

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE BOARD

REGULATORY MEETING

VOLUME V

TELECONFERENCE - ALASKA

April 27, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Christianson, Chairman
Charles Brower
Rhonda Pitka
Chad Padgett, Bureau of Land Management
Greg Siekaniec, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Don Striker, National Park Service
Gene Peltola, Bureau of Indian Affairs
David Schmid, U.S. Forest Service

Ken Lord, Solicitor's Office

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S
2
3 (Teleconference - 4/27/2020)
4
5 (On record)
6
7 MR. DOOLITTLE: All the lines should be
8 open for all the speakers, this is Tom. Good morning
9 on this sunny day in Anchorage on April 27th, 2020, and
10 this is to readjourn the recessed meeting of the Board
11 from last Thursday. And before I turn it over to the
12 Chair do a quick roll call to make sure that our Board
13 and State partners and Staff are on line.
14
15 And I'll start off with Rhonda Pitka,
16 are you here?
17
18 (No comments)
19
20 MR. DOOLITTLE: Rhonda, are you on
21 line?
22
23 MS. PITKA: Hello.
24
25 MR. DOOLITTLE: Hello, Rhonda?
26
27 MS. PITKA: Yes, I'm here.
28
29 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, good. Just doing
30 roll call. Good morning.
31
32 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.
33
34 (No comments)
35
36 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest Service,
37 David Schmid.
38
39 MR. SCHMID: Good morning, Tom. Dave's
40 on and Wayne Owen will be tag teaming today with me. I
41 have a few meetings, I'm going to have to step out.
42
43 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, thank you very
44 much Dave.
45
46 Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
47 Siekaniec.
48
49 MR. SIEKANIEC: Good morning, Tom.
50

1 Yes, I am on line.
2
3 MR. DOOLITTLE: All right, Greg, good
4 to hear you this morning.
5
6 Bureau of Land Management, Chad
7 Padgett.
8
9 MR. PADGETT: I am here, thanks, Tom.
10
11 MR. DOOLITTLE: All right, Chad, good
12 to hear you this morning.
13
14 National Park Service, Don Striker.
15
16 MR. STRIKER: I'm here and Joshua is
17 also on in case I have to step out, it's the big reopen
18 the Parks weekend, right.
19
20 MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Don, thanks
21 for taking the time and good to hear you this morning.
22
23 MR. STRIKER: You bet, good to hear
24 you, happy Monday.
25
26 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, happy Monday.
27
28 Charlie Brower.
29
30 (No comments)
31
32 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. No, Charlie yet.
33
34 Chairman Christianson.
35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I'm here
37 Tom, thank you.
38
39 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. Still waiting
40 for Gene and Charlie.
41
42 MR. PELTOLA: And Gene's on, sorry
43 about that.
44
45 MR. DOOLITTLE: Hey, Gene, good to hear
46 you this morning.
47
48 Charlie, are you on yet?
49
50

1 (No comments)
2
3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty. We're still
4 waiting on Charlie.
5
6 Ken Lord, are you on this morning?
7
8 MR. LORD: I am here, Sir.
9
10 MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, Ken.
11
12 Mike Routhier, are you on?
13
14 (No comments)
15
16 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, we have Ken. Our
17 State partners, is Ben Mulligan on this morning.
18
19 MR. MULLIGAN: Good morning, Tom. I'm
20 here and then also just because of logistics today Mark
21 is here but at another location so if I'm not available
22 he will be.
23
24 MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, thank you for
25 that. Thank you again, Ben, for being available this
26 morning.
27
28 Going into our Council Chairs. Is
29 Della Trumble on this morning.
30
31 MS. TRUMBLE: Good morning, I'm here.
32
33 MR. DOOLITTLE: Hi, Della. Is Greg
34 Encelewski on this morning.
35
36 MS. PERRY: Tom, this is DeAnna Perry,
37 Council Coordinator for the Southcentral RAC.
38
39 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yep.
40
41 MS. PERRY: Greg is unable to join us
42 today but if there are any questions I'm standing by.
43
44 Thanks.
45
46 MR. DOOLITTLE: All right. Good to
47 hear you this morning, DeAnna, and thank you.
48
49 Don Hernandez.
50

1 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes, I'm here.
2
3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Hi, Don, good morning.
4
5 Bristol Bay, is Nanci Lyon on?
6
7 MS. MORRIS LYON: Yes, I'm here.
8
9 MR. DOOLITTLE: Great, Nanci, good to
10 hear you this morning.
11
12 Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, Alissa Rogers.
13
14 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
15 This is Eva Patton, Council Coordinator. There are no
16 further proposals or closure reviews for the YKDelta
17 region so Alissa Rogers will not be joining us today
18 but I'm available to answer any questions if they
19 arise.
20
21 Thank you.
22
23 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Eva.
24
25 Western Interior, Jack Reakoff.
26
27 (No comments)
28
29 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, no Jack.
30
31 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 This is Karen Deatherage, can you hear me?
33
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.
35
36 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, Karen, we can hear
37 you.
38
39 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you. Through
40 the Chair, I'm not sure if Mr. Reakoff is going to be
41 calling in today. There are no other -- or further
42 agenda items for the Western Interior RAC on the
43 agenda.
44
45 Thank you.
46
47 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Karen. Just
48 going through roll call, this is Tom here.
49
50

1 Seward Peninsula, Louis Green.
2
3 (No comments)
4
5 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, no Louis.
6
7 Northwest Arctic, Mike Kramer.
8
9 MR. STEVENSON: Tom, this is Zach
10 Stevenson, good morning.
11
12 MR. DOOLITTLE: Good morning, Zach.
13
14 MR. STEVENSON: Mr. Kramer is
15 unavailable today. I'm available to speak to matters
16 pertaining to the Northwest Arctic region should they
17 arise.
18
19 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Zach, and
20 good morning.
21
22 Eastern Interior RAC, Sue Entsminger.
23
24 MR. STEVENSON: Tom, Zach Stevenson
25 again.
26
27 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yep.
28
29 MR. STEVENSON: Sue is not on the phone
30 right now, she's asked us to contact her if matters
31 arise pertaining to the Eastern Interior region.
32
33 Thank you.
34
35 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Zach.
36
37 North Slope RAC, Gordon Brower.
38
39 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Mr. Chair
40 and members of the Council. This is Eva Patton,
41 Council Coordinator. Gordon Brower is not able to join
42 us at this time. He may be able to call in later, I'll
43 alert him, again, when we get closer to the final
44 Wildlife Closure Review, 20-31, and I'll be available
45 to read the Council's comments and answer questions if
46 needed.
47
48 Thank you.
49
50

1 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Eva.
2
3 Orville Lind, are you on?
4
5 MR. LIND: Yes, good morning, Tom. Can
6 you hear me?
7
8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yep, loud and clear.
9
10 Okay. Going back to the Board, is
11 Charlie Brower on yet?
12
13 (No comments)
14
15 MR. DOOLITTLE: Don't have Charlie on.
16 But, Mr. Chair, we do have a quorum at this time with
17 seven of the eight Board members present and at your
18 discretion, if you want to give a few more minutes
19 that's fine, or whatever your direction is, Mr. Chair.
20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll give him
22 two more minutes until 10 after and then we'll get
23 started here.
24
25 Thank you, Tom.
26
27 MR. DOOLITTLE: Alrighty, thank you.
28
29 (Pause)
30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right good
32 morning everybody and welcome back to the Federal Board
33 meeting. I appreciate everyone who's taking the time
34 this Monday to come back and deal with some of the
35 agenda items that we were unable to -- okay, and I just
36 got a message that Charlie will join us in a little bit
37 so we'll go ahead and get started.
38
39 Again, welcome everybody.
40
41 And as a normal process we usually
42 start the meeting with some public comment on non-
43 agenda items but due to the time constraints, you know,
44 and the overwhelming public comment that we received
45 this week on some pretty critical issues, you know,
46 mainly pertaining to food security, I'd like to take
47 the morning to get started right off the bat without
48 any, you know, objection from the Board, to go ahead
49 and just get started with where we left off with our
50

1 business when we recessed.

2

3 And with that, I'd open the floor for
4 the Board on the discussion of food security and hope,
5 you know, that we can really drive home some direction
6 for the Staff and for the agencies that need to try to
7 address this monumental need in the state of Alaska and
8 rural residents. And so with that I'm going to go
9 ahead and invite the floor to be open for the
10 discussion of food security with the concurrence of the
11 Board.

12

13 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
14 Greg.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg.

17

18 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19 Steve Wackowski with the Department of Interior's
20 office is not available until 11:00 a.m., he has the
21 10:00 to 11:00 hour that he has to be on a call
22 regarding the Covid-19 with the Department. After that
23 he would be potentially available to join us to have
24 part of this discussion, if you wanted to wait until
25 then, or if not then we can get him caught up as well.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think Steve's
28 pretty critical to this, I mean as far as -- or that's
29 the office that's going to be receiving the requests;
30 am I correct, Greg?

31

32 MR. SIEKANIEC: That's correct.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I mean
35 that's 50 minutes from now so I don't see any problem
36 putting it off until 11:00, that would be fine, I think
37 I would have a preference if Steve was on the call and
38 can listen to the conversation that the Board's going
39 to have on this.

40

41 MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. And I will
42 contact him and let him know that we would like him to
43 join at 11:00.

44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
46 Does that work for the rest of the Board?

47

48 MR. SCHMID: It works for Dave, thanks.

49

50

1 MR. PELTOLA: BIA is good.

2

3 MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda, that works.

4

5 MR. PADGETT: Chad, it works.

6

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: And, Mr. Chair, that
8 means we put together some fairly quick movement on
9 some other agenda items, some housekeeping items on the
10 wildlife closure reviews, 20-10, 28, 29, 30 and 44,
11 which all deal with Unit 22 muskox and at this time if
12 it would work out I would recommend that we move to
13 that part of the agenda if we have this hour to do
14 that, if we could.

15

16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I think that's
17 a good idea, Tom, whatever we can knock out to utilize
18 the time we have today to get the order of business
19 accomplished. So we'll go ahead and call on the Staff
20 to provide the analysis for those proposals.

21

22 Thank you.

23

24 MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair, Lisa will be
25 presenting the analysis for those muskox closure
26 reviews, but I just wanted to elaborate a little bit on
27 what Tom said, which is these five closure reviews are
28 listed individually in the agenda but they share a lot
29 of material in terms of the presentation and I think
30 the decision points are going to be very similar
31 between them so we decided to lump them for the
32 presentation and then the Board may either act on them
33 independently or as a group.

34

35 That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. And
38 we appreciate the brevity and the summarizing of those,
39 like you said they're all similar in nature and would
40 appreciate if the Staff did do that, so thank you very
41 much for the thoughtfulness. So we'll proceed with the
42 presentation and then act on the proposals.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 MS. MAAS: All right, thank you, Mr.
47 Chair, members of the Board. For the record my name's
48 Lisa Maas and I'm a wildlife biologist in the Office of
49 Subsistence Management. I'll be presenting a summary

50

1 of the analysis for closure review WCR20-10 which
2 begins on Page 1010 of your meeting books; WCR 20-28
3 which begins on Page 1121; WCR20-29 which begins on
4 Page 1138; WCR20-30 which begins on Page 1155 and
5 WCR20-44 which begins on Page 1171.

6
7 Wildlife Closure Review 20-10 pertains
8 to the closure of muskox hunting in Unit 22B to non-
9 Federally-qualified users. Muskox were reintroduced to
10 the Seward Peninsula in 1970. In 2001 the Board
11 established a muskox hunt in Unit 22B. The hunt was
12 open to Federally-qualified subsistence users but
13 remained closed to non-Federally-qualified users.

14
15 Wildlife Closure Review 20-28 pertains
16 to the closure of muskox hunting in Unit 22D, that
17 portion west of the Tisuk River drainage in Canyon
18 Creek except by residents of Nome and Teller. This
19 closure area will hereafter be referred to as Unit 22D
20 southwest. In 1995 the Board established a muskox hunt
21 in Unit 22D southwest, the hunt was opened to
22 Federally-qualified subsistence users but remained
23 closed to non-Federally-qualified users. In 2010 the
24 closure was rescinded and opened to all users. In 2014
25 this hunt area closed to all users except residents of
26 Nome and Teller.

27
28 Wildlife Closure Review 20-29 pertains
29 to the closure of muskox hunting in Unit 22 remainder,
30 except by residents of Elim, White Mountain, Nome,
31 Teller, and Brevig Mission. In 1995 the Board
32 established a muskox hunt in Unit 22D. The hunt was
33 open to Federally-qualified subsistence users but
34 remained closed to non-Federally-qualified users. In
35 2014 this hunt area was further closed to all users
36 except residents of the five communities previously
37 mentioned.

38
39 Wildlife Closure Review 20-30 pertains
40 to the closure of muskox hunting in Unit 22E except by
41 Federally-qualified subsistence users. In 1995 the
42 Board established a muskox hunt in Unit 22E. The hunt
43 was open to Federally-qualified subsistence users but
44 remained closed to non-Federally-qualified users. In
45 2010 Unit 22E was open to all users. In 2014 Unit 22E
46 was once again closed to non-Federally-qualified users.

47
48 Wildlife Closure Review 20-44 pertains
49 to the closure of muskox hunting in Unit 22D within the
50

1 Kuzitrin River drainages except by residents of
2 Council, Golovin, White Mountain, Nome, Teller and
3 Brevig Mission. The closure area will hereafter be
4 referred to as Unit 22D Kuzitrin. In 1995 the Board
5 established a muskox hunt in Unit 22D. The hunt was
6 open to Federally-qualified subsistence users but
7 remained closed to non-Federally-qualified users. In
8 2014 this hunt area was further closed to all users
9 except by residents of the six communities previously
10 mentioned.

11
12 Between 1970 and 2007 the Seward
13 Peninsula muskox population increased steadily peaking
14 out 2,900 muskox in 2010. Between 2010 and 2012 the
15 population decreased but has remained stable at about
16 2,000 muskox since 2012. Around 400 muskox occupy 22B
17 on average. In 2017 about 550 muskox occupied 22D.
18 And 142 muskox occupied Unit 22D southwest,
19 specifically. An estimated 278 muskox occupied Unit
20 22D remainder. And an estimated 136 muskox occupied
21 22D Kuzitrin specifically. Also in 2017 an estimated
22 306 muskox occupied Unit 22E.

23
24 Mature bulls protect calves against
25 predators which increased recruitment and causes
26 selected harvest and mature males to substantially
27 impact population growth. Therefore, while ratios of
28 20 mature bulls per 100 cows is considered the minimum,
29 ratios of 50 to 70 mature bulls per 100 cows are
30 preferred. Between 2002 and 2017 mature bulls per 100
31 cows in Unit 22B averaged 41. Recruitment has declined
32 since 2002 and was only 13 short yearlings per 100 cows
33 in 2017. Over the same time period mature bulls per
34 100 cows in Unit 22D averaged 33. Recruitment was low
35 between 2010 and 2015 but increased to 38 short
36 yearlings per 100 cows in 2017. Between 2002 and 2017
37 mature bulls per 100 cows in Unit 22E averaged 41 but
38 was only 29 in 2017. Recruitment was low between 2012
39 and 2015 but increased to 62 short yearlings per 100
40 cows in 2017.

41
42 Muskox are harvested under Federal
43 registration and State Tier II permit hunts. Quotas
44 for individual hunt areas such as Unit 22B are
45 calculated at 10 percent of the estimated number of
46 mature bulls in that area.

47
48 Between 2012 and 2017 muskox harvest
49 from Unit 22B has averaged 5.5 muskox per year. Since
50

1 2012 42 percent of the Unit 22B muskox harvest has been
2 by Federal permit. Between 2012 and 2017 the harvest
3 quota for Unit 22D southwest has been one muskox per
4 year, and harvest has ranged between zero and two
5 muskox per year. Between 2012 and 2018 the harvests
6 quota for Unit 22D remainder ranged from four to 7
7 muskox per year and harvest ranged between zero and
8 five muskox per year. Between 2012 and 2018 the
9 harvest quota for Unit 22E ranged from four to 10
10 muskox per year and harvest ranged between four and 9
11 muskox per year. Between 2012 and 2018 the harvest
12 quota for Unit 22D Kuzitrin ranged from two to four
13 muskox per year and harvest ranged between two and
14 seven muskox per year.

15
16 OSM's recommendation is to maintain
17 status quo. The harvestable surplus of muskoxen in all
18 of these hunt areas is very low and cannot sustain any
19 increase in harvest. Continuing the current closure is
20 necessary to conserve muskox while providing for
21 subsistence opportunity and a rural priority.

22
23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
26 questions for Staff.

27
28 (No comments)

29
30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Appreciate
31 that, thank you. We'll move on to summary of public
32 comments.

33
34 MS. WESSELS: Good morning, Mr. Chair
35 and members of the Board. For the record, Katya
36 Wessels with OSM. We did not receive any written
37 public comments for WCR20-10, 28. 29. 30 and 44.

38
39 Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
42 Katya. And with that we'll open up the line for public
43 to speak to the specifics of this proposal, muskox
44 closure review.

45
46
47 (No comments)

48
49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,

50

1 hearing none, we'll move on to the Alaska Native Tribal
2 consultation comments, Native Liaison.

3
4 MR. LIND: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
5 Board members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native
6 Liaison for the Office of Subsistence Management. And
7 we did not receive any comments during the consultation
8 -- I'm sorry, no consultation, we did not receive any
9 comments on the Wildlife Closure Reviews.

10
11 Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
14 Orville.

15
16 MR. DOOLITTLE: And, Mr. Chair, sorry
17 to interject.....

18
19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional
20 Advisory Council recommendations.

21
22 MR. DOOLITTLE:here -- thank you,
23 Mr. Chair.

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: So I'll call on
26 the RAC Chair or designees at this time.

27
28 MS. DEATHERAGE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
29 This is Karen Deatherage with OSM. Speaking on behalf
30 of Louis Green for Wildlife Closure Reviews 20-10, 28,
31 29, 30 and 44, the Council had the same recommendation,
32 to maintain status quo.

33
34 The Council voted to maintain the
35 status quo for all of the Unit 22 muskox closure
36 reviews due to the currently low muskox population in
37 the region. The Council expressed that they are
38 worried about extremely low population numbers,
39 potential overharvest and susceptibility to bear
40 predation. Overharvest could lead to a population
41 decline to the point where the population may never be
42 able to recover.

43
44 The Council expressed alarm with the
45 decline in muskox numbers and the lack of herd
46 recovery. The Council would like to see the closure
47 remain in place to protect the remaining population
48 while still allowing for a very small harvest by local
49 subsistence users. Some Council members were open to
50

1 closing the hunt entirely to give the muskox population
2 an opportunity to grow.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
7 questions.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
12 Hearing none, we'll go on to the Alaska Department of
13 Fish and Game comments, State Liaison.

14

15 MR. MULLIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Ben Mulligan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The
17 Department had no comments on the following proposals
18 -- or closure reviews -- my apologies.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
23 InterAgency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

24

25 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
26 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
27 comment for WCR20-10, 28, 29, 30 and 44.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At
30 this time we'll open it up for Board discussion with
31 Council Chairs and State Liaison.

32

33 (Teleconference interference -
34 participants not muted)

35

36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
37 the floor is open for Board action on these proposals.

38

39 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, Chad Padgett
40 with BLM.

41

42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Chad, you have
43 the floor.

44

45 MR. PADGETT: Thank you, Sir. I move
46 to maintain the status quo for WCRs 20-10, 28, 29, 30
47 and 44. This proposal is shown on Pages 1110, 1121,
48 1138, 1156, and 1171, respectfully of the Board book.
49 Following a second, I will explain why I intend to

50

1 support this motion.

2

3

MR. PELTOLA: Second.

4

5

6

REPORTER: Hey, I'm sorry, I didn't
hear who that second was, was it BIA?

7

8

MR. PELTOLA: BIA.

9

10

REPORTER: Thank you, Gene.

11

12

13

MR. PADGETT: Thanks, Gene. My
justification is the following:

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

Muskox populations remain low and may
be declining in some areas. The current closure in
conjunction with decreased harvest quotas have slowed
or stalled the decline in muskox population and this
closure should remain in place to ensure that this
muskox population has the opportunity to reach healthy
levels and to ensure that Federally-qualified
subsistence users continue to have the opportunity to
harvest this subsistence resource into the future.

24

25

Thank you.

26

27

28

29

30

31

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
Chad. Any discussion or deliberation from the Board on
this motion. The motion is to accept all the closure
review at once.

32

33

(No comments)

34

35

36

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
We'll call for the question.

37

38

MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

39

40

MS. PITKA: Question.

41

42

43

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
called. Roll call, Tom, please.

44

45

46

47

48

MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
This is in regards to Wildlife Closure Review 20-10,
28, 29, 30 and 44 to maintain the status quo on Unit 22
muskox for each of the respective closure reviews.

49

50

I'll start with Rhonda Pitka this

1 morning.

2

3 MS. PITKA: I support maintaining the
4 status quo as laid out by the justification by the BLM.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

9

10 U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

11

12 MR. SCHMID: Yeah, I also support
13 maintaining the status quo as with the justification
14 provided by BLM and the deference to the Seward
15 Peninsula Regional Advisory Council.

16

17 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

18

19 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
20 Siekaniec.

21

22 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I
23 support maintaining the status quo as justified by the
24 Bureau of Land Management and in deference to the
25 Seward Penn Regional Advisory Committee [sic].

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you very much,
30 Greg.

31

32 National Park Service, Don Striker.

33

34 MR. STRIKER: I also support the motion
35 to maintain the status quo in deference to the RAC and
36 for BLM's awesome explanation.

37

38 Thank you.

39

40 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Don.

41

42 Charlie Brower, are you on?

43

44 MR. C. BROWER: Roger. I support as
45 stated above.

46

47 MR. DOOLITTLE: Good to hear your voice
48 this morning, Charlie, and I got you for support.

49

50

1 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

2

3 MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs
4 supports maintaining the status quo for all areas as
5 recommended by the Seward Penn RAC and as articulated
6 by the Bureau of Land Management.

7

8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

9

10 Bureau of Land Management, Chad
11 Padgett.

12

13 MR. PADGETT: I support as stated.

14 Thank you, Tom.

15

16 MR. DOOLITTLE: You bet, Chad.

17

18 Chairman Anthony Christianson.

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

21

22

23 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24 That vote was unanimous on WCR 20-10, 28, 29, 30 and
25 44.

26

27 And it looks like we'll have time to
28 get to the next Wildlife Closure Review, which would be
29 WCR20-19, Northwest Arctic Unit 23 muskox, Page 1267 in
30 your books. Mr. Chair, I'll turn it over to you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yep, thank you,
33 Tom, for that. And we'll call on the Staff to provide
34 the analysis for that proposal.

35

36 Thank you.

37

38 MS. MAAS: All right, thank you, Mr.
39 Chair, members of the Board. Lisa Maas for the record.
40 I'll be presenting a summary of the analysis for
41 Closure Review WCR20-19, which begins on Page 1267 of
42 your meeting book.

43

44 Wildlife Closure Review 20-19 pertains
45 to the closure of muskox hunting in the southwestern
46 portion of Unit 23 to non-Federally-qualified users.
47 Muskox were reintroduced to the Seward Peninsula in
48 1970. By 1995 the muskox population had grown
49 sufficiently to warrant a limited hunt and the Board

50

1 established a muskox hunt on the Seward Peninsula
2 including Unit 23 south of Kotzebue Sound, and west of
3 and including the Buckland River drainage, hereafter
4 referred to as Unit 23 southwest. The hunt was opened
5 to Federally-qualified subsistence users but remained
6 closed to non-Federally-qualified users.

7
8 Between 1970 and 2007 the Seward
9 Peninsula muskox population increased steadily peaking
10 at 2,900 muskox in 2010. Between 2010 and 2012 the
11 population decreased but has remained stable at about
12 2,000 muskox since 2012. About 205 muskox or 10 to 13
13 percent of the total Seward Peninsula population occupy
14 Unit 23 southeast on average.

15
16 Mature bulls protect calves against
17 predators which increases recruitment and causes
18 selective harvests of mature males would substantially
19 impact population growth. Therefore, while ratios of
20 20 mature bulls per 100 cows is considered the minimum,
21 ratios of 50 to 70 mature bulls per 100 cows are
22 preferred.

23
24 Between 2002 and 2017 mature bull per
25 100 cows in Unit 23 southwest ranged from 19 to 33 and
26 with only 19 mature bulls per 100 cows in 2017. Quotas
27 for individual hunt areas such as Unit 23 southwest are
28 calculated as 10 percent of the estimated number of
29 mature bulls in that area. Between 1995 and 2011 the
30 muskox harvest quota in Unit 23 southwest ranged from
31 six to 18 muskox. Between 1995 and 2017 actual harvest
32 has ranged from zero to 18 muskox each year. However,
33 since 2008 no muskox have been harvested under Federal
34 regulations. Muskox are more easily accessed on State
35 lands and the quota may be reached before Federally-
36 qualified subsistence users have an opportunity to
37 access Federal lands.

38
39 OSM's recommendation is to maintain
40 status quo. The harvestable surplus of muskoxen in
41 Unit 23 southwest is very low and cannot sustain any
42 increase in harvest. Continuing the current closure is
43 necessary to conserve muskox while providing for
44 subsistence opportunity and a rural priority.

45
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47
48 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
49 appreciate that. Any questions for Staff.

50

1 (No comments)

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
4 we'll move on to the summary of public comment.

5

6 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
7 members of the Board. For the record, Katya Wessels
8 with OSM. We received no written public comments for
9 WCR20-19.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At
14 this time we'll open up the floor to the public
15 specific to this proposal.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 (No comments)

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
22 we'll go to the Regional Advisory Council Chair
23 recommendation or designee.

24

25 (No comments)

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional
28 Advisory Council recommendation, Chair or designee.

29

30 MS. MAAS: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this is
31 Lisa. I can provide that if no one else is on line for
32 that.

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

35

36 MS. MAAS: The Northwest Arctic
37 Subsistence Regional Advisory Council voted to maintain
38 status quo for WCR20-19. The Council supported
39 maintaining the closure for muskox hunting in Unit 23
40 for the reasons stated in the OSM justification.

41

42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
43 Lisa.

44

45 Tribal Alaska Native/Corporation
46 comments, Native Liaison.

47

48 MR. LIND: Thank you. Mr. Chair.
49 Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the Office of

50

1 Subsistence Management. There are no comments on
2 WCR20-19.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
7 We'll move on to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game
8 comments, State Liaison.

9

10 MR. BURCH: Mr. Chair, this is Mark
11 Burch, can you hear me?

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Mark, you
14 have the floor.

15

16 MR. BURCH: For the record, Mark Burch,
17 Department of Fish and Game. The State has no comments
18 on this closure.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
23 Mark. We'll move on to InterAgency Staff Committee
24 comments, ISC Chair.

25

26 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
27 ISC provided the standard comment for WCR20-19.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
30 That opens the floor for Board discussion with Council
31 Chairs or the State Liaison.

32

33 (No comments)

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no
36 questions we will go to Federal Board action for this
37 proposal.

38

39 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, Chad Padgett
40 with BLM.

41

42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Chad, you
43 have the floor.

44

45 MR. PADGETT: Thank you. Mr. Chair, I
46 move to maintain the status quo for WCR20-19. This
47 proposal is shown on Page 1267 of the Board book.
48 Following a second I will explain why I intend to
49 support this motion.

50

1 MR. PELTOLA: Second, BIA.

2

3 MR. STRIKER: Second, Park Service.

4

5 MR. PADGETT: Thank you. My
6 justification is the following:

7

8 The harvestable surplus of muskox is
9 very low and the population cannot sustain increases in
10 harvest. Continuing the current closure is necessary
11 to conserve the muskox population while providing for
12 subsistence opportunity and a meaningful rural
13 subsistence priority.

14

15 Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
18 Chad. Motion's been made and seconded. Any other
19 additional deliberation on this motion.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
24 question.

25

26 MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
29 called. Roll call, Tom, please.

30

31 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 This is Wildlife Closure Review 20-19, muskox Unit 23
33 to maintain the status quo.

34

35 We'll start with Bureau of Indian
36 Affairs, Gene Peltola.

37

38 MR. PELTOLA: BIA supports maintaining
39 the status as quo as recommended by the Northwest
40 Arctic Regional Advisory Council in addition to
41 concurring with the BLM justification.

42

43 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you much, Gene.

44

45 Rhonda Pitka.

46

47 MS. PITKA: I support maintaining the
48 status quo in deference to the Regional Advisory
49 Council and in concurrence with the BLM recommendation.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

4

5 Charlie Brower.

6

7 MR. C. BROWER: I support WCR20-19 to
8 maintain status quo as stated by Northwest Arctic
9 Borough -- thank you -- or Northwest Arctic Council.

10

11 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

12

13 U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

14

15 MR. SCHMID: Yeah, I also support to
16 maintain status quo for WCR20-19 as recommended by the
17 Northwest Regional Advisory Council and the
18 justification provided by the Bureau of Land
19 Management.

20

21 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, very much,
22 Dave.

23

24 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
25 Siekaniec.

26

27 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I
28 support WCR20-19 with the justification that Bureau of
29 Land Management provided and in support of the
30 Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council.

31

32 Thank you.

33

34 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

35

36 National Park Service, Don Striker.

37

38 MR. STRIKER: The Park Service supports
39 the motion for the reasons enumerated by my colleagues.

40

41 Thank you.

42

43 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Don.

44

45 Bureau of Land Management, Chad

46 Padgett.

47

48 MR. PADGETT: I support as stated.

49

50

1 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

2

3 And last by not least, Chairman Anthony
4 Christianson.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.

7

8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay. WCR20-19, the
9 motion passed for Unit 23 muskox unanimously.

10

11 Mr. Chair, that would move us on and we
12 still have time before 11:00 bell strikes, and the next
13 Closure Review on the list is 20-42.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: 20-42, you have
16 the floor, Staff.

17

18

19 MS. MAAS: All right, thank you, Mr.
20 Chair. Lisa Maas for the record. I'll be presenting a
21 summary of the analysis for Closure Review WCR20-42
22 which begins on Page 1344 of your meeting book.

23

24 Wildlife Closure Review 20-42 pertains
25 to the closure of caribou hunting in Unit 12 and
26 consists of two hunt areas which are depicted in Map 1
27 on Page 1346.

28

29 The southwest cross-hatched hunt area
30 was closed to all hunters in 1993 to protect the
31 Mentasta Caribou Herd. This area has remained closed
32 to all hunters. The southeast dotted hunt area was
33 closed to all hunters in 1994 to protect the Chisana
34 Caribou Herd. This area opened to hunting by a few
35 communities in 2012. In 2016 this area opened to all
36 Federally-qualified subsistence users but remained
37 closed to non-Federally-qualified users.

38

39 The Mentasta herd population declined
40 from an estimated 3,100 animals in 1987 to less than
41 1,000 animals in 1993 when the area was closed for
42 conservation concerns. Since 1993 the estimated
43 population has continued to decrease to an estimated
44 470 animals in 2018. Very poor calf recruitment due
45 mostly to predation is the primary reason for the
46 decline. The bull/cow ratio has generally been well
47 above the management objective of 35 bulls per 100 cows
48 but may be inflated due to mixing with the much larger
49 Nelchina herd. The Chisana herd ranges between Alaska

50

1 and Yukon Territory Canada. It's population declined
2 from an estimated 1,900 animals in 1988 to a low of 315
3 animals in 2002. Weather, predation and hunting
4 contributed to the decline. In 2003 an intensive
5 recovery effort was initiated and since then the herd
6 has stabilized around 700 animals. Since 2010
7 bull/cow, and calf/cow ratios have exceeded management
8 objectives.

9

10 There has been no targeted harvest of
11 Mentasta caribou since the 1993 closure. However, some
12 Mentasta caribou may be incidentally harvested in the
13 winter when they mix with the Nelchina herd.

14

15 In 2012 a hunt restricted to only a few
16 communities opened for the Chisana herd. In 2016 the
17 hunt was opened to all Federally-qualified subsistence
18 users. The Chisana Management Plan prescribes an
19 annual harvest rate of two percent allocated equally
20 between Yukon and Alaska. This translates to seven
21 caribou available for harvest in Alaska. Since the
22 hunt opened in 2012 zero to three caribou have been
23 harvested each year indicating harvest levels are
24 sustainable.

25

26 OSM's preliminary conclusion is to
27 maintain status quo due to conservation concerns. The
28 Mentasta herd population remains low and cannot
29 withstand any harvest. The Chisana herd population
30 appears stable and current harvest levels are
31 sustainable indicating no additional restrictions are
32 warranted. The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and
33 Preserve Superintendent has delegated authority to
34 manage the hunt and can respond to yearly conditions.
35 Additionally, the low harvest quota cannot support the
36 harvest pressure that could result from opening the
37 area to all users.

38

39 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
42 questions for Staff.

43

44 (No comments)

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, thank
47 you. Summary of public comment, Regional Council
48 Coordinator.

49

50

1 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
2 members of the Board. For the record, Katya Wessels
3 with OSM. We did not receive any written public
4 comments for WCR20-42.

5
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. At
9 this time we'll open up the floor to the public,
10 anybody on line who wants to speak specifically to this
11 proposal.

12
13 Thank you.

14
15 (No comments)

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
18 we'll go to the Regional Advisory Council
19 recommendation, Chair or designee.

20
21 (No comments)

22
23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Regional
24 Advisory Council recommendation, Chair or designee.

25
26 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, members of the
27 Board. This is DeAnna Perry. I would like the Eastern
28 Interior RAC to give their recommendation first, if
29 they would like.

30
31 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. Eastern
32 Interior.

33
34 (No comments)

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Eastern
37 Interior Chair or designee.

38
39 MS. MAAS: All right, Mr. Chair, this
40 is Lisa, I can give that recommendation.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
43 Lisa, please do.

44
45 MS. MAAS: The Eastern Interior Council
46 voted to maintain status quo for WCR20-42. The Council
47 voted unanimously to maintain the status quo and
48 reconsider when more information on movement, degree of
49 mixing with other caribou herds, particularly the
50

1 Nelchina Caribou Herd and population status is
2 available in the future. 10 collars were placed on
3 caribou in the Mentasta Caribou Herd during the fall of
4 2018 and more are scheduled for deployment during the
5 fall of 2019.

6

7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
10 that. We'll listen to the Southcentral now.

11

12 MR. PERRY: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair
13 and members of the Board. Again, my name is DeAnna
14 Perry. I'm the Coordinator for Southcentral RAC and
15 Mr. Encelewski's not available today so I will go ahead
16 and give the recommendation.

17

18 That recommendation could be found in
19 your meeting books on Page 1366 and the Council voted
20 to maintain status quo. The Council stated that this
21 population hasn't really grown and that if it could
22 recover, this opportunity should be given to the
23 population to recover. The Council stated that it
24 would be good to have more information on the mixing of
25 the two herds.

26

27 That was the recommendation of the
28 Southcentral Council.

29

30 Thank you.

31

32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
33 questions from the Board to the Regional Advisory
34 Councils.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
39 we'll move on to the Tribal Alaska Native/Corporation
40 comments, Native Liaison.

41

42 MR. LIND: Thank you. Mr. Chair, Board
43 members, RAC Chairs. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for
44 the Office of Subsistence Management. We did not have
45 any comments on WCR20-42.

46

47 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,

50

1 Orville. We'll move on to the Alaska Department of Fish
2 and Game comments, State Liaison.

3

4 MR. BURCH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mark
5 Burch, Department of Fish and Game. The State has no
6 comments on this closure.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
11 InterAgency Staff Committee comments, ISC Chair.

12

13 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
14 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
15 comment for WCR20-42.

16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.
18 That opens the floor for Board discussion with Council
19 Chairs or State Liaison.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
24 the floor is open for Board action on this proposal.

25

26 MR. REAM: Mr. Chair, this is Joshua
27 Ream. I've been asked to represent the Park Service on
28 behalf of Don Striker for this one.

29

30 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor is
31 yours, Josh.

32

33 MR. REAM: I move to maintain the
34 status quo for Wildlife Closure Review WCR20-42 thus
35 retaining the closures to the harvest of caribou in
36 portions of Unit 12 due to conservation concerns.
37 Although the closures apply to all caribou, not
38 specific herds, the closure within Wrangell-St. Elias
39 National Park and Preserve west of the Nabesna River
40 and Glacier is designed to protect the Mentasta Caribou
41 Herd, and the closure to harvest by all but Federally-
42 qualified subsistence users east of the Nabesna River
43 and Glacier and south of the winter trail is designed
44 to protect the Chisana Caribou Herd.

45

46 If given a second, I will explain my
47 intention to support this motion.

48

49 MR. SCHMID: Second.

50

1 MR. REAM: Thank you. Conservation
2 concerns for the Mentasta Caribou Herd persists despite
3 a moratorium on hunting in Unit 11 since 1998, and in
4 Unit 12 since 1993. The herd continues to exist in low
5 numbers and population characteristics suggest low
6 production, poor recruitment and low survival. Calf
7 production and recruitment remains below the management
8 objective. Mentasta herd caribou typically move into
9 Unit 12 during the fall and are known to travel through
10 the current closure area. These movements coincide
11 with those of the Nelchina herd resulting in mixing of
12 the two herds. Mixing of this herd with the Nelchina
13 herd in the fall makes it impossible for hunters to
14 differentiate between animals of these herds and any
15 incidental harvest of Mentasta caribou must be avoided.
16

17 For these reasons Federal public lands
18 in Unit 12 within that portion of Wrangell-St. Elias
19 National Park and Preserve that is west of the Nabesna
20 River and Nabesna Glacier should continue to remain
21 closed to caribou hunting for the conservation of
22 healthy populations of the Mentasta Caribou Herd.
23

24 The Chisana Caribou Herd population has
25 been relatively stable for the last decade and herd
26 composition in terms of bull/cow and calf/cow ratios is
27 above the minimum thresholds set in the Chisana Caribou
28 Herd Management Plan for allowing continued subsistence
29 harvest. The current season and limited harvest by
30 Federally-qualified subsistence users are consistent
31 with the recommendations and management guidelines in
32 the management plan, and the harvest does not seem to
33 have negatively affected population level. At the same
34 time, however, the small herd size and recommended
35 harvest quota make for very limited harvest
36 opportunity, and in some years the herd composition has
37 been close to the minimum threshold set in the
38 management plan. The potential for additional harvest
39 if the closure were to be lifted would pose a
40 significant conservation concern.
41

42 Consequently Federal public lands in
43 Unit 12 that are east of the Nabesna River and Glacier
44 and south of the Winter Trial should remain closed to
45 the harvest of caribou by all but Federally-qualified
46 subsistence users for the conservation of healthy
47 populations of the Chisana Caribou Herd. Maintaining
48 the closures in these two areas in Unit 12 is
49 consistent with the position of the Southcentral and
50

1 Eastern Interior Councils, OSM and the ISC.

2

3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
6 Josh. Any discussion on this proposal as presented.

7

8 (No comments)

9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
11 question.

12

13 MR. SIEKANIEC: Question.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
16 called, thank you, Greg. Roll call, Tom.

17

18 MR. DOOLITTLE: This vote is on
19 Wildlife Closure Review 20-42, Unit 12 caribou, support
20 the status quo.

21

22 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
23 Siekaniec.

24

25 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I
26 support to maintain the status quo for WCR20-42 as
27 justified by the National Park Service and in deference
28 to Southcentral and Eastern Interior Regional Advisory
29 Councils.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

34

35 U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

36

37 MR. SCHMID: Support maintaining the
38 status quo for WCR20-42 with the justification provided
39 by the National Park Service and in deference to the
40 Southcentral and Eastern Interior RACs.

41

42 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

43

44 Rhonda Pitka.

45

46 MS. PITKA: I support maintaining the
47 status quo for WCR20-42 in concurrence with the
48 National Park Service and in deference to the Regional
49 Advisory Councils.

50

1 Thank you.
2
3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.
4
5 Charlie Brower.
6
7 MR. C. BROWER: I support to maintain
8 status quo on WCR20-42 as stated by BLM [sic] and the
9 Southcentral Advisory Council and the Interior Advisory
10 Council.
11
12 Thank you.
13
14 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.
15
16 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.
17
18 MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs
19 supports maintaining the status quo for WCR20-42 as
20 recommended by the Eastern Interior and Southcentral
21 Regional Advisory Councils, and as articulated by the
22 very thorough justification provided by the National
23 Park Service.
24
25 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.
26
27 Bureau of Land Management, Chad
28 Padgett.
29
30 MR. PADGETT: I support maintaining the
31 status quo and in deference to the RACs and as stated
32 by the Park Service.
33
34 Thank you.
35
36 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.
37
38 National Park Service, Joshua Ream.
39
40 MR. REAM: I vote in favor of my
41 motion, thank you.
42
43 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you.
44
45 Chairman Anthony Christianson.
46
47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.
48
49 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chairman
50

1 Christianson. Unit 12 caribou status quo vote
2 unanimously on Wildlife Closure Review 20-42.
3

4 And we've got a few minutes, you know,
5 until Steve's going to be on but I think we could
6 probably push through the last closure review that's on
7 the agenda, WCR20-31 and then get into food security.
8 Does that sound okay, Mr. Chair.
9

10 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That sounds
11 appropriate so we'll call on the Staff to provide the
12 analysis for the last review.
13

14 Thank you.
15

16 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, thank you, Mr.
17 Chair.
18

19 MR. MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
20 is Chris McKee, can you hear me?
21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yep, can hear
23 you fine, Chris, you have the floor.
24

25 MR. MCKEE: Okay. Thank you. I'll be
26 presenting the summary for the analysis of Wildlife
27 Closure Review WCR20-31 which can be found on Page 1368
28 of your Board meeting materials book.
29

30 Wildlife Closure Review WCR20-31, the
31 closure to moose hunting on Federal public lands in
32 Units 26B remainder and 26C, except by rural Alaska
33 residents of the village of Kaktovik. The current
34 regulation is for one moose by Federal registration
35 permit for the residents of Kaktovik only. The Arctic
36 National Wildlife Refuge manager has delegated
37 authority to determine annual quotas, set open and
38 closing season dates and determine the number of
39 permits to be issued.
40

41 State management objectives for each
42 unit are as follows: For Unit 26B it is to maintain a
43 population of at least 300 moose with short yearlings
44 comprising at least 15 percent of the population; Unit
45 26C maintaining a population of at least 150 moose with
46 short yearlings comprising 15 percent of the population
47 and maintaining bull/cow ratios of at least 35 bulls
48 per 100 cows when hunting seasons are open for both
49 units.
50

1 A comprehensive moose survey has not
2 been conducted for Units 26B and 26C but smaller scale
3 surveys have been conducted in areas when moose
4 concentrate to assess population trends. The moose
5 population of the eastern portion of 26B including the
6 Canning River rebounded from low levels in 1998 to 2000
7 to 335 animals in 2005, but declined to 104 animals in
8 2015. Since 2016 the population has been increasing.
9 The last estimate was 212 moose in 2016. The
10 composition of short yearlings, which measures
11 recruitment into the population averaged 16 percent
12 from 2005 to 2008 but declined to four percent in 2015
13 before increasing to 21 percent in 2018.

14
15 The central portion of Unit 26C, which
16 consists of the foothills and coastal areas is surveyed
17 every other year by Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
18 Staff. Between 2003 and 2011 the population in the
19 surveyed area has remained fairly stable at around 52
20 animals.

21
22 Harvest on Federal public lands in
23 Units 26B remainder and 26C has been limited to the
24 residents of Kaktovik since 2004 with up to three
25 permits issued annually and a combined harvest quota of
26 three animals. Since 2004 10 bull moose have been
27 harvested with between zero and two animals being
28 harvested annually, no moose have been harvested since
29 2017. Five total permits were issued in 2017 and 2018
30 and no moose were taken. The North Slope population in
31 26C has increased in recent years and is now above 50
32 animals, which has been the longterm average for this
33 marginal population. As of 2018 the moose population
34 of the eastern portion of Unit 26B including the
35 Canning River has increased but it's still below State
36 management objectives. Current Federal regulations
37 allow management flexibility to the Refuge Manager of
38 Arctic Refuge and continuing to limit the moose hunt on
39 Federal public lands in 26B remainder and 26C is
40 recommended given the small North Slope moose
41 population.

42
43 For these reasons the OSM conclusion,
44 which can be found on Page 1378 of your Board book, is
45 to maintain the status quo for WCR20-31.

46
47 Thank you, Mr. Chair, that concludes my
48 presentation.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
2 Chris, appreciate that. Any questions for the Staff on
3 that presentation.

4
5 (No comments)

6
7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
8 hearing none, we'll call on summary of public comment.

9
10 MS. WESSELS: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
11 members of the Board. For the record, Katya Wessels
12 with OSM. We did not receive any written public
13 comments for WCR20-31.

14
15 Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
18 Katya. We'll move to the line, Operator, if there's
19 anybody in the public that would like to speak specific
20 to this proposal now is the time.

21
22 OPERATOR: And this is the Operator,
23 would you like them to press star one to have their
24 line open for the call?

25
26 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, Operator, that's
27 the intent for the public comment, thank you.

28
29 OPERATOR: Okay, thank you, just wanted
30 to be sure.

31
32 MR. DOOLITTLE: Please excuse me, Mr.
33 Chair.

34
35 OPERATOR: At this time I'm showing no
36 questions.

37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Excuse me, did
39 you say no questions.

40
41 OPERATOR: Correct.

42
43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay. We'll
44 move on to Regional Advisory Council recommendation,
45 Chair or designee.

46
47 MS. PATTON: Good morning, Mr. Chair.

48
49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Good morning,
50

1 you have the floor.

2

3 MS. PATTON: Good morning. I'd like to
4 just check and see if Chair Member Gordon Brower has
5 joined us on teleconference this morning.

6

7 (No comments)

8

9 MS. PATTON: Okay, he may not be able
10 to join in this morning. This is Eva Patton, Council
11 Coordinator for the North Slope Subsistence Regional
12 Advisory Council. And I will provide the Council's
13 recommendation on Wildlife Closure Review 20-31 which
14 can be found on Page 1382 in your Board meeting book.

15

16 The North Slope Subsistence Regional
17 Advisory Council recommends maintaining the status quo
18 for Wildlife Closure Review 20-31 but would like to
19 establish a larger harvest quota of one bull moose by
20 Federal registration permit for Unit 26B remainder and
21 four bull moose in Unit 26C for Kaktovik residents
22 only. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge manager will
23 set the opening and closing dates as needed, set the
24 annual harvest quotas and limits through consultation
25 with the community of Kaktovik and the process outlined
26 in the delegation of authority letter. Federal public
27 lands are closed to the taking of moose except by
28 Kaktovik residents holding a Federal registration
29 permit and hunting under these regulations.

30

31 Currently the subsistence needs of
32 Kaktovik are not being met. Food security is extremely
33 important and the community's needs should be a main
34 consideration in the subsistence management
35 decisionmaking process. While there's not an exact
36 number of how many moose the community of Kaktovik
37 needs, it was estimated that 30 to 50 moose would be
38 needed to sustain Kaktovik annually. More moose would
39 be needed if access to other food resources, such as
40 caribou, were limited. The Council noted that the
41 community should be able to harvest the maximum
42 sustained yield of the moose population. The Council
43 would like the Federal Subsistence managers to better
44 understand the subsistence economy, sharing and
45 traditional practices. These moose are very important
46 to share within the community and may be traded for
47 other subsistence foods.

48

49 The Council supports the flexibility

50

1 provided by the delegation of authority process and
2 would like to see the relationship with the Refuge
3 manager and the community of Kaktovik continue to grow
4 through ongoing consultation. The Council requests
5 that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge conduct
6 additional moose surveys in the summer and in fall to
7 better understand population fluctuation and document
8 movements of the moose in Units 26C and 26B remainder.
9

10 Kaktovik -- North Slope Council member
11 from Kaktovik, Edward Rexford, Sr., shared feedback
12 from the community that moose hunts in the Kongakut
13 River drainage are a long way from Kaktovik and outside
14 the community's traditional harvest areas. Subsistence
15 activities require a lot of resources including gas,
16 snowmachine, sled, tent, camping gear and food. In
17 addition, they are dependent on the weather, hunter
18 availability, snow conditions, location and ease of
19 access of the moose, a long trip to the Kongakut River
20 requires a lot of gas, which is very expensive in
21 remote communities. Some communities need to pool
22 resources just to conduct an extended hunt and they may
23 have only one chance to harvest a moose.
24

25 The Council requests a comprehensive
26 subsistence needs assessment for the community of
27 Kaktovik to ensure that rural subsistence priority is
28 being met.
29

30 The Council would also like for the
31 community to be able to harvest moose throughout the
32 year and not just during April when moose are skinny.
33 The community would like more flexibility for the
34 timing of the hunt when the bull moose are fat, in the
35 fall and the ability to harvest moose opportunistically
36 when and if they move closer to Kaktovik.
37

38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Eva.
41 Any questions for Eva.
42

43 (No comments)
44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
46 hearing none, we'll move on to Tribal Alaska
47 Native/Corporation comments, Orville.
48

49 MR. LIND: Thank you. Mr. Chair.
50

1 Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the Office of
2 Subsistence Management. We did not have any comments
3 on this proposal -- wildlife closure.

4

5 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
8 Orville. Alaska Department of Fish and Game comments,
9 State Liaison.

10

11 MR. BURCH: Mr. Chair, this is Mark
12 Burch, Department of Fish and Game. I understand that
13 Ben Mulligan's trying to get in but hasn't been able to
14 get through yet, but in the mean time the State of
15 Alaska has no comments on this.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
20 standing by Mark, appreciate it. InterAgency Staff
21 Committee comments, ISC Chair.

22

23 MS. WORKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
24 InterAgency Staff Committee provided the standard
25 comment for WCR20-31.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, that
28 opens the floor for Board discussion with Chairs and
29 State Liaison.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing none,
34 we'll.....

35

36 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

37

38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
39 Gene, you have the floor.

40

41 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 There's a couple things I'd like to get clarification
43 on.

44

45 One is, glancing through the analysis,
46 I didn't see, unless I overlooked it, the timing of the
47 historical harvest because if the Board goes to true
48 deference to the Regional Advisory Council, in this
49 case it would not only be to maintain the status quo,

50

1 but also to establish a quota which currently is
2 delegated for GMU26B remainder and 26D moose to the
3 Refuge manager, and also there is a desire from the
4 North Slope to have a more flexible timing of the
5 harvest as they put it, you know, other than in April.
6 So to me that would infer that there's only been a
7 winter hunt that has been authorized historically by
8 the Refuge manager.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Mr.
13 Chair. Any response from the Staff for that.

14

15 MR. MCKEE: Yes, Gene, I don't have an
16 answer for your question in terms of the timing but
17 from what I recall, just in changing and doing the
18 delegation letter a couple of years ago, I think the
19 majority of that hunt does take place during the winter
20 months, at least the last several years.

21

22 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, may I
23 follow.....

24

25 MR. MCKEE: And in terms -- sorry.

26

27 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead,
28 finish, Chris, and then Gene.

29

30 MR. MCKEE: No, I was done, go ahead,
31 Gene.

32

33 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you. So, Chris, in
34 the delegation, does it allow for a harvest if called
35 for by the Refuge manager, outside those winter hunts,
36 which have been traditionally offered, do you recall?

37

38 MR. MCKEE: It's a may be announced
39 season, so the season dates, the opening and closing
40 dates are determined by the Refuge manager. There
41 aren't any specific dates in regulation.

42

43 MR. PELTOLA: Okay. Mr. Chair, one
44 other followup, if Greg is available, I'm not trying to
45 put him on the spot or anything, but I was wondering
46 what has been utilized in the criteria to offer a
47 winter harvest as opposed to a fall harvest.

48

49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: Hey, Gene, this is
2 Greg. I do not know the answer to that but if I
3 remember correctly when we just recently redid the
4 delegation letter that the may be announced dates and
5 that the Refuge manager did make some changes to the
6 window of time but I don't have those off of the top of
7 my head.

8
9 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Greg. And I
10 was just trying to show that there is the flexibility
11 there by the Refuge manager to offer such.

12
13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
16 further discussion on this, questions for Chairs or
17 State Liaison.

18
19 (No comments)

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Hearing no
22 further discussion, we'll go ahead and open the floor
23 for Board action.

24
25 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, Greg, with
26 the Fish and Wildlife Service.

27
28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg, you have
29 the floor.

30
31 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 Yeah, I would like to move that we maintain the status
33 quo for Wildlife Closure Review 20-31. The wildlife
34 closure language is shown on Page 1369 of the Board
35 book. Following a second, I will provide justification
36 for why I intend to support my motion.

37
38 MR. C. BROWER: Second.

39
40 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. Currently
41 the moose populations in Units 26B and 26C remainder
42 are small but increasing slowly. Since the
43 establishment of a Federal hunt in 2004, only 10 moose
44 have been harvested with an average of one moose per
45 year. Given the small number of moose that can be
46 harvested from this population, it is appropriate to
47 maintain this closure to only Federally-qualified users
48 of Kaktovik to provide them a subsistence harvest
49 priority. Current regulations allow management
50

1 flexibility by the Refuge manager of the Arctic
2 National Wildlife Refuge to determine sustainable
3 harvest levels based on the status and health of this
4 small moose population. Maintaining this closure
5 supports the North Slope Regional Advisory Council's
6 request to provide a subsistence harvest priority for
7 residents of Kaktovik who depend on a variety of
8 subsistence resources for food security.

9

10 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
13 Greg. Any discussion, deliberation on this proposal.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Call for the
18 question.

19

20 MR. PADGETT: Question.

21

22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
23 question's been called. Roll call, Tom, please. Thank
24 you.

25

26 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 Wildlife Closure Review 20-31 is a closure review that
28 reviews the closure to the moose hunting in Units 26B
29 remainder and 26C except by the residents of Kaktovik.
30 The vote is to maintain the status quo.

31

32 I'll start with Bureau of Land
33 Management, Chad Padgett.

34

35 MR. PADGETT: Thank you, Tom. I
36 support maintaining the status quo as stated by the
37 Fish and Wildlife Service.

38

39 Thank you.

40

41 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

42

43 National Park Service, Don Striker or
44 Josh Ream.

45

46 MR. REAM: Hi, this is Joshua Ream on
47 behalf of Donald Striker. National Park Service votes
48 to maintain the status quo for the reasons outlined by
49 the Fish and Wildlife Service.

50

1 Thank you.

2

3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Josh.

4

5 U.S. Forest Service, David Schmid.

6

7 MR. SCHMID: Yes, support to maintain
8 the status quo for WCR20-31 with the justification
9 provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

10

11 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Dave.

12

13 Rhonda Pitka.

14

15 MS. PITKA: I vote to maintain the
16 status quo as laid out by the National Park Service
17 [sic]. Thank you.

18

19 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

20

21 Charlie Brower.

22

23 MR. C. BROWER: I support to maintain
24 status quo for WCR20-31 as recommended by North Slope
25 Borough -- Advisory Council.

26

27 Thank you.

28

29 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

30

31 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg
32 Siekaniec.

33

34 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I
35 support as stated. Thank you.

36

37 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.

38

39 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.

40

41 MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs
42 supports maintaining the status quo as recommended by
43 the North Slope Regional Advisory Council, in addition
44 to the additional request from the North Slope Council,
45 where the most part can be addressed via the delegation
46 of authority of the Refuge manager of Arctic National
47 Wildlife Refuge in addition to the justification
48 provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

49

50

1 Thank you.
2
3 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.
4
5 Chairman Anthony Christianson.
6
7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support.
8
9 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay, the motion for
10 the status quo on WCR20-31 passes unanimously.
11
12 And that moves us on, Mr. Chair, to
13 food security discussion.
14
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right.
18 Thank you, Tom, for that appreciate it. And, again,
19 I'll ask Greg if Steve was able to join the call.
20
21 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
22 Steve Wackowski, were you able to join, I've been
23 texting with him and he was trying to log in here
24 probably about seven or eight minutes ago so maybe he's
25 on line.
26
27 Steve.
28
29 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, can you hear
30 me?
31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, I can hear
33 you Steve. Thank you for signing on today, I was just
34 making sure you were available to listen to the
35 discussion today, appreciate you taking the time to
36 call in.
37
38 MR. WACKOWSKI: Yes, Sir. Mr. Chair,
39 may I be recognized.
40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, you have
42 the floor, Steve.
43
44 MR. WACKOWSKI: Thank you, Sir. First,
45 I want to thank all of you. I know you put in a lot of
46 hard last week and I want to apologize, wearing my
47 other hat as the Secretary's Field Special Assistant, I
48 actually have an emergency management coordination role
49 so I've been on a lot of video conferences with FEMA
50

1 throughout the week and during the day, and unrelated
2 to that my wife blessed us with our third baby boy born
3 a couple of weeks ago so I've been trying to balance
4 telework and paternity leave.

5
6 That being said, two weeks ago OSM
7 provided the Secretary's Alaska Office with a
8 memorandum describing a potential special action in
9 light of a Covid response posture to use the public
10 safety trigger in ANILCA and the regs promulgated from
11 that to open up certain spring hunts to address
12 specifically supply chain disruptions, and critical
13 food shortages. Then OSM had recommended a generic
14 delegation of authority letter to our field managers to
15 address the crises response.

16
17 We understand that this is an
18 extraordinary situation, a unique use of our authority
19 as the Office of Subsistence Management and the Federal
20 Subsistence Board to address response.

21
22 After reading through the memos we
23 realized there was a need for FEMA and State EOC
24 coordination when we look at taking action to address
25 these supply chain disruptions and critical food
26 shortages. That coordination was done primarily last
27 week and over the weekend before last. After we
28 coordinated with them, the Office of the Secretary,
29 Alaska's Office had asked OSM to provide an advisory
30 memo that more clearly defines what our authorities are
31 and what the public safety triggers we're going to use
32 along with a new round of draft delegation letters. I
33 expect an immediate review of those delegation letters,
34 in those letters we want to give our field managers
35 some coordination tools written into the delegation
36 letters so they can coordinate with FEMA and EOC. And
37 it's important to note that this is a critical tool
38 that we've viewed that can address some potential
39 problems for rural Alaskans in this unprecedented times
40 who are faced with a very unsettling situation with a
41 lot of historical trauma involved.

42
43 Pending any questions, Mr. Chair, I'm
44 available.

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, any
47 Board have a question or want to have a discussion with
48 Steve, the floor is open.

49
50

1 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, this is Chad,
2 with BLM.

3
4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Chad, go ahead.

5
6 MR. PADGETT: Thank you. Steve, so you
7 mentioned -- I might have misheard it, but you
8 mentioned there might be a letter or memo, has that
9 been disseminated to the Board, and I just want to make
10 sure I understand kind of what space we're in here.
11 Because I don't recall seeing something, but maybe I
12 missed it.

13
14 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, may I be
15 recognized.

16
17 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Steve, you
18 have the floor.

19
20 MR. WACKOWSKI: Thanks, Chad, great
21 question. We have not gotten the advisory memorandum
22 out. We were hoping to have the Staff work through it
23 this week but obviously we're still in Board meetings.
24 I expect that we'll be able to -- we absolutely will be
25 able to share the memorandum and then -- since you're
26 going to be taking action on the delegation letters,
27 you'll, of course, see those as well.

28
29 My hope is that we can get something
30 done -- we talked to our -- Ken Lord, I think he is
31 going to work with the Staff to get something out and
32 I'm hopeful that, you know, it'll be in like days
33 timeframe.

34
35 MR. DOOLITTLE: Hello, Steve, this
36 is.....

37
38 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

39
40 MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
43 Charlie, you have the floor.

44
45 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, and, you know, for
46 Steve's information and everybody is that on Friday I
47 did review that memo, Sue also, you know, did -- Susan
48 Detwiler, the ARD, so we have gone through the final
49 edits and review of that memo and we're going to put
50

1 that on letterhead today or at the very latest
2 tomorrow.

3

4

MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

5

6

7

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, go ahead,
Charlie, you have the floor.

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

MR. C. BROWER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Steve, so we're waiting for this memorandum to come
out, so do we need to discuss the food security now or
is it a go, who is to make recommendations on this
procedure.

15

16

17

MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, this is
Steve.

18

19

20

CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Steve, you
have the floor.

21

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MR. WACKOWSKI: So I think the -- we
didn't ask for a decision memo to the Secretary, I
think what we -- I don't think, I know, what we would
like is just since this is a new use of the authority
in an innovative way, it's never been used like this
specifically, the OS in DC just wanted a review of it,
so I don't expect any positive action to be required,
it's just if they've got concerns or questions, the OSM
Staff may have to review it. And I expect that once we
get the memo ready for submission to DC, that'll be at
the point when you all can review it, but I'm -- maybe
-- there's not an expectation that you need to act on
the memo, I think the action we're looking for from the
Board is the delegation -- draft delegation authority
letters that will accompany the memo.

37

38

Did I answer your question, Charlie.

39

40

41

42

43

44

45

46

MR. C. BROWER: Yes, thank you. So in
light of everything, we're just waiting and see -- are
we going to do some kind of vote on it if it comes in
within a couple of days or so, so this food security
won't be on hold, but as special requests are
considered, or coming in, can we direct the field
managers to okay them or what?

47

48

49

50

MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, this is

Steve.

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead,
2 Steve.

3
4 MR. WACKOWSKI: I think once we get
5 this cleared and my understanding is that typically
6 delegation of authority letters, the Board can do it
7 electronically and just concur with -- but once those
8 go out I think our thought is that they go through the
9 normal process, so -- and that I don't know, does the
10 Board, maybe Mr. Peltola, or Mr. Chair, if you can
11 answer that, does the Board typically weigh in on in-
12 season managers once that delegation of authority has
13 been promulgated?

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Tom.

16
17 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, this is Tom,
18 Steve, if you would like me to -- through the Chair,
19 would you like me to interject?

20
21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yeah, I wanted
22 you to answer that question for us, please.

23
24 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah. The in-season,
25 you know, delegation that's given to a specific field
26 manager, let's say it's on the North Slope, Charlie,
27 and it's to the Refuge manager at Arctic National
28 Wildlife Refuge, and there was a specific community
29 that had a special action, that specific community
30 would go through that Refuge manager that has the full
31 authorities of the Board, through the letter of
32 delegation, and then they would make a decision on
33 whether to provide or not, the decisionmaker in that
34 case, will be the field manager, it will not be the
35 Board. And so that allows the fields, statewide, to
36 those that have existing letters of delegations to
37 either provide an amendment to their existing letter of
38 delegation or if the Board decides to provide new
39 letters of delegation to specific individuals where we
40 have gaps in coverage around the state, then we would
41 do that also.

42
43 The Board did look at the original
44 letter of delegation, that was in generic form, and
45 approved the process and then, again, after discussion
46 with the Department, was making sure that that decision
47 is made on safety, that they have consulted the right
48 food security personnel within the State of Alaska and
49 Alaska Department of Fish and Game prior to any
50

1 decisions. So the memo is supportive to the letter of
2 delegation reaffirming the side bars that the
3 Department feels is critical to making the decisions in
4 the field.

5
6 So hopefully, Mr. Chairman, Board
7 Member Brower, I answered some of those questions.

8
9 Thank you.

10
11 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you, Tom.

12
13 Thank you, Steve.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom.

16
17 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, Chad Padgett
18 again.

19
20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Chad, you have
21 the floor.

22
23 MR. PADGETT: Thank you. So Steve I
24 want to make sure I'm clear. So are you asking us to
25 take a vote today on delegation of authority prior to
26 seeing the memo or direction from DOI, I just want to
27 make sure I got my head wrapped around what we're doing
28 here.

29
30 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair.

31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
33 Steve.

34
35 MR. WACKOWSKI: No, Chad. Again, the
36 expectation is when the advisory memo goes to DC, you
37 guys will get a copy along with the delegation of
38 authority letters and then you'll take action after
39 that.

40
41 MR. PADGETT: Thank you for the
42 clarification. Through the Chair, thanks.

43
44 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

45
46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Gene, you have
47 the floor.

48
49 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
50

1 what I understand -- tell me if I understand this
2 correctly. Is that, we're potentially looking at a
3 whole new set of delegation of authority letters based
4 on food security; is that correct?

5

6 MR. WACKOWSKI: Yes. Sorry, Mr. Chair.

7

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
10 Steve, you guys can have a free discussion.

11

12 MR. WACKOWSKI: Okay, thank you. Yeah,
13 Gene, this was -- OSM had approached the Department
14 saying that, you know, this is in light of Covid
15 response mechanisms so we framed the problem through
16 that response, right, and the problems identified were
17 critical food shortages -- or supply chain disruptions
18 and critical food shortages so, you know, I think this
19 will be good to have in our hip pocket in the future as
20 we get floodings or earthquakes, but this was viewed as
21 a new tool to exercise the authority under the public
22 safety trigger.

23

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Does that make sense, Gene.

MR. PELTOLA: Yep. And the difference
would be under this -- under any action taken under
these proposed delegations, there would be a new
coordination requirements which did not exist.....

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Hey, thank you.

MR. PELTOLA:to our delegation of
authority.....

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE: Hey, thank you.

MR. WACKOWSKI: Gene, yes. You know
since the Stafford Act has been invoked and the
emergency declaration in Alaska, there's some pretty
delineations on authorities now, I'm not saying that
the authority still doesn't rest with us, the request
is that we, in fact, coordinate. And just a perfect
example of that is, if we do, in fact, take a special
action where there is -- where the criteria are met and
there's a harvestable surplus, that may -- you know,
the EOC wants to know about that because that may
change their calculus on other activities when they're
delivering supplies, or cleaning supplies and such.

1 They've got a whole math care group stood up (ph-
2 muffled) and so I think we felt it be important to be
3 coordinated with the first responder community.
4

5 MR. PELTOLA: But, Mr. Chair, I'm just
6 throwing this out there. As opposed to one thing I'd
7 like the Program to consider is, instead of providing a
8 whole new delegation letter, we currently have numerous
9 delegations out there with regard to wildlife and fish,
10 one thing the Board might want to consider is looking
11 at where those gaps are and most likely those gaps
12 might be with regard to some authorities within the
13 field regard to particular species, or are those areas
14 where the delegation of authorities been issued to the
15 ARD of OSM, and if we use those existing delegations
16 with a temporary modification to cover the gaps, we
17 wouldn't be exerting a new authority, but also we could
18 extend that new coordination out there and I think that
19 might be just as expedient and if we were to do so then
20 if we had a temporary modification up until the end of
21 the regulatory year which ends June 30th, 2021 or
22 something like that, that might be more expedient than
23 issuing all new delegations throughout the program.
24

25 Thank you, Mr. Chair.
26

27 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, this is
28 Steve. I would -- yes, it's important for us to know
29 what outreach tool we have in our tool kit available
30 and if OSM can give us a rundown of what is out there
31 and existing, but, again, the view from the Department
32 level is we're responding in a unique way in light of a
33 public safety crises, you know, and I think we should
34 have the discussion is there, you know, can, if we
35 reinvoke those delegation of authority letters that are
36 existing, you know, can we give our field managers some
37 guidelines for the coordination, if that's fair.
38

39 Mr. Chair.
40

41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And I think,
42 was that a question for Ken, Steve?
43

44 MR. WACKOWSKI: Maybe, Ken or Tom, I --
45 yeah, maybe Ken or Tom, I guess.
46

47 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay.
48

49 MR. WACKOWSKI: I'd like to understand.
50

1 And it would be good to know what we already have out
2 there and I agree with Gene, I mean we need to be
3 expedient in our response. So it would be good to know
4 what tools we have in the tool kit to address some of
5 the important concerns rural Alaskans have raised.

6
7 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is Tom, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Tom, you
10 have the floor.

11
12 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, I mean there's a
13 good list of field managers that already have existing
14 letters of delegation in wildlife that we have. And --
15 but a good example would be, on the roll out, it would
16 be easy to amend those with similar language that we
17 have in the present generic letter of delegation that
18 the Board has previously looked at and what the
19 Department has looked at, but a good example for
20 discussion would be take the Koyukuk/Nowitna manager
21 that does not have delegated authority for wildlife,
22 and there's a gap, using that as an example, versus
23 those that -- those other managers where it would be an
24 amendment, how do we -- you know, how does the Board
25 envision handling those gaps. And to me, my one
26 suggestion was that we use this generic letter to fill
27 that gap when needed, or if there's another process,
28 you know, be more than open to understand how that
29 could be rolled out.

30
31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32
33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you.

34
35 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair. You know,
36 what I ask again, and the view from the Department is
37 that we're exercising our authority, or the authority
38 that the Secretary has promulgated down to the Board,
39 in a unique and very important way that is kind of new
40 to the Board and, hence, you know, the importance of
41 proper coordination.

42
43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
44 appreciate that. Any other Board discussion.

45
46 MR. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, Mr. Chair, this
47 is Greg.

48
49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg, you have
50

1 the floor.

2
3 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. Thanks,
4 Steve, for joining the call. I don't see this as being
5 too complicated. You know, we already have a draft of
6 the delegation of authority letter for the new people,
7 we have some existing ones, I think once we get the
8 memo that has some coordination obligations identified
9 in it, that we could pretty easily incorporate those
10 into the delegation of authority letters to kind of
11 move this forward. I don't anticipate that being too
12 much of a timely issue, especially if we can get this
13 memo cleared rather quickly.

14
15 Another question, though, Steve, I
16 think you and I have maybe talked about one time,
17 though, is how do we bring in the Secretary of AG into
18 this, given that it's Department of Interior and
19 Department of Agriculture relationship here in this
20 Federal Subsistence Board, have you given any more
21 thought to that, or maybe Ken, do you have any thoughts
22 on that?

23
24 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair, this is Ken.

25
26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ken, you have
27 the floor.

28
29 MR. LORD: Yeah, copied Dave and Jim
30 Ustishefski from Department of Agriculture on the draft
31 memo and I just assumed we would continue a process
32 like that as we move forward.

33
34 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
35 Greg.

36
37 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg, yes.

38
39 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
40 So, Dave, if you're still on line, I don't know if you
41 were on or not, but do you see anything that we need to
42 do in addition to just coordinating with your legal
43 Counsel?

44
45 MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair, this is Dave.
46 And to get back to Greg, no, I think we've been
47 coordinating here from the beginning and been involving
48 our Office of Governmental Counsel and above there, so
49 I think the coordination is adequate at this point.

50

1 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Thank you, Dave. Yeah, because we were hearing a lot
3 of requests both coming from the Southeast, which would
4 certainly involve a fair amount of Forest Service
5 lands, as well as Interior lands and elsewhere.

6
7 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8
9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
10 Greg.

11
12 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair, one final
13 question.

14
15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the
16 floor.

17
18 MR. C. BROWER: Steve or Dave, so, once
19 this memorandum comes out and I know we have a lot of
20 special requests on food security piling up now, so
21 once these approve will the Refuge managers, or whoever
22 is being delegated to do it have the -- to proceed with
23 the special request proposals?

24
25 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, this is
26 Steve -- or Charlie, this is Steve, through the Chair.
27 Yes, they will be empowered to act as soon as we can
28 get these letters out, and we expect coordination to be
29 happening pretty rapidly, the coordination triggers,
30 very rapidly.

31
32 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

33
34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board
35 discussion, questions for Steve or Staff.

36
37 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
38 Greg.

39
40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg, go ahead.

41
42 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. So just to
43 make sure and I think everybody's maybe thinking
44 somewhat we're all on the same lines, is that, a
45 special action request comes in to a delegated in-
46 season manager, there's still going to be an obligation
47 to do all of the coordination around the community, the
48 State, you know, Fish and Game, with OSM, with the
49 offices for which they are working with, the Refuges,

50

1 the fisheries, and there still has to be some level of
2 an analysis done, and that analysis is what's going to
3 be done to support whether or not the special action
4 request would be approved, and/or then we've satisfied
5 all the coordinations, so there's still going to be a
6 fair amount of work to be done so, you know, I'm
7 expecting Tom, and Sue at OSM, you know, that they're
8 going to be making themselves available from the
9 Staffing standpoint to support, you know, the in-season
10 managers and, you know, figuring out, you know, how
11 they're going to facilitate and do their analysis of
12 the requests as would be, I would expect, you know,
13 Staff and the Refuge management program, as well as
14 fisheries so, with the same level of coordination that
15 always needs to go into the special action request will
16 have to be done, they're just going to have some
17 additional coordination, but we need to make people
18 available because they cannot languish if they're a
19 special -- an emergency or a special action request.

20

21 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
24 Greg.

25

26 MR. LORD: Mr. Chair, this is Ken.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Ken, you have
29 the floor.

30

31 MR. LORD: Yeah, I would add to that
32 that we'll have to make it clear to the managers that
33 they're going to have to draw a distinction between the
34 potential or the fear of a future problem as opposed to
35 an imminent immediate problem with food supplies and
36 food security. The first may not be ripe for action
37 yet, or won't be ripe for action yet, whereas the
38 latter is what they really need to be focused on,
39 whether there's an immediate actual problem now.

40

41 MR. PADGETT: Ken. Sorry, Mr. Chair,
42 Chad Padgett.

43

44 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Chad,
45 speak, go ahead.

46

47 MR. PADGETT: Sorry about that. Ken,
48 can you speak to how this pares up with the State
49 statutes on emergency take of wildlife? As I

50

1 understand it there is provisions for that, so can you
2 maybe speak on how that's going to pare up. Because as
3 I understand it there's already an authority under
4 State statute to take if there's a problem with food
5 security. So I'm trying to figure out where we're at
6 here.

7
8 MR. LORD: What the State statute
9 allows is if you are -- basically if you are starving,
10 you can go take an animal and you can -- you have a
11 defense against -- if you are charged or, at least the
12 State hopefully won't charge you in the first place.
13 What this does, I think, is removes a layer of
14 complexity there by opening a hunt and people know
15 where they stand legally and knows they're able to --
16 you know, because there is this problem that might be a
17 community problem with supply rather than any one
18 individual who is starving who needs to go out and, you
19 know, hunt for his or her family, this allows sort of a
20 clearer approach and maybe one that serves the
21 community at large rather than the individual who is
22 having a problem, or having a group of individuals who
23 all are in this boat and go out and hunt individually
24 rather than having the super hunter go out and take a
25 moose for everyone.

26
27 MR. PADGETT: Okay, Ken, if I heard
28 that right, you're saying that we do have the authority
29 to open a harvest?

30
31 MR. LORD: Well, like Steve said, this
32 is a novel approach but the law clearly states -- or
33 the regulations clearly state that we can open for
34 reasons of public safety so if there's a demonstrated
35 public safety problem, yes.

36
37 MR. PADGETT: Thanks.

38
39 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

40
41 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Gene.

42
43 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
44 One thing I'd like to point out and I don't mean any
45 disrespect by it, but I recall during last week's
46 public testimony on non-agenda items, I recall at least
47 one proponent of a special action request stipulated
48 that they had gone through the State system and they
49 didn't get -- they were declined so they were coming to
50

1 the Federal system. So I just wanted everybody to keep
2 that in mind as well when we deliberate these options.

3

4 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
7 Greg.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg.

10

11 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you. So, Tom, I
12 think, if you don't mind, I think Ken brought up a
13 couple of points but one of them made me start thinking
14 about the validation of these special action requests,
15 is that still a role that OSM will likely be playing

16

17 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, and the
18 validation of requests that -- we do have an opinion on
19 that but, again, when letters of delegation go out, the
20 purpose of that is to encourage -- and when we have a
21 proponent, is to turn over that decision, you know, to
22 the field. So the idea of the letter of delegation
23 would be rather than going to OSM, traditionally --
24 would be a good example, in many of the fishing letters
25 of delegation, unless it's a specific action that the
26 proponent wants the Board to take, then we go through
27 it, but the encouragement will be for those communities
28 to go through the in-season managers for the process.

29

30 And if I could also make a point of
31 clarification relative to -- OSM is more than willing
32 to be and it has a traditional job in the in-season
33 process of helping coordinate the in-season process,
34 but in doing the actual analysis, we are normally not
35 the entity that does the analysis but, of course, we
36 can review that, you know, for folks, and these are
37 decisions that are supposed to be quick and timely, not
38 some of the sorts of analysis that you're looking at in
39 the last week or today that are extremely extensive.
40 The key is, is that they should be short and deal with
41 an emergency situation.

42

43 Thank you, through the Chair and to
44 Board member Siekaniec.

45

46 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is Greg
47 again.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for

50

1 that Tom. Any other questions from the Board or
2 discussion for Steve.

3

4 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
5 Greg, one more time if you don't mind.

6

7 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Not at all,
8 Greg, go ahead.

9

10 MR. SIEKANIEC: Okay. So, Tom, thanks
11 for that. What I guess is rattling around for me is
12 this idea of this is a new approach, we're invoking the
13 public safety aspect of it, we've not done that from
14 what I understand, and I think we need to have a
15 certain level of consistency thought around this
16 because of the, you know, the requirements that we're
17 going to get, so some additional coordination and
18 communication, so I still see the OSM's role as being
19 very key here in helping us, you know, maintain that
20 consistency that's going to be needed for this.

21

22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23

24 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
25 other questions for Steve or Staff.

26

27 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair, Steve.

28

29 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Steve, you have
30 the floor.

31

32 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair. I just want
33 to thank the Board for all their dedication and hard
34 work and you have my commitment for expedient review
35 and response on this critical issue. I know the public
36 testimony last week was heart wrenching, you know, and
37 I think that we've got a critical tool that we can use,
38 I just want to, again, make sure that we, in using this
39 authority in a new way, we do it well, not a manner,
40 that, you know, avoids any potential for longterm
41 damage to the Program.

42

43 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
44 well, I thank you for that, Steve, and I'm glad that
45 the Department is taking up a role to expedite this
46 process, you know, like you said, hearing overwhelming
47 testimony to the needs of rural Alaskans and I think
48 especially with this food security issue and I look
49 forward to the memo coming out and a process that would

50

1 be fast for our delegation of authority to go out and
2 start to make available some reprieve for rural
3 Alaskans. So I appreciate the diligence done by your
4 office and the Staff to get this to the point it is and
5 hopefully, we can, in the next week or two start to see
6 this letter come out and the appropriate steps taken to
7 fulfill some of these SAR requests to people who are in
8 need.

9

10 So definitely thank the Department for
11 their time, and, you, for calling in today, Steve, and
12 all the Board members for your critical questions today
13 that define a path towards us providing this
14 opportunity for rural Alaskans.

15

16 So thank you guys again, and the floor
17 is open still if anyone has any further comments.

18

19 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Gene.

22

23 MR. PELTOLA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
24 one thing I'd like to point out is that the existing
25 delegation of authority letters are for emergency
26 special actions less than 60 days, and then also and
27 the role that OSM has played, I can attest that in-
28 season managers have sent their justifications to OSM
29 for assistance for review and I know that the Wildlife
30 Program, and I believe the Fisheries Program has
31 vacancies at this time, so such -- and if that is the
32 case, if OSM requested, the Bureau of Indian Affairs
33 would be more than happy to provide assistance from our
34 subsistence Staff here at the Bureau to assist OSM,
35 albeit OSM will still have the final authority on
36 what's going out the door.

37

38 So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
41 that offer, Gene, appreciate that.

42

43 MR. SCHMID: Mr. Chair, Forest Service.

44

45 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Dave,
46 you have the floor.

47

48 MR. SCHMID: Yeah, just, one, I would
49 thank Mr. Wackowski's leadership here in trying to

50

1 coordinate this, it is new territory, I think that
2 we're venturing in. And the only comment I would have,
3 it'll be interesting to see where we land here in terms
4 of coordination, it's critically important that we do
5 coordinate, but how you define coordination and define
6 that consistently as we look across the state, I think
7 will be important, it means different things to
8 different people.

9

10 So thank you, Mr. Chair.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
13 Dave.

14

15 Any other Board discussion or comments
16 for Steve or Staff.

17

18 MR. C. BROWER: Mr. Chair.

19

20 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
21 Charlie, you have the floor.

22

23 MR. C. BROWER: Yeah, I also would like
24 to thank Steve for the work that he's doing and keeping
25 us informed as things progress, so, thank you very
26 much.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, so
29 it sounds like we're winding down. Any other Board
30 member wanting to make a statement or comment to food
31 security.

32

33 MS. PITKA: This is Rhonda Pitka.

34

35 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, Rhonda,
36 you have the floor.

37

38 MS. PITKA: I would very much be
39 interested in reading this memo. I think it's
40 premature to me to be asking questions on something
41 that I haven't read or reviewed yet. So if we could
42 make that available, I'd really appreciate it.

43

44 Thank you.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
47 Rhonda.

48

49 MR. WACKOWSKI: Mr. Chair. We will

50

1 absolutely make it available to the Board once it gets
2 cleared to go to DC, we'll make that happen in tandem.

3

4 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you for
5 that response, Steve, appreciate it.

6

7 Any further discussion, questions.

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I just want to
12 thank, again, the Board too and steering, again, us in
13 a direction and a path towards trying to find some
14 resolve for this critical issue. So thank you guys.

15

16 I think that marks the end of our food
17 security discussion.

18

19 MS. TRUMBLE: Mr. Chair.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead.

22

23 MS. TRUMBLE: This is Della Trumble. I
24 was waiting to see if you were going to have any
25 questions from the RAC Chairs, is it appropriate to ask
26 a question at this time.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead,
29 Della, you have the floor.

30

31 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you. My question
32 is, in listening to this discussion, and I know that
33 Dean Gould had put in a special request to extend the
34 caribou season to April 30th, which is almost over, and
35 how this is going to play out at this point, and he
36 just left here, because beyond April 30th we're not
37 going to want to go and try to harvest any caribou
38 because they most likely -- the females, will hopefully
39 be pregnant, and so I guess my question in looking at
40 this process of sending in a special request in very
41 early April and not hearing anything from anybody and
42 understanding the issue around the Covid and people are
43 working out of their homes, I really think -- I'm not
44 sure what the process will be in the future but I think
45 this is kind of sad in a way because, you know, I had
46 requests from False Pass and from King Cove and I'm not
47 sure what the answer is at this point, but it is a
48 little disheartening.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Sorry, I did
2 apologize on us having a lag in this process due to it
3 just being unchartered territory and like I said I hope
4 this can find some resolve through that and I'm not
5 sure on how we would extend that to those special
6 action requests like you're saying that have a midnight
7 date of like this week and providing that opportunity.
8 And so hopefully there's a way that we can also look at
9 those and maybe adjust them, but also be mindful of
10 some of our cultural practices that may keep us from
11 doing what we need to do to provide for our families so
12 that's also something we have to consider.

13

14 So thanks for bringing that up Della.

15

16 MS. TRUMBLE: Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Any other Board
19 discussion, question, comments.

20

21 (No comments)

22

23 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
24 hearing none, Tom, I would ask you what other agenda
25 items do we have on the table before us. I know
26 there's the Fortymile Caribou.

27

28 MR. DOOLITTLE: And then there's the
29 report for the request for reconsideration 15-01. And
30 then we were going to talk about RAC appointments also
31 as other business is what I have on the list.

32

33 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: On other
34 business. Okay, well, right now it's 10 to 12:00, I
35 anticipate what it'll take an hour or two?

36

37 MR. DOOLITTLE: I would hope that the
38 Fortymile Caribou would be pretty quick and considering
39 the RFR is a report, I would believe that would be
40 fairly fast also and then it's review of our 2020
41 summer work session and -- but some of that we've
42 already sent out polls for that and also to discuss the
43 winter public meeting, but we don't necessarily have to
44 hit that right now. But I know on other business, that
45 the RAC appointments were of interest to the Board.

46

47 Thank you.

48

49 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, Tom,

50

1 well, I think, you know, maybe what we'll do right now
2 without any opposition is take a 40 to 45 minute break.

3

4 MR. C. BROWER: Yes.

5

6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes.

7

8 MR. C. BROWER: I might be a little
9 late this afternoon after the break because I have some
10 stuff to do so.

11

12 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I appreciate
13 you making the time this morning, Charlie, to get in on
14 that important conversation so I thank you for that.

15

16 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
17 Greg.

18

19 MR. C. BROWER: Thank you.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Greg.

22

23 MR. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, Mr. Chair, thank
24 you. Tom, is there any way we could possibly do a few
25 of these actions just via email because they're kind of
26 like, I think they're updates, I don't believe they
27 require any Board action. You know, the Fortymile
28 Caribou Plan we all have, you know, I guess the one
29 discussion with the RAC Chairs potentially but we're
30 operational -- or excuse me, not the Chairs, but the
31 RAC appointments, but we're operational for now, so I'm
32 just looking for a way with other people who are
33 obviously expressing that they have other commitments
34 because we brought this into, not just another day, but
35 another week, if we can shorten this up some way.

36

37 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38

39 MR. DOOLITTLE: Through the Chair, this
40 is Tom Doolittle.

41

42 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Tom,
43 you have the floor.

44

45 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, the one action
46 item -- the remaining action item is the Fortymile
47 Caribou Herd harvest plan. So if we did take care of
48 that, even right now, we could reschedule the other
49 items for discussion and into the future, Mr. Chair,

50

1 and to respond to Board Member Siekaniec.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Well, why don't
4 we entertain the Fortymile Caribou presentation at this
5 time.

6

7 MR. DOOLITTLE: Okay.

8

9 MS. WORKER: Mr. Chair. I think one of
10 the ADF&G folks were going to introduce the Fortymile
11 Caribou Harvest Plan, Mark or Ben, are you prepared to
12 do that or do you have Staff on line?

13

14 MR. MULLIGAN: Hi, this is Ben
15 Mulligan. Yeah, just I'll give -- we've got area Staff
16 that can come on line to describe it in more detail, if
17 the Board so wishes. This is just something, you know,
18 that came to our attention. The harvest plan that has
19 a lot of players involved including the State, Federal
20 agencies, the RACs, and there's been a history of
21 bringing this harvest plan to both the Board of Game
22 and the Federal Subsistence Board to get, I mean, for a
23 lack of better terms, signed off on. So the Board of
24 Game heard our presentation earlier and kind of gave it
25 its blessing and we're here to do the same thing in
26 front of the Federal Subsistence Board and so we
27 appreciate the opportunity, and I believe Jeff Gross
28 should be on line to describe it in a little more
29 detail than I can give.

30

31 I'm trying to coordinate that right
32 now, so I apologize.

33

34 (Pause)

35

36 MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator, is Mr. Jeff
37 Gross on line.

38

39 OPERATOR: Certainly, let me open his
40 line.

41

42 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you.

43

44 OPERATOR: And, Jeff Gross, your line
45 is open.

46

47 MR. GROSS: Hi, this is Jeff Gross with
48 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Tok.

49

50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, go ahead,
2 Jeff, you have the floor.

3
4 MR. GROSS: Yeah, I don't know if Jim
5 Herriges is on the line, he's our BLM management
6 partner for the Fortymile Herd, and Jim oversees all
7 the Federal aspects of this plan and the Fortymile Herd
8 management. I guess I would offer to Jim, if he'd like
9 to introduce the plan. I did it with the Alaska Board
10 of Game for the State side of things.

11
12 Anyway, I think he's on line.

13
14 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, we'll
15 give him the floor.

16
17 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, this is Chad.

18
19 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Go ahead, Chad.

20
21 MR. PADGETT: Just want to let you know
22 it looks like Jim is trying to dial in now, I just got
23 a message on that so he's trying to dial in.

24
25 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, we'll
26 just give him a moment.

27
28 MR. PADGETT: Thank you.

29
30 (Pause)

31
32 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, this is Chad.
33 We're still trying to get a hold of him here, we
34 thought he was dialed in but maybe not.

35
36 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Okay, we'll
37 just wait another few minutes and hopefully he gets on.

38
39 (Pause)

40
41 OPERATOR: This is the Operator, I do
42 apologize, and what was Jim's last name?

43
44 MS. WORKER: It's Herriges.

45
46 OPERATOR: Thank you.

47
48 MS. WORKER: H-A-R-R-I-G-U-S.

49
50

1 OPERATOR: I'm not seeing that he's
2 joined yet.
3
4 MS. WORKER: Okay.
5
6 OPERATOR: I did, however, have
7 somebody that did press star one awhile ago and you
8 didn't take public comment, I didn't know if you wanted
9 that line open at any point.
10
11 MS. WORKER: I don't think so.
12
13 (Pause)
14
15 MR. PADGETT: He should be dialing in
16 now.
17
18 (Pause)
19
20 MR. DOOLITTLE: Operator, is Jim on
21 line yet?
22
23 OPERATOR: I'm not seeing that Jim has
24 dialed in.
25
26 MR. HERRIGES: I am on line.
27
28 MS. WORKER: If he's.....
29
30 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, all right.
31
32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right, Jim,
33 you got the floor.
34
35 MR. HERRIGES: Okay. So you guys
36 haven't discussed this yet?
37
38 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We were waiting
39 for you to provide the summary of the plan so no we
40 haven't discussed it yet.
41
42 MR. HERRIGES: Okay, great. Well, this
43 is basically just an update for a plan that's -- it's
44 probably the fifth update of this plan since the
45 mid'90s and in essence it lays out a framework for
46 management of the herd including how to allocate
47 harvest between Yukon Territory and Alaska and it has
48 been focused in the past -- the difference from the
49 past versions, in the past it's been focused pretty
50

1 much on herd growth, with that objective of trying to
2 increase the herd and expand the range to -- into more
3 of the historical range into the Yukon especially. And
4 so in this version of the plan the -- there is a bit of
5 a shift because the herd has grown from 22,000 and when
6 the planning process was started to this, the most
7 recent estimate was 84,000 two summer ago and the
8 objective that was set and is still set in this herd --
9 in this plan is between 50 and 100,000 and so along
10 with that, some of the indices of nutritional condition
11 that Fish and Game has been monitoring especially
12 pregnancy rate in three year old cows has been kind of
13 on a steady decline and so there's some concern that
14 the herd is potentially reaching carrying capacity and
15 could go into a decline. And so this herd -- or this
16 plan maintains an objective of a slower level of herd
17 growth but also lays out options for kind of frameworks
18 for other alternatives, in other words if something
19 indicates it needs to be really drastically indicated,
20 there's kind of like options in there or it needs to be
21 -- harvest needs to be cut way back because it is
22 crashing, that's in there as well.

23
24 It doesn't strictly lay out the
25 management in how subsistence management occurs, other
26 than recommending that we continue with the joint
27 Federal and State registration permit as a way to
28 manage this hunt, which has been something that the
29 planning teams have recommended all along. And so the
30 -- but it does have a few objectives related to
31 subsistence, which basically is to continue to maintain
32 the -- both the -- well, provide reasonable opportunity
33 for Alaska subsistence uses and manage Alaska hunts to
34 allow opportunity for non-subsistence hunters while
35 staying within the constraints of the other goals.

36
37 So the way that we have maintained a
38 subsistence opportunity in this herd up to now has
39 mostly been -- in some years there's been an early
40 start to -- the State season has been delayed until the
41 end of August and the Federal season opened on August
42 10th. That ended a couple of years ago when the State
43 needed to expand the season more to get adequate
44 harvest. But often the State season will be closed
45 after a few days, sometimes, when the herd is next to a
46 highway system and the quota's been met and the -- and
47 then we'll normally leave the Federal season open
48 usually for the rest of the season, at least -- it's
49 probably been five or six years since we have closed
50

1 the Federal season early rather than just leaving it
2 open. And that quota system is kind of one of the main
3 aspects of the plan.

4
5 So this plan has been, for the past --
6 the past four or five versions of it has been the
7 planning team has requested that both the Federal Board
8 and the State Board endorse this plan and so that is
9 what is basically on the agenda here.

10
11 And with that I'll see if you have
12 anything you want me to add or address or any
13 questions.

14
15 MR. SIEKANIEC: Mr. Chair, this is
16 Greg.

17
18 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Greg, yes, go
19 ahead the floor is yours.

20
21 MR. SIEKANIEC: Yeah, thank you very
22 much for the introduction and the presentation. I'm
23 trying to understand a little bit more about the
24 relationship between the subsistence and potentially
25 non-subsistence user, or rural residents and non. Is
26 there going to be asking for a Federal in-season
27 manager to provide some rural priority by extending
28 perhaps the front end of the season, you know, when the
29 herd obviously can support it and when there's enough
30 numbers or location and various things; I'm trying to
31 figure out if that's part of what you were trying to
32 describe or not?

33
34 MR. HERRIGES: The WP20-48 that was in
35 the consensus agenda basically allowed us to set
36 seasons outside of the dates that we are currently at
37 and the Eastern Interior RAC suggested that we do open
38 the season early on August 1st to give some early
39 season opportunity to Federal subsistence hunters and
40 with the approval of that we'll have the ability to do
41 that.

42
43 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
44 And thank you for that reminder that WP20-48 was also
45 associated with this and that that makes the
46 relationship much clearer for me.

47
48 Thank you.

49
50

1 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you. Any
2 other additional questions for Jim.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
7 appreciate that, Jim.

8
9 Tom, was this one we're looking for a
10 motion for?

11
12 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yes, it's just to have
13 a motion to approve the cooperation of the Board with
14 the Fortymile Caribou Management Plan.

15
16 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: The floor is
17 open for the motion.

18
19 MR. PADGETT: Mr. Chair, Chad Padgett
20 with BLM.

21
22 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the
23 floor, Chad.

24
25 MR. PADGETT: Thank you. I move to
26 endorse the proposed Fortymile Caribou Plan as
27 submitted by the Harvest Management Coalition. This
28 proposal is shown on Page 1427 of the Board book.
29 Following a second I will explain why I intend to
30 endorse this motion.

31
32 MR. SIEKANIEC: Second, Fish and
33 Wildlife Service.

34
35 MR. PADGETT: Thank you, Greg. My
36 justification is the following:

37
38 This harvest management plan will be
39 the framework to guide management of this important
40 international herd to maintain abundant and wide
41 ranging caribou. Balancing the herd health with
42 caribou abundance and range expansion is the
43 conservation which makes a cohesive management
44 framework critical. This management approach is
45 supported by substantial empirical evidence, it has
46 resulted in a population increase from approximately
47 22,000 to 84,000 animals in about 25 years. The plan
48 will support subsistence opportunity and continue
49 customary and traditional uses of caribou. The
50

1 management plan will not unnecessarily restrict other
2 users and will improve subsistence opportunity for
3 Federal and State subsistence users and Yukon First
4 Nation users.

5

6 Thank you, and appreciate everybody's
7 patience while we got Jim on the phone.

8

9 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: All right,
10 thank you for that Chad. Any Board discussion or
11 deliberation on the motion.

12

13 MR. PELTOLA: Mr. Chair, BIA.

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: You have the
16 floor.

17

18 MR. PELTOLA: With regard to discussion
19 I'd like to point out that endorsement of this plan by
20 the Federal Subsistence Board does not necessarily
21 constitute removing the obligation to provide for a
22 rural preference or a priority consumptive use for
23 Federally-qualified users on Federal lands in the areas
24 of question.

25

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27

28 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you,
29 Gene. Any other Board deliberation, discussion,
30 questions.

31

32 (No comments)

33

34 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll call for
35 the question.

36

37 OPERATOR: We do have a question on the
38 phone lines if you'd like to take it.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Is it one of
41 our RAC members?

42

43 OPERATOR: I apologize, it's from Wayne
44 Owen.

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Yes, we'll go
47 ahead and take that, Wayne.

48

49 OPERATOR: I'll open that line at this

50

1 time.

2

3 MR. OWEN: Sorry, Mr. Chair, I was just
4 beeping in because Mr. Schmid has taken a break and
5 I'll be voting for him instead for the Forest Service.
6 Sorry for the interruption.

7

8 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: And that's
9 fine, thank you for taking the time to sign on and sit
10 in for him. So any other Board discussion or
11 deliberation on this proposal.

12

13 (No comments)

14

15 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: We'll call for
16 the question.

17

18 MR. SIEKANIEC: Question, Fish and
19 Wildlife Service.

20

21 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Question's been
22 called. Roll call, Tom, please.

23

24 (No comments)

25

26 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Did we lose our
27 Staff here, Tom, are you available to do roll call?

28

29 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yep, I'm here, I had to
30 switch phones, sorry about that.

31

32 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: That's fine.

33

34 MR. DOOLITTLE: This is for the
35 approved cooperation by the Federal Subsistence Board
36 for the Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Plan.

37

38 We'll start with Don Striker, National
39 Park Service, or Josh Ream.

40

41 MR. REAM: Hi, Tom, this is Josh, Tom's
42 trying to call back in, he just got dropped, so if we
43 could come back to us, that'd be great.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 MR. DOOLITTLE: That's great.

48

49 Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg

50

1 Siekaniec.
2
3 MR. SIEKANIEC: Thank you, Tom. I
4 support the motion to endorse the Fortymile Caribou
5 Management Plan with the justification provided by the
6 Bureau of Land Management and thank people for getting
7 on the phone with this kind of short notice.
8
9 Thank you.
10
11 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Greg.
12
13 U.S. Forest Service, Wayne Owen.
14
15 OPERATOR: One moment, please.....
16
17 MR. DOOLITTLE: U.S. Forest
18 Service.....
19
20 OPERATOR:would you like his line
21 open at this time?
22
23 MR. DOOLITTLE: Mr. Owen's line's not
24 open?
25
26 OPERATOR: It is not open at this time,
27 we'll go ahead and open it for you.
28
29 MR. OWEN:as presented.
30
31 OPERATOR: His line is open.
32
33 MR. OWEN: Hello.
34
35 MR. DOOLITTLE: Yeah, hi, Wayne.
36
37 MR. OWEN: Okay, third time, great.
38 The Forest Service votes affirmatively to support the
39 Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Plan as briefed.
40
41 Thank you.
42
43 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you.
44
45 Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gene Peltola.
46
47 MR. PELTOLA: Bureau of Indian Affairs
48 votes to support the endorsement of the Fortymile
49 Caribou Plan, also we'd like to articulate that
50

1 accepting the framework does not necessarily remove the
2 obligation of the Federal Subsistence Program to
3 provide for the rural preference and priority
4 consumptive use on Federal lands.

5

6 Thank you.

7

8 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Gene.

9

10 Rhonda Pitka.

11

12 MS. PITKA: I support endorsement of
13 this plan for the reasons as stated by the BIA.

14

15 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Rhonda.

16

17 Charlie Brower, are you still with us?

18

19 MR. C. BROWER: I'm still here. I
20 support the Fortymile Caribou Harvest Plan with BIA's
21 statement.

22

23 Thank you.

24

25 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Charlie.

26

27 Bureau of Land Management, Chad

28

29 Padgett.

30

31 MR. PADGETT: I support as stated,

32

33 thank you.

34

35 MR. DOOLITTLE: Thank you, Chad.

36

37 National Park Service, Don Striker.

38

39 MR. REAM: This is Josh Ream, Don
40 Striker did ask me to vote for the National Park
41 Service on this issue. We do vote in favor of
42 endorsing the Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Plan.
43 We would like to emphasize the need for the Federal
44 manager to consider the rural priority extension on the
45 front end of the season and we also want to mention
46 that Yukon-Charley Staff do intend to be more involved
47 with the coalition in the future.

48

49 Thank you.

50

MR. DOOLITTLE: And last but not least,

1 Chairman Anthony Christianson.

2

3 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: I support the
4 plan as presented.

5

6 MR. DOOLITTLE: The motion to support
7 the Fortymile Caribou Harvest Plan is unanimous.

8

9 And, Mr. Chair, Staff said we could put
10 off the RFR description until this summer, and the only
11 thing that you have left is the motion to adjourn.

12

13 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Thank you, Tom.
14 Again, I want to thank everybody for calling in and
15 taking the time to come back on Monday.

16

17 I'd like to thank all of the public
18 that called in. I know there was yearning today to do
19 some type of public testimony but I would just like to
20 apologize to everybody, you know, I wanted to make sure
21 we were able to get to the order of business and allow
22 our Staff some time to go ahead and start to produce
23 the documents and get those things started that need to
24 get started for us to go ahead and make this
25 opportunity available for the public.

26

27 I want to thank all of the Staff for
28 doing a good job and doing diligence and the work that
29 we accomplished in the last week and thank you to all
30 the Board members for being expedient in the work that
31 we do.

32

33 So thank you guys, and with that I'll
34 open up the floor to a motion to adjourn.

35

36 MR. C. BROWER: So moved.

37

38 MR. SIEKANIEC: Second.

39

40 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion's been
41 made and seconded, any opposition to the motion to
42 adjourn.

43

44 (No opposition)

45

46 CHAIRMAN CHRISTIANSON: Motion carries
47 unanimously.

48

49 (Off record)

50

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
) ss.
STATE OF ALASKA)

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

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DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 26th day of May 2020.

Salena A. Hile
Notary Public, State of Alaska
My Commission Expires: 09/16/22