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SEWARD PENINSULA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

Aurora Hotel

Nome, Alaska
October 5, 2022
9:12 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Louis Green, Chairman
Tom Gray
Deahl Katchatag
Ronald Kirk
Robert Moses
Leland Oyoumick
Elmer Seetot

Regional Council Coordinator - Nissa Pilcher

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Nome, Alaska - 10/5/2022)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Good morning, everybody. 9:12. Are we going to do roll call? I'll let Nissa handle that.

MS. PILCHER: Good morning. So first we're going to change -- I guess first we should establish a quorum come to think of it. My apologies. So just double checking. Is Mary Freytag from Unalakleet online?

(No response)

MS. PILCHER: How about Louis Green from Nome.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Louie's here. Thank you.

MS. PILCHER: Tom Gray is not present, but he is expected momentarily. Mr. Katchatag from Unalakleet.

MR. KATCHATAG: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Mr. Oyoumick from Unalakleet.

MR. OYOUMICK: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Martin from Golovin he is excused. Elmer Seetot from Brevig Mission.

MR. SEETOT: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Robert Moses, Sr. from Golovin, are you online?

(No response)

MS. PILCHER: And then Ronald Kirk from Stebbins.

MR. KIRK: Here.

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1 MS. PILCHER: So quorum is established.
2 Just so those of you that are online are aware of who
3 else is in the room I'll just quickly run through who
4 is present here just so we can do that quickly. From
5 BIA -- I forgot your last name though.

6
7 MS. DEBENHAM: Debenham.

8
9 MS. PILCHER: Debenham. My apologies.

10
11 MS. DEBENHAM: That's okay.

12
13 MS. PILCHER: National Park Service we
14 have Letty Hughes. Office of Subsistence Management of
15 course me, Nissa Pilcher, Jarred Stone, Hannah
16 Voorhees, Deanna Perry and Robbin LaVine.

17
18 So then online if we could run through.
19 Are there any Native organizations or groups online?
20 You can introduce yourself now. Tribal government,
21 Native organizations, any of those online?

22
23 (No response)

24
25 MS. PILCHER: All right. Anyone from
26 Bureau of Indian Affairs online.

27
28 (No response)

29
30 MS. PILCHER: Anyone from U.S. Fish and
31 Wildlife Service.

32
33 (No response)

34
35 MS. PILCHER: Anyone from National Park
36 Service.

37
38 MS. PATTON: Good morning, everyone.
39 This is Eva Patton.

40
41 MS. PILCHER: Good morning, Eva.

42
43 MS. PATTON: Subsistence Program
44 Manager with the NPS Regional Office in Anchorage.
45 Good morning.

46
47 MR. PAYER: Good morning. This is
48 David Payer, wildlife biologist with the National Park
49 Service from the Regional Office in Anchorage. Thank
50

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1 you.

2

3 MS. KOELSCH: Uvlaalluataq. This is
4 Jeanette Koelsch, Superintendent, Bering Land Bridge
5 National Preserve.

6

7 MR. ATKINSON: Good morning. Ken
8 Atkinson, National Park Service, Nome.

9

10 MS. BRAEM: Good morning. Nikki Braem,
11 National Park Service, Nome, but I have to dial in this
12 morning. Thanks.

13

14 MS. PILCHER: All right. Good morning,
15 National Park Service. Anyone from BLM online? Bureau
16 of Land Management.

17

18 MR. MCKEE: Good morning. This is
19 Chris McKee, Statewide Subsistence Coordinator with BLM
20 out of Anchorage.

21

22 MR. SEPPI: Good morning. This is
23 Bruce Seppi, Anchorage Field Office, BLM.

24

25 MS. PILCHER: All right. Good morning.
26 Anyone from Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

27

28 MS. GERMAIN: Sara Germain, Fish and
29 Game, wildlife biologist in Nome.

30

31 MS. CARSON: Good morning. This is
32 Alicia Carson, area wildlife biologist in Nome.

33

34 MS. URQUIA: Good morning. This is
35 Morgan Urquia from the Division of Subsistence in our
36 office in Fairbanks.

37

38 MS. PILCHER: Good morning. So just to
39 double check on ADF&G. So we've got Morgan. Do we
40 also have Sara and Alicia?

41

42 MS. GERMAIN: Yep, that's right.

43

44 MS. PILCHER: Sorry. My mic was giving
45 some feedback. All right. So anyone online from
46 Office of Subsistence Management?

47

48 MR. UBELAKER: Good morning. Brian
49 Ubelaker, wildlife biologist out of the Anchorage

50

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1 office.

2

3 MR. FOLEY: Good morning, everyone.

4 This is Kevin Foley, fish biologist out of the

5 Anchorage office.

6

7 MS. PILCHER: All right. Do we have

8 anyone who has yet to introduce themselves?

9

10 (No response)

11

12 MS. PILCHER: All right. Well, this is

13 Nissa again. Just to let you guys know we -- Tom Gray

14 did enter the room and we will get this meeting

15 started. Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, folks. We had a

18 long discussion last night about our letter to the

19 Federal Subsistence Board. We identified some items on

20 there that we'd like to put on the letter and have

21 their staff summarize it. So they're asking for a

22 motion for us to direct them to work on that until our

23 winter meeting where we will rehash it and decide

24 whether to edit it or add to it or whatever we need to

25 do.

26

27 At this time we had three items on

28 there. One was resident northern Seward Peninsula

29 caribou. Another one was beluga. Then we talked about

30 -- it was my topic. I'm trying to think of the words

31 for it. It had to do with the intercept.

32

33 MR. GRAY: Seals and oogruks.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Seals and oogruks.

36 Ribbon seals.

37

38 MR. GRAY: Bycatch.

39

40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Bycatch. There you

41 go. That's the word I was.....

42

43 MS. LAVINE: Trawlers impacting marine

44 mammals.

45

46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go. That

47 was the best way to put it. So at this time I'd

48 entertain a motion to approve a draft letter of three

49 items discussed for the fiscal year 2022 annual report

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1 and direct staff to summarize for our winter meeting.
2 Is there a motion.

3

4 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair, I would move.
5 Does that include our reindeer?

6

7 MR. GRAY: Yeah.

8

9 MS. LAVINE: Resident caribou/reindeer
10 population.

11

12 MR. KIRK: I so move. Ron Kirk.

13

14 MR. GRAY: Second.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I have a first and a
17 second and a motion. All those that approve say aye.

18

19 IN UNISON: Aye.

20

21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All against same sign.

22

23 (No opposing votes)

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none. Motion
26 passes. So that brings us to the next item on our list
27 which is Nissa. Under item 11(e) Fall 2022 Council
28 application/nomination open season. Go ahead, Nissa.

29

30 MS. PILCHER: All. Thank you, Mr.
31 Chair. Members of the Council. For the record my name
32 is Nissa Pilcher, Subsistence Council Coordinator with
33 OSM. I'd like to briefly talk to you about the fall
34 2022 Council application and nomination open season.
35 This is not an action item.

36

37 I'd like to thank all Council members
38 for your volunteer service on the Council on behalf of
39 the Federally qualified subsistence users in your
40 region. Your knowledge and experience is of great
41 value to the Federal Subsistence Management Program and
42 to the Board.

43

44 The program is best served by having
45 robust Councils will full membership. At the request
46 of the Board, we will be engaging the help of Native
47 liaisons of Federal agencies in helping us solicit more
48 applications during this appointment cycle. We are
49 also requesting you to help because you are our
50

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1 connection to the communities in the region that you
2 represent.

3

4

5 The 2023 Council application period
6 opens on September 13th. We are encouraging you to
7 help us to spread the word about it in your region and
8 to recruit new applicants. You know the people in your
9 region and you also can share the firsthand experience
10 of what it means to serve on the Council, what is
11 involved and how much time it takes.

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You can also nominate the candidates if someone is interested in applying but is having a hard time filling out an application. The application packets are available on our website. That's www.doi.gov/subsistence/regions. We also have application periods here at the meeting for you to take back to your communities to distribute to interested persons, organizations and tribes.

Additionally, we are mailing out about 1,000 copies of the application packet to various addresses across the state. If someone needs a copy to be faxed, we can do that as well. We are hoping to have a good number of qualified applicants applying this year so we are able to fill all vacant seats and have alternates available. The application period is open until February 21st, 2023.

I also encourage all the incumbents on your Council to reapply before you depart from this meeting. That way you can save on postage. There are currently three seats that will expire. There is one vacant seat for a total of four seats that will become open for appointment or reappointment come December 2nd, 2023.

All incumbents whose seats expire then will need to reapply during this cycle. Those incumbents, which I will name in just a second, did get incumbent applications in your packet, but if they've gone misplaced I have extras and I'll certainly help you get them filled out and turned in while you are here.

Martin, his seat is expired. I have mailed and emailed him a copy and I'll work with him on getting it in if he is still interested. Leland, you'll also need to fill out an incumbent application

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1 and I can certainly help. There's a less rigorous one
2 which I can get you a copy. And then also Mr.
3 Katchatag, Deahl.

4
5 So that's that. All right.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Robbin.

8
9 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
10 would just like to do again a shameless plug for our
11 program. As I said yesterday, I learned so much from
12 all of you. You know your region and if you can help
13 us think about which communities you think might also
14 be wonderful to invite so that you have a more holistic
15 representation of your region, please let us know.

16
17 Anybody listening online, hearing our
18 process, we invite you if you are a Federally qualified
19 subsistence users in the Seward Peninsula Region to
20 apply or to share those people that you know, you
21 respect, have knowledge about the region and how people
22 use wild foods to please join our team. I hope all of
23 you who need to re-up your seats I hope you do that. I
24 love working with you.

25
26 Thanks.

27
28 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for that,
29 Robbin. Thanks for the invite over the phone here. I
30 think that concludes that section there. So the next
31 thing we have up on the agenda is item (f) under 11.
32 It's called the joint meeting North American Caribou
33 Workshop and Arctic Ungulate Conference in May of 2023.
34 Hannah is going to present. Hannah, you have the
35 floor. Me and Tommy won't talk.

36
37 MR. GRAY: Wanna bet?

38
39 (Laughter)

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I tried.

42
43 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
44 members of the Council. Good morning. For the record
45 my name is Hannah Voorhees. I'm an anthropologist with
46 the Office of Subsistence Management.

47
48 This morning I'm presenting an
49 announcement about a Caribou and Ungulate Conference
50

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1 next year that will hopefully be of interest to Council
2 members. I'll be seeking your input on a couple
3 matters related to the conference and an information
4 flyer about the conference can be found in your meeting
5 book on Page 57.

6
7 A joint meeting of the North American
8 Caribou Workshop and the Arctic Ungulate Conference
9 will be held in Anchorage from May 8th through 12th,
10 2023. The meeting will bring together an international
11 group of managers, researchers, indigenous and local
12 knowledge holders who want to share their knowledge of
13 caribou, muskoxen, Dall's sheep, moose and reindeer.

14
15 The theme for the joint meeting is
16 Crossing Boundaries. This meeting is held every two
17 years and is international in nature. Arctic ungulates
18 regularly cross landscape boundaries, connecting
19 ecological processes between different systems and, as
20 you all know, this necessitates collaboration across
21 geographical boundaries. Also call for crossing
22 boundaries between Western science and local knowledge.

23
24 The conference will include plenary
25 sessions on co-management, specifically co-management
26 of caribou across Alaska and Canada, the status of
27 caribou globally, integrating western science and
28 indigenous knowledge and the effects of climate change
29 on caribou. Field trips, workshops, research talks and
30 a poster session will also be part of this meeting.

31
32 The conference web address is on the
33 flyer in your meeting book if you have interest in
34 finding more information there. Before I move on are
35 there any questions?

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So who is this group
38 again? What are they -- just the Wilderness Society,
39 what you see on the bottom there? Are they part of
40 this?

41
42 MS. VOORHEES: The Wilderness Society
43 is a sponsoring partner, but this is a conference that
44 moves around the Arctic every two years and it's always
45 kind of a grassroots effort to organize it. It's not
46 connected to one single entity. It's just a conference
47 that brings together all these different groups
48 interested in arctic ungulates.

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Hannah.
2 Tommy, you got anything to add?

3
4 MR. GRAY: The Western Arctic Caribou
5 Herd Working Group is taking the lead and putting this
6 together. I sit on the executive committee and I'm
7 supposed to be involved in it, but I have a business to
8 run and I have not made meetings. This is a big to-do
9 in that arena. There's a year effort of planning
10 behind us and they still got another half a year or so
11 to go. So I imagine it's going to be a pretty good
12 show.

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Gray.

15
16 MS. VOORHEES: Yes, thank you. It
17 certainly has been a big effort and I believe members
18 of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group are
19 being brought in in several different capacities.

20
21 So the next item I have related to this
22 for you is that we'd like to seek your input as a
23 Council on a particular event and this event is a State
24 and Federal Ungulate Management Symposium. This is
25 being organized by a colleague of mine and I've been
26 asked to reach out to this Council and see if you have
27 any feedback on what you'd like such an event to look
28 like or what it should feature, what kind of topics and
29 focus.

30
31 So this is a facilitated discussion on
32 Alaska State and Federal ungulate management. The
33 session is intended to be a neutral forum for Council
34 members such as yourselves, State Fish and Game
35 Advisory Committee members, Federal and State agency
36 staff and other interested parties to discuss ungulate
37 management in Alaska. Specifically focusing on harvest
38 regulations.

39
40 So my question for the Council is what
41 topics and issues would you like to see discussed
42 during this session? It could be anything of concern
43 related to harvest regulations and ungulate management.
44 So I'll turn the floor back over to you and see if you
45 have anything to say.

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Hannah. I
48 think Leland has a comment or question.

49
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1 MR. OYOUNICK: Does that include
2 muskox?

3
4 MS. VOORHEES: Yes. Yes, it does. Any
5 ungulate.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: When is the timing of
8 this?

9
10 MS. VOORHEES: May 8th through 12th,
11 2023.

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, okay. We're
14 talking about the same thing. You threw me off when
15 you said symposium.

16
17 MS. VOORHEES: I know. The terminology
18 is a little confusing.

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any other Council.
21 Leland, go ahead.

22
23 MR. OYOUNICK: Are they going to also
24 decide when they can hunt like muskox some people here
25 starting to be a lot of muskox and they'd like to go
26 after them and weed them out kind of control them a
27 little bit. I talked to one local here and when I talk
28 to one it's pretty much representative of them all.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.
33 Thank you, Member Leland. So this will not be a
34 regulatory decision-making meeting, but it will be a
35 place just to discuss those issues and brainstorm
36 solutions and hopefully a lower stakes environment
37 where people can come together. That would be an
38 important issue to bring up for sure.

39
40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Go ahead,
41 Tom.

42
43 MR. GRAY: So who's heading this up?
44 And it's part of this caribou symposium? I guess
45 something I'm concerned about is we have things set up
46 for our people up here. I know there's people in the
47 state not happy about muskox. Not happy about certain
48 things that we have that are in our corner. You know,
49 this is to me a forum that those that don't like our
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1 muskox situation where it's a local thing could plant
2 the seeds, so to speak, and change -- try and get
3 change. I'm not too interested in that.

4

5 I'm -- you know, I don't mind talking
6 about where we're at and how things are going and stuff
7 like that, but if this is the intent of this is to
8 plant seeds and get the Commission of Fish and Game on
9 their side and change policies in the long term, not at
10 this meeting, but the -- you know, again, planting
11 seeds.

12

13 You know, we have a platform for our
14 people here that is working and I don't need outsiders
15 coming in and taking my muskox or taking my moose.
16 There's not enough to go around as it is. You know,
17 it's -- so hopefully that message gets back to your
18 people.

19

20 MS. VOORHEES: Through the Chair.
21 Thank you, Member Gray. I think the intent is really
22 to take a birds-eye view of ungulate regulation across
23 the state where it's working, where it's not. That is
24 how it's working for each community and to try and
25 improve that.

26

27 In terms of other people who are behind
28 this I would say you have people from National Park
29 Service, biologists with OSM, my colleagues,
30 independent researchers in the ungulate world. It's
31 more of an academic group coming together to foster
32 discussion without any particular agenda, vis-a-vis
33 regulations. However, I fully respect that feedback.

34

35 MR. GRAY: And, you know, I can't see
36 enough -- some of these ideas that are spawned by
37 biologists or administration or something, you know,
38 let's go look at the elk population out in the states
39 where they brought wolves in. The people can't stand
40 it. Elk populations have crashed. Bison populations
41 are hurting because of some biologist that thought, oh,
42 this is a good idea.
43 So anyway I'm trying to plant the seed that we may not
44 be perfect up here, but we're pretty content where
45 we're at.

46

47 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you for that
48 feedback. I'm wondering if that is an indication that
49 the Council does not want to weigh in on this item or
50

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1 beyond that in terms of suggestions for how it should
2 operate.

3

4 MR. GRAY: I'm weighing in by saying be
5 careful where you go with this thing because I don't
6 want to see a bunch of outsiders coming in here and --
7 you know, if that's the intent is to look at
8 regulations and adjust it for some other peoples. We
9 need to ensure that our people are protected by these
10 regulations. I mean that's my main focus sitting here
11 is to protect my subsistence lifestyle.

12

13 MS. VOORHEES: I understand. Thank
14 you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I think Robbin has
17 something to add.

18

19 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair. This
20 is Robbin Lavine, Subsistence Policy Coordinator. I'm
21 listening. This is an action item and Hannah is
22 discussing the joint meeting on the North American
23 Caribou Workshop and this is a session within that
24 meeting and she's looking for items that potentially
25 can lead discussion.

26

27 Listening to you talk, I pulled out two
28 things that I've heard. Two points that you might want
29 to share there and you can confirm for us and that
30 might be concerns regarding the local muskox population
31 just in general and that would be local to Seward
32 Peninsula. I know this is an all-Alaska thing. Also
33 in the symposium I'm hearing from Mr. Gray concern
34 regarding outside interests in local Seward Pen
35 resources just in general.

36

37 Would that be a good summary or would
38 you like to clarify?

39

40 MR. GRAY: Okay. Number one, if you
41 say -- if you go to a meeting and say, oh, we've got
42 too much muskox up here and it's an issue, the first
43 thing that's going to happen is Board of Game is going
44 to get petitioned, BLM, the Park. They're going to all
45 see outside interests come in and say we need to open
46 this up because the local RAC is bitching about how
47 many muskox there are.

48

49 Tom Gray is saying if there's a

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1 problem, let's adjust our Seward Peninsula take, not
2 the outside take. The Seward Peninsula take. Because
3 we have hundreds of people apply to get 10 or 15
4 muskox. So be careful. This is what I'm trying to get
5 at is this is our resource and we're pretty content on
6 what we're doing, but once you raise the flag all hell
7 breaks loose.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Councilman
10 Gray. I've got a question. I don't remember the
11 number between the State and the Fed's permits.

12

13 MR. GRAY: I don't know.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Tom Sparks, BLM.

16

17 MR. SPARKS: I believe it's eight on
18 the Fed's and the State I can't come up with that
19 number. I think it's 20-something. I'd have to refer
20 that. I just know the Federal side.

21

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Sparks
25 from BLM to make your comment. The number 36 comes to
26 mind. I don't know if I'm -- so that would be it. So
27 then there's eight and 22. So the State has about 22
28 permits. It's pretty regulated and it's pretty local
29 as far as outside interests because of the size of the
30 herd, which isn't very sizable to offer outside. I
31 don't think we have to worry about outside interest,
32 but that's just my thought under discussion listening
33 to Mr. Gray.

34

35 I think we should have something to say
36 and bring to the table. I think Robbin kind of honed
37 in on that, points that we would bring to the table.

38

39 On participating in this, how do we get
40 to participate if we want to be there at the meeting?
41 Does any number of members of this Council get to sit
42 in a chair there or through the funding sources here?

43

44 MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
45 So the next item I was going to move onto is an
46 opportunity to nominate a Council member to attend.
47 OSM can support one member of each Regional Advisory
48 Council to attend this conference. I believe part of
49 the hope was that that member would participate in the

50

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1 State and Federal Ungulate Symposium that we were just
2 discussing. So keep that in mind.

3

4 So we'd provide financial support to
5 send this member to the conference. Again May 8th
6 through 12th next year in Anchorage. All expenses such
7 as travel and conference registration would be covered.
8 So now I'll turn the discussion back over to you,
9 Mr. Chair, and ask that the Council nominate a member
10 to attend the caribou conference and just let me know
11 if you have any other questions.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Hannah.
14 I'm going to ask Councilman Gray about the watch group
15 that's part of this. Is that the entirety of the
16 group? That's quite a few members on that group. Do
17 you know anything about how they're going to react?

18

19 MR. GRAY: I'm not sure how we're going
20 to be involved. I sit on the executive committee and
21 I'm sure I'm going to have opportunity to go , but the
22 rest of the group I don't know. I can't see the State
23 paying all of our ways. There's 20 or 30 of us that
24 sit on this group.

25

26 I do think that, you know, if we send
27 Louie, for example, on behalf of the group here, we
28 should tell Louie that there's certain things that --
29 you know, we need to take a stand on certain things.
30 Muskox is one of them. Again, planting the seeds that
31 we have a muskox problem up here when in reality the
32 problem is how many are we harvesting.

33

34 We have plenty of people to kill them.
35 The system is not allowing that to happen and wanting
36 the herd to grow. Maybe the public doesn't like all
37 these ox out there. But that's something we have to
38 deal with here on the Seward Peninsula, not in
39 Anchorage or Fairbanks. We'd have 2,000 people apply
40 for muskox up here or 10,000. I mean there'd be
41 thousands of people and we don't need that.

42

43 I'll shut up.

44

45 (Laughter)

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Yeah, he got
48 mad at you and then me and then himself. That's pretty
49 good, huh?

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1 (Laughter)

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CHAIRMAN GREEN: That's my take. All right. Hannah wants to have us nominate somebody from this committee or this Council to go and attend. About that time of the season I guess I could be there. I don't know about Tommy. Are you dealing with bears?

MR. GRAY: I don't even know when this is.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's on the 8th. It's right here.

MR. GRAY: Oh, I'm bear hunting.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, you're bear hunting. I'd probably try to bear hunt too, but that's a different deal. He's got clients.

MR. GRAY: I'll nominate Louie.

MR. SEETOT: I second.

MR. GRAY: Question.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: The question is called. Those in favor of nomination of Louie say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against same sign. Aye. No, I'm kidding. That was a joke.

(No opposing votes)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: I'll accept. Thanks for the nomination.

MS. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: So we have an opportunity to discuss this. When is our winter meeting?

(Coughing online)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Somebody has an open mic. You need to mute. It's not in the room.

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1 MR. KIRK: Is it March?

2

3 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I think it's
4 March.

5

6 MR. KIRK: March 24?

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Nissa.

9

10 MS. PILCHER: Through the Chair. Nissa
11 Pilcher. So right now you're scheduled for March 22nd
12 and 23rd, but that is an item later on your agenda.

13

14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, okay. So just
15 to periscope up to see forward there on that one, we
16 have time to discuss any matters Mr. Gray may be
17 concerned with at this meeting before I attend on our
18 behalf.

19

20 Any other Council has that opportunity
21 also and during that meeting we can get the scope of
22 what we want to talk about through me, I guess. I'll
23 do what the Council wants for this meeting.

24

25 Hannah, I was going to ask you one
26 question. This wasn't about regulating anything,
27 right? This is just to have the sciences there,
28 biology and all that.

29

30 MS. VOORHEES: Correct. There will be
31 no regulatory decision-making at this conference.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. And then I
34 heard Councilman Oyoumick here speak about what he
35 talked about with the local -- I want to say people
36 don't like those things in their yard. I had a fight
37 with one with a stick in my yard once up at Icy View.
38 It tried to kill two of my dogs. Another fellow
39 clubbed it and drove it off. Two weeks later I think
40 that was the same one that Miss Diane Adams shot in her
41 yard. He was a frisky one.

42

43 I've been in -- let's just put it this
44 way. In Kirkland, Washington there are coyotes running
45 up and down the streets. In Palmer, in my son's yard,
46 there are moose coming out to eat the apples in the
47 tree. I've had reindeer right outside of my house at
48 Icy View and I've also had muskox fighting in the yard
49 too. So I mean we have to live with this. This is
50

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1 Northern Exposure whether we like it or not. It was a
2 great TV program, but we live it.

3

4

5 I always have to look at two sides of
6 that. We need the resource. Mr. Gray's adamant about
7 that and I know we need it. How do we make it better
8 is the question. The other side is how do we deal with
9 them in town and the safety of our kids, especially the
10 dogs because the dogs seem to be the target.

10

11

12 The muskox that I dealt with that
13 morning -- I heard my dogs barking at two in the
14 morning. I got up and looked out the window and he was
15 all the way across the field over there, but I knew he
16 was going to come to the dogs. So I just had enough
17 time to run down and grab a stick and go around the
18 corner and he was already there.

18

19

20 People are going to have to take it on
21 themselves. Everybody wants Fish and Game to deal with
22 it all the time and Fish and Game kind of runs out of
23 resources. I know they are part of it. They're there
24 on the ground sometimes. I've seen them. Yeah, we
25 live in a TV program called Northern Exposure.

25

26

27 All right. Thank you, Hannah. We know
28 what we're going to do here at the next meeting for
29 this symposium. Thank you.

29

30

MS. VOORHEES: Thank you.

31

32

33 MR. GRAY: If I could say this. Let's
34 make sure this is on the agenda to talk about it at the
35 next meeting.

35

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Gray.
38 That brings us to the next item since we took care of
39 that action item for the Council. Nissa, it's about
40 item (g) under 11, telephonic/internet expenses related
41 to the Council teleconference meetings.

41

42

43 MS. PILCHER: All right. Mr. Chair,
44 members of the Council. For the record, my name is
45 Nissa Pilcher, Subsistence Council Coordinator with
46 OSM. I'm going to present you information on how you
47 can potentially get reimbursed if you had any
48 telephonic internet expenses associated with your
49 participation in the Council meetings over the last two
50 and a half years. The material for this agenda item is

50

0165

1 in your supplemental materials and it's Tab 1. This is
2 not an action item.

3

4

5 The issue was brought up to the Board's
6 attention by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Council during
7 their winter 2022 meeting. OSM reviewed policies
8 regarding reimbursement and I'd like to provide you
9 with information on the types of expenses that may be
10 reimbursed and the documentation necessary to receive
11 reimbursement.

11

12

13 For the time period when the Council
14 meetings were held via teleconference you can be
15 reimbursed for internet and phone charges that are in
16 excess of their normal bill. Council members who have
17 internet or cellular plan that charge a flat monthly
18 fee that they pay regardless of Council meetings cannot
19 be reimbursed through normal charges.

19

20

21 In order for Council members to receive
22 reimbursement for excess charges, they need to submit a
23 copy of their bill that covers the time period during
24 which the virtual Council meetings took place and
25 indicate the excess charges for attending the virtual
26 meeting.

26

27

28 Council members can submit this
29 information to their Council coordinator or mail their
30 bills to the Office of Subsistence Management at 1011
31 E. Tudor Road, Mailstop 121, Anchorage, Alaska 99503.

31

32

33 I'm recently hired, so please be nice
34 because I wasn't a part of most of this.

34

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(Laughter)

CHAIRMAN GREEN: So I think a question I came up with when we discussed this the other day, the other evening when I was getting enlightened on how we're dealing with this meeting was how do you show that you have an overage because of that particular meeting that day? It's like they want to see the end of the month. Well, there's nothing specific to that timeframe that you used it for the meeting. What if you were under your -- there was no overage in your bill? You can't prove that through that over -- not having overage that you used your internet. So it sounds kind of hokey. So please enlighten me.

0166

1 MS. PILCHER: So my understanding is
2 that if you have a flat rate and you didn't hit that
3 overage, then there would be no reimbursement, but if
4 you did hit it and you can demonstrate that your bill
5 was higher than it should have been, then you can find
6 the bills from those meeting months and submit them.

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I suppose that means
9 when you're buying buckets, is that kind of where --
10 you know, you ever do that where you get onto the
11 overage on your internet and you've got to call in and
12 -- yeah. All right. So the unlimited she's talking
13 about there's nothing to worry about. Anything over
14 and when you add buckets to have a meeting or
15 something, I suppose that would be some sign there for
16 proof that you had overage because of a meeting.
17 Thanks.

18
19 So anybody have any other comments,
20 questions or concerns on that one for Nissa? Elmer, go
21 ahead.

22
23 MR. SEETOT: I don't own a telephone,
24 but I use a phone for meetings. I'm not very
25 proficient. During the meetings -- that last meeting I
26 think I got cut off more than 35 times. So that's a
27 major problem I think with calling from the communities
28 where they have poor phone service, is that you're
29 being cut off and sometimes you don't hear the rest of
30 the issues that are being discussed because it takes
31 time to connect. That was very frustrating.

32
33 I think when you're trying to do
34 telephonic meetings that either with GCI or with some
35 phone company you get cut off very bad, very much so.
36 That was one of my issues with telephonic meetings. I
37 don't mind participating. It's just the process of our
38 calling again and again and again. It's kind of
39 frustrating, but we get through it.

40
41 MR. GRAY: So I have a question. I was
42 in Hawaii participating in a meeting some years ago and
43 I'm driving down the road listening -- I'm not talking,
44 I'm listening to the meeting and a cop pulls me over
45 and I get a \$300 fine. Can I get reimbursed for that?

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: No drinking -- I mean
48 no talking and driving, Tommy.

49
50

0167

1 (Laughter)

2

3 MR. GRAY: I wasn't talking.

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You were listening.
6 Okay. I remember you enlightening me of your endeavors
7 over there when you were trying to be on vacation. It
8 was costing you more than you expected.

9

10 All right. So anything more on
11 telephonic internet expenses? Any more conversation
12 about that?

13

14 (No comments)

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Seeing none. Hearing
17 none. Let's move on to item H under (11) and that
18 would be harvest of wildlife for sport purposes in
19 National Preserves. National Park Service, Eva Patton.
20 You have the floor.

21

22 MS. PATTON: Yes. Good morning. Good
23 morning, Mr. Chair and members of the Council. For the
24 record this is Eva Patton with the National Park
25 Service Subsistence Program, the regional office in
26 Anchorage. Thank you for taking some time in your busy
27 agenda to speak with you today about how the National
28 Park Service manages sport hunting on National Preserve
29 Lands in Alaska.

30

31 Last winter the National Park Service
32 was directed by the Department of the Interior to
33 initiate new rulemaking to reconsider factual, legal
34 and policy conclusion that underlay the 2020 hunting
35 rule. I know a number of you that have been on the
36 Regional Advisory Council for a number of years perhaps
37 you recall the history of the 2015 rule and then just
38 recently a 2020 rule.

39

40 The 2020 National Park Service rule
41 allows baiting of bears by sport hunters in National
42 Preserves as well as other previously banned activities
43 such as the harvest of wolves and coyotes during
44 denning season, the taking of black bear cubs and sows
45 at den sites and the harvest of swimming caribou among
46 other practices. Those were previously banned for
47 sport hunters and were undone in the 2020 rule.

48

49 Two points the National Park Service is

50

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1 specifically looking at in this new process is
2 re-examining the risk associated with bear baiting on
3 Preserve lands. You know, especially in areas where
4 much of the public utilizes those areas for many
5 different activities.

6
7 Also looking at several practices
8 authorized in 2020 that may be appropriate for Federal
9 subsistence users, but the Park Service is
10 reconsidering whether those opportunities should be
11 authorized for non-Federally qualified users or for
12 sport hunters specifically.

13
14 So what we're talking about today in
15 the new proposal for 2022 will not affect Federal
16 subsistence practices that are currently in regulation.
17 These proposed restrictions would only affect
18 non-Federally qualified users or sport hunters on
19 National Preserve lands.

20
21 So far the input that Park Service has
22 received through informal communication with affected
23 tribes and Native corporations that one of the primary
24 concerns with the 2020 rule is that it increases
25 competition with non-local hunters. As it currently
26 stands, the 2020 rule allows for sport hunters to
27 compete with Federal subsistence users for the same
28 resources on Preserve lands.

29
30 We're talking with you today to get
31 your input as the Regional Advisory Council and hope
32 that this process will help ensure that the perspective
33 of those who live in the effected areas as a priority
34 consumptive users under ANILCA are considered in this
35 new 2022 proposal.

36
37 Again, the new rule would not restrict
38 any Federal subsistence regulations and activities
39 currently in place on National Park Service lands. It
40 would only address sport hunting and trapping on
41 National Preserves harvest under State regulations on
42 National Preserves.

43
44 We would very much like to hear your
45 thoughts and ideas. We have anticipated that there
46 would be an actual Federal Register notice to consider
47 exact language in the proposed rule.
48 That is on hold at this time. We're not sure when it
49 will be published. But any feedback that the Regional
50

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1 Advisory Council would like to share at this time would
2 be very helpful to inform the Park Service. Of course
3 we would notify all the RACs and public and affected
4 tribes as soon as that Federal Register notice does
5 publish.

6
7 I'd like to say we also have Dave
8 Payer, wildlife biologist with the National Park
9 Service Regional Office on teleconference as well and
10 he's also available to help answer any questions. With
11 that, we'd take any questions or comments from the
12 Council.

13
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Eva.
17 Council, any of you guys got comments or questions or
18 concerns here?

19
20 (No comments)

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What I picked up is
23 that something that could be done that has to do with
24 people that aren't eligible, but it doesn't conflict
25 with the eligible folks in those areas. I don't know
26 of any bear baiting or anything going on up here.

27
28 Go ahead, Tommy.

29
30 MR. GRAY: This is Tom Gray. The bear
31 baiting that you're talking about is just black bears
32 or is that grizzly bears or what exactly is that? For
33 your information I'm also a hunting guide and you must
34 have stuff relevant that connect guiding that you're
35 dealing with also.

36
37 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
38 Mr. Gray. The baiting in the 2015 rule, the hunting of
39 black and brown bears over bait was prohibited and that
40 did get lifted in the 2020 rule. So what the Park
41 Service is looking at now is to prohibit baiting for
42 both black and brown bears over bait on National
43 Preserve lands.

44
45 MR. GRAY: Again, this is Tom Gray.
46 Again, I'm a hunting guide and, you know, baiting bears
47 by my Native people I really don't care. If they want
48 to bait bears and kill bears, in my world that's fine,
49 but I am going to be very adamant that we don't -- you
50

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1 know, Tom Gray doesn't want this for the guiding
2 industry. I don't want to see us setting up shop,
3 baiting brown bears in up here, especially in our
4 world. You know, all we're going to do is get
5 ourselves in trouble. So hopefully that goes back to
6 just a local issue or a local thing for people locally,
7 but I really don't care if it gets shut off altogether.

8

9 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Gray. To
10 clarify, the prohibition of baiting black and brown
11 bears or hunting black and brown bears over bait the
12 prohibition only proposed for sports hunters on
13 National Preserve land. The proposed rule would not
14 affect any allowance that's currently in place for
15 Federal subsistence users to hunt black or brown bear
16 over bait. Again, the prohibition would only affect
17 non-Federally qualified users on Preserve lands or
18 sport hunters on Preserve land.

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Eva. This
21 is Louie. So what you're saying is that a subsistence
22 user in Unit 22 if they want to bait bears, they can?
23 I'm trying to understand this.

24

25 MS. PATTON: So the current regulations
26 that are in effect in Federal subsistence regulations
27 would remain in effect. The only change would be to
28 the sport hunting practices.

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So if I'm
31 trying to hunt subsistence bear and I'm in the
32 Preserve, the Bering Land Bridge, and I'm qualified to
33 hunt on Federal lands here in Unit 22, can I bait
34 bears?

35

36 MS. PATTON: I'm actually just looking
37 up the subsistence regulations right now to reconfirm
38 what's on the books for Unit 22. So everything that's
39 currently on the books for Federal Subsistence
40 regulations would remain in place. There would be no
41 changes effected under the proposed rule. I'll have to
42 take a quick look here at Unit 22 regulations.

43

44 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I just wanted to know
45 if I could legally go to the Preserve and bait bears if
46 I want to. I'm not sport hunting. I'm saying I want
47 to take a subsistence bear. I'm not sure what the
48 regulation states for that like 22E on State land.

49

50

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1 MS. PATTON: Thank you for that
2 question.....

3
4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Not on State land, but
5 I'm saying the sub unit I think is 22E that the Bering
6 Land Bridge is in. Go ahead.
7 I might want to go get a walrus off the beach up there
8 above Shishmaref and drag it up over there where I want
9 to use it to bring in the bears. So I want to know if
10 I can legally do that. I'm being hypothetical here
11 just to try to understand the difference between sport
12 hunting. That would be State?

13
14 MS. PATTON: Correct, yeah. So
15 non-Federally qualified subsistence users. The
16 proposed restrictions are aimed at non-Federally
17 qualified subsistence users on Federal lands, on
18 National Preserve lands specifically, and would not
19 have any affect or change to current Federal
20 subsistence regulations in place. I'm just trying to
21 pull up that reg book to look at 22E for you here.

22
23 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, I'll give you
24 the moment there. I wanted some clear direction on
25 that. I'm not familiar with that. I just wanted to
26 know if we could do it in our own backyard. We'll wait
27 for a minute here. Everybody is looking now. I guess
28 it was a good question.

29
30 MS. KOELSCH: Hey, Louie, this is
31 Jeanette.

32
33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Who is this?

34
35 MS. KOELSCH: Jeanette Koelsch.

36
37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, yeah. Go ahead,
38 Jeanette.

39
40 MS. KOELSCH: There is no subsistence
41 bear baiting in Unit 22E. It's not allowable.

42
43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So in 22E
44 around the Preserve we have no -- but how about -- is
45 there a sport bear baiting in our area?

46
47 MS. KOELSCH: As far as I know, and I
48 don't have the State regulations open either, there is
49 no bear baiting in Unit 22 for brown or black bears.

50

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1 It is also highly regulated by the State on State lands
2 and those specific regulations are in the State reg
3 book.

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks, Jeanette.
6 We've kind of locked it in there that actually all of
7 Unit 22, whether it's Federal lands or State lands,
8 there is no bear baiting. All right. We've got an
9 answer.

10

11 MS. KOELSCH: Yes.

12

13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Everybody, thank you
14 for indulging my question.

15

16 MS. PATTON: Thank you for that
17 clarification, Jeanette. The proposed prohibitions
18 there are varying regulations in different areas of the
19 state, so some aspects of the proposed rule are more
20 relevant to some regions than the other. I wanted to
21 ensure that all Regional Advisory Councils had an
22 opportunity to be aware of the proposed rule and have
23 an opportunity to comment on it.

24

25 Thanks so much, Jeanette, for helping
26 us look up area specific regulations. Appreciate that.

27

28 MR. GRAY: Nissa, show Robbin the
29 regulations. Robbin, go look at the regulations.....

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: What are you looking
32 up on yours? I missed it.

33

34 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
35 on a trail of Federal regulations and the differences
36 between State prohibitions and Federal prohibitions.
37 So I haven't got my way all the way through, but if you
38 look at our harvest of wildlife regulations in our new
39 reg book on page 16 you will see that it says when
40 taking wildlife for subsistence purposes you may not
41 use bait for taking ungulate, bear, wolf or wolverines
42 except you may use bait to take wolves and wolverine
43 with a trapping license and you may use bait to take
44 black bears and brown bears with a hunting license as
45 authorized in unit specific hunting regulations.
46 Baiting for black bears and brown bears is subject to
47 the restrictions found on Page 20.

48

49 So now I'm going to Page 20. Let's see

50

0173

1 what Page 20 says. Restrictions for baiting of bear.
2 No person may establish a bear bait station unless they
3 first register their site with ADF&G. A person using
4 bait shall clearly mark the site with a sign reading
5 bear bait station. The sign should display the
6 person's hunting license number and their ADF&G
7 assigned number. You may only use biodegradable
8 material for bait if fish or wildlife is used as bait.
9 Only the head, bones, viscera or skin of legally
10 harvested fish and wildlife, the skinned carcasses of
11 furbearers and unclassified wildlife may be used except
12 that in Unit 7 and 15 fish or fish parts may not be
13 used as baits. Scent lures may be used at registered
14 bait stations.

15
16 Their continues to be -- no person may
17 use bait within one-quarter mile of publicly maintained
18 road or trail. No person may use bait within one mile
19 of a house, campground or developed recreational
20 facility. When hunting is completed a person may use
21 -- using bait shall remove all litter and equipment,
22 and a person may give or receive payment. At any time
23 no person may have more than two bait stations.

24
25 So I'm wondering if there are folks
26 online who can further clarify.

27
28 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for
29 the record. In the State regulations Unit 22 is not
30 listed as a Unit that allows bear baiting. So if you
31 would go to the State Fish and Game Office to get a
32 permit to bait bears in Unit 22, they would not issue
33 you one because it does not exist. It's not permissible
34 in State regulations.

35
36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And there you have it,
37 the full picture now. Thank you, Robbin. Thank you,
38 Nissa and everybody else. Eva, thank you for your
39 presentation. Do you have anything to add?

40
41 MS. PATTON: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
42 members of the Council. If there's no further
43 questions, I just wanted to let you know that we will
44 be notifying all the RAC coordinators as soon as a
45 proposed rule does publish so that both the public and
46 tribes will also be notified as well directly through
47 the Park Service Superintendent when the proposed rule
48 does publish so there's an opportunity to review it in
49 full.

50

0174

1 Thank you for your excellent questions.
2 If there's no further questions, again we'll be letting
3 you know as soon as that Federal Register notice does
4 publish.

5
6 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Eva. So I
9 saw an asterisk in there. Is this an action item,
10 Nissa? Asterisk, what does that mean?

11
12 MS. PILCHER: It means you could have
13 taken action on it if you chose to weigh in, made an
14 official motion to comment, but you also don't have to
15 if you don't choose to.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: No, I don't think it's
18 necessary for us to act on it. It doesn't apply to our
19 region. Okay. So do we need a little break before we
20 start taking up Fish and Game?

21
22 MR. SEETOT: Yep.

23
24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So we're
25 heading for item I, State of Alaska Board of
26 Fisheries/Board of Game proposal review. Let's take a
27 little break here before we dive into that.

28
29 MS. LAVINE: Short.

30
31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Short. Robbin Lavine
32 says. Don't say Lavene. It's not spelled with an
33 E-N-E. It's spelled with an I-N-E, Lavine. That's how
34 I remember it.

35
36 (Off record)

37
38 (On record)

39
40 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Nissa. Do you
41 want to make your comment again so everybody can hear
42 you.

43
44 MS. PILCHER: Through the Chair. Nissa
45 Pilcher, OSM. The next agenda item is discussing Board
46 of Fisheries proposals. There's a couple for Norton
47 Sound. I was just letting the Council know that this
48 is not an action item. This is more of a heads up that
49 these are out there and they can choose to comment and
50

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1 submit their comments to the Board of Fisheries if they
2 so like.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So, Tommy, you think
5 this has nothing to do with the AC? This is just
6 Charlie's.....

7

8 MR. GRAY: Oh, I'm sure the AC is going
9 to weigh in on it. I just haven't -- they haven't
10 called a formal AC meeting. Any time there's State
11 proposals the AC weighs in on it. We have not had a
12 fall meeting or annual meeting, so I don't know what is
13 on the agenda. When we do have a meeting, if this is
14 State proposed, it will be addressed at the AC.
15 Hopefully somebody is here that can explain this to us
16 what's different about this proposal and the regulation
17 that's in place.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is somebody from ADF&G
20 online?

21

22 (No response)

23

24 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So they want to
25 liberalize this fishing on grayling is what it looks
26 like to me. If the abundance is there, I don't see any
27 problems. Is this -- this is a bag limit. This is for
28 sport fish, right?

29

30 (Off record discussion)

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So it says
33 underneath this summary here or whatever you want to
34 call it, what is the issue you would like the Board to
35 address and why.

36

37 So they've got stock assessment of
38 several northern Norton Sound arctic grayling
39 populations indicated abundances within established
40 index areas to be well above desired management
41 threshold levels. The current 15-inch length limit was
42 a conservative management measure used to protect
43 larger fish from over-exploitation because the arctic
44 grayling abundances within the index areas are
45 predominantly composed of fish 15 inches. This is the
46 size most caught by anglers.

47

48 Since 2010 estimates of annual fishing
49 effort and harvest in the sport fishery have declined

50

0176

1 substantially and the conservative regulations are no
2 longer needed. Eliminating the 15-inch minimum size
3 limit for harvest and maintaining the five fish bag and
4 possession limit with no size limit may result in
5 unsustainable harvest, but a bag limit of two fish with
6 no size limit would be sustainable and allow anglers to
7 harvest more large fish.

8

9 In the Pilgrim and Snake Rivers,
10 smaller population sizes and presence of multiple
11 roadside access points put Arctic grayling stocks at a
12 higher risk of overharvest than in the larger or more
13 remote rivers. Reducing the bag limit from two fish
14 (only one fish 15 inches) to one fish (no size limit)
15 would allow for harvest and not alter the size
16 structure of the Arctic grayling populations in the
17 Pilgrim and Snake Rivers.

18

19 Did anybody figure what I just read to
20 you out? It kind of went up and down for me, so I
21 thought they were liberalizing something.

22

23 Go ahead, Nissa.

24

25 MS. PILCHER: The Snake River bag and
26 possession limit they want to change it from two to one
27 fish and from a.....

28

29 CHAIRMAN GREEN: The size limit.

30

31 MS. PILCHER:size limit of 15
32 inches or greater to no size. So it is a -- not a
33 liberalization. It's a change in bag limit, it's a
34 lesser bag limit, but then it's changing the size limit
35 to -- so it's liberalizing the size limit, but
36 decreasing the bag limit in the Snake.

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go.

39

40 MR. GRAY: I want to see what's above
41 that.

42

43 MS. PILCHER: And then in the Pilgrim
44 they're changing it -- the proposal seeks to request a
45 change to modify the bag limit from two to one and then
46 also modify the bag limit from -- or size restriction
47 to no size limit. So it's decreasing the bag limit,
48 but liberalizing the size in the Pilgrim. That's sport
49 fishing, so I believe rod and reel sport fishing, so
50

0177

1 basically people coming up.

2

3 MR. GRAY: So let me explain. I'm a
4 hunting and fishing lodge and people coming to my place
5 you can't keep grayling. I won't let you. It's all
6 catch and release. One thing these folks don't
7 understand, even guys on the Game of Fish don't
8 understand is if I have a 20-inch grayling, that's over
9 30 years old and if you come to my area and are going
10 to target -- I mean I would have people come to my area
11 and target big, big grayling and only take big grayling
12 out.

13

14 For example, I have a fly fishing group
15 that comes in every year and they bring five people in.
16 They target grayling and they catch hundreds and
17 hundreds of grayling. If I let them take grayling out,
18 it would be the big ones and I have no interest in
19 taking the big ones out. It takes so long for them to
20 get that size. You know, Tom Gray would prefer you can
21 only take 15 and under grayling or 20 and under,
22 something of that nature. But my policy again is you
23 can't take grayling. We'll eat some small ones if you
24 guys want to eat grayling, but I won't let them keep
25 grayling.

26

27 So, you know, reducing the grayling to
28 two to five -- now.....

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Five to two.

31

32 MR. GRAY:this thing is kind of a
33 Catch-22 because I know my people. If this only
34 applies to outsiders coming in, that's great, but if
35 you're going to try and enforce this for locals, good
36 luck.

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Everybody's a sport
39 fisherman that has to (indiscernible - away from mic).

40

41 MR. GRAY: I mean to me -- and I'll go
42 along with this, but, you know, you're going to have
43 everybody in the village breaking the law. Everybody.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Leland.
46 Grab a mic.

47

48 MR. OYOUNICK: Yeah, my question is I'm
49 wondering what kind of effect catch and release has on

50

0178

1 the fish. Do they get kind of lackadaisical and lazy?
2 In our river they catch and release, the sport
3 fishermen that come in. We can't monitor them. We
4 can't spend all our time watching them and they won't
5 tell us what they do. But I think that's what they do
6 with our silvers. There's so many of them they catch
7 them left and right and then catch and release. I just
8 kind of wonder what kind of effect that has on a fish
9 or the fisheries.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Leland.
12 I've got a question. If that's happening and it's
13 detrimental to those fish and they do die, they're
14 probably on a side of a riverbank somewhere on a beach.
15 I don't know if people witness that or not.

16

17 Tommy.

18

19 MR. GRAY: So I spend days and days and
20 weeks and weeks on the river fishing and if catching
21 and releasing fish was not good to silver salmon, for
22 example, I would see dead silvers all over the place.
23 I would see dead -- literally hundreds and hundreds of
24 grayling we caught this summer and I don't see dead
25 grayling on the side of the river. You know, seagulls
26 would be all over this. So I'm not so much worried.
27 I'm all about the resource. If I'm hurting the
28 resource, I'm going to change my program. I don't see
29 a negative effect of catch and release.

30

31 I do know grayling -- like I make
32 people pinch their barbs down on grayling fishing
33 because I've seen grayling that have healed up from
34 being torn up. So there is some, but again I don't see
35 dead fish. Is this for everybody or is this just
36 outsiders?

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Sport fishers.
39 Anybody that buys a sportfishing license adheres to
40 that. So that could be you or me if we had to buy one.
41 Of course we're too old to buy one anymore. They just
42 give them to us. They know we're not going to use them
43 because we're too old to get off the couch, right?

44

45 (Laughter)

46

47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Nissa.

48

49 MS. PILCHER: I was just about to say I

50

0179

1 think sport fish biologist Brendan Scanlon was going to
2 call in and that might have been him beeping in.

3

4 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is that you, Brendan?

5

6 MR. SCANLON: Thank you, Nissa. Yeah,
7 this is Brendan.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go for it. We had
10 questions.

11

12 MR. SCANLON: Sure. You're talking
13 about the grayling proposal for the Board of Fish?

14

15 MS. PILCHER: Proposal 75.

16

17 MR. SCANLON: Okay. 75. 75 is a lake
18 trout proposal. Do you mean 79?

19

20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: She's laughing at
21 herself. It says Proposal 75, Norton Sound sport
22 fisheries. Proposal 75.

23

24 MR. SCANLON: I must be looking at a
25 different road map.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: It's at the.....

28

29 MR. SCANLON: Anyway.....

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, go ahead.

32

33 MR. SCANLON: Yeah, do you want some
34 background on the proposal? Do you have some questions
35 on it?

36

37 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead. There's
38 been questions about reducing the take, but increasing
39 the size. The one question I have that goes with that
40 is how old do these fish have to be to reproduce and
41 the size?

42

43 MR. SCANLON: So that's a good
44 question. In the Fairbanks area, the Tanana drainage,
45 Yukon drainage, most grayling are mature at about 12
46 inches and they spawn for the first time about five to
47 seven and then the Seward Peninsula it's a little older
48 and a little longer. So we did a maturity study on
49 Snake River about 10, 15 years ago now, but they were
50

0180

1 -- 99 percent were mature at 15 inches. So we feel
2 that the 15-inch reg was put in place to give these
3 fish a chance to spawn.

4
5 What we found is that when we do our
6 stock assessments in these five rivers in this proposal
7 we almost don't catch any fish under 15 inches. So
8 there's a lot of big, old fish in the population by
9 having that five fish 15 or bigger on the fish in
10 Niukluk. It's essentially just a one fish bag limit
11 because you barely catch fish that small. It keeps
12 people from having to measure fish if we just make it
13 simpler. It also cleans up the regs a little bit. So
14 that was the impetus behind that proposal.

15
16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Could you say
17 that on the Niukluk again, how you worded that.

18
19 MR. SCANLON: Well, the way it's
20 written for the fish in Niukluk it would go to two a
21 day any size instead of five a day only one 15 inches
22 or bigger. Before harvest was already really, really
23 low on grayling and the guides that fish grayling
24 release almost everything it appears from the log book
25 data we used to have.

26
27 So there's a population -- the fish in
28 Niukluk is well above the minimum we wanted to see for
29 our study areas. So population is big and healthy.
30 Lots of old fish. The under 15 inch regulation is
31 nonsensical, so we wanted to streamline it and give
32 people the opportunity to keep another fish and not
33 have to measure fish.

34
35 MR. GRAY: So I'm sorry, Brendan. Tom
36 Gray here. You made a comment that you never catch
37 fish or very seldom catch fish under 15 inches. I'm a
38 fishing guide operation and I wish that was so. I've
39 gone into places where we catch hundreds of fish that
40 are seven or eight inches. You know, granted we have a
41 healthy stock on our river system, but I'm of the
42 flavor, I guess, that I'd rather see old, big fish than
43 little fish. You know, it would be awesome if we had
44 something saying if it's over 20 inches you don't take
45 it.

46
47 But I'm not going to fight this
48 proposal. What I am going to do is throw it out there
49 that you're going to make a bunch of, number one, kids,
50

0181

1 number two, locals a bunch of outlaws because you go to
2 Council in the middle of winter and look at the
3 graylings sitting on the ice from ice fishing. They're
4 huge fish and I always cringe when I see that because,
5 you know, they're killing 19-20 inch grayling. That's
6 not only Council. I mean that's all of our fishing
7 holes along the river. Everybody is taking big fish.

8
9 So if some fish cop got wise to this,
10 boy, he'd be writing tickets all over the place. We're
11 going to create outlaws in our own people and I don't
12 think that's really a wise thing to do. Again, I'm not
13 going to fight it. My river has a healthy population.
14 The Nome River isn't talked about here and maybe
15 because it's closed. That's why it's not talked about.

16
17 Anyway, you got my thoughts.

18
19 MR. SCANLON: Thanks, Tom. So when we
20 do stock assessments on the grayling population, we
21 don't do the entire drainage. It's just not
22 reasonable. So we have a stretch of river on the
23 Niukluk from the Casa down to Council about 10, 11
24 miles or so. Similarly on the Fish we have about a
25 15-mile section of river we do stock assessments in.
26 As you know, the bigger fish are further upstream. So
27 we don't go all the way down to lower river where we
28 would expect to see little fish.

29
30 The last stock assessments that we've
31 done on the Niukluk and Fish Rivers we estimated almost
32 1,000 fish per mile 15 inches or bigger, which is a
33 lot. So it doesn't appear that there's a
34 sustainability concern. It would still only make the
35 reg two per day on the fish in Niukluk, which is we
36 believe reasonable.

37
38 Tom, if you would like to submit public
39 comments at the Board of Fish meeting, I could
40 certainly help to do that.

41
42 MR. GRAY: Yeah, again, I'm not -- you
43 know, I think it's going to take a long time to blow up
44 in anybody's face, so I'm not going to fight it. What
45 is going to blow up in you guys' face though is if you
46 get some young guy writing tickets. Good Lord, this
47 proposal is going to open the door for lots and lots of
48 tickets to be wrote.

49
50

0182

1 MR. SCANLON: Well, enforcement has
2 always been a problem in the Nome area. Grayling is
3 pretty far down the list of things they'd go after.
4 Right now we don't even have a wildlife trooper active
5 in Nome. Tom, there's so many fish right now, for us
6 it's kind of a wait and see thing. If we do a stock
7 assessment and things change, we could certainly change
8 the regs or close fisheries. We don't want to do that,
9 but there just seems to be so many fish in Niukluk that
10 I don't think we're concerned about over harvest with
11 this proposal.

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Brendan. I
14 had a couple questions. One had to do with the Nome
15 River. What's the stock assessment there? Number one.

16
17 MR. SCANLON: Okay. Good question. So
18 it's been closed since the '90s, I believe. It used to
19 have a pretty big harvest from our harvest survey.
20 There was over 600 fish a year pulled out of there,
21 which sounds like a lot. The last three times we tried
22 to do a stock assessment we haven't caught enough fish
23 in our first event to warrant a second event. So when
24 we do a mark/recapture to estimate abundance, it's a
25 two event project.

26
27 This 2021 we attempted to do a stock
28 assessment. Floated about a 25-mile stretch of river
29 all the way down to the weir and we caught 50 fish. So
30 it wasn't even enough to warrant a second event. We'd
31 like to see 2,000 fish 15 inches or bigger in there
32 before we open it back up to catch and release or one
33 fish annual harvest. They're just not getting there.

34
35 It's something that geneticists has
36 called the Allee effect. There's just so few grayling
37 that all they can do is just maintain their numbers.
38 They can't get any bigger. They just can't get over
39 that hump. It's like panthers in Florida. There's
40 always going to be 75 panthers. They just won't get
41 any more than that.

42
43 So along with the pathology and
44 genetics lab we wrote a recovery plan for the Nome
45 River where we wanted to move some fish from another
46 drainage, like the Kuzitrin or maybe the Niukluk. We
47 would have to do some genetics and pathology work first
48 to make sure we weren't including population or
49 introducing disease.

50

0183

1 So we had this plan written out where
2 we'd move up to 2,000 fish probably from the Kuzitrin
3 into the Nome River to try to jumpstart the population,
4 but that project was rejected by Division leadership.
5 So it looks like it's not going to go.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. That's
8 interesting to know. Genetics. They're worried about
9 genetics. I know of a past tagged grayling that was
10 tagged I'm thinking in Nome River and ended up over in
11 Russia. So are these -- these things can -- they can
12 migrate from one river to another to the ocean.

13
14 MR. SCANLON: Louie, I think you're
15 thinking of -- I'm sorry. I think you're thinking of
16 dolly varden project we did a long time ago. We tagged
17 a bunch of fish in the Wulik and some of them were
18 caught in the Anadyr. Grayling have really low
19 tolerance for saltwater, so I don't think it was the
20 grayling. I think you might be mistaken there.

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, and I could be.
23 It's been a long time. The idea that it would have
24 been a grayling was a surprise, so that's kind of why
25 it stuck out, but I could be wrong. And I do know
26 about the trout thing.

27
28 So I've got a question now. Because
29 the Nome River is not seeming to produce or nothing is
30 increasing there and you guys wanted to do a swap from
31 one river to the other. I thought that was good what
32 you were talking about, but then you ended it. So what
33 is the food source for these grayling in the Nome
34 River?

35
36 MR. SCANLON: Well, like everywhere,
37 it's a lot of bugs in the spring and once the salmon
38 come in they like to eat pink salmon eggs and a lot of
39 bugs grow on the flesh and they'll eat rotted flesh.
40 Salmon and the bugs that eat the flesh also. It's not
41 a food issue. There appears to be plenty of habitat.

42
43 We floated pretty much the entire
44 stretch of available habitat for the grayling. We
45 started way up high and much below the weir gets tidal
46 and they don't like that water. Surprising to me that
47 there weren't more there. It looked like it was great
48 habitat. I don't think that's an issue. I think it
49 was overfished and it's just so low.

50

0184

1 But the Division leadership rejected
2 the project on the grounds that it would benefit
3 subsistence fishers more than sport, so then that would
4 be a violation of our Federal Aid Contract. That's the
5 reason it was not allowed. Comm Fish would have to do
6 it.

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You just said that
9 they couldn't do that by moving those fish because it
10 would make a gain for subsistence? How did you say
11 that again?

12
13 MR. SCANLON: Well, our Division
14 leadership decided that because subsistence fisheries
15 would benefit more than sport that that's a violation
16 of our Federal Aid Contract. We're funded through
17 licenses and taxes on fishing gear. So that being the
18 case they would not let the project go forward.

19
20 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. We're trying to
21 provide food. Huh. All right.

22
23 MR. SCANLON: I'm disappointed too,
24 Louie.

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah. Well, okay.
27 Well, I'm going to get a barrel and I'm going to go get
28 some -- I'm kidding. Anyway, I see this is dealing
29 with sport fish on -- you say the Snake River and what
30 was the other one?

31
32 MR. SCANLON: Well, the Niukluk and
33 Fish would go to a two a day any size and the Pilgrim
34 and Snake would go to one fish any size.

35
36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: And that's sport fish,
37 okay.

38
39 MR. SCANLON: Yeah.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Anybody else on
42 this one? I'm not worried about it.

43
44 MR. GRAY: I'm not.

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Anybody on the Council
47 got any concerns on it? I'm seeing a lot of nos here.
48 Thanks for that, Brendan. That helps. So we're going
49 to move on to the next one. Stand by.

50

0185

1 Okay. Proposal 77. Could you help us through this
2 one?

3

4 MS. PILCHER: He may not be able to.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Oh, okay. This is
7 commercial fishing. I'm trying to see the intent here.

8

9 MS. LAVINE: Mr. Chair. This is Robbin
10 Lavine.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Robbin.

13

14 MS. LAVINE: For the purposes of our
15 time together today, Mr. Chair, if you can review these
16 proposals and see if you can identify potential impacts
17 to our Federally qualified subsistence users and focus
18 your comments and discussion on those impacts, that
19 would be helpful to our process and your time here
20 today. Thanks.

21

22 MR. GRAY: So with that being said,
23 that last proposal that we talked about I am concerned
24 that my people are going to become outlaws with that
25 proposal if the system so decides to enforce that
26 regulation. You know, our intent sitting here needs to
27 protect the people, not give support to the law
28 enforcement agency or whatever. Basically Fish and
29 Game is trying to liberalize the size of fish that can
30 be taken. Again, I don't want tickets being written
31 or, you know, my opinion about this is we're creating a
32 law that's going to go against our people and I don't
33 like it.

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Tom. I'm
36 just trying to read this one here now. We've already
37 moved on to Proposal 77. Guideline harvest range for
38 Port Clarence district. They want an escapement goal
39 of 7,000 to 12,000 sockeye salmon for Salmon Lake
40 Drainage within Port Clarence district.

41

42 MR. GRAY: So I think the key thing in
43 this thing that he's asking for is in the second
44 paragraph. The regulation should convert to a
45 management plan with a 7-12,000 sockeye assuming
46 continued fertilization. I think that's the key.
47 Right now we have a regulation that manages this and
48 maybe I'm reading this wrong. I don't know. It looks
49 like he's proposing a management plan and I don't

50

0186

1 understand how that's going to change things.

2

3

CHAIRMAN GREEN: I see something about
4 the carrying capacity of the lake in this and the
5 current regulation sets the upper limit at 30,000
6 salmon, well above the recent analysis. The lake is
7 fertilized. It used to be BLM territory, wasn't it,
8 Tom?

9

10 MR. GRAY: Tom knows these things.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: He knows a little bit
13 about this stuff so that's why I'm tapping him.

14

15 MR. SPARKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Before the land transfers occurred at Salmon Lake there
17 were public lands there and we were involved in a
18 five-year project to initially fertilize the lake
19 largely because the fingerlings coming out of the lake
20 were about half the size as normal statewide. So we
21 were involved with that project for five years.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Can you elaborate?
26 What is that telling you?

27

28 MR. SPARKS: Well, it's a proposal by
29 Mr. Lean that should go through the regulatory process
30 with the State, so I don't have any official comment on
31 that as a BLM employee. Thank you, sir.

32

33 CHAIRMAN GREEN: (Laughs) Okay. Tom
34 and Tom. There's nothing we can do about it because
35 there's nothing in our grasp. This is another one that
36 we don't take action on I don't think. The escapement
37 goal, the upper limit, is 30,000 into the lake. I'm
38 trying to remember the numbers. Isn't it 30,000, high
39 side of the.....

40

41 MR. GRAY: Twelve.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: No, I mean on the
44 proposal it's 12, 7 to 12, but isn't it currently --
45 the upper limit is 30, right, but it's down to -- I
46 forgot the lower side of that. That's the escapement
47 goals currently, I think.

48

49 So what I'm trying to understand is why

50

0187

1 the 7 to 12,000 -- is that the escapement through the
2 weir to allow for the commercial fishery to be
3 conducted?

4

5 MR. GRAY: Good question. I don't
6 know.

7

8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. Go ahead,
9 Nissa.

10

11 MS. PILCHER: There's no shining light
12 that I'm offering here. Through the Chair, Nissa
13 Pilcher. I was just going to let you guys know that,
14 as Tom noted, this is more of an information if you
15 guys choose to take it up, you're more than welcome to.
16 This will for sure be discussed at all the local
17 advisory committees, especially if you want to. By
18 then the Department should, A, be present and, B, have
19 an analysis finished. So if anybody feels strongly
20 about this or has questions, the AC could be another
21 avenue of getting concerns addressed and questions
22 answered.

23

24 Like I said, I did provide these
25 because I wanted you guys to be aware of them, but me
26 providing them for you to be aware of unfortunately
27 does not also then give me the information to give you
28 to help you formulate any response.

29

30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks, Nissa. We're
31 going to move on. Thanks for the information on this,
32 Nissa. It's good to see what's going on in our back
33 yard.

34

35 Proposal 78, Fishing seasons and
36 periods for Bering Sea-Kotzebue Area. It has to do
37 with herring by the way. Anybody see anything in here
38 they want to address?

39

40 We're all reading this by the way. Some
41 of us. It's by the Department. I think we can just
42 move on from this because there's no commercial
43 interest on it. Anybody have any comments, questions
44 or concerns? Ron, do you?

45

46 MR. KIRK: Mr. Chair, it's talking
47 about fisheries, roe count. I was just trying to read
48 it. What does this mean? Are they going to start
49 commercial fishing for roe again on the herring side of
50

0188

1 it? Because I hold a herring permit. I'm a permit
2 holder.

3

4

CHAIRMAN GREEN: They're adding more
5 time to the fisheries in May. There's Subdistricts 1 -
6 6, from May 15 through November 15 (sac-roe or food and
7 bait season). So they're extending it for the use and
8 then there's no real commercial fishing because there's
9 no buyer. Anyway, this proposal would align in
10 regulation with what has been occurring since 2014 in
11 the herring fishery.

12

13 All right. We're educated. We see
14 that. It's probably okay. Are we done with the
15 proposals?

16

17 MS. PILCHER: Yep.

18

19 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right, Nissa.
20 Thank you. What's next?

21

22 MS. PILCHER: Through the Chair, Nissa
23 Pilcher. Agency reports is what's next.

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. So we've got
26 agency reports coming up here. Tribal governments.
27 Are there any tribal government reps online?

28

29 (No comments)

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Any other Native
32 organizations online? This would be the time to speak.

33

34 (No comments)

35

36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Justin. We already
37 covered Native American Fish and Wildlife Society with
38 Justin Leon yesterday. So that brings us down to
39 Bureau of Indian Affairs. You have the floor, Madame.

40

41 MS. DEBENHAM: Hi. For the record this
42 is Rosalie Debenham, biologist for the BIA Alaska
43 region. I just had a couple of staff updates. So Pat
44 (Petrivelli) retired, the anthropologist for BIA
45 Subsistence Division, and they are -- her position was
46 going to be flown to hire somebody else, but then the
47 Regional Director retired, so they're going to hire the
48 Regional Director sometime soon.

49

50

0189

1 Since that position works so closely
2 with that board member they're probably going to hold
3 off to hire that position until the Regional Director
4 starts. They should advertise that sometime this
5 winter.

6
7 In the meantime it's going to be mostly
8 Glenn Chen that will be covering. I'll be assisting
9 him when I can, like attending this meeting. I'm also
10 covering for three other empty positions at this time,
11 so we're a little short-staffed. So that's the staff
12 update there. I don't know when it's going to be
13 flown, but it should be flown sometime this winter.

14
15 There's a couple of open positions in
16 the Bureau of Indian Affairs. If any of you know of
17 anyone who is interested in working for the Bureau of
18 Indian Affairs, please let them know there's a variety
19 of positions open in Anchorage, Juneau and Fairbanks.
20 And then also a couple remote ones as well.

21
22 That's all I have for your right now
23 unless you have questions for me.

24
25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. There was
26 something on this update of Typhoon Merbok recovery
27 efforts. You don't have anything to do with that, do
28 you?

29
30 MS. DEBENHAM: Just initially we did.
31 Before the storm hit or during the storm hit that
32 weekend we had a meeting with BIA leadership in the
33 Secretary's Office connected with tribal elected
34 leaders at that time and then after. Of course the
35 storm was happening and they had a lot to deal with.
36 The meetings with the tribal leaders was fairly brief,
37 but the BIA did a lot of organization beforehand and
38 after. The result was Federal aid to the tribes
39 affected.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank you for
42 that. Anybody with comments, questions or concerns for
43 this young lady here.

44
45 (No comments)

46
47 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Seeing none, hearing
48 none. Thank you very much.

49
50

0190

1 MS. DEBENHAM: Of course. I know you
2 guys also work for tribes, so please, if there are
3 concerns and questions they have, please don't be
4 afraid to reach out to the Bureau of Indian Affairs
5 with those questions and we'll do our best to help you
6 out. Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. Thanks.
9 That brings us to the next, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
10 Service. Yukon River 2022 season summary with Holly.

11
12 MS. PILCHER: Through the Chair. This
13 is Nissa Pilcher. Just to let you know Holly Carroll
14 and the next agenda topic, which would be the Y-K Delta
15 RAC update as well on the river -- this meeting
16 overlapped Eastern Interior RAC, so those employees are
17 now at that Eastern Interior RAC so they won't be here.

18
19 There is written material available.
20 The Yukon River update was right in front of me. There
21 it is. Supplemental material Tab 5 for the Yukon River
22 update. We did hear some information about that day
23 one about the Special Action Request and the openers or
24 lack thereof from Staff.

25
26 Kuskokwim River. That refuge also
27 provided information. That was provided in a handout
28 received during the meeting in the folder. There was
29 both a Kuskokwim River update as well as a Refuge
30 update in written copy or hard copy and I'm sure that
31 Boyd will do his best to be able to attend your winter
32 meeting to give an actual update verbally other than
33 just in writing unless I'm mistaken and Boyd happened
34 to be able to call in.

35
36 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Nissa. Thank
37 you. I haven't heard that. I think that brings us to
38 National Park Service, Bering Land Bridge National
39 Preserve. Jeanette or Letty?

40
41 MS. HUGHES: This is Letty with Bering
42 Land Bridge. I will keep this brief. Our office
43 wanted to provide -- and we're just passing around some
44 photos for Council to look at. In late August Bering
45 Land Bridge put in a beaver flow device at Serpentine
46 Hot Springs. The reason for this was we've been having
47 flooding issues, but it then became very apparent after
48 the Serpentine airstrip started flooding this early
49 summer as a result of some beavers just moving in and
50

0191

1 damming up near the ponds near the runway.

2

3

4 So that was definitely a high priority
5 just because we couldn't get visitors in there and
6 personal aircraft couldn't land in there either. So we
7 put this in. We actually brought in a contractor who
8 specifically deals with installing these flow devices
9 as you see. Those pipes there are two 12-inch poly
10 corrugated pipes. So that's what you see to help
11 handle the water flow in there.

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So far, even with all the rain the Seward Peninsula has received in September, I want to say like Rick Tallman, if you're on the Bering Sea Climate Facebook group, he had posted on there that at least in the Nome area had received 5.7 inches of rain, which was like the fourth largest rain amounts since 1906. So, when you think about it, expanding across the Seward Peninsula, I did have some thoughts like how it was going to handle the water flow with the rain.

We did have one Park Service staff doing research this late September, so I had him take some of those photos and check it out to make sure it was all good and it still apparently is working.

This is a flow device that's very similar to like what Pilgrim Hot Springs has. The same individual that they brought up is who also Bering Land Bridge used. So when we talk about how is this going to work with winter, ice freezing and so forth, so far it's working at Pilgrim Hot Springs. So that's what we're really hoping for, to continue to keep that airstrip, the Hot Spring itself and some of the infrastructure from getting flooded.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. Thank you for that, Letty. Is there anything else from the Bering Land Bridge National Preserve that we have to get updated about?

MS. HUGHES: There's nothing further.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank you. I guess that brings us to the Bureau of Land Management, BLM. Mr. Sparks. This is your section. I was just using you for your personal expertise on the other stuff. Thank you.

0192

1 MR. SPARKS: I can't tell you what a
2 pleasure it is to be back here and see everybody in
3 person and engage. I made some copies of some things I
4 pulled out of the office this morning. I thought the
5 board may be interested particularly in those from
6 Unalakleet because the D(1) came up just yesterday.

7
8 So we are engaged in a new
9 Environmental Impact Statement. There's actually a
10 little flyer that I printed out for everyone on the
11 board. There's a public comment going on just for the
12 scope of the analysis. Those comments are due by
13 October 17th, so it's very timely.

14
15 The D(1) is kind of a complicated
16 issue. There's public land orders that have been in
17 effect, as I said yesterday, since the early '70s.
18 There's one that will be opened in April of 2023 and
19 those are for lands in the Kobuk-Seward Land Use Plan.
20 To give you an idea of the scope of the area I printed
21 out a map kind of showing the whole Seward Peninsula.
22 So it's all those cross-hatched lands. It's a huge
23 swath of public domain.

24
25 The other thing I wanted to do is give
26 you some more information about the Vietnam Veterans
27 Act because that's something that I know this board is
28 interested in. Certainly to disseminate that
29 information. So we recently opened some lands that
30 were previously not available. So the amount of
31 Federal lands that are available for the Vietnam
32 veterans expanded greatly. There's a flyer on that
33 that I included looks like this.

34
35 These issues are rather complicated. I
36 think if board members have specific questions, they
37 can certainly get a hold of me there in the Nome office
38 or send me an email. My office number is 442-2177 and
39 my email is tsparks@blm.gov.

40
41 Other than that I'll keep it real
42 short. We did provide a written analysis for you, the
43 accomplishments of Anchorage Field Office. I believe
44 it starts on Page 58 of your packet. It's about three
45 pages long. I won't take the time to read through
46 that, but if any of you have any questions on that I'd
47 be happy to answer those.

48
49 Also the last thing I want to bring up
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1 is that we did have the Director of BLM come to Alaska
2 and we were fortunate she came to Unalakleet and we
3 held a meeting there about the D(1) and some of the
4 other issues with the Bering Sea-Western Interior Land
5 Use Plan. So we were quite privileged to see the
6 Director of BLM here, Tracy Stone-Manning.

7

8 With that I'll end my report and be
9 available for questions, Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for your
12 report, Tom. Just a question on the D(1). Just a
13 summary of what it means.

14

15 MR. SPARKS: Well, there's several
16 issues at stake. Some areas are currently open to
17 mineral entry for first minerals. Some are closed
18 entirely. I think the big issue for this board in the
19 review that I've looked at is what we call State top
20 filings. Some of the PLO's restricted public lands for
21 being selected by the State of Alaska under the
22 Statehood Act. These public land orders, when they
23 change, the State's top filing will automatically
24 convert to a State selection. State selected lands are
25 not available for Federal subsistence users. I think
26 that is an issue that certainly would impact the
27 Federal Subsistence Program.

28

29 Did that help, Mr. Chair?

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Anybody
32 else have any questions, comments or concerns? Okay,
33 we've got two. Deahl, go ahead.

34

35 MR. KATCHATAG: Okay. Concerning the
36 veterans selection of lands, we had one in Unalakleet
37 that was denied. I'd like to know why.

38

39 MR. SPARKS: Those are individual
40 applications and without knowing exactly behind it,
41 those are done out of our State office. They're
42 adjudicated. So I wouldn't know the specifics. Deahl,
43 maybe I could get with you together to find the
44 individual's name and so forth. But that's an
45 individual application that's dealt with, so there's
46 appeal procedures and so forth when a veteran is
47 denied. So there has to be a rationale of why it was
48 denied. Usually they don't meet the regulatory
49 requirements.

50

0194

1 MR. KATCHATAG: Another question I want
2 to know about is mining in North River and Golsovia
3 River.

4
5 MR. SPARKS: There isn't any current
6 mining going on there. Some of those lands are
7 currently open to mineral entry. Meaning someone could
8 go in and stake a Federal mining claim if they find
9 locatable minerals. The only Federal claims is --
10 well, they were owned by Tweto, but the Pat Bliss's
11 claims off the Ungalik. Many of you know those are
12 some patented mining claims there as well. So that's
13 the only ones I'm aware of down in your neck of the
14 woods.

15
16 There are certain areas now that are
17 currently open for first minerals and that's kind of
18 like gold, silver, those types of things. So I just
19 think on a practical basis there's not a lot of
20 minerals that are there that would cause someone to go
21 stake a Federal mining claim.

22
23 Just because an area is open to Federal
24 claims they still have to go through the regulatory
25 process with the BLM in terms of filing for a notice or
26 a plan level. We have environmental impact statements
27 on a plan level operation. So there's quite a bit of
28 regulations. Mining laws change quite a bit in terms
29 of our regulatory powers too. So just a comment there.

30
31 MR. KATCHATAG: What about the one in
32 Elim, the uranium?

33
34 MS. STARK: There are some claims there
35 that are held by Hetterly Smith. That's been on the
36 books for quite a while. They're still valid. I
37 believe there's about 12 claims. I'd have to check on
38 that specifically. But there has been no plan or
39 notice level operation out there for many years.

40
41 They did some drilling there I think it
42 was my second year with BLM. I've been with BLM about
43 17 years. So about 15 years ago there was some
44 drilling that occurred on those claims and everything
45 surrounding that is pretty much on State land and I
46 can't speak to State operations because I work for BLM.

47
48 MR. KATCHATAG: I'm on the Norton Bay
49 (Inter-Tribal) Watershed Committee and it originated in
50

0195

1 Elim. In one of our meetings this past year the
2 coordinators in Elim had gone up to Niukluk River and
3 seen a lot of dead little fish on the sandbars from the
4 dust that was coming off the hill. Have you heard
5 anything about that?

6
7 MR. STARK: No, I have not.

8
9 MR. KATCHATAG: They observed some
10 shoveling up on the hill by miners. On the way up the
11 river they found a lot of dead fish. If that
12 continues, we'll have nothing in Norton Sound. So
13 that's my biggest concern right now. That and gold
14 mining. I'm pretty sure they're going to gold mine and
15 mine the North River and the Golsovia River. We tried
16 to stop the offshore drilling, but it passed, so
17 there's nothing we can do about that.

18
19 MR. STARK: Thank you for those
20 comments.

21
22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Are there any other
23 Council members. Ron, go ahead.

24
25 MR. KIRK: Concerning mining, I don't
26 like the idea of them mining near our freshwater rivers
27 because, like he stated earlier, our fish will die off.
28 My concern is that when they open mining in the
29 Golsovia River, that's where the trout go up and spawn
30 into the river up there. If they destroy their
31 spawning grounds, we're going to lose our trout and our
32 salmon that go up the Golsovia River.

33
34 I'm wondering if the corporations or
35 ANCSA can put a little say-so into mining where the
36 freshwater is concerning our spawning of our fish even
37 in the Nulato area because that's where a lot of
38 whitefish go up and spawn and they're doing mining up
39 there.

40
41 Thank you.

42
43 MR. SPARKS: Through the Chair. Ron,
44 I'm having some difficulty with what the question is.
45 I think as far as your commenting on lifting the D(1)
46 is appropriate now. We're again involved in a big EIS
47 to take in further comment. I know that our land use
48 plans do have some specific criteria as far as surface
49 occupancy with minerals, with mining, when it actually
50

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1 goes to that level.

2

3

4 Again, it's kind of a step-by-step
5 process. Someone has to acquire a Federal mining
6 claim, there has to be minerals present, they have to
7 apply for work to be done either through a notice or
8 plan level operation. We do an environmental impact
9 statement or an environmental assessment, depending on
10 the level of operation. We would be involved with the
11 communities as far as that goes. I think now is the
12 time to comment on that because we are involved in a
13 very large project to address those D(1)s. I hope that
14 helped.

14

15 MR. KIRK: It did a little. I'm real
16 concerned about mining because not only I'm worried
17 about the fish, I'm worried about the migratory birds.
18 They nest along these rivers and once you start mining
19 near the rivers those migratory birds are going to
20 move. They say they'll put everything back the way it
21 is after they're done mining, but I don't think that
22 will happen.

23

24 MR. SPARKS: Appreciate those comments,
25 Ron. Thank you.

26

27 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron. Any
28 other comments for Mr. Sparks and BLM.

29

30 (No comments)

31

32 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Seeing and hearing
33 none. Thank you very much, Mr. Sparks.

34

35 MR. SPARKS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Always a pleasure.

37

38 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Come back. Don't let
39 these guys scare you off. So I just got a note here
40 that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mr. Boyd, has
41 called in. He had a brief report to give us?

42

43 MS. PILCHER: I believe so. I think
44 actually it was Aaron Moses. I think I mixed those up.
45 Aaron, are you on and able to give an update?

46

47 MR. MOSES: Hello. Can you hear me?

48

49 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead, Aaron.

2

3 MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
4 is my first time engaging with the RAC and I'm very
5 fortunate and thank you for you guys's time. I'd like
6 to quickly introduce myself. My name is Aaron Moses.
7 I'm originally from Toksook Bay and I'm the subsistence
8 coordinator for Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge.

9

10 I'd just like to give you guys a quick
11 report for the summer salmon season that we had for the
12 Kuskokwim River. It started all the way in the
13 beginning of the spring when our summer season gets
14 broken up into three different phases. Now, the
15 beginning of all the chinook salmon season and then we
16 go into chum salmon and then this year it went all the
17 way into coho salmon. They're pretty much three
18 distinct phases even though they do overlap. We try to
19 work hard with our partners at the Kuskokwim River and
20 Tribal Fish Commission. We start these talks very
21 early in the summer.

22

23 In the beginning we closed the river on
24 June 1st to all gillnet fishing. We're working with
25 the information that the run for the Kuskokwim for
26 chinook salmon, our first stage of the summer, was
27 going to be between 99-161,000 chinook salmon. With
28 that number we knew that there was still a conservation
29 concern, so we limited it to closing the river and only
30 during openings opening it to Federally qualified
31 users.

32

33 Subsequently we were able to fish in
34 five special actions, which resulted in us being able
35 to fish for a total of 200 hours. We had four driftnet
36 opportunities and seven setnet opportunities. The
37 driftnet opportunities were able to last about 12 hours
38 and then the setnets were 16 to 36 hours.

39

40 We chose the 12 hours because for the
41 past five years we know the fishery is for the whole
42 Kuskokwim between Aniak at our border and to the mouth
43 of the Kuskokwim. On any given fishing opening for 12
44 hours for chinook salmon we can harvest between four
45 and seven thousand chinook salmon. We had an outlier
46 this year. On one day we were able to harvest 14,000
47 chinook salmon in one day. So that was the outlier
48 that we've had for the past five years.

49

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1 Towards the middle of the season we
2 have or starting to have large runs of sockeye on the
3 river. This allows us to be able to be a little bit
4 more flexible between the 4th of July timeframe between
5 the last week of June and first week of July. That's
6 when the peak of the sockeye salmon are running through
7 the Bethel area. We believe that during this time when
8 there's a slug of sockeye coming in that we are able to
9 fish just a little bit more while being still
10 conservative.

11
12 We know that chinook and chum salmon
13 will be harvested, but looking at our data we are
14 pretty happy with seeing the ratios between chinook,
15 chum and sockeye salmon to be very high. So roughly
16 just from experience from that timeframe it was roughly
17 10 sockeye for every chum and chinook. So people were
18 able to fish a little bit more.

19
20 Also here in the chum salmon season we
21 had the second lowest chum salmon return. Towards the
22 end of the season our sonar estimated about 100,000
23 chum salmon passed by the Bethel sonar, which is the
24 second lowest only to last year when there was less
25 than 50,000 chum salmon returning past the sonar. By
26 the end of July we gave up Federal management right
27 when the coho were coming in, but towards the middle of
28 the season of the coho run we, along with the Fish
29 Commission, Fish and Game, everybody was saying that
30 the coho were coming in very poorly.

31
32 So the Alaska Department of Fish and
33 Game closed the entire river from pretty much August 16
34 to September 15, but allowing non-traditional salmon
35 areas to be open so that the residents here would be
36 able to fish for whitefish, which is predominantly
37 harvested during the fall season. With that the Fish
38 and Wildlife Service figured that we'd be closely
39 watching the coho run and by the end of this we would
40 not be able to have any fishing opportunities on the
41 coho for this year.

42
43 A preliminary post-season summary for
44 the chinook salmon we have three escapement goals on
45 three rivers, the George, KogrukluK and Kwethluk for
46 chinook salmon. From the end of season data we have
47 achieved all three goals for that. As for chum salmon
48 we have one escapement goal of 15-49,000 on the
49 KogrukluK River for chum salmon. As of this date only
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1 11,458 chum salmon returned to that weir, so the
2 escapement goal has not been met.

3

4

5 As for coho salmon, there are two
6 escapement goals, one on the Kogrukluk and Kwethluk.
7 The Kogrukluk River in the fall was flooded out, so
8 only 706 coho were counted. So estimates will be
9 provided at a later date. The Kwethluk has an
10 escapement goal of greater than 19,000. At the end of
11 the season the count was 6,291. So the escapement
12 goals for coho will not be met for the 2022 season.

12

13

14 Like I said, this year was
15 unprecedented that we had to close the river for almost
16 the entirety of the fall salmon runs. We had about a
17 three week window where the river was wide open. So
18 fishing on the Kuskokwim, relying on chum and coho
19 salmon, is not like it used to be in the past.

19

20

21 Sockeye salmon have been coming in
22 healthy. About 606,000 sockeye salmon returned to the
23 river, so like I said during the end of June to first
24 two weeks of July when the sockeye are peaking we have
25 that ability to be able to fish just a little bit more
26 than we have in the past so that the residents of the
27 Kuskokwim would be able to harvest those fish.

27

28

29 So that's the report I have for the
30 2022 season. If you guys have any questions, I'd be
31 happy to answer them. I believe Boyd is also online
32 and he'd be able to answer any questions that I
33 wouldn't be able to answer.

33

34

35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay, Aaron. I
36 appreciate your report. I just have two quick
37 questions. One is you've talked about over 600,000
38 sockeye running up. Where do they spawn at?

38

39

40 MR. MOSES: We have one lake type
41 spawning area, Telaquana Lake, and that's in the Park
42 Service and that lake is closer to Anchorage than it is
43 to Bethel. That river gets between 100-200,000
44 sockeye, but the rest of the sockeye that we do have
45 are river-type sockeye. They're a bit larger than
46 lake-type sockeye. They're probably just a little bit
47 smaller than the chum salmon that we have.

47

48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. You're
50 telling me you got sockeye that spawn not only in the

50

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1 lakes, but in the rivers, correct?

2

3 MR. MOSES: Yes. On the Kuskokwim we
4 have a lot of river-type sockeye.

5

6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you. Are there
7 any genetic studies on those sockeye?

8

9 MR. MOSES: I do know the Alaska
10 Department of Fish and Game has been collecting
11 genetics for the last three or four years and I'm not
12 sure where those are. I know they take a lot of the
13 genetics from that Telaquana Lake because they are
14 distinct populations. So in the future I believe our
15 run reconstruction would be able to be provided for
16 sockeye in the future.

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All right. Well,
19 thank you. I'll ask Council. Anybody here besides me
20 have any comments, questions or concerns with Aaron and
21 Boyd joined him online?

22

23 (No comments)

24

25 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none. Seeing
26 none. Thank you for your time, Aaron, and your report.

27

28 MR. MOSES: Thank you guys so much.
29 I'll talk to you guys in the spring meeting.

30

31 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Yeah, we get to be
32 your first -- you said this is the first time you've
33 had to do this?

34

35 MR. MOSES: Yeah, for you guys up
36 there. We should be starting to be more involved with
37 your guys' RAC so that we could show you guys all the
38 projects that are happening within the Refuge and just
39 all the cool things that a lot of us have been doing.
40 You guys should get a refuge report and we can present
41 it in your guys's spring meeting.

42

43 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Thank you very
44 much. I heard something that I've always suspected
45 that was in my backyard and our sockeye runs to Salmon
46 Lake. I always said they spawned in the Grand Central
47 River above the lake and they spawned in the Pilgrim
48 River down below the lake and then down wherever they
49 needed to be. Survival of the fittest. So there's an
50

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1 argument about our carrying capacity of the lake. I
2 always thought the numbers were way too low.

3
4 So I appreciate your information and
5 thank you very much for your time.

6
7 That moves us on to the Alaska
8 Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence.
9 Helen.

10
11 MS. COLD: Yes. Good morning, Mr.
12 Chair. This is Helen Cold with Subsistence.

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: You have the floor,
15 ma'am.

16
17 MS. COLD: Okay. Thank you. Well,
18 this is actually my first time being able to engage
19 with the Council as well, so I just wanted to briefly
20 introduce myself.

21
22 I work with the Alaska Department of
23 Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence in the Fairbanks
24 Office. I am currently the Arctic Area Subsistence
25 Research Coordinator. So I work with communities
26 across the Seward Peninsula as well as the Northwest
27 Arctic and the North Slope.

28
29 I'm relatively new to this position.
30 I've been working here for about a year in this
31 position and with Fish and Game Subsistence for about
32 four. While I was at it I also wanted to introduce a
33 colleague who I believe also called in. Her name is
34 Morgan Urquia and she works closely with me on projects
35 across the region as well.

36
37 So I don't need to take a lot of time
38 today. I just wanted to give you folks some
39 information about a few research projects we have going
40 on in your region and then see if you had any
41 questions. So just a couple of slides. There are two
42 active research projects right now we're working with
43 communities with.

44
45 The first one is the Bering Land Bridge
46 Ethnographic Overview and Assessment Project. This is
47 being funded by the National Park Service and the
48 purpose of this project is to produce an ethnographic
49 overview and assessment document for the Bering Land
50

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1 Bridge National Preserve.

2

3 This is basically a document that
4 serves as reference material for folks in the National
5 Park Service and other people to have a better idea of
6 some of the ethnographic resources in the area.

7

8 So the focus region is just the zone
9 communities within the Bering Land Bridge; so Wales,
10 Shishmaref and Deering primarily. This involves a
11 comprehensive literature review as well as consulting
12 with communities in the area to ultimately create this
13 reference document.

14

15 This project began in 2020 and it's
16 slated to end in 2024. We have conducted the
17 literature review and Morgan and I are actively writing
18 this document. We have planned to visit the zoned
19 communities and do some community consultation to
20 identify any information that's missing and add to this
21 document with the community's input.

22

23 We hoped we would be able to go out and
24 visit communities earlier, but Covid has kind of
25 changed our schedule a little bit, but we're hoping to
26 be able to travel to these communities in the spring of
27 2023 to start that process. Ultimately we'll finalize
28 and share this draft report with communities again in
29 2024. It's scheduled to be completed in the fall of
30 2024.

31

32 For the other research projects we have
33 going on right now is the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
34 Harvest Assessment. So this is being funded by Fish
35 and Wildlife Service. It's a research partnership
36 among eight different study communities in the Western
37 Arctic Herd area, ADF&G Subsistence and then also ADF&G
38 Department of Wildlife Conservation.

39

40 So with this project we're conducting
41 household large mammal harvest surveys in these eight
42 different communities. The focus areas -- the
43 communities are listed here, but in your region it
44 would be Golovin, White Mountain and Shishmaref, but
45 we're also working with Selawik, Shungnak, Noatak,
46 Deering and Kobuk.

47

48 This involves conducting household
49 surveys as well as ethnographic interviews with a

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0203

1 mapping component and also participant observation.
2 Getting out and hunting with folks.

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This project started in 2019 and it's scheduled to end in 2024. So there are four years of surveys and each community is surveyed twice, once every two years. In spring of 2022, we visited Shungnak, White Mountain, Selawik and Golovin and then this spring in 2023 we plan to visit Deering, Kobuk, Golovin and Shishmaref. This would be the final year of survey efforts in these communities.

So this is the fourth and final year and we're going to be working with these communities to review the results from these surveys and the interviews as we're compiling this larger document, which is anticipated to be completed by mid 2024.

So that's the only two slides that I had for projects. I did want to very briefly mention that we have another research project that although is not technically going on in the Seward Peninsula Region. It's more with Northwest Arctic communities. I've heard a lot of talk about beavers and the impacted beavers in your area.

So I just wanted to let you know that there is a research project that we are actively working on and trying to understand beavers upward movement into Arctic communities and how it's impacting the environment and folks in those communities and the resources they harvest.

So it's part of a larger newly formed network of scientists and communities in the U.S. as well as in Canada that form the Arctic Beaver Observation Network. So this is a new group. It just formed about a year ago and it met for the first time virtually last year.

They're holding another meeting in November in Yellowknife, Canada, but the meeting after that in 2023 is likely to take place in Alaska. It would be really great if folks from communities all across northern Alaska could attend that either virtually or in person and to share information about the impacts of beavers in and around their communities.

0204

1 Also a lot of the scientists that are
2 involved in this work are doing remote sensing work, so
3 the idea is for not only just to be sharing how beavers
4 are impacting folks in communities, but then to also be
5 able to share on the remote sensing and digital imagery
6 side of things larger landscape level changes that are
7 happening.

8
9 So if folks have questions about that
10 project or any of the other ones that I just mentioned,
11 you're welcome to contact me. Email me or call my
12 office phone number. I can take any questions you have
13 right now too.

14
15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Well,
16 appreciate that, Helen. Are there any questions,
17 comments or concerns at the table here, Council?

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none. Seeing
22 none. Thank you very much for your report.

23
24 MS. COLD: Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN GREEN: That brings us up to
27 Office of Subsistence Management, Robbin Lavine.

28
29 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
30 Members of the Council. Again, for the record, I'm
31 Robbin Lavine, Subsistence Policy Coordinator with OSM.
32 I have a couple of items to share with you that we
33 share with all the Councils across the state of Alaska.

34
35
36 I'm going to start by expressing again
37 my gratitude for your knowledge, your expertise and my
38 delight in being able to be here with you in person.
39 We are all of us just so thankful for your patience and
40 your fortitude that you stuck with us through two and a
41 half years of funky phone lines and getting dropped and
42 not being able to have our discussions in person. So
43 thank you all.

44
45 In person Council meetings this fall
46 following Covid-19 requirements. So we're holding all
47 10 Regional Advisory Council meetings in person this
48 fall. We've been working over the recent months to
49 arrange for travel, lodging, meeting places for all the
50

0205

1 Councils and we're happy that we can finally see you
2 face to face and we thank you again for bearing with
3 us. All the things I've just shared with you.

4

5 The Federal Subsistence Management
6 Program recognizes that in person Council meetings are
7 preferable. The Council meetings must follow Federal
8 government guidelines. We're hoping that Covid-19
9 levels are low enough in each of the communities where
10 Council meetings are planned at the time of the meeting
11 so that we will be able to meet Federal government
12 guidelines.

13

14 So far that has been the case. That
15 means that we don't have certain requirements that we
16 must adhere to while we're here sharing the space
17 together. We're working with each of the Councils on
18 the specific requirements for their regions.

19

20 Changes to OSM staffing since the
21 winter of 2022. We're pleased to welcome two newly
22 hired Subsistence Council Coordinators and they are
23 Lisa Hutchinson-Scarborough and Jessica Gill. They
24 both have a wealth of knowledge and experience in
25 working with rural users in communities as well as
26 Alaska subsistence issues.

27

28 Eva Patton, who you heard representing
29 the Park Service, she was one of our Council
30 Coordinators and she has transferred to NPS. Karie
31 Crow has returned to OSM as our budget analyst and it's
32 fantastic. She was with OSM for many, many years and
33 to have her come back with her expertise on our program
34 is invaluable. Bernard Shavings joined us as an
35 administrative support assistant and Michelle Andrews
36 joined us as OSM's executive secretary.

37

38 So we continue to work on building our
39 capacity. We have an amazing team right now. We are
40 almost fully staffed up and we are grateful to have
41 every single one of the people that we have on our team
42 right now. They're all awesome.

43

44 Real ID for travel to Council meetings
45 I think we've shared this with you for a number of
46 years. It's continued to be postponed. We keep
47 reminding Council members about the change in
48 requirement for IDs at airports. So beginning May 3rd,
49 2023 every air traveler will need to present a Real ID

50

0206

1 compliant driver's license or other acceptable form of
2 identification like a passport to fly within the United
3 States.

4

5 Yes, Leland.

6

7 MR. OYOUNICK: Excuse me. Our Native
8 village issued ID cards. Would those be acceptable?

9

10 MS. LAVINE: I am uncertain, through
11 the Chair, Mr. Leland. You know, I'm looking at your
12 ID card from here and that looks like it may meet those
13 requirements. Just one moment. We're confirming.

14

15 MR. KIRK: Can I comment on this, Mr.
16 Chair?

17

18 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Go ahead.

19

20 MR. KIRK: On these tribal IDs they are
21 Federally recognized. I fought with the fire service
22 for years. I fought wildfires for years. We had
23 issues taking our men out of Alaska to go fight fires
24 in California. They needed Real IDs. So we went
25 through Kawerak and the non-profits throughout the
26 state to have the tribal governments provide IDs like
27 this. I have one. So that our men can board a plane
28 in California and get sent home through our tribal ID.
29 They are Federally recognized because the tribal
30 governments are Federally funded.

31

32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thanks for that
35 information, Ron. Robbin.

36

37 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Member Kirk. I
38 think we should fully confirm, but I believe those new
39 IDs -- and it probably has more to do with how they're
40 made. So we have -- can you hang on just a moment.
41 Yep, here we go. On their website for the Q&A there's
42 a question, is my tribal identification an acceptable
43 form of ID and, yes, a Federally recognized tribal
44 issued photo ID is an acceptable form of
45 identification. So thank you very much and all of you.
46 There you have it.

47

48 I would like to wrap up my OSM report
49 just with a reminder of how our Regional Advisory

50

0207

1 Council meetings work and the Federal Subsistence
2 Management Programs work. You have been having
3 substantive discussion on the record and we are taking
4 notes. There will be transcripts of this meeting.
5 There will be your annual report.

6

7

8 All of this information we use. OSM
9 uses, the Federal Subsistence Management Program uses
10 to ensure that our Federal Subsistence Board makes
11 informed decisions relevant to you and your region.
12 That's what we're doing here. As I have worked for OSM
13 for the last eight years I'm constantly going to the
14 transcripts. I'm going to your words. I'm going to
15 your reports to help ensure that our actions are in
16 line with the information you've shared with us, your
17 needs and your concerns.

17

18

19 The Federal Subsistence Board will be
20 meeting before your next winter meeting at the end of
21 January. Your Chair, Louie Green, will be in
22 attendance to ensure that your Council and your region
23 is represented.

23

24

25 So this process, this is how it works.
26 This is why I'm grateful for your time here, your
27 expertise. I also wanted to extend my gratitude to the
28 amazing team that we have. I want to express my
29 gratitude to our Federal agencies and staff who are
30 here in person; BLM, Park Service, BIA. I also want to
31 extend gratitude to the remaining colleagues of ours
32 online, including our State colleagues. Your
33 information, your expertise, your willingness to join
34 us and help inform this process is essential.
35 Thank you so much for all.

35

36

37 Then thank you to Nissa. Thank you to
38 Hannah and Jared and Deanna who is usually in Southeast
39 or Southcentral for all coming here to support our
40 process. And Nathan, who is our court reporter and his
41 expertise also assists in all the work we do.

41

42

43 So thank you for an amazing meeting.
44 Leland, I see that you have also something to share.

44

45

46 MS. OYOUNICK: It's only because of
47 those who raised us up and grew us up we know so much.
48 We need to thank them.

48

49

50 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Leland, through

50

0208

1 the Chair. You are correct. The information you share
2 is not just yours alone. It's the knowledge that is
3 passed on to you from your families, your elders and
4 the people who have been here for generations.

5

6 With that, thank you so much and good
7 meeting all.

8

9 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you very much,
10 Robbin. I guess Elmer wanted to ask you something.

11

12 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig
13 Mission. I heard from the coordinator that we're
14 volunteer service members and then Office of
15 Subsistence Management put out strict guidelines on
16 travel and stuff like that. As you can see in the
17 front table, you can see we're not young anymore. I
18 mean these two gentlemen are from the community of
19 Nome. We're from the outside areas.

20

21 To volunteer our time to come to these
22 meetings sometimes it kind of lets you wonder, should I
23 go to the meeting or not, because there's a weather
24 forecast that is supposed to maybe continue or start
25 tonight and then into tomorrow. I know that there are
26 guidelines, but since some of the meetings are, you
27 know, and before their required time, why are not we
28 allowed to go home after the meetings? That is one of
29 the basic things that I kind of look at is the Federal
30 guidelines on travel.

31

32 I know that it takes a lot of time to
33 do these travel for outlying communities. I'm not
34 young anymore and most of my attention is toward
35 grandchildren and home living. I don't -- if I am
36 forced to stay here or in any place due to weather or
37 other complications, I don't have my Native food to
38 sustain me. Very vital because with store-bought food
39 you continue just to eat and eat and eat. You build up
40 calories. Oh, look, gee, how big I get now, you know,
41 and stuff like that. But that's something that I kind
42 of look at over the years. Weather forecast, I would
43 think that that's old folk's syndrome. You don't want
44 to be stranded in any community.

45

46 That last meeting too, big disparity in
47 volunteer service members and paid staff. Whether it's
48 from the State or the Federal agency. We don't get
49 paid for telephonic meetings. So that's how come I say

50

0209

1 there was disparity between paid staff and volunteer
2 service. Sometimes, you know, it takes a toll. Should
3 I go to this meeting or not.

4

5 You kind of mentioned about recruitment
6 for the Seward Peninsula Regional Advisory Council.
7 The majority of the people that I kind of interviewed
8 why aren't you going for Seward Peninsula, it has no
9 financial incentive. It just pays for your meals.
10 Many of the tribal organizations they provide stipends
11 and/or honorarium for meetings like this here. So
12 that's something that I kind of look at.

13

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 I would like to go home as soon as
possible after the meeting, but sometimes, you know,
they tell me that it's the guidelines of the Office of
Subsistence Management. That's my piece I have to say
under OSM. I had some things written down, but I'll do
that at a different time.

 Thank you very much.

 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.
Robbin.

 MS. LAVINE: Thank you. Through the
Chair. I think we always invite your comments, your
critiques and ways in which the program can improve and
support you. I do know that in other regions and at
other times we have done our very best to get our
Council members out and safely home ahead of storms and
weather fronts outside of the dates we initially
scheduled. So if we can, we'll all work hard together
to scramble to get you out as soon as possible.
Especially, you know, depending on what the weather is,
we'll be working with you on that on breaks and lunch
breaks and in between discussions.

 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Robbin.
Ron, go ahead.

 MR. KIRK: I have a comment on -- I'd
like to elaborate more on Elmer's wording because my
concern is the same as his. We get per diem for this
meeting and then that per diem lasts until the meeting
is done. What his concern is and mine is, what if we
get storm bound, we get weather bound? After the per

0210

1 diem is gone, how do we provide for ourselves in a city
2 like Nome to get more food from the restaurant or the
3 stores?
4

5 And we're stuck in Nome after the
6 meeting for -- I'll just throw in a couple of days.
7 Like during the winter sometimes you get stranded for a
8 week or so. How are we going to provide for ourselves
9 with only a per diem of \$300 for four to five days
10 without getting support?
11

12 I know you'll pay for the hotel room
13 for four to five more days, but how are we going to be
14 sure that you're going to be able to pay for our
15 restaurant meals? We're all volunteering like he said.
16 You, as staff, get paid by the Federal government or
17 the State. We volunteer. My question is why aren't we
18 allowed honorariums for attending meetings?
19

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
21

22 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you for your
23 comments, Ron. Robbin, did you have something to add?
24

25 MS. LAVINE: Thank you. Through the
26 Chair. Honorariums for Council members has been
27 discussed. I know it's been the content of many annual
28 reports that I've seen over the years and I don't have
29 the information or the response on hand, but your
30 concerns are noted.
31

32 The other thing I would note is that
33 while we -- if you are weather bound, we not only take
34 care of your accommodations, but you have a per diem
35 for the time you spend away from home. The challenges,
36 of course, that comes is your final check and not
37 during the time that you might be in town and your
38 funds run low. All I can share is that's what I know.
39

40 Again, our comments and our discussion
41 is on record, so we can refer to them and I can better
42 inform myself next time when we meet again to have a
43 potential to respond to you guys. I'll look at the
44 annual reports again because I know the Board has
45 responded to questions of honorariums and compensation.
46

47 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Robbin.
50

0211

1 Elmer is raising his finger.

2

3 MR. SEETOT: So if we need to make --
4 like revise our accommodation, we would have to go
5 through you or we would have to talk to you or through
6 Council Coordinator?

7

8 MS. LAVINE: Nissa.

9

10 MR. SEETOT: Nissa. Okay, thank you.

11

12 CHAIRMAN GREEN: With that I think.....

13

14 MR. KIRK: One more.

15

16 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Uh-oh. Ron, go ahead.

17

18 MR. KIRK: One more question. Can we
19 submit a letter to the Secretary of Interior concerning
20 our concerns, like the honorarium and stuff like that?
21 Thank you.

22

23 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair. One of
24 the things that we actually do during the meeting is
25 not only are we looking at issues to include in your
26 annual reports, but if you want to write a letter, if
27 you have particular letters and messages that you want
28 addressed not just by the Federal Subsistence Board,
29 but by others, yes.

30

31 You work with Nissa and we can also --
32 again, because we have the transcripts and we have this
33 discussion on record, if you want to direct Staff to
34 write a letter to the Secretary, so it wouldn't be just
35 Interior, it would be like the Secretaries of Interior
36 and Agriculture, about this particular issue and
37 support honorariums in recognition of your expertise
38 and your time, you can ask us to summarize this
39 discussion and put it in a letter and then we can
40 either have it, you know, written and sent to you or we
41 can -- if you want to take your time to make sure we
42 get it right, you can ask Nissa to summarize this
43 discussion and we can bring this letter to you in the
44 winter meeting if you wish. So we're here to take
45 direction.

46

47 Thanks, Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you again,

50

0212

1 Robbin. Okay, Council, are we.....

2

3

MR. KIRK: We're good now.

4

5

CHAIRMAN GREEN: We're good now. Okay. Thank you, Robbin. All right. So that brings us up to future meeting dates. Confirm the winter 2023 meeting date and location March 3rd and 4th is in Nome. Nissa.

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MS. PILCHER: Through the Chair, Nissa Pilcher. You did have some updated calendars in the manila folder. I've got a couple copies left. I'll hand them out. I don't have six. I have four, so some people will have to share because there was an update to one of the Councils. Only one has met before you guys.

So the winter meeting is still set for the 22nd and 23rd in Nome.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: We're looking at October. We're in early October. I don't want a meeting in early October anymore. We've got business off the shore of Nome here for subsistence. We're sitting here and this is -- I started this on Saturday with Bering Straits having an annual meeting in Nome. So it's like arggh. I want to find another time.

Tommy points out AFN is in October, of course, and I think it's around the 19th or 20th this year. I was trying to look at dates here, just myself looking at it, and I was like thinking towards the end of the month of October. I don't know. I want other people to chime in here. I just threw that out there.

Any other Council members? They're all open, right? Okay. This month of October -- are we like the first ones to reach out for a meeting?

MS. PILCHER: Other than the Kodiak Aleutians, which chose, what is that, like later/mid September. That blue band right there. You guys are the second Council to meet after them, so you have pretty much a wide open calendar.

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Other Council members chime in. Look at the dates. I'm going to step out for a minute. I'll be right back.

MR. SEETOT: August and September

0213

1 usually in the community that's when you do a lot of
2 harvest of berries and stuff like that, so I would kind
3 of maybe go at a later date, what Louie was mentioning.

4

5 MR. GRAY: I have a question. It seems
6 like every time we start talking about meeting dates
7 we're jammed into a certain parameter and we're told
8 you can only go in this timeframe. You know, the
9 administration and the support people for this thing
10 are on a paycheck. In my way of thinking, they should
11 be able to do this any time.

12

13 You know, I guess my thoughts are
14 August, September we're picking berries, we're putting
15 fish away, we're moose hunting. Our time is more
16 important to us than what your time is and yet it's
17 shoved down our throats that you have to fit this
18 schedule. I'm sorry, but I think it's ass backwards.
19 We should be looking at how can we make it good for all
20 of us and not just administration. Does that make
21 sense?

22

23 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair. This
24 is Robbin Lavine. I would gently push back on that. I
25 think that -- and I agree that we want to try to
26 develop a schedule that is most supportive of your
27 cycles and your families and the seasons and the way --
28 the traditional subsistence way of life. Also
29 recognizing that there have been plenty of times when
30 we have expanded our windows for the meetings, given a
31 wide variety.

32

33 Early meetings we're not even prepared
34 to support them because of the amount of analyses and
35 reviews that we go through. I know you're like eh cry,
36 cry me a river, give me a little violin there. But we
37 don't have enough time to support you and to prepare
38 ourselves to support you.

39

40 That being said we're still trying to
41 look at ways of dialing in our cycles, our regulatory
42 cycles, so that we do have time to fully support you.
43 That we are not trying to box you in to a timeframe
44 that isn't supportive of you. Truly, this program is
45 hinged on you and your participation. This is where we
46 get all of our feedback and information.

47

48 But how do we do that. How do we have
49 two meetings a year for all of our 10 Regional Advisory
50

0214

1 Councils that produce information that Staff then need
2 to type up and process and then get back to you and say
3 is this it and you say yes and then we go back and we
4 process some more and then we move it on. So it's a
5 puzzle. The longer I stay in this program I still
6 address it as a puzzle. I still see it as something
7 that we need to improve.

8

9 So your suggestions on how we improve
10 that will be well received. At the same time we still
11 need -- in between each time we meet with you we need
12 time to process all the information and the requests
13 and the reports and all of that kind of stuff. Anyway,
14 I'm sharing with you a little bit of how we work.

15

16 MR. GRAY: And I'll share with you how
17 Tom Gray is going to work. I just said it a minute
18 ago. You can pick a date and I'll see if I make it.
19 You know, I sit on this board with the full intention
20 to be there, but out of your open dates, August to end
21 of October, basically the last two weeks of October is
22 something that I'll work with. The rest of the time
23 you're not going to get me in a meeting in September or
24 August. You won't, flat out.

25

26 You know, I guess my thoughts are why
27 is that. I mean we've been told, yeah, we're not ready
28 for you or we're not whatever it is, yet we have
29 October, November, December. Maybe that's the time
30 that we should be looking at because all of our
31 schedules pretty much shut down until that time. I
32 mean I'm traveling all over the United States at that
33 point. To fit in a meeting like this in that
34 timeframe, that's great.

35

36 But I'm like Louie. This water has
37 been calm and I'm dealing with bear problems at my camp
38 and Bering Straits meeting I had to get an award. You
39 know, this is ludicrous. I'm taking -- I might miss
40 out on beluga whales because of this kind of stuff and
41 it shouldn't happen. So anyway buyer beware. If you
42 go too early, August, September, I'm not coming. I
43 don't care what you say. October, pick wisely.

44

45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Question. I was going
46 to ask, but I didn't quite hear what he said. November
47 is not an option because of -- yeah.

48

49 MS. LAVINE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So

50

0215

1 what we're asking for -- during the fall meeting cycle,
2 right, we're asking for your feedback on closure
3 reviews and proposals. You only had one this time.
4 Sometimes there's more. It depends on which Councils.
5 We need your recommendations on those to help inform
6 the Board and the Board's meeting is in January for
7 fisheries proposals.

8

9 Why is it in January? It's in January.
10 So once the Board takes action on those regulatory
11 changes we put them in the regulation book. We need
12 time to do that too so that it's ready by when fishing
13 season starts. Right? May 1st or whenever that is.
14 And wildlife, the Board meeting is pushed off a little
15 bit because that reg book isn't due out until July-ish.
16 So we've got a little more time. So we're kind of
17 squeezing in these things.

18

19 I have consistently heard most Councils
20 are very interested in October/November. So that's
21 good information that we can work with. When and how
22 long are you ready, how long are you available, what's
23 the window in the spring. Can you share what window of
24 time you might be most flexible in the springtime.
25 Give us your feedback on this because we're trying to
26 work on it.

27

28 MR. OYOUMICK: In lieu of what Tom is
29 saying, can we not have a substitute that would come in
30 his place, you know, if he can't make it. Most of us
31 can make it. I can because I don't have a choice. I
32 got retired because I had two surgeries on my spine.
33 So it doesn't matter what day you pick. The weather
34 will dictate that for us. To me I can come any time,
35 but not all of us can do that. I understand what he's
36 saying.

37

38 To get around that can we have like a
39 substitute that would replace under instruction or
40 would that be an idea that we could consider or is that
41 too much?

42

43 MS. LAVINE: Through the Chair. Yes,
44 that would be what we'd call an alternate and we've
45 been discussing alternates. I think we're really open
46 to alternates, but I would note you have 10 seats on
47 your Council and those seats are not full. You're
48 actually quite a full Council. There are others that
49 have 10 seats and they've got -- four of those 10 seats
50

50

0216

1 are vacant. It is a big challenge that I really would
2 love our program to address.

3
4 I understand that supporting you is a
5 big part of making this program something that your
6 community members want to participate in. Again, any
7 of your -- you know, we're not just looking for
8 feedback on regulations and policy. We are. That's a
9 big -- that's why we're here.

10
11 If you have any recommendations on how
12 this process will work better to support you, you've
13 been sharing some of your comments and there may be
14 other ideas that you have, we are open to them. Think
15 about them between now and the winter meeting and share
16 them. Please bring them forth. Bring your ideas
17 forth.

18
19 That being said, this agenda item now
20 is confirming next year's fall meeting. What I'm
21 hearing is late October is the best. When does that
22 window close?

23
24 MS. PILCHER: November 3rd.

25
26 MS. LAVINE: November 3rd. So we've
27 got a couple of weeks there wide open that might fit
28 your needs.

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: November 1st and 2nd?

31
32 MR. KIRK: So moved.

33
34 CHAIRMAN GREEN: November 1 and 2. Are
35 we voting on this right now? Nissa, go ahead.

36
37 MS. PILCHER: Sorry. Through the
38 Chair. This is Nissa Pilcher. So both of these are
39 action items. Either you could take them up -- we
40 could go back to the -- sorry. We could go back to
41 what we call the winter meeting, second and motion to
42 have those dates stay the same and the location stay
43 the same and then take this up or you could do it as
44 one motion together.

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: A block.

47
48 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

49
50

0217

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. We'll do the
2 winter and the spring meeting as a block. So we have
3 the spring or winter meeting you call it, March 22nd
4 and 23rd. We can retain that. That's after the
5 Iditarod is out of the way. The location is Nome,
6 correct?

7
8 MR. KIRK: Correct.

9
10 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. And then we're
11 looking at our spring meeting next -- actually fall
12 meeting, sorry, would be the 1st and 2nd of November in
13 Nome again.

14
15 MR. KIRK: Correct.

16
17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Okay. Maybe we get
18 past some of the fall storms and maybe it settles down
19 a little bit. That's kind of one of the other things I
20 was thinking of because it's not just our hunting and
21 fishing we've got to attend to, but consider the storms
22 and whatnot that goes on.

23
24 So, okay, the 1st and the 2nd in Nome.
25 I need a motion to that effect. Is there a motion?

26
27 MR. KIRK: I move, Mr. Chair. Ron
28 Kirk.

29
30 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Is there a second to
31 those dates?

32
33 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, second.

34
35 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer. All
36 those in favor to those dates and the locations of the
37 winter and fall meetings say aye.

38
39 IN UNISON: Aye.

40
41 CHAIRMAN GREEN: All those against same
42 sign.

43
44 (No opposing votes)

45
46 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Hearing none. Motion
47 passes. Dates are set. Thank you. So we're done
48 there. Our future meetings are set. We're moving into
49 item 14, closing comments. We'll start out with Deahl,
50

0218

1 Elmer, Leland, Tommy and Ron.

2

3

4 MR. KATCHATAG: This is Deahl
5 Katchatag. It's pretty good. There's a lot of issues
6 that I would like to have seen more on. What's going on
7 in the region really concerns me. Being on the Norton
8 Bay watershed hearing from the Federal government and
9 BLM about mining, offshore oil drilling. Offshore oil
10 drilling will happen. Mining, they're really pushing
11 for it because that's a big investment for the senators
12 and the House members.

13

14 Should that happen in our region all
15 our fish will be killed. All our sea mammals will be
16 moved. We'll have nothing. We rely on subsistence.
17 We rely on what we get, all the life out in the ocean
18 and the rivers and the mainland.

19

20 We're dealing with climate change now.
21 All our permafrost in Unalakleet is melted. This past
22 spring the snow didn't flow out to the river like it
23 usually does. It just went straight down into the
24 ground. Our riverbanks are falling in. Our hills are
25 falling in. The coastline hills are falling in. So
26 we're looking at a lot.

27

28 None of this is being brought up. It's
29 very important for our subsistence way of life. What's
30 coming out of the permafrost that's been frozen for
31 millions of years? Do we know that? No, we don't. I
32 would like to find out because it has effects on our
33 fish. It has effects on our land animals, our ocean,
34 our sea mammals.

35

36 You wonder why you have a lot of people
37 dying of cancer. Well, they eat a lot of sea mammals
38 and the sea mammals are bringing in cancer and passing
39 it on to human life. We've got to dig more and look at
40 more.

41

42 You guys are scientists, biologists.
43 We're just Natives, hunters. I have observed a lot in
44 my lifetime ever since 1957. I think I know more about
45 climate change and global warming than most people do
46 because I lived it. I seen it. I watched it. If we
47 don't control it, what will we have in the future.
48 Nothing.

49

50 Thank you.

0219

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Deahl.
2 Elmer.

3
4 MR. SEETOT: Elmer Seetot, Brevig.
5 Mostly wildlife resources were kind of upsetted
6 recently made by climate change. I woke up recently on
7 spring morning. Here's my house. Here's the sunrise
8 that I've observed for the past 50 years or so. One
9 morning I woke up, sunrise. It was directly north, my
10 shadows. How I know? Because all these years I was
11 growing up the shadows were kind of north northeast.
12 Now when I wake up they're kind of north.

13
14 Then our summers I've been cool
15 throughout summer. We have had a lot of precipitation.
16 So I think -- I'm not a scientist or anything, but I
17 think our axis is tilted a little bit. You hear about
18 all the earthquakes and natural disasters. Maybe
19 everything is kind of going to one side. I just kind
20 of noticed that our system -- our sunrise shadow
21 changed. I mentioned that to other people. They also
22 noticed that at St. Lawrence Island that the sunrise is
23 in a different direction.

24
25 Mail service has been very slow. I
26 just received my packet about two days or a day. I had
27 to call Nissa to get my transportation and my hotel
28 accommodations. I'm not very much a social media fan,
29 but I'll get the information via my wife or my son or
30 my daughter.

31
32 In past meetings National Park Service
33 I guess voluntary provide transportation when you are
34 going to the airport. Now we have to -- now I'm not
35 really too sure about the taxi service in Nome, but I
36 think that's what we have to deal with. It used to be
37 very welcome when someone picked us up at the airport
38 when we were coming to meetings. Now that's maybe part
39 of the past. Expenses are getting too high. Gas is
40 getting too high.

41
42 Other than that our subsistence harvest
43 activities have been altered a little bit during the
44 past summer and hope that we'll be able to adapt to
45 these other changes. Pretty much I would like to make
46 it home today somehow other than being here for --
47 we're scheduled to leave tomorrow, but I hope they can
48 up my accommodations and save the Federal government a
49 little bit of money. We're 31 trillion dollars in
50

0220

1 debt. I just saw it this morning. We're on borrowed
2 cash.

3

4

Thank you.

5

6

7

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9

CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Elmer.
I'll move on to Leland Oyoumick, famous guard in the
basketball court in this country that used to shoot
threes before the threes were there.

10

11

12

MR. OYOUMICK: Yeah, that's only when
we played Nanooks.

13

14

(Laughter)

15

16

17

18

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21

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26

MR. OYOUMICK: Anyway, I'm real happy
to come to this meeting. It was good to have
teleconferences. Even though it seemed like it would
be boring to have a teleconference, but the meetings
were so interesting. I liked the teleconferences. I
appreciate those meetings we had. Usually I'm not on
the phone all day, but when we had the teleconferences
I more than welcomed it because they were good. We
couldn't get together due to what was going on, so we
adapted like they wanted us to.

27

28

29

30

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32

33

34

Well, we're still adapting and I hope
things are going to get better, but I kind of doubt it,
you know. The weather dictates pretty much who we are
and what we can go get and what time of the year we can
go get it because the animals have their own schedule.
We try to fit in with them, but sometimes we can't
because of the weather.

35

36

37

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44

Anyway, the animals seem like they're
getting fewer. The fish are getting fewer. I never
heard of anybody getting too much salmonberries at home
and/or blueberries. I know they got some cranberries
and some blackberries, but those aren't predominantly
what they go after. For the most part I don't think
anybody picked any number -- I mean large quantities of
blueberries like we used to. We used to just go a
little ways and our berries were right there.

45

46

47

48

49

50

One elder, she just passed away not too
long ago, she brought something to me that I didn't
know. She said when the seawater covers where the
berries are, the salmonberries, there's no berries
after the saltwater hit them. With all this high water

0221

1 and stuff, I wonder what else it affects, you know,
2 besides berries and us, you know. I don't know if it
3 will get better, but I hope it does.

4

5 I'm happy to be here and hear all these
6 things and learn some things. I look to my Council
7 members for guidance sometimes. We don't get together
8 outside these meetings to try and decide what we want
9 to do. We just sit here and we decide right here at
10 this table. I like that fact, you know. Everybody is
11 kind of on the same page. I hope it continues.

12

13 Thank you.

14

15 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Leland.
16 That moves to Mr. Gray.

17

18 MR. GRAY: Well, I think I've said too
19 much during this meeting, but a couple of points. We
20 need to remember who we represent and that's
21 subsistence. You know, we're living in a changing
22 time. From global warming to dealing with
23 administration to whatever we're dealing with, we all
24 need to be team players and make sure that we progress
25 accordingly.

26

27 One thing that I don't care too much
28 for, and hopefully it changes, is we all got programmed
29 to have Zoom meetings and teleconferences and so on and
30 so forth. Unlike Leland, I don't like Zoom meetings.
31 I like to look somebody in the face and argue my point
32 so to speak.

33

34 That being said, I understand Zoom
35 meetings and teleconferences. I guess I struggle with
36 Staff using this as a crutch. Oh, this is good enough.
37 I can get on a Zoom meeting and that's good enough. I
38 participated. Well, you know, we're dealing with
39 important stuff.

40

41 You know, it's like proposals. We
42 struggled and had a hard time getting through the
43 proposals and if we had the right players at the table
44 talking with us, we wouldn't have struggled.

45

46 Anyway, there's a time and place for
47 Zoom and teleconference and stuff, but also hopefully
48 we can get back to the real essence of the meetings.
49 You know, again I can't say it loud enough. We're
50

0222

1 living in a changing time big time. Changing fast and
2 hard. So hopefully we'll adapt and come out smelling
3 like a rose.

4
5 Good meeting.

6
7 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Tommy.
8 Councilman Ron Kirk.

9
10 MR. KIRK: Pass. No.

11
12 (Laughter)

13
14 CHAIRMAN GREEN: I was going to hit you
15 with my hat.

16
17 MR. KIRK: First of all I'd like to
18 thank the Staff for this meeting. Thank you for
19 putting it together. This climate change is really
20 making a big effect on our way of life. This high
21 water that we had I'm pretty sure it probably damaged a
22 lot of our blackberries in Stewart Island because we
23 pick our berries down there.

24
25 I enjoyed this meeting. I like meeting
26 like this, face to face. I'm like Tom. I like to see
27 who I'm arguing with on the table. These face-to-face
28 meetings are productive. I think we accomplished a
29 lot. My concern, like everybody else, is our future.
30 Our children's children future life.

31
32 The way the salmon is running now and
33 the fish and the marine mammals is starting to look
34 very scarce for our children, so we need to think about
35 them and fight for them because they're the next
36 generations. They're the ones that's going to be
37 running the government, the nation itself. They're the
38 younger generations that's going to be taking over
39 after we're gone.

40
41 All in all it was good to see everybody
42 and I enjoyed this meeting and hope to see you again.
43 Thank you.

44
45 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you, Ron. I'm
46 the baby of the clan here, so I guess I'm last but not
47 least.

48
49 MR. KIRK: That's why you're the
50

0223

1 Chairman.

2

3 (Laughter)

4

5 CHAIRMAN GREEN: They always make the
6 young guys go get the water, go chop the wood. There
7 you go. By the way, he's 55 just like you are, same
8 year. So you guys are the same age.

9

10 MR. GRAY: I'm older than you. Respect
11 your elders.

12

13 (Laughter)

14

15 MR. GRAY: January 1st.

16

17 CHAIRMAN GREEN: There you go. New
18 Year's baby. So thank you for the Staff getting this
19 thing together. It's good to be face to face again.
20 Unlike these other guys, I like to see the people that
21 I'm talking to face to face. It's more personal.

22

23 I would say that during the time that
24 we went through all this Covid with Bering Straits we
25 had stipulations on whether you could be in the room or
26 not. I sat out until just the last couple of meetings
27 because I was the holdout. I was one person that voted
28 no when it came to saying that people needed to get
29 their shots before they could stay on the job. I
30 didn't agree with that. That was kind of to me a
31 forced issue.

32

33 Then again I got Covid and I went
34 through it and I've tested along the way and my
35 antibodies are still there and that was last September
36 that I got it. So they kept me out of the meetings and
37 it was so good to get back to the meetings over there.
38 We have serious stuff that we deal with there at the
39 regional corporation level. They had to vote it in to
40 get me to be able to come to the meetings. We didn't
41 have to do any voting here. It was just a thing that
42 was changed in the government administration. So I was
43 pleased to see that leaf turned over.

44

45 I wanted to follow up on some of the
46 comments that were made here about honorariums.
47 Somebody talked about how much money we're behind and
48 the deficit. That made me think about how much did we
49 send to the other countries, Ukraine and whatnot, to

50

0224

1 help them out. Why can't we get an honorarium to
2 serve. The participation on this Council is important
3 and everybody knows it.

4
5 So when you look at that and you look
6 at how hard it is to fill these seats, you've got to
7 start questioning whether or not it would be more
8 effective to have a little bit of a time served and be
9 honored for it rather than just voluntary service.
10 I've got 12 years. That guy right over there's got 30.
11 This guy's got over 20 I'm thinking. About 20. He's
12 right around the corner.

13
14 We take our issues serious and we take
15 our subsistence serious enough to be here. So I think
16 the government needs to cut us a little slack and maybe
17 those seats will get filled. When I hear four seats
18 empty on another one, I've seen it almost -- I hear
19 about the same. That stands out.

20
21 And then I see Mr. Seetot over here.
22 He wants to get home today. He's hoping that somebody
23 can bend a little bit so he can get on the plane and go
24 home. I see that and I agree with that
25 even if it does cost the government a couple extra
26 dollars. It probably won't.

27
28 All right. So I got to that one.
29 Participation by the public. It's really hard. I
30 served 13 years on the Advisory Committee for Fish and
31 Game and it was always Staff and it was always other
32 committee members from around the region. You know,
33 when you get out in the street and then you talk about
34 it to somebody and you talk about what's going on and
35 they give you the well I wasn't invited, well it's
36 always -- there's always an invitation because the
37 government always make sure they have them out there.
38 It's not maybe somebody missed it or something. They
39 didn't make it.

40
41 There's different places to put it. I
42 think maybe Facebook is one place because everybody has
43 got their nose in the screen. That might help. The
44 issues that we're dealing with, maybe that needs to
45 stand out as a bullet point in a Facebook post,
46 something like that. I'm just trying to use what I've
47 seen jump out at people and when it works.

48
49 The idea that we can do this letter to
50

0225

1 the Federal Subsistence Board about some of the things
2 that we think of along the way that are important may
3 not be something that it can handle, but they can
4 actually lift us up a little bit by lifting that
5 information and giving it to like the Department of
6 Commerce, the Secretary there. We have that support.
7 So we need to think above and beyond and know that we
8 can get that if we pursue it.

9

10 We talk about the trawler industry and
11 the impacts on our subsistence lifestyle. People have
12 to get used to talking about that because -- I hear a
13 lot about climate change. I get it. The climate isn't
14 going to stop changing. It's going to keep changing.
15 There are things that we know about, like Area M
16 statewide intercept fisheries and trawler industry
17 impacts on our subsistence way of life. We have to be
18 able to start thinking about that. So I'll leave that.

19

20 The time of subsistence has no
21 schedule. Somebody said that here. I think it was
22 Leland. It does not have a schedule. When we sit up
23 here and we put our time in, we know that's going to
24 happen. Something is always going to get in the way.
25 Tommy and I wear a lot of hats. I know there's several
26 -- there's other fellows here that sit at the table
27 that do too. It's a roll of the dice when you make a
28 commitment to a meeting November 2nd and 1st of 2023
29 what could happen by then. Anyway, we've reached out
30 and got a hold of that.

31

32 I certainly appreciate all these
33 fellows here at the table. And Mary is not on the
34 phone maybe. Robert is not on the phone. They
35 certainly must have other things going on. I
36 understand that. Martin was the other one. I wanted
37 to recognize them for their part in putting their time
38 in.

39

40 Tommy alluded to the point of Leland's
41 comments about Facetime or what do you call it, Zoom.
42 I relied on a lot of that telephone teleconferences
43 over the last eight years because of my son's
44 conditions and getting an injury that was life-changing
45 for not just him but for his family. So I've taken
46 part on phone lines, run meetings from the bathroom in
47 the hospital in Seattle for Pete's sake. I kind of got
48 accustomed to it a little bit, but I do like the face
49 to face myself. I have adapted to be able to use

50

0226

1 electronics too. It's handy.

2

3 Tom was talking about -- his side of it
4 was about the idea that Staff is there on the phone.
5 Maybe they should do everything they can to be here
6 just like us. We're volunteers. So I can see his side
7 of the coin. I just want to make sure that that's not
8 unheard by me. I feel the same way. If I'm here to
9 volunteer my time, Staff that gets paid is responsible
10 for answering or helping us and guiding us through our
11 questions and conversations. They should be here too.
12 I really thank the ones that are here. I'm not trying
13 to bash anybody, but just trying to reiterate what
14 Tommy had to say. Councilman Tommy Gray.

15

16 It's been a really good meeting. I'm
17 thankful that everybody in attendance was here to share
18 their expertise, their knowledge and whatnot and have a
19 really good conversation about what we had to deal
20 with.

21

22 So, with that, I've got to stop being
23 long winded. Otherwise we're going to just sail right
24 off on it into the Bering Sea. I'd like to say thank
25 you and to those online and those in the room. God
26 bless you and fair weather and following seas. Amen.

27

28 Mr. Deahl has a comment.

29

30 MR. KATCHATAG: Yeah, concerning what
31 Elmer said about tilting of the earth. That's
32 happened. If you look into it, present it to our board
33 here so they could understand what's going on. That
34 would be great because it's happening. We used to have
35 stars shining in July. Now it's September. We finally
36 started getting stars up in the sky. So the tilting of
37 the Earth is real, so find out about it and let these
38 guys know.

39

40 Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN GREEN: So at this time since
43 we've all had our say and those of us that had to
44 listen to what others had to say, I'm going to ask for
45 a motion to adjourn.

46

47 MR. SEETOT: So moved.

48

49 MR. KIRK: Second.

50

0227

1 CHAIRMAN GREEN: First and a second.
2 All those in favor say aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 CHAIRMAN GREEN: With that the motion
7 has passed and like old Jack Hogan used to say to Joe
8 Maloney so nice to see you come, Joe, but so nice to
9 see you go, Joe.

10
11 (Laughter)

12
13 CHAIRMAN GREEN: Thank you everybody.

14
15 (Off record)

16
17 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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STATE OF ALASKA)

I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

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THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party interested in any way in this action.

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 31st day of October 2022.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/26