's Slough, they
24 don't go up Woodyard Creek. There's a lot of sloughs,
25 like I said. There's probably 60 percent of the
26 sloughs that the salmon go up, but the non-salmon
27 don't.

28
29 I think if you save -- you know,
30 they're worried about a lot of the salmon getting
31 caught, but if you put your nets maybe back in the
32 slough or somewhere, there's something can be done
33 because right now as it is I think all fishing is
34 closed till December and it cuts a lot of the people
35 off. By December the ice is two or three foot thick.

36
37 There's a lot of older people that are
38 out there. I have a guy that's 80-some years old and
39 you're not going to stop him. He got caught for the
40 salmon before, but he was in the right and they let
41 him go on it, but as it is right now there's not many
42 people out there fishing. But I really that in the
43 fall a lot of us are out at our camps and you see a lot
44 of fish.

45
46 I mean I'm not going to lie to you. I
47 did break the law on fishing. What else are you going
48 to eat. Our kids got to eat. Our elders got to eat.
49 We're just going to feed them moose meat, that's it?
50

0164

1 It's easy for the Federal and the State to say and do
2 anything they want. I guess they're all from the
3 higher up, the governments or whatever.

4
5 All this stuff is -- I think it goes
6 all back to money. I don't know. We're trying to save
7 anything and it's just not going anywhere. Our people,
8 we don't have like Fred Meyers, all this stuff out
9 there. We can't just choose what we want to eat every
10 day. And then the fuel prices right now out there is
11 9.99 a gallon. And you're going to tell me I can't eat
12 anything? You're not going to stop me. I'm just going
13 to say it because a lot of people feel like that. It's
14 hard. It's really hard.

15
16 Try putting one of you guys out there
17 with us at our camps and let you survive. You'll
18 believe it's totally not right at all. I better not
19 get too far into this. But there's ways to deal with
20 this non-salmon fishing. It's got to be talked about
21 and I think the State or the Federal, whoever they are,
22 they should or they better respond.

23
24 This is what I'm going to say there.
25 Thank you.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
28 Anybody else? Tim.

29
30 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Thanks, Jim. Could
31 you or Kevin clarify that closure on September 15th of
32 all gear type. I thought Holly Carroll was stating
33 yesterday that they had allowed 60 feet of 4-inch gear,
34 but is that only on Federal waters?

35
36 MR. J. SIMON: Thank you for the
37 question, Tim. When you're looking at management on
38 the Kuskokwim and the Yukon, in some respects it's sort
39 of like the different approaches being used. It's
40 almost like looking at the Area M fishery. So on the
41 Yukon 4-inch gear was allowed to be able to target
42 non-salmon fish and to be able to retain pink salmon or
43 coho salmon despite a low return of coho on the Yukon
44 also.

45
46 On the Kuskokwim beginning August 15th
47 or 16th that's when the -- I think as Kevin explained
48 yesterday that the coho run had gotten into the Middle
49 River. That's when all opportunity was shut down.

50

0165

1 That effectively closed non-salmon fishing with gillnet
2 gear also and these other selective gear types that
3 Kevin is speaking about.

4

5 So, you know, it's sort of peculiar to
6 look at those different management strategies on two
7 sister rivers with both facing conservation problems.
8 It was sort of surprising given in 2021 there have been
9 concerns expressed by the State's Advisory Working
10 Group on the Kuskokwim about coho declines for a number
11 of years now. It's been wide open with regular mesh
12 gear in 2021, up to 8-inch gear, et cetera, allowed to
13 fish during that coho run.

14

15 This year it was like completely out of
16 the ordinary approach to just shutting down the river.
17 I can't really explain those differences in the absence
18 of any response from the Commissioner's Office. I
19 can't really give you more explanation.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Then I had another
22 question. On the Kuskokwim is there subsistence or
23 commercial fishing for the Arctic lamprey and Bering
24 cisco?

25

26 MR. J. SIMON: I don't recall there
27 ever being a commercial fishery for lamprey on the
28 Kuskokwim and I believe that most of the whitefish
29 commercial opportunities have been like a
30 catcher/seller opportunity, but I'm really not sure
31 when the last time that happened.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Thank
34 you, Tim. Anybody else on the board.

35

36 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, I'd like to
37 make a comment.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead, Jack.

40

41 MR. REAKOFF: Yeah, that was just so
42 weird to close down the 4-inch mesh when they allowed
43 subsistence harvest in the Kuskokwim River out of the
44 mainstem 100 feet inside the sloughs. They should have
45 maintained that kind of harvest opportunity for 4-inch
46 mesh all the way up the river through the entire -- for
47 the protection of coho, but allowed take of freshwater
48 stocks of whitefish, pike, et cetera.

49

50

0166

1 I feel that the Department of Fish and
2 Game on the Kuskokwim River was completely out of touch
3 with reality in what they had previously done through
4 the entire season for the lower river allowing fishery
5 inside sloughs. So I think that has to be re-evaluated
6 with the management discussions this winter.

7
8 Thank you, Madame Chair.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.

11
12 MR. J. SIMON: If I may respond to what
13 Jack just said. I agree that it's very peculiar
14 especially since in 2021 the Department of Fish and
15 Game during their opening for all Alaska residents to
16 use gillnet gear despite a Federal closure for even
17 Federally qualified users on that particular day, June
18 28th.

19
20 You know, the Department allowed this
21 gillnet gear with the live release of chinook salmon, I
22 think. So if they do honestly believe that you can
23 live release salmon from a gillnet gear, then why
24 wasn't gillnet gear allowed in the middle and upper
25 river in 2022 with allowing the harvest of non-salmon
26 fish with the release of coho.

27
28 It's very unfortunate that politics are
29 influencing the sustainable management and the
30 subsistence priority in this region.

31
32 Thank you.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tom.

35
36 MR. KRISKA: Just being Alaska Native
37 and one of the reasons I said 60 percent of the rivers
38 probably the salmon don't go up was just being out
39 there, living out there. Why I think that Federal or
40 in-state should revise their -- you know, closing of
41 the salmon for non-salmon fish is because a lot of the
42 rivers and the sloughs a lot of the salmon will go for
43 a gravel bottom.

44
45 But if you really think about it and
46 learn about it and look into a lot of the rivers and
47 little sloughs, a lot of the just run into the flats
48 where there's only silt bottom, so there's no salmon up
49 there. You can fish all summer in one of those sloughs
50

0167

1 and you won't never catch a salmon at all because only
2 the pike, the whitefish and the sheefish are going back
3 into those lakes and they're going in now. All my life
4 I never did catch a fish in the silt water at all.

5
6 So it's something to think about. I
7 hope they think about it because you come in here and
8 older Natives that are alive right now they always say
9 they don't know what they're talking about. For them
10 to be 70, 80 years, they know what they're talking
11 about. They never did catch a salmon in those silt
12 water places. It's all flats, so there's no drainages
13 that run up into the mountains. Once you start going
14 into elevation, that's where you're going to find your
15 salmon.

16
17 So that's something to think about and
18 I hope you really think about it to allow this 4-inch
19 at least in some of these rivers. You could move it
20 farther back off the river if you want, but it would be
21 something.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.

26
27 MR. J. SIMON: Yeah, through the Chair.
28 Tommy, I really appreciate the perspective that you're
29 sharing here. It's one of another significant
30 difference between the Yukon River and the Kuskokwim
31 River. That kind of knowledge is actively used to
32 manage salmon fisheries on the Kuskokwim River because
33 of the cooperative management partnership between the
34 Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge and the Kuskokwim
35 River Intertribal Fish Commission.

36
37 Bringing that local indigenous
38 knowledge into making the decisions how to sustainably
39 manage the resource, conserve the resource and provide
40 as much subsistence fishing opportunity as possible to
41 fulfill the requirements and obligations of the State
42 and Federal subsistence priority laws.

43
44 It's really something that I would
45 encourage your Council to continue to push to develop a
46 similar kind of cooperative management process on the
47 Yukon.

48
49 Thank you.

50

0168

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jim.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Pollock had a question.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, I'm sorry.
6 Pollock had a question.

7

8 MR. P. SIMON: I wanted to mention I
9 have a dozen dogs and after breakup I would sit there
10 with a little fishnet, 4-inch or smaller, just use to
11 catch pike, suckers and little whitefish. Most of June
12 we catch the fish and there's no salmon yet. We should
13 continue to catch fish to feed our dogs. They eat the
14 little whitefish. Sometimes we gift them away.

15

16 Thank you.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
19 Pollock.

20

21 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Kevin.

24

25 MR. WHITWORTH: If I can bring this
26 topic up just a little bit longer or keep on with this
27 topic if you don't mind.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: A few minutes more.

30

31 MR. WHITWORTH: I think this fall when
32 the State of Alaska basically said that they didn't
33 have the tools in the toolbox to allow for non-salmon
34 harvest during that fall closure on the Kuskokwim
35 River, I think on the Yukon it sounds to me that they
36 do have the tools in the toolbox to manage for 4-inch
37 mesh nets, you know.

38

39 We were told that we could submit an
40 emergency petition to the State of Alaska or they could
41 do it, they could start it, but it was going to take
42 several months or a month or whatever, a long time. By
43 that time the fishery would have been over. We
44 wouldn't have had a chance to fish.

45

46 I'd like to make a motion here if you
47 guys would entertain me to start that process. For the
48 State of Alaska to start that process on the Kuskokwim
49 to revise their management plan for non-salmon species,

50

0169

1 for whitefish species, so that people in the Upper
2 Kuskokwim can have an opportunity for whitefish in
3 those -- if there is conservation concerns for coho and
4 start that process so that there are -- they do have
5 the tools in their toolbox.

6
7 I don't know how to word it, but we
8 could figure that out later. We could write a letter
9 to the Commissioner of Fish and Game and get this
10 started. They need the tools. They don't have it they
11 say.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
14 Kevin. So what does the board think about that motion
15 -- not a motion, but suggestion of a motion?

16
17 MR. KRISKA: Ms. Chair. I think it's a
18 great idea and add the Yukon to that.

19
20 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
21 Don.

22
23 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I would certainly
24 support the idea. I think it's a great idea in all
25 fairness. I mean my exact feelings on this whether
26 it's on the Yukon or whether it's on the Kuskokwim I
27 think it should be in all fairness to have the
28 opportunity to fish for them.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim.

31
32 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I agree. I'd like
33 to see non-salmon harvest in particular on the years of
34 low or no salmon harvest. I'd like the language to be
35 such. So Tommy just clarify. You're saying the
36 sloughs where there's no water moving are generally the
37 ones where you have very low salmon being caught?

38
39 MR. KRISKA: Okay, the salmon tend to
40 head for the gravel up higher as far as they can go,
41 but in the silt water sloughs there's a lot of them.
42 There's hundreds of them. Right up to the end of the
43 slough it just ends. There's no elevation, nothing.
44 So the salmon they go up in elevation to spawn and they
45 will not go back into the silt because I think the silt
46 might suffocate the eggs or I don't know what's the big
47 deal there, but they won't never go back in the
48 sloughs.

49
50

0170

1 Another thing that I want to say. I
2 had a net in, the 4-inch, and I had it on one of the
3 slough into a lake and an older person told me don't
4 put it there, put it across. A long time ago we used
5 to have it here and that's where we catch the sheefish
6 and the whitefish. Over here that night I caught six
7 whitefish. Turned that net in the same area onto the
8 slough and caught I think nine sheefish and 14
9 whitefish.

10

11 And there's no salmon. There's nothing
12 back there. And this is seven miles back into the
13 slough. It's not way down. I mean we're not going to
14 kill the salmon if you don't want them killed. There's
15 other fish that we want to eat. They're fat, they're
16 nutritious for us. They're a delicacy at every
17 potlatch for fish ice cream. It's like you buying
18 fruit. Some of this stuff we eat and we're going to
19 get it.

20

21 Hopefully rather than see a commotion
22 out there in the woods, fix it. It's so easy to do for
23 you. Thank you.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
26 Pollock, do you have anything to add?

27

28 (No comment)

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack.

31

32 MR. REAKOFF: Yes, Madam Chair. I do
33 think that the Western Interior Regional Advisory
34 Council needs to submit a letter to the Commissioner's
35 Office for re-evaluation of the management plan for
36 fall management on the Kuskokwim River for 4-inch mesh
37 net out of mainstem of the Kuskokwim River as they do
38 throughout the mainstem in season. So I do feel it's a
39 worthwhile motion and if Kevin would make that motion.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I have something
42 to add also. I would agree with the rest of the
43 members here that's a good idea to have a motion on the
44 board. I guess you have to do the motion now.

45

46 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair. This is
47 Kevin. Nissa says that there may be a proposal out for
48 it. If there is a proposal, we can do the proposal,
49 but I think we should have a motion still. I'd like to

50

0171

1 make that motion. Jack really defined that motion
2 best. If I could just make the motion like Jack had
3 just mentioned and include the Yukon River in that
4 motion.

5

6 MR. HONEA: Madame Chair. I would
7 support -- I would second that motion.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion made
10 by.....

11

12 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

15

16 MR. REAKOFF: The Yukon River fishery
17 manager Holly Carroll, Deena Jallen, Christy Gleason
18 they all allowed 4-inch mesh use for the subsistence
19 harvest opportunity for non-salmon species. I don't
20 think we really need to beat them up. They did a great
21 job. I do feel that the Kuskokwim River should be
22 specifically addressed in this motion.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: We have Holly
25 here to respond to the motion.

26

27 MS. CARROLL: Madame Chair. This is
28 Holly Carroll, U.S. Fish and Wildlife manager for the
29 Yukon River. You're bringing up a lot of good points,
30 but I believe you're talking about a few different
31 issues. So I just wanted the opportunity to clarify in
32 case it's helpful for you making your motion.

33

34 On the Yukon River we have a lot of
35 flexibility to allow non-salmon harvest opportunity.
36 We can allow 4-inch gear, we can allow selective gear
37 like fishwheels, dipnets, all of that already. So I
38 think it's worth focusing on what changes you might
39 want to make by river and going that way.

40

41 Tommy, what you're talking about where
42 you could have particular streams where salmon don't
43 even go. So maybe what you might be saying is it might
44 be better to be allowed to use any gillnet size? We do
45 get asked about that a lot and I think there's work
46 that could be done on stream surveys to find these
47 areas where locals are telling us no salmon go there so
48 that we can allow bigger mesh. I think that's
49 something we need to talk about going forward.

50

0172

1 But that's a real different issue than
2 -- I'm not familiar with the regs for the Kuskokwim,
3 but if they do not have the ability to allow fishwheels
4 or dipnets or 4-inch gillnets for non-salmon, then you
5 would want to take up those regulations specifically
6 because on the Yukon we do have all of those gears
7 listed as legal gears for non-salmon.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tom.

10
11 MR. KRISKA: Thank you. One of the
12 reasons I'm talking about this a lot of our people
13 start -- they're going back to their camps and trying
14 to figure out other ways to get the subsistence fish.
15 There's no berries out there. It's really hard this
16 year. Like me, I'm way back seven miles off the river
17 and, like you said, you can use a bigger mesh because
18 there's no salmon back there.

19
20 Some of the people in Nulato they're 30
21 miles off the Yukon back in the Kaiyuh area where
22 there's a lot of lakes and a lot of whitefish and right
23 now as it is on the Yukon it's all shut down. The whole
24 thing is shut down and it's just not like who made
25 these decisions. They don't even know what the heck is
26 going on. They're starving us out here.

27
28 I think a lot of this stuff can be
29 revised and something done about it. Even if we're
30 close to the river if they want to -- just to make them
31 happy, there's a lot of -- back in the sloughs there's
32 a lot of forks that go off into -- one goes off into
33 the big lakes. That's where a lot of the whitefish and
34 the sheefish go. I was proven that this fall by an
35 elder.

36
37 So there's a lot of things that's miles
38 off the river that could be fished. I think a lot of
39 these people out there would be happy. Like Huslia.
40 There's a lot of places out there you could fish rather
41 than close to the river and still get what you need and
42 it's not very much. If you really think about it, a
43 lot of the families wouldn't mind having 10 whitefish,
44 10 sheefish and that's it. They've got no freezer room
45 because of the moose and other things that they
46 harvest.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

0173

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
2 Senior moment.

3
4 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for
5 the record. So Proposal 91 to the Board of Fisheries,
6 so we're talking Stateside, does seek to modify
7 Kuskokwim area lawful gear and gear specifications.
8 There's an opportunity later on in your agenda to
9 comment on this. I haven't read this before, so I'm
10 doing it really fast on the fly.

11
12 One only speaks to salmon, so we're not
13 talking non-salmon species. It looks like it realizes
14 -- it increases the ability of the manager to deal with
15 nets and net sizes, fishwheels, allows the use of
16 dipnets in times of specific salmon conservation. So
17 that's one avenue that you guys could use in order to
18 get comments before the State on concerns on the
19 Kuskokwim.

20
21 One thing to think about is the State's
22 process timeline is different than the Federal. So
23 currently right now we're in an AYK year, which would
24 include the Kuskokwim. The Board of Game will be
25 meeting I believe in January on that. So in order to
26 get something in front of the Board of Game the normal
27 process would be proposal, which were do April 10th of
28 this year. So proposal-wise we're out of luck. ACRs
29 normally are due in August sometime, so the agenda
30 change request avenue wouldn't be an option.

31
32 You could do an emergency petition if
33 this doesn't do what you would like it to do, so that's
34 another option just to get it in front of the Board.
35 You could comment on this proposal and modify it, but I
36 would put a caveat on that. If you wanted to go as far
37 as to change it from salmon to salmon and non-salmon
38 species, I don't -- just based on my understanding of
39 how the Board of Fish works, they would be leery of
40 doing that without putting that specific proposal out
41 for more public comment just because it's a pretty
42 massive change of this proposal. They'll do tweaks
43 here and there, but that's a pretty big overhaul.

44
45 So those are a couple different
46 processes that you guys could use in order to seek what
47 you're looking for through the State process and the
48 Board of Fish.

49
50

0174

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Kevin.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair, thanks.

4 I'd appreciate bringing up Proposal 91. I do believe
5 that a letter is -- we should go forward with a letter
6 as well. We could do both. I think we really need to
7 paint this picture very clearly to the Commissioner,
8 the hardships that this caused us last fall for the
9 people in the Upper Kuskokwim and that region not being
10 able to catch whitefish and them telling the folks that
11 they just didn't have the tools in the toolbox to allow
12 for 4-inch is -- people were very upset.

13

14 So I still want to go with the motion
15 on the table. Tommy, if you don't mind, it sounds like
16 you're proposing to add Yukon, but it may be -- your
17 avenue may be better to go through Federal government,
18 like Holly is saying. She has the tools in the toolbox
19 to do that. This sounds to me more like a State of
20 Alaska issue in the Upper Kuskokwim.

21

22 So if we could go with the motion with
23 just the Kusko, we could do other stuff for you, Tom,
24 as well. But this motion, if we could just keep it
25 clean, Kuskokwim, State Commissioner letter, if you
26 don't mind.

27

28 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, go for it.

29

30 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay. So the motion
31 would be on the table with that. We'll just erase the
32 Yukon. That's all. Thanks.

33

34 MR. HONEA: In the sake of time, Madame
35 Chair, I call for the question.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Thank
38 you, Don. All in favor say aye.

39

40 MR. GERVAIS: Wait. Stand by. I want
41 to restate the proposal. Give us the language.

42

43 MR. WHITWORTH: Jack -- sorry. Madame
44 Chair. Since I brought up the motion. Jack, could you
45 restate what you had said? I think Jack had said it
46 best.

47

48 MR. REAKOFF: I was speaking to the
49 Department use the full 4-inch mesh back into the side
50

0175

1 200 feet or 100 yards off of the mainstem during the
2 king salmon -- prosecution of the king salmon fishery.
3 The Department should have that ability to pull --
4 allow 4-inch mesh gear off the mainstem of the
5 Kuskokwim River. I do appreciate Nissa bringing up the
6 Proposal 91, which was -- they seem to be under
7 regulation for king salmon protection only.

8

9 When we get to Proposal 91, it should
10 be expanded. It's talking about chum salmon, but it
11 should be expanded to all salmon including king salmon
12 and the other species.

13

14 The motion should be regarding the
15 ability of the Department to prosecute closures on this
16 last season. They should have had the ability to pull
17 large mesh salmon gear off the mainstem. They should
18 have had that already. That should have been an
19 emergency order ability. The motion is regarding the
20 Department's ability to pull off the mainstem and
21 protect salmon while providing for non-salmon species
22 on side streams.

23

24 Thank you.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Kevin, is that
27 what you had in mind?

28

29 (No audible response)

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim.

32

33 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So we're drafting
34 -- the motion is to draft a letter for the Kuskokwim
35 River only allowing 10 fathom length of 4-inch gear
36 more than 100 yards off the mainstream of the river
37 targeting non-salmon species. Is that what the motion
38 is?

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Kevin.

41

42 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair, thanks.
43 Sorry about the confusion here. I think we just need
44 to keep it generic and I don't know how to say it best.
45 The State of Alaska needs tools in their toolbox to
46 manage the fishery for non-salmon species in the State
47 waters of the Kuskokwim River. The tools in the
48 toolbox, if it's a management plan or whatever it is,
49 we can figure that language out, but if we can just
50

0176

1 keep it a generic letter at this point.

2

3 That's all.

4

5 MR. GERVAIS: Asking for emergency
6 change in the regulation for this end of the season?
7 Is that.....

8

9 MR. WHITWORTH: No, it's not.....

10

11 MR. GERVAIS: What's the action you're
12 ask -- we want to ask the State for?

13

14 MR. WHITWORTH: We've got to be able to
15 allow for the State to have the tools in their toolbox
16 to allow 4-inch mesh whitefish targeted fishery when
17 there's coho concern and there's coho -- conservation
18 of coho and everything is closed down. They couldn't
19 make those decisions when we wanted to use a fishwheel
20 and release coho salmon. They said, no, we can't do
21 that. We can't get into that much detail in our
22 regulations because we don't have tools in the toolbox.

23

24

25 I don't know how to say it more than
26 that. Maybe Jim Simon can help. There is already
27 pressure to the Commissioner's Office. Jim had
28 mentioned TCC had written a letter to the Commissioner
29 about this issue. I think we should follow with our
30 own letter to the Commissioner and say, hey, look,
31 there's a problem here. If you guys don't have the
32 toolbox, let's put them on the table so in the future
33 -- this year is already done. We can't fish whitefish
34 anymore, but in the future we should be able to.

35

36 I agree with Don. I think we should
37 move on.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I feel like a
40 little owl. It's hurting my head going back and forth.

41

42 (Laughter)

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Tim, are
45 you satisfied with that?

46

47 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I am.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. I don't

50

0177

1 really know what the motion is, how it goes now, but
2 all in favor say with it, I guess. Nissa.

3

4 MS. PILCHER: Can I get a double check
5 on who seconded it.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: The motion was
8 made by Kevin and Don Honea, Jr. seconded. I guess the
9 question was called for. All in favor say aye.

10

11 IN UNISON: Aye.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed say.....

14

15 MR. REAKOFF: Aye.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack opposed.
18 Was that an opposed, Jack?

19

20 MR. REAKOFF: No. The phones are slow,
21 so I was in favor of the motion.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Sorry
24 about that. All opposed same sign.

25

26 (No opposing votes)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.

29

30 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair. Thank
31 you for going through that. I had no idea I was going
32 to do that this morning, so I didn't have a motion.
33 Basically it's a letter. The details are in the
34 letter. We can work together on those details, but
35 these people got to fish for whitefish. The relatively
36 healthy species of whitefish up there. They're not
37 able to fish for them.

38

39 Thanks.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Thank
42 you. With that, before we start on the next person,
43 Tommy has to leave at 10:30. It's five to 10:00 right
44 now. He had a report, but we also had a non-agenda
45 item. Do you want to go before that?

46

47 MR. KRISKA: I just had this resolution
48 from the Nulato Tribe. It's a resolution or request to
49 make Kaiyuh a controlled use area for moose hunting.

50

0178

1 If you could read it, I'd appreciate it. We have
2 copies. I had a meeting last week. Too many things
3 happening. I'll just save those.

4
5 It's not a controlled use area, so
6 there's a lot of planes going in there into people's
7 hunting areas. Flying in there, shooting moose. Some
8 of them are just going in there. You're supposed to
9 wait until the next day, but going in there, shooting a
10 moose and flying off with it.

11
12 They're using those planes to river,
13 two airplanes right at -- you know, on Native
14 allotments too. They're all over. They just fly back
15 off the river back into Kaiyuh, do their thing, come
16 out, fly back out with a moose.

17
18 It's happening and there's a lot more
19 River is a controlled use area they're limited to go up
20 there. They're starting to hit from across Galena all
21 the way down to probably Holy Cross. So they just down
22 the river. I mean everybody has a right to hunt, but
23 it's just way out of hand.

24
25 So they wrote this resolution and it's
26 kind of sad for all of them. One of the things they
27 wanted to do was to have their own check station at the
28 mouth of Kaiyuh. So that's what it is.

29
30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So Nissa is
31 going to go ahead and read the proposal.

32
33 MS. PILCHER: I'll read the resolution
34 into the record. So this is from the Nulato Tribal
35 Council, Resolution 2022-22. A resolution making a
36 request to make Kaiyuh a controlled use area. Whereas
37 the Nulato Tribal Council is the governing body of the
38 Nulato Village, is a Federally Recognized Tribe.....

39
40 (Phone interruption)

41
42 MS. PILCHER: All right. Nulato Tribal
43 Council is the governing body of the Nulato Village, is
44 a Federally Recognized Tribe and is on the United
45 States list of Federally Recognized Tribes under the
46 Tribe List Act of 1994 preserving sovereigns and
47 aboriginal rights in perpetuity and;

48
49 Whereas we recognize our inherent
50

0179

1 authority to exercise our tribal rights as stewards to
2 our traditional territories and resources. Since time
3 immemorial we have properly cared for the hunting of
4 the Kaiyuh Flats. We commit to conserve, restore and
5 provide for the tribal use of wildlife based on
6 indigenous knowledge systems and scientific principles
7 and;

8
9 Whereas the Nulato Tribal Council is
10 concerned about the increasing number of outside
11 hunters going into Kaiyuh and;

12
13 Whereas the Nulato Tribal Council is
14 also concerned about the number of float planes that
15 are going into Kaiyuh and taking out moose and;

16
17 Whereas the Nulato Tribal Council is
18 concerned about the effects that these things will have
19 on our traditional hunting grounds and;

20
21 Whereas the Nulato Tribal Council is
22 also concerned about the trespassing that happens on
23 our tribal members' Native allotments located in
24 Kaiyuh.

25
26 Now, therefore, be it resolved that the
27 Nulato Tribal Council hereby requests that the Kaiyuh
28 be made into a controlled use area.

29
30 That is the end. A quick note for the
31 record. I believe that this would be a resolution that
32 would be going towards the Board of Game. That would
33 be during an Interior Board of Game cycle, which I'd
34 have to double check, but may come up next year or the
35 year after, but I'll verify.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you. Tom.

38
39 MR. KRISKA: The reason that they --
40 they put it on, they know that, you know, the period
41 for putting this resolution in is next year, so that's
42 the reason they put it out now so it would be brought
43 up. Thank you.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
46 So did they want us to -- do we pass this or what?
47 Vote on it?

48
49 MS. PILCHER: My understanding is the
50

0180

1 Nulato Tribal Council is seeking the Western Interior
2 Regional Advisory Council's support in this on the
3 resolution.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a motion to
6 that effect to support this resolution by Nulato?
7 Pollock.

8

9 MR. P. SIMON: Motion to adopt.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
12 second? The motion was made by Pollock.

13

14 MR. GERVAIS: I'll second it.

15

16 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

19

20 MR. REAKOFF: I support the motion. It
21 should state -- delineate the Kaiyuh -- there has to be
22 a delineation of what area they're actually talking
23 about so this could actually move forward. So we could
24 reference that with further delineation of a controlled
25 use area in the motion.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tom.

28

29 MR. KRISKA: The Kaiyuh Flats is -- you
30 know, a lot of the people there -- they have a lot of
31 Native allotments over there and there's only so many
32 places they can go with boats and that's the area they
33 want to cover. Most of the main hunting grounds is
34 Kaiyuh Flats in general.

35

36 MR. REAKOFF: But I mean if you're
37 making a management area under State regulation it goes
38 from this point to that point to this point to that
39 point. Like the Koyukuk Controlled Use Area, the
40 Kanuti Controlled Use Area. They have to have -- it
41 can't be vague. It's got to be actually set out. So
42 part of the motion is to delineate where the Kaiyuh
43 Flats Controlled Use Area would entail. That's the
44 direction that this needs to go.

45

46 MR. KRISKA: Okay. From what they were
47 talking about was like from across Koyukuk where they
48 call Squirrel Creek down to 22 miles to Kaltag. So
49 that's the area.

50

0181

1 MR. REAKOFF: And then back -- so far
2 back from the river. I mean there's got to be some
3 back boundary.

4
5 MR. KRISKA: Okay. Back to the Federal
6 lands there's a boundary back there someplace. It's
7 pretty much over halfway back into Kaiyuh and that's
8 there that's out and about.

9
10 MR. REAKOFF: Okay. That gives a rough
11 idea of what we're discussing.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Thank you. Tom.

14
15 MR. KRISKA: Madame Chair. I'm a
16 little confused on here. So what we're supporting here
17 is a motion to support the idea, but eventually -- I
18 mean so this is going to come up in our next cycle like
19 on game and I'm also kind of confused. I mean so we
20 could support this idea OSM, but is this a State kind
21 of a thing? Because it's going to come up with the
22 State and I guess maybe from now until then we could
23 garner support from ACs and villages and stuff like
24 that. You know, hey, I'm supporting the idea. I like
25 the idea. It kind of knocked down the numbers a lot I
26 think on the Koyukuk. Did it not, Tom? So that was
27 the general idea.

28
29 So I guess what I'm asking right now is
30 we're just supporting the general idea, but we don't
31 take this issue up until the next game cycle? Thank
32 you.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: That's what I'm
35 thinking. Nissa.

36
37 MS. PILCHER: So the next Interior
38 Board of Game meeting is 2023-2024 meeting cycle, which
39 means that the proposal would need to be submitted in
40 early 2023. I believe prior to May. The proposal book
41 would go out and then the Board of Game would take
42 action-- would look at this and take action on it
43 during their 2024 Interior Board of Game meeting, which
44 is typically held in March.

45
46 So this Council would have the ability
47 to weigh in on the proposal as written. So first
48 support or -- support notwithstanding of this
49 resolution or withstanding. The Council could then
50

0182

1 also formally support a proposal that was submitted
2 that would potentially have boundaries put in place so
3 they could do both for sure.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Tommy.

6

7 MR. KRISKA: Okay. We did bring this
8 proposal -- put a proposal in before and I wouldn't --
9 Jim, I think you might have known that. Could you come
10 up and explain a little bit more on that. We do have a
11 map.

12

13 MR. J. SIMON: Through the Chair.
14 Thank you, Council Member Tommy Kriska. Yeah, there
15 was a similar proposal submitted to the Board of Game
16 for the 2020 meeting cycle. It was Proposal 58. I am
17 now trying to go through -- there was a map associated
18 with it and I am trying to find that map on the Board
19 of Game website and I have not yet found it.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair. May I make
22 a statement while Jim is looking up that map?

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

25

26 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I support what the
27 Nulato Tribe is trying to do here and will continue to
28 support it. I just want to make this Council aware
29 that whenever you restrict access or means of access
30 like no-fly zone in a controlled use area, that puts --
31 that shifts additional burden onto other areas nearby.

32

33 Like when they created Koyukuk
34 Controlled Use Area as a no-fly zone, I started to see
35 a lot more air taxi traffic upriver from Ruby where
36 those air taxi operators operating out of Galena they
37 had a certain amount of hunters that they wanted to fly
38 out. So what that did is it put more hunting pressure
39 on areas outside of that controlled use area. So
40 there's always an effect to any kind of restriction.

41

42 It may benefit Nulato Tribe and it
43 probably will do that, but there's going to be some
44 overflow effect or people moving -- since they can't
45 hunt in that controlled use area with airplanes,
46 they're going to land their transport clients in other
47 areas in Unit 21, which potentially could affect other
48 subsistence users. But I do support what Nulato Tribe
49 is trying to do there, but there will be some adverse
50

0183

1 effects to other parts of Unit 21 because of this.

2

3

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tom.

4

5

6 MR. KRISKA: The State already have a
7 permit hunt and the draw permit in there. They have 31
8 permits. There's permits all over in those areas that
9 a lot of people are not aware of. It was put out there
10 by an abundance of moose. Like in the Uke area I think
11 there's 16 permits. Pilot Mountain area there's 22.

12 Behind Galena, Bear Creek there's 14. Kaiyuh Flats,
13 going on downriver there's 31. In between Nulato and
14 Kaltag there's 13.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

So all these permits they add up and they were put in there because of the abundance of moose already. They know that when they draw for these permits they can go in there without stopping them. But what it will do and what they want to shut down mostly is the no-fly zone.

Because that's when -- I mean there was a few years back when this first came up. There was a guide. I don't know where he was from, but he was in the lake, landed on this -- one guy was across Koyukuk walking around back in those lakes and a plane landed and he was already pretty much halfway back to that lake and hear a shot, boom. He can hear a bullet hit, so he thought I wonder who in the heck is back there.

So he walked back there and walked up to a guy, another guy, in a float plane with a little girl there and that girl, before her dad or anybody else could say anything, she said, hey, my dad just shot that moose right from the airplane. We brought that up to the Fish and Game, you know, and tried to do something about it. You can't do anything about it.

So this is the concerns that a lot of the Nulato -- and not only -- honest, I mean I go over there too myself, but then you go out this lake and, you know, no one out there and you go in there and it's like, holy smokes, three or four airplanes. What's the use of going there? Nine dollars a gallon of fuel. It's kind of heart-breaking.

So that's one of the reasons. I mean a lot of these people their jobs are minimized. I support this and I just kind of want to clarify a

0184

1 little bit of it. Thank you.

2

3

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jim.

4

5

MR. J. SIMON: Thank you, Madame Chair.

6

So the proposal -- I remember this now from when we went through this in 2020. The proposal incorrectly identified registration moose hunt 833 as the area being proposed to establish this controlled use area. The subsequent submission to the Board of Game clarified that it is actually the hunt area of RM-831, which covers the Kaiyuh Flats.

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

I would presume that you have the State Hunting Regulation Booklet, but if you would look at Unit 21 maps you will see RM-831 and that, I believe, is what -- that proposal had been submitted by the Middle Yukon Fish and Game Advisory Committee. What is unclear to me -- this is the first I've heard of this resolution coming from the Nulato Tribal Council, so it's unclear to me whether or not Nulato Tribal Council is specifically requesting the same controlled use area as the Middle Yukon Fish and Game Advisory Committee requested for the 2020 regulatory cycle.

26

Thank you.

27

28

29

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Any other comments.

30

31

32

MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

33

34

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

MR. REAKOFF: We'll meet before the Board of Game proposal period is closed, so this whole discussion can occur when we move into wildlife proposals at our spring meeting. So I support this resolution, so we should forward it to our next meeting where we can have delineation and have more concise adoption or submission of the proposal regarding this resolution.

44

Thank you, Madame Chair.

45

46

47

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack. Nissa.

48

49

50

MS. PILCHER: Just a quick process point. There is a motion on the table.

0185

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So all in
2 favor to support this resolution for the Nulato Tribe
3 say aye.

4
5 IN UNISON: Aye.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
8 sign.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So this motion
13 carries that we're supporting the Nulato Tribe on this
14 proposal. Thank you.

15
16 With that we have one more non-agenda
17 item and it's by P.J. Simon of Fairbanks and he'll be
18 talking about Dall sheep.

19
20 MR. P.J. SIMON: Good morning, Madame
21 Chair. Members of the board. Just a quick note that's
22 my dad right there. Can I just give some general
23 comments on sheep and then what worries me for
24 biological fish and whatnot, Madame Chair?

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

27
28 MR. P.J. SIMON: My name is P.J. Simon.
29 I've hunted the Brooks Range most of my life. First
30 went on a sheep hunt when I was 11 with my dad up to
31 the Tangle Blue (ph) in the Brooks Range. Last year we
32 went sheep hunting. We didn't see much. Some locals
33 went up to Alatna River, Unakserak, Guruk (ph). They
34 saw a few carcasses from most likely winter starvation
35 for sheep. I have to applaud you guys' efforts on
36 conservation. I think that's really important right
37 now.

38
39 If you have watched the state or
40 national news, you see the crash of the king crab
41 fishery where some of the smartest and richest people
42 in the world they don't have anything to fish now. So I
43 heard politics from a past presenter in different
44 words. I think biological science will really help
45 guide the board and stick to that.

46
47 My people in the Upper Koyukuk River
48 have lived a subsistence lifestyle. We live right next
49 to Bettles, which sometimes has five air transporters
50

0186

1 or three different guide operations. We found that
2 balance over time. I'd like to keep that balance
3 healthy and not one-sided where our moose population
4 starts getting decimated, the same with sheep.

5

6 In the recent closures of the 24A and
7 26A, I believe, along the Dalton Highway, in my opinion
8 as a hunter, a state resident, a subsistence hunter,
9 tribal member, is warranted. The Bering Sea on the
10 west coast stays open most of the year round and a lot
11 of snow shadows come over from the west and slowly a
12 lot of our sheep are dying because of heavy snowfall.

13

14 A few years ago in this very room there
15 was the cycle for Board of Game on game issues and I
16 heard the State biologist say the population was
17 healthy to open an August 1st take your kid hunting on
18 State land. That worried me, especially when we
19 started hearing rumors, we started seeing signs or TEK
20 or our visualization of sheep up there.

21

22 By the way, I hunt Unakserak, Guruk up
23 there and Alatna River. I hunt the Tangle Blue area,
24 Sheep Creek up at the John River, (Indiscernible) area
25 on Glacier River Valley. That area, Madame Chair, is
26 five to seven thousand years pre-contact. So that's a
27 very old hunt for us and we want to preserve our
28 culture. We are tied to the land. We take what we
29 need, just like all the books. You hear the speeches.
30 That's how we live. I think we won't go forward until
31 -- my opinion is until you guys are transparent with
32 the agencies to see actual trend data, recruitment,
33 numbers instead of them saying, oh, it's good. Yeah,
34 it's down last year. Well, what's down? How much?
35 How much was it five years ago? How much was it 10
36 years ago?

37

38 I think overlaying that data trend will
39 guide the WIRAC board to keep doing what you guys need
40 to do. It's a touch job. I commend you guys on what
41 you guys are doing. A lot of pressure, a lot of side
42 conversations. Just in the Upper Koyukuk specifically,
43 you know, our caribou numbers are down from the Ray
44 Mountain Herd. If our caribou doesn't come from the
45 north, from Anaktuvuk or out from Ambler east, then we
46 go south to the Ray Mountain Herd. We've really cut
47 into that population. I'm sure airplane SuperCubs land
48 there in fall time and pick out a few. It's a lot of
49 pressure. With climate change especially, going
50

0187

1 seining this fall in Allakaket for people for food and
2 then my dad's dogs with no salmon. We have so much
3 rain with climate change in the last five years or
4 however we want to call it. It just rains more and the
5 water levels are springtime high where seining is
6 fruitless. Where I used to catch 140 broad whitefish,
7 a only catch a few. We give away to the elders the
8 choice fish and then throw a bunch into my dad's lot
9 for his dogs, which he's had -- he's 82. He's had dogs
10 for 68 years. It's that type of culture we're
11 protecting and I commend you guys on especially closing
12 the sheep.

13

14 We go up -- at \$11.50 a cents a gallon
15 we go up Unakserak, we go up Tangle Blue. A bunch of
16 us pool our hard-earned money. Median income is
17 \$12,500. So imagine we take a big chunk of our
18 earnings to go to keep that old hunt alive. When you
19 look at the true cost of it, if a sheep hunt cost
20 \$25,000 and you guys okay and kept it open, well, what
21 if they take 30 sheep. Well, you know, 30 x 25,000.
22 That's what we're decimating the sheep with.

23

24 I commend you guys on helping close
25 that area. I think it's warranted. It will come back.
26 Just like moose numbers go down, they come back up. I
27 just wanted to say some generalized comments. Salmon
28 is worrisome also. We don't get that much salmon
29 anymore as we used to. We're adapting to how the
30 environment is changing by eating more whitefish and
31 whatnot, waterfowl. We have a lot of waterfowl in the
32 springtime. Just dealing with a lot of different
33 things.

34

35 Mainly I just wanted to emphasize today
36 to WIRAC board to keep up your hard work and ask for
37 data. Five years, ten years on sheep counts. These
38 Federal agencies or the State they have data on where
39 every single sheep is from year to year. They don't
40 know if it's alive or not, but just the numbers. I
41 think giving that to the tribal members of the Upper
42 Koyukuk that will help out too rather than say, oh,
43 it's down this year. Oh, a virus is bothering the
44 sheep this year. But that's one of our really precious
45 foods.

46

47 Part of my family comes from the South
48 Fork River. The Bear Paw Clan, my mother. They're
49 mostly extinct now. There's a few people that have
50

0188

1 lineage to the Bear Paw Clan. They used to go up to
2 the John River with dogs and get the sheep skin in the
3 winter time and then they barter with it or make warm
4 clothing. So we're tied to that in a long way.

5
6 I just wanted to commend -- I'm sorry
7 Jack Reakoff is not here, but Madame Chair what you
8 guys do is important in terms of conservation. I trap
9 wolves, I hunt. I kill a lot of things. Guide. I'm
10 even in the guiding industry. I've transported before.
11 These type of things come up. Populations go down.
12 You guys make a swift decision for conservation.
13 Populations come up and life goes on for the guide.
14 Life goes on for the subsistence hunters.

15
16 I don't have anything more. I just
17 wanted to commend your guys' hard work on the sheep.
18 Keeping an eye on the sheep populations. That's really
19 important to the Upper Koyukuk too. The Inuit there
20 with Alatna and Allakaket, Evansville, Hughes. Thank
21 you.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, P.J.
24 Any comments or questions for P.J. Don.

25
26 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair.
27 Thank you, P.J. I really appreciate that kind of a
28 heartfelt talk about the sheep. I know our chairperson
29 Jack is very compassionate about that. Also it's a
30 real concern. I appreciate somebody from an area
31 speaking up about their concerns.

32
33 Like in the past I've had people say,
34 hey, would you support this proposal from this area.
35 Okay. Fine, Sure. A friend of mine. Okay. So when
36 it came time to testify for that proposal there's no
37 comment. There's no village comment, there's no
38 comment from the maker of the proposal. So I really
39 appreciate and I for one really feel compassionate
40 toward my own area for our moose population because
41 fishing is non-existent almost.

42
43 I just wanted to thank you for
44 testifying for that.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Don.
47 Anybody else? I know Tommy has to leave pretty quick.
48 Do you have something to add?

49
50

0189

1 MR. KRISKA: Thank you, P.J., for a lot
2 of that. I wish there was more people like you to come
3 up who are concerned about your areas. You gave me
4 something to say in my closing comments that is very
5 important. I appreciate you coming. Like Don said, a
6 lot of people shoot back their proposals and everything
7 else that they get into and it's kind of hard to fight
8 for things and you don't have the backing.

9
10 Thank you very much.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
13 P.J.

14
15 MR. P.J. SIMON: Yes, one quick comment
16 on that. I also forgot to mention that a lot of us
17 started going sheep hunting in the springtime. Two
18 years ago I was 25 miles from Anaktuvuk with a
19 snowmachine at 4,500 feet. So we do take advantage
20 before the season closed April 15th. It's an area we
21 feel really tied to and we want to keep that hunt
22 alive.

23
24 It's not about killing something. It's
25 about bringing food home to our people. You know, an
26 elder once said there's nothing more sorrowful than a
27 hunter coming home empty-handed. There's a lot going
28 on. You know, you know it. You guys know it. There's
29 a lot of politics. But you're just hearing from our
30 side of the story.

31
32 Anyway, a lot of people can't fly in,
33 Madame Chair. It's 170 one way, hotels are 300 a
34 night. So testimony -- and there's not much internet
35 in the villages, but they are concerned and they do pay
36 attention.

37
38 Thank you.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, P.J.
41 Every time I hear you speak I learn a lot from you. I
42 know your heart -- you can just feel it when you speak
43 because you speak from the heart and I think that's
44 what we all try to do when we have proposals or
45 resolutions or anything before us.

46
47 One thing I'd like to say I do miss, we
48 brought it up earlier, is we don't have a couple areas
49 represented here today for some reason or another, but
50

0190

1 we really need to get the GASH area and Aniak area
2 people members. Try to get them on the board because
3 we don't know what's going on in their area and we do
4 have to vote on some of the stuff that we see in our
5 packet and we don't know really unless we hear from the
6 person or people. Then we can make a better decision.

7

8 So I just want to thank you again and I
9 think your dad has something to say. Pollock.

10

11 MR. P. SIMON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
12 I want to add to my son's report that my father and my
13 grandfather used pulling boats in the early 1900s to go
14 up into the mountains. They had no powerboats. They'd
15 go up the John River and Alatna River. Today with the
16 price of gas and (indiscernible) of sheep, it's getting
17 kind of difficult to think about going up into the
18 mountains to look for sheep. I just wanted to mention
19 this.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
24 Pollock. Anything else?

25

26 (No comment)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: If not, Tommy,
29 did you want to do your report, your Council report
30 now?

31

32 MR. KRISKA: Yes, thank you. I'm sorry
33 that I have to leave and I'm really kind of heartbroken
34 about it, but I have other -- put on a different hat
35 this afternoon and it's very important today and
36 tomorrow. I tried to get on a plane tonight, but
37 there's no room from 5:00 o'clock and 8:00 o'clock
38 flights, so the only flight I can get on is this 11:55.

39

40 There's really a lot of concerns and
41 I'm really -- it's sad to be almost living out there
42 and it's getting harder and tougher. Not only we lose
43 our game, but like the weather is this year, there's no
44 berries at all, which is a big factor to the sheep that
45 we're trying to catch. With the salmon it's gone.
46 Then the fuel prices go up. So I don't know.

47

48 It's like pushing us back into a corner
49 and it's really sad when other folks don't really think
50

0191

1 about it because -- you know, they don't -- I mean
2 everybody lives a subsistence life no matter who you
3 are, but being out there in the village and you
4 actually need a lot of the necessities that's out there
5 that the Lord gave us and they're the reason he put us
6 there and it's being taken away from you by people that
7 are -- a lot of them are not even from the state of
8 Alaska. But to make the sort of comments, decisions
9 and all of this stuff it's just heartbreaking to see
10 that.

11

12 I'm saying that on behalf of a lot of
13 my hunting buddies that we go out there. The State --
14 or I don't know. I shouldn't say anything like that.
15 But, you know, it kind of really gets me kind of upset
16 when I'm spending a lot of money for predator control,
17 for the wolf control. You can't imagine how much money
18 we spent, me and our hunters out there, that control
19 the predators and why these abundance of moose are out
20 there for the last -- all our lives.

21

22 You don't see the State out there. You
23 don't see the Federal government out there managing
24 this stuff. We do this stuff ourselves and when the
25 population comes up, they freely go in there and make
26 their decisions. Big bunch of moose right here. We
27 can put in permits. We could allow hunters in there.
28 Why do they get to do something like that when we're
29 the ones that's managing this stuff ourselves all our
30 lives. They don't even recognize that.

31

32 What I'm trying to say is that before
33 the State or the Federal government or whoever they are
34 making decisions on what could be harvested out there,
35 how they can be, why they're going to be harvested, who
36 gave them the right to make these decisions. If they're
37 going to make a decision to put more hunters in an area
38 that's not even the tribe or the ACs have no consent
39 about anything, they're not even allowed to speak on
40 that behalf.

41

42 I don't know. I'm just kind of
43 confusing myself. I'm kind of a little upset about it
44 because, you know, for me in between 275 to 300 wolves
45 in my time managing that area. That's me alone. The
46 last few years me and my -- just four of us in the
47 Nulato area where all those moose are for how many
48 years now, two years ago we shot 61 wolves in there.
49 Last year was 42, I think, or something like that. You
50

0192

1 put those numbers together. We're the ones that put
2 those -- and one of the reasons those moose are there.
3 And some of the big bears that are affecting a lot of
4 this.

5

6 We should be in that room while they're
7 making that decision about moose hunt or either help us
8 manage this predator control. They're not out there,
9 but they sure the heck can make decisions on what can
10 be harvested and when and all of this stuff. I just
11 want to be in the room when they're making those kind
12 of decisions in some way or let us know what they're
13 doing. Let the village, let the tribes know what's
14 coming on.

15

16 I don't think Galena, Koyukuk, Nulato,
17 Kaltag knew all this 100-some permits are allowed in
18 their backyard. Right in their backyard. It's no
19 doubt right up to their house. They didn't have no
20 idea. They were not even aware of it. It kind of
21 pissed me off that all these decisions were made
22 without our consent. We should be notified because
23 what you're doing is allowing -- the outside hunter now
24 can go right in your aunt's backyard and shoot a moose.
25 They can come that close because that's where the
26 permitted area is.

27

28 It's all the way from Yuki down 40
29 miles below Kaltag on the south bank and quite a bit
30 from Koyukuk on the one mile below the airport on down
31 to the river and from Nulato River on down. They
32 didn't know all of this stuff and it's kind of
33 heartbreaking that this has happened and we have no
34 control over it whatsoever, but we're still going to
35 continue to pay \$10 a gallon, you know, for our own
36 predator control for the years to come on. It's kind
37 of -- I don't know. If they're going to do that, they
38 should help us.

39

40 But anyway -- and then the fishing, all
41 of this stuff. One of my comments for the State or the
42 Federal government, it's just a suggestion, that maybe
43 if they're not too keen about right at the mouth, but a
44 fish will wander a little ways in, maybe, like they
45 said, 100 feet, 100 yards, but if they put it a quarter
46 mile in and that would -- the fish, the salmon and
47 non-species they won't go that far because they already
48 have the scent of the stream that they come from. They
49 follow that scent all the way right into the stream.

50

0193

1 Since they know that scent they go into
2 that stream. That was told by one of my late uncles.
3 Then after that you can make your decision if you can
4 allow 6 inch, 5 inch or something like that. Just move
5 the little boundary a little farther back so that way
6 the people -- possibly anywhere that these silt water
7 rivers are -- can be allowed to, you know, smile or
8 something about what they have.

9
10 Like I said, you're not going to take
11 things away from the potlatches. Those potlatches are
12 sacred and have been going on for more years than
13 anyone. They were here before you were even born.
14 This is part of our traditions, the whole thing.

15
16 I have a lot to say. I probably can
17 talk all day, but I have other places to be and I'm
18 sorry that I have to leave. I'm kind of heartbroken
19 about it, I really am, because there's so much
20 decisions here that need to be made. I advise the
21 people we're people too and we're out there. We're
22 busting our nuts for you to enjoy your decisions or
23 permits or whatever you put in our lands. It's kind of
24 crazy. Anyway, just try to figure it out and, you
25 know, balance your thoughts.

26
27 With that, I'm sorry I have to leave
28 again, but I'm thankful that these young guys are still
29 here and Tim and Jenny and Don and Pollock. I'm not
30 going anywhere. You're going to hear from me for I
31 don't know. Until we get old, I guess.

32
33 So thank you very much for all that. I
34 thank you for being on this board. Thank you.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
37 With that -- yes, Don.

38
39 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I'd like to say
40 something before Tom leaves. I think that every
41 village -- I know for a fact that he keeps the wolves
42 down. I actually wished he lived in Ruby. I mean
43 we've got some wolf hunters there. But he's exactly
44 right. Why should we as a tribe dole out 200, 500 for
45 the sake of keeping the numbers up, you know? I
46 actually pray for our population of moose to be stable.

47
48
49 It's kind of disheartening when we have
50

0194

1 a big population of moose and then we have an X amount
2 of people coming in and we see all these racks going
3 upriver. I did not get a moose for -- I didn't get one
4 this fall, but it's not like we can take one any time
5 we want or anything like that. So I appreciate the
6 people that's keeping the wolf numbers down.

7

8 Jeremy knows on the Novi that they're
9 just across the river there howling away. I mean the
10 Tanana people. We all hear them. There's a lot of them
11 out there.

12

13 So I appreciate your work. I know what
14 you're talking about. If we as tribes can have an
15 incentive program to keep those numbers at bay, I
16 appreciate you being on the board and speaking from the
17 heart. Speaking from -- say, hey, I'm up here and, you
18 know, I've got a cabin up here and bringing it
19 basically down to earth.

20

21 Thank you.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Don.
24 Anybody else?

25

26 MR. VENT: Yeah, this is Darrell.

27

28 MR. HONEA: I just have one more little
29 thing. The thing that gets me is, you know, the moose
30 are counted out there by the State. I don't like to
31 say and point fingers at anybody, but this is just the
32 way things are done. These decisions out there, our
33 moose are counted, abundance is there, the number is
34 there, so whenever the number is up so high the
35 percentage of allowing permits are allowed.

36

37 We're on this other side where ACs say
38 come on just tell us everything. We bring it up and
39 nothing happens. But I just thought of this here.
40 We're really doing the work and it costs a lot of money
41 to do this. The thing is we like to be out in the
42 woods and there's a handful of us and there's people in
43 Galena, Koyukuk, Nulato, Kaltag, they really are strong
44 people. If it was way back in the day, those people
45 would be the main chiefs of those villages. They'd
46 follow them anywhere they want to go.

47

48 Nowadays there's different changes and
49 you're the chief on paper and all of this stuff, but
50

0195

1 technically those people that do all this stuff they
2 watch they're like from maybe the Lord. I don't know
3 where they're from. But they help the people for
4 everything; fishing, hunting, protection, search and
5 rescue. Those guys I hand it to them. They're never
6 mentioned. They never ask for anything, but they
7 protect their country from a lot of things.

8

9 Anyway, like I said, I talk all day.
10 Thank you for being here.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
13 Darrell. Now we -- Darrell. Tom, we have Darrell on
14 line. You wanted to say something, Darrell?

15

16 MR. VENT: Yes. Good morning, Madame
17 Chair. I'm here in Anchorage and I'm listening to Tom
18 there. It's a good thing what he's doing down in that
19 area because we've been having issues up in our area.
20 I remember back in the '80s or '90s they went out and
21 had to take some of the predators out and it really
22 helped the moose population.

23

24 Now here again we are having some
25 issues up in our area, around the Dolby area. There's
26 a big pack down there. I know Tom's been around there.
27 I think Rico and probably a few others up in that area
28 there.

29

30 It's good that they're working on the
31 wolves, but now that these bears they don't have no
32 more fish, we're having a real issue here in Huslia
33 right now. They're really trying to get that bear.
34 It's been around two days now and people have been
35 spotting it right in their yards.

36

37 I think that, you know, once they take
38 those moose a lot of times those animals will start
39 coming around. So I think we have to try to put in a
40 preventive program for predation because, you know,
41 they affect one area and they don't do nothing about
42 another area. That's going to increase and we're going
43 to have a loss of moose population.

44

45 So I agree with Tom there. We've got
46 to work on that program there and help on both sides
47 because it costs money to go out and do what he does.

48

49 Thank you.

50

0196

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
2 Darrell. Very good comment. Pollock.

3

4 MR. P. SIMON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
5 I want to talk to about our salmon fishing in the early
6 days. The old timers told stories of some lean years
7 where there was no salmon. 1940 to 1945 there was
8 hardly any salmon. It improved since 1945 to 1950. In
9 the '50s I was in Hughes. There was plenty of fish
10 then. We'd catch about 80 or 100 a day. The way it
11 was is we'd just take as needed. Our elders always
12 tell us to save what we get hunting and fishing. They
13 always tell us to take care of our fish and take care
14 of the animals and show respect. That's how we make
15 our living.

16

17 Then the Statehood Act and then the
18 State and the Feds took over the fish management and
19 the salmon disappeared. Around Allakaket there's about
20 20 miles there's David's fish camp. That's the only
21 one of cabins left. But in between there and Allakaket
22 were other fish camps. They're empty now and the fish
23 racks falling in. There's no fishing now. It's like
24 that's if you can't catch -- not allowed to catch king
25 salmon then they don't want to fish at all. That's the
26 way it is.

27

28 King salmon is the main fish diet for
29 our people up and down the river. Once fishing and
30 hunting were and he said the salmon might come back a
31 little bit, but not as it used to be. He said that
32 king salmon is something we enjoyed in the past.

33

34 Thank you, Madame Chair.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
37 Pollock. Okay. We're going to take a short break now
38 until 11:00. Be back by 11:00 because we have so many
39 things to go over. Thank you to all who spoke. Thank
40 you, Darrell for speaking and Jack. We'll see you in
41 10 minutes.

42

43 (Off record)

44

45 (On record)

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. I guess
48 we're all ready. Welcome back. As I look at our
49 agenda, we do have a lot of things to cover. We're

50

0197

1 going to move some things around. I just realized we
2 haven't even started the meeting yet. So, with that,
3 we'll start with Cory.

4

5 MR. GRAHAM: Hello, Madame Chair.
6 Members of the Council. For the record my name is Cory
7 Graham. I'm a fisheries biologist with the Office of
8 Subsistence Management. I'll now present Fisheries
9 Closure Review 23-02, which can be found starting on
10 Page 87 of your Council book.

11

12 FCR23-02 reviews the Federal
13 subsistence closure to the harvest of all fish in the
14 Kanuti River drainage. This is a standard Board
15 directed review to determine if the closure is still
16 necessary.

17

18 Under Federal regulations subsistence
19 harvest of all fish is prohibited in the Kanuti River
20 closure area. The Federal closure was carried over
21 from State regulations at the beginning of the Federal
22 program and has not been reviewed or modified since.
23 Under State regulations the Kanuti River is closed to
24 subsistence fishing, but sport fishing is allowed. The
25 closure area crosses the Dalton Highway and is located
26 on general domain land managed by the Bureau of Land
27 Management.

28

29 According to local knowledge and the
30 anadromous waters catalogue, chinook and summer chum
31 salmon are present in the Kanuti River downstream of
32 the closure area. Aerial surveys indicate few salmon
33 inhabit the drainage. Non-salmon fish species such as
34 Arctic grayling, burbot, round whitefish, northern pike
35 and longnose sucker have been observed in the Kanuti
36 River, but information in the closure area is limited.

37

38 Wiseman and Coldfoot are the
39 communities most likely to subsistence fish in the area
40 if the closure is rescinded. If the closure is
41 rescinded, Federal subsistence regulations for the
42 Yukon northern area would apply. Harvest of salmon
43 would be allowed if authorized by State emergency order
44 or Federal special action.

45

46 Non-salmon fish could be taken with any
47 gear listed at the top of Page 89 of your Council book.
48 Subsistence rod and reel harvest limits would match
49 State sport fishing harvest and possession limits.

50

0198

1 Harvest would be unrestricted for all other legal gear
2 types.

3
4 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
5 rescind the closure. Currently, a portion of the
6 Kanuti River is closed to subsistence fishing but open
7 to other uses. Rescinding the closure would establish
8 a Federal subsistence priority in the area. However,
9 allowing unrestricted harvest for gear types other than
10 rod and reel may lead to overharvest. While populations
11 may be protected by limiting subsistence harvest to rod
12 and reel or modifying harvest limits, these
13 modifications simply aren't possible through the
14 closure review process and would require a fisheries
15 proposal be submitted during the next fisheries
16 regulatory cycle.

17
18 Until such a proposal can be submitted,
19 the Federal in-season manager may use their delegated
20 authority to restrict gear types and/or harvest limits,
21 for up to 60 days, to protect populations in the
22 closure area. Actions exceeding 60 days would require
23 a temporary special action be implemented by the Board.

24
25
26 So the motions are slightly different
27 for this than for the proposal, so if you can turn to
28 Page 103 of your Council book, you'll see what motions
29 can be presented or that the Council can do. The
30 firsts is retain status quo. So that's just simply
31 keeping the closure in place. The next is rescind the
32 closure, so that would just be eliminating the closure
33 from regulations. The Council can also modify the
34 closure, but again you can't modify gear type or
35 harvest limits. You could, for example, rescind the
36 closure only for non-salmon species. The Council may
37 also defer the decision to the next regulatory cycle or
38 take no action.

39
40 That concludes my presentation. I'll
41 stand by for any questions you may have.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Do we have any
44 questions for Cory at this time?

45
46 (No comments)

47
48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: If not, thank
49 you very much. Next one is -- Cory, I think you're up
50

0199

1 again. You're going to be talking about Bonanza Creek.
2 No?

3

4 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

7

8 MR. REAKOFF: We're still deliberating
9 this proposal FCR23-02. We would be going down through
10 the tribal consultation reports, ADF&G comments, et
11 cetera. We're still deliberating this -- or going to
12 deliberate this proposal.

13

14 MS. PILCHER: All right. So we just
15 did the presentation of analysis. Is there any tribes
16 or ANCSA corporations online that would like to
17 weigh-in. I do not believe we received any, but if
18 anyone is online. For the sake of time, I will
19 probably go quickly. So if I gloss over you, just
20 speak over me, all right.

21

22 Any agency comments, which would
23 include ADF&G, Federal or tribal.

24

25 MS. STUBY: Good morning, Madame Chair.
26 Lisa Stuby, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. There
27 are no ADF&G comments, which is pretty much my fault.
28 I misunderstood what Cory had just mentioned about the
29 procedures and rules for modification.

30

31 I assumed that this would proceed
32 similarly to two years ago or last year when the Jim
33 River proposal was an FCR and it was modified to pretty
34 much follow the sport fish regulations just for
35 conservation purposes because this is off the road
36 system. It is a pretty prolific grayling fishery, but
37 then to allow for a harvest of 10 versus 5 Arctic
38 grayling.

39

40 So I had thought -- and I pretty much
41 confused everybody. The Delta will come up and it's
42 going to be similar. That we should wait until the
43 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council presents
44 modifications, but now I know that those can't be
45 presented.

46

47 So I will be working on and going
48 through my channels and going through my leadership for
49 official State comment, but the one thing that I can
50

0200

1 mention is just a concern regarding sustainability.
2 Again, we're off the road system of an unregulated
3 fishery and just express those concerns. Generally we
4 are -- again, I can't say today, but would be concerned
5 about the sustainability. Generally would be opposed
6 to an unregulated fishery.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: All right. So the next
11 is advisory group comments. Other Regional Councils.

12

13 MR. GRAHAM: The Eastern Interior
14 Regional Advisory Council voted to modify by rescinding
15 the closure to non-salmon species only. The Council
16 was concerned about Yukon River salmon stocks and
17 additional harvest on those stocks.

18

19 The North Slope RAC met and they voted
20 to rescind the closure. The Council noted that
21 rescinding the closure would benefit subsistence uses
22 and provide a Federal subsistence priority.

23

24 Seward Peninsula RAC opted not to take
25 up the closure review and the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta
26 will meet next week and consider this proposal then.

27

28 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Kevin.

31

32 MR. WHITWORTH: I just have a question
33 for Cory. So this rescinding would basically -- the
34 delegation of authority for the fishery would go to the
35 Federal in-season manager and that person would make
36 open/closure comments. It doesn't completely open it
37 to fishing like Lisa had mentioned. So I just wanted
38 to ask that. Holly or Cory could answer that. Does
39 that make sense?

40

41 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. This is
42 Cory Graham with OSM. So rescinding this closure would
43 open that fishery, but we have the tools through the
44 special action process to make changes, modify, to
45 close, to open and such. That would be limited to 60
46 days under Holly's delegation of authority and it could
47 be a temporary special action request, but would need
48 to go to the Board and that wouldn't go until the next
49 regulatory cycle.

50

0201

1 MS. CARROLL: I guess through the
2 Chair. This is Holly Carroll. I think -- Kevin, does
3 that answer your question? One of the concerns is that
4 as the Fishery Manager I only have temporary special
5 action authority. So if we're going to open a whole
6 drainage, that's year round, right? So I can't close
7 it for longer than 60 days. So while it gives Federal
8 management authority, I still would have to go to the
9 Federal Subsistence Board to create some structure
10 around managing that.

11
12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Did that answer
13 your question, Kevin?

14
15 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes. Thank you.

16
17 MS. PILCHER: All right. There's been
18 no Fish and Game Advisory Committees submitted to
19 comment on this at this time. I don't believe any
20 Subsistence Resource Commissions have either as they
21 haven't met yet. We have not received any written
22 public comments. No public testimony has been received
23 at this meeting. After that it is back to the Council.

24
25 MR. REAKOFF: I'd like to speak.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

28
29 MR. REAKOFF: I'm going to make a
30 motion to modify the closure to non-salmon to maintain
31 the salmon closure and allow for freshwater stocks
32 harvest. So modification of the closure as EIRAC has
33 done already. I will speak to various aspects of this
34 after we get a second.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a second.

37
38 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion by Jack
41 to -- whatever he said and seconded by Tim.
42 Discussion.

43
44 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

47
48 MR. REAKOFF: This area is distant from
49 Wiseman, Coldfoot, which are the primary subsistence
50

0202

1 users. These fisheries would occur for like grayling
2 would be as people were down there berry picking. So
3 it would be nominal harvest that far distant from these
4 communities. There's absolutely little concern for
5 overharvest that we would be utilizing that fishery.
6 This ascension would then give opportunity to submit a
7 proposal, as we have for the -- at this time there's
8 little concern on my part that there would be any
9 realistic overharvest scenario.

10

11 Thank you, Madame Chair.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.
14 Any other discussion.

15

16 (No comments)

17

18 MR. WHITWORTH: Question.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you. All in favor
21 say aye.

22

23 IN UNISON: Aye.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
26 sign.

27

28 (No opposing votes)

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: The motion
31 carries. Okay. Cory, you're up again.

32

33 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. Members of
34 the Council. Again for the record my name is Cory
35 Graham. I'm a fisheries biologist with OSM. I'll now
36 present Fisheries Closure Review 23-03, which can be
37 found starting on Page 105 of your Council book.

38

39 This is again a standard review of a
40 Federal subsistence fishery closure to the harvest of
41 all fish in the Bonanza Creek drainage. The purpose of
42 the review is to determine if the closure is still
43 necessary and this is really similar to what I went
44 over for the Kanuti River.

45

46 So like the Kanuti River, under Federal
47 regulations subsistence harvest of all fish is
48 prohibited in this drainage. The Federal closure was
49 carried over from State regulations and has not been

50

0203

1 reviewed or modified. Under State regulations Bonanza
2 Creek is closed to subsistence fishing, but sport
3 fishing is allowed. The closure area also crosses the
4 Dalton Highway and is located on general domain land
5 managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

6
7 Information regarding salmon is
8 limited, but chum salmon may spawn in Bonanza Creek and
9 have been documented downriver of the Dalton Highway.
10 Population assessment near and above the Dalton Highway
11 for all salmon species is lacking in the drainage.

12
13 The non-salmon fish community is
14 comprised of Arctic grayling, burbot, round whitefish,
15 longnose sucker and northern pike. Grayling abundance
16 was assessed in 1996 in a 3.3 mile section of the
17 creek. Results indicated there was a density of
18 approximately 349 grayling per mile.

19
20 Again, Wiseman and Coldfoot are the
21 communities most likely to subsistence fish in the area
22 if the closure is rescinded. If the closure is
23 rescinded, Federal subsistence regulations for the
24 Yukon northern area would apply. Harvest of salmon
25 would be allowed if authorized by State emergency order
26 or Federal special action.

27
28 Non-salmon fish could be taken with a
29 variety of gear types. Rod and reel harvest limits
30 would match State sport fishing and harvest and
31 possession limits. Harvest would be unrestricted for
32 all other legal gear types.

33
34 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
35 rescind the closure. Currently, the system is closed
36 to subsistence fishing but open to other uses.
37 Rescinding the closure would establish a Federal
38 subsistence priority. Populations may be protected by
39 special actions until a proposal that modifies
40 allowable gear types or harvest limits could be
41 submitted.

42
43 That concludes my presentation. I'll
44 stand by for any questions you may have.

45
46 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim.

49
50

0204

1 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
2 Cory, I'm not understanding. How can it be open to
3 sport fishing if the land is BLM land? Wouldn't it be
4 closed except for -- well, it seems like the Federal
5 closure would overrule the State sport regulation
6 because of land ownership.

7
8 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. These are
9 again closures that have been on the books for a really
10 long time that we're just now looking at. Because
11 they're in there in the regulations I don't think that
12 that would automatically close sport fishing because
13 that's a State regulation.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

16
17 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair.
18 Cory, I think what's really throwing me off is the word
19 rescind. Is that OSM preliminary conclusion to
20 eliminate.....

21
22 MR. GRAHAM: (Nods affirmatively)

23
24 MR. HONEA: Okay, eliminate.

25
26 MR. GRAHAM: Through the Chair. Yes,
27 that is correct.

28
29 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

32
33 MR. REAKOFF: We should have Nissa go
34 through the Tribal consultation report, et cetera.

35
36 MS. PILCHER: 10-4, Jack. All right.
37 So I did not receive word that any tribes or
38 corporations submitted. If there's any online.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 MS. PILCHER: Agency comments. State,
43 Federal or Tribal.

44
45 MS. STUBY: Through the Chair. Lisa
46 Stuby, State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game.
47 My comments for Bonanza Creek are pretty much the same
48 as for Kanuti as they're all -- pretty much follow the
49 State subsistence closures including the Jim River. So
50

0205

1 my comments are similar.

2

3 MS. PILCHER: Other Regional Councils.

4

5 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. Cory Graham
6 for the record.

7

8 MR. WUTTIG: Hi, this is Klaus Wuttig
9 with Fish and Game.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead.

12

13 MR. WUTTIG: Thank you, Madame Chair.
14 I apologize this is through the phone, but just to
15 reiterate Bonanza Creek is different than the Kanuti
16 and the Department has sustainability concerns given
17 that rescinding it would allow gear types such as
18 gillnets. You can almost jump across it in places. So
19 having all gear types available with no harvest limits
20 is a true concern. So I just wanted to point that out.
21 It's a completely different situation than Kanuti.

22

23 Madame Chair.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Thank
26 you, Klaus. Cory.

27

28 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. The Eastern
29 Interior Regional Advisory Council voted to modify by
30 rescinding to non-salmon species only. Again, the
31 Council was concerned about Yukon River salmon stocks
32 and additional harvest on those stocks.

33

34 North Slope Regional Advisory Council
35 voted to rescind the closure. The Council noted that
36 rescinding the closure would benefit subsistence uses
37 and provide a Federal subsistence priority.

38

39 The Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory
40 Council opted not to take up the closure review and Y-K
41 Delta will meet next week.

42

43 Thank you.

44

45 MS. PILCHER: All right. State Fish
46 and Game Advisory Committees. I don't think they
47 weighed in yet.

48

49 Subsistence Resource Commissions have

50

0206

1 not met yet.

2

3

4 MS. CARROLL: Sorry, Madame Chair. You
5 asked for agencies and I'm going to talk on behalf of
6 the Federal agency. I just wanted to reiterate that
7 just like Kevin's question on the previous one, my
8 management authority on this, if this were to be
9 opened, is limited to 60 days. So to manage this
10 fishery year round we would need to go to the Federal
11 Subsistence Board and create structure around that as
12 to gear, length of time people could fish, all of that.

12

13

14 So I just wanted to clarify that for
15 you. While you would have Federal management, it needs
16 further refinement if this fisheries opened up.

16

17

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

0207

1 the biomass there. The subsistence users -- the
2 primary predominant species in those drainages is
3 Arctic grayling and those are harvested with rod and
4 reel. Those fish are only present from May through
5 late September and then they vacate the drainages.

6
7 So there's no year-round fishery.
8 There's no fishery going to occur. Ninety-nine percent
9 of grayling that are harvested are harvested with rod
10 and reel for subsistence in the upper drainages. It's
11 the most effective method of take.

12
13 So again I will state for the record
14 that I feel there would be incidental -- if people are
15 down in that area, they may catch grayling incidental
16 to their other subsistence activities in that area, but
17 there would not be excessively large harvests or people
18 are not going to go there with other harvest methods of
19 gillnet, et cetera.

20
21 Thank you, Madame Chair.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.
24 All in favor of the motion say aye.

25
26 IN UNISON: Aye.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
29 sign.

30
31 (No opposing votes)

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.
34 Okay. Onto Cory again. Sorry about that. This is Liz
35 that's going to speak.

36
37 MS. WILLIAMS: Good morning, Madame
38 Chair and members of the Council. This is a crossover
39 customary and traditional use analysis and I'll kind of
40 keep it short. It's more of a housekeeping thing that
41 came up during some of the recent closures. I'll start
42 with some of the notes and cut it short unless you want
43 more detail.

44
45 The analysis itself begins on Page 123
46 and it's a crossover proposal because it affects
47 fisheries in the Yukon. Proposal FP23-02 was submitted
48 Chevak Native Village and requests the Federal
49 Subsistence Board to recognize customary and
50

0208

1 traditional uses of chinook, summer chum, coho,
2 sockeye, and pink salmon by residents of Chevak, Hooper
3 Bay, and Scammon Bay.

4
5 Currently these three communities have
6 a customary and traditional use determination for and
7 are eligible to harvest fall chum salmon only. So the
8 reason Chevak submitted this proposal was that in
9 spring 2022 the Federal Subsistence Board closed
10 Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to
11 the harvest of salmon from June 1st through September
12 30th. Any subsistence fishing opportunity on Federal
13 public waters was announced by the Federal manager.

14
15 This brought up the issue that Chevak,
16 Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay residents customary and
17 traditional use determination for salmon is for fall
18 chum only. When the Federal manager provided
19 opportunity to harvest salmon, residents of these three
20 communities were not eligible to harvest other species
21 of salmon under Federal regulations. So OSM staff asked
22 the Native Village of Chevak to submit this proposal so
23 that we could correct this omission.

24
25 In the early days of the program there
26 were a few oversights and, quite frankly, mistakes or
27 accidental omissions. We can't really reconstruct the
28 record of how these three communities were not
29 included. So that's the purpose of this proposal is to
30 acknowledge their customary and traditional uses of all
31 these other species. They were harvesting them under
32 State regulations before this was -- or I guess they
33 knew. But anyway. So Federal regulations would make
34 it much better for them.

35
36 That's kind of the summary of this
37 proposal. If you'd like more information, the person
38 who wrote the analysis went through the eight factors
39 for customary and traditional uses and found them 1,000
40 percent customary and traditional uses.

41
42 So that's the end of my presentation
43 unless you have questions. Thank you.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Do you have any
46 questions, Kevin?

47
48 MR. WHITWORTH: Yes. Thank you, Madame
49 Chair. Do these communities have customary and
50

0209

1 traditional use on the Kuskokwim? I can't remember.

2

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Through the Chair. Mr.
4 Whitworth. I don't know.

5

6 MR. WHITWORTH: I'm seeing no in the
7 background. It doesn't really matter, I guess, but I
8 was just curious. Thank you.

9

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. I would have to
11 look. Pippa Kenner actually did this analysis, so I
12 don't know off the top of my head. Okay, according to
13 the fish regs, no. That's on Page 37 in the Federal
14 regs if you wanted to look.

15

16 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you. With
19 that we'll give a presentation of the analysis.

20

21 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher.
22 Board consultations. We did not receive any comments
23 that I am aware of from tribes or corporations. I'll
24 move to agency comments. Fish and Game.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 MS. PILCHER: Federal.

29

30 MS. CARROLL: Madame Chair. This is
31 Holly Carroll. I know Liz did a great job presenting,
32 but as a Federal Manager I just want to reiterate that
33 if this was passed it would give me another tool in my
34 toolbox to allow these three communities to be
35 Federally qualified and fish for salmon when we have
36 the opportunity to allow that.

37

38 It was really hard as a manager this
39 year to allow this tiny opportunity to go for coho and
40 those three communities were not legally Federally
41 qualified users during those openers. If this passes
42 at the Board, they will get to fish in any Federal
43 opportunities next summer for any type of salmon.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

46

47 MS. PILCHER: Tribal.

48

49 MR. J. SIMON: Thank you. Through the

50

0210

1 Chair. For the record my name is Jim Simon. I'm
2 representing the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Tribal
3 Resource Stewardship Program. I've discussed this
4 proposal with the leadership of the Resource
5 Stewardship Program and based on knowledge shared with
6 me by the late Mary Pete when I was hired 20 years ago
7 to the Division of Subsistence Mary Pete was the
8 director then, but had previously worked as a
9 subsistence resource specialist throughout this portion
10 of the coastal area. I learned from her very quickly
11 because of such a priority for her research background
12 that the salmon stocks that these three communities
13 rely on are Yukon River bound salmon stocks.

14
15 Some of the residents of these three
16 communities formerly lived in other villages prior to
17 the government requiring people to move and get their
18 kids in school, et cetera, lived closer to -- I believe
19 it's called the Black River, which is part of what
20 leads into one of the Yukon River mouths.

21
22 So from the perspective of the Tribal
23 Resource Stewardship Program at TCC the inability of
24 the Federal In-season Manager to allow any limited
25 opportunities for Federally qualified subsistence uses
26 that these three communities couldn't have access to
27 those resources is a problem that the Tanana Chiefs
28 Conference wants to support in correcting by supporting
29 this proposal.

30
31 Thank you.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you very
34 much.

35
36 MS. PILCHER: Other Regional Councils.

37
38 (No comments)

39
40 MS. PILCHER: Did any other Regional
41 Councils weigh in on this?

42
43 MS. WILLIAMS: The Eastern Interior RAC
44 -- this is Liz Williams -- deferred to the home region.
45 The Yukon Kuskokwim Delta RAC meets next week, so
46 they'll address it then as well.

47
48 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher.
49 To my knowledge no Fish and Game Advisory Committees or
50

0211

1 Subsistence Resource Commissions have submitted
2 comments on this proposal either. There was no written
3 public comments received and no public testimony at
4 this time that I'm aware of. So that would turn it
5 back over to the Council.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Is there a motion
8 to adopt.

9
10 MR. GERVAIS: I make a motion to adopt
11 FP23-02 with the intent to support.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
14 second.

15
16 MR. P. SIMON: I second.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Seconded by
19 Pollock. Motion made by Tim and seconded by Pollock.
20 Discussion.

21
22 (No comments)

23
24 MR. P. SIMON: Question.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: The question has
27 been called for. All in favor of the motion say aye.

28
29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same sign.

32
33 (No opposing votes)

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.
36 With that we have Cory.

37
38 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. Members of
39 the Council. Again for the record my name is Cory
40 Graham. I'm a fisheries biologist with the Office of
41 Subsistence Management. I'll now present Fisheries
42 Closure Review 23-05, which can be found starting on
43 Page 149 of your Council book.

44
45 FCR23-05 reviews the Federal
46 subsistence fishery closure to the harvest of all fish
47 in the Delta River. Again it's a standard or directed
48 review to determine if the closure is still necessary.
49 Under Federal regulations subsistence harvest of all
50

1 fish is prohibited in the Delta River. The Federal
2 closure again was carried over from State regulations
3 at the beginning of the Federal program.

4
5 Under State regulations the Delta River
6 is closed to subsistence fishing, but sport fishing is
7 allowed. The Delta River, which is located in the
8 Eastern Interior Region, begins at the outlet of Lower
9 Tangle Lake, about 60 miles south southwest of Delta
10 Junction. The upper portion of the Delta River is a
11 component of the National Wild and Scenic River System,
12 which is administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
13 The lower section of the closure area is on General
14 Domain Land, which is also managed by BLM.

15
16 Chum and coho salmon spawn in the lower
17 section of the Delta River, but salmon do not inhabit
18 the closure area. The non-salmon fish community is
19 comprised of Arctic grayling, burbot, round whitefish,
20 longnose sucker, lake trout and dolly varden. Previous
21 research indicates the closure area provides year-round
22 habitat for an abundant population of Arctic grayling
23 with one of the highest recorded density estimates ever
24 recorded for the species in Alaska.

25
26 Big Delta and Delta Junction are the
27 communities most likely to subsistence fish in the
28 Delta River if the closure is rescinded due to their
29 close proximity to the drainage. If the closure is
30 rescinded, Federal subsistence regulations for the
31 Yukon northern area would apply. Non-salmon fish could
32 be taken with a variety of gear types that are listed
33 on Page 150 of your Council book.

34
35 Rod and reel harvest limits would match
36 State sport fishing harvest and possession limits.
37 Again, harvest would be unrestricted for all other
38 legal gear types.

39
40 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to
41 rescind the closure. Again Federal public waters of
42 the Delta River are closed to subsistence fishing, but
43 open to other uses and rescinding the closure would
44 establish a Federal subsistence priority in the area.
45 Again, similar to the previous closure reviews,
46 populations may be protected by special actions until a
47 proposal that modifies allowable gear types or harvest
48 limits can be submitted.

0213

1 That concludes my presentation and I'll
2 stand by for any questions you may have.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Any questions.

5
6 (No comments)

7
8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: If not, that's
9 introduction of the proposal. Now we need a
10 presentation of the analysis.

11
12 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher.
13 To my knowledge no comments were received by tribes or
14 corporations. If there's any online, this would be the
15 time to speak.

16
17 (No comments)

18
19 MS. PILCHER: So agency comments.
20 State.

21
22 MS. GLEASON: Thank you. This is
23 Christy Gleason. I'm the fall season manager with the
24 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Deena and I manage
25 the subsistence and the personal use fisheries for this
26 area. We don't have an official ADF&G comment on this
27 proposal, but I did want to let you know that the Delta
28 AC met last night and I was in attendance for that
29 meeting with Brandy Baker, the sport fish biologist,
30 and this proposal was discussed and they took it up and
31 they unanimously opposed it just for the general
32 concerns of sustainability of people fishing with
33 gillnets for non-salmon in this area.

34
35 Those are my comments at this time.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

38
39 MS. STUBY: Alaska Department of Fish
40 and Game, Division of Sport Fish, Yukon Area Management
41 Biologist, excluding the Tanana. I'm actually just
42 speaking for Brandy, who is out counting coho salmon
43 currently on the Delta Clearwater. The State at this
44 point does not have comments for the reasoning I gave
45 for both Bonanza and the Kanuti River. A
46 misunderstanding of the whole procedure for
47 modification.

48
49 But I just want to kind of reiterate
50

0214

1 what I said for those two drainages. In general, the
2 State is concerned and generally does oppose an
3 unregulated fishery with respect to harvest limits and
4 gear types due to very similar sustainability concerns.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you very
7 much.

8
9 MS. PILCHER: Now we'll hear from
10 Federal.

11
12 MS. CARROLL: Thanks very much. Madame
13 Chair. Holly Carroll, Federal In-season Manager for
14 the Yukon. I wanted to highlight that again. If this
15 closure were rescinded and it was open to all fishing
16 year round, the Federal manager has to take action to
17 close anything or to set bag limits or do anything like
18 that. My authority is limited to a 60-day period. So
19 we would need to work with the Federal Subsistence
20 Board and other managers to figure out a way to manage
21 this fishery. So just kind of reminding you of some of
22 the limitations in my abilities to manage a year-round
23 fishery on this system.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

26
27 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Kevin.

30
31 MR. WHITWORTH: I have a question for
32 Holly. Could you -- after that 60-day period could you
33 reapply basically for another 60 days?

34
35 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair.
36 Thanks for that question. What I'm understanding about
37 my emergency special action authority is no. It is
38 limited to 60 days for the same type of action, so I
39 can only take new types of actions and that's why we
40 would need the Federal Subsistence Board or proposals
41 or something to create a lot of structure around this
42 for gear types, different salmon, bag limits.

43
44 It would be a whole new fishery that
45 has not existed before and it would take a bit of work
46 to execute. I just wanted to make it clear that when
47 you take those Federal closures away, it is open and I
48 can only close it for a certain amount of time. So
49 just making that clear for you guys.

50

0215

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
4 Holly, what year was this closure instituted?

5

6 MS. CARROLL: Through the Chair. I
7 think Cory discussed all these closures have been on
8 the book for decades and this is part of the closure
9 review to see why they're there and whether they should
10 be there. I don't know the original closure date or
11 the reasons for the closures. Most of these closures
12 are based around the road system. You can see there's
13 a lot of roads around this system.

14

15 MS. PILCHER: All right. And then
16 tribal.

17

18 MR. J. SIMON: Thank you. For the
19 record, my name is Jim Simon. For the purposes of this
20 closure review I'm representing the Ahtna Intertribal
21 Resource Commission where I'm also a consultant.

22

23 This closure review is a very clunky
24 process, you know, with the inability for OSM or you to
25 make any modifications in rescinding a closure to
26 provide for sustainable methods and means, customary
27 and traditional use determinations, et cetera. For
28 that reasons, you know, this is the first time as I
29 understand it that this closure review has ever been
30 before reconsidered by the Federal Subsistence
31 Management Program. OSM is recommending removing the
32 closure.

33

34 When this was added to the agenda, I
35 believe last week Southcentral Regional Advisory
36 Council meeting for them to consider it, that is when
37 we learned that the Southcentral Regional Advisory
38 Council doesn't have any jurisdiction to weigh in on
39 this closure review despite the fact that the
40 headwaters of the Delta River are contained within the
41 Ahtna Traditional Use Territory.

42

43 While the Board of Directors of AITRC
44 has not yet met to discuss this specifically, AITRC
45 staff as well as the president of the Native Village of
46 Tazlina, who sits on the Southcentral RAC, wants to
47 weigh in on this closure review. This is an area that
48 is customarily and traditionally been used for taking
49 non-salmon as well as wildlife resources since before
50

0216

1 the Delta Junction and road system existed and they
2 continue to use this area.

3

4

5 Having grown up in the Ahtna
6 Traditional Use Territory, I'm personally familiar with
7 this area of the Upper Delta River and have fished for
8 non-salmon fish there myself even though I am no longer
9 Federally qualified. I think it's important to
10 recognize that the Ahtna Intertribal Resource
11 Commission is also very committed to sustainable
12 fisheries management and would also not like to see
13 this closure removed to the extent that an
14 unsustainable fishing practices occur. But in order to
15 get the process started there needs to be support for
16 rescinding the Federal closure.

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

As Holly has expertly explained, her authority is limited to 60-day emergency authority. Removing the closure could then -- and having Holly place limitations or a temporary closure or an emergency closure in place could at least allow the Federal Subsistence Board to take up a temporary Special Action Request that could close fishing until the next fisheries regulatory cycle whereby then a proposal could be submitted to establish bag limits and methods and means determinations.

I suspect, given the Office of Subsistence Management is recommending rescinding this closure, if I remember correctly, that the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission will be submitting a proposal to have their customary and traditional use determination recognized given the longstanding and continuing use of this area for fishing.

I think with that I've covered all the points I need to. Thank you.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim has a question.

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair. Jim, the Federal Subsistence Board cannot take any action on creating seasons and methods and means and bag limits until the closure is rescinded?

MR. J. SIMON: To my understanding that is correct, but there are others in the room who know this much better in more detail. I think the

0217

1 constraints that you and everyone has about these
2 closure reviews stems from the closure review policy
3 and some of the limitations put into that. But I would
4 defer to Katya or Tom or others in the room who
5 probably have a much clearer explanation. Perhaps
6 Cory.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. So the
11 Board can do that through the proposal process. The
12 fisheries proposal process. Right now we can't do that
13 through the closure review process, but if this was for
14 example deferred, somebody could submit a proposal like
15 you did for the Jim River that would establish bag
16 limits, gear type restrictions and also rescind the
17 closure at the same time.

18

19 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher
20 just to finish out the procedure. The next is advisory
21 group comments. We did hear from Ms. Gleason about
22 Fish and Game Advisory Committees. How about other
23 Regional Councils?

24

25 MR. GRAHAM: Madame Chair. This is
26 Cory Graham for the record. The Eastern Interior
27 Regional Advisory Council voted to defer this. The
28 Council noted the need to hear from people that would
29 be affected by this closure and that would be the Delta
30 AC. The Council was also concerned about the lack of
31 monitoring and potential overharvest.

32

33 The North Slope RAC recommended to
34 defer to the Eastern Interior Council who is most
35 affected by this closure.

36

37 The Southcentral Regional Advisory
38 Council provided a comment and they recommended OSM
39 remove the Federal subsistence fishing closure of the
40 Delta River, but delay opening Federal fishing until
41 such time that OSM has conducted an 804 or similar
42 analysis of the area to determine which Federally
43 qualified users should receive a C&T determination in
44 the Delta River Drainage and to make recommendations as
45 to the appropriate methods and means of harvest to
46 ensure sustainable fisheries management.

47

48 The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC will meet
49 next week.

50

0218

1 MS. PILCHER: All right. And then
2 Subsistence Resource Commissions. I don't believe
3 we've received comment from them. No written public
4 comments or public testimony was received. Hold on.

5
6 MR. J. SIMON: I'm sorry. For the
7 record, this is Jim Simon on personal testimony.
8 Something I forgot to mention in the AITRC testimony I
9 just gave is that, again, when I was hired into the
10 Division of Subsistence what I was taught is that all
11 of the Delta River was closed as well as these other
12 closures that you've been dealing with today in order
13 to protect the fish during the construction of the
14 Alyeska Pipeline and then as Cory has already
15 identified those closures.

16
17 So those closures all predated the
18 State subsistence statute as well as the Federal
19 Subsistence Management Program. It's a holdover of the
20 adoption of existing State subsistence fishing
21 regulations and closures when the Federal subsistence
22 fishery program was established.

23
24 Thank you.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

27
28 MS. PILCHER: All right. Then with
29 that it goes back to the Council.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
32 motion to adopt.

33
34 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

37
38 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair. I make a
39 motion to defer this proposal FRC23-05 to region. This
40 is within the Eastern Interior Region and I feel that
41 they should deal with this issue as it affects them
42 mostly.

43
44 Thank you, Madame Chair.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you. Is
47 there a second.

48
49 MR. WHITWORTH: Second.

50

0219

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: The motion was
2 made by Jack to defer. Seconded by Kevin. Discussion.

3
4 MR. P. SIMON: Question.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: The question has
7 been called for. All in favor say aye.

8
9 IN UNISON: Aye.

10
11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
12 sign.

13
14 (No opposing votes)

15
16 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.

17
18 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for
19 the record. Sorry to stall you guys's forward
20 momentum, but I was hoping we could actually go back to
21 the previous proposal FP23-02, which was to revise
22 customary and traditional use determinations for Yukon
23 River salmon. If you guys could just put a brief
24 something on the record for your support, that would be
25 very helpful.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Thank you
28 so much.

29
30 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair.

31
32 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

33
34 MR. GERVAIS: Can I.....

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

37
38 MR. GERVAIS:supply some
39 justification for 23-02.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, Tim.

42
43 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah.

44
45 MR. REAKOFF: I'll defer to Tim. Go
46 ahead, Tim.

47
48 MR. GERVAIS: Excuse me, Jack. I
49 didn't hear you on there. I think the justification
50

0220

1 for our support would be that these coast communities
2 it would be natural for them to be first and any
3 migrating salmon heading towards the various mouths of
4 the Yukon River. From what we know it sounds like a
5 fishery that would have been occurring for a long time
6 and we're just recognizing that those people use that
7 resource.

8

9 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tim.
10 Okay, Jack.

11

12 MR. REAKOFF: I agree with Tim's
13 statement. This is for the OSM record for the Federal
14 Subsistence Board use that we recognize this customary
15 and traditional use and rescinding this closure is
16 warranted.

17

18 Thank you, Madame Chair.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.
21 Is there a question? Call for the question. Sorry, we
22 already voted. I'm all mixed up, but that's okay.
23 Okay with that. I don't know what happened to Mr.
24 Honea. Anybody know? MIA, I guess.

25

26 With that we have -- I guess we'll do
27 this one. D. Liz and Cory.

28

29 MS. WILLIAMS: Sorry about that. Good
30 afternoon, Madame Chair and members of the Council.
31 I'm Liz Williams, anthropologist with OSM. Cory and I
32 are here to discuss the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
33 Program. What we're talking about today is an action
34 item. There's general information about the Fisheries
35 Resource Monitoring Program on Page 161. Then I think
36 Nissa has in your packets some of the specific
37 information we'll be talking about.

38

39 So what we would like to do today is
40 have the Council consider and approve the priority
41 information needs for fisheries research for the Yukon
42 and Kuskokwim regions. OSM administers the Monitoring
43 Program which funds research and monitoring projects
44 that informs the management of subsistence fisheries in
45 the Federal public waters of Alaska. It's also
46 directed at supporting meaningful involvement in
47 fisheries management by Alaska Native and rural
48 organizations and promoting collaboration and
49 partnerships among Federal, State, Alaska Native and
50

0221

1 local organizations.

2

3

4 So sometime in 2024 -- or actually the
5 Office of Subsistence Management will announce the
6 Notice of Funding Opportunity for 2024 later this
7 winter. So this is like a call for proposals. The
8 first step in the funding process is for the Regional
9 Advisory Councils, you, to identify priority
10 information needs for each region. We've talked about
11 a lot during this meeting.

12

13

14 Priority Information Needs identify
15 issues of local concern and knowledge gaps related to
16 subsistence fisheries. In addition they guide the
17 monitoring program by determining the types of projects
18 that are submitted for funding and provide a framework
19 for evaluating and selecting project proposals.

20

21

22

23 In late September of this year
24 volunteer members from the Eastern Interior, Western
25 Interior, and Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Councils met to
26 develop a list of Priority Information Needs for the
27 Yukon region.

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

51

52

53

54

55

56

57

58

59

60

61

62

63

64

65

Members from Western Interior and
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Councils met to develop a draft
list of Priority Information Needs for the Kuskokwim
Region. Volunteers from your Council were Tim Gervais
for the Yukon and Kevin Whitworth for the Kuskokwim.

If you like, I can read the Priority
Information Needs for both rivers and ask for you to
comment on and approve the list. Again, this is an
action item and we'd like to get your consideration and
approval of these lists today. We can certainly modify
or specify things to what's written. It doesn't have
to be exactly as written.

Madame Chair, if you would like for me
to read these out loud or if you'd all prefer to just
read them yourselves.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Council, do you
want to just read them yourself? I think we'll just
read them ourselves. Thank you.

MS. WILLIAMS: I'll defer to you,
Madame Chair, when you all have finished reading. Do
you want to read them right now so we can decide?

0222

1 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Kevin.

4

5 MR. WHITWORTH: Liz had mentioned I was
6 part of the group that helped with the list for the
7 Kuskokwim River and I'll just give a brief summary of
8 what we were trying to do here. We were trying to --
9 we started off with a big list. I mean over 20
10 Priority Information Needs. But we tried to pare it
11 down to some critical five I would say or the highest
12 priority.

13

14 I worked with several people from OSM
15 and Alissa Rogers with the Yukon Delta RAC also was
16 involved. So it's not just me. Anyhow, I feel
17 comfortable with the five that we proposed for the
18 Kuskokwim. Feel free to read them, but I'm comfortable
19 with these five for the Kuskokwim.

20

21 That's all I wanted to share. Thanks.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Anybody else.

24

25 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair. Did you
26 want me to comment on how we evaluated the Yukon needs?

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

29

30 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. So in our meeting
31 approximately a month ago we had a long list because
32 we're also interested in trying to find information and
33 solutions to increasing our fish stocks. I don't think
34 we took hardly anything off the table. One new one
35 that was introduced to the list from our meeting was
36 cued analysis so much different information coming out,
37 all the studies, whether it's genetics or ichthyophonous
38 or whatever. A lot of research from all different
39 levels.

40

41 I was stating I thought it was beyond
42 the means of the average Council member to understand
43 all the information from all the different sources and,
44 therefore, this term meta analysis meaning that
45 somebody would assemble all this different information
46 from different sources and provide a more condensed
47 report so that the Council members could make decisions
48 based on the best available information.

49

50

0223

1 I don't know if we can change it, but
2 on this cue when it talks about the marine environment,
3 environmental conditions, bycatch competition. I think
4 we also discussed interception as one of those reasons.
5 If it's okay with the anthropological team, I would
6 like to add that specifically to the list, interception
7 along with bycatch.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tim.
10 Any other comments.

11
12 MS. WILLIAMS: I just wanted to say
13 that if we hear correctly, Kuskokwim, you would like to
14 adopt as written. Yukon, you would like to amend Item
15 Q and include interception?

16
17 MR. GERVAIS: That's correct for Yukon,
18 yes.

19
20 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. That's in the
21 marine section. Thank you. This was Liz Williams.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Kevin.

24
25 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Madame
26 Chair. I'd like to make a motion to accept
27 Yukon-Kuskokwim Priority Information Needs for 2024
28 FRMP cycle as written with that modification to add
29 interception to Q.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
32 second.

33
34 MR. GERVAIS: I will second that.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion made by
37 Kevin. Seconded by Tim. Discussion.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: If not, all in
42 favor say aye.

43
44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
47 sign.

48
49 (No opposing votes)

50

0224

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.
2 Thank you. Liz.

3
4 MS. WILLIAMS: This is Liz Williams
5 again, anthropologist at OSM. I have a part two.
6 Apologies. We also wanted to talk about the sort of
7 subcategory of the Fisheries Resources Monitoring
8 Program. It's the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring
9 Program. We call it the Partners Program for short.
10 I'm sure you've heard reports from Partners throughout
11 past meetings.

12
13 Before I begin I'd like to introduce
14 Nicole Farnham who's in the back and she'll be
15 presenting to you later. She works with Tanana Chiefs
16 and she is funded through the Partners Program and
17 she'll be giving you an update on her work that she
18 conducted this summer.

19
20 In mid October there will be another
21 Notice of Funding Opportunity or a call for proposals
22 and it will be posted on OSM's website and it's a
23 competitive grant for Alaska Native and rural nonprofit
24 organizations. Again, the intent is to strengthen
25 Alaska Native and rural involvement and Federal
26 subsistence management by providing salary funds to
27 organizations so they can hire a professional
28 biologist, social scientist or educator.

29
30 The grant provides funds for science
31 and culture camps and paid student internships. More
32 information on this is posted on our website, but if
33 you look at Page 170 my colleague Karen Hyer
34 coordinates that program and her email address as well
35 as her direct phone number are there if you have
36 questions, you'd like to apply.

37
38 We try to really support people who
39 submit applications and we don't often get questions,
40 but organizations that would like to participate are
41 highly encouraged to call and get some assistance or
42 guidance in preparing an application because those
43 aren't always crystal clear.

44
45 That's the end of this presentation.
46 Thank you.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Liz.
49 With that I think we're going to go ahead and go to
50

0225

1 lunch. I'll give you an hour and 15 minutes. Be back
2 at 1:30. Be back at 1:30.

3

4 (Off record)

5

6 (On record)

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, we'll
9 reconvene our meeting at 12:34. And our first item
10 would have been Jack been discussing the process and
11 timeliness but we're going to table that until the next
12 meeting and we'll go ahead and hear annual report from
13 Nissa.

14

15 MS. PILCHER: Thank you, Ms. Chair.
16 Members of the Council. For the record my name is
17 Nissa Pilcher, Subsistence Council Coordinator with
18 OSM.

19

20 Now -- yes, I'm on the right agenda
21 item, just doublechecking.

22

23 Now, is the time for the Council to
24 decide what issues to include in its annual report.
25 For your information guidelines for annual reports can
26 be found on Page 55 of your meeting book, that's the
27 one with the black comb binding, so that's Page 55.

28

29 This is an action item.

30

31 ANILCA established the annual report as
32 a way to inform the Federal Subsistence Board of
33 regional subsistence uses and needs and to provide
34 recommendations for regional fish and wildlife
35 management strategies, policies, standards, guidelines
36 and proposed regulations. Section .805(A)(3(d) as in
37 Delta of ANILCA stipulates that your annual report
38 should contain an identification of current and
39 anticipated subsistence uses of fish and wildlife
40 populations within the region, an evaluation of current
41 and anticipated subsistence needs for fish and wildlife
42 populations within the region, a recommended strategy
43 for the management of fish and wildlife populations
44 within the region to accommodate such subsistence uses
45 and needs and recommendations concerning policies,
46 standards, guidelines and regulations to implement the
47 strategy.

48

49 MR. HONEA: I can't find it.

50

0226

1 MR. GERVAIS: It's not on Page 55.

2

3 REPORTER: Nissa, it's 171.

4

5 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

6

7 MS. PILCHER: Page -- oh, my apologies,
8 it looks like I misspoke, it's not Page 55, it's Page
9 177 of your meeting book.

10

11 MR. HONEA: I still can't.....

12

13 MS. PILCHER: Your annual report
14 ensures the Board has the most up to date awareness of
15 issues, concerns and current events that impacts your
16 subsistence ways of life. With your report and
17 recommendations.....

18

19 REPORTER: Don, it's 171.

20

21 MS. PILCHER:the Board can make
22 informed decisions on regulatory and policy actions.
23 Please share items or information that you would like
24 to see raised to the Board's attention in your 2022
25 annual report and have a discussion on what you would
26 like OSM to include under this topic. These items will
27 be drafted into topics of your annual report based on
28 information you provide today and the Council will
29 review the draft report at your winter '23 meeting to
30 provide edits and any additional information.

31

32 All right.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
35 Nissa. The next one will be.....

36

37 MS. PILCHER: Sorry, this is an action
38 item so this is an opportunity for the Council to let
39 the Board know of any concerns or other items that
40 they'd really like to draw the Board's attention to.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack, do you
43 have any comments on this.

44

45 MR. REAKOFF: The only thing that I
46 could think of, Madame Chair, is we have the dall sheep
47 closure for the prescribed unit of Unit 24A and 26B
48 west, there needs to be -- the Board needs to be aware
49 there has to be a sheep management plan to progress

50

0227

1 forward and a strategy to manage the dall sheep
2 population within and near the Dalton Highway Corridor
3 Management Area. So this is sort of a -- the Council
4 should have a report from biological Staff and the
5 Council should be in discussion about a management plan
6 but the Federal Subsistence Board also has to be aware
7 that there needs to be a management strategy to
8 initiate a reopening of this area to non-subsistence
9 uses so that should be one of the annual report topics
10 to the Federal Subsistence Board.

11

12 Thank you, Madame Chair.

13

14 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
15 Jack. Anyone else.

16

17 Tim.

18

19 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
20 Yeah, I would like an item for the annual report to
21 communicate this Council's disagreement that there's
22 still salmon being harvested in commercial fishing when
23 we're having trouble -- we're not meeting our
24 escapement goals on the Yukon River. Specifically that
25 we still have salmon taken out of the population with
26 the BSAI trawl fishery, bycatch -- incidental bycatch
27 in a commercial fishery while there is no subsistence
28 harvest and escapement is not being met.

29

30 And I guess it would be a second item
31 because it's a different system, that there's severe
32 subsistence restrictions on the Kuskokwim and the same
33 issue that we're having, the bycatch taken out of the
34 population with -- from the BSAI trawl fleet also.

35

36 So I think those should be two separate
37 items in the annual report.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. What did
40 you say the second one was?

41

42 MR. GERVAIS: The second one is
43 pertaining to the Kuskokwim River, saying that there's
44 significant subsistence restrictions in place and
45 there's still fish removed from the marine ecosystem
46 due to commercial fishing operations, commercial trawl
47 fishing operations.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,

50

0228

1 Tim. Any other concerns with the Board.

2

3

Kevin.

4

5

6

MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Madame
Chair. If we can add on the salmon issue concern that
Tim brought up, add Area M interception -- did you say
Area M Tim.

8

9

10

MR. GERVAIS: No, my.....

11

12

MR. WHITWORTH: No.

13

14

15

MR. GERVAIS:the two topics I
brought up were specifically addressing Bering Sea
trawl bycatch.

16

17

18

19

MR. WHITWORTH: I would like to see, I
know it's a State water issue but Area M intercept
part of that concern.

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

Also, I think we should have a topic of
continued co-management of fish and trying to work with
tribes and the tribal co-management and the tribal
consultation. I think this just needs to be put up
front again that the Biden Administration and Secretary
of Interior Haaland have executive orders for continued
co-management and also doing more co-management within
DOI and NOAA. So co-management and co-stewardship of
species that are not only under conservation concern
but species that are important for people, tribal
people. Like Darrell suggests, you know, he's talked
about we should be active with all management, not just
conservation species like -- anyhow.

35

36

37

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair. I
would concur with Kevin on maybe a more thorough study
of Area M complex there. I believe that we should, at
least support Virgil's, whatever that proposal was, and
I think -- you know, when we talk about the bycatch or
whatever, the factors that are leading to, I think we
have to really consider some of the bycatch of chum in
Area M, so I think we ought to have a thorough study
done on that.

48

49

50

Thank you.

0229

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Don.
2 Tim.

3
4 MR. GERVAIS: I wanted to ask the other
5 Council members if they thought it was valid to express
6 concern over Alaska Industrial Development Authority
7 still pushing for development of the Ambler Road when
8 this Council has noted in our past meetings to -- that
9 it would be a big detriment to the ecosystem and to
10 subsistence users to have that road put in place. Do
11 other Council members feel that's valid for a topic?

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don, do you have
14 any?

15
16 MR. HONEA: No.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

19
20 MR. HONEA: I'm sorry, Tim, I kind of
21 -- are you asking about the support for that
22 resolution?

23
24 MR. GERVAIS: Well, I'm asking if you
25 feel like the WIRAC's opposition to the Ambler Road, if
26 you think that's valid to be an annual report topic?

27
28 MR. HONEA: I deem it necessary and
29 whatever it takes to oppose that road, yes.

30
31 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, this is
32 Jack.

33
34 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack, do you
35 have any -- Jack, yes.

36
37 MR. REAKOFF: Yes, Tim's right. This
38 Council has highlighted this issue to the Federal
39 Subsistence Board that the road would have significant
40 impact to fish and wildlife resources that would affect
41 our region. The road crosses -- basically half of the
42 road crosses through our region. And as I've stated
43 before on the record, that road is not a private road,
44 it will be open because anybody can stake a mining
45 claim to then become a commercial user. That's how
46 these hunters started using the Haul Road. Long before
47 the Haul Road was open, hunters found out they could
48 stake mining claims for relatively price to buy their
49 permit to be a commercial user, so it's a serious
50

0230

1 concern of the people in the Upper Koyukuk at how much
2 additional hunting pressure will be exerted and fishing
3 pressure against sheefish stocks on the Alatna River
4 and Kobuk River and all the fisheries, the commercial
5 guiding that will take place if this road is now open
6 -- there's lots of commercial guides that are hunting
7 up here and they're highly competitive with local
8 people. This is an issue that the Federal Subsistence
9 Board -- concerns that we should bring forward again,
10 that this is -- this will have long range ramifications
11 for the subsistence users in our region.

12

13 Thank you, Madame Chair.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
16 Jack. I also think -- I know from the past this
17 Council has been very supportive in opposing the Ambler
18 Road and I think we should keep continuing to say it
19 and write letters or whatever it takes to -- for them
20 to hear us. Like Darrell said we need to take action
21 on stuff so I think we need to just keep saying it and
22 saying it and saying it. Because I remember when I sat
23 on our Louden Council we had something that we brought
24 up and year after year after year after year we kept on
25 just harping, bringing it up and we finally got what we
26 were harping about. So I think if we just keep on
27 going and harping and, you know, standing behind the
28 opposition of the Ambler Road maybe it'll happen.

29

30 Pollock.

31

32 MR. SIMON: Up in Allakaket the peoples
33 talk about the Ambler Road, they said it's going to go
34 through anyway but there's things that -- if the road
35 right now is just -- it's for industrial use only, that
36 sounds good but they also said that about the oil
37 pipeline Haul Road but later it was turned over to the
38 State and of course the State opened the road to the
39 public and lots of people drive up the road, not only
40 to look at the mountains but fish here and there and
41 hunt and trap, that's (indiscernible) people from
42 Allakaket. Of course we don't have no salmon, we're
43 restricted in fishing, there's low number of moose, and
44 the caribou hasn't returned since 1974. So that's one
45 reason that they're afraid of the Haul Road. They come
46 to our village sometimes to offer job opportunities but
47 that will be just short-term compared to what will
48 happen. The proposed road will cross the Henshaw River
49 and salmon spawn on the Henshaw River and Alatna River

50

0231

1 there's sheefish spawn, whitefish spawn and the
2 proposed road will (indiscernible) these places and
3 that's why people are afraid if they build this it
4 would be a disaster. Right now there's no salmon and
5 we really fish for sheefish and whitefish
6 (indiscernible) if those are impacted through this.

7

8 That's it, Madame Chair.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
11 Pollock. Okay, do we have anything -- oh, Kevin.

12

13 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Madame
14 Chair. So I sit on the McGrath AC and they, too, are
15 really concerned about sheep in 19C so it's west --
16 east of McGrath in the Farewell region. Nikolai has a
17 winter hunt up in the range, I think the quota is maybe
18 five. But I would just like to add 19C to the concerns
19 for our letter as well as the Brooks Range population
20 too. But the number 1 concern for that McGrath AC was
21 sheep. That was at the last meeting so I wanted to
22 bring that up.

23

24 Also the last concern I have, that
25 we've heard a lot of it, too, that folks are talking
26 about is non-salmon species, whitefish in particular,
27 and sheefish and folks having to adjust, you know, they
28 can't get salmon so they're having to target whitefish
29 to try to meet their needs and there's concern for the
30 populations of whitefish. But in the upper Kuskokwim
31 also there's concern because there's no access to fish
32 for whitefish all of that time in December -- or excuse
33 me, that whole month -- anyways, was completely closed
34 so I think we should point that out as well.

35

36 That's all, thanks.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
39 Kevin. Tim, did you have something to say.

40

41 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. I just wanted
42 Kevin to talk about that region around McGrath and up
43 river, this -- is that all State land, 100 percent
44 other than the Native land.

45

46 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah -- Jenny. So
47 there's BLM -- there's -- it's mixed. But I think most
48 of it is State land, State managed but I can't remember
49 how close Denali Park is to that area but it is State

50

0232

1 managed. You know it's just like the Ambler Road, it's
2 very checkerboarded throughout the entire reach of that
3 Ambler Road but it is a concern.

4

5 I think Nikolai had C&T for sheep at
6 one point but I can't remember the Federal lands up in
7 that area. But most of it is State, yeah. Is that
8 helpful.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: (Nods affirmatively)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Are we
13 done with that now, Kevin are you satisfied, Tim.

14

15 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, Jenny -- or Madame
16 Chair. I would like to add just one specific topic on
17 its own, it's just saying that for these river systems,
18 historically chinook salmon was the most important and
19 most nutritious subsistence resource we had, and the
20 other -- the other salmon were also significant on
21 their own and now that there's either no fishing
22 allowed, or significant reduction in subsistence
23 harvesting, that all the subsistence users in the
24 Western Interior are extremely compromised and we would
25 encourage the Federal Subsistence Board to do whatever
26 they can to help us understand and figure out a way
27 forward to regain these runs back into all these
28 drainages.

29

30 So that, that's differing than those
31 first two I was mentioning, I was addressing the
32 bycatch. This last statement I made is just
33 highlighting the significance of not having salmon as
34 part of our subsistence economy.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
37 Tim. So any more to add for the annual report.

38

39 Nissa.

40

41 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for
42 the record. Just to doublecheck something, so Jack's
43 looking at -- or sorry, Member Reakoff's looking at a
44 dall sheep -- or requesting the Board elevate,
45 understand that a management plan needs to be put into
46 place for the population near the Dalton Highway
47 Corridor. Unit 19C sheep probably wouldn't be included
48 in a management plan involving the corridor. I do
49 understand the McGrath AC has had concerns for awhile,
50

0233

1 that would mostly be population, or external, guiding
2 forces, basically -- not guiding forces but.....

3

4 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

7

8 MR. REAKOFF: I'll clarify for the
9 record, I was referring to the Federal public lands
10 associated through the Dalton Highway Corridor
11 Management Area in Unit 24A and 26B west of the
12 Sagavanirktok, not just the Corridor.

13

14 MS. PILCHER: Thanks for that
15 clarification Jack. Just to circle back on Kevin, so
16 do you want to expand on the concerns that residents of
17 19C have for sheep in that area, just to make sure that
18 I get it right on the report?

19

20 MR. WHITWORTH: Yep. Yeah, not a
21 problem. So McGrath AC, I think at the last meeting,
22 so at the spring meeting State biologists plus the --
23 all of the members of the McGrath AC had concern for
24 the sheep up in 19C Farewell drainage, up in those
25 areas. The population has significantly crashed in the
26 past year or two and this is -- friends of mine have
27 gone up there sheep hunting and they just left because
28 they weren't seeing the sheep. And the guide
29 operations are calling it quits because they are not
30 seeing sheep. Lots of concern -- it's the same time
31 period when the Brooks Range crashed, the 19C
32 population also crashed. These rain events, or icing
33 up in the mountains. And so the McGrath AC thought
34 that they were going to close this sheep hunt but they
35 did not this last year, it may be coming up but I think
36 we should just, in general, just need to say that there
37 is concern for this sheep population and it should be
38 closed.

39

40 Is that helpful.

41

42 Thank you.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim, do you have
45 something else.

46

47 MR. GERVAIS: Well, regarding Kevin's
48 concerns with 19Charlie sheep, it sounds like it should
49 just be its own separate topic rather than just in
50

0234

1 addition to Jack's. All right.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Anything
4 else. Don.

5

6 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair.
7 Yeah, I would just like to mention Tommy's concern from
8 the proposal, whatever that was from Nulato Tribe, as
9 to how to -- the protocols for getting to be a
10 controlled use area, in the Kaiyuh Flats there. I
11 believe it's across from Nulato and what kind of
12 concerns me is, you know, whether it's -- we're talking
13 about State land or it's a myriad of State, Federal,
14 BLM, I don't know the -- I think that it would be a
15 good thing to bring up in a future meeting. I'm not
16 going to be at the next meeting, granted, this is my
17 last meeting for a year or something. But I would like
18 to know the protocol for doing that. And between then
19 and now, and next year -- next fall -- when we -- when
20 we will take the thing up, I would like to, you know,
21 be able to be informed on that, or the Council to be.

22

23 Does that make sense?

24

25 I think it -- I think it's a concern of
26 ours. If a tribal council brings that up and they're
27 concerned about, you know, the -- how to go about that
28 whether it's through State avenues or whatever, I think
29 it's something we should be aware of, something that
30 Ruby AC can help out and all of our ACs collectively
31 could, you know, jump on board and support them.

32

33 And I think if we're talking about
34 annual reports or something, I think it's -- it's --
35 it's a matter of concern that, you know, I'd like to
36 mention.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Don.
41 Do we have anything else that you want to add to the
42 annual report.

43

44 Tim.

45

46 MR. GERVAIS: I'd like to hear your
47 concerns, Madame Chair.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I thought I said

50

0235

1 my concerns. Mine was short so I did say it.

2

3

(Laughter)

4

5

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: But like I said we harp about things and I agree with all of you, what we have because the annual report is very important when we write it -- we don't write it, but somebody else writes it for us and I know Jack has always been stressing that annual report, we have to get this in, get that, make sure they hear this. So I think we did a good job with the few Council members we have here and Jack on the phone. Thank you, Jack, for being right there.

15

16

Anything else.

17

18

Tim.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

We did this the last letter.

(Council nods affirmatively)

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: We all agree.

0236

1 Go ahead.

2

3

4 MS. PILCHER: Can I -- through the
5 Chair. Don, I have a question about Tommy's concern.
6 So one of the things -- the impetus of his concern was
7 basically hunters coming in from outside and that's why
8 they wanted the controlled use area being created and
9 just process-wise, controlled use areas are State so
10 that would be through the Board of Game, which would be
11 a proposal, which it sounds like they're going to do so
12 we'll have another opportunity to weigh in on that.
13 But would -- do you want the report to reflect that the
14 Council is interested in furthering the controlled use
15 area, a State proposal, or do you want it to maybe
16 reflect that you have concerns with -- in times of
17 limited resources, especially outside hunters coming
18 into areas where resources are limited and others are
19 depending on them?

19

20 MR. HONEA: Well, I guess what I meant
21 was maybe a study, maybe it doesn't have to be
22 extensive or something but, you know, when we were
23 discussing this, Tim mentioned something kind of
24 interesting like, well, hey, maybe if you do this then
25 we're going to get more pressure in this area which
26 brings up a valid point. So I guess what we -- I am
27 kind of geared towards the pros and cons on this whole
28 thing. The very protocol of entering into, you know,
29 it's not so much a call of ours or even OSM or the --
30 but because it's the Subsistence Council -- I mean the
31 Federal Board or whatever, but it's a State call
32 correct.

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MS. PILCHER: Uh-huh.

MR. HONEA: Okay. I guess I'm just
looking for maybe information for myself on protocol on
this and so maybe -- maybe just something that --
study of how to go about this -- a protocol and stuff
could be made available to the Council members.

Thank you.

Is that clear, is that.....

MS. PILCHER: (Nods affirmatively)

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
Don.

0237

1 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Anything else.

4

5 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

8

9 MR. REAKOFF: I just wanted to clarify
10 for Don, a proposal will be submitted to request a
11 controlled use area so typically what the State Board
12 of Game regulatory process -- Ruby AC and the Regional
13 Councils will have opportunity to comment on that
14 proposal when it's produced. And at our spring
15 meeting, which is in February, we would have the
16 opportunity -- is it February or April -- anyways at
17 our next spring meeting coming up we'd have opportunity
18 to find out what the prop -- if the proposal is
19 submitted and what it says and we would be able to
20 comment and Ruby AC would make comment at that time.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.

23

24 Don.

25

26 MR. HONEA: Can I respond.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead.

29

30 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. -- thank
31 you, Jack, for clarifying that. I guess what I'm --
32 maybe I'm just making some pointers for the next
33 meeting for the next agenda and maybe this should not
34 be an annual report thing. So if that's confusing I'll
35 retract it.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. I think

40 we.....

41

42 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

45

46 MR. REAKOFF: Yes, it'll be in the
47 proposal process and I just see that our next meeting
48 is in April, so just for clarification.

49

50

0238

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.

4 Okay, if there's nothing else I think all our -- would

5 you be able to read some of the stuff back or do we

6 just go with what we have?

7

8 MS. PILCHER: It's up to the Council.

9 Do you want me to run through the bullets -- or Jenny

10 -- Chairwoman could run through the bullets, or does

11 everyone feel they're clear on it.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Does anybody

14 want her to read it back or did you listen when you

15 were saying things.

16

17 (No comments)

18

19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, I think we

20 all listened and heard.

21

22 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So if there's

25 nothing else to add to the annual report, do we need a

26 motion on this?

27

28 MS. PILCHER: (Nods affirmatively)

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, we need a

31 motion. Is there a motion to.....

32

33 MR. SIMON: So moved.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Moved by

36 Pollock. Is there a.....

37

38 MR. HONEA: Second.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA:seconded by

41 Don to go ahead with the annual report with the stuff

42 that was said.

43

44 Discussion.

45

46 (No comments)

47

48 MR. SIMON: Question.

49

50

0239

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Question
2 has been called for. All in favor say aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
7 sign.

8
9 (No opposing votes)

10
11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, motion
12 carries. Next on the agenda we have Nissa and she's
13 going to do Council applications.

14
15 MS. PILCHER: Yep. Thank you, Ms.
16 Chair. Members of the Council. For the record my name
17 is Nissa Pilcher, Subsistence Council Coordinator for
18 OSM. I'd like to briefly talk about the current
19 Council application and nomination open season. This
20 is not an action item and I would like to note we did
21 actually just talk about it in your annual report. So
22 -- and actually quite frequently over the last day and
23 a half this has come up.

24
25 So first I would like to thank all
26 Council members for your volunteer service on the
27 Council and on behalf of the Federally-qualified
28 subsistence users in your region. Your knowledge and
29 experience are of great value to the Federal
30 Subsistence Management Program and to the Board. This
31 program is best served by having robust Councils with
32 full membership including more women and also members
33 from the GASH region and the mid-Kuskokwim. At the
34 request of the Board we will be engaging the help of
35 Native Liaisons of Federal agencies in helping to
36 solicit more applications during this appointment
37 cycle. We are also requesting that you help because
38 you are our connection to the communities and the
39 region that you represent.

40
41 The 2023 Council application period is
42 currently open and will close February 21st, 2023.
43 Please assist us to help spread the word in your region
44 to recruit new applicants. You know the people in your
45 region and you also can share firsthand experience of
46 what it means to serve on the Council, what is involved
47 and how much time it takes. You can also nominate
48 candidates if someone is interested but having a
49 difficult time applying or you're more than welcome to
50

0240

1 give them my contact information and I will assist
2 them.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

There are application packets at the meeting for you to take back to your communities to distribute to interested persons, organizations and tribes. OSM, in turn, has mailed lots of copies out of the application period -- packet across Alaska. OSM will also gladly fax applications if anyone is in need, and they can also be found on our website at www.doi.gov/subsistence/regions. Hopefully there will be a good number of qualified applicants this year to fill all vacant seats and have alternates available. There are currently three seats that will expire and there's one vacant seat to fill for a total of four seats that will become open for appointment or reappointment on December 2nd, 2023. All incumbents whose seats expire will then need to reapply during this cycle. Incumbent forms were handed out in your green meeting folders of those council members whose terms will expire in 2023 which are Member Whitworth and Member Gervais. Jack, I emailed one out to you since you weren't able to attend in person. And I also have extras if you have misplaced yours.

And that concludes that.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you, Nissa. And I don't know if this should be on the record but looking at Page 4 of the Advisory Council you have me down for 20 -- expire 2021, and I think it's.....

MS. PILCHER: Yep, I got it in my notes to get it fixed. Thanks.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So my term expires in 2024.

MS. PILCHER: Correct.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. With that we have Nissa again.

MS. PILCHER: All right. Ms. Chair. Members of the Council. For the record my name is Nissa Pilcher, Subsistence Council Coordinator for OSM. I am going to present to you information on how you could potentially get reimbursed if you had any

0241

1 telephonic or internet expenses associated with your
2 participation in the Council meetings over the last two
3 and a half years. The material for this agenda is in
4 your supplemental materials, Tab 1. This, again, is
5 not an action item.

6

7

8 This issue was brought up to the
9 Board's attention by the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Council
10 during their winter, 2022 meeting. OSM reviewed the
11 policies on reimbursement and I would like to provide
12 you with information on the types of expenses that may
13 be reimbursed and the documentation necessary to
14 receive reimbursement.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

For the time period when the Council meetings were held via teleconference you can be reimbursed for internet and phone charges that are in excess of their normal bill. Council members who have internet or cellular plans that charge a flat monthly fee that they pay regardless of Council meetings cannot be reimbursed for their normal charges. In order for Council members to receive reimbursement for excess charges they need to submit a copy of their bill that covers the time period in which the virtual Council meetings took place and indicate the excess charges for attending the virtual meeting. Council members can submit this information to me or mail their bills to the Office of Subsistence Management at 1011 East Tudor Road, Mail Stop 121 Anchorage, Alaska 99503.

That's it.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Who brought that up did you say?

MS. PILCHER: The Yukon Kuskokwim Delta.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So how does that Council feel about that.

Kevin.

(No comments)

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, Madame Chair. I believe we all got a letter concerning this thing here.

0242

1 But I -- I don't know if it's going to arise again but,
2 you know, we all know the complications of
3 teleconferencing. It's especially hard for me, for
4 myself, and having to do this without any kind of
5 compensation. I'm not looking so much for compensation
6 as to boy you just going to have to have a -- when we
7 do that, two cell phones. About three or four hours
8 into this and I'm running dead here and I'm going to
9 have to plug in. I don't know, I guess it's just
10 something we have to endure. But I would support the
11 thing of some kind of compensation, some kind of, you
12 know, give us a temporary cell or hours or something if
13 and when we had to do that.

14

15 That's just my comment, thank you.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim, do you have
18 anything.

19

20 MR. GERVAIS: Not at this time.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Pollock.

23

24 MR. SIMON: No, I was sleeping.

25

26 (Laughter)

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. That's
29 okay, we all do the same thing.

30

31 MS. PILCHER: Am I that boring.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, Kevin, do
34 you want to reconsider and say something.

35

36 MR. WHITWORTH: No.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: No, okay. First
39 time he's quiet.

40

41 (Laughter)

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: But I agree with
44 Don. It's really hard on the teleconference, and I've
45 already said it before. It's so good to be here to see
46 faces and sometimes we look confused up here because we
47 haven't seen each other in so long and we don't know if
48 we're speaking to the same person. But, Jack, do you
49 have anything else to add.

50

0243

1 MR. REAKOFF: No, I don't, Madame
2 Chair, thank you.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Wow, short. So
5 what do we do, just go on.

6
7 MS. PILCHER: It's not an action item.

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, something
10 to think about. Okay, thank you.

11
12 Next up we have Peter Christian.

13
14 MR. CHRISTIAN: Good afternoon, Madame
15 Chair and members of the RAC. My name is Peter
16 Christian. I work for the National Park Service out of
17 the Regional Office in Anchorage. Thanks for giving me
18 just a little bit of time on your busy agenda to talk
19 to you today about an important issue that affects how
20 we manage sport hunting on our National Preserve lands.

21
22 Last winter, I think it was February,
23 the Department of the Interior directed the Park
24 Service to initiate a rulemaking process to reconsider
25 the factual, legal and policy conclusions of the 2020
26 hunting rule. And you'll remember the 2020 hunting
27 rule is the rule that has allowed the baiting of bears
28 by sporthunters in our Preserves as well as other
29 previously banned activities such as hunting -- or
30 trapping wolves and coyotes in their dens during the
31 denning season, taking black bear cubs and sows with
32 cubs in their dens, shooting swimming caribou and other
33 practices.

34
35 So two points that the Park Service
36 would like to look at specifically is, we're
37 reexamining the public safety risk of allowing the
38 baiting of bears in areas where we invite the public to
39 come and enjoy those lands.

40
41 The second is, although these practices
42 may be appropriate -- certainly are appropriate for
43 Federal subsistence users, is this something we want to
44 authorize for sporthunters to do.

45
46 So I want to be clear, none of this
47 affects Federal subsistence regulations, we're talking
48 about regulations pertaining to sporthunting.

49
50

0245

1 Nikolai, I believe, would be the two communities.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah. And that's --
4 Denali National Park is not though, right?

5

6 MR. CHRISTIAN: The Park is not in play
7 but the Preserve lands there where you're talking about
8 would be, yes.

9

10 MR. WHITWORTH: Okay, good enough,
11 thanks.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
14 Kevin. Any other concerns. Pollock.

15

16 MR. SIMON: I want to mention that to
17 the north of Anaktuvuk Pass, Anaktuvuk Pass is right on
18 the -- there's a valley right through the Brooks Range
19 and to the north is a National Park Preserve where
20 sporthunting is allowed and the caribou migrate through
21 that valley. And for many years there's hunting
22 pressure there and now the caribou don't come through
23 anymore because there's hunting pressure on the
24 Preserve.

25

26 Thank you, Madame Chair.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
29 Pollock. Okay, do you have anything else to add?

30

31 MR. CHRISTIAN: Nothing else at this
32 time, thank you.

33

34 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you
35 very much.

36

37 MR. CHRISTIAN: Thank you, Madame
38 Chair.

39

40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. With that
41 we have State Board -- State of Alaska Board of
42 Fisheries, we're going to move that down to our future
43 meeting dates and we're going to start on the agency
44 reports. There's a time limit of 15 minutes, approved,
45 and I won't read the rest. But with that we'll start
46 with tribal governments.

47

48 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

49

50

0246

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Kevin.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Sorry to back up but
4 did we need a comment on that or do we have more time
5 to comment on the National Park Service presentation?

6

7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: He did ask for
8 comments.

9

10 MR. WHITWORTH: I know.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

13

14 MR. WHITWORTH: But we have other
15 opportunity, right, later on, we'll have more
16 opportunity? I don't know if we need to make comments
17 now, just curious, if we had more opportunity later?

18

19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yeah, I'm sure
20 we do.

21

22 MS. PILCHER: I believe -- and correct
23 me if I'm incorrect, but if the Federal Register comes
24 out in November, December and there's a 60 day comment
25 period, your guys' next meeting is in April which means
26 this Council, as a whole, would not have another
27 opportunity.

28

29 MR. CHRISTIAN: Madame Chair. That's
30 correct. I guess you could have a separate meeting,
31 you know, to address this particular issue, but that's
32 right if it's April.

33

34 MS. PILCHER: Sorry. Once again this is
35 Nissa. Just timewise it's just kind of a -- you guys
36 are kind of backed into a corner because it hasn't
37 actually come out in the Federal Register yet so you
38 don't really have much to comment on. But when it does
39 come out, there won't be enough time for you guys to
40 meet -- your next scheduled meeting won't be in time, I
41 do believe.

42

43 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

46

47 MS. WESSELS: Thank you. Katya Wessels
48 for the record. The Council would not be able to have
49 another special meeting to discuss that. Our meetings

50

0247

1 are announced in the Federal Register a year in
2 advance, we would be hard pressed in order to schedule
3 another meeting to address this one issue.

4
5 Thank you.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So I
8 guess we won't have.....

9
10 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, this is
11 Jack.

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack -- go
14 ahead, Jack.

15
16 MR. REAKOFF: The Gates of the Arctic
17 Subsistence Resource Commission will be addressing this
18 issue at the next meeting far more than likely so
19 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council has looked
20 to the Subsistence Resource Commission to address
21 issues that deal with Park issues. So I would feel
22 comfortable with the comment, which I sit on that
23 Subsistence Resource Commission, I feel comfortable wi
24 the Subsistence Resource Commission addressing these
25 issues.

26
27 Thank you, Madame Chair.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
30 Jack. So do we want to defer that to SAR.

31
32 MR. HONEA: What was that?

33
34 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Do we want to
35 refer that to the SAR, S-A-R.

36
37 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair. I make a
38 motion to defer that issue to the Gates of the Arctic
39 Subsistence Resource Commission.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
42 second to that motion.

43
44 MR. HONEA: Second.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Motion
47 made by Jack to defer to SAR, seconded by Don.
48 Discussion. Kevin -- I mean Tim.

49
50

0248

1 MR. GERVAIS: Did -- Peter, do you have
2 any draft language on this?

3
4 MR. CHRISTIAN: Madame Chair. We do not
5 have any draft language at this time that we could show
6 you, we're really looking for input at this stage and
7 what your perspectives are and so nothing to share.
8 Sorry.

9
10 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Since -- it seems
11 like we're pretty early on in the rulemaking process,
12 we don't have much to work on I'm okay with deferring
13 it to the Subsistence Resource Committee.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
16 Tim. With that, all in favor say aye.

17
18 IN UNISON: Aye.

19
20 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
21 sign.

22
23 (No opposing votes)

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, motion
26 carried, we're going to defer it back to SAR.

27
28 Now, as I stated we're on the agency
29 reports now.

30
31 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher.
32 So typically we'll let tribal governments go first,
33 none reached out to me but I did leave it on in case
34 there was one in the room or on the phone during your
35 meeting.

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MS. PILCHER: So moving on with that
42 we'd have the Native organizations which would be the
43 Tanana Chiefs Conference. And, just, of course,
44 everyone in the room and online is well aware but we
45 are running short on time, there are some folks that
46 may get moved up just due to planes and what not, but
47 if those in the audience that are planning on giving a
48 presentation could give us the short and sweet version
49 that would be great as well.

50

0249

1 Thank you.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: TCC, is that
4 where we are?

5

6 MS. PILCHER: Yeah.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tanana Chiefs,
9 do we have -- okay.

10

11 MS. FARNHAM: Good morning everybody --
12 or sorry, afternoon. It's been a long day -- long few
13 days. Good afternoon, Madame Chair and members of the
14 Council. I'm Nicole Farnham and I am one of the
15 Fisheries Biologists at the Tanana Chiefs Conference.
16 And I'm going to hopefully give you a guys a quick,
17 short, brief summary of what we did this summer and
18 what we have up and coming.

19

20 So next slide, please.

21

22 (Pause)

23

24 MS. FARNHAM: Well, it's getting into
25 focus.

26

27 (Pause)

28

29 MS. FARNHAM: Okay. Just for timesake
30 I'll keep moving it along.

31

32 So our mission is to protect the
33 cultural and traditional lifestyle and resources that
34 fuel it. It is our goal to help advocate for the
35 conservation and sustainability of these customary and
36 traditional practices so that it may be continued and
37 passed down from generation to generation. We strive
38 to incorporate traditional knowledge into current
39 research, management systems and to develop
40 partnerships with other agencies and organizations to
41 help achieve these goals.

42

43 Next slide please.

44

45 So we have a few current projects here
46 at TCC. The one that TCC currently oversees right now
47 is the Henshaw Creek weir and then we are in the
48 process with working with Fish and Wildlife to take
49 over the Gisasa weir project in 2024 so we're working
50

0250

1 together right now to learn how they run the project
2 and how we're going to take it over and manage it in
3 the future. And then for next year we are going to be
4 starting a new humpback whitefish survey up in the
5 middle Koyukuk River region. All three of these
6 projects are funded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
7 OSM FRMP funding and our Partners Program also funds
8 Brian McKenna's position, and thanks to all of these
9 funding opportunities, it really helps us have our
10 efforts succeed and for us to produce good data.

11

12 Next slide please.

13

14 MR. GERVAIS: Excuse me. You said --
15 what's the name of the weir that you're taking over?

16

17 MS. FARNHAM: The Gisasa weir. So that
18 is in the lower area of the Koyukuk region, or river,
19 excuse me.

20

21 So this year we went out to the Henshaw
22 Creek weir but unfortunately we were unable to operate
23 due to flooding in 2021 so the weir sat in the river
24 all winter long. So we had two different trips out
25 there and we removed the weir and we had several key
26 pieces that needed to be fabricated and so we will be
27 repairing them this winter and I'll have more
28 information on that come this spring.

29

30 Next slide please.

31

32 MS. FARNHAM: So here are a couple of
33 pictures that we see with what the weirs looked like
34 when we first got the camp. Unfortunately our fish
35 trap decided it was going to take a trip down the river
36 and so we will be removing that, hopefully, next year,
37 we didn't have the proper tools this year. But the
38 weir did pretty well. It weathered the winter better
39 than we thought. It did change the land, which is
40 unfortunate, so we're hoping that the land will start
41 to revert back over the next few years.

42

43 Next slide please.

44

45 So this year, like I said, we had two
46 trips out to Henshaw. Our first trip was with a crew
47 of five and we removed the weir and then we did a
48 damage assessment. Came back to town, regrouped and
49 went back out. And the second trip was to facilitate
50

0251

1 weir repairs on the panels and do an inventory
2 assessment.

3

4 So next slide please.

5

6 So the next slide shows some of our
7 intensive sketches that we did so that we could
8 actually fabricate each of the pieces because creating
9 a weir, everything is special, it's not super cookie-
10 cutter so you need to have a lot of specs and
11 measurements and all of that. So a few repairs that we
12 will be.....

13

14 Next slide please.

15

16 A few repairs that we will be working
17 on this winter is getting a new winch stand which helps
18 hold the weir together and the bulkhead, which, again,
19 helps keep our trap fish [sic] tight. We're going to
20 have to do some fabrications on the bulkhead, creating
21 new pieces and parts for the chute, which is where the
22 fish swim up so we can count them. Thanks to the
23 Gisasa weir, they had a spare trap that they weren't
24 using and haven't used in about 15 years and they were
25 so kind to have donated it to us and so this winter
26 I'll be doing a 3D puzzle putting it back together to
27 see what pieces we might need still. But hopefully
28 it's a complete trap.

29

30 Next slide please.

31

32 So this summer I also spent time out on
33 the Gisasa River learning the in and outs of the
34 project. I was working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
35 and I went out and helped set up camp and then went
36 back out at the end of season to see how they ran the
37 video weir and helped remove and breakdown camp.
38 During the winter of this year we will be helping Fish
39 and Wildlife with the reports and analyzing the data
40 and helping them do the final report for the end of the
41 season. TCC is also working with the Loudon Tribal
42 Council to discuss a partnership for this project
43 starting in 2024 and we're going to hopefully have --
44 be able to hire people from the Galena area for that
45 project.

46

47 Next slide please.

48

49 And then our last project is the

50

0252

1 whitefish study that is starting this coming fall, or I
2 guess next fall. This project will start in the summer
3 2023. ADF&G will be leading the household survey
4 during the summer and TCC will be leading the
5 biological sampling in the fall. Local research
6 assistants will be hired to support both the household
7 surveys and the biological sampling. TCC will be
8 interested in contracting with local fisher people to
9 sample their Federal Subsistence Board harvest of
10 humpback whitefish in the Alatna River. So if anybody
11 fishes in that area we would love to work with you and
12 all of that.

13

14 Next slide please.

15

16 So the three main objectives for the
17 whitefish project are to identify important whitefish
18 and other non-salmon fish species in the upper Koyukuk
19 River region with particular attention to the humpback
20 whitefish, build upon past traditional knowledge
21 interviews and harvest surveys to identify any changes
22 to non-salmon fish populations, their habitat and their
23 traditional uses, describe the demographic composition
24 of age, sex, length, and gonomaticsomatic index of the
25 Alatna River humpback whitefish population.

26

27 Next slide please.

28

29 And, of course, none of this can be
30 done without everybody who's helped us from the
31 Allakaket and Alatna Tribal Councils, the Louden Tribal
32 Council, the Office of Subsistence Management and the
33 Partners Program as well as the FRMP, U.S. Fish and
34 Wildlife Fairbanks Office, the Kanuti and Yukon Flats
35 National Wildlife Refuge and the Alaska Department of
36 Fish and Game.

37

38 Last slide.

39

40 And with that I'll take any questions.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim.

43

44 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you for your
45 report. I might have missed it because I wasn't in
46 attendance a year ago at our meeting. What was the
47 reason that the weir was left in the river last year,
48 was it high water conditions?

49

50

0253

1 MS. FARNHAM: Yep. Through the Chair.
2 Yep, that's exactly it. There was high water, it was a
3 flash flood and unfortunately they waited, they had to
4 evacuate camp and then they came back out late, late
5 September, early October to try to pull the weir, a few
6 people did, and the water ended up freezing on them and
7 so they had to get out of camp right away.

8
9 MR. GERVAIS: So the summer of 2022,
10 the first year with no data in quite awhile for Henshaw
11 Creek.

12
13 MS. FARNHAM: To the Chair. Let's see,
14 I think there was 2018 there was no data as well,
15 again, due to high water. We've had a few seasons out
16 there, I know 2014 was a high water season, and 2018,
17 so, yeah, this will be our third year within a fairly
18 close timeframe.

19
20 MR. GERVAIS: All right, thank you very
21 much.

22
23 MS. FARNHAM: Yep.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Any other
26 questions. Pollock.

27
28 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I'm glad that the
29 weir is going to be in operations again. Most of the
30 time a few local people work there during the
31 summertime so I'm glad they could work again. I hope
32 there's no problem this time.

33
34 Thank you.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
37 Pollock. Anybody else.

38
39 (No comments)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
42 Nicole, that was a very good report.

43
44 MS. FARNHAM: Thank you. Have a good
45 day.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So the next one
48 up would be Koyukuk [sic] River InterTribal Fish
49 Commission. Kevin.

50

0254

1 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair. Is it
2 okay if I sit here.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

5
6 MR. WHITWORTH: I'll be real brief.
7 I'm putting on a different hat right now, so Kuskokwim
8 River InterTribal Fish Commission, Executive Director,
9 Kevin Whitworth from McGrath, tribal member of McGrath
10 Native Village, born in -- not born in McGrath but I'm
11 from McGrath as you all know.

12
13 So just in April, you guys probably
14 heard Mary Peltola started campaigning for the current
15 seat that she's in and she left, resigned the Kuskokwim
16 River InterTribal Fish Commission at that time, the
17 Board had asked if I could be the interim Director
18 through the summer season, it was a hard lift, I won't
19 lie, not having Mary there and me stepping up. We
20 didn't backfill for Mary until just recently but the
21 summer was a success. So now starting September 1st
22 I'm the Director full-time. I've backfilled a little
23 bit. So Nikki Pollock, I just hired her just a couple
24 days ago, she's operations manager. She'll be taking
25 the day to day -- she'll be doing a lot of the day to
26 day operations of the company. Terese, she's from
27 Bethel too, she's now a full-time employee. And then
28 we are contracting our finance out to somebody from
29 McGrath, a CPA, somebody who -- she's really good at
30 taking care of finance and stuff like that. So there's
31 some changes going on with our Staff. We have a new
32 Jesuit volunteer, Andrew, he just started this fall.

33
34 But this summer was a success.

35
36 Our co-management agreement we have
37 with Fish and Wildlife Service, we've just finished our
38 seventh year of co-management working with Fish and
39 Wildlife, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Staff.
40 Aaron Moses, Boyd, and that Staff over there is
41 fantastic to work for. Both companies, the Fish and
42 Wildlife Service and the Fish Commission are working
43 really hard to try to do what's best for the fishery,
44 try to recover from the disasters that we're seeing
45 with chinook salmon, chum salmon and the coho salmon
46 now.

47
48 Starting June 1st the Federal
49 management took over all the way through the end of
50

0255

1 July time period. Escapement goals for chinook salmon
2 was met, we did have some opportunity for folks but
3 about a third of their harvest -- a third of their
4 harvest they caught so there's still a lot of hardship.
5 But they did -- we were able to reach the escapement
6 goal, so it's huge. And that was really on the backs
7 of the fishers. They did not get what they needed.

8
9 The chum salmon escapement goals were
10 not met. Chum salmon harvest was not met, not at all.
11 It's like the Yukon, chum salmon numbers are very low.
12

13 And this is the first time, and I've
14 brought this up already, but this is the first year
15 we've ever seen complete closure for coho salmon
16 starting August 16, through September 15, about a month
17 long closure for coho salmon. With all these closures,
18 this year, 2022, was the longest restricted salmon
19 fishery ever. It had to be. I don't know of any other
20 year that was not as restricted as this year, and it's
21 really hard on the people on the river, it's difficult
22 and even though there's relatively good runs of sockeye
23 salmon and non-salmon species like whitefish, sheefish,
24 people are not able to access those. Trying to protect
25 the other species.

26
27 We are involved with several research
28 projects, the Kwethluk River smolt out-migration, it's
29 a screw trap project. We're counting out-migrating
30 smolt to try to come -- and this is in conjunction with
31 the Kwethluk River weir. So we have a good idea of how
32 much adult salmon species are getting up into the
33 Kwethluk River system and now we're counting how much
34 smolt are coming out of that system with this screw
35 trap. This is the first year we did this. This
36 project was done by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for
37 about four years in 2015, I believe, it was the last
38 year it was run, or the first year, and we're just
39 redoing this project. This project was funded by the
40 AYK Sustainable Salmon Initiative. In the future -- we
41 got two years of funding. This year and then next
42 year, we have another year of funding. In the future
43 we'll hopefully get it funded through other means.
44 This is a great project. It gets an idea of how much
45 fish are coming out of the system. It gives you a
46 little bit of an idea of what the fresh water system is
47 producing.

48
49 And then we have the Kwethluk River
50

0256

1 weir, there's a partnership with OVK, the Organized
2 Village of Kwethluk, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
3 Service there in Bethel and the Kenai Fish Office. We
4 also run the Takotna River weir. And one of our more
5 important projects that we run is the community based
6 harvest monitoring project. This project, after each
7 opener, we compile harvest interviews there in the
8 local lower river villages. The Bethel Tribe, they do
9 interviews in Bethel, and the local fish camps, all
10 that data is compiled with aerial surveys that are done
11 by u.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and we make -- we
12 come up with harvest estimates after each opener. And
13 it's about a 24 hour turnaround but after each opener
14 we have the data turned around, produced in an
15 assessment packet, we look at all of the information
16 that is at Bethel Test Fish, the sonar, the harvest
17 information, catch per unit effort, what is harvested
18 with that opener and it goes to our in-season managers
19 so that they can make management decisions on the next
20 opener or closure with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
21 Service.

22

23 This project -- this is a really
24 important project for us when it comes to in-season
25 management, it provides a lot of data. And it's live
26 -- it's in-season data, which is really rare.

27

28 Weirs is really a post-season data, you
29 don't get the data until right now after the season's
30 been compiled. Bethel Test Fish, we find that early
31 season, that data's not real helpful until about mid-
32 season, maybe about until June 20th you can kind of get
33 a better idea of what the run is looking like. So,
34 really, this harvest estimate program is providing a
35 lot of the bulk of the information as well as the -- we
36 have local people, our in-season managers at the table.
37 They're bringing their information to the table as
38 well, so traditional knowledge, local knowledge is
39 brought to the table as well.

40

41 I'm just going to skip a lot of this.
42 I think this is in the packet.

43

44 The other thing I wanted to mention is
45 the Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission, so we
46 wrote the Kuskokwim River salmon situation report, I
47 think there's some copies on the back table here and I
48 encourage people to look at it. It brings all of the
49 Western science that we know of, it paints the picture
50

0257

1 of what's going on for the chinook salmon runs, the
2 chum salmon runs and the coho runs. This year we added
3 coho because you all know this is the third year of
4 coho declines. This is the first year, 2022 was the
5 first year with such drastic restrictions. The other
6 two sections I want to point out, that I really
7 encourage folks to look at, is the Area M interception
8 section and the bycatch sections. Those two sections,
9 really, as you all know, the data, the genetics in
10 those two sections are not real accurate to one
11 tributary like the Kuskokwim. So they're genetic, that
12 information could be used for Yukon fish or Norton
13 Sound, it's basically Western Coastal Alaska.

14
15 What we found with -- looking at the
16 best data that we have, you know, and Yukon/Kuskokwim
17 River, both systems, are really in a data limited
18 management scenario, where we have very little data to
19 make management decisions. And we see that in Area M
20 too with the data that we have, which is from 2007
21 through 2009 are the genetics they did at that point,
22 57 percent of the chum catch in the June fishery down
23 there was coming to Western Alaska. That's 10 times
24 more than the pollock fishery. This intercept fishery
25 is huge. This is a big problem for Western Alaska and
26 I encourage you guys to read this report because it
27 really lays it out. This is data from ADF&G and it's
28 the best data that we have. Like I said it's not the
29 best data because we're in a data limited system.

30
31 Pollock fishery, they have genetic data
32 every year they collect this. Every year they're
33 collecting it. They're seeing that they're catching
34 less chinook salmon. I mean our chinook salmon
35 populations are low. It makes sense they would catch
36 less. Chum salmon, for the pollock fishery they're
37 catching a lot. I can't remember what it's at 100,000
38 or so -- 500,000 or so, how much of those come to
39 Western Alaska, I can't remember what the report says
40 but I encourage you guys to look at that report.

41
42 I do work alongside the five regional
43 corporations, the tribal corporations. We have AVCP,
44 Kawerak, TCC, Yukon and Kuskokwim Fish Commissions,
45 they make up this consortium, we call it the AYK Tribal
46 Consortium. I work real closely with those five
47 agencies on advocating for what's best for our fishery,
48 especially in the pollock fishery, the North Pacific
49 Fisheries Management Council, the Board of Fish, Area M
50

0258

1 Fishery, we work very closely together. It's a
2 powerful group, it's over 118 tribes represented in
3 those five organizations. I just wanted to bring that
4 up real briefly. I can't remember where I was going at
5 with that but.....

6
7 I just got a text. My dad had a
8 stroke.

9
10 So, anyhow, I'm going to stop there.

11
12 My dad's in the hospital as I speak so
13 he's fine, it was a mild stroke.

14
15 That's it, thanks.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
18 Kevin. Any comments or questions.

19
20 Tim.

21
22 MR. GERVAIS: Thanks for the report,
23 Kevin. Is Quinhagak, Kongiginak and Kwig part of that
24 Kuskokwim River InterTribal Fish Commission?

25
26 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah. S o the Bay
27 communities, not all of them, so there's North Bay,
28 Kuskokwim Bay and then there's South Kuskokwim Bay,
29 there's Quinhagak, they're part of the Kuskokwim River
30 InterTribal Fish Commission, I can't remember which
31 one's on the north side of the shore, who are, but
32 they're -- those tribes haven't -- don't have a
33 resolution where they've joined the Commission but
34 sometimes they're at our meetings, sometimes they're
35 not. I think right around 30 of the communities in the
36 entire Kuskokwim River are part of this consor -- or
37 the Commission. And Paul Cleveland, he's our in-season
38 manager from Quinhagak who represents the Bay area. We
39 also have Avery Hoffman from Bethel. We have Betty
40 Magnuson from the McGrath area. Megan Leary from
41 middle river. Mike Williams from Akiak region. So
42 those five people are representing the in-season
43 management group and are in co-management with Fish and
44 Wildlife Service.

45
46 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Well, I like the
47 information we're getting from your group. And it
48 sounds like you guys are having an impact on successful
49 management of the fish resources so keep up the good
50

0259

1 work and congratulations on your permanent position.

2

3 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Tim.

4 Appreciate it.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
7 Kevin, that was a very good report, I enjoyed it. Any
8 other comments.

9

10 Don.

11

12 MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you, Madame
13 Chair. Kevin, it was pretty thorough, I really enjoyed
14 your report and I was wondering, maybe, you know,
15 because of othe -- because we have an agreement,
16 International agreement, if you will, with Canada to
17 let a certain amount in and so we have the sonar set
18 up, you know, in a couple places but is there sonars on
19 the Kuskokwim above Aniak, maybe between McGrath that
20 would give you guys an indication of your numbers like
21 how are you coming about with these numbers, you know,
22 like in escapement or how much are going out to the
23 ocean or whatever, it's interesting.

24

25 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Madame
26 Chair. So the Kuskokwim has something what they call a
27 run reconstruction and they -- that program, it's a
28 statistical model basically and they take all the weir
29 data, they take aerial survey data, and it goes into
30 this program where they estimate the run size about
31 this time of year and that's unique. We also have
32 sonars, you can use the sonar to give you an idea in-
33 season what the run is doing. But we have only one
34 sonar, not like Yukon where there's two, we have one in
35 Bethel. And that's it. I think that's all we have as
36 far as -- you know, the aerial survey data is used in
37 the run reconstruction but what we've found is it's
38 very biased towards the different observers, different
39 pilots and it's not as accurate as a weir would be.
40 But that is all we have, anyhow.

41

42 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
45 Kevin. With that we'll move on to Yukon River Drainage
46 Association, Serena Fitka and Catherine Moncrieff.

47

48 MS. MONCRIEFF: Hi, good afternoon, can
49 you hear me okay?

50

0260

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

2

3 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay. Good afternoon,
4 Madame Chair and Council members. Thank you for the
5 opportunity to present to your Council. I'm pleased to
6 represent the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries
7 Association. And for the record my name is Catherine
8 Moncrieff and I am YRDFA's Staff Anthropologist.

9

10 We apologize that our Executive
11 Director, Serena Fitka, and our new Staff member, Gabe
12 Canfield are unavailable due to other commitments at
13 this time, and that I was not able to be in the room
14 today but I will be providing our report by
15 teleconference.

16

17 I'd like to bring your attention to our
18 report in your supplemental meeting materials. I'll
19 provide brief updates on our activities and key
20 accomplishments since you last met.

21

22 I'll start with a Board update.

23

24 Our Board met on March 22nd and 23rd in
25 Anchorage of 2022. The 2023 Board meeting is
26 tentatively scheduled for April 17th and 18th in
27 Fairbanks. We will have five Board member seats up for
28 election and five alternate seats also up for election.
29 Please encourage people in your communities to self-
30 nominate or your tribes to submit nominations. We will
31 be having a special meeting in November to go over the
32 Board of Fish proposals, it is tentatively set for
33 November 8th and 9th of 2022 and this will be a virtual
34 meeting.

35

36 Our Yukon River salmon summer pre-
37 season preparation meeting was held in Anchorage on
38 March 24th, 2022. This was our first in-person pre-
39 season meeting since 2019. We had approximately 80
40 people in-person and 50 online participants. With the
41 high number of participants we put the agenda aside to
42 listen to the people's concerns as we went around the
43 room. It was a very successful meeting. The 2023
44 Yukon River pre-season meeting will be held in
45 Fairbanks and will be a two day meeting, the tentative
46 date is set for April 19 and 20 of 2023.

47

48 Next I want to give a fisheries
49 disaster update for 2020, 2021 and 2022.

50

0261

1 NOAA has just allocated 56\$ million for
2 the salmon fishery disasters in alaska. On September
3 22nd, 2022, the State of Alaska opened up the public
4 comment period for the spend plan. We have copies of
5 this letter and can forward it to your Coordinator if
6 you would like. Deadline for the comments has passed
7 and we submitted our comments and questions for the
8 spend plan. Our comments and questions included the
9 following:

10

11 Questioning the reasoning for combining
12 the Yukon River with the Kuskokwim, and reason for
13 combining the 2020 and 2021 years for the Yukon River.
14 We also disagreed with the formula for distribution on
15 the subsistence allocation by shares. The guidance
16 should first be broken down by harvest by community and
17 then by shares. We need to continue to work with our
18 delegation to strengthen the subsistence priority in
19 the Magnuson-Stevens Act and to better serve our people
20 who continue to receive the shorter end of the stick.

21

22 And I'm just going to pause for a
23 second because it's completely silent on my end and I
24 want to make sure I'm still being heard.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, you are,
27 we're all listening.

28

29 MS. MONCRIEFF: Okay, great, it was so
30 quiet.

31

32 Okay, next I'd like to give you an
33 update on the in-season salmon management
34 teleconferences which are a Fisheries Resource
35 Monitoring Program funded project and there is a
36 detailed report in your supplemental packet.

37

38 We had mailed two posters to each
39 tribal office to hang around town and use Social Media
40 to remind people of the teleconferences each week,
41 however, I want to acknowledge our challenges, which
42 currently include a lack of participation. Listening
43 to the dismal news each week took a toll on the mental
44 health of the Yukon River people, and we understand
45 that people do not want to share information while on
46 the call. Taking into account the current situation we
47 included special presentations on topics we heard arise
48 from previous calls. And I want to emphasize that the
49 teleconference calls are still a useful platform for
50

0262

1 people to talk and we encourage participation from your
2 region.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10 include starting out with a hybrid training in March in
11 Anchorage with some surveyors in-person and some
12 online. Followed by another challenging summer with
13 surveys attempting to collect information from fishers
14 who were unable to fish. Through the final interviews
15 we learned that the impact of Covid19 was greatly
16 reduced this year but some participants in almost every
17 community felt some impact or stayed isolated from
18 others. We also learned that participants were, again,
19 not able to harvest enough fish for the winter. Our
20 surveyors informed us that it would be easier to do
21 their job if people could fish and wanted to
22 participate in the survey. They said some people were
23 reluctant to give any information, afraid that they
24 would be shut down or restricted from any kind of
25 fishing. We are learning that we need to find more
26 ways to put people at ease. Next steps for this
27 project include considering program updates and
28 revisions. We are bringing Gabe, our new Staff member,
29 on to help run this project and explore ways to enhance
30 its effectiveness. The program is currently funded by
31 the FRMP through March of 2024 and if you have ideas
32 for changes or about how to improve this program, we
33 please contact myself or another YR DFA Staff member.

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

Next I want to give an update on the
Local and Traditional Knowledge of Anadromous Fish in
the Yukon Flats with an emphasis on the Draanjik
Drainage project. This FRMP funded project has ended
since your last meeting and the final report is
available in electronic form. In this project YR DFA
partnered with the communities of Chalkyitsik, Fort
Yukon and Venetie and the Tanana Chiefs Conference to
update the Anadromous Waters Catalog. We used a
combination of traditional knowledge and Western
science techniques to document anadromous fish and make
nominations to the Anadromous Waters Catalog in the
following locations. Rearing juvenile chinook salmon
in the Tetthajik and Drifting Snow Creeks; spawning
adult and rearing juvenile coho salmon in Ni'inlii in

0263

1 the Kvenjik Creek Drainage; presence of adult and
2 juvenile roundfish in Kvenjik Creek, Drifting Snow
3 Creek and Grayling Fork Black River; presence of
4 juvenile Arctic lamprey in Kvenjik Creek, Tetthajik
5 Creek and Grayling Fork Black River.

6
7 Our other projects are covered in your
8 supplemental documents and they include the Yukon River
9 Clearing House which is a partnership with the Yukon
10 River InterTribal Watershed Council and is a culturally
11 responsive monitoring program that will cumulate in a
12 digital clearing house where traditional ecological
13 knowledge and scientific materials on the Yukon River
14 can be accessed. It is further described in your
15 supplemental packet.

16
17 For the Elders Warnings project we will
18 be holding our third workshop for the team this fall to
19 focus on learning how to turn our research and
20 recordings into outreach materials. This project goes
21 through March of 2024. Our final year will focus on
22 summarizing what we have learned, producing outreach
23 materials and giving presentations about the project.

24
25 For an update on the project Local and
26 Traditional Knowledge of Anadromous Fishes in Tanana
27 and Yukon River, which is funded by the Alaska
28 Sustainable Salmon Fund and is a partnership between
29 YR DFA and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This
30 project has a goal of expanding documentation of fish
31 presence and life stages on a section of the Yukon and
32 Tanana Rivers. During this past summer, the Alaska
33 Department of Fish and Game team was out on the river
34 in June, July and September documenting fish presence.
35 In total, they documented 14 species, including chinook
36 and chum salmon as well as several whitefishes known to
37 be anadromous in the middle Yukon River or lower Tanana
38 River such as Lease Cisco, humpback whitefish, broad
39 whitefish and sheefish. But some of the field work was
40 not possible due to fires and weather so we have
41 extended this project for one more year ending now in
42 June of 2024. This will give us the time to complete
43 the field work and hold community meetings to share the
44 results.

45
46 We have a new projects called, Engaging
47 Fishers in Chinook Salmon Research funded by the North
48 Pacific Research Board that will begin in January of
49 2023. Through this project we will be partnering with
50

0264

1 the communities of Alakanuk and Emmonak to conduct
2 interviews about the health of chinook as they enter
3 the river. This information will help inform our
4 companion project led by Dr. Katie Howard. And we will
5 be working with the communities of St. Mary's and
6 Huslia to monitor water temperatures, conduct carcass
7 surveys and develop a community action plan if there is
8 another heat event that causes salmon die-off in the
9 future. This winter we will be reaching out to begin
10 our partnership and work.

11

12 More information on other YRDFA
13 projects and programs are included in your supplemental
14 materials and I'd be happy to answer any questions
15 about our report or projects.

16

17 Thank you for the opportunity to
18 provide this report.

19

20 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
21 Catherine. Do we have any comments or questions.

22

23 MR. HONEA: Yeah.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

26

27 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair.
28 Catherine, hey this is Don Honea. I guess I met with
29 you maybe in April or May at -- down here at the David
30 Salmon Hall, remember our conversations about the low
31 chum run and maybe some of the reasons for it. But
32 specifically I had a question, you mentioned that you
33 disagreed with the distribution of fish equation, or
34 what was that comment, because I did not know that you
35 guys had anything to do with distribution of fish to
36 the villages because for the most part, we, in the
37 middle Yukon, at least, and I know Galena and Ruby, we
38 haven't 'received any fish in Ruby, but Galena, I think
39 Louden has gone out and purchased fish, and it was
40 pretty high quality fish. Maybe they were reds, I
41 don't know what they were but people were pretty well
42 pleased with it. I just wanted to know if YRDFA had a
43 program where you guys distributed maybe along with TCC
44 fish distribution. If you could explain that I would
45 appreciate it.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 MS. MONCRIEFF: Yes, through the Chair.

50

0265

1 Thank you for the question Don. I think -- so I think
2 Serena took a pretty strong role in the fish
3 distribution the previous summer but this summer I
4 don't think we had much of a role in that. I think
5 what you heard me talking about was the fisheries
6 disaster update and the fact that NOAA has just
7 allocated money for the salmon fisheries disasters in
8 all of Alaska. And we submitted comments on their
9 spend plan, of how they were going to distribute the 56
10 million that they set aside and the comment that YR DFA
11 made on the letter was that we questioned the reasoning
12 for combining the Yukon River with the Kuskokwim River,
13 and for combining the years. We thought that the
14 formula distribution for allocating those funds should
15 be based on -- broken down by harvest by community and
16 then by shares.

17
18 So I think that's what you heard me
19 talking about.

20
21 MR. HONEA: Okay. I appreciate that
22 clarification, thank you, Catherine.

23
24 MS. MONCRIEFF: You're welcome.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, at this
27 time -- hang on -- Tina, you needed a break, something
28 with your machine?

29
30 REPORTER: Uh-huh.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So we'll
33 take a few minutes break right now, there's something
34 wrong with her machine. Be back in about five, 10
35 minutes -- five minutes.

36
37 (Off record)

38
39 (On record)

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, if you
42 would start making your way back to your seats Council.

43
44 (Pause)

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, we'll
47 continue with our meeting. And I don't know if
48 Catherine was still on the phone but if anyone had any
49 questions for Catherine.

50

0266

1 MS. PILCHER: I don't think anyone
2 else.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I don't think
5 anyone does.

6
7 (No comments)

8
9 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
10 Catherine for your report.

11
12 MS. MONCRIEFF: Thank you for the time.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Next on
15 the agenda we have Jeremy from the Innoko, Yukon -- or
16 Koyukuk Nowitna.

17
18 MR. HAVENER: Thank you, Madame Chair
19 and Council members. For the record my name is Jeremy
20 Havener, I'm the Refuge Subsistence Coordinator for
21 Koyukuk, Nowitna and Innoko National Wildlife Refuges.
22 That was a long sentence there.

23
24 (Laughter)

25
26 MR. HAVENER: And I just want to say,
27 you know, I said it in my introduction but I'm just
28 super happy to be here in person for the first time in
29 what, two and a half years, so it's great to see
30 everybody's faces. It's nice having the side
31 conversations and just catching up on everything. So
32 thank you, again, for having us here.

33
34 I'm going to do a quick update on
35 things that are going on at the Refuge.

36
37 First I'll start off with some
38 management things that are going on and Staffing. The
39 first one, since he's here in person I'll go ahead and
40 introduce him, we've got a new law enforcement officer,
41 relatively new, I think he's been with us for a couple
42 years now, stationed out of Fairbanks but comes and
43 patrols the Koyukuk, Nowitna, Innoko Refuges, and if
44 you don't mind standing up, that's Jared Long. So put
45 a face with the name.

46
47 The other big change we have is we are
48 vacant in our Refuge Manager position. I think most of
49 you knew Bob Rebarchick, he retired in July, and we are
50

1 in the process of advertising that. I think it was
2 opened on September 26th and it'll be closing in a week
3 so we expect to get a new Refuge Manager soon. I don't
4 know who, obviously, at this point, but as soon as that
5 position gets into Galena we will make sure to
6 introduce them to all the villages we work with, you
7 know, come to the Councils and things. So other Staff
8 changes, the big one that I'm working on right now and
9 I've been working on it for some time and I'm trying to
10 do some recruiting for it, is a Refuge Information
11 Technician position. That's a liaison position that
12 works for us and goes out to the communities and, you
13 know, gathers subsistence information and, you know,
14 brings management decisions and things and starts that
15 conversation with folks and it helps us out, knowing
16 what's going on with our subsistence users. And if you
17 guys know of anybody that might be interested in that,
18 it'll be a local hire position, try to get them in
19 touch with us or let me know and then we can start
20 recruiting somebody for that position. We're also
21 hiring a couple technicians this summer. We're looking
22 at a fisheries technician and a biotechnician so we'll
23 be hiring those positions probably come around May.

24
25 So then the other thing we've been
26 working on here recently is the tribal co-stewardship
27 consultation meetings. We have those going on right
28 now. We've got one coming up here in November and just
29 trying to better our work with our partners in
30 conservation and continuing subsistence.

31
32 I'm going to jump into outreach.
33 Moving out of covid we've, you know, been pretty
34 restricted on being able to go do village visits, and
35 things like that and now we're kind of getting out of
36 that and my fingers are crossed there. So what we've
37 -- we've conducted here this summer, first thing was we
38 did a couple hunter safety programs, I actually teach
39 those and worked with a local State Trooper and we went
40 up to Huslia and did one in Galena and we ended up
41 getting 30 kids through hunter safety this spring. So
42 that was great to see.

43
44 And also for McGrath, we conducted a
45 culture science camp. Kelly Pearce is our Park Ranger
46 down there and she put on a program where I think she
47 had 26 students go through it, and they did everything
48 from working with traditional foods, drying moose meat,
49 making stews, working with the tribal members and, you
50

0268

1 know, sharing traditional stories. And, you know,
2 science and biological stuff included identifying birds
3 and plants. So that was a good program and it turned
4 out really well.

5

6 Also we did a science camp and culture
7 camp in Galena and we had 20 students there and went
8 through a variety of activities that lasted two weeks.
9 So that was a good step out of kind of coming out of
10 the Covid restrictions and getting out and working in
11 our communities.

12

13 I will jump into our biological update.
14 And we completed most of our surveys this year. We did
15 run into some issues as you probably all remember in
16 May and June we had a really dry, dry spell there that
17 created a bunch of smoke and so we did have to cancel a
18 few things, but for the most part we conducted our snow
19 surveys and we had a lot of snow this winter.
20 Throughout the three Refuges our average was 35 inches
21 in all of our stations and we had some of them that
22 were over 40. So we were pretty concerned about the
23 snow this year, you know, anything over 30 inches is
24 when we start to get, you know, concerned about the
25 impacts on moose. And we think we saw that -- we
26 jumped into moose twinning surveys in May and we did
27 see some low twinning rates, I think 10 percent in some
28 areas, which is really low, and then some places had 26
29 percent. But I did talk with our supervisory wildlife
30 biologist and he did indicate that when they do these
31 surveys they've got to get a quota on the number of
32 calves that they have to identify or locate and this
33 year is the fastest we've ever done that. So twinning
34 rates might have been down but it seems like production
35 was pretty good with the winter that we saw.

36

37 We also participated in the lynx
38 project. That's a statewide project we've been working
39 on for five years now. This year we collared four new
40 lynx, and since the project started we've collared 39
41 of them in Galena. So we're hoping to continue that
42 here this next spring.

43

44 Galena Mountain Herd caribou telemetry,
45 we only did three flights this year, we're pretty
46 limited. But we did find six of the collared caribou
47 that are still alive. And we counted 83 caribou this
48 year, which appears to be down.

49

50

1 Also we conducted our breeding bird
2 surveys. Whitefronted goose aerials molting surveys
3 and river flow production surveys. Right now we just
4 conducted the beaver cache surveys that we do and we
5 did it in the Koyukuk Refuge this year. We kind of
6 rotate those each year so that way we get each Refuge
7 once about every three years.

8
9 And then kind of jumping into this
10 November we are going to do our moose trend count
11 surveys. And this is -- I kind of want to take a
12 second to touch on this. Speaking with a couple of the
13 RAC members that participate in moose hunting out on
14 the Nowitna moose hunter checkstation, we kind of
15 noticed this year that we had some low harvest. I got
16 back and kind of compiled everything and we saw we had
17 19 moose harvested for the whole month of September,
18 which is actually the lowest harvest that we've seen
19 since the checkstation began in 1988. And, you know,
20 we know there were some things with warm weather. I
21 think I had whitesocks biting me on the last day of the
22 season on September 25th and so it was pretty warm and
23 that can obviously impact how the bulls are moving.
24 But it's definitely a population that we've been kind
25 of keeping our eyes on the last couple years. Have had
26 some concerns from Council Member Honea and Council
27 Member Wright from the Eastern Interior Regional
28 Advisory Council and, you know, I got back I talked
29 with our biologists and, you know, it kind of came to
30 light that we need to do maybe a little bit more of a
31 survey, which is a geospacial population estimate. And
32 because Alaska Department of Fish and Game are
33 conducting one in the Koyukuk Refuge this year, we
34 think and we've kind of spoke with the Alaska
35 Department of Fish and Game, we think we have the tools
36 necessary to be able to conduct one this year on the
37 Nowitna Refuge. So I just wanted to pass that
38 information along. It's not set in stone yet, we're
39 still working with our pilots and kind of figuring out
40 the logistics for that but I wanted you to know that we
41 are looking at that.

42
43 Again, I mentioned it just a second ago
44 with the Nowitna checkstation, but we set up this year
45 on September 2nd and then we closed it October 1st,
46 and, again, we had about an average number of hunters.
47 It was 88 with 19 moose harvested, and then there's the
48 Federal season that opens up from September 26th
49 through October 1st for qualified residents of Galena,
50

0270

1 Ruby and Tanana and we issued 12 permits and three
2 moose harvested. And that's preliminary. I'm still
3 trying to track down some harvest reports. But I don't
4 imagine harvest went up too much.

5

6 Also Federal hunts, the FM2104 and
7 FM2105, which is the winter hunt that takes place
8 around Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk and Holy Cross in Game
9 Management Unit 21E, as you probably know I've updated
10 you in the past but they traded a State registration
11 hunt that takes place exactly the same time as the
12 Federal hunt and so we've kind of deferred to Alaska
13 Department of Fish and Game's registration hunt during
14 that time and I think the last two years we haven't
15 issued any Federal permits because folks can get the
16 State registration permit and essentially go out and
17 hunt on corporation lands, State lands and anything out
18 there so they're not restricted in a sense. And it
19 seems like it's working out pretty good. I know there
20 were concerns of maybe overharvest since it's a
21 registration hunt but from looking at my data the hunt
22 numbers, the harvest numbers are pretty close to the
23 Federal harvest numbers that we've had in the past.

24

25 And I think on that note, I'll open it
26 up for questions.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Anybody
29 have any questions or comments.

30

31 MR. HONEA: Comment.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Comment, who,
34 you?

35

36 MR. HONEA: Yeah, me.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

39

40 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair.
41 Jeremy, I appreciate that report and I appreciate the
42 fact that I did not know that -- who was exact -- you
43 know, how many years ago was a population count
44 conducted as opposed to a trend count. Now, a trend
45 count, you would just take a certain section there and
46 maybe kind of guesstimate as to the rest of the
47 whole.....

48

49 (Teleconference interference -

50

0271

1 participants not muted - on hold)

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10 MR. HAVENER: Through the Chair.
11 Member Honea. No, I appreciate that question, that's a
12 really good point and I didn't mention that. I know
13 I've talked to you in person about it. The last
14 population estimate or geospacial population estimate
15 that we conducted for the Nowitna was 2008. And so,
16 you know, that's our interest as well, is trying to get
17 a good idea of what that population is doing especially
18 with the recent burns that we've had there. But, yeah,
19 you know, I'm no moose biologist but I do know, you
20 know, when we're doing the trend counts, you know,
21 we're flying these selected areas along the river
22 corridor looking for, you know, the number of cows,
23 ratios, essentially, cows and calves, bulls and cows
24 and yearling bulls and cows. A geospacial population
25 estimate is a more thorough count where we're going out
26 and we're flying a larger area, you know, putting more
27 time in and then all that information gets plugged into
28 a model and then that kicks out a population estimate
29 for that area.

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. HONEA: Can I have one last
question here.

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. HONEA: Okay. You -- you had
mentioned the caribou, a caribou herd, is that the herd
between Huslia and Galena and some mountain herd or
something, I was just interested -- years ago, we had a
-- like a herd back of Kokrines, between Kokrines and
maybe Allakaket or Hughes or something, is that
nonexistent to this day?

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. HAVENER: Through the Chair. So
that -- yeah, you're exactly right, that herd that's
north of Galena, it's the Galena Mountain Caribou Herd.
They kind of winter, you know, near -- you know, on the
Huslia Trail there in between Galena and Huslia. The
one you might be referring to, it could be the Wolf
Mountain Herd but I'm not 100 percent certain on that

0272

1 so I might defer on that information but I can try to
2 get back to you on that question if you'd like.

3

4 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

5

6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you.

7

8 Tim.

9

10 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
11 Thanks for your report Jeremy. Kind of sad to hear
12 they're going to hire a full-time manager, we like
13 having you run the show down there. On the Federal
14 permit hunt, the 12 permits, do you recall what's the
15 ratio of that from Tanana users and Ruby users?

16

17 MR. HAVENER: So through the Chair.
18 Yeah, just off the top of my head I want to say there
19 was one permit for Ruby and then the rest were Tanana
20 and nobody from Galena was participating this year.

21

22 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then when
23 you're talking about this new style of moose count,
24 geospacial, why are you going to that, is that supposed
25 to be more accurate or a more efficient way to count?

26

27 MR. HAVENER: Yeah, through the Chair.
28 Yeah, absolutely it's a more thorough count that gives
29 us a better estimate of how many moose are in that
30 area.

31

32 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. From your Staff,
33 did you -- do you figure that there was a large
34 winterkill last year with the moose and that's -- is
35 that one of the factors with the 19 moose overall
36 harvest on the Nowitna?

37

38 MR. HAVENER: Through the Chair. No, I
39 -- thank you for that question and that's a really good
40 question. I mean I -- you know, talking with our
41 biologists they didn't seem to indicate like they saw a
42 ton of winterkill. You know I've talked to a few
43 subsistence users who've said they've obviously ran
44 into those. But, you know, as harsh as the winter was
45 it seems like things turned out pretty good for most of
46 the area. And, you know, as far as the 19 moose
47 harvested, I don't want to speculate on that too much
48 but, you know, it could be anything from the warm
49 temperatures we were seeing to, yeah, maybe less moose,
50

0273

1 there's a bunch of factors that could be at play there.

2

3 MR. GERVAIS: Alrighty, well, thanks
4 for managing good and healthy populations on these
5 Refuges. It's important to everyone in the region.

6

7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

8

9 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Kevin.

12

13 MR. WHITWORTH: Thanks. I'll be real
14 brief. Thank you, Jeremy. Yeah, we saw a lot of that
15 in McGrath. In McGrath, we saw a lot of that warm
16 weather. In early September, lots of rain, lots of
17 water. Everything was flooded, streams were high. And
18 what we found in McGrath is if you got a moose in that
19 early part of the September moose hunt, you know, and
20 you basically had to butcher it right away, you know,
21 it was just too hot. You couldn't hang it, you know --
22 you know prefer if you can hang it, you know. But what
23 we were seeing there in McGrath was the transporter --
24 the new transporter that was flying out to the Innoko
25 Refuge, is he was bringing back really bad meat. And
26 he was giving this meat away, some of it wouldn't be
27 given away, friends of mine would give it to people who
28 have dog teams because they said this is not edible,
29 this is not edible at all. It's blood shot, it's
30 spoiled. Lots of waste. I had mentioned this earlier.
31 Also so some of the meat would go to the butcher,
32 there's a butcher shop in McGrath, some of this meat
33 would be given to the butcher and he would try to
34 salvage as much as he could but a lot of the waste went
35 to the dump. A lot of this concern is not mine, but
36 the people, the local people, the elders stressed that
37 to me, they said there's got to be something done here.
38 So I encourage Jeremy and the Refuge Manager there to
39 work with the local Fish and Game Office in McGrath,
40 I'm sure they're aware of it and also Kelly Pearce, the
41 Fish and Wildlife Service person there. I know she's
42 hunting herself so she's not there all time. But the
43 local people, the elders, this is a big concern of
44 theirs.

45

46 So I just wanted to bring this up,
47 thank you.

48

49 MR. HAVENER: Through the Chair. I

50

0274

1 just want to respond to that. And, yeah, Council
2 Member Whitworth, I appreciate that information and,
3 yeah, we've heard some concerns of that as well and we
4 are definitely looking into that. We take that very
5 seriously, you know, with any commercial activities on
6 a Refuge, we permit those through a special use permit
7 and we definitely want to make sure it's -- laws are
8 being followed and meat's coming out in good condition.
9 So I very much appreciate that.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
12 Jeremy. If there's no more comments or questions.

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you much.
17 Okay, with that we have an agenda shift here, we have a
18 couple people leaving so we need to get them up to the
19 mic. The first one would be Aaron Moses.

20

21 MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madame Chair.
22 My name's Aaron Moses, I'm the Subsistence Coordinator
23 for Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. I'll start
24 with some Staff updates.

25

26 This year we lost our fisheries
27 biologist and our deputy. We're in the process of
28 getting those hired. We just hired a brand new
29 assistant manager, he's on his -- he's driving his way
30 up from Arizona as we speak so hopefully our upper
31 management positions are going to be filled. We have
32 two local students that are -- one is just starting
33 grad school and one is almost finished. Randall
34 Friendly, he's here at UAF getting his, I think it's
35 his last semester for waterfowl and hopefully by next
36 year he'll come on on the Refuge as one of our first
37 waterfowl biologists that are from -- that is from the
38 village. We also have Paul Arson who's just starting
39 grad school, he's going to the University of Colorado
40 and he's going to be studying eiders. And so we're
41 very happy we have these young guys going through
42 college.

43

44 One of the first things I wanted to --
45 I'll be pretty quick.

46

47 This summer we had some pretty bad
48 cases of the highly pathogenic avian influenza run
49 through a lot of our waterfowl. Our waterfowl

50

0275

1 biologists and projects took over 350 samples and the
2 bird flu was detected in quite a high number of the
3 samples. This spring I'll be able to have a better
4 report on that because we have samples still being
5 analyzed right now. But we did find quite a high
6 number of birds near the Newtok area have a high
7 prevalence of the bird flu and we found a lot of
8 deceased birds out there that are being sampled right
9 now.

10

11 For fisheries, Kevin spoke about it,
12 the one project we have is the screw trap and looking
13 forward to working on it again this year.

14

15 As for our Big Game, this is one of the
16 bigger programs that we're having right now. Our big
17 game biologist is on the move also, I forgot to say
18 that, it will be vacant for a little awhile. But one
19 of the things we have is the Unit 18 Remainder, it's
20 the Yukon moose from Russian Mission on down to the
21 mouth of the Yukon. In that area we have an estimated
22 count of 25,000 moose and one of the management changes
23 that we had this year is we moved the quota from two
24 moose per Alaska residents to three moose and we
25 extended our hunting season to April 30th so our hunt
26 season now is from August 1st to April 30th. So a lot
27 of people from the Kuskokwim snowmachine up in the
28 wintertime and harvest moose and from the projects that
29 are going on closer to the mouth of the Yukon, those
30 populations are still skyrocketing up. Around the
31 Russian Mission area they're kind of decreasing because
32 of the high snow and high mortality from starving. A
33 lot of them are starving. We're seeing about between
34 200 and 500 moose alongside the river in the springtime
35 just dead from starvation and a lot of that is
36 attributed to the higher snow. It's not -- it can be
37 also that they're eating themselves out of house and
38 home but our big game biologists in Fish and Wildlife
39 are looking through that.

40

41 As for the Kuskokwim, we started a
42 different method of distant sampling for moose. This
43 is because our resident helicopter pilot is on the
44 verge of retiring and it is very expensive to get a
45 helicopter pilot from Anchorage or Dillingham to come
46 and help so we're trying to find different ways using
47 our fixed-wing aircrafts to do different methods for
48 our moose on the Kuskokwim.

49

50

0276

1 As for my regular -- our caribou number
2 I give to Jack every year, for 2022, Fish and Game, we
3 weren't able to be involved just because of our low
4 Staff number, but Fish and Game in Togiak were able to
5 do flights this summer and the Mulchatna Caribou Herd
6 number for this year was 12,112, which is down about
7 700 caribou. Our management objective's supposed to be
8 about 30,000 caribou, so it's even gone lower than the
9 past two years. In the spring we'll have a wildlife
10 biologist present for you guys to be able to answer
11 questions on why the population decreased even more.

12
13 Along with that I'm just really glad
14 that I'm here and see you guys. The last time I was
15 with you guys was in Galena and that was a lot of fun,
16 so I'm really happy to be back. So with that I'm open
17 to questions.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
20 Aaron. Any questions or comments for Aaron.

21
22 Tim.

23
24 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Aaron. You
25 said that the annual harvest limit for Federally-
26 qualified users is three moose?

27
28 MR. MOSES: through the Chair. Yeah,
29 it's actually for all Alaska residents. We, on the
30 Unit 18 Remainder, what we call Unit 18 Remainder, is
31 pretty much the Yukon River from Russian Mission on
32 down. We've even opened it to antlerless moose hunt in
33 the wintertime to non-residents because there's a lot
34 of moose and we feel like we need to harvest as many --
35 a lot more than we are right now. We're averaging
36 about 3,000 moose harvested every winter. We'd like
37 that to be up to roughly 5,000 maybe, I'm not 100
38 percent sure. But the moose population is still
39 growing very fast and there's a lot of moose that are
40 having a lot of twins in that lower Yukon area.

41
42 MR. GERVAIS: All right, thank you.
43 Madame Chair. Can we add this continual decline of the
44 Mulchatna Herd number to our annual report. That's a
45 critical thing we need to keep tracking and keep
46 communicating with the Subsistence Board.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yeah, I guess so
49 if it's okay with the Board members. Okay with you to
50

0277

1 continue?

2

3

MR. WHITWORTH: I second.

4

5

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Was that a
6 motion?

7

8

MR. GERVAIS: I'll make a motion. I
9 would -- Madame Chair, due to Aaron's report on the
10 continual decline, and that's a pretty significant
11 decline, like 8 percent or so when we're already in a
12 state of restricted harvest there, I would like to add
13 on our annual report topic that Mulchatna Caribou Herd
14 population estimate is 12,112 with a decline of 700
15 animals from the prior year. That's my motion.

16

17

18

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Motion by
Tim and seconded by Kevin.

19

20

Discussion.

21

22

MR. HONEA: Yeah.

23

24

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

MR. HONEA: Thank you, Madame Chair.
Under discussion, I guess that is a major concern for
us for it falls within our region there and we've taken
measures in the past to try to curtail these numbers
from going down and it's pretty sad to see it's still
going down so I think that should be a part of our
objectives to work on that.

33

34

Thank you.

35

36

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Don.

37

38

Tim.

39

40

41

MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, it's a 5.7 percent
decline from the prior year.

42

43

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you.

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MR. GERVAIS: Aaron, when I talk to
some of the villagers that live in that coastal area,
Unit 18, they -- what they communicated to me is they
just hunt caribou whenever it's around. Does the
Refuge have any plans for any additional education or

0278

1 enforcement to try to support that population better,
2 the caribou population?

3

4 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. Yes, we
5 are starting that pretty much now. Because right when
6 the ice -- right when all the lakes freeze up that's
7 when a lot of -- we see a lot more movement of the
8 caribou and they do get very close to the villages
9 early on in the falltime or late in the falltime. So
10 me, along with RITs and our law enforcement, we're just
11 now starting our outreach right before freezeup happens
12 because we know that's when a lot of out of season
13 harvest occurs.

14

15 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Yeah. I don't
16 know if the caribou and the moose are in the same
17 location but I guess the big moose numbers are on the
18 Yukon River and the caribou are in the -- around the
19 villages on the Kuskokwim so it's not like the lower
20 Kuskokwim villagers have access to that big moose
21 resource; is that the situation?

22

23 MR. MOSES: Through the Chair. There
24 is a lot of people that snowmachine up from Bethel in
25 the wintertime. It's about 75 miles one way. And
26 there are places we could -- it's called the Devil's
27 Elbow area, it's between Marshall and Russian Mission,
28 there's been times when we've counted over 200 moose on
29 a single island in that area and so in that Devil's
30 Elbow area if you go late in the season you'll see like
31 300/400 gut piles on one single island so there is
32 quite a lot of moose and there are a lot of people from
33 at least the Bethel area that are using that resource.
34 And that Unit 18 Remainder is a very large area because
35 it includes all the Coastal Villages. The only place
36 it kind of restricts is the Kuskokwim area because
37 there's a divide between the Kuskokwim moose hunts and
38 the Yukon moose hunts.

39

40 MR. GERVAIS: All right, thank you.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
43 Aaron. Now, all in favor of the motion say aye.

44

45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
48 sign.

49

50

0279

1 (No opposing votes)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, the motion
4 carries. Thank you, Aaron.

5

6 MR. MOSES: Thank you.

7

8 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Aaron.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Next we
11 have Bruce.

12

13 MR. SEPPI: Madame Chair. Members of
14 the Council. I am Bruce Seppi, Subsistence and
15 Wildlife Biologist for the Anchorage Field Office, BLM.
16 I'm going to make this short because I have to catch an
17 airplane. But you have our agency fall report and I'm
18 not going to go through that line by line. But there
19 are some points I wanted to make on it.

20

21 You mentioned early in the meeting
22 about wood bison and I just wanted the Council to know
23 that BLM has been involved with wood bison in the
24 management plan over the years but we were able to get
25 a significant amount of money in 2021 from a Washington
26 Office that we transferred to Fish and Game through a
27 cooperative agreement and that money was used to
28 purchase 28 yearling bison from Canada that were
29 transferred by truck to Fairbanks and then later by
30 barge to the Innoko, up the Innoko this summer and that
31 money helped pay for that. And then it also helped
32 hire local hires from Shageluk and Holy Cross to make a
33 temporary pen in the Innoko area to release those bison
34 and then it -- and it also helped pay for that
35 transport. So we're happy to make that happen. I was
36 able to be out on the river -- and, oh, it also helped
37 to pay for the use of the lands from the Shageluk
38 Village Corporation to build that pen, Fish and Game
39 had paid them to use their land to release those bison
40 and that was very successful. So I'm glad BLM could be
41 a part of that and use that money to get bison on the
42 ground like that.

43

44 The other thing you mentioned is
45 Mulchatna Caribou and for years we've been working with
46 the Togiak Refuge to put money into an InterAgency
47 agreement to monitor the Mulchatna Herd which is in
48 severe decline as everyone knows. In this last year,
49 over 2020 and '21 we got money to purchase radiocollars

50

0280

1 for the Mulchatna Herd especially in the Platinum
2 Goodnews Bay area. Since the herd is so small now and
3 it's become much migratory and tends to be splitting up
4 into these smaller herds and Fish and Wildlife Togiak
5 Refuge wanted to get proof of that and show that these
6 animals aren't moving as much and they're actually now
7 moving into separate smaller herds. So this is the
8 first year just because of Covid and because of weather
9 it was difficult to get those collars out but they were
10 out in early April of this year and so we'll get a lot
11 more information of how that herd is moving and whether
12 it's splitting up into smaller herds or not.

13

14 And then finally, what's not on my
15 agency report is I wanted to let everyone know that BLM
16 is working on an environmental impact statement to
17 evaluate ANCSA withdrawals on BLM-managed land. And
18 I've got something right from our web page that I'm
19 going to read to you just so I get it straight, so I
20 don't mess this up. But:

21

22 Bureau of Land Management is working on
23 an environmental impact statement to consider the
24 effects of opening lands currently subject to
25 withdrawals established under the Section 17(d)(1) of
26 the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act on different
27 land use plans. That's the Bay Plan, the Bering Sea
28 Western Interior, the East Alaska Plan, the
29 Kobuk/Seward Plan and the Ring of Fire Plan.

30

31 And there was a 60 day public comment
32 period but that has closed, it just closed October
33 17th, which is Monday. So this Council won't have a
34 chance to comment on that but I just wanted to let you
35 know that BLM is working on an environmental impact
36 statement for that. That EIS will review Public Land
37 Orders that were previously prepared but not issued.
38 In 2020 and 2021 BLM prepared those land orders, five
39 of them, which would have opened the BLM-managed lands
40 to such activities as mining and oil and gas by
41 revoking the ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdrawals for
42 approximately 28 million acres in those five planning
43 areas. The new Administration determined that legal
44 defects were identified in the decisionmaking process
45 that led to these orders and so as a result the opening
46 of the public land orders are going to be subject to an
47 EIS and will be deferred until further review, until
48 that EIS is done. BLM is now addressing those legal
49 defects in that -- with this EIS, including ensuring
50

0281

1 that there's compliance with NEPA, or the National
2 Environmental Policy Act.

3

4

5 If you have questions on that I'm 'not
6 well versed in this, I know it's happening, there will
7 be an ,810 analysis done on this, meaning a subsistence
8 analysis and the biggest thing that happens with that
9 is when those lands are -- those withdrawals are lifted
10 the selections come into place and they would be
11 selected either by Native corporations or the State and
12 move out of Federal ownership meaning they wouldn't be
13 ANILCA lands and they wouldn't be -- have a priority --
14 have a subsistence priority on them, so it is an
15 important thing that's happening with that and BLM will
16 keep the RAC Councils informed as it goes along.

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

Any questions on that, I know that was
quick.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Don.

MR. HONEA: Yeah, Bruce, I just had a
question on the bison, the bison herd, you know, and we
don't have to go into real detail about the numbers but
are they thriving. I remember when I first got on this
Council it was a dream of, I believe, it was Randy
Rogers to -- Tina?

REPORTER: Yes, Randy Rogers.

MR. HONEA:to do that.

MR. SEPPI: Yes.

MR. HONEA: And, you know, I mean I
even offered to say, hey, over in the Melozi country or
near Ruby or something and late Ed Sartin, it was our
kind of dream to maybe bring that in as an alternate
food source. But I'm just -- you know it's kind of
quiet about the numbers, are they thriving or can you
say are they getting along with the moose or the wolves
doing anything because last I heard, maybe a few years
ago the bison not being native to the land there they
just -- some of them are just out on the lake and they
just stood there and fell through the ice and drown and
so I'm just wondering, does the numbers have to come up
to, you know, the goal of this whole thing is to bring
a food source, is it going to be available or anything,
I mean.....

0282

1 MR. SEPPI: Yes.

2

3 MR. HONEA:not to go into great
4 detail? Thank you.

5

6 MR. SEPPI: Well, I want to point out
7 this is not a BLM project, it's Alaska Department of
8 Fish and Game, Tom Seaton is the lead biologist on it.
9 The answer to your question is, they are doing well but
10 they've had some hard winters. When they were first
11 released a number of them in the spring walked out on
12 the Innoko River and fell through the ice and drowned.
13 But right now, with these 28 yearlings there's 150
14 animals of all age classes on the ground. They have a
15 very -- I don't have the statistics for you, they have
16 a very good calf recruitment. Bison, because of the
17 way they protect their young, both bears and wolves
18 aren't a huge factor on them. I can't talk with any
19 authority of their survival rates but when they have a
20 decent winter, when there's not rain on snow types of
21 events that is affecting them and as the bison, you
22 know, they were released and they were being semi-
23 domesticated and now they're figuring out how to live
24 on the landscape and they're finally figuring that out
25 and their survival is much better.

26

27 So to answer your question, yes, they
28 are thriving but as any wild population they do have
29 their ups and downs. And the goal is to get to a
30 certain management level where they will -- when they
31 will be able to be harvested and that is -- remains to
32 be seen but that is the goal of releasing these on to
33 the landscape.

34

35 And as far as information on this, if
36 you look up Alaska Wood Bison, Fish and Game has a
37 website that they go into detail about what's currently
38 happening with them, what they know about them, what
39 their numbers are, I don't have that website handy here
40 but it's easy to Google it and look it up to get some
41 accurate information on it.

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
44 Bruce. Tim.

45

46 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
47 Bruce, did -- is there any chance or opportunity for
48 the work that was done a few years ago with the ACEC
49 program for that to get revisited under the Biden
50

0283

1 Administration or is all that project complete and not
2 to be rehashed again?

3

4 MR. SEPPI: I think Geoff might talk a
5 little bit about this, Geoff Beyersdorf from Fairbanks,
6 but right now there is talk about that. I don't have
7 anything official to tell you. But, yes, there has
8 been discussions on either a plan amendment. As you
9 well know othe ACECs that were proposed in the Bering
10 Sea Western Interior, for sure, which is in my field
11 office and which is a large part of the Western
12 Interior RAC, those ACECs that were proposed were not
13 included in the final decision and so there is a
14 process that's starting that's looking at either a plan
15 amendment or some sort of way to reevaluate that and
16 look at that. So the answer to that is, yes, I just
17 don't know when and the details of it.

18

19 MR. GERVAIS: All right, thanks for
20 your report.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you very
23 much, Bruce.

24

25 MR. SEPPI: Okay, I got to scoot, thank
26 you.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Okay,
29 next on the agenda.....

30

31 (Pause)

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, next on
34 the report we'll go to Kanuti.

35

36 MS. FOX: Good afternoon, can you hear
37 me?

38

39 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

40

41 MS. FOX: Good afternoon to the
42 Council, through the Chair. For the record, I'm Joanna
43 Fox, I'm the Manager of the Kanuti National Wildlife
44 Refuge. And before I summarize our report today, I
45 would like to start by acknowledging that Kanuti Refuge
46 encompasses the traditional lands of the Koyukon,
47 Athabascan and the KobukNunamiut people who have relied
48 on the lands, waters and resources that the Refuge
49 provides for thousands of years and still do today.

50

1 We've been hearing and talking a lot
2 about change the last couple of days, profound
3 environmental changes in climate, in vegetation and in
4 habitat and in the fish and wildlife populations that
5 we steward and benefit from.

6
7 I want you to know that we are also
8 going through some Administrative change at Kanuti
9 Refuge. You can reference our summary report which is
10 available in Tab 6 of your supplements for more
11 information. Briefly, though, leadership in our region
12 recently completed a multi-year effort to reprioritize
13 and redistribute funds and Staffing among the Refuges
14 in Alaska with the intent to allow more flexibility for
15 managers to respond to unpredictable but generally
16 declining budgets. As a result of those efforts, which
17 included an in-depth workload analysis of all 16
18 Refuges in the region, which is the State of Alaska,
19 budgets and Staffing at Kanuti and Yukon Flats National
20 Wildlife Refuge to our east, are being reduced, and
21 within two to five years we will be combined, or as you
22 may have heard it called before, complexed. In the
23 meantime as positions are vacated many are not being
24 refilled. We are also starting the transition to where
25 to combine programs, though we have not yet been
26 complexed. So we're eliminating programs and
27 facilities that we can no longer support. I bring this
28 up so that you understand why we no longer have Staff
29 or facilities in Coldfoot at Kanuti Refuge and to
30 prepare you for more change that is coming down the
31 road. I assure you that the Staff at both Refuges are
32 still passionate about the work that we do, we're doing
33 the best that we can with what we have and we continue
34 at all times to advocate for the resources that we need
35 to fulfill the purposes for which these Refuges were
36 established, including providing the opportunity for
37 continued subsistence use.

38
39 I'll start at our biological report
40 today by mentioning that we are very grateful to Alaska
41 Department of Fish and Game for completing a
42 (indiscernible) moose survey in the Refuge last fall,
43 the first since 2017. So the Refuge no longer has
44 planes or pilots to contribute to the effort we were
45 able to provide the aviation fuel to support the survey
46 as well as lodging for the crew in our Bettles
47 bunkhouse where the effort was based. Glenn Stout
48 reported the results of that survey to you at the
49 spring meeting, I believe, but in a nutshell the
50

1 estimate included 528 cows, 297 bulls and 115 calves
2 for a total estimate of 783 to 1,121 moose in Kanuti
3 Refuge and this had a 90 percent confidence interval.
4 While the estimate was lower than the 2017 estimate it
5 was not significantly lower and, thus, the overall
6 trend suggests that the population is still stable but
7 in the low density equilibrium that it has been for
8 quite a long time now. For more information about the
9 estimates in the years 1989 through 2021 please refer
10 to the table that's on the third page of our report.

11

12 This year we were able to have a crew
13 string out at the Moses Beach (indiscernible -
14 background noise) administrative cabin at Kanuti Lake,
15 Wildlife Biologist Chris Harwood and a seasonal intern
16 that we share with Yukon Flats Refuge this year were
17 there from mid-April through the end of June. While
18 they were there they conducted long-term monitoring and
19 inventorying of birds and they got quite a bit of
20 overdue maintenance completed for us. Since there have
21 been significant declines in bee production in the last
22 50 years and bees and other pollinators play a key
23 ecological role in ensuring seed and fruit production
24 for plants they also initiated bee collections to
25 inventory the types of bees and other pollinating
26 insects that are present in the Refuge.

27

28 We had aerial surveys for breeding
29 scaup and scotters and for molting geese planned this
30 year and we were ready to get those done but
31 unfortunately pilot and plane unavailability in June
32 and then persistent wildfire smoke in July prevented us
33 from completing those surveys. Smoke from fires also
34 ultimately caused us to cancel our annual dragonfly day
35 event just a day or two before it was set to occur,
36 which was very disappointing.

37

38 We were also very much hoping to
39 reinstitute our longstanding and popular science and
40 culture camp at the Henshaw Creek weir this summer but
41 due to the severe flooding and damage that you heard
42 about from Nicole with TCC earlier this afternoon,
43 those plans, too, came to a halt when TCC let us know
44 that they needed to spend the whole season making
45 repairs and we would be unable to host students there.
46 We're very much hoping to be out there with the
47 students and elders again next summer and we're looking
48 forward to making that happen.

49

50

1 Finally, I'm happy to report that
2 Federal Wildlife Refuge Officer Jared Long was able to
3 conduct several days of patrols in the Refuge during
4 the moose season in September. He reported that he was
5 able to make 30 hunting contacts, check nine rifle and
6 one archery moose kill and a wolf kill and he reported
7 no problems or complaints. He's still in the room, I
8 believe, so if you have questions about his patrols,
9 I'll defer those to him and I'll conclude my report
10 here.

11
12 There is some additional information in
13 the summary in your books so I encourage you if you
14 haven't already read that, please do. And I thank you
15 very much for your time and I'm happy to try to answer
16 any questions that you might have.

17
18 Madame Chair.

19
20 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, Jack
21 Reakoff.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

24
25 MR. REAKOFF: I've been listening very
26 closely to all of these reports, I have not been making
27 comments. I am extremely concerned about the
28 reductions for Yukon Flats and Kanuti, what kind of
29 reductions have you had Joanna in the last -- to
30 basically draw down to a skeletal crew at this time,
31 what kind of budgets have been cut?

32
33 MS. FOX: Well, right now what we're
34 going through is a time period where as there's
35 (indiscernible - background) in our Staff, positions
36 are not being refilled. That's not every position,
37 there are some positions that don't fall within our
38 primary base operation funding so fire positions are
39 still funded, law enforcement is still funded,
40 maintenance as well, for the most part. But we -- we've
41 lost -- over the last four to five years, we've lost
42 several biologists at Kanuti Refuge alone, we only have
43 one biologist remaining and we are not being allowed to
44 refill those biological positions. The intent is that
45 we will share our biological Staff with Yukon Flats and
46 we have done a lot of sharing for quite a few years
47 with Yukon Flats but, you know, as they are losing
48 positions and funding it becomes a matter of having to
49 prioritize and do one project here and a different one
50

0287

1 there, you know, maybe on alternating years. So that's
2 what I foresee down the road but we definitely -- we've
3 definitely seen a pretty big decrease in our base
4 budget over the last couple of years. I think the new
5 model for the region gives the combined Refuges 6
6 percent of the budget for the Refuges in Alaska.

7

8 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you. Madame Chair.

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, any other
11 comments.

12

13 MR. HONEA: Madame Chair.

14

15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead, Don.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Yeah, was somebody online.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 MR. HONEA: Jenna, is that your name.

22

23 MS. PILCHER: Joanna.

24

25 MR. HONEA: Joanna.

26

27 MS. FOX: Joanna.

28

29 MR. HONEA: Yeah, this is Don Honea. I
30 just had a question I'd like to ask about each one of
31 our Refuges since we don't know, I'm just -- are you
32 concerned about your moose population? I think you
33 said maybe the count is down a little bit or something
34 and I think it's -- we should concern ourselves in
35 every Refuge about how your numbers -- are you
36 comfortable with your numbers?

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 MS. FOX: Yes, through the Chair. I'm
41 comfortable with the numbers that were derived through
42 the survey that was done. In other words, I'm
43 comfortable that with the 90 percent confidence
44 interval they're pretty accurate. It's hard for me to
45 say that I'm comfortable with the moose population that
46 is at a low level but it has been low for a very long
47 time. It's in an equilibrium state. I haven't seen an
48 alarming trend over the past five to 10 years but I am
49 definitely worried about weather events in the winter.

50

0288

1 I don't know what kind of an impact weather might have
2 had on the moose population this last year and
3 certainly we had a pretty horrific winter around
4 Fairbanks so that survey was completed before -- you
5 know, before full winter so it's possible that numbers
6 are different now. But, yeah, I guess I would say I
7 don't have a sense that there's been a crash of some
8 sort without doing a new survey.

9

10 MR. HONEA: Yeah, again, I just ask
11 this question because you guys had a wolf control
12 program I believe up there some years ago, I don't know
13 the numbers or anything and I'm just hoping that it had
14 an effect and I -- I don't know if they -- I thought
15 there was one around McGrath and I just -- you know I
16 am just wondering how much -- how low we have to get
17 before we have to institute something like that but I
18 appreciate your answers.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 MS. FOX: Thank you.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, any other
25 questions or comments, if not, thank you very much
26 Joanna.

27

28 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair. Madame
29 Chair.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead, Jack.

32

33 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

36

37 MR. REAKOFF: I would like to read this
38 into the record. The Western Interior Regional
39 Advisory Council Member, I am very concerned regarding
40 Staffing and funding of important resource monitoring
41 at Kanuti.

42

43 Goals and priorities need to support
44 (cuts out).....

45

46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, Jack, are
47 you.....

48

49 MR. REAKOFF: Western Interior Regional

50

0289

1 Advisory Council is experience.....

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack, you cut
4 off on -- we couldn't hear what you said so maybe you
5 could repeat.

6

7 MR. REAKOFF: I'm on my cell phone, our
8 phone system is having problems today. Can you hear me
9 okay.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: You keep cutting
12 out but go right ahead.

13

14 MR. REAKOFF: I'll try and redo this
15 again.

16

17 Western Interior Regional Advisory
18 Council is -- as a Council member I'm very concerned
19 about Staffing and funding for Kanuti National Wildlife
20 Refuge. I feel the goals and priorities need to
21 support interaction of the Refuge subsistence Staff
22 with communities of Allakaket, Alatna, Evansville,
23 Bettles and Hughes.

24

25 The Western Interior Regional Council
26 has experience with complexing with Innoko and Koyukuk
27 Nowitna has proven to be a vast reduction and failure
28 of the Refuge's resources and the Refuge itself.
29 Innoko is too distant from Galena and budget for
30 subsistence outreach was minimal. This is not the
31 fault of the Koyukuk/Nowitna Refuge, they're just
32 spread too thin. Complexing is a failure at ground
33 level view. I feel as a Council member that the Kanuti
34 needs to be Staffed with its own manager, biological
35 Staff and Kanuti resource information technicians that
36 may be shared with Yukon Flats at times. It needs its
37 own subsistence coordinator.

38

39 As a WIRAC member I oppose complexing
40 Kanuti with another Refuge, Yukon Flats. The small
41 savings is less to the resources and people of each
42 Refuge unit. The Council needs funded fish and
43 wildlife habitat monitoring at Kanuti so we and the
44 Federal Subsistence Board can make informed decisions.

45

46 Thank you, Madame Chair.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.
49 Any other comments. Tim.

50

0290

1 MR. GERVAIS: Thanks for your comment,
2 Jack, would you like to add it to the annual report?

3
4 MR. REAKOFF: I would like to send this
5 as a letter to the Regional Director Sara Boario and
6 the Alaska Chief of Refuges, Brian Glaspell, as a
7 letter of concern about this complexing plan that is
8 due to fail so to the Subsistence Regional Council, the
9 people and the resources.

10
11 MR. GERVAIS: I would make a motion to
12 transmit that letter as dictated Jack.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, motion by
15 Tim.

16
17 MR. REAKOFF: Second.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
20 second.

21
22 MR. SIMON: Second.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Second by
25 Pollock.

26
27 MR. REAKOFF: Second.

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.
30 Discussion. I think we've discussed it -- Kevin,
31 sorry.

32
33 MR. WHITWORTH: Question.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, question.
36 All in favor say aye.

37
38 IN UNISON: Aye.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
41 sign.

42
43 (No opposing votes)

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, motion
46 carries. Okay, if there's no more comments or anything
47 for Joanna, Joanna thank you very much.

48
49 (No comments)

50

0291

1 MS. FOX: Thank you. Thank you for
2 your time.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. National
5 Park Service, now we have Gates of the Arctic update by
6 Marcy, Mark and Matt, three M's.

7
8 MS. OKADA: Good afternoon, Madame
9 Chair. Council members. My name's Marcy Okada and I
10 work for Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve
11 as the Subsistence Coordinator. I'd like to refer you
12 to your supplemental packet, Tab 7 for our written
13 update. And I'll try to make this as brief as
14 possible.

15
16 We do have a new Superintendent, Mark
17 Dowdle, but unfortunately he had to head out to another
18 meeting this afternoon. He was here earlier today.
19 Our two Subsistence Resource Commission members on your
20 RAC are Jack Reakoff and Pollock Simon, Sr., and
21 they'll both have the chance to talk further with our
22 new Superintendent at our upcoming SRC meeting next
23 month, November 9th and 10th. I know we have a new
24 member on the RAC and just to let folks know, Pollock
25 Simon, Sr., is the RAC appointed member to our SRC.

26
27 So I will hand it off to Matt for the
28 caribou and moose update.

29
30 MR. CAMERON: Thanks, Marcy. Hi,
31 Madame Chair and members of the Council. For the
32 record my name is Matt Cameron, I'm a Wildlife
33 Biologist here in Fairbanks with the National Park
34 Service for Gates of the Arctic. I'll be presenting
35 our Western Arctic Herd update and moose update.

36
37 So this spring in working with ADF&G we
38 deployed 36 GPS collars on the herd and we currently
39 have 87 active collars on the Western Arctic Herd. We
40 retrieved our camera collars this summer and, Jack, I'm
41 happy to tell you we plan to analyze those for summer
42 and fall diets for the herd in the next year or two.
43 And we plan to deploy collars again this next spring
44 via helicopter.

45
46 For our moose update we successfully
47 completed a GSPE survey this spring. Our 2022 estimate
48 was 1,308 moose and this was up from 2015 but our
49 confidence intervals were overlapping and so it
50

0292

1 suggests the population is relatively stable if not up
2 a little bit. So this gave us a density of .21 moose
3 per square mile and generally we had a similar number
4 of calves in 2015. So our report just got finalized
5 earlier this week and so we can share that with anyone
6 who's interested. We also noted in the report that
7 deeper snow this year compared to 2015 may have had an
8 influence on our estimate as we saw more groups in
9 fewer units but in larger groups overall.

10

11 So that concludes the moose report and
12 we have Will Deacy on the line to present our sheep
13 update.

14

15 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair, may I ask a
16 question while we're on moose?

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Sure

19

20 MR. GERVAIS: Hi, Cameron. What's your
21 -- what's the goal on the moose density per square
22 mile?

23

24 MR. CAMERON: It's just monitoring and
25 so this is -- we've conducted three surveys in total,
26 three GSPE surveys for Gates, 2004, 2015 and 2022 and
27 they've all produced relatively similar densities so we
28 think this is just characteristic of the population.

29

30 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you.
31 Okay, whoever's online, did you say his name, I forgot
32 his name.

33

34 MR. CAMERON: Will Deacy. Are you
35 there, Will?

36

37 MR. DEACY: Yes, thank you, Madame
38 Chair. This is Will Deacy, Biologist with the National
39 Park Service. I'll just provide a quick sheep survey
40 update. This summer my team in partnership with the
41 BLM conducted distance sampling surveys for dall sheep
42 in July 6th to the 16th in Gates of the Arctic Park and
43 also in BLM lands surrounding the Dalton Highway. We
44 received a lot of help from Fish and Wildlife Service,
45 three biologists helped us with the survey. This year
46 we flew surveys in the Itkillik area up Northeast Gates
47 and also in Southeast Gates of the Arctic Park between
48 the Dalton Highway and the John River. Unfortunately
49 we did not finish surveys in Anaktuvuk Pass survey area
50

0293

1 because of snow that fell and that ran us into the
2 start of the Anaktuvuk Pass community hunt.

3
4 Full results in this years survey
5 aren't available yet, however, our preliminary data
6 suggests sheep numbers in the Itkillik area are stable
7 or possibly slightly decreasing when compared to the
8 last few years. But it's important to remember that
9 the numbers over the last few years are down 50 to 70
10 percent since the large decline the area experienced in
11 2013 to 2014. Our initial assessment of the data from
12 the Southeast Gates area suggests sheep numbers are
13 similar this year compared to last which means 50 to 60
14 percent decline in adult sheep since 2015.

15
16 So more information including the full
17 results of the abundance model and details of the
18 graphic data will be available at your winter meeting
19 and you have material in your packets from -- including
20 the full survey results and I'll also provide the full
21 results at the Gates of the Arctic SRC meeting.

22
23 Thank you, Madame Chair.

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you
26 very much. Any more to add to this.

27
28 MS. OKADA: And then our final update
29 is just that Park Service has partnered with the U.S.
30 Geological Survey to look at orange colored streams.
31 They've been seeing more of these in the Brooks Range
32 and the thought is it's the effect of iron mobilization
33 that's having impacts on stream water quality and so
34 they'll be doing this project for the next few years.
35 We've heard from local people that they've also been
36 noticing what's quoted as "Tang" colored streams. So
37 there's a study being done on this.

38
39 And that's it for our update.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Any other
42 comments.

43
44 MR. REAKOFF: Thank you.

45
46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

47
48 MR. REAKOFF: I wanted to thank Gates
49 of the Arctic Staff for diversifying their fields of
50

0294

1 study on the wildlife and on the habitat. Thank you.

2

3

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Tim.

4

5

6

MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair. Marcy, is Gates of Arctic Park involved with any work with the Alaska Industrial Development Authority on the environmental work regarding the Ambler Road?

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

MS. OKADA: Madame Chair to Mr.

Gervais. So because Ambler Road does go through the southern portion of Gates of the Arctic we do have Staff that attend meetings, AIEDA that they've been holding. One thing that AIEDA create was a subsistence advisory committee and there's an appointed seat from our Subsistence Resource Commission to this subsistence advisory committee so there's some overlap there. But as of right now it's just been meeting between the AIEDA hosts that the Park Service attends.

MR. GERVAIS: Okay. And then I never been up to Gates of Arctic, how much of an area is subject to the -- this rule or planning that's coming out regarding the sporthunting in the -- is there a section of the Gates of Arctic that's a Preserve or is it all a Park?

MS. OKADA: So the hunting rule that was presented earlier would affect two portions of Gates of the Arctic. We have two Preserve units that are attached to the Park. The northern most Preserve Unit is the Northeast section called Itkillik Preserve and then we have a southern portion, a Southern Preserve Unit, we call it the Kobuk Boot portion of the Gates of the Arctic so those are the two Preserve units that would be affected.

MR. GERVAIS: All right, thank you.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you. Do you have any more -- if you don't have anymore thank you very much Marcy Okada and Mark -- Mark -- Matthew.

MR. HONEA: Matthew.

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, Matthew Cameron. Okay, next up we have Central Yukon Field Office, Erin Julianus.

0295

1 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, good afternoon
2 Madame Chairwoman and members of the Council. For the
3 record my name is Erin Julianus and I'm a Wildlife
4 Biologist for the Central Yukon Field Office. And with
5 me today I have our field -- or our Fairbanks District
6 Manager, Geoff Beyersdorf, who, of course, many of you
7 know, who will be speaking briefly about the Ambler
8 Road. And, yeah, it's really wonderful to see
9 everybody here today. I'll try to keep my update short
10 but I do want to cover a couple field office specific
11 things.

12
13 So usually at this meeting we, of
14 course, give an update on the Central Yukon Resource
15 Management Plan. My update's going to be pretty short.
16 The planning effort is still ongoing as it has been for
17 a long time, since 2013. We published the draft EIS,
18 environmental impact statement, last year, and received
19 many meaningful and constructive public, agency and
20 other organization comments. The draft and all
21 associated documents are available online. I know that
22 hard copies have been circulated pretty widely. I don't
23 have any additional updates for the RMP and we don't
24 have an official timeline for it's completion at this
25 time.

26
27 So for resource updates in the field
28 office, our Staff had a pretty busy summer as usual. A
29 lot of trips up to Coldfoot and did a lot of our usual
30 compliance work for permitting along, specifically, the
31 Dalton Highway. And both the aquatics and terrestrial
32 Staff for the Central Yukon Field Office were involved
33 in BLM's national inventory and monitoring program
34 work. The aquatics Staff have been involved in this
35 work for multiple years but this was the first year we
36 started doing terrestrial vegetation inventory work as
37 part of that effort so we were all pretty excited to
38 get that done.

39
40 For wildlife we continued our
41 InterAgency sheep survey work with the National Park
42 Service and, yeah, we're really grateful to, you know,
43 Will, and the Park Service for their capacity and
44 willingness to extend their survey efforts to BLM-
45 managed land in the Central Brooks Range and, yeah, of
46 course, defer to Will -- or the updates that Will just
47 provided and, yeah, I think we'll have further to say
48 about the 2022 survey results next spring.

49
50

1 Jen McMillian took a job with the
2 National Park Service this spring so I'm slowly
3 integrating the sheep work into my workload. We're
4 still planning on summarizing the mineral work in a
5 report and continuing with the Park Service InterAgency
6 agreement with surveys into next year.

7
8 We surveyed the Ray Mountains Caribou
9 Herd this past September and got kind of a partial
10 survey done of the Hogatza Herd. We ended up getting
11 weathered out the second half of that survey but it was
12 good to be able to get the Ray Mountains Herd counted.

13
14 Our Cultural Resource Staff floated the
15 Atigun River in July to monitor known archeological
16 sites and we continue to monitor and treat invasive
17 species along the Dalton Highway as we've been doing
18 for a number of years.

19
20 Let's see, in our report, which is
21 included as supplemental material on the table in the
22 back included a really nice summary from our Ranger,
23 Steve Mosier of the 2022 hunting season. And much of
24 the beginning of the season, of course, was spent
25 making sure people were aware of, you know, the closure
26 of Federal public lands in and around the Corridor to
27 sheep hunting and making sure people had a really good
28 understanding of the land status in the areas where
29 they intended to hunt. And, yeah, Steve, does a
30 really good job for us and has been really committed to
31 extend patrol efforts in the field office, particularly
32 on the Dalton Highway and that's been really
33 beneficial, we've been really grateful for that.

34
35 A quick summary of our -- all of our
36 authorizations in the field office. We have 32 active
37 recreation permits, special recreation permits under
38 authorization. Most of these are tour operators, we do
39 have eight commercial hunting guides under permit and
40 permittees are submitting their post-use information
41 from the 2022 season now so we'll have that summary as
42 we typically do, or usually do at the winter meeting.

43
44 We continue to permit a lot of diverse
45 right of ways and other land use activities in the
46 field office. We have multiple active -- yeah, let's
47 see, 11 active placer mines, five active gravel pits
48 and ongoing permitting activity with Pipeline
49 maintenance.

0297

1 Yeah, and then the last thing I'll say
2 before turning it over to Geoff, yeah, the Ambler Road
3 right of way certainly continues to be a big workload
4 for us. We're currently conducting a supplemental
5 environmental impact statement to address identified
6 deficiencies in the original impacts analysis and,
7 yeah, we're currently in an open 45 day comment period
8 on this supplemental environmental impact. And, yeah,
9 Geoff is here because he is the authorized officer for
10 that project so Geoff maybe you could speak more
11 specifically to that. And, yeah, I'll turn it over to
12 you.

13
14 MR. BEYERSDORF: I guess before we go
15 there, if there's any questions for you from the
16 Central Yukon side.

17
18 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, we could certainly
19 do that. I know there was a question about, I can't
20 remember, the ACECs, I think areas of critical
21 environmental concern, Bruce kind of addressed that to
22 the extent that I'm aware of it too so.

23
24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Do we
25 have any questions or comments, if not, go ahead Geoff.

26
27 (No comments)

28
29 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead.

30
31 MR. BEYERSDORF: Through the Chair to
32 the members, Geoff Beyersdorf. I wanted to thank you
33 for allowing me to be here today. I'm the son of Ralph
34 and Sharon Beyersdorf and the grandson of Wilamena and
35 August and John and Kate, my family is primarily from
36 Czechoslovakia and from Germany and our background as
37 far as moving over to the United States is primarily in
38 farming. I'm the oldest of six kids.....

39
40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Excuse me, could
41 you go closer to the mic.

42
43 MR. BEYERSDORF: Yeah. I'm the oldest
44 of six kids. I've got three children and god willing
45 I'll have five grandchildren come next month. So I've
46 been in Alaska, as many of you know, I was surprised at
47 how many of you are still here. I've been here for
48 about 32 years and as Jenny well knows, about half my
49 time has been spent in villages.

50

0298

1 I wanted to speak on the Ambler EIS.
2 Specifically it's been pulled out of the field office
3 and up to the district and so what has occurred there
4 is it has gone through litigation. It went through the
5 U.S. District Court here in Alaska and the Department
6 of Interior voluntarily remanded it back to the BLM to
7 take a look at it because of four identified
8 deficiencies in regards to caribou habitat, the decline
9 in the Western Arctic Caribou Herd as you guys have
10 noted and also the decline in the Yukon salmon
11 population as well as the water crossings and some of
12 the impacts from the water crossings in sheefish,
13 whitefish and other salmon species.

14
15 So currently as Erin noted, we're in
16 the open public comment and scoping period which goes
17 from September 20th until November 4th. With that I've
18 been heavily engaged in the government to government
19 consultations. I was in Kobuk last week. I will be
20 going to Ambler and Shungnak and then also to Huslia
21 probably the middle of the month and then to -- Elder
22 Simon just to let you know, I contacted your chief
23 yesterday and I'll be going to Allakaket probably next
24 week as well so there's some significant engagement
25 getting back out to the tribes and hearing from them in
26 regards to their concerns. You know this open comment
27 period goes through November 4th but obviously there
28 will be opportunities beyond then. I would assume that
29 this -- the Western Interior RAC is interested in
30 commenting on that. I didn't catch if it was in your
31 annual report or not, and then we will be looking to
32 come out with a draft environmental impact statement
33 based upon the scoping and the comments through this
34 open period probably some time in June and that would
35 obviously be another opportunity for people to provide
36 us comments on that.

37
38 So with that I'll stop and slow down
39 and I'm sure that there may be a question or two, maybe
40 even from you Jack.

41
42 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, do we have
43 any questions.

44
45 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

46
47 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

48
49 MR. REAKOFF: Yes. I do appreciate

50

0299

1 Geoff Beyersdorf being back working with this Council
2 again. He was the Subsistence Coordinator down in
3 Galena for a long time. And so I do feel that the
4 Council has made comments on the Ambler Road
5 previously. I feel that those comments are still valid
6 and I feel that our comments should be resubmitted
7 during this open comment period again. And I do
8 appreciate the thorough presentation by Erin Julianus.

9

10 Thank you.

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.

13 Anybody else.

14

15 Tim.

16

17 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair. Do we need
18 a motion to draft this letter restating our Western
19 Interior's position on the road and the subsistence
20 concerns that the Ambler Road raises?

21

22 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

25

26 MR. REAKOFF: I'd like to make a motion
27 to recover our comments that we submitted to the
28 Federal Bureau of Land Management regarding the Ambler
29 Road issues and resubmitting them.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion made by
32 Jack, is there a second.

33

34 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

35

36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Seconded
37 by Tim. Discussion.

38

39 (No comments)

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All -- okay, all
42 in favor say aye.

43

44 IN UNISON: Aye.

45

46 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed --
47 Jack.

48

49 MR. REAKOFF: I'm affirmative.

50

0300

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. All
2 opposed same sign.

3
4 (No opposing votes)

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.
7 Okay -- yes.

8
9 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa for the
10 record. Just to clarify while we did just lose Member
11 Honea from the room we're still maintaining quorum,
12 there's still five members present, so we're still good
13 there.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: With that, are
16 you done with your report -- yes, Mr. Beyersdorf.

17
18 MR. BEYERSDORF: Thanks, Chairman
19 Pelkola. A couple things, one, I want to directly --
20 I'm sorry that I missed Jack, that he's not here, I
21 wanted to thank him personally, I know he spent some
22 time with Director Manning there in Coldfoot and there
23 was an opportunity for her to get out to Allakaket also
24 to visit with people and so I think that was time that
25 was very well spent and I really appreciate his making
26 the effort to do that.

27
28 Secondly, you know, Erin has mentioned
29 the supplemental environmental impact statement. One
30 thing going forward with that, we're going to be doing
31 some cultural resources surveys which is what we would
32 have to do if there's -- if there's any Federal project
33 that goes along and there's some disturbance associated
34 with it we do what's called a Section .106 compliance
35 in regards to cultural surveys, archeological surveys
36 and we are making very intensive efforts with all of
37 the villages on getting those surveys complete along
38 with doing what's called ethnographic history and then
39 we'll be working with each of the tribes along the way
40 in regards to developing their own specific
41 ethnographic history report so they have that as a
42 source of information should there be any future need
43 for that. So I wanted to point out to Elder Simon that
44 that is one thing that we're going to be doing with
45 Allakaket and Alatna as well.

46
47 So thank you.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you
50

0301

1 very much. Before you leave I have a little story
2 about Geoff. In 2002 I came down with -- I got cancer
3 and I went out to Seattle for treatment and in Galena
4 they had a raffle for me and when they sent out to the
5 list to me his name was on there and I remember he
6 donated -- he didn't even know me, he donated \$100 and
7 I said, who is this guy that donated, I don't even
8 known him.

9

10 (Laughter)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: And so when I
13 came back to -- went back to Galena, I went directly to
14 camp and low and behold this White guy come into camp
15 and he said I'm Geoff Beyersdorf and I said, oh, okay,
16 he's the one, so I had a chance to thank him there. I
17 didn't know him, that was my first meeting with him.
18 And then later on he -- I don't know if it's the same
19 time but later on he said, hey, there's a vacancy on
20 the Western Interior -- I didn't even really know about
21 the Western Interior and he said, well, why don't you
22 go for it, it must have been later, years later, so he
23 just kept pushing me. He said you're always at fish
24 camp anyway, you might as well just get on there, try
25 so that's how I got on and he pushed me and we have a
26 long friendship since then. We taught him how to play
27 cards in Galena, he wasn't very good but.....

28

29 (Laughter)

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA:but he was
32 learning. So that's my connection with Geoff. And
33 this morning he brought me a jar of honey and I said,
34 oh, thank you honey.

35

36 (Laughter)

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So I just thank
39 you, again, Geoff, and so you did a good job on your
40 report. Thank you.

41

42 MR. BEYERSDORF: Thank you, Chairman
43 Pelkola.

44

45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Tim.

46

47 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
48 Erin, so you said that the supplemental EIS is complete
49 and it's out for public comment?

50

0302

1 MS. JULIANUS: It's not a supplemental
2 yet, it's the draft environmental impact statement for
3 the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan, yeah, it
4 was published last year sometime, I think, yeah. Yep.

5
6 MR. GERVAIS: All right. So it's for
7 the whole BLM operation, it doesn't just address the
8 Ambler Road?

9
10 MS. JULIANUS: Yeah, correct. Yep, two
11 different projects entirely. Yep. Yep, so this is the
12 resource management plan which will, you know, provide
13 management direction for BLM-managed lands in the, you
14 know, essentially our field office, but the Central
15 Yukon portion of the state so.

16
17 MR. GERVAIS: Okay.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. If
20 there's no comments or questions, I thank you very much
21 for your report and we'll see you later Geoff,
22 sometime.

23
24 Is there anyone to give a report for
25 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

26
27 MS. COLEMAN: Hi, this is Jesse Coleman
28 with Division of Subsistence. So hoping to just give
29 one really quick update and introduce myself since I'm
30 new in this position.

31
32 (Interference on speaker's phone)

33
34 MS. COLEMAN: There's just one project
35 that's coming up this year on customary trade. I wanted
36 to highlight this one because it's relevant to your
37 region. Some of our other work is more Delta focused.
38 But this project is a sister project to previously OSM
39 funded work. It was completed in 2015 in the upper
40 Yukon. This project is about documenting customary
41 trade and barter and describing how these practices fit
42 within kind of the overall subsistence use of salmon in
43 the lower and middle Yukon areas, today and in the
44 past.

45
46 So last year surveys were completed in
47 Galena and Kaltag and then we will be doing surveys in
48 the communities of -- right now Mountain Village and
49 NunamIqua this fall and winter.

50

0303

1 So that's my really quick update and
2 thank you very much, Madame Chair and Council members.
3 It's good to meet you.

4
5 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, are you
6 done?

7
8 MS. COLEMAN: Yes, I'm done, thank you.

9
10 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: That was quick,
11 any questions or comments for her.

12
13 (No comments)

14
15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Before we
16 go to the next one I just want to let Geoff know that I
17 got my 15 year plaque yesterday, 15 years plus.

18
19 Okay, with that we have OSM.

20
21 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. Members of
22 the Council.

23
24 On behalf of the OSM, I wanted to thank
25 all Council members for your exceptional work on behalf
26 of your communities and the user groups during the
27 trying times in recent years, during the pandemic. We
28 value your experience and contributions and your
29 knowledge to the regulatory process. And I'm going to
30 stand and give you a round of applause and I'm going to
31 ask everyone behind me to do the same.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 (Applause)

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you.

38
39 MR. KRON: Thank you all.

40
41 We are holding all 10 2022 Regional
42 Advisory Council meetings in-person this fall and have
43 been working over recent months to arrange for travel,
44 lodging and meeting places for all Councils.

45
46 OSM Staff are happy that we can finally
47 see you all face to face. We thank you again for
48 being with us during the past two and a half years
49 during the pandemic and the teleconference meetings.

50

0304

1 The Federal Subsistence Management
2 Program recognizes that in-person Council meetings are
3 preferable. Again, I am very sorry to hear about
4 Jack's accident and his inability to come to this
5 meeting but thank you, Jack, for joining us again via
6 teleconference.

7
8 The Council meetings must follow
9 Federal government guidelines. We are hoping that
10 Covid19 levels are low enough in each of the
11 communities across the state where the Council meetings
12 are planned at the time of the meeting so that we will
13 be able to meet Federal government requirements. We
14 are working with each of the Councils on the specific
15 requirements for their region to conduct in-person
16 meetings safely.

17
18 OSM is pleased to welcome two newly
19 hired Subsistence Council Coordinators, Lisa
20 Hutchinson-Scarborough and Jessica Gill. Both have a
21 wealth of knowledge and experience in working with
22 rural users in communities as well as Alaska
23 subsistence issues.

24
25 Eva Patton transferred to the National
26 Park Service.

27
28 Karie Crow returned to OSM as a budget
29 analysis.

30
31 Bernard Shavings joined us as an
32 Administrative Support Assistant.

33
34 Michelle Andrews joined as OSM's
35 Executive Secretary.

36
37 The OSM Team continues to work on
38 rebuilding our capacity.

39
40 Over the past two and a half years
41 we've been reminding Council members about the change
42 in requirements for IDs at airports. Beginning May
43 3rd, 2023, next spring, every air traveler will need to
44 present a RealID compliant driver's license or other
45 acceptable form of identification such as a passport to
46 fly within the United States. This is applicable even
47 when you fly on small Bush carriers. Please note that
48 all members will need to make sure they have the
49 RealID for travel to fall 2023 Council meetings.

50

1 As you were previously briefed in 2020
2 the State of Alaska filed a lawsuit against the Federal
3 Subsistence Board after it adopted Emergency Special
4 Action WSA 19-14. This Special Action allowed the
5 village of Kake in Southeast Alaska to engage in
6 community harvest of up to four bull moose and 10 male
7 Sitka black tail deer in response to Covid19 pandemic
8 and it's impact on food supplies for that community.
9 Also in the lawsuit was Temporary Special Action WSA
10 20-03 in which the Board closed Federal public lands in
11 units 13A and B to moose and caribou hunting by non-
12 Federally qualified users for the 2020 to 2022
13 regulatory cycle for reasons of public safety and
14 continued subsistence uses.

15
16 On December 3rd, 2021 the court ruled
17 in favor of the Federal Subsistence Board on both
18 matters. Briefings are currently underway for both of
19 these issues.

20
21 Council Member Whitworth asked about
22 ADF&G's recent management on the Kuskokwim at an
23 earlier Council meeting. With the poor salmon runs to
24 the Kuskokwim Rivers in recent years the Federal
25 Subsistence Management Program has issued closures to
26 non-subsistence fishing and severely limited
27 subsistence participation in the fishery on the waters
28 within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. In
29 spite of this the ADF&G announced openers in 2021 and
30 2022 allowing all Alaskans to harvest salmon on Refuge
31 waters. ADF&G's actions undermine ANILCA, Title VIII
32 priority to rural residents and preempted the Federal
33 conservation based actions. In response to calls for
34 action from an outraged subsistence community and at
35 the request of the Federal Subsistence Board the
36 Solicitor's Office drafted a complaint and began
37 seeking litigation against the State of Alaska. The
38 Department of Justice filed this complaint in May of
39 this year. On June 23rd the U.S. District Court issued
40 a preliminary injunction after concluding that the U.S.
41 is likely to prevail on the merits of this case. The
42 court also found irreparable harm to the Federal
43 government's ability to enforce ANILCA's rural
44 subsistence priority. This injunction prevented ADF&G
45 from unlawfully interfering with the Federal government's
46 implementation of ANILCA's subsistence priority and
47 efforts at conservation on the Kuskokwim for the
48 duration of the lawsuit. This case is proceeding.

0306

1 That concludes my report. I'd be happy
2 to answer any questions.

3
4 Thank you, Madame Chair.

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, do we have
7 any questions for Tom from the Board.

8
9 Tim.

10
11 MR. GERVAIS: Regarding the case, Tom,
12 so it's just still getting litigated, nothing's been
13 determined or is that preliminary injunction
14 effectively settle the issue?

15
16 MR. KRON: Our Solicitor's office
17 representative, Ken Lord, told me that he is guessing
18 that it's probably going to be in the court system for
19 another two years but the indications are that the
20 Federal Subsistence Board will prevail on this matter
21 based on what we're seeing right now. And, again,
22 we'll work real closely with the Kuskokwim River group
23 that Kevin is very involved with.

24
25 Thank you.

26
27 MR. GERVAIS: So how did that affect
28 the management on the grounds this summer, this summer?

29
30 MR. KRON: Mr. Chair, I would defer to
31 Council Member Whitworth.

32
33 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Kevin.

36
37 MR. WHITWORTH: This is Kevin. Well,
38 maybe you can elaborate on -- I'll just back up a
39 little bit. I'll take a bite at it.

40
41 So at one point the Kuskokwim River
42 salmon management working group, the Alaska Department
43 of Fish and Game announced that they will not -- we do
44 not have -- so that's a State of Alaska working group
45 that advises State of Alaska for openers and closures.
46 The State of Alaska announced that that -- one of the
47 meetings, I can't remember the date, sometime this
48 summer, that they will -- that we didn't have any
49 authority -- I was part of the working group as the
50

0307

1 Western Interior RAC representatives, we didn't have
2 any authorities anymore within Federal waters and that
3 we had to stop making management recommendations to the
4 State managers and the manger said we cannot so that
5 was huge. For them to announce that and not to mirror
6 openers or have openers within emergency special action
7 closure time periods, that was a big announcement. So
8 there's no more worry there.

9
10 So I don't know, do you want to add any
11 more to that Tom, I'm just going to leave it at that.

12
13 MR. KRON: Madame Chair. I think
14 Council Member Whitworth addressed it very well. Thank
15 you. Nothing to add.

16
17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tom.
18 Any more comments or questions.

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: If not thank you
23 very much.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Now we've
28 got to go back up to.....

29
30 MR. RISDAHL: Madame Chair.

31
32 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

33
34 MR. RISDAHL: This is Greg Risdahl with
35 the USDA Forest Service. I can answer the question that
36 Council Member Tim Gervais asked. He was asking what
37 will be happening in the meantime.

38
39 The court -- what will happen is -- or
40 what's happened is the court instated both a temporary
41 restraining order and a preliminary injunction, and the
42 preliminary injunction means that the State will not be
43 allowed to implement any kind of openings until this
44 gets through the court system.

45
46 Thank you.

47
48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Sorry, I thought
49 that was Jack, it was somebody else. Okay.

50

0308

1 MR. RISDAHL: Madame Chair. This is
2 Greg Risdahl.

3
4 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

5
6 MR. RISDAHL: I was just speaking to
7 answer Tim Gervais question about what will happen in
8 the meantime while this is still going through
9 litigation. And what will happen is the State is not
10 allowed to open up any fisheries on the Kuskokwim over
11 the top of a Federal closure because of a preliminary
12 injunction that the judge issued.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you.
15 Okay, with that.....

16
17 MR. RISDAHL: You're very welcome.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Did
20 somebody say something -- no -- okay, with that we're
21 going to go ahead and select our winter location
22 meeting dates and you have a calendar in front of you.

23
24 MR. HONEA: Yeah.

25
26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So the
27 dates were set for the winter meeting were set for
28 April 4th and 5th at Aniak.

29
30 Everybody agree with that.

31
32 Do we need a motion after we.....

33
34 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

37
38 MR. REAKOFF: This typically is a -- we
39 need to first affirm that we have a meeting place other
40 than the gym, that has extremely bad acoustics. And
41 the other thing about going to Aniak, which I'm in
42 favor of, is that we need to have a charter to reach
43 Aniak. Going on a one week trip to Fairbanks and
44 Anchorage and all round about, we've traditionally used
45 charter to access this meeting. So do you have any
46 other information to add to that Nissa?

47
48 MS. PILCHER: For the record this is
49 Nissa Pilcher. So I haven't got around to figuring out
50

0309

1 if there's other locations in Aniak, just the charter
2 -- or just the travel stuff. So I will certainly do
3 that now. But I guess in the meantime while I'm
4 figuring out -- so first off Aniak is not a hub
5 community which means I would need Director approval in
6 order to have the Council meet there. So what I can do
7 in the meantime is -- or what we could do currently is
8 after the meeting ends I can figure out if there's any
9 meeting location other than the place you don't want to
10 go but you guys could also -- and then seek Director
11 approval to actually hold a meeting in Aniak, but if
12 you'd like you could pick a secondary location so if
13 either of those dominos fall you have one already in
14 your back pocket to choose from in case Aniak doesn't
15 work out.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

18

19 MR. REAKOFF: Okay.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Any
22 suggestions. Pollock.

23

24 MR. SIMON: Yeah, the last time we had
25 meeting in Aniak it was several years ago we had to --
26 me, I have to fly to Fairbanks and Fairbanks to
27 Anchorage, stay overnight in Anchorage and next day
28 Anchorage to Aniak and the return was the same, McGrath
29 [sic] to Anchorage, Anchorage to Fairbanks, stay over
30 night and then go home, a couple of days flying for a
31 day and a half meeting. I would -- at the time we talk
32 about a charter flight straight to Aniak. But they
33 said you can't have a charter flight while the airline
34 has a seat available to fly in there.

35

36 Thank you, Madame Chair.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
39 Pollock. Any other comments.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I think Nissa
44 will look into it, right?

45

46 MS. PILCHER: Yes, Madame Chair, I will
47 certainly look into it. I'm not positive on the
48 process here but like I -- if you guys make a motion to
49 meet in Aniak, and we find out that either, A, we can't
50

0310

1 pull a charter off, or, B, the only place to meet is in
2 that location, without a secondary location I'm not
3 positive we'd be able to meet anywhere other than Aniak
4 just because -- well, I shouldn't say not possible, but
5 it might be more difficult. It looks like we might be
6 able to get that addressed.

7

8 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, so if the Regional
9 Director doesn't approve your meeting location in Aniak
10 due to the travel costs and travel ceilings that we're
11 probably going to get this year since we started
12 traveling again, then you automatically will revert
13 back to Fairbanks because it's your hub location,
14 Fairbanks, Western Interior. So if you -- your Council
15 wants to meet in a non-hub community, maybe you want to
16 select an alternate one just in case and Nissa will
17 have to do the cost comparisons and put that for an
18 approval with the Regional Director -- with the
19 Assistant Regional Director for OSM.

20

21 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Anybody
22 has a suggestion for an alternate place to meet.

23

24 Pollock.

25

26 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
27 Madame Chair. If that's the way it's going to be,
28 travel through Anchorage, I don't mind the travel, I
29 just want to bring it to everybody's attention.

30

31 Thank you, Madame Chair.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Anyone else.

34

35 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, this is
36 Jack Reakoff.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

39

40 MR. REAKOFF: What's our other hub
41 community, is that Galena and McGrath?

42

43 MS. WESSELS: I will have to look,
44 Jack, if you'd give me a second I could probably find
45 what other hub communities for Western Interior.

46

47 MR. REAKOFF: This Council has
48 requested charter to Aniak different times, we've
49 requested the charters to McGrath also because there's

50

0311

1 no cost advantage to all of the Council members
2 spending two nights in hotels in Fairbanks and
3 Anchorage during travel, that's not cost effective, the
4 charters are actually cheaper because we could go
5 directly in one day from home to McGrath, or home to
6 Aniak. So I would like to make that clear for the
7 record, that the Council's advocating for the -- a few
8 dollars saved, the per diem, the hotel rate, not
9 (breaks up) so I would like to know what other hub
10 communities there are so the Council can make an
11 informed decision as to an alternate to Aniak.

12

13 (Pause)

14

15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Nissa.

16

17 MS. PILCHER: I think I -- excuse me,
18 this is Nissa Pilcher. I think I found the document
19 Katya was looking for, it looks like for Western
20 Interior your hub communities are -- another option
21 would be Galena as a hub community.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Pollock.

24

25 MR. SIMON: It would be good to meet --
26 go down there and meet in Aniak, in the earlier time we
27 had another member from Aniak, but there's none now so
28 maybe we could meet down there and maybe somebody will
29 get interested and get on the Board.

30

31 Thank you, Madame Chair.

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: That's a good
34 idea. Anybody else.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So what
39 should.....

40

41 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, may I make
42 a motion.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion by Jack
45 is there a second.

46

47 REPORTER: Jenny, he hasn't made it
48 yet.

49

50

0312

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, okay, yes,
2 Jack.

3
4 MR. REAKOFF: I'll make the motion, the
5 motion is that the first priority is Aniak with charter
6 access as our first priority with the selected dates,
7 alternate would be Galena with charter for RAC members
8 from southern communities like McGrath and I guess
9 McGrath is the only one. But we need to have the
10 ability to expeditiously transport our Regional Council
11 members to a selected destination so Galena would be
12 our second alternate.

13
14 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Is there
15 a second to that motion.

16
17 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. There's a
20 motion made by Jack to have the meeting in Aniak and
21 the alternate place would be Galena. Discussion.

22
23 MS. PILCHER: Can I just ask.....

24
25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Hang on -- yes.

26
27 MS. PILCHER: Would you want to include
28 in that motion that the current dates are okay which
29 would currently April 4th and 5th.

30
31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Anybody.

32
33 MR. REAKOFF: Yes.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So it
36 will be April 4th and 5th in Aniak or Galena.

37
38 MR. REAKOFF: Yes.

39
40 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Via charter.
41 Okay, all in favor say aye.

42
43 IN UNISON: Aye.

44
45 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
46 sign.

47
48 (No opposing votes)

49
50

0313

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, motion
2 carries. So our next meeting will be in Aniak on April
3 4th and 5th. We're going to go on to our fall meeting
4 and that's scheduled for.....

5
6 MS. PILCHER: It's not.

7
8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: It's not
9 scheduled. So if you look on your calendar there's
10 some RACs that already chose their dates. Okay,
11 anybody have a preference.

12
13 MR. GERVAIS: I like the October 11th
14 and 12th.

15
16 MR. REAKOFF: I'll concur with that.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. October
19 11th and 12th in, where? Fairbanks.

20
21 MR. REAKOFF: Fairbanks.

22
23 MR. GERVAIS: Is there protocol between
24 hub and rural or how is there -- is there any way that
25 that's supposed to play out.

26
27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I know we met in
28 Anchorage a couple times but I don't know what happened
29 to that but wherever you want to meet we'll meet.

30
31 Kevin.

32
33 MR. WHITWORTH: Oh, I just wanted to
34 mention that hopefully we can avoid AFN week. I don't
35 know, you know, last time when we voted on a fall
36 meeting we didn't know AFN's schedule and it's this
37 week, and I think that's a lot of the reason why we're
38 missing some people here, you know, there's a lot of
39 people there at AFN. So anyhow I just wanted to
40 mention that. And I am kind of frustrated, too, that,
41 you know, with Covid we saved a lot of money on travel
42 but now we're trying to scrap to make Aniak work. I
43 realize there's Federal budgets and fiscal year but
44 just wanted to mention my frustration there, with Covid
45 we did save a heck of a lot of money with travel
46 budgets.

47
48 Thanks.

49
50

0314

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
2 Kevin. I think AFN is usually on the third week in
3 October so hopefully they don't move it, if we set our
4 meeting -- but if we do set our meeting and AFN happens
5 to move is there something we can add an alternate
6 dates for that instead of -- Nissa.

7
8 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for
9 the record. So you guys will be revisiting your dates
10 in your -- at your winter 2023 meeting and I did a
11 quick search and I couldn't find that the AFN dates
12 were out for 2023 but you're right it is normally that
13 third week of October, which this does not fall on.
14 That being said you could move your fall meeting at
15 your winter meeting if it does happen to coincide but
16 then -- but unfortunately then you'll run into we
17 can't really do more than two Council meetings in one
18 week just due to Staff as well as the Court Reporter so
19 the wiggle room that you'll have at that time during
20 the winter meeting will be much smaller than you've got
21 right now.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Another
24 thing to remember is I think this next year it'll be
25 held in Fairbanks, AFN, but I'm not too sure. They try
26 to alternate between Anchorage and Fairbanks.

27
28 So with that, October 11th and 12th, is
29 that the dates you picked -- the 11th and 12th?

30
31 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah.

32
33 MR. REAKOFF: I prefer those dates.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So do we have a
36 motion for that. Oh, I'm sorry, Pollock -- yes.

37
38 MR. SIMON: Just like this week is AFN
39 weekend and we got two members that took off to AFN so
40 I was thinking we could come and meet a week earlier,
41 10, 11, 12 or 13th.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. I think
44 there's a motion on the floor to have it for October
45 11th and 12th and it was made by Tim and then seconded
46 by Kevin.

47
48 MR. WHITWORTH: Second.

49
50

0315

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.
2 Discussion.

3
4 MS. PILCHER: Where?

5
6 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, where?

7
8 MR. WHITWORTH: Tim, did you say
9 Fairbanks, is that what your motion was for?

10
11 MR. GERVAIS: No, I asked if there was
12 some kind of schedule or protocol where we have a
13 certain rotation we did. But I would say I don't care
14 where it is.

15
16 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair.

17
18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes.

19
20 MS. WESSELS: Yeah, I can answer Tim's
21 question. IT used to be that the meeting in the non-
22 hub community was once every two years, so I -- we have
23 a new Assistant Regional Director at OSM now so I don't
24 know what her policy will be because we don't know what
25 the budgets will be. Unfortunately, yeah, we did not
26 travel for the last two years, two and a half years,
27 but, you know, each year we get a new budget so I don't
28 know what's going to happen. I think your chance of
29 being in a hub community is very high -- a non-hub
30 community is very high this year just because we are
31 just starting traveling. So I think, you know, chances
32 of Aniak being approved is a good chance but I don't
33 know what's going to happen after that.

34
35 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I had a -- I guess
36 one -- a discussion yesterday with Nissa and she's
37 indicating that -- I'm open to suggestions on the
38 location of fall 2023. I'm not -- I don't have a
39 certain location that I'm saying needs to happen there
40 so feel free for other members to make a -- to suggest
41 a location.

42
43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. The way I
44 think the way we worked it was we had it like every two
45 years in the villages and then we'd have it in the city
46 so that's how we got to meet in the hubs every two
47 years so we tried to be fair that the village people
48 would be able to attend when we have it in the village
49 and then when we come to the city, that the city people
50

0316

1 would be able to attend, that's why I think we had it
2 like that. And I don't know what happened to Anchorage
3 but it doesn't matter where we meet as long as we meet.

4

5 Yes, Don.

6

7 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Madame Chair. I -- I
8 agree with you 100 percent. We only have a certain
9 amount of villages that have the capacity to be able to
10 meet like this. I remember when we went to Aniak the
11 sound system, everything was not set up that good,
12 that's why I -- over the years I've always advocated
13 for McGrath because it was just -- where we stayed was
14 right across the street from -- everything was set up
15 really nice and Galena is another one. We don't have
16 that many places. We tried Kaltag one time, maybe they
17 didn't have the sound system or something. But I
18 agree, I mean I think meeting here in Fairbanks is
19 great and then every -- whatever -- alternate --
20 whatever formula you had is good.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.

23

24 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, this is
25 Jack.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

28

29 MR. REAKOFF: I would prefer Fairbanks
30 for the next fall meeting. We have more RAC Members
31 that have access to Fairbanks from the southern part.
32 Going to Anchorage would be more costly in the long run
33 because additional travel days. So I would prefer
34 Fairbanks as our meeting place for the fall 2023
35 meeting.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, so we'll
38 just add that to our motion then.

39

40 MR. HONEA: Yes.

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So we're
43 going to add that on, October 11th and 12th in
44 Fairbanks for the next fall meeting.

45

46 MR. WHITWORTH: Question.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA:
49 Kevin.

50
0317

1 MR. WHITWORTH: Question.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. The
4 question has been called for. All in favor say aye.

5

6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed.

9

10 (No opposing votes)

11

12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Motion carries.
13 We're almost done I think. Okay, so Jack is going to
14 do his report.

15

16 MS. PILCHER: (Nods affirmatively)

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Jack is
19 going to do a report on State of Alaska Board of
20 Fisheries review, right?

21

22 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

23

24 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: A report.

25

26 MR. REAKOFF: I don't know what that
27 is.

28

29 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Nissa.

30

31 MR. REAKOFF: We were going to
32 cover.....

33

34 MS. PILCHER: I'm going to try Jack.

35

36 MR. REAKOFF: Go ahead.

37

38 MS. PILCHER: We're going to cover the
39 Board of Fish proposals. But since OSM Staff really
40 can't lead you guys through those Board of Fish
41 proposals, that's kind of more of a Council driven
42 process. You guys do have the Board of Fish proposals
43 in your packet, both Yukon, Kuskokwim, and then Area M
44 -- or I shouldn't say Area M, but the Alaska Peninsula
45 Chignik Fisheries Proposals if you wanted to go through
46 them. And there is -- there is some Staff.

47

48 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair, this is
49 Jack.

50
0318

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Go ahead, Jack.

2

3

4 MR. REAKOFF: There's real priorities
5 State Proposal -- the management plan for Area M,
6 Proposal 140, the one Virgil went over. Proposal 24 is
7 the gear specs proposal by Department of Fish and Game
8 to allow additional harvest methods on the Kuskokwim
9 River. Those are important ones that will address some
10 of the issues with harvest of non-salmon species. I
11 think those are the two most important proposals. And
12 104 is a hook and line proposal for the Koyukuk River
13 Advisory but that's not nearly as important as Proposal
14 140 and 124.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

And so those are in our proposal
attachment. Can you assist with that Nissa.

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

MS. PILCHER: I'll give it a go.

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

MR. REAKOFF: 140 is the proposal by
the Fairbanks Advisory Committee, the one that Virgil
spoke extensively on. So this would be reverting back
to South Alaska Peninsula and Shumigan June salmon
management plan. I was fully supportive of that long
discussion by Virgil. And so I don't think that the
Council needs additional discussion, we had like an
hour discussion with Virgil on this proposal.

28

29

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

I'm supportive of Proposal 140.

30

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

Should I make a motion, Madame Chair.

31

32

33

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, go ahead,
Jack.

34

35

36

37

38

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

MR. REAKOFF: I make a motion to adopt
State Board of Fisheries Proposal South Unimak Shumagin
Island June salmon fisheries management plan is
Proposal 140 submitted by the Fairbanks Advisory
Committee to revert to a management classification of
the fishery, there would be more protection for the
chum -- total chum salmon loss to the subsistence users
of the Yukon and Kuskokwim River drainages.

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

Thank you, Madame Chair.

45

46

47

48

49

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Is there
a second to that motion.

50
0319

1 MR. WHITWORTH: Second.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Second.

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Seconded by Don.

6 Discussion.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. All in
11 favor for the motion.....

12

13 MR. GERVAIS: Jenny, yeah, I would like
14 to discuss this for a minute.

15

16 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, Tim.

17

18 MR. GERVAIS: So last year from August
19 to October I was down in this area for crab fishing and
20 I spent a lot of time in King Cove and some amount of
21 time in False Pass and I met a lot of these fishermen
22 and saw them actually fishing quite a bit and I wanted
23 to correct some of the statements from Virgil's
24 testimony yesterday that there are a lot of streams
25 down there that are local to those areas. And so it's
26 not that -- everything that these people are harvesting
27 in this area is intercept fishing. Yes, there are some
28 people that have real expensive boats and there are
29 some people that have million dollar seasons but then
30 there's a lot of people that have a more modest harvest
31 and they're -- they are just like other people in rural
32 Alaska, they're just trying to make a living based on
33 the resources that are available to them.

34

35 I've been trying to get a hold of a
36 fellow from King Cove all day to have him come online
37 and explain what this proposal would mean to him.

38

39 To me, I don't have a copy of this
40 current, 5AAC9.365 with me, I have one on my boat but I
41 didn't bring it to this meeting. And Virgil just
42 pulled this management plan from 2001 to 2003 and
43 without having the other plan in front of me to compare
44 the differences, I would have to -- let me think of the
45 term -- it's -- I would have to not vote on it because
46 I don't have enough information comparing the current
47 management plan to what Virgil's proposing here.

48

49 I understand everybody's position on

50
0320

1 trying to protect AYK chum salmon stocks, however, I
2 cannot say yes or no whether this specific management
3 plan from 2001 to 2003 with some slight revisions is
4 the best way to go about it. I would ask Madame Chair
5 if we could have this fellow from King Cove speak to us
6 about his thoughts. He grew up in the area. He's at
7 least a second generation fisherman. He knows more
8 about the chum harvest in this area than everyone on
9 this Council combined. But that all takes time and I
10 don't know if you want to get involved with it but I
11 cannot participate in the vote based on the amount of
12 information and discussion we've had so far to have
13 such a radical revision of their management plan.

14
15 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Any other
16 comments.

17
18 (No comments)

19
20 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack, do you
21 have anything to add.

22
23 MR. REAKOFF: Well, Virgil made a
24 compelling argument in favor of Proposal 140. The
25 current management plan is not working. We got 900 and
26 some, thousand, chum salmon take and the current
27 management plan makes no consideration of chum salmon
28 interception. The current plan is not working in my
29 mind and I'm supportive of Proposal 140 to at least get
30 it before the Federal -- or the State Board of Fish so
31 that they can reconsideration the impacts to the
32 Kuskokwim and Yukon River fisheries. So I intend to
33 vote for Proposal 140. The Board of Fish will sort
34 this out in the mix. The current plan is not working.

35
36 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Did you cut out
37 or are you still talking?

38
39 MR. REAKOFF: I'm done, Madame Chair.

40
41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, thank you,
42 Jack. Tim.

43
44 MR. GERVAIS: Madame Chair. Can we
45 check to see if this fellow from King Cove is on the
46 line to explain his understanding of the management
47 plan. His name is Justin Wilson.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. What's

50
0321

1 the preference of the Board.

2

3 Kevin.

4

5 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, any testimony is
6 good I think but I don't think we should block a
7 testifier.

8

9 MR. REAKOFF: Right.

10

11 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Jack, did you
12 have something to add.

13

14 MR. REAKOFF: Oh, no, I agree with
15 Kevin. Thank you.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So if you
18 can get him.

19

20 (Pause)

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, what's his
23 name?

24

25 MR. GERVAIS: His name is Justin
26 Wilson.

27

28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Is Justin
29 Wilson online.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Justin are you
34 there, Justin Wilson.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MR. GERVAIS: Okay, I would just advise
39 you to proceed if he's not able to call in.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So we
42 have a motion before us. All in favor of the motion
43 say aye.

44

45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46

47 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. All
48 opposed.

49

50
0322

1 (No opposing votes)

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Tim is
4 abstaining at this time. The motion passes.

5

6 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair. I made a
7 mistake on the Proposal number, for the Kuskokwim River
8 lawful gear and gear specifications, which is Proposal
9 91 submitted by the State Department of Fish and Game
10 to give more wider range of options with dipnets and
11 various other aspects of -- it should -- Proposal 91
12 should be in your packet.

13

14 (Pause)

15

16 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Where -- oh, in
17 our packet.

18

19 MR. REAKOFF: In the Board of Fish
20 proposal packet that was provided by Nissa.

21

22 (Pause)

23

24 MR. REAKOFF: So I'll make a motion to
25 adopt Proposal 91.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Motion by
28 Jack seconded by Kevin.

29

30 MR. WHITWORTH: Second.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay.
33 Discussion.

34

35 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair, this is
36 Kevin. I would like to make a friendly amendment, if
37 we can add coho salmon to that motion.

38

39 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack.

42

43 MR. REAKOFF: I'm amicable to including
44 all salmon species. Would that be appropriate, Kevin?

45

46 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, let's -- I like
47 that language, all salmon species if we could make that
48 amendment, thank you.

49

50
0323

1 MS. WESSELS: Madame Chair.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, sorry.

4

5 MS. WESSELS: Sorry. There's no such
6 thing as friendly amendment. You will have to make an
7 amendment to the original motion and then vote on the
8 amendment and then vote on the original motion as
9 amended. Sorry.

10

11 MR. WHITWORTH: Say that again -- so I
12 make an amendment and.....

13

14 MS. WESSELS: You make an amendment and
15 then the Council.....

16

17 MR. WHITWORTH: I make a motion to.....

18

19 MS. WESSELS:votes on your
20 amendment and then the Council votes on the original
21 motion as amended.

22

23 MR. WHITWORTH: What she said.

24

25 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So you're
26 amending what he just said.

27

28 MR. WHITWORTH: Yeah, I make an
29 amendment -- motion to amend the original motion.

30

31 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Is there
32 a second to that.

33

34 MR. REAKOFF: To include all salmon, I
35 second.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. We have a
38 motion, it was seconded. Discussion.

39

40 (No comments)

41

42 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Hearing none
43 we'll go ahead and vote on the motion. All in favor
44 for Proposal 91 say aye.

45

46 IN UNISON: Aye.

47

48 MR. GERVAIS: For the amend.....

49

50
0324

1 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, wait, wait,
4 hang on, we're voting on the amendment.

5

6 MR. REAKOFF: Okay.

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So all in favor
9 for Kevin's amendment say aye.

10

11 IN UNISON: Aye.

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Did Jack vote?

14

15 REPORTER: Yes.

16

17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, I guess
18 you did.

19

20 MR. REAKOFF: I did, sorry.

21

22 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Oh, yeah.
23 Okay, all opposed same sign.

24

25 (No opposing votes)

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, the motion
28 passed.

29

30 MS. PILCHER: The amended motion.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Now we got to go
33 back to the main motion.

34

35 MS. PILCHER: Correct.

36

37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. The main
38 motion, all in favor for the main motion say aye.

39

40 IN UNISON: Aye.

41

42 MR. GERVAIS: As amended.

43

44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: As amended,
45 thank you.

46

47 IN UNISON: Aye.

48

49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All in -- all

50
0325

1 opposed say no.

2

3 (No opposing votes)

4

5 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, motion
6 passed.

7

8 MR. WHITWORTH: Madame Chair, sorry, I
9 was just trying to be friendly.

10

11 (Laughter)

12

13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: That's okay, I'm
14 so confused anyways so -- we're all confused right now.

15

16 (Laughter)

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: That's okay,
19 we're getting through it. Okay, what's next Nissa.

20

21 MS. PILCHER: Yep, so those were the
22 two proposals that Jack outlined that he'd like the
23 Council to go over but if there's any other proposals,
24 any other State Board of Fish proposals the Council
25 would like to take up this would be an opportunity.

26

27 MR. REAKOFF: If the Council has a
28 quick moment, the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee has
29 Proposal 104 to allow hook and line for subsistence
30 from Nulato up the Koyukuk River to the closed area of
31 the Dalton Highway Corridor. The Koyukuk River
32 Advisory Committee wanted to have hook and line as a
33 legal gear type for subsistence fishing.

34

35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Is that a
36 -- this.....

37

38 MR. REAKOFF: 104 should be in your
39 packet.

40

41 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: It's in our
42 packet?

43

44 MR. REAKOFF: It should be.

45

46 (Pause)

47

48 MR. REAKOFF: No, I'm wrong on my
49 number again. It's Proposal 79, excuse me. I got my

50
0326

1 page number and proposal number mixed up.

2

3 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, Proposal
4 79, I don't know where it is. Hang on.

5

6 (Pause)

7

8 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Oh, first page.
9 Okay, so Jack you made a motion to accept Proposal 79.

10

11 MR. REAKOFF: I'll make that motion to
12 accept -- to adopt Proposal 79 for gear specifications
13 to allow hook and line fishing from the Nulato River
14 mouth up to the Koyukuk River up to the permit area of
15 the South Fork and Middle Fork of the Koyukuk River.
16 That's the motion.

17

18 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Is there a
19 second to that motion.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Seconded.

22

23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Motion
24 made by Jack to accept Proposal 79, seconded by Tim.

25

26 Discussion.

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 MR. SIMON: Question.

31

32 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, Pollock
33 called for the question. All in favor of adopting the
34 Proposal 79 say aye.

35

36 IN UNISON: Aye.

37

38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed same
39 sign.

40

41 (No opposing votes)

42

43 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Does the
44 Board have any other proposals.

45

46 MR. REAKOFF: Madame Chair.

47

48 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Yes, Jack, go
49 ahead.

50
0327

1 MR. REAKOFF: That's all the proposals
2 I feel the Council -- that's imperative for the Council
3 to address at this time. The Council is tired and I
4 feel that it was -- that's all we need from there
5 unless other Council members have a proposal.

6
7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Does
8 anybody -- other Council members have any other
9 proposal they want to look at or pass.

10
11 (No comments)

12
13 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, I think
14 not -- it looks like it. So we'll go ahead -- are you
15 done, Jack, with that?

16
17 MR. REAKOFF: Yes.

18
19 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. So now
20 we're on to Council closing comments.

21
22 Pollock, closing comments.

23
24 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Madame Chair.
25 I'm glad that we had a sit down meeting, face to face.
26 we never had a meeting like this for a couple years.
27 It's good to see all of you, all the different
28 agencies. I listened to teleconference a few times the
29 last couple years but the phone, the landline, phones
30 in my home, so I had trouble trying to call in so I
31 didn't like it much but now I'm happy I see all of you.

32
33 Thank you, Madame Chair.

34
35 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,
36 Pollock.

37
38 Tim.

39
40 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Madame Chair.
41 I'd like to thank all the Council members and Staff for
42 helping us put the meeting on. I'd like to thank the
43 community of Fairbanks for hosting us. I wish Jack a
44 good recovery from his accident. I appreciate Jenny
45 and Nissa for working together and keeping our meeting
46 orderly and efficient.

47
48 In speaking with people during the
49 meeting we had some reference to continued wanton waste

50
0328

1 of moose meat coming out of the Melozi River with the
2 same guiding outfits, Craig Hill's so we're going to --
3 as a community of Ruby we're going to pursue
4 documenting this and trying to get the correct law
5 enforcement or whatever is the correct agencies
6 involved with getting rid of that problem of wanton
7 waste coming out of the Melozi which has been going on
8 for probably about a decade now. It's really sad that
9 this is continuing on.

10

11 I'd like to express appreciation to all
12 the subsistence users on both rivers, all three rivers,
13 counting the Koyukuk for maintaining respect for the
14 regulation and the closures and not engaging in much
15 illegal salmon fishing so we can all share the burden
16 of conservation. I hope we have some successes.

17

18 Over the winter we're trying to get
19 various agencies, and the ADF&G and the North Pacific
20 Council in taking some more significant action to
21 address the lack of salmon on all these rivers.

22

23 And that's about it for tonight.

24

25 Thank you.

26

27 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Tim.

28

29 Don.

30

31 MR. HONEA: Yeah, I'd like to thank our
32 Coordinator here for bringing me in a day earlier
33 because in climate weather -- you saw how it was
34 yesterday and I believe -- and we have sometimes a hard
35 time getting into the village of Ruby. Galena might be
36 -- might -- you know they got a pretty good size
37 airport there and -- but, yeah, so I'm -- I will sign
38 up again for -- I guess it'd be a year from now or
39 whatever, that I'd serve, but I appreciate everyone
40 bringing their -- and -- you know bringing their
41 concerns to us, to the RAC. I mean just as PJ did,
42 public testimony, I think is really meaningful when we
43 hear from the participants, when we hear their problems
44 and stuff like that. And I -- it just -- it just
45 bothers me that some areas are not represented well.

46

47 I don't believe in this calling kind of
48 business. I think we should really be compensated for
49 that. It's really difficult to talk over the phone.

50
0329

1 When I got to, you know, borrow my wife's phone or
2 completely hang up or something like that, you know, we
3 -- maybe we don't want to talk about it but I think we
4 should. I think it should be compensated as to the guy
5 that wrote us the letter about this.

6
7 Other than that I appreciate each one
8 of you because -- Darrell and Tommy and they always,
9 you know, all them guys always bring it from the --
10 straight from the heart. They were talking about a fish
11 camp up here or -- or, you know, really good stuff. I
12 mean, you know, talking about stuff that I don't know
13 about that I, you know, there's -- maybe there's no --
14 like he's talking about, the gravel -- a gravel bar and
15 stuff, or circumstances that, you know, each time we
16 come here it's kind of a -- it's a learning thing.
17 And, you know, my position right now, I'm more
18 concerned about our Refuges and our game populations.
19 Aaron talked about the problem of -- a moose population
20 exploding on the Lower Yukon. You remember 20, 30
21 years ago it was controversial for that area, there
22 were hunters coming up into the GASH area and -- and is
23 it kind of ironic that now they have so much that they
24 -- that they have a -- that they have to have a winter
25 season, a cow season and something, that's a good
26 problem. So I'm just going to keep trying to, you
27 know, at least if -- and I mentioned this before -- if
28 we don't have no fish I'm going to at least try to keep
29 our game populations.

30
31 With that thank you.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Don.

34
35 Kevin.

36
37 MR. WHITWORTH: Thank you, Madame
38 Chair. First I just want to thank you for stepping up
39 while Jack's recovering, and, Jack, I hope you can
40 recover soon and see you at the next face to face
41 meeting. Nissa thank you for your coordination and
42 getting us all here and a place to stay.

43
44 OSM Staff, thanks for all the analysis
45 and it was a good meeting.

46
47 Thank you very much.

48
49 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you,

50
0330

1 Kevin.

2

3

Jack.

4

5

MR. REAKOFF: Thank you, Madame Chair.

6

I really appreciate you stepping up to Chair the
7 meeting. I'm really sorry I had to be on the phone
8 here. I still am crawling for three weeks on my floor
9 and I can't put any weight on my feet. I do really
10 appreciate how the meeting progressed. We covered a
11 lot of issues. And I appreciate Nissa is getting up to
12 speed on how the Federal process works. And I really
13 appreciate all the U.S. agencies, and the State of
14 Alaska that participated in this meeting.

15

16

17

I do feel that this Council has been
18 very effective and we'll try to avoid any kind of
19 meeting conflicts in the future. When we set those
20 dates last time we didn't realize that we were going to
21 have this AFN pop up during this meeting.

21

22

23

I do hope that we can get
24 representation for some areas of our region, the GASH
25 region and the lower and middle Kuskokwim down towards
26 Aniak would be a -- there's got to be some
27 representatives to speak well for those portions of our
28 region.

28

29

I appreciate all the Council members
30 diligence in attending and I hope to see you face to
31 face at the next meeting.

32

33

Thank you.

34

35

MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Thank you, Jack.
36 I would also like to thank Nissa for her help and like
37 she said this is her second meeting. Thank you, you
38 did a good job. I'd thank the Board members, thank you
39 for sitting here and bearing with just listening and
40 getting educated for the same time. Thank you to the
41 Staff, you did a good job.

42

43

I don't know if you noticed but I was
44 timing every agency to see how you did and you all did
45 pretty good. Most of you stayed within 10 minutes,
46 which was very good.

47

48

(Laughter)

49

50
0331

1 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: And if we didn't
2 have any questions from the Board you would have all
3 hit like maybe eight minutes. You did very good.

4
5 (Laughter)

6
7 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: I'd like to
8 thank our recorder, Tina. I know her as Tina, I don't
9 know what you know her as -- I've known Tina since I've
10 been on the Board so -- and she's always so patient,
11 thank you very much.

12
13 And the rest of the Staff that helped
14 us.

15
16 November 21 and we had only four
17 standing members on the Council and that's when I ran
18 the meeting on the phone and I just wanted to thank
19 Jack and Tim for being online that time, I had to go a
20 lot to them for support and they did it, thank you very
21 much.

22
23 And in this last -- I couldn't attend
24 the last meeting due to my brother passed away the same
25 day the meeting was held and I just think back since
26 February I lost four family members so it's -- you
27 know, we've just been losing a lot of people in our
28 area.

29
30 Again, I'd just like to thank everyone.
31 I think we did a good job. As you noticed, I said this
32 morning, my head was like a little owl, I was trying to
33 look at everybody and thank you for bearing with me.

34
35 (Laughter)

36
37 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: This has been an
38 experience for me. When I listen to Kevin speak, or
39 the younger guys speak I was thinking, what am I doing
40 on this Board we need younger people on here but we
41 also need the older people for guidance, I guess.

42
43 And I've always been pushing for a
44 woman to get on the Board because I've been on the
45 Board for a long time with -- just by myself. We had a
46 lady before, she came to one meeting and I don't know
47 what happened, and we have another lady on the Board
48 and I've never met her. But I keep pushing for women
49 in our area to get on the Board. I think we need to

50
0332

1 hear from both sides because the men have a lot of -- I
2 don't know what you want to say, but the woman also
3 have -- we have a lot of leadership in our women.

4
5 So I just want to thank you again.
6 It's been a long two days and we did it, thank you.

7
8 One more -- yes, Tina -- or Nissa.

9
10 MS. PILCHER: You just.....

11
12 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, we got
13 done with our closing comments, we're at the end.

14
15 (Laughter)

16
17 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay, is there a
18 motion to adjourn.

19
20 MR. REAKOFF: Make a motion to adjourn,
21 Madame Chair.

22
23 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Okay. Motion by
24 Jack seconded by.....

25
26 MR. WHITWORTH: Second.

27
28 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA:Kevin. All
29 in favor say aye.

30
31 IN UNISON: Aye.

32
33 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: So we're done at
34 6 -- 5:00 -- 5:55.

35
36 MR. GERVAIS: All opposed.

37
38 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: All opposed.

39
40 (No opposing votes)

41
42 MR. REAKOFF: Safe travels.

43
44 MADAME CHAIR PELKOLA: Adjourned.

45
46 (Off record)

47
48 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

49

