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1 SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE
2 REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

3
4 PUBLIC MEETING

5
6 VOLUME II

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10 Prince of Wales Vocational and
11 Technical Education Center
12 Klawock, Alaska
13 October 25, 2023
14 8:34 a.m.

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18 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

19
20 Donald Hernandez, Chairman
21 Larry Bemis
22 Calvin Casipit
23 Michael Douville
24 Albert Howard
25 Harvey Kitka
26 Cathy Needham
27 Patricia Phillips
28 Robert Schroeder
29 Jim Slater
30 John Smith
31 Louie Wagner
32 Frank Wright

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36 Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry
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43 Recorded and transcribed by:

44
45 Computer Matrix Court Reporters, LLC
46 329 F Street, Suite 222
47 Anchorage, AK 99501
48 907-227-5312/sahile@gci.net
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Klawock, Alaska - 10/25/2023)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Good morning everybody. It looks like we've all gathered and are ready to resume through the day. On the agenda today we still have some old business to attend to and we'll start off with that old business by resuming where we left off last night with the non-rural determination for Ketchikan. We heard a fair amount of public testimony yesterday. We're still on that agenda topic so, you know, I'll accept other comments this morning if people still are out there that want to make comments on the Ketchikan non-rural determination but we still have to get some comments from the Council members on record here so we'll be doing that as the first item of business after we open up an opportunity for public testimony and comments on non-agenda items. And if you would like -- if you're in the room and you would like to do a comment on non-agenda items I'll point out again and kind of ask you to fill out these blue cards and bring them up so we'll get an idea of how many people are interested and we'll also check the phone lines to see if there's anybody on the telephone who would like to make a comment on a non-agenda item.

Okay.

So that's how we'll begin our day but first I think we need to do a roll call to make sure we have a quorum and I think DeAnna's going to do that.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Roll call for the Council.

Louie Wagner.

MR. WAGNER: Here.

MS. PERRY: Harvey Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Here.

MS. PERRY: John Smith, III.

MR. SMITH: Here.

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MS. PERRY: Cathy Needham.

MS. NEEDHAM: Here.

MS. PERRY: Patricia Phillips.

MS. PHILLIPS: Here.

MS. PERRY: Albert Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Here.

MS. PERRY: Robert Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Here.

MS. PERRY: Mike Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Here.

MS. PERRY: Cal Casipit.

MR. CASIPIT: Here.

MS. PERRY: Larry Bemis.

MR. BEMIS: Here.

MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.

(No comments)

MS. PERRY: Frank Wright, are you on
the phone.

MR. WRIGHT: Here. Yes.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Frank.

And Jim Slater, is Jim on the phone.

MR. SLATER: Yes, I'm here.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Slater.

And Don Hernandez.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Here.

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1 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Hernandez.
2 Mr. Chair, Mr. Chair, you have all 13 Council members
3 present and you have a quorum.

4
5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Very good.
6 Appreciate you guys on the phone being able to call in
7 this morning, glad to hear you.

8
9 Mike, do you have something.

10
11 MR. DOUVILLE: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I
12 just wanted some clarification. We are -- I believe
13 this was an opportunity for the Council to provide
14 comment to OSM on KIC's proposal, it's not a forum for
15 making a decision or debate. But it seems like the
16 comments are focused towards the Council and not OSM
17 for most of what we heard yesterday. Am I correct?

18
19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: So the way I
20 understood the presentation yesterday from Mr. Vickers
21 was that he is looking for comment from the Council and
22 we don't have to do a formal Council comment. Items --
23 you know, points that we discuss here around the table
24 he's going to be taking that from the transcripts, I
25 presume, and incorporating just comments that Council
26 members make on -- we're not deliberating on anything
27 now, that comes later so we're not drawing conclusions
28 on this issue we're just identifying important factors
29 that we would like them to consider and maybe, you
30 know, giving our opinions on weighing those factors as
31 well I guess would probably be included but, no, we're
32 not actually doing any deliberation, there's no
33 decisions being made at this meeting, that happens next
34 year. I think that's my understanding. And if I'm
35 incorrect in any of that then come forward and -- I'm
36 getting the thumb's up so I guess that's what we're
37 doing. Our discussions will be incorporated in as
38 comments from the Council, anything we discuss around
39 this table, yeah, will be captured.

40
41 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay, thank you.

42
43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah.

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45 MR. DOUVILLE: It's a concern. It
46 seems like it was going farther than what was necessary
47 and we have a whole big long agenda to take care of and
48 I was concerned.

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1 Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I recognize
4 that, you know, given the importance of the issue --
5 yeah, some -- it may be easy to kind of go beyond maybe
6 at times what they're looking for but I think that's
7 just kind of the nature of the discussion that, yeah,
8 we tend to get in to some decisionmaking is expressed
9 but that's not really what we're looking for now. It's
10 helpful comments on continuing with this process, I
11 guess.

12

13

Okay. I'll start with the public
14 comment session this morning and I have a card here
15 from Karli Tyance Hassell and Heather Douville. I have
16 two names here so.

17

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19

(Pause)

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23

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Whenever
21 you're ready. Please correct me any mispronunciation
22 of your name so.

24

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MS. HASSELL: You actually got it
24 right.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.
MS. HASSELL: You pronounced it right
30 which rarely happens. So thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
31 morning Council members. My name is Karli Tyance
32 Hassell, I'm Anishinaabe (In Native), which is Gull Bay
33 First Nation located in Northwestern Ontario back in
34 Canada but I currently serve as a Senior Policy
35 Coordinator for Central Council of Tlingit & Haida
36 Indian Tribes of Alaska and I'm joined with my
37 colleague Heather here and I'll let her introduce
38 herself.

40

41

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MS. DOUVILLE: Good morning, everyone.
41 My name's Heather Douville. I'm from Craig, Alaska,
42 and my dad's over there, Mike Douville, and I'm the
43 Regional Resource Coordinator for Tlingit & Haida.

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Thank you.

MS. HASSELL: So we wish to address the
48 Council today on the topic of the Marine Mammal
49 Protection Act, co-management and the northern sea

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1 otter population. Heather had distributed a copy of a
2 letter that was sent to the Alaska Regional Director
3 early in October -- I should say Alaska Regional
4 Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for your
5 reference as we provide this testimony today. And we
6 realize this is a non-agenda item but we appreciate
7 your time.

8

9 So Tlingit & Haida as you probably know
10 is the largest State and Federally-recognized tribe in
11 Alaska representing 37,000 citizens and we serve 18
12 villages and communities spread out across 43,000 miles
13 of traditional homelands throughout Southeast Alaska.
14 And the management of indigenous lands and waters is
15 really crucial to maintaining Tlingit & Haida way of
16 life and it's an expression of tribal sovereignty.

17

18 Shared ancestral lands and waters
19 provide incredible opportunities for indigenous led
20 large scale collaborative projects that can really
21 connect and restore lands, waters and wildlife that are
22 a foundation of cultural existence, economic welfare.
23 Since time and memorial, Tlingit & Haida and Tsimshian
24 people have steward traditional homelands and waters
25 and sustained these relationships through traditional
26 and customary fishing practices, sometimes referred to
27 as subsistence and these life ways really nourish the
28 Tlingit & Haida and Tsimshian people by supporting
29 physical health, mental health, well-being, spiritual
30 health, culture and language and preserving and
31 protecting these ways of life is really vital for the
32 continued existence and, again, is an expression of
33 sovereignty. Tlingit & Haida seeks to co-manage with
34 the Fish and Wildlife Service the northern sea otter
35 population located within the traditional territory in
36 Southeast Alaska as identified in Tlingit & Haida
37 Indians of Alaska versus the U.S. Under Section 119 of
38 the MMPA, Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Fish and
39 Wildlife Service is authorized to enter into agreements
40 with Alaska Native organizations and tribes to conserve
41 marine mammals and provide co-management of subsistence
42 species by Alaska Natives. Co-management agreements
43 benefit both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its
44 tribal partners by really expanding monitoring data
45 collection and research opportunities for the agency
46 while allowing tribes to ensure cultural preservation,
47 food security and access to healthy foods for their
48 citizens. We heard yesterday, on the broader issue of
49 the lack of consistent baseline data across the region,
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1 due to State capacity issues, funding issues, which
2 could really lead to major data gaps. And tribes and
3 tribal organizations are really well situated to access
4 specific funding designated and set aside for tribes
5 and we're also really well situated to provide real-
6 time information, community based monitoring and
7 traditional knowledge for strengthened decisionmaking.

8
9 So Tlingit & Haida does not define
10 tribal citizenship by blood quantum but rather enrolled
11 by lineal descent and many enrolled tribal citizens are
12 prevented by the 1/4th blood quantum standard cited in
13 Section 18.3, Part 50 of the Code of Federal
14 Regulations from engaging in harvesting and using
15 marine mammals. And this regulation has really had a
16 detrimental impact on Tlingit & Haida. Many tribal
17 citizens are not allowed to engage in subsistence
18 harvesting of sea otters within traditional territory
19 because of the outdated emphasis on blood quantum. In
20 addition to subsistence harvesters this regulation also
21 prevents many Tlingit & Haida artists from using and
22 creating cultural art and handy work with sea otter
23 pelts. Furthermore, the detrimental effect of this
24 arbitrary regulation is that it's preventing the
25 passage of traditional knowledge and skills from elders
26 to youth, younger tribal citizens. So for instance,
27 tribal citizens who can legally harvest sea otters and
28 work with sea otter pelts often cannot teach their
29 skills to other tribal citizens because those citizens
30 do not meet the 1/4th blood quantum standard and young
31 people really need to learn these skills to keep
32 cultural practices alive.

33
34 In some areas of Southeast Alaska the
35 over population of sea otters has led to the decline of
36 other traditionally harvested species which sea otters
37 eat and the current management plan is really affecting
38 all tribal citizens in Southeast by reducing through
39 sea otters -- their consumption of their foods, the
40 populations of traditional harvested species such as
41 king crab, dungeness crab, abalone, sea urchin,
42 gumboots as well as clam species such as geoducks,
43 cockles, butter clams, horse clam and sea otters have
44 really destroyed octopus populations within intertidal
45 zones and they can no longer be traditionally harvested
46 from these areas and need to be obtained from deeper
47 waters typically found within shrimp pots.

48
49 So, in summary, by allowing more tribal
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1 citizens to engage in sustainable harvest of sea otters
2 through a regional co-management plan with specific
3 policies and procedures that are negotiated and
4 outlined through jointly written and agreed upon
5 harvest management plans we can really bring back the
6 balance into the ecosystem in Southeast Alaska by
7 allowing traditionally harvested species to thrive for
8 generations to come. And we really believe that a
9 regional co-management agreement between the U.S. Fish
10 and Wildlife Service and Tlingit & Haida can meet these
11 goals. So we would really appreciate the Councils
12 support on this matter.

13

14 Gunalcheesh. Haw'aa. For your time
15 and listening.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
18 Karli. Do you have anything else to add, Heather, or
19 -- okay, we'll open it up for questions from the
20 Council then. Mike, did you have something.

21

22 MR. DOUVILLE: I didn't hear what you
23 said.

24

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Oh, any questions
26 from the Council.

27

28 Larry.

29

30 MR. BEMIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
31 Isn't it -- you know, I agree with what you're saying
32 here and I'd just like to shed some light on something
33 that has happened here on our blood quantum. It was
34 voted by Sealaska to tone down the blood quantum before
35 people, the younger generation to be able to have
36 access of Sealaska. They're the first ones to break
37 the barrier of utilizing a blood quantum for justifying
38 what you can do and can't do. And that took awhile to
39 get there, but it was voted on and it's a good thing
40 because we're losing so many elders, and we're losing
41 so much of our resources and everything. And I think
42 what you've got here is justifiable, it just depends on
43 how it's handled and the best way forward. Sealaska
44 took awhile to get there and then it finally got voted
45 on and I agree, we're all dealing with something like
46 this. But it's like one of those things, they say,
47 it's like an Act of Congress to get it going.

48

49 But I definitely, as a Council member,

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1 agree because, you know, one of my daughters falls
2 under the threshold of being within a 1/16th and she's
3 an artist and sews furs and everything and she said,
4 you know, really I can't have these or be messing with
5 these, I can't sell it, but I can make them and give
6 them away by getting pelts from somebody else.

7

8 So I like what you're presenting here
9 and I hope you have luck with it.

10

11 Thank you.

12

13 MS. DOUVILLE: Gunalcheesh.

14

15 MS. HASSELL: Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

18

19 Patty.

20

21 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
22 Hernandez. Thank you for the correspondence. I think
23 there's two issues here, is that what I'm reading, is,
24 one is the blood quantum issue and then the other one
25 is the co-management, so are you asking for our
26 endorsement for both of those or just the co-management
27 section? Because it seems like the blood quantum topic
28 would have to go through a different sort of a, I don't
29 know, process, so maybe you could clarify that for me.

30

31 MS. HASSELL: Yeah, we do realize the
32 blood quantum is maybe a little bit more complex than
33 asking for a co-management plan with the U.S. Fish and
34 Wildlife Service. We realize that one thing might take
35 a little bit longer than the other but we do hope to
36 accomplish both things, concurrently. So whatever the
37 Council feels are the best ways to support this we'd be
38 willing to hear those as well.

39

40 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Patty.

41

42 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
43 Hernandez. On the co-management agreements, and it
44 says with their tribal partners -- this letter's
45 obviously from Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian
46 Tribes of Alaska, but is it the goal to bring in the
47 other tribes like, you know, like the POW tribes,
48 Hoonah tribe, Angoon tribe, is that the goal to
49 include, you know, these regional tribes under the
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1 umbrella of Central Council?

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Thank you.

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MS. HASSELL: Yes, we'd be willing to
6 meet with tribes to hear what their specific goals
7 would be for management of sea otter populations within
8 their traditional areas. We realize that the density
9 of sea otter population might be different in various
10 areas across Southeast Alaska so that's where a
11 specific harvest management plan would kind of talk
12 about those parameters of how many are in the area,
13 when to harvest, so we would work specifically with the
14 tribes to discuss those.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Mr. Schroeder.

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Will note that, as a Council, we have
authority over to make recommendations on subsistence
issues. It's not exactly clear where sea otters fall
in there. It may be -- perhaps if we have a little bit
of discussion on this, I think there's a strong
rationale to see sea otters as well as other marine
mammals as being subsistence -- subsistence creatures
although they may not be exactly under the authority
under ANILCA for us.

I did have a couple of other things on
sea otters that you may be interested and could be
helpful.

One is I had -- I was able to meet with
a good friend of ours who participated in the sea
otters reintroduction to Southeast Alaska in the late
'70s -- '60s and that's Skip Wallen, who also --
everybody knows Skip Wallen because he did the whale in
Juneau downtown and poor Skip is, he's pretty sick, he
had a bad stroke but he was writing up his memoirs and

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1 he has a whole chapter on sea otters and -- and
2 probably many of us in the room know something about
3 this, there was an initial Fish and Game effort to
4 transplant sea otters, to reintroduce them to
5 Southeast Alaska. Over two years they transplanted
6 approximately 100 sea otters, 50 a year, and they were
7 using pretty small planes and it was kind of a
8 shoestring operation. Then, interestingly enough, the
9 military got involved and came up with some big plan
10 and big funding and put another 100 sea otters in
11 Southeast Alaska.

12
13 You may also want to contact -- I also
14 found out that, interestingly enough, a guy named Joe
15 Roman, who is a fellow writer in residency at
16 University of Vermont is completing a book on this
17 reintroduction. I don't know if you -- were you guys
18 aware of that or not? The book is supposed to come out
19 real soon so just -- the wheels of my mind moving
20 quickly, you should know about whatever he's found, but
21 he should know that there's a move for indigenous
22 management of sea otters. So perhaps I could give that
23 reference to Heather at a break.

24
25 But, anyway, I think it's good stuff.
26 I'd also think, just following on what Patty said, that
27 inclusion of other tribal governments in Southeast
28 Alaska would be really important both because people
29 have different concerns about sea otters but also to
30 garner support for proceeding in this way.

31
32 But, all in all, really good job.

33
34 Thank you for coming before us.

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36 MS. DOUVILLE: Gunalcheesh.

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38 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: John, go ahead.

39
40 MR. SMITH: Yeah, thank you for the
41 letter. Just to share a little history, my father --
42 or my mother is 3/4 Tlingit and my great-grandmother is
43 100 percent, my bloodline runs all the way to Martha
44 Mary Jack and Sitka Jack from Haines and Klukwan. And
45 of course, myself, you know, through my bloodline, I'm
46 only 25 percent but I have 11 children, two of them are
47 girls, and all my kids have harvested with me all their
48 life and like they were saying, my son probably doesn't
49 even have a 1/16th but participates in harvesting, you
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1 know, our foods. So understanding that, you know, I
2 don't know if it was a strategy or a tactic when they
3 put this on the table but sooner or later if this
4 stands on the table there's not going to be any 25
5 percent bloodline and then all these resources are just
6 going to disappear. I don't know if that was put in
7 place. So I really encourage communications and
8 teamwork between all the tribes, and all the entities
9 to sit down and make a change on that.

10

11 I really liked the idea of the
12 descendent so my children can go harvest the seal and
13 they're very healthy today because of that, because
14 they grew up that way. And, of course, now they're
15 adults and the only way they're going to do that is if
16 they come and have their father or go out with
17 relatives.

18

19 And, you know, the co-management and
20 the partnerships that you're talking about, I'm the new
21 person so my first adventure here, and my first
22 meeting, I went back home to (In Native) and I have no
23 intentions, no -- you know, I'm not trying to hurt
24 anybody, forgive me if I do, my intentions aren't to,
25 but when I walked over to Juneau I wanted -- I went to
26 Tlingit & Haida and, of course, I'm a community council
27 member, I'm in charge of the education department, but
28 when I went to the office I let them know that I was a
29 Federal Subsistence and I'd like to sit at the table
30 and hear your concerns, but when I did they pretty much
31 just said, oh, we're okay, we're fine, so I testify
32 that because I really believe that we all should be at
33 the table together. We have a lot of Alaska Natives
34 sitting at the table and all -- all ethnicities here on
35 the concern of our land, air, sea.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Albert, go ahead.

40

41 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
42 I appreciate hearing the fact that you're addressing
43 the blood quantum issue, that's -- that's always been
44 in the back of my mind. I guess my question is, how,
45 as of now, how, as a sea otter hunter, how do I
46 identify myself through your process, that I'm eligible
47 to hunt sea otters. Because in Texas someone would
48 speak Spanish to me, in other words they thought I was
49 Mexican. It's easy -- I guess it's easy to make that
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1 mistake. And when you have law enforcement coming from
2 outside the state, they don't know if I'm Tlingit or if
3 I am of another descent of some kind. It was always a
4 joke that in Texas I was Mexican, and in Sitka I was
5 Filipino, but at home I'm Tlingit. So I was out
6 hunting sea otters with my son and it crashed his line,
7 what if someone comes up, how are we going to identify
8 that we have the right to hunt sea otters? So, Mr.
9 Chairman, I've got a driver's license to drive my
10 truck, I have got an ID card to take with me when I go
11 hunting so I don't lose my driver's license, and then I
12 have a TWIC card to operate boats, and now I'm going to
13 have to have another identification for hunting sea
14 otters. That never crossed my mind until we were
15 actually doing it. And I appreciate the fact that
16 blood quantum is being addressed because it should be,
17 as it's always been, my mother's Tlingit, so I am; my
18 grandmother's Tlingit, so my mother was; we follow our
19 mother in our culture, so how is that going to be
20 addressed and do all the agencies recognize the tribal
21 ID card as who we are as Natives?

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Do you have an
26 answer to that question?

27

28 (No comments)

29

30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Mike, you might
31 have an answer.

32

33 MR. DOUVILLE: As far as ID?

34

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Right, yeah.

36

37 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. The Craig Tribe
38 will take you in as a tribal member but you have to
39 trace your roots back to the original tribal members
40 when it was formed in 1930 or whenever it was. So if
41 you can do that, you are -- you can become a tribal
42 member. You have to trace your heritage to there. And
43 the tribe is capable of issuing you a card that says
44 you are a tribal member.

45

46 So this topic has been a concern of the
47 tribe for some time. I commend Tlingit & Haida for
48 taking it a bit farther here. I think it's a great
49 thing. Our bloodline is becoming diluted.

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1 (Teleconference interference -
2 participants not muted)

3

4 MR. DOUVILLE: It is still -- even
5 though they are just underneath the threshold, they are
6 still raised in the traditional environment and still
7 practice those same things although we'd like them to
8 do it legally. So I think it would be a big step
9 forward. And like I said earlier in the meeting, I
10 dispute what the Fish and Wildlife Service says for
11 populations and carrying capacity, that is way off.

12

13 In any case, there is two different
14 things here and I think the Council could address them
15 both, either singularly or together.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thanks for
18 that Mike.

19

20 Harvey.

21

22 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
23 was just curious as to whether T&H has contacted sea
24 mammal commissions that are in operation, that are
25 already kind of co-managing the sea otter right now. I
26 know there's a northern part of the sea mammals that
27 deal more with whales and seals and stuff, but the
28 Southeast part deal more with seal and sea otters. I
29 know the -- I think the Chair of Southeast is Mike
30 Miller in Sitka, I was wondering if you guys have
31 contacted them and seeing if they agree with what you
32 guys have here?

33

34 Thank you.

35

36 MS. HASSELL: Thank you, Council
37 member. We have sent a copy of the letter that you
38 have in front of you to IPCoMM to let them know that we
39 are pursuing this.

40

41 MR. KITKA: Thank you.

42

43 MS. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair. I wanted to
44 also respond to Mr. Howard's comment or question. So
45 Tlingit & Haida does not define our tribal citizenship
46 by blood quantum, it's by lineal descent.

47

48 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman.

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1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, do you have
2 a follow up Albert.

3
4 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman. The
5 question was, do the agencies recognize the ID card,
6 because I carry all these ID cards for different
7 reasons and the local tribe does the same thing, the
8 same way, the bylaws that Angoon Community Association
9 say that I have to be a descendent of previous tribal
10 members, I guess, so my parents and grandparents have
11 to be members of the tribe in order for me to be a
12 tribal member, or recognized as a tribal member as well
13 as my son and daughter. So my concern is if someone
14 comes up and I've got a boat load of seal or sea
15 otters, the way things are now, I mean I gave you an
16 example, Mr. Chair, earlier, that my son, because we
17 didn't mark our buoys even though we both carried our
18 documentation, they still gave him a ticket for using
19 my gear without his markings on it even though I made
20 him carry the paperwork to say he's eligible to fish
21 halibut, the SHARC card. So I'm wondering, do they
22 recognize the T&H card or our local tribal cards?

23
24 MS. DOUVILLE: Thank you for your
25 clarification. So currently as it stands, and I'm --
26 if it's okay with me speaking personally, not from my
27 position at Tlingit & Haida but currently, you know,
28 I'm a skin sewer, so I harvest sea otter all winter,
29 seals, in order to harvest those and get them tanned
30 I'm required to provide proof of 1/4th blood quantum
31 from a coastal Alaska Native tribe. So I don't -- when
32 carrying out those activities I do not provide proof of
33 tribal enrollment in Craig Tribe, I carry my blood
34 quantum card with me.

35
36 Thank you.

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38 MS. HASSELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 Just to add to your question, Mr. Howard. In addition
40 to, you know, showing documentation, I think, you know,
41 what you're concerned about is the agency not
42 recognizing or not being aware of maybe the co-
43 management agreement itself, should it be in place. I
44 think those are terms that we would work with the U.S.
45 Fish and Wildlife Service to define and perhaps it is a
46 step to train their agency officials on this agreement.
47 So, you know, increasing education about, you know,
48 where this is coming from, the importance of it, is
49 definitely something we could include in that agreement
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1 to address that concern.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Louie, go ahead.

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6 MR. WAGNER: Mr. Chair. I just want to
7 share a little bit of information in what we go through
8 in Metlakatla. You have to be the quarter Indian or
9 the BIA will not sign off on the children that aren't a
10 1/4 Indian, but I think it would be very important to
11 check with the Department of Interior, or the BIA if we
12 were to get into the blood quantum issue here. It's
13 pretty important. Even in our community, we're losing
14 the bloodline and it's going away rapidly and if we
15 don't, somehow, protect some of the bloodline we're
16 going to lose it. There's a lot of full-blooded, yet,
17 but then it starts tapering down like I am.

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But I just wanted to share that
information on what's happening with Metlakatla and the
BIA.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Louie.

Patty.

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
Hernandez. So I'm curious, I mean I'm not questioning
the integrity of T&H, in fact, you know, I really
admire the self-determination that they're taking, but
I'm born and raised in Southeast Alaska but I'm a
member of the Afognak Tribe which is over by Kodiak, so
how would this co-management affect -- you know, and I
meet the blood quantum requirement but my
granddaughters do not, but how would someone from a
different tribe other than a member of the Central
Council Tribe, how would -- how might this management
plan affect that, or is it too soon to say?

MS. HASSELL: Thank you, Council member
Patty. I think it might be a little bit too soon to
say. I think the focus for us is Southeast Alaska
tribal citizens working with the tribes specifically to
define what that would look like so I can't speak to
what that would look like if they're enrolled in other
tribes outside of Southeast.

Thank you.

0192

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Maybe one
4 more comment from the Council and then we're going to
5 have to move on here, so, John, go ahead.

6

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MR. SMITH: I'm just curious, are you
8 guys working on that or trying to come to some
9 agreement with that so some of our descendants can
10 participate in their culture?

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Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you
for that presentation and bringing this letter to our
attention. I think the Council will probably want to
have a discussion here before the end of the meeting on
writing some kind of a support letter on this issue. I
don't know how all encompassing it would be, the blood
quantum issue sounds complicated and may not be
something the Council wants to weigh in on but
certainly co-management of sea otters is a high
priority I think with this Council so we'll probably
want to generate a letter of support and we'll have a
discussion on how inclusive that might be for your
efforts here.

So thank you very much. I think the
Council really appreciated hearing your presentation
this morning. So thank you.

MS. HASSELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair and

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1 thank you Council members for your feedback. It was
2 really good to hear from you today.

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Thank you.

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MS. DOUVILLE: Gunalcheesh.

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MR. SMITH: Gunalcheesh.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Let's see, I got a
card here from Don Nickerson and he says he also wants
to talk about sea otters so it might be a good time for
you to come up Mr. Nickerson.

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MR. NICKERSON: Good morning, Council.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm really happy to see this
presentation regarding quantum. You know the Klawock
Tribe, along with the tribal consortium on the Island
did a sea otter study for four years. You know we
collected all the information and data that we possibly
can as a Federally-recognized tribe and these critters
are protected more than we are. They have more rights
to these resources, you know, that impact not only our
foods but also commercial, you know, they consume close
to two million pounds a year and that's a lot. You
know I really feel they need to take a look at this
quantum, you know, because there's a lot of people, you
know, I have two children that are 50 percent quantum
and, you know, you look at these sea otter, they're so
protected, and I really encourage Heather, you know, to
approach the tribes and get their support also, you
know, because our tribal organizations have a lot of
connection to the Department of Interior and the
Department of Agriculture and their obligation, you
know, to work with recognized -- Federally-recognized
tribes. You know, so I'm really happy to hear that
this gentleman said, you know, let's go ahead and send
a letter of support. You know the biggest challenge we
had, you know, with the Marine Mammal Protection Act
was the significantly altered. You know, to me, if you
shoot a sea otter it's significantly altered with a
bullet hole.

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(Laughter)

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MR. NICKERSON: But now, you know, it's
such a process. You know I think in co-management, you
know, I think one of the things that we need to state
in this letter of support is, you know, let's change

1 the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Remove significantly
2 altered. You know I think the co-management would be a
3 lot more easier, you know, for any Native with quantum
4 to manage these resources. It's not even a resource,
5 you know, I call them sea rats and I think it would be
6 beneficial, you know, if we could remove significantly
7 altered and just sell the raw pelt, you know, I think
8 it would really impact not only the management of these
9 resources but we would start restoring our own
10 resources that these critters consume on a daily. We
11 used to be able to go out here and get sea cucumber any
12 time we wanted, dungeness crab, clams, gumboots,
13 abalone. They move deeper now because of the sea
14 otters, it's a challenge to get these foods we enjoy
15 eating. But, you know, awesome, I'm glad to see this
16 and I would definitely support it and I plan on meeting
17 with our tribal organization, you know, to make sure
18 that they do support this also.

19

20 Thank you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
23 Nickerson. Let's move on to Briar Gubaiach and I don't
24 know if, Heather, you want to come up at the same time,
25 that'd be fine.

26

27 MS. BAUSCHER: Good morning everyone,
28 my name is Heather Bauscher, thanks for the opportunity
29 to speak. I am pleased to be here in support of
30 another round of the youth program we've been doing
31 with the University of Alaska-Southeast. We've been
32 developing this program for maybe seven years or so
33 now. I firmly believe that the only way to learn to
34 navigate these things is by doing it, so this course is
35 really rooted in experiential learning and part of that
36 learning is learning to give testimony so I'm going to
37 turn it over to our star student here with us today and
38 let her introduce herself. And if you don't mind she
39 asked me to film her testimony so I'm going to do that,
40 so I'll take a second to get set up.

41

42 (Pause)

43

44 MS. GUBAIACH: (In Inupiaq) Good
45 morning, my name is Briar Gubaiach. My Inupiaq name is
46 (In Inupiaq) named after my great aunt. I'm from
47 Qikiqtagruk, or Kotzebue, Alaska. I am here with an
48 amazing opportunity with UAS with these amazing people,
49 Heather Bauscher, and Ashley Bolwerk. I'm glad to be
50

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1 here with you all today and I want to hear all your
2 voices, concerns and issues from a different region
3 where I live. All your voices are important. Living
4 in Kotzebue my family uses subsistence. I know how
5 important it is with all of us. When I'm home I go
6 fishing, boating, berrypicking, dog mushing, and I cut
7 up fish and follow the traditional rules. One of the
8 rules that sticks out to me is respect to your elders
9 and since they have the most experience than the youth
10 generation. Our ancestors used subsistence and will try
11 to keep this traditional -- tradition alive.

12

13 I have experience with learning
14 subsistence as I was an intern working at the Park
15 Service in Kotzebue. For the summer I worked there
16 for two summers, which brings a really good perspective
17 for my view on how this is very important with all of
18 us and how subsistence is very important.

19

20 My concerns is with climate change and
21 over harvesting all over Alaska. How this can affect
22 our future generations to keep subsistence alive. In
23 Kotzebue, currently the concern is the caribou, the
24 caribou changing the migration patterns and one of them
25 with the caribou is with the snow, it will hurt their
26 knees which would like -- it's really bad because we
27 live on caribou and it's a way -- caribou is very
28 important with us.

29

30 This opportunity will help me more to
31 tell my youth how these meetings could be very
32 important about the concerns. I'm looking forward to
33 meeting all of you and learning more. It's nice to be
34 here with -- it's nice to be here to see trees since
35 where I live there's like basically no trees.

36

37 (Laughter)

38

39 MS. GUBAIACH: Oh, yeah, I forgot to
40 mention I'm a Mt. Edgecumbe student. I'm a three year,
41 junior, and how the environment is very important with
42 us.

43

44 Quyana for your time.

45

46 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Briar.
47 I don't know, Council members might have some questions
48 for you, I don't know, anybody from the Council.

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1 Bob, go ahead.

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MR. SCHROEDER: Well, thanks from coming down from Kotzebue, and, you know, I spoke to you at a break and, you know, don't be too afraid of the trees, they do fall over but.....

(Laughter)

MR. SCHROEDER:you know if you're careful you can last for awhile.

I'm wondering what you think from your experience and if you have some ideas about what you'll study when you go to college and if you're interested in working on natural resources for your people.

MS. GUBAIACH: Wait, sorry, what's your question? What did you -- sorry.

MR. SCHROEDER: Well, I'm interested in what you are thinking you might study when you go to college and if you would be thinking about working on natural resources for your people in the Kotzebue Sound?

MS. GUBAIACH: I'm really interested in hearing about subsistence since my job title is the tribal government services with subsistence and when I go to college I -- I've learned a lot, and maybe work at the Park Service in Kotzebue in some way, or somewhere in Alaska, because I love Alaska.

Well, it was nice meeting you all.

MS. BAUSCHER: There's one more question for you.

MS. GUBAIACH: Oh, sorry.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Are there any other questions for Briar?

Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have a question but I do have a comment. I just want to express how much we appreciate Heather's program and students like yourself with the initiative

0197

1 and drive to step up and come and sit through three
2 days worth of meetings, especially maybe even on topics
3 that aren't necessarily related to your experience with
4 subsistence, but you're getting that knowledge and
5 being able to interact with those of us that are at the
6 table and it takes a lot to volunteer to kind of put
7 yourself out there and do that, and you did a really
8 good job with your testimony, so thank you.

9

10 MS. BAUSCHER: Thank you, Cathy.

11

12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yep, I agree with
13 that. And I also want to encourage you to what you're
14 already doing, is, you know, any questions you have for
15 Council members during breaks and what not, just feel
16 free to collar us and ask your question or whatever.
17 We're always happy to tell you what you want to know.

18

19 So very good.

20

21 MS. GUBAIACH: Happy to be here.

22

23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
24 coming before us this morning, appreciate it.

25

26 MS. GUBAIACH: Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I want to just
29 check to see if we have anybody who's called in who
30 wanted to give testimony or comment this morning.

31

32 MS. PERRY: And for those folks on the
33 phone who would like to make a comment by phone if
34 you'll press star, five, that's the asterisk on your
35 phone and then the number 5, that will show us on your
36 system that you would like to speak. Again, star, five
37 for anyone on the phone who would like to speak on a
38 non-agenda item at this time.

39

40 (Pause)

41

42 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, I do have a hand
43 raised, the last two numbers in the phone number is 3-6
44 -- or are 3-6 so if this is your phone line if you'll
45 now press star, six, that will unmute your phone and
46 we'll be able to hear your comment.

47

48 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you. This is Mark
49 Richards with Resident Hunters of Alaska, can you hear

50

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1 me?

2

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4 MS. PERRY: We can, Mark, but I didn't
get your last name could you repeat that for me please.

5

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7 MR. RICHARDS: Yeah, the last name is

8

9

10 Richards.
11 MS. PERRY: Thank you. Please go ahead
with your comment.

12

13

14 MR. RICHARDS: I wasn't sure -- I
couldn't be here yesterday afternoon so if there's
still time to testify on Wildlife Proposals 24-04 to
24-06.

15

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18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: You know we would
prefer to hear those comments at the time they come up
on our agenda which is not going to be this morning. I
don't know if you're going to be available and are able
to keep track of where we are on our agenda to be able
to call in when we get to that topic, would that be
convenient for you?

24

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26 MR. RICHARDS: Yes, I am, Mr. Chair. I
just wasn't sure if you had already gone over those
yesterday. I will call in later.

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1 And on the other hand, with the
2 comments earlier, about the sea otter so I just want to
3 talk to the tribal members and the local people, and
4 folks that are Alaska Native. In our culture when we
5 had issues we used to go to Berners Bay and start
6 training and get ourself balanced and get strong and
7 then we would leave there and we would attack the issue
8 that was on place and our nephews would be with us. So
9 I encourage that if we have a issue with the sea otter,
10 that we gather our families that are Alaska Native and
11 are a quarter and we posse and we go out and we harvest
12 the sea otter, and that's how we used to do it.

13
14 I work with the -- partner, I donate my
15 time with the University of Fairbanks, but we teach bow
16 and arrow, we teach shotgun, we teach pistols, rifling,
17 and I've -- I'm side by side with them, I'm certified
18 to teach this too, I'm not far away and I would love to
19 come and support the families here on education, you
20 know, even boating, water safety, first-aid, CPR, so
21 that we're safe when we go out there, but actually
22 getting it done. A lot of times I hear people, they
23 talk about it but we need to get out there and just get
24 it done.

25
26 (In Tlingit)

27
28 No intentions to hurt anybody.

29
30 Thank you.

31
32 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. So getting
33 back to non-rural determination. When we left off
34 yesterday, that's an agenda item so we finished off
35 with some public testimony yesterday and I'll ask this
36 morning before we resume the topic if there's anybody
37 else who wants to give public testimony on that topic
38 this morning, anybody we haven't heard from yet.

39
40 (No comments)

41
42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, so it looks
43 like we don't have anybody coming forward. I did
44 neglect this morning, when we opened the meeting, that
45 yesterday Harvey Kitka was not at the beginning of the
46 meeting and he didn't have an opportunity to give his
47 Council member report so I'm sorry, Harvey, I forgot to
48 start with you this morning, but it'd be a good
49 opportunity for you to introduce yourself and to give
50

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1 your report before we get on to old business.

2

3

4 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
5 name is Harvey Kitka. I was born and raised in Sitka,
6 Alaska. I've spent a lifetime with my parents living a
7 subsistence lifestyle. My mother and father processed
8 every kind of food there was available to us and raised
9 us in that way and we try very hard to pass it on to
10 our children.

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One of the things we really watched was how everything pertained to everything in the world. I know Sitka has been very concerned about the herring as one of our major topics. What we've been trying to get across to the State of Alaska that not only is it a forage fish but it's very important to the life and cycles of how much food is left out in the ocean. As we go down through time or we find that our king salmon are getting skinnier, they're not as heavy as they used to be, they don't get as -- they don't get the food that they need in the ocean. Part of this is because we got a hatchery program that doesn't consider what food is available out there. If you get too much hatchery fish out there and there's not enough food then not only your wild stock will start dying but your hatchery fish will start dying too, and you're going to get less and less. It's just a matter of food source available. And that is just one of our major concerns within the Sitka area.

Aside from that, Sitka had a very large run of sockeyes in Redoubt Bay, which is close to our hometown and made it a lot -- really nice for people to get the sockeye. One of the things we are concerned about is when we get such an abundance of sockeye within a system like that we very seldom can handle that many fish, we worry that sometimes a disease will get involved in the river and the run will disappear for a number of years, sometimes 10, 20 years before it starts coming back again. So we asked the State of Alaska if we could go in and harvest our fish with seines right in the area just for subsistence but it kind of fell on deaf ears again.

The sockeye run that's in some of our other systems has stayed fairly small. Some of it is coming back but it's a long ways from being where it should be.

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1 The sea otter in Sitka Sound, it seems
2 like it's -- they found a way to control it, I don't
3 know if anybody realizes it but we started to get some
4 of our seafood back again, our abalone and our gumbots
5 and our cockles and our clams are -- the urchins are
6 coming back and they found a way to control how many
7 sea otters are out there and they're doing it without
8 really damaging the sea otter population too much.
9 This is so important because we all have to live
10 together and they're all part of what happens.

11
12 The deer population in Sitka, mostly
13 the mild climate we've been having over the years, the
14 population has stayed pretty stable, pretty good. One
15 of our concerns is the goats, the goat hunting that
16 takes place. We find that most of it is probably
17 sporthunters and trophy hunters and things like that.
18 Our local people that subsist on goats, they don't get
19 a chance to really harvest in some of the places
20 because they start closing the areas off because the
21 populations, and the way they look at it. Goats are a
22 very hearty animal and they live in some pretty tough
23 environments.

24
25 These are some of the concerns we have
26 in Sitka.

27
28 Thank you so much.

29
30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Harvey.
31 And my apologies for forgetting to ask you your report
32 earlier. It's always really important that the Council
33 hear what you have to say about your local area, your
34 observations are always very keen and of interest to
35 the Council so thank you for reminding me of that and
36 appreciate it.

37
38 So back to the old business.

39
40 I didn't see anybody who wanted to come
41 forward and testify on the Ketchikan non-rural
42 determination so I'll open it up for Council comments
43 on this topic and once, again, I'll note that the
44 Council is not taking any formal action at this time,
45 it's just an opportunity for Council members to let the
46 Staff know what issues are of importance to them and
47 maybe things that they think ought to be emphasized in
48 this factfinding effort that's going on now. So it's
49 open to any Council member who wants to make a comment.
50

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1 Anybody.

2

3 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chair.

4

5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Is that Frank.

6

7 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah, I'd like to make a
8 comment. You know one of the things that I have a hard
9 time with is that, you know, a lot of people that used
10 to live in Hoonah live in Juneau who are Tlingit and
11 because they live in Juneau they are not supposed to be
12 able to come and harvest in our area, you know, and I
13 see the same thing with Ketchikan. You know so I'm
14 sure there's a lot of indigenous people that are living
15 there that are not allowed to do what we, in the rural
16 areas can do, because of where they are located, not
17 because of their home because of jobs or whatever made
18 them move there. You know I always think about my
19 nephews and my nieces and uncles that live in Juneau or
20 wherever they're living now, and, you know, I have a
21 nephew that lives in Bellingham but he -- he used to be
22 a hunter all the time, but he's not able to do what he
23 used to do when he was a kid, you know, so it's pretty
24 hard when people want and -- want to continue their
25 lifestyle, I mean their way of life when they lived in
26 a village and they can't do it.

27

28 You know, I was listening to the
29 earlier comments about this quantum thing and Federal
30 Subsistence Board Tlingit & Haida doesn't have a
31 quantum thing but, you know, these people that are
32 living in the urban areas can't do stuff that --
33 because of this quantum thing. I'm opposed to quantum
34 because, you know, sometimes I go to a (In Native) and
35 then -- and I see (indiscernible) dancing up there,
36 they're dancing up there because they believe in their
37 heritage, they believe in who they are, just because
38 they live in an urban area and they're stuck with
39 something that the Federal government has placed on
40 them. I knew a guy in Hoonah who his quantum wasn't
41 high enough and he just took his boys out hunting
42 because they were quali -- had the qualifications of
43 having a quota or a half and they were able to -- he
44 was still able to teach them how to hunt seal.

45

46 You know, this urban/rural thing is
47 such (indiscernible) to the people that are really
48 indigenous to this area, and the area that -- like
49 Ketchikan and Juneau, we always look at the way people

50

0203

1 are -- of the world, you know, they say well like
2 they're -- it's elimination of people and then the
3 people in Ketchikan and the people in Juneau, they're
4 being kind of eliminated.

5
6 I always say, I'm Tlingit in Hoonah,
7 every time they take one little piece of me away, like
8 that has been done to me, even though I live in Hoonah,
9 they're diminishing my identity. An identity of a
10 person is so important, especially for indigenous
11 people that are in areas of that we are discussing.

12
13 You know, so it's a tough decision. We
14 always have to look at what the Fed say as indigenous
15 people, not the way our heart is as indigenous people.
16 So I'm sure that there's going to be a lot more
17 discussion on this issue because of who we are.

18
19 Like sea otters, hunting sea otters,
20 you know, if a person goes out and hunts and is 1/8th
21 they're taking -- they're taking part of that culture
22 away because of who they are, where they were born.
23 Like I say, each -- each time you take one little thing
24 away from a person, our identity as a Tlingit, or a
25 Haida or a person that lives in a rural area, it takes
26 away who they are.

27
28 I have a lot more to say about this but
29 I know that this issue is going to be coming up again.

30
31 Gunalcheesh for letting me speak.

32
33 Thank you.

34
35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
36 Frank. Any other Council members want to make a
37 comment at this time.

38
39 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair.

40
41 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Albert, go ahead.

42
43 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
44 I guess, I've explained it this way before, if I go
45 hunting in Angoon with my five gallons of gas and get
46 nothing, I go home with nothing. If I lived in Juneau,
47 with the five gallons of gas and went home with
48 nothing, I can go to Costco, I can go to Walmart, I can
49 go to Safeway so that's my explanation for talking
50

0204

1 about Walmart and Costco and everything else. We don't
2 have that same opportunity in Angoon to do such a
3 thing. We don't complain about it, it's the reality of
4 the choice we made of living in a rural community.

5
6 I guess as part of the analysis that
7 OSM is going to be doing I'd like to know or have an
8 explanation as part of your analysis of what the
9 population of 6,000 of non-Natives added into a
10 population of -- or a resource that can't even sustain
11 the current resource or user group, I guess, of Natives
12 that are Federally-qualified or Federally-qualified
13 subsistence users, we have a resource that currently
14 doesn't maintain the qualified user group now. Having
15 said that, though, I think I agree that Ketchikan
16 shouldn't just, or Juneau, be pushed aside because they
17 chose to live in Juneau, they should be allowed access
18 to the resources around Ketchikan and Juneau. So
19 however that happens, that has to be something you have
20 to exercise your sovereignty as a tribe. Sovereignty
21 is a strong word, Mr. Chairman, because now the State
22 of Alaska recognizes each tribe, that has never been
23 done before and Governor Dunleavy signed it into law.

24
25 So you may have access to a resource
26 you've never had access to before and you have to --
27 for yourself, you have to look at what that looks like
28 and not just take this process, no, as the end all be
29 all to the solution for your tribal members. This
30 process is flawed because we have a stack of papers
31 here that are addressing a solution this Council has
32 come up with to address the current problem and we have
33 non-rural residents sending in written comments that's
34 almost bigger than our book itself.

35
36 So that's my thoughts.

37
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.

41
42 Patty, go ahead.

43
44 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. The
45 population issue, to me, is a little muddied because we
46 have the Ketchikan Gateway Borough population and then
47 we have the Ketchikan proper population and then we
48 have the Ketchikan Indian Community populations, and
49 within the Ketchikan Indian Community populations you
50

0205

1 have some that don't reside in Ketchikan so if there's
2 a way to filter out, you know, how many in Ketchikan
3 would qualify if it was a rural -- redesignated as
4 rural versus, you know, how many of their tribal
5 members are outside and would not qualify.

6

7

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Patty.
10 Any other Council members.

11

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(No comments)

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I have some
comments here. Well, first of all I think I want to
start by saying, you know, just a little bit of history
there from my perspective.

I would say that, you know, 20 years
ago I would have been probably adamantly opposed to
Ketchikan being determined non-rural. During the time
that the economy of Ketchikan was dominated by the pulp
company, the pulp company came to Ketchikan seeking to
alter the economy of the city of Ketchikan, you know,
they were going to be an industrial center that, you
know, promised year-round employment, steady
employment, I think that's kind of one of the hallmarks
of a urban communities, having that stable year-round
economy. You know, I look at Juneau and they definitely
have a stable, year-round economy with their -- the
State government provides an awful lot of steady year-
round jobs, I think that's an important component to
consider. You know also at that time during the pulp
ear, you know, the pulp contracts they were basically
contrary to the subsistence way of life. The pulp
contractors kind of viewed the Forest resource, which
up to that time had been very important provider of all
the natural resources that people depend on for their
subsistence uses and the pulp contracts changed that
Forest resource into a commodity that was, you know,
sold for cash and that's pretty much contrary to a
subsistence way of life. It's just not right. But so
the pulp contracts are gone, the pulp company's gone,
the situation's changed in Ketchikan. I see now that
Ketchikan is more dependent on tourism, probably than
anything else, and tourism is a seasonal economy for
the most part and I see a seasonal economy as being far
more characteristic of a rural community than an urban
community so I think that's an important factor to

1 consider.

2

3

4 Also I think you should give strong
5 consideration to the cultural make up of Ketchikan. I
6 really do believe that Title VIII of ANILCA, one of the
7 intents was to preserve Native culture in Alaska and I
8 think it's a valid topic to look at the cultural make
9 up of the city of the Ketchikan area and consider the
10 indigenous population there as a factor of the overall
11 population and whether or not you consider it a
12 significant portion of the population, or at least a --
13 not an insignificant portion of the population, I think
14 that should be a strong part of your investigation.

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Another thing I'd like to address is
kind of the services that a community provides. I
think here in Southeast Alaska, how you would view a
rural community is vastly different than how you would
view a rural community in the Lower 48. I don't think
there's any comparison. What I was thinking about here
last night was just take for example a community that
I'm pretty familiar with, the rural community of
Petersburg. So, you know, Petersburg, a population of
about 3,000 people, think if that community were, you
know, plunked down in Corn County, Iowa, let's say, and
compare what life would be like for a community of
3,000 people compared to what it is here in Southeast
Alaska. In Petersburg you got twice daily jet service.
You can leave your house and 10 minutes later be in an
airport that will get you anywhere in the world that
same day. You wouldn't find that in Iowa. Petersburg
has a hospital, pretty decent hospital, provides a lot
of services, full staffed. If you were in rural Iowa,
would you be able to walk 10 minutes to a pretty well
staffed hospital, you'd be driving to Des Moines or
Dubuque probably to get any kind of medical attention.
So these are things that a rural community in Southeast
Alaska provide. It's very much rural but anywhere else
in the country that would not be the case. So I think
there's a really important distinction there when
you're talking about rural and urban here in Southeast
Alaska.

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Also I want to address this issue of
services that are provided by the city of Ketchikan. A
lot of the attention seems to be put on Ketchikan
having a Walmart. Well, I think it's important to
consider that Ketchikan is a hub community. And if it
were not for the outlying areas of the, you know, five

0207

1 to 6,000 people that also use Ketchikan as a hub,
2 talking about Prince of Wales community, the Metlakatla
3 community, would there be a Walmart in Ketchikan if
4 they didn't serve those other 6,000 residents in the
5 rural area. So I think you should kind of consider
6 whether or not all the services that are available in
7 Ketchikan serve the city of Ketchikan or should they be
8 considered as Ketchikan is kind of a hub community for
9 what I would call the greater Southeast Alaska rural
10 community of all the smaller towns and villages that
11 use Ketchikan.

12

13 So I think that's all I have on my
14 list, those are important considerations that I think
15 you'd like to look into.

16

17 So is there anybody else, comments.

18

19 Patty.

20

21 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
22 Hernandez. And thank you, Mr. Douville, for bringing
23 us back to, you know, what we're here for, as the
24 Regional Advisory Council, is to provide
25 recommendations on how to move this process forward.
26 We're not taking a vote on whether to support rural
27 status for Ketchikan or not, we're helping develop what
28 do we want in an analysis that we will review the next
29 time around.

30

31 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Patty.
34 Anybody else.

35

36 Larry.

37

38 MR. BEMIS: You know, Mr. Chair, thank
39 you. I come from a rural community and I see a lot of
40 changes, those changes weren't by me. As you guys talk
41 about lumber companies and stores and military and all
42 the industry, I don't think everybody was waving a
43 flag, hey, over here, come and get it, we got all these
44 infrastructures, come join us, those things are
45 developed on their own. They weren't -- sure, some of
46 it might have been asked for but most of it is just
47 once you start building something and the
48 infrastructure looks so good you have people add on to
49 it because there's the people will come to build that
50

1 infrastructure. Let's say none of that happened and
2 they are just Ketchikan and a Native community living
3 that got kind of passed over on a landless situation, I
4 think the problem's a little bigger and starting from
5 where it was when we had the Native Land Claims Act
6 that they kind of got overlooked because things moved
7 so fast in their community. They're the first ones on
8 line coming from the USofA, coming from the South. As
9 we grow, smaller communities, less activi -- less
10 proportion to the way other bigger communities are, so
11 the impact doesn't affect us as much as it does where
12 you're the first in line, first for boats, first for
13 this, first for that.

14
15 I'm thinking that this needs to be
16 looked on a broader view for their part and we will
17 stand by the decision that they come up with and how
18 this works out going through the process,
19 determination. I think the only way we see this is how
20 hard they work to separate direct and make this happen
21 for themselves and I think we should be supportive as a
22 group for them to do this, we're all representing each
23 one of our tribes, representing each one of our
24 communities and I think as a whole that's what we're
25 here for, is to represent every community equally,
26 wholefully, fairly, and I don't like seeing all these
27 letters be so negative when maybe the intention was so
28 overwhelming that all you're thinking about is impact
29 before there is one that might not be. This whole
30 thing is not meant to overtake anybody or take away for
31 anybody but have the rights of the same thing that
32 everybody else has.

33
34 And as this group here, I feel that we
35 should be neutral in our thoughts of how the outcome
36 is, but support the outcome the best way forward. And
37 I think it's up to Ketchikan to really work on their
38 own and find the best way forward and we stand by that
39 decision that will be brought forward. I don't like
40 being put aside with thee letters, it's not productive,
41 you've already got a negative before you even got a
42 chance to have a positive and it doesn't sit well, it
43 divides us as our thoughts are getting polluted with
44 the wrong idea. After you read about it and after you
45 think about it, you're going, gosh, maybe I don't feel
46 that way, maybe I shouldn't feel that way, maybe I
47 should support and find the good in it and as I see
48 this -- and I stand so far away from another community,
49 hundreds of miles away, but as I stand not knowing
50

0209

1 either side I'm only standing what I think is right,
2 and I think this Council should semi- be neutral and
3 supportive and whatever decision comes out the -- if
4 all parties agree then we move forward and then until
5 then we listen, we support and do our part as to what
6 we do.

7

8 Thank you.

9

10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Larry.
11 And you did remind me, I did have one other point I
12 wanted to make in my comments and that would be, you
13 know, if the decision were positive for Ketchikan to be
14 determined as rural I mean it definitely would have
15 impacts on the surrounding area, I don't want to
16 minimize that but I really think the determination
17 should be made on the merits of their arguments and we
18 can deal with the consequences later. The Council will
19 probably have a lot of work ahead of it, you know,
20 dealing with the consequences and it may not be the
21 people that are on this Council now, it could be years
22 in the workings, but I think it needs to be decided on
23 the merits and deal with the consequences afterwards.

24

25 Mr. Douville, Mike, go ahead.

26

27 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
28 I would encourage the Federal system -- first of all
29 I'd say Title VIII is pretty strong and thoughtful
30 legislation, it does protect all users. So in spite of
31 all the fear of that we are seeing locally here, Title
32 VIII does protect rural users and it gives priority and
33 there should not be that fear and I think it comes from
34 not understanding how Title VIII works. And I
35 encourage those entities that are concerned and
36 negative at this point to, perhaps with the help of
37 OSM, to educate themselves to understand how it works.
38 I think we covered much of the bases -- and this
39 Council does not work outside of the regulations and
40 rules that are laid out in Title VIII. It is not a
41 popularity contest. It is not who yells the loudest.
42 But we go by the rules and regulations, and we do not
43 go outside those, and it offers much protection.

44

45 So there's no need to be fearful. I
46 understand the concerns on both sides. But I'm not
47 making a decision, I mean that's up to OSM to do the
48 analysis and that will be reviewed and I will say that
49 we do not always agree with OSM in their analysis, we
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0210

1 have disputed that in the past. I think education here
2 would go a long way.

3

4 Thank you.

5

6 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.

7 Anybody else.

8

9 Harvey, you have something. Go ahead,
10 Harvey.

11

12 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 After listening to all the conversation on this it
14 seems like we really don't have much in the way of
15 really, really helping because we don't -- we didn't
16 make the law where they put in the rural status instead
17 of Native subsistence. This is something that I think
18 the Native organizations should, throughout Alaska,
19 need to take it back to Congress and hopefully they
20 come up with the proper wording because like in Juneau
21 and where the Auke Indians and Taku Indians, they had
22 villages there but the city grew up around them, it's
23 not their fault that they can't subsist, it's because
24 of the way the law was written. Ketchikan is the same
25 way, the Ketchikan Indian Community, the city grew up
26 around them and they're stuck with a law that says that
27 they're a non-rural community. The law is -- when they
28 did this it was supposed to be to protect the Native
29 subsistence rights, but the law got changed and they
30 made it all rural communities and all rural people and
31 that really threw a bind in us and we have to live with
32 that and all we can do is recommend that the Native
33 communities, the Native leaders in our towns need to
34 get together and talk about it and see what they can do
35 to help straighten that out.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Harvey.

40 Anybody else.

41

42 (No comments)

43

44 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. So we had
45 probably a lot of other comments that were noted by OSM
46 Staff that we made yesterday and we added some today.
47 Albert, you have something else to add, go ahead.

48

49 MR. HOWARD: Just something for OSM.

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0211

1 Maybe in your analysis answer the question why is it
2 that Ketchikan currently isn't in rural status. I'm
3 sure there was reasons when a lot of this was created
4 as to why Ketchikan wasn't included so maybe when we
5 come back and read the analysis we'll see why and that
6 will help clear a lot of things up and maybe help find
7 a way for them to get there.

8

9 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10

11 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
12 So I'm thinking that we can conclude the discussion on
13 this topic. I think OSM probably has what they're
14 looking for. Brent, did you want to come up one more
15 time, then come on up.

16

17 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
18 Members of the Council. I do have an update from the
19 public hearings, a summary of the public hearings that
20 I would like to put on record if that's okay with you.

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure, that would
23 be helpful.

24

25 MR. VICKERS: Okay. I'll go ahead
26 then. Good morning, again, Mr. Chair and members of
27 the Council. This is Brent Vickers again from Office
28 of Subsistence Management. And this is a summary of
29 the two public hearings on Non-rural Determination
30 Proposal NDP25-01 that were held over the last week.

31

32 The first public hearing was last
33 Wednesday, October 18th in Ketchikan. The second was
34 the other night, October 24th here in this room in
35 Klawock.

36

37 At the Ketchikan public hearing 16
38 people testified in person and one testified over the
39 phone. Most of these testifiers were residents of
40 Ketchikan and were in support of the proposal. Those
41 opposed to the proposal were from Prince of Wales
42 Island.

43

44 At the Klawock public hearing there
45 were 11 testimonies, 10 in person and one by phone.
46 Nine of the testifiers lived here on Prince of Wales
47 and two were from Ketchikan. More of those who
48 testified -- more of those who testified were in
49 opposition of the proposal.

50

1 One of the main things I had taken away
2 from participating in the public hearings and this
3 Council discussion, is the amount of stress and concern
4 over the issue that is being felt by residents of
5 Ketchikan, particularly tribal members, by the
6 residents of Prince of Wales, by members of the Council
7 and by others, it's a stressful issue. I really
8 appreciate and commend the way that it's been managed
9 and held so far and I appreciate the helpful comments
10 and discussions.

11
12 Testifiers, particularly
13 representatives of tribes have expressed their
14 frustrations and concerns that this proposal and
15 process is putting tribes against each other. KIC
16 representatives clarified that the intent of the
17 proposal was not to encroach on others lands and use
18 their resources, but rather to give tribal members --
19 members of KIC subsistence priorities in their own
20 area. They explained to other regional tribes and
21 subsistence users we're all in this together.
22 Representatives from Prince of Wales tribes, cities,
23 villages and other organizations expressed that they
24 were understanding of the Ketchikan Indian Community's
25 intent and restraints that they were facing. Prince of
26 Wales representatives said that it was very difficult
27 for them to have to oppose this proposal but that they
28 would feel compelled to oppose the proposal because it
29 is for all residents of Ketchikan rather than just
30 members of KIC. They claim that they would support the
31 proposal if it was providing rural priority for just
32 members of Ketchikan Indian Community and not for the
33 community at large.

34
35 In addition to expressing their
36 frustration, those who supported the proposal shared
37 the following items with their testimonies.

38
39 Federal priority will remove
40 impediments that Ketchikan residents face to accessing
41 traditional subsistence resources in the area such as
42 eulachon in the Unuk River.

43
44 Federal priority will improve food
45 security in the community, particularly since recent
46 supply chain issues experienced by the Ketchikan
47 community during the Covid pandemic which emphasized
48 the remote and isolated nature of the community and the
49 need for Ketchikan residents to be able to utilize all
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0213

1 possible means to engage in subsistence practices to
2 provide for their families.

3

4 Federal priority will help protect
5 local resources from those who come from the outside to
6 hunt and fish in the Ketchikan area. It would help to
7 reduce the amount of time it takes Ketchikan residents
8 to harvest subsistence resources, either because they
9 can only access these resources further away under
10 State regulations or because they have smaller bag
11 limits under State regulations.

12

13 Tribal members in Ketchikan should not
14 be prohibited from continuing their traditional
15 practices just because they live in Ketchikan.

16

17 Those in favor also noted that
18 achieving rural status would help them to maintain and
19 build their cultural traditions that have long been
20 based in subsistence.

21

22 Those who were in opposition of the
23 proposal shared the following themes in their
24 testimonies.

25

26 Ketchikan has too large of a
27 population, too many economic opportunities, and too
28 many services, including supermarkets, large docks and
29 barges with supplies, a university, and a Coast Guard
30 base to be considered non-rural.

31

32 Residents of Ketchikan don't depend on
33 subsistence resources like those in rural communities
34 where there is limited industry and costs are very
35 high.

36

37 The fish and wildlife resources on
38 Prince of Wales do not have the capacity to support the
39 number of residents of Ketchikan if those residents
40 were able to harvest them under Federal regulations.

41

42 In addition to those comments in
43 support or opposition of the proposal there are also
44 comments on the overall need for everyone to be more
45 respectful of resources and to be mindful of resource
46 conservation.

47

48 That with this non-rural determination
49 process the government is pitting tribe against tribe.

50

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1 That there will be a need for an .804
2 analysis on Unit 2 deer if this proposal is approved.

3
4 And that tribal consultation on this
5 proposal is a mandate and not an option.

6
7 That is the end of my summary.

8
9 A third public hearing will soon be
10 held over phone, we will announce the time and day as
11 soon as it is set.

12
13 Thank you, and I can answer any
14 questions.

15
16 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Brent.
17 That was very helpful for the Councils who weren't able
18 to attend the testimony sessions. Any questions.

19
20 Cathy.

21
22 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 After the next stage of the process will you guys be
24 doing public hearings again, I mean you just mentioned
25 that you'll have a telephonic one and then are there
26 others that will be planned after that?

27
28 MR. VICKERS: That's a good question.
29 Currently we don't have any planned. We planned to
30 have these three, the one -- the two that I just
31 summarized and the third coming up. And to continue
32 with providing opportunity at the Council meetings
33 including the next winter, which is in Anchorage, and,
34 again, next fall when you will be making the
35 determination.

36
37 Thank you.

38
39 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody else.

40
41 John, question.

42
43 MR. SMITH: It's more like a comment
44 but I was looking up, it said before 2007 it was rural
45 and then they changed it -- no, excuse me -- anyway it
46 was rural in Saxman and Ketchikan was non-rural, the
47 Saxman right, and then in 2015 that's when they
48 determined Saxman as a rural and my thoughts are is
49 Ketchikan and Saxman -- Saxman is Ketchikan and

50

0215

1 Ketchikan is Saxman, I mean I have blood from here, and
2 family here, and I have connection here so even
3 understanding that history that Ketchikan would never
4 have been here without Saxman and I think it's all --
5 you know, just thinking of that. I might be way off
6 hand, but I just -- just thinking of that, but, sorry,
7 yeah.

8
9 MR. VICKERS: It's a confusing history
10 I understand. And I would need to have the facts in
11 front of me if you really wanted to go in front of it
12 but I -- I appreciate your comment if that's all you
13 want to do but it is a confusing history on how those
14 determinations were made in the first place, how they
15 decided to nullify decisions that had been made at some
16 point and then revise the process, I'll try to do my
17 best to do a brief history of that in the analysis so
18 -- as Council Member Howard requested, and hopefully
19 that clarifies where we are today.

20
21 Thank you.

22
23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Brent.

24
25 Cathy, something else, go ahead.

26
27 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
28 actually had a follow up from the question that I asked
29 earlier. So there might not be any public hearings, or
30 any more public hearings, but has OSM given any
31 consideration yet about what Mr. Douville brought up in
32 terms of that public outreach and education about what
33 this process is and is not, and are there opportunities
34 to do so between now and the time the analysis is
35 brought back before us?

36
37 MR. VICKERS: Thank you, Council Member
38 Needham. One thing that we were planning to do is a
39 break out session, if you will, on customary and
40 traditional use and the -- a rural priority .804
41 analysis -- Section .804 at the winter -- upcoming All
42 Council winter fall -- winter meeting. That was -- is
43 being designed for Council members to participate in.
44 We have not discussed outreach opportunities here in
45 the community for the public at large, we can start
46 thinking about things. I -- I did write that down as
47 it was brought up. We can try to do more about it at
48 the next fall Council meeting or we can work with
49 DeAnna to set up something differently if -- if that's
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1 requested, I'm not exactly sure what that would look
2 like at this point but I -- hearing everything that
3 I've heard in discussions I agree it would be -- we
4 always agree that we could use a little bit more
5 outreach and education on these processes. So if
6 that's something that the Council really wants then I
7 think we can try to work on something.

8

9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
10 Brent. Anything else.

11

12 (No comments)

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, let's wrap
15 up this topic. I think OSM has what they were looking
16 for from the Council. I feel pretty good about it. I
17 really appreciate all the public testimony that we've
18 heard. I think it was excellent and informative. And
19 we'll take a 10 minute break, come back at 10:30, and
20 we'll be resuming our old business discussion on our
21 position paper on continuation of subsistence uses,
22 we'll want to hear from Council members if they've had
23 a chance to look over our draft there and we'll decide
24 whether or not we need to have more work on it or not
25 at that time. So that's what's coming up.

26

27 (Off record)

28

29 (On record)

30

31 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Folks, can you
32 hear me out in the hall, we're going to gather up again
33 and come back to the table.

34

35 (Pause)

36

37 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: If we can get all
38 the Council members back into the room we'll get
39 started again.

40

41 (Pause)

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, we're going
44 to get back to work here. Like I say we're still
45 missing a couple Council members out in the hall,
46 please come back to the room if you can hear me. We
47 are resuming a discussion that we left off yesterday
48 under old business and that is the Council's position
49 paper that we propose to send to the Board on our
50

0217

1 recommendations on how the Board should consider the
2 continuation of subsistence uses as a criteria for
3 restricting non-subsistence uses.

4

5 So where we left off yesterday, the
6 working group that was established at the last meeting
7 put together a draft statement that a lot of Council
8 members hadn't really had a chance to look over yet
9 because the meeting books were kind of late in getting
10 published so I encourage the Council members to read
11 through that draft statement and this morning we have
12 to decide if the whole Council is ready to make a
13 recommendation on this draft. If there is any
14 significant changes recommended by the rest of the
15 Council we may have to have another session by the
16 working group to kind of hash that over and come back
17 again with final action, so we'll be opening up that
18 discussion. But before we do that, this is an agenda
19 topic and I do want to open it up to any public
20 comments, if anybody in the audience would like to give
21 us their thoughts on how continuation of subsistence
22 uses should be used as a criteria and a decision on a
23 restriction to non-subsistence users. I haven't seen
24 any blue cards brought forward on that topic but if you
25 would like to make a comment please fill out a card and
26 bring it up here and we'll give you that opportunity.

27

28 So seeings how we don't have any right
29 at this moment, I'll get to the Council business here,
30 and open it up for discussion. the draft is on Page
31 61, I believe in our Council books, to refer back to,
32 and so I guess what we're looking for this morning is
33 either a motion to adopt this or a suggestion to
34 reconvene the work group to do more work on it.

35

36 So Albert, you have a comment.

37

38 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
39 move to adopt this document for discussion purposes.

40

41 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. So we have
44 a motion to -- was that a motion to adopt it, Albert?

45

46 MR. HOWARD: Yes.

47

48 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, okay. Motion
49 to adopt. And of course that opens up for discussion

50

0218

1 but first do we have a second.

2

3

MR. CASIPIT: Second.

4

5

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We have a motion and a second to adopt, now this is the document as it is currently written as a draft. So discussion on the draft and any recommended additions or changes.

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Cathy.

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MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First I want to acknowledge the hard work that went into this. I have sat on several working groups in the past that I know it takes a lot of time and I appreciate the efforts of the working group on this letter, that really does a good job overall putting a lot of points that we've discussed as a Council together in one place so that we can state our position.

I do have -- and as a whole document I wholly support it, I would like to see us submit it, however, I do have some recommended changes to consider, to it, not necessarily in content, but more in formatting.

I did find a couple of things that seemed a little repetitive and I'm trying -- like I think about this for who we're sending it to and I want to make sure that the Federal Subsistence Board really understands what we're saying. And, you know, we're calling this a position statement, and I don't mean any disrespect when I say this but I had a hard time trying to figure out what our position was. I wanted to see it a little more -- stated a little more succinctly if possible. I think it might be -- our position might actually start on Page 67 which is currently bullet No. 12. Everything before that that is bullated is sort of our review of pertinent regulatory history, which I think is important, and I'm glad somebody took the time to put that together, but then it just -- the rest of the letter just kind of continues the bullet point, but I think we should probably come out of bullet points at that section because that seems to be where we're really saying what we believe prior to that means.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Right.

0219

1 MS. NEEDHAM: So that was one
2 recommendation, to hopefully clarify in this letter,
3 what our position statement for the continuation of
4 subsistence uses actually means.

5
6 And then the other sort of bigger
7 formatting thing -- I have some small things as well,
8 but the other bigger formatting thing that I would like
9 maybe the work group's input on considering is the
10 leading page 69, which is the possible future position
11 policy statements. While I agree that they're
12 important, I feel like rather than just having this
13 long lengthy letter that says here's a review of what
14 we're talking about, here's our position on it and, oh,
15 by the way we're also going to potentially write more
16 on this later. I think we should just do the more
17 later and not actually have a whole 'nother page in the
18 letter. I think it just tracks -- like that becomes
19 the ending of this letter and it kind of just tracks
20 with what we're trying to say our position is.

21
22 So I think it's more of a formatting
23 thing, rather than changing specific content within the
24 letter but I personally feel like I would be able to
25 tease out more what our position statement is if those
26 changes were considered to make.

27
28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
31 Cathy. That's very helpful and we'll take that under
32 consideration. Anybody else.

33
34 Patty.

35
36 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
37 Hernandez. On Page 62, paragraph 4, we definitely need
38 to insert .805, I mean because that's our marching
39 orders under that -- you know, it lists Section .801,
40 .802, .804, and, .815, we need to insert .805 there.

41
42 MS. PERRY: I'm sorry, Patty, where was
43 that?

44
45 MS. PHILLIPS: Page 62, paragraph 4.

46
47 MS. PERRY: Thank you.

48
49 MS. PHILLIPS: And then one other --
50

0220

1 oh, excuse me.

2

3

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Patty.

4

5

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman Hernandez. Under the regulatory -- or Council review of pertinent regulatory history, is ANILCA, Section .101(c), which -- let's see what does that say, that says: The purpose of ANILCA is to provide the opportunity for rural residents engaged in subsistence way of life to continue to do so.

12

13

And those were my two edits, Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you, Patty. Those are pretty direct and succinct. Anybody else.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Oh, Cathy, something else, go ahead.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have some small things if you want to hear those now. One is -- do you want to hear those now?

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure, go ahead.

MS. NEEDHAM: Okay. One is we just need to change the acronym for ANCSA. I think it's ANCSA, rather than SCA.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Right.

MS. NEEDHAM: And it is in that whole bullet point three times. And I did have one confusing -- I didn't understand this but on Page 65 9(a) I didn't understand what fourwheelers that fit on drop bow boats is, maybe that's something, but I didn't understand that and I'm not sure if there's a better way to state it basically because I didn't understand what that meant.

But -- and then my only last note was under Section 5(c), or actually even Section 5, we have A, B, C, D and E.....

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Uh-huh.

0221

1 MS. NEEDHAM:I think that the
2 Alaska population that is inserted within No. C, I'd
3 like to see that pulled out as a footnote rather than
4 have it in there because I think it says ANILCA's
5 primary talk about uses, I think that could be more
6 succinct and the population estimates could be not
7 necessarily in there as a bullet point itself, but that
8 was a formatting -- a small formatting thing.

9
10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.

11
12 MS. NEEDHAM: That was the small
13 things.

14
15 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

16
17 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18
19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Something else
20 from Patty as well, go ahead, Patty.

21
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Council
23 Member Needham. So under 5(c), I mean if you pull it
24 out also that it lists the Ketchikan population at
25 7,198, I believe that's the Ketchikan proper population
26 but the Ketchikan Gateway Borough population is 13,741
27 so, you know, I don't know what number we want to put
28 in there.

29
30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Something
31 to be considered, thank you again. Anybody else.

32
33 (No comments)

34
35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. I'm hearing
36 some -- oh, one more, Bob, go ahead.

37
38 MR. SCHROEDER: Well, just
39 operationally and, you know, thanks for the very
40 careful reading by Patty and Cathy, but if we come to
41 be in a court on the overall direction and content,
42 perhaps Patty and Cathy could work with DeAnna in doing
43 these fine point changes, that's operational.

44
45 And I also, just on the one, somewhat
46 substantive thing that Cathy came in on on what to do
47 with Page 69, which is possible future position policy
48 statements, just when I was working on the draft I sort
49 of thought, gee, I want to say something about that but
50

0222

1 I really didn't know whether it fit this letter
2 particularly. So I don't have any problem with that
3 being held off for another time or done some different
4 way.

5

6 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
7 Bob. So what I'm hearing is we have a motion to adopt,
8 we could potentially make some small amendments to the
9 motion, which may not even be necessary if they're
10 small edits -- I'm not quite sure of procedure on that.
11 However, Cathy's, you know, formatting suggestions, I
12 think that should be something that maybe the working
13 group should come back together and discuss those
14 formatting -- it doesn't change the content, it's just
15 kind of changing, say, how it's presented, it might be
16 a good idea to just have a short work session to decide
17 how best to do that. I think that's worthwhile.

18

19 So I think my recommendation at this
20 time with the motion, I think would be to table -- is
21 that proper -- and bring it back tomorrow for any final
22 approval.

23

24 Albert.

25

26 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is
27 it possible to make an amendment to the main motion
28 that we adopt the draft as amended by the working
29 group, that way you don't have to bring it back? It's
30 just an option, Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I see what you're
33 saying. I think we should hold off on voting to adopt.
34 I think the proper thing to do right now would be to
35 table, bring it back tomorrow and it probably will be
36 to everybody's satisfaction and then the main motion
37 could be voted on with amendments. It would have to be
38 amended at that time and we would have those amendments
39 available and then have the vote at that time.

40

41 Does that sound proper to everybody?

42

43 (Council nods affirmatively)

44

45 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: So does somebody
46 have to make a motion to table?

47

48 MS. PERRY: Yes.

49

50

0223

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, okay. so if
2 that's what the Council thinks we ought to do -- do you
3 have another question, Albert.

4
5 MR. HOWARD: No, Mr. Chair. I just --
6 I figured if we just.....

7
8 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I see where you
9 were going, yeah.

10
11 MR. HOWARD: Well, I mean we've all
12 worked together so long that it's easy to trust the
13 working group, especially Cathy and Patty working on
14 the language of it, I think I'd be happy with the end
15 result without even having to see it. But I'll go with
16 the majority so I'll move to table, Mr. Chair.

17
18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
19 Albert. Mike, are you seconding.

20
21 MR. DOUVILLE: We have a motion on the
22 floor so.....

23
24 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Right.

25
26 MR. DOUVILLE:so you have to deal
27 with that before you could make a motion to table it,
28 if I'm correct.

29
30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I'm going to need
31 an opinion on that I guess.

32
33 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chair.....

34
35 MS. PERRY: The motion to table is
36 disposing of the motion temporarily, that's my
37 understanding. If you're tabling a current motion
38 you're just delaying it to be brought up later for full
39 disposition. So we're just putting it on pause, we're
40 pressing the pause button on the motion and we're not
41 going to dispose of that until you guys decide whether
42 you want to make edits tomorrow when the working group
43 has already met. Does that make sense?

44
45 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Coordinator
46 Perry. We were in this situation in Saxman and we had
47 a motion on the floor and then there was a motion to
48 table and it was pointed out that we cannot do that but
49 I can't remember all the fine details of it and that's
50

0224

1 why I brought that up. But I'm willing to go along
2 with anything that puts it on pause until tomorrow and
3 then we can deal with it.

4

5 Thank you.

6

7 MS. PHILLIPS: Second.

8

9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, so we had a
10 motion to table, thank you for bringing up the
11 discussion Mike -- we had a motion to table, Patty just
12 seconded. All in favor of tabling the motion until
13 tomorrow say aye.

14

15 IN UNISON: Aye.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Is there anybody
18 opposed, say no.

19

20 (No opposing votes)

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We'll come
23 back tomorrow and make any final decisions.

24

25 The original working group was John,
26 Bob, Cal, myself and Patty, which is five if I count
27 correctly. We're allowed to have six and still be
28 under a quorum so I'm going to suggest that we add
29 Cathy to the working group seeing as how she has the
30 suggested formatting changes. So I don't know if that
31 takes an action by the Council or is that just
32 something I can do. Is that okay, DeAnna?

33

34 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair. Just to keep it
35 clean, if -- since we're adding a member, if we could
36 just do a short motion that would be great.

37

38 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Let's keep
39 it clean, is there a motion.

40

41 Albert.

42

43 MR. HOWARD: So moved, Mr. Chair.

44

45 MS. PHILLIPS: Second.

46

47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. So
48 the motion to add Cathy Needham to the work group, all
49 in favor say aye.

50

0225

1 IN UNISON: Aye.

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed
4 say no -- nay.

5

6 (No opposing votes)

7

8 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
9 Cathy.

10

11 (Laughter)

12

13 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I think we have
14 that room downstairs in the hotel where maybe we can
15 gather this evening, that might be good.

16

17 Cathy.

18

19 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 Now I'm kind of sad that I did my homework last night.

21

22 (Laughter)

23

24 MS. PHILLIPS: Could we meet over
25 lunch?

26

27 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Well, that's a
28 good suggestion Patty, we'll probably be having lunch
29 right here again so we could possibly do it at lunch.
30 It didn't sound like you had too extensive changes to
31 make. Okay. Yeah, let's do it at lunch, thank you.

32

33 Okay. Old business.....

34

35 REPORTER: Don.

36

37 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ:almost
38 concluded.

39

40 REPORTER: Don. Don.

41

42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We have one left
43 that I think -- oh, excuse me -- we have one topic left
44 in old business and I think that was an update from OSM
45 on moving the Office of Subsistence Management under
46 the Secretary of -- Assistant Secretary of Indian
47 Affairs but I see that's time certain on Thursday
48 morning. So we'll do that then.

49

50

0226

1 We have another old business item on
2 NOAA fisheries request for information and I believe
3 this was on aquaculture sites; is that correct, that's
4 of interest to the Council. However, I do want to ask
5 DeAnna, I know we potentially have an opportunity to
6 hear from Mr. Sherman, the Forest Supervisor for the
7 Tongass, I hear he's in Craig, I don't know if he's
8 here in -- oh, he is here in the room.

9
10 (Laughter)

11
12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: This might be a
13 good opportunity to have Mr. Sherman come up and give
14 us an update on Forest Service issues here in the
15 District so go ahead, Mr. Sherman.

16
17 Mike.

18
19 MR. DOUVILLE: I would like to correct
20 myself.

21
22 (Laughter)

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: There was a motion on
25 the floor to -- it had to do with elk and then there
26 was another motion to take no action, not to table.

27
28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.

29
30 MR. DOUVILLE: And that's what it was,
31 my confusion, thank you.

32
33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That's a good
34 recollection, Mike.

35
36 (Laughter)

37
38 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I appreciate that.

39
40 Okay, Mr. Sherman, Forest Supervisor
41 for the Tongass National Forest, go ahead.

42
43 MR. SHERMAN: Well, thank you, Mr.
44 Chairman. Again, Frank Sherman. I am the Tongass
45 Forest Supervisor and thank you very much for this
46 opportunity to address the Subsistence RAC. The last
47 time I was here I opened with an update about the
48 Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy. As you all
49 are familiar there were four parts to that Secretary
50

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1 announcement and I wanted to be able to provide you an
2 update on two aspects of that announcement, which is
3 the SASS investment piece. If I can remind you all
4 that was the initial \$25 million that the Secretary set
5 aside for investments, mostly with partnerships across
6 Southeast Alaska and the other part was the Forest
7 Management piece.

8
9 So let me just begin with the SASS
10 investment update. I think most of us are aware that
11 that occurred FY'22. We went ahead and the IUSAATeam
12 was trying to look for a measure to determine what was
13 the economic output of the initial investment. They
14 went ahead and they partnershiped -- they created a
15 partnership with Southeast Conference and specifically
16 they partnered with the Raincoast* Data. They're the
17 group that has been taking the lead on setting up
18 metrics on determining how much -- you know, what's the
19 economic impact to Southeast Alaska with this
20 investment. And they went ahead and they provided
21 their calendar year report at Southeast Conference back
22 just last month up in Sitka. So what they ended up
23 figuring out was of the 25 million, we had about \$1.3
24 million spent across those agreements in calendar year
25 '22, so they went ahead and took a -- used a number of
26 metrics and they figured up they had about another six
27 to \$700,000 that increased through indirect economic
28 opportunities that were afforded because of those
29 initial investments. So you're looking at about \$1.9
30 million that came out of that initial investment in
31 '22.

32
33 Some of the things that came up that I
34 was really happy to see was that almost all of that
35 additional monies went to salaries, to positions that
36 were hired specifically to do the work of the
37 investment. So it turned out to be about 45 jobs in
38 Southeast Alaska, which is a great number. It impacted
39 all across Southeast Alaska and it involved 12
40 different partners and their organizations so, again,
41 already we are starting to see a significant increase
42 just from that small investment.

43
44 The one thing I do want to just alert
45 you to, though, is that for calendar year '22 most of
46 the agreements, we didn't even get them done until late
47 in the calendar year, so that initial investment seems
48 small to me initially, but when you look at when the
49 agreements were signed, you know, it takes us a little
50

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1 bit of time to move through that process and I'm not
2 going to sit here and tell you that we're great at it,
3 but we moved through and we got them all done but we
4 got them right at the end of the calendar yea -- you
5 know, right at the end of the fiscal year, and for the
6 Federal government that's September, so really you're
7 only looking at about a three month period of actual
8 agreement work. So, again, \$1.9 million looks like a
9 pretty good number to me. I am really looking forward
10 to the calendar report for FY -- for calendar year '23
11 and that will be provided in January and I'll be able
12 to give an additional update the next time I meet with
13 you all.

14
15 So, again, that was the SASS investment
16 piece.

17
18 For the Forest Management piece, which
19 I know a lot of you are much more familiar with, we
20 ended up with public engagement in the first week of
21 July, although we did not stop taking input. We had at
22 least six more tribal inputs that came in during the
23 summer and we took all of that input. The
24 interdisciplinary team creat -- went through and
25 revised our criteria that I had talked about, there was
26 two parts to that, we were going to look at project
27 areas across Southeast Alaska and then we were also
28 looking at how we were going to set up criteria in
29 which to prioritize that work. When we went through
30 all the comments we had over 300 comments and we had
31 over 120 projects submitted. Again, this was an
32 initiative that we went out with a blank slate, we
33 said, hey, give us your ideas and this was another
34 opportunity for the public to engage with us without
35 any side boards. Again, this is turning out to be
36 really fruitful work and I'll get to that in a minute.
37 But at the end of the day we went ahead and took all
38 those comments, you'll see here in about another 10
39 days, within a week to 10 days we'll finish up the
40 mapping exercise that we've completed. It took us
41 about 8 weeks to take all those comments, turn those
42 comments into some spacial project areas and then
43 within each project area that's been designated all the
44 publics and tribal input and industry are all within
45 those project areas. So you'll be able to click on,
46 like for instance, Staney Creek, and you'll be able to
47 see all the comments that related to restoration work,
48 timber management work, all those sorts of things
49 embedded within that spacial area. So, again, a lot of
50

0229

1 great work accomplished over the summer. We're in the
2 criteria phase right now, in the ranking order. I
3 expect to have that brief next week and then the
4 following week we'll roll that out to a number of the
5 partners and a number of other public entities for them
6 to take a look at and see if we hit the mark or not. I
7 think we did but, you know, I'll leave that up to the
8 experts to let us know. But at the end of the day I
9 really do think by Thanksgiving you'll be able to go
10 online and see the project work that we have aligned
11 for the Tongass for the next decade.

12

13 The work that was identified, I could
14 probably go out for the next five decades, I mean
15 that's how extensive this work -- or I mean this
16 project list was. So it was very valuable for us to
17 move through this process.

18

19 Some of the themes that I saw, that
20 came out from the comments, just to share with you all,
21 I think you'll find these very interesting, was
22 restoration is a key priority for the folks here in
23 Southeast Alaska.

24

25 We need to uplift recreation and
26 tourism.

27

28 Climate resiliency is critical.

29

30 Timber remains an important aspect
31 related to local wood for local mills. And so family
32 run businesses.

33

34 Support for food security.

35

36 And, finally, subsistence, access to
37 subsistence.

38

39 There were a number of others but those
40 were the ones that resonated to the top.

41

42 Again, we'll have this list out by mid-
43 November, right before Thanksgiving I think is when
44 we'll be able to publish it. And this work is going to
45 directly going to be impactful for the next thing I'll
46 brief you on, is our Forest Plan Revision.

47

48 So in September the Washington office
49 informed me that the Tongass National Forest will

50

0230

1 undergo a Forest Plan Revision, so that's a complete
2 wholesale relook at our land and management plan. So
3 anybody that's done that work will automatically know
4 that now I know why I got this job so quickly is
5 because nobody wants to go through that body of work,
6 it takes about four years and I was told to go ahead
7 and start immediately. So we're in the pre -- what we
8 call a pre-assessment phase with the hope of having a
9 Forest Plan completed by 2027. In between that we've
10 just come up with a neat little trifold, I'll leave
11 some for you, Mr. Chairman, it kind of gives an idea of
12 what we're looking at. It's got this fancy looking QR
13 Code thing that you can click on with a camera and go
14 right to the web page and it gives you more information
15 about, you know, how we're going to try to move forward
16 with this.

17

18 As we enter the preassessment phase,
19 that's all about data collecting. And if you have done
20 any type of NEPA work that's the foundation in which
21 you're going to build your Forest Plan. So all the
22 data we collect, everything from how many days a cabin
23 is rented, to how many miles have we brushed on POW, or
24 how many miles -- or how many acres of pre-commercially
25 thinned young growth do we have on the Forest, I mean
26 that's all the type of data that we're collecting right
27 now. It takes us about a year to go through that
28 process and that will inform 15 separate assessments
29 that have to be completed before I can move into the
30 actual work of building the Forest Plan. It's
31 everything from like wild and scenic river assessments
32 to wilderness assessments to what our Forest Management
33 Product assessments so there's a whole wide range of
34 natural resource assessments we have to go through.
35 Most of that work is done through contractors that help
36 supply all that information that we build the
37 foundation of our Forest Plan on.

38

39 That's one piece.

40

41 The other piece is the public
42 engagement piece. And we've got really two portions of
43 that, we're just starting to build out that strategy.
44 There's a tribal entity piece that we've got to move
45 through, I'm mandated to do that, it's directed in the
46 instructions that I received, there's a whole new
47 section on ecological knowledge and cultural use
48 knowledge that I have to incorporate so you'll see a
49 different flavor on our land and -- Forest and Lands
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1 Management Plan than you have in the past. So there'll
2 be a whole section there.

3

4 And then the public engagement piece.
5 We know through -- this is -- I'm just personally
6 speaking. I do not believe that I do that very well,
7 the public engagement piece, we have contracted with
8 SpruceRoot to help us through the public engagement
9 piece of this. We've been meeting with them and we're
10 already making some headway there on how better to
11 engage with the public.

12

13 We also took a hard look at the
14 economic piece that has to be incorporated in the
15 Forest Plan and we're looking for the Juneau Economic
16 Development folks, the JEDC to help us through a lot of
17 that as well and that'll incorporate a lot of the
18 recreation, outfitter, guide, tourism aspects of the
19 Forest Plan.

20

21 So that's all coming.

22

23 We'll get -- you'll -- the public will
24 officially be notified of the Forest Plan Revision in
25 March right now of next year and that's what we call a
26 notice of intent, that's when it goes into the Federal
27 Register and that's kind of the starting gun for the
28 Forest Plan Revision but I know I've got about four
29 years to get this done. So quite the effort.

30

31 Again, I think opportunities like this
32 will be key as we move forward and it'll be a lot of
33 fun to be the Forest Supervisor as we try to move
34 through that body of work.

35

36 So that's what I have for you, Mr.
37 Chairman. I'm open for your questions.

38

39 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
40 Mr. Sherman. Questions.

41

42 Patty.

43

44 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
45 Hernandez. I have mostly comments and questions -- or
46 they could be questions. So in the Forest Plan
47 Revision, you said there was an emphasis on Forest
48 Management, and we've had some -- sorry, Mr. Council
49 Member from Angoon, but I'm going to bring up wolf.

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1 (Laughter)

2

3

4 MS. PHILLIPS: There was -- I sat in on
5 several meetings about it while I've been here and it's
6 about the timber is like -- I mean the Forest is like
7 crowding out areas where deer can move through and deer
8 is a very important subsistence resource and the
9 population of deer is heavily impacted by wolf
10 predation so is -- will there be like wildlife
11 corridors and will there be Forest management efforts
12 taken on POW Island, you know, to have a sustainable
13 deer population and then I just want to say that the
14 Hoonah Indian Association has an excellent program that
15 where their tribal members are going in and doing some
16 of that thinning of the Forest, you know, in order to
17 have a better Forest. And also is there going to be
18 cross-agency collaboration, I mean you've got the
19 National Park Service in the Unuk River area, I don't
20 know, I -- is it the National Park Service at Unuk
21 River, because we hear from the Ketchikan Indian
22 Community that they're not able to go into the Unuk
23 River and do some of their traditional practices with
24 their tribal members, so is there some sort of
25 collaboration that could be occurring between the
26 Forest Service and the Park Service in this --
27 identified in this plan revision.

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And I also have another -- I have a
question now, is that, like on Chichagof Island we have
the NECCUA and so it's a controlled use area. I don't
know how controlled use areas were set up or how you
make one but would it be possible to do a special use
area, or controlled use area within the area that the
Ketchikan Indian Community has identified as their
traditional area and, you know, that specific
management, subsistence management measures or similar
could be done, you know, for that community.

So those are my comments mostly. Plant
the seed for you to think about and if you do want to
respond that'd be great.

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Thank you.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anything you can
respond to there Mr. Sherman.

MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Ms. Phillips, let me attempt to address a couple of

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1 your thoughts and concerns and there's some parts I
2 just don't know, I'll have to get back with you.

3

4 Concerning Hoonah, specifically,
5 though, this summer I was up in the Spasski River, you
6 know the water basin up there, and I saw the great work
7 that the Hoonah Native Forest Partnership did, the
8 thinning work they did up there was tremendous. It
9 allowed -- they did some slash treatments up there,
10 they also did some thinning, they also did some
11 wildlife corridors, all successful management
12 practices. We're going to do the same thing there, in
13 I think it's called Big Game Water Base, which is just
14 to the west, we're going to shift focus next year over
15 there with the same crews. They did great work and
16 you'll see the same type of improvements there.

17

18 I know there's been significant
19 improvement in the deer population there, I would
20 expect the same on the west side as well.

21

22 So maybe that answers that part.

23

24 When you get into cooperating agencies,
25 that is part of building any type of Forest Plan, that
26 will be invitations that we send out to all of our
27 Federal agencies and our State -- the State agencies to
28 become cooperating agencies as we build out this Forest
29 Plan. If you become a cooperating agency, then you sit
30 on the table as we move through this process. A number
31 of tribes will likely become cooperating agencies as we
32 build this plan out. So I hope to have many, we'll see
33 how that goes.

34

35 On POW, I spent some time out at Thorne
36 Bay Basin, that integrated resource management project
37 area, we just finished up scoping for that particular
38 project. I don't know if you're familiar with that
39 one, but that's just to the north and to the east of
40 Thorne Bay. That particular project area is about
41 26,000 acres, that sounds like a lot but when you
42 really look at it, the restoration piece of that
43 encompasses about two-thirds of it because it's driven
44 on the water basins that are up there, there's quite a
45 few and there's a lot of work to be done up there.
46 There's a lot of places that had harvest early in the
47 '70s and before that that we had no protection on a lot
48 of those watersheds. So there's plenty of work to be
49 done up there. If you look at some of the stands that

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1 were not -- that weren't harvested, they were never
2 treated with any type of thinning or griddling or
3 gapping, so those are all parts of the -- when we went
4 out with scoping that's the parts that we targeted.
5 And we tried something new on the scoping, I don't know
6 if anybody looked at it, but we actually included
7 pictures on our scoping to try to show the difference
8 between areas that had been thinned and that were now
9 wildlife corridors and you could see slash on the
10 ground, you know, so there is some of that, but at the
11 end of the day there's so much light going through
12 those stands and you could see the forage for the deer
13 and you, you know, all of us know that, hey, if you got
14 forage the deer are going to be there, and sure enough
15 in those areas they are. But we also show pictures
16 that never got any pre-commercial thinning and they're
17 all, like you normally see in a lot of places on the
18 Forest Service [sic] they're just densely grown, you
19 know, sub -- I call them sub-caliber trees because
20 they're just little twigs but there's so many of them
21 it -- it shadows out all the undergrowth.

22

23 So I think you all are very familiar
24 with what those things look like but I included those
25 pictures in there specifically to help inform the
26 public on the differences between areas that have been
27 treated for wildlife and for better stands, the health
28 of the stand, and when you do that you'll see that --
29 you'll see more red cedar coming in instead of the
30 alders and the other less valuable trees. You know, I
31 mean everybody loves hemlock but boy if I can get a
32 stand with a whole lot more cedar in it that's a lot
33 better stand. So we strive for a variety so at the end
34 of the day you can tell the difference. And that's all
35 part of the scoping that we just finished up.

36

37 And I -- I got a quick brief right
38 before I came over this morning, I think we had about
39 44 comments, they were kind of split, you know, there's
40 still a lot of folks out there that don't want us to
41 touch it and, you know, there's other people out there
42 that kind of understand we're, you know, going in there
43 and doing some restoration work and doing some wildlife
44 work, it is really important to the health of the
45 Forest.

46

47 So we'll move through that process and
48 that'll allow us to figure out what type of NEPA work
49 we're going to do, either environmental analysis, which
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1 will probably take us about a year, or if, you know, if
2 we have to we'll have to, then we'll have to go to an
3 environmental impact statement and that usually takes
4 at least two years, just because of the amount of
5 assessments and surveys you have to do. So we'll move
6 forward with that as we analyze those comments.

7

8 I hope I answered most of your
9 questions.

10

11 Oh, special use. I don't know, I'll
12 have to -- they're so specific to the area, I mean I'll
13 have to burrow in and figure out exactly, you know, the
14 areas that we're looking at and the impacts for any
15 type of special use permitting.

16

17 Is that helpful?

18

19 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

20

21 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. While
22 you mention that Thorne Bay project that's currently
23 being scoped, you know, I've heard there's a lot of
24 wildlife restoration involved in that it sounds like
25 there may also be some commercial harvest involved with
26 that and I haven't really heard much talk about how
27 much of that is involved and what you plan -- how you
28 plan on putting that up for market and there's a lot of
29 people on the Island and here on the Council who are
30 pretty opposed to round log export, that's probably
31 going to be carried out in a way that probably will
32 lead to extensive harvest and that will probably be a
33 net loss of habitat. I know you're trying to restore
34 habitat but we want to be assured that there won't be
35 any losses of any habitat involved with that sale.

36

37 So tell us what you can about the
38 commercial aspect of that project.

39

40 MR. SHERMAN: Sure, Mr. Chairman. I
41 think as scoped, and, again, I haven't gone through
42 comments yet so we'll have to try to integrate those,
43 but at the end of the day what we proposed is about a
44 third of that 26,000 acres is commercial. It's been
45 designated or it's -- it lies within our timber land
46 use designations or our modified use land use
47 designations. So both of those you can do pre-
48 commercial thinning, commercial thinning, and you can
49 do commercial harvest. There's -- we haven't got into
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1 the prescriptions that we'll use, other than when we
2 scoped it we did put some side boards on the commercial
3 harvest piece to the effect -- or we've got three pots,
4 if you will, on opening sizes. So for anybody that
5 does that type of work we've got some small opening
6 sizes, two to six -- two to six acres, so I think
7 that's a pretty small opening, and then you have others
8 that are in the mid-20 to 30 acre openings and then you
9 have the large which was really like -- I think when we
10 scoped it we only had one area that we looked at large
11 and that would be 100 acre opening. So all those
12 opening sizes lead to the prescriptions in which that
13 specific area is going to be prescribed.

14
15 At this point, like I said it's just
16 scoping so this is just our ideas and we'll see how it
17 moves forward. I don't know how it's going to be
18 commercially driven other than what we're -- the aim of
19 it was to be able to provide about in between four and
20 7 million board feet of young growth a year over about
21 15 years, if -- I'm not too sure we'll get there but
22 with the blow -- with the blow down, and what I mean by
23 that is the -- you know, when you take out all the
24 areas that you can't harvest in, like along the
25 streams, along riparian areas, when you -- when you do
26 patch work harvesting, meaning you'll clear-cut a small
27 -- you know, a 10 acre portion and then there's blow
28 down, you know, there's wind events so you try not to
29 put those on -- like on the south facing of the -- of
30 steep slopes and things like that. All that's called
31 -- we call blow down, so that'll all be taken off the
32 table just because you can't harvest that area without
33 having some type of harm to those areas. So at the end
34 of the day we've suggested prescriptions. There is
35 wildlife corridors specifically laid out, in fact,
36 there's three of them laid out in Thorne Bay Basin
37 right now, there might be more, but there's three.
38 What they tried to do is link areas so the deer can
39 move from the lower, you know, sea level, right along
40 the beach fringe there all the way up to the Alpine.
41 So again, I think they were trying to -- the objective
42 was to be able to allow wildlife to move across that
43 area and to sustain itself with areas in which there's
44 now forage, particularly if we are able to get in there
45 and do some thinning.

46
47 Is that helpful?

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49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That's a pretty
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1 good answer. I think it's just -- points out that some
2 of us will probably be taking a real close look at that
3 and want to make sure that those openings are not too
4 extensive because that would be a loss of habitat and
5 that's not where we want to go.

6
7 Okay, appreciate that.

8
9 Cathy.

10
11 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
12 Going back to the Forest Plan Revision. As you know
13 we're -- this Council is a FACA committee and in our
14 charter the very first description of our duties is to
15 recommend the initiation, review and evaluate proposals
16 for regulations, policies, management plans and other
17 matters related to subsistence uses of fish and
18 wildlife on public lands within the region. And so
19 that being said, you mentioned that you had a public
20 engagement piece that you have been working with and
21 you have, you know, the tribal consultation mandates
22 that you'll be doing so you'll be working directly with
23 tribes and I'm wondering if there's -- the other piece
24 was public engagement which, you know, we're pretty
25 good at -- making sure that we do a lot of review and
26 participate in the public engagement piece, but have
27 you considered or thought about potentially having a
28 venue or at least some piece of it to engage with us
29 more directly? And the reason why I ask that is it
30 seems like the last time when there was the plan
31 revision all we ever got from the Forest Service was
32 kind of updates and then we were in response mode and
33 the timing of it is always very complicated for us
34 because we only meet two times a year, and so having
35 some kind of plan I think would help us better engage
36 with the -- when I say, plan, I'm not talking about the
37 Forest Plan, but having some kind of engagement plan
38 directly with the Regional Advisory Council might
39 assist in some of the frustration that sometimes we
40 feel when we try to respond to these things and help
41 you, the Forest Service, with respect to subsistence
42 uses.

43
44 So I guess that might be more of a
45 comment than a question unless you actually have
46 thought about how you might engage with the Regional
47 Advisory Council through your process.

48
49 Thank you.

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1 MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman. Ms.
2 Needham. Thank you very much for the offer. I'll take
3 you up on that and we will figure out a way to -- I
4 haven't given it much thought but, yes, that would be
5 -- that was one of my hopes today was to announce this
6 to you all and ask for your help and assistance and
7 your invitation to participate. So we'll -- I'll have
8 to think about that and I'm happy to work, Mr.
9 Chairman, with whomever you'd like to come up with a
10 viable plan on how to engage with the Subsistence RAC.

11
12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

13
14 Bob.

15
16 MR. SCHROEDER: Yeah, thank you.
17 Through the Chair. And thanks for coming before us
18 today, Frank. Just in light of a really good way to
19 interact with the Regional Advisory Council is that we
20 are a forum for gathering public opinion and input on
21 many things, but our real focus is on subsistence and
22 really important when a Forest Plan is taking place is
23 how you deal with Section .810 and for a whole variety
24 of reasons that was a real rubbing point on the most
25 recent huge planning process that went on on the
26 Roadless Rule. Now, I know we changed Administration,
27 I won't clap, but that was a very difficult area, so
28 something that could get headed off before there's a
29 problem would be to talk with us and really figure out
30 what you're going to do with Section .810 with the
31 Forest Plan.

32
33 And then I did have a couple of other
34 things.

35
36 Forest Service, quite a few years ago
37 sponsored and facilitated a major citizen involvement
38 effort on planning for deer on Prince of Wales and one
39 things that came out of that group was -- which was
40 adopted by the Council as a recommendation was the
41 somewhat aspiration goal of restoring the Tongass
42 National Forest to its natural state, which was a
43 fairly radical idea at the time and it obviously hasn't
44 quite -- I said it was aspirational, we're not there,
45 but, you know, that still pretty much stands as what
46 the Council would likely want to have happen is to, you
47 know, get this Forest so that its productivity for
48 subsistence was back what it was.

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1 The Council has also weighed in at
2 different times and in our comments, our multiple
3 comments on Roadless Rule, a major point both for this
4 Council and then for the majority of the comments that
5 came in on the Roadless Rule, was to consider and value
6 the Tongass National Forest as a major carbon sink. I
7 don't know if anyone went so far as to want to rename
8 it the Amazon of the North, but we are a big junk of
9 territory that sequesters really a lot of carbon, and
10 this is a national treasure in that respect. And many
11 people feel that that sequestration of carbon outweighs
12 other consumptive uses of trees. And it also matches
13 up pretty well with maintaining a subsistence priority
14 for subsistence uses as well as making sure that the
15 resources needed for subsistence.

16

17 So those were a couple of things.

18

19 And then back when you were talking
20 about the economic impacts of this funding, I just say
21 that you could even toot your horn more because if
22 you're doing -- if most of the money was spent was
23 spent on salaries you get a really good multiplier
24 effect on those as opposed to if you -- if the money
25 was spent to barge in a big piece of equipment so you
26 can put another gold star next to that, which may be
27 useful sometime.

28

29 But that's it for me.

30

31 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob.

32

33 John, go ahead.

34

35 MR. SMITH: Yeah, a little bit of
36 comment. I really thank you for talking about Hoonah.
37 Dennis Gray, Jr., back many years ago -- of course I
38 worked for Whitestone Logging for 28 years so I logged
39 a lot of that, I was a hook tender for Whitestone and
40 Larry was sharing about some of his machines that would
41 get 150 logs a day but I got 350 to 400 logs a day. So
42 through the years of working with Dennis he asked me to
43 come out and I watched the process, but just seeing the
44 process being done, and of course today I work with the
45 University of Fairbanks, I'm a gardener so I look at
46 the Forest as a garden, so I -- I'm listening to the
47 carbon issue and I think we're working too hard.

48

49 So I'll share a perspective.

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1 Is we leave a lot of carbon out there
2 and we talk about that when we make a clear-cut and
3 that the deer come through there, no, they -- I don't
4 really believe that they manoeuver through there, maybe
5 through some of the new units that have been taken care
6 of well that they do, there's no path through there.
7 You try to walk through there, even a deer is not going
8 to get through there because underneath the growth is
9 all these limbs and branches and carbon that we left
10 there. And when you leave a lot of that there it -- it
11 takes awhile. We actually did the study with the
12 children about carbon and actually had garlic on one
13 side where we used seaweed as one and then we put a lot
14 of wood on top of it, a lot of carbon, and the carbon
15 didn't grow real well, it was like dull but on the
16 other side we had a lot of green. So when I'm talking
17 about working too hard, it's pretty dangerous when you
18 drop a seven foot on the butt tree on there and you
19 have somebody bucking -- I don't know if you know about
20 that, or how dangerous that is, but why are we doing
21 that there, let's get the whole tree, just drop it,
22 take the whole thing to the landing, leave all the
23 resources there so we can come back and receive it.
24 That will clean the area up. And not to mention that
25 the reason I got 400 logs a day is because I rigged the
26 trees 100 to 120 feet, I can, you know, suspend all the
27 logs off the ground, but I could also just lay them on
28 the ground and have the yarder engineer drag it and
29 kind of break up the ground that he goes, but
30 underneath the cover of all the trees, if you're just
31 out there roaming around, some of you hunters or
32 whatever, but there's all kinds of young ones already
33 growing. So when you pull that out and I suspend those
34 it's not going to hurt them, right so you start
35 realizing that once you do that, get the carbon, then I
36 think our return will be faster. And then, of course,
37 realizing that when I went out to help Dennis with his
38 planting, that I was watching gentlemen, you know,
39 they'll take a few of their steps and they'll plant the
40 tree but they're not looking, they're planting a tree
41 right there where there's five or six of them already
42 growing, why put another one there, and I don't know if
43 you have teaching and education and a process that
44 these people that you're paying to do that, to make
45 sure that they're doing that and they're not putting a
46 tree right there where there's one that's a lot bigger
47 already and making a circle and maybe destroying the
48 other ones by pulling them up and getting the roots out
49 so you just have this one nice little tree and then as
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1 you're coming through there you might not have to buy
2 20,000 trees; do you see what I'm saying.

3

4

5 So -- and then looking at the future
6 that maybe you don't have the resources right there but
7 you have -- but I mean you took all the resources out
8 of the wood so you can later on come back with the
9 children. It really floored me that Sealaska had a --
10 they're heating their building with wood pellets and
11 then I asked them, I was like, oh, are you getting that
12 from the mountains and they said, no, we're buying them
13 and I could just see the children going in and actually
14 making pellets for their Sealaska building instead of
15 producing -- so -- and then look at it this way -- and
16 then a corporation -- our people like to go out there
17 and just think if you did it this way, all the
18 blueberries, huckleberries, all the other things are
19 going to grow very well and now we have little paths up
20 there because when I was logging I'd do between five to
21 10 to 12 roads [sic] a day depending on what type of
22 unit so you leave these little trails through there.
23 People would be able to walk right up there, go harvest
24 their food and start getting it out to our elders and
25 taking care of it. Maybe we'd go out there and feed,
26 you know, so help it grow and get back and get some
27 nitrogen out in there.

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30 So just the thought of looking at a
31 different process and I don't know if this makes sense
32 or not or if I'm way out of line but I'd love to sit
33 with your team and see if there's folks out there -- I
34 see are logging here -- but when I flew over, something
35 that really bugged me the most was seeing.....

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Hey, John, we got
36 to move on.....

38 MR. SMITH:them.....

40 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ:here, you're
41 getting a little too -- too specific.

43 MR. SMITH: Yeah. Yeah. The buffers,
44 I really.....

46 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Save those
47 comments.

49 MR. DOUVILLE:worry about making

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1 the.....

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Save those
4 comments for when we have.....

5

6 MR. SMITH:buffers not 200 feet,
7 not 300 but more, like I looked at the islands here and
8 the trees, they took all the -- so anyway (In Tlingit).

9

10 Sorry.

11

12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Yeah, lots
13 of opportunity to give them those comments directly but
14 we kind of got to stick to business here.

15

16 I'm going to give Cal the last word, I
17 think you had your hand up earlier.

18

19 MR. CASIPIT: Mr. Chair. I'll talk to
20 Mr. Sherman at lunch or something. I just had some
21 minor things about standards and guides that I thought
22 would be important for subsistence so I -- but, anyway,
23 I don't want to take up anymore time.

24

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Mike, did you have
26 your hand up?

27

28 MR. DOUVILLE: Yep.

29

30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

31

32 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
33 guess I would ask if the plan has any set aside areas
34 for cultural trees and if not could it be a
35 consideration?

36

37 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
38 Mr. Douville. Yes, absolutely, we have a whole section
39 on cultural -- all cultural wood products. So when we
40 talk about the Forest Plan that will be incorporated in
41 that as well. For the Thorne Bay Integrated Resource
42 Management Project there are specific places in there
43 that we've identified for cultural use.

44

45 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you.

46

47 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair.

48

49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Albert.

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1 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 A couple of questions, I guess. I'm wondering why
3 Southeast Conference was chosen as a partner and the
4 second question is, is your plan consistent with Angoon
5 Community Association's Strategic Plan for Admiralty
6 Island? Because, Mr. Chairman, the thought of Angoon
7 was that because of -- it seems like when the Forest
8 Service or anyone talks about the Tongass, they don't
9 include Admiralty Island, but when the people of Angoon
10 want to remove Admiralty Island from the Tongass
11 language because it's a National Monument they say, no,
12 you can't do that, so it's a Catch-22. The first
13 question is, is your plan consistent with Angoon
14 Community Association's Strategic Plan for the island?
15

16 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
17 I have -- I've seen that strategic plan, I've scanned
18 through it. When I was in Angoon last -- I guess it
19 was in early June, some of the Council members and I
20 discussed that. I think there's portions of it that
21 incorporate very nicely into the Forest Plan, there's
22 other areas that we probably have to do more work. So
23 I think this would be good opportunity as we move with
24 the new Forest Plan to incorporate more aspects of your
25 Strategic -- of the Angoon's Strategic Plan because
26 there's some really good thoughts in there that we
27 haven't addressed yet.
28

29 And so hopefully that answers your
30 question.
31

32 And then the other part, you asked me
33 one other piece and I didn't write it down so I've
34 forgotten it already, I'm sorry.
35

36 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Southeast
37 Conference, why are they.....
38

39 MR. SHERMAN: Oh, that was done -- it
40 was done through US, our partners with Department of
41 Agriculture, NRCS, Rural Development and the Forest
42 Service, they -- they believed that using Southeast
43 Conference was a good way of looking at the economic
44 impact in Southeast Alaska since they've done that work
45 for years and were the leaders of -- with that aspect.
46

47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
48 Follow up Albert.
49
50

0244

1 MR. HOWARD: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. The
2 reason I asked about Southeast Conference, having been
3 the former Mayor that's an economic group.

4
5 MR. SHERMAN: Yep.

6
7 MR. HOWARD: And they do have a good
8 idea of the economics of Southeast Alaska but they
9 don't represent the economics of Angoon. In fact, had
10 they done that we wouldn't be 80 percent unemployed.
11 If you look at the elected people on that Council, none
12 of them have been elected by Angoon. And, Mr.
13 Chairman, I'm trying to keep this to two minutes
14 because our people from Juneau used up 20 of my 30
15 minutes, so thank you Mr. Chair.

16
17 (Laughter)

18
19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
20 Albert.

21
22 Patty.

23
24 MS. PHILLIPS: Quick question, Mr.
25 Chair. So the person who leads the SASS was at our
26 Juneau meeting and said something about not going to be
27 in that position anymore, so is there someone who's
28 been put into that position?

29
30 MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman. Ms.
31 Phillips. The person who briefed in Juneau was Barb
32 Miranda -- Barbara Miranda, she's now a deputy Forest
33 Supervisor for the Tongass so I hired her in and she's
34 remaining in Juneau. That's the good news, at least
35 for the Tongass, I'm really happy to report that, in
36 fact, I have two now so I'm really happy. The one
37 that's stationed in Ketchikan is right here with me,
38 Clint Kolarich, was the District Ranger in Wrangell for
39 the last four years and made him -- promoted him and
40 brought him down to Ketchikan so he's the second
41 deputy. So I really feel blessed to have two deputies.

42
43 But to specifically answer your
44 question, nobody has picked up that role formally,
45 we've had it shifted over to the partnership folks that
46 work at the region but they are still moving through
47 that process. So it's going to be either between NRCS
48 or the Forest Service that will take the lead for
49 Southeast Alaska Sustainability Strategy.

50

0245

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, Albert, one
2 quick question.

3
4 MR. HOWARD: The question is is there a
5 current plan for the trees that are dying on Admiralty
6 Island? You could fly over Admiralty Island and see
7 all the spruce trees are just -- in my mind, if you're
8 going to create economics for the sawmills, the small
9 mom and pop's on there, is there an opportunity to -- I
10 don't know, I'm not a logger, maybe the gentleman from
11 Juneau can tell me that that referenced my uncle from
12 Hoonah, but is there an opportunity to possibly do
13 selective logging and remove all the dead trees and
14 make that -- instead of taking a green tree, take a
15 dead tree and make a product out of it and.....

16
17 (Teleconference interference -
18 participants not muted)

19
20 MR. HOWARD: That's my question, thank
21 you, Mr. Chair.

22
23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

24
25 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
26 Mr. Howard, I can partially answer your question. The
27 -- I looked at the last -- I'm no bug scientist so I
28 don't know all the right terms, but they -- the last
29 update I had was about a month and a half ago, they
30 finished up their field surveys, they know Admiralty
31 got hit probably the hardest across the Tongass. We
32 thought originally Wrangell was going to be the worst,
33 but Admiralty looks like it's going to be the hardest
34 hit, they were initially looking at about a 30 percent
35 mortality rate and now -- but that's not the case. The
36 last two field seasons we've seen at 50 percent of that
37 30 percent actually green up so they think they're
38 going to have a mortality rate around 10 percent on
39 Admiralty Island, so that's good news.

40
41 As you all know that this is cyclical,
42 this has happened before. So it's not unusual,
43 although I would argue that having a sawfly -- hemlock
44 sawfly outbreak and then followed by the black headed
45 bug worm was significantly damaging and, again, that's
46 about the only terms I really know about bugs.

47
48 (Laughter)

49
50

0246

1 MR. SHERMAN: Other than they really
2 like those spruce. With all that said, though, Cube
3 Cove, that whole area that has been brought over to the
4 Forest Service side now is in its final throws of
5 getting pushed through the Washington office so we can
6 clear that area for restoration. And if we do -- if we
7 are able to go in there, because it is wilderness, then
8 we will be able to do some thinning up in those areas
9 where there are some significant damage and if that's
10 the case we'll be able to harvest those trees.

11
12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
13 Mr. Sherman. So, yeah, I think we can wrap this up,
14 you've answered a lot of questions, we really
15 appreciate that, given us a lot of good information and
16 I'm glad you had an opportunity to come and meet with
17 us here in Klawock, so appreciate it very much.

18
19 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you very much, Mr.
20 Chairman appreciate the time.

21
22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah. So before
23 we break for lunch.....

24
25 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chair.

26
27 REPORTER: Hold on, Don, Frank is on
28 the phone, can he talk?

29
30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Oh, Frank, just a
31 second -- hold on a second there -- Frank.

32
33 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 First I'd like to thank Mr. Sherman for working with
35 the Hoonah Indian Association and it's pretty good
36 that two government agencies can work together and it's
37 going to continue on I'm sure.

38
39 A question I have is have you seen the
40 Tenakee Corporation land selection that is going before
41 the Federal government, because the Hoonah Indian
42 Association is a little concerned about their
43 selection, they got selection on Home Shore and they
44 got selection up on Mt. -- Port Frederick, which we --
45 we definitely don't want any logging up there. But
46 still I just found about this yesterday, so I'm curious
47 about if you know anything about the selection.

48
49 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

50

0247

1 MR. SHERMAN: So, Mr. Chair, for Mr.
2 Wright's comment, I think he was talking about land
3 selection, I wasn't quite able to hear all of his
4 question, but he was concerned about portions of the
5 land selection and if I am aware of them?

6
7 REPORTER: Right, on Port Frederick and
8 Home Shore by Tenakee.

9
10 MR. SHERMAN: Oh, okay.

11
12 MR. WRIGHT: Yes, it was Home Shore and
13 Port Frederick being selected by Tenakee Corporation.

14
15 MR. SHERMAN: So, Mr. Wright, yes, I am
16 aware of those selections but to tell you the truth
17 other than the Forest Service providing technical
18 information to the Congressional Delegation, I don't
19 know where that's at.

20
21 MR. WRIGHT: Okay, I just saw it
22 yesterday so I just thought you might be aware of it.
23 Thank you. All right.

24
25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
26 Frank, and thank you Mr. Sherman, once again.

27
28 So we have one more item of old
29 business that I was hoping to introduce here before
30 lunch break and that's this request for information
31 from NOAA Fisheries involving aquaculture sites in our
32 area. In your blue folders there was a notice
33 included, it's kind of in the back of the blue folders,
34 some information on this. They're looking for comment,
35 there's opportunities for comment. I guess I wanted to
36 hear from the Council if the Council, as a whole, wants
37 to make any comments, if we were to do that we would
38 probably put together of a working group of those that
39 are most interested in this topic and kind of gather
40 some comments they want included, or this could just be
41 an information item and make everybody aware that there
42 are going to be listening sessions on this topic in
43 order to provide comments.

44
45 So I'll get the Council's opinion on
46 whether or not we want to put in comments from the
47 Council requiring a work group or are we satisfied with
48 just leaving this information with the Council.

49
50

0248

1 Bob.

2

3

4 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair
5 and thanks DeAnna for, yet, once again getting things
6 to the Council that we might never hear about
7 otherwise, or more likely we hear about way too late.
8 I just saw this, DeAnna, circulated this sheet before
9 us, oh, it wasn't that long ago it was a week or 10
10 days ago and then I thought this was something we
11 should take up at the Council and then I think Mike
12 seconded that.

12

13

14 Since we're really not being briefed on
15 what's envisioned by NOAA, we're operating a little bit
16 in the dark, and then I'm not sure if the Federal
17 Register item came out on this or not, exactly where we
18 are in the comment process, but my initial thoughts on
19 this were that it was definitely a good thing to look
20 at aquaculture sites, but that the approach was
21 seriously misguided because if you just do a cursory
22 reading of this it kind of assumes that basically all
23 areas where aquaculture would conceivably be possible
24 are open unless you complain about it, unless either
25 our Council or an individual community or an individual
26 person says, whoa, whoa, that's not where it should be.
27 I think that just from my own personal view that this
28 is kind of going about things backwards because -- and
29 will probably not be particularly successful.

29

30

31 So were we to do comments it would be
32 probably much more on the procedural level and saying
33 that, you know, there aren't very many areas in
34 Southeast Alaska that we know of that aren't used for
35 subsistence uses, coastal areas are where aquaculture
36 could be feasible and these are -- essentially these
37 areas are in some ways already occupied.

37

38

39 The second point is that I'm really
40 frustrated, however well meaning attempts at gathering
41 information like this may be, that completely bypassing
42 consultation with tribes and communities is basically
43 not the way to go. I think that the first round of
44 information gathering should go to organizations that
45 are empowered to look after their members interests.

45

46

47 So perhaps were we to do something,
48 we'd do something like that, namely say that in our
49 experience virtually all of the coastline, intertidal
50 areas in our region have some subsistence use and that

50

0249

1 we would deal down the line with identified areas that
2 were proposed for aquaculture initiation. And then on
3 the other hand just the procedural one of how NOAA
4 needs to occupy up, needs to address things like this
5 through organizations that already exist and those are
6 tribes and communities and no doubt other organizations
7 that I'm not really thinking of.

8

9 So that would be my suggestion on what
10 we do. We could have some discussion on that and then
11 have a good enough record so that our wonderful
12 Coordinator could draft a letter to that effect.

13

14 Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob.
17 Any other Council members with thoughts on this. Mike,
18 you raising your hand -- yeah, go ahead.

19

20 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
21 We have some experience with when I was a City
22 Councilman, SeaGrove applied for permits in different
23 areas, one was refused because there was rookies there
24 and the city of Craig agreed to Doyle Bay. At the same
25 time SeaGrove applied for Real Marina and we protested
26 that at that time so Doyle Bay was okay. SeaGrove then
27 reapplied for Real Marina and the city did not make
28 comment but the tribe did and we protested and said,
29 no, this is a high subsistence area, there's no less
30 than 18 seal haulouts in that area and so on and the
31 permit was granted and we appealed and we were, I
32 guess, for a lack of a better term, just blown off.
33 But we did see some buoys in that area the year before
34 last, I haven't seen any since and it hasn't been
35 utilized so I don't know where it's at now.

36

37 But we are opposed to having these kelp
38 farms in our four or five islands that are so important
39 to our subsistence. That's just, to me, not a
40 consideration. We did have a different company that we
41 worked with, I can't remember the name, they're from
42 the Netherlands, but anyway we said go up into SeaOtter
43 and we supported that. But they need to consult with
44 the local people to see, you know, if this is sensitive
45 or not.

46

47 One of the efforts that they have is to
48 grow bull kelp. Bull kelp only -- and they tried it in
49 Doyle Bay and I said it won't work because it doesn't

50

0250

1 grow there naturally. If it doesn't grow there
2 naturally you're not going to farm it. It needs a
3 high, either ocean agitation or natural high current,
4 it doesn't need the wave action but it needs that
5 current and some of those , you know, ideal places are
6 very sensitive, otherwise it simply will not grow. I
7 mean it grew this tall (indicating) and I knew it
8 wouldn't grow there but they grow other things that are
9 doing well in those areas. But the State was the one
10 that issued the permit, NOAA didn't have anything to
11 say about it but now they're included here somehow, I
12 don't know how it all works but like everybody -- Go
13 Green Mariculture, but wait a minute, you know, we have
14 a lot of sensitive area here that, to me, is not on the
15 table for consideration.

16
17 So, anyway, that's all I'll say right
18 now.

19
20 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I'll follow
21 up there. So would you be in support of putting some
22 language you were talking about into a letter?

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: I can't understand you.

25
26 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Do you think you
27 would support including some of the comments you made
28 into a letter to NOAA; is that kind of where you're
29 going with that, incorporating your comments there into
30 a letter?

31
32 MR. DOUVILLE: Well, I have no problem
33 with that, yeah.

34
35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, that was
36 kind of where Bob was going.

37
38 Albert.

39
40 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 For sake of discussion I'd like to make a motion to
42 create a working group to draft a letter to NOAA
43 concerning this item.

44
45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
48 Albert. That might be a good suggestion. I guess we
49 might need a motion to create a working group.
50

0251

1 MS. PERRY: He just made the motion.

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That was the
4 motion, thank you. Do we have a second then.

5

6 MS. PHILLIPS: Second.

7

8 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, Patty
9 seconds. Okay. Let's talk about forming a work group
10 that can put together a letter from the Council on this
11 issue and who wants to participate.

12

13 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, I'm just
14 making suggestions.

15

16 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Excuse me, let's
17 -- let's go to the vote, I think first.

18

19 MS. PERRY: Discussion. The motion's
20 on the table so.....

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I guess forming --
23 okay, I guess discussion on forming the group would be
24 appropriate before we vote, okay, let's have the
25 discussion.

26

27 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman. I think
28 this is where Ms. Needham volunteers you because that's
29 how that works where I come from.

30

31 (Laughter)

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Well, I think we
34 might have some other good volunteers for this but
35 let's ask for volunteers first, who would like to work
36 on the letter.

37

38 Bob, yes.

39

40 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Chair, and I
41 think probably if a working group could quickly
42 identify the key points of concerns and then leave that
43 up to DeAnna to make sweet and acceptable and, you
44 know, because we always do things -- in letters of this
45 sort we state our authority under ANILCA, et cetera, et
46 cetera, that's boilerplate. And I just -- so I don't
47 forget about it, you know, something else, you know,
48 I'm not opposed to aquaculture, it's not like a over my
49 dead body kind of thing, but permits and development of

50

0252

1 aquaculture tends to create a de facto property right
2 for the person who gets the permit. Now it really
3 isn't a property right but if the State of Alaska
4 encourages someone to set up an oyster farm or a kelp
5 farm and they put in investments in there and they may
6 hire people, in a very real way that becomes their
7 place and so, you know, this isn't -- so disposing of
8 public resources in this way, common property resources
9 really should be done very carefully because, you know,
10 we basically believe there should be open access to the
11 land of waters of our state for subsistence and other
12 purposes. And this puts a barrier to that and if
13 there's a big kelp farm going on or an oyster farm or
14 something else other people pretty much can't go there
15 so.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob.

18

19 Cathy.

20

21 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
22 believe the motion is to form a working group and my
23 question would be is the goal of that working group to
24 do it by this meeting or would the working group be
25 able to work between now and the spring meeting to
26 accomplish the letter so that they had time to actually
27 research it. I mean we only have a day and a half left
28 of this meeting and a lot of business.....

29

30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah.

31

32 MS. NEEDHAM:so what's the
33 timeline for the work group?

34

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Well, it looks
36 like they're opening up a 60 day comment period here in
37 October so I don't think we could put our comments off
38 to the next meeting but it may not take a lot of work
39 to put together this letter. We're having a lot of
40 discussion around the table just in relation to the
41 motion so those thoughts can all be captured. There
42 might be just a few additional things to add to that by
43 a work group.

44

45 Albert.

46

47 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
48 It could be as simple as asking NOAA to -- as a Council
49 we recognize individual IRAs and their sovereignty and
50

0253

1 we should ask NOAA to do the same.

2

3

4 As an example, if Craig objects to it,
5 that's their, you know, priority and that's their
6 prerogative to do such things and we should support
7 that. Just like if ACA wants to object to anything. I
8 agree this is -- you're taking a body of water and
9 you're giving it to somebody, why can't we use the same
10 process to take care of the Ketchikan Indian
11 Association. Give them a right to whatever they want
12 in that area. We're going to do it for commercial. So
13 that's the thought process I'm using now looking at
14 this, we have a process here for someone to create a
15 commercial industry and it's easier than Ketchikan
16 Indian Association trying to get the right to the
17 resource around their front door.

17

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Mr. Chairman, I believe Section .810
applies to this. But I also believe that we should --
as the State of Alaska recognizes each IRA's
sovereignty now, we should do the same and we should
encourage NOAA to also do the same. That individual
IRA should be approached in that manner and we should
support whatever IRA in that community decides is best
for them.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
More good comments that could be incorporated into a
letter. I guess the question still remains, do we have
some volunteers for a work group who want to kind of
gather all these and bring them back to the Council.
We had the motion to create a working group, who wants
to be on it?

Albert. Bob.

MR. DOUVILLE: I would, Mr. Chair, but,
you know, I want to be up front I am not a writer but I
do have considerable information.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Well, we would
leave the writing up to our Council Coordinator to
actually put the letter together with all the proper
acknowledgements but, yeah, we just need the main
points that we want to put in the letter. So you're
volunteering for that Mike?

0254

1 MR. DOUVILLE: (Nods affirmatively)

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. John, are
4 you questioning or volunteering?

5

6 MR. SMITH: I'll volunteer.

7

8 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
9 John. Albert, volunteering?

10

11 MR. HOWARD: (Nods affirmatively)

12

13 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.

14

15 MS. NEEDHAM: I have a question.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That sounds good,
18 three volunteers but Cathy has a question. Go ahead,
19 Cathy.

20

21 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
22 had to put my hand down because you were like looking
23 for volunteers but I still have a question.

24

25 (Laughter)

26

27 MS. NEEDHAM: I scanned the QR code on
28 the flier and there's a different timeline in the
29 website information than what the flier says and it
30 says that fall of 2023 they will be developing
31 preliminary maps of the study areas, and winter of 2024
32 will be when they request information from stakeholders
33 to present -- tribes, communities and interested
34 parties so maybe the first order of the working group
35 could be to nail down the timeline and if this is
36 business that can have a little bit more time to put
37 things together and it might not necessarily need to
38 try to cram this into this meeting.

39

40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, sounds
43 reasonable. Do a little further investigation, take
44 some time to do that in the work group. Yeah, I think
45 we have three good volunteers that can work on that.
46 If we're ready for a vote on that.

47

48 MR. DOUVILLE: Call for the question.

49

50

0255

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
2 All in favor of forming a working group to do some
3 further investigating and putting together some
4 proposed language for a potential letter for the
5 Council to send to NOAA on aquaculture sites; all in
6 favor say aye.

7
8 IN UNISON: Aye.

9
10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed
11 say nay.

12
13 (No opposing votes)

14
15 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
16 We'll leave it up to the people on the work group to
17 decide when they want to get together on that and bring
18 something back before the end of the meeting that would
19 be great.

20
21 Larry, question.

22
23 MR. BEMIS: Mr. Chair. I was out in
24 the restroom and missed being a part of this. I just
25 got notified yesterday on my agenda that I'm going to
26 have today that our local corporation had went in
27 partners with a group out of Canada to set up a bull
28 kelp farm. And before this even got started, the State
29 gave them the lease, we didn't get any notification
30 about it, it went through the tribe -- I mean it went
31 through the corporation, the State handed over the
32 permits before anybody even had public comment so this
33 thing scooted right along and they picked an area, Mr.
34 Douville was talking about, that was protected by an
35 island, it doesn't have the -- it has the depth, is
36 what they were looking for, but it doesn't have the
37 current and there's a kelp bed that's about a mile away
38 that is massive, runs for miles, and here you are
39 trying to set something up that doesn't even -- anyway,
40 let's get to the point. They're offering to sell that
41 permit and giving the tribe, which I'm a Councilmember
42 first choice to buy all the stuff, so in other words,
43 this thing acted so fast and we were all going, hey,
44 that's where we fish, that's where we troll, that's
45 where we hunt, and it's a huge area. And it kind of --
46 the committee was just caught off guard and the State
47 gave up that permit without any due process, that I
48 knew of, because I'm going how did this all happen and
49 now they want to take up 14 acres, and it's going to be
50

0256

1 a square and it's going to have all these lines and
2 buoys and everything and now it's going to be on my
3 table to decide whether to buy it, and what's
4 surprising is you can actually run ahead and get a
5 lease and then turn around and sell it to somebody
6 without due process and I'm finding that out today. So
7 I'm glad this was brought up and it'll give me some
8 insight to investigate it a little deeper and find out
9 how that -- because that's the first we heard.

10

11 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Your observation
12 sounds similar to what Mr. Douville had to say. So, I
13 don't know, did you miss the opportunity to be on this
14 working group, do you want to volunteer for that?

15

16 MR. BEMIS: Yeah, I should. I should.

17

18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.

19

20 MR. BEMIS: Yes.

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Let's add Larry to
23 the work group. I think I called -- the question was
24 called for though so we can add Larry Bemis.

25

26 MS. PERRY: Yeah, you guys already
27 voted so.....

28

29 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We could add
30 Larry, that's fine, yeah.

31

32 MR. BEMIS: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.

33

34 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Like I say you
35 guys decide when you want to get together on this and
36 it sounds like you have a lot of good input into this
37 issue. So let's adjourn for lunch -- not adjourn, but
38 recess for lunch. We've got one working group that's
39 going to get together here at lunchtime so I think
40 there's six of us on that, so let's do that and let me
41 just say that it's 12:15, and I'll give until 1:30 for
42 lunch so we can give time for this working group to
43 spend some time on this so we'll recess until 1:30.

44

45 (Off record)

46

47 (On record)

48

49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Council members,

50

0257

1 if you're out in the hall please come back to the room
2 and we'll get started here.

3

4 (Pause)

5

6 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We still
7 have a little bit of old business to conclude, to hear
8 from the working group, but I'm pretty confident that
9 the working group really didn't have to do a whole lot
10 of work, we got things squared away pretty good to
11 bring back to the Council but I think I'm going to hold
12 off on concluding that until tomorrow morning because
13 we have somebody here that wants to give us a report
14 that's here in Klawock and is ready to go and it's a
15 prelude to our wildlife proposals which are next up on
16 new business. And so let's go ahead and get wildlife
17 reports. I see Jake Musslewhite is up there at the
18 table and we also have Ian Johnson with a report from
19 the Hoonah Indian Association on survey work that they
20 were doing. Maybe I'll -- are you ready to go, Jake,
21 do you want to present first or if you want to.....

22

23 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Yes.

24

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ:let Ian go
26 first.

27

28 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Yes, I am, thank you.
29 Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, for the record my
30 name is Jake Musslewhite, I am the North Zone
31 Subsistence Biologist for the Tongass. And, yes, I
32 think my job here is I'm going to be sort of the warm
33 up act before diving into the wildlife proposals here.
34 So I'm just going to give a quick overview of the
35 effort and harvest for wildlife over the past few years
36 just so the Council has the background information and
37 context for considering these proposals.

38

39 It seems like most of our talks so far
40 here in this meeting has been deer so here is the big
41 picture for deer harvest over the past few years, unit
42 by unit. As you see that yellow line at the top is
43 Unit 4, which is, you know, the big producer of deer in
44 this region and obviously the topic of a lot of
45 discussion here over the past few years. You'll see
46 that in this past year in 2022 there was a big decline
47 in deer harvest, which I found kind of curious, and I
48 honestly can't explain. I suspect that's probably
49 weather related. I know in my personal experience I

50

0258

1 never made it out last year because every -- when the
2 rare occasions I had time to do so the weather was so
3 crappy so I suspect that possibly explains that sudden
4 drop there.

5

6 Next underneath that is the red line,
7 Unit 2, again, a lot of discussion of Unit 2 deer here
8 and you see that sort of long slow decline there in the
9 number of deer harvested.

10

11 And then under there Unit 1 and Unit 2
12 [sic], which are fairly stable but not exactly big deer
13 producers.

14

15 And then a lot of those harvest levels
16 are explained by just simply the amount of effort. As
17 you see in Unit 4 there was a lot less harvest as we
18 seen in the previous slide but there was a lot less
19 effort, so that's kind of why I suspect weather or
20 something similar explains that decline. And then,
21 again, in Unit 2, along with the, you know, slowly
22 declining harvest there you see almost identical
23 decline in effort in the sheer number of hunters. This
24 doesn't -- you know, it doesn't reflect the amount of
25 time those folks are spending but just the number of
26 folks that are going out and hunting. And, again, in
27 Unit 1 and Unit 3, fairly stable low pattern there in
28 the number of hunters participating.

29

30 So I'm just going to go unit by unit to
31 show you which communities are harvesting deer in each
32 of these units. So starting with Unit 4, our biggest
33 pie here, you see Juneau and Sitka pretty much dominate
34 the communities harvesting deer in those units but
35 everyone comes to Unit 4 to get there deer because we
36 have, you know, probably the highest success rates of
37 anywhere in the region here in Unit 4. So a little bit
38 folks from all over here, I think just about every
39 Southeast community is represented here as some folks
40 hunting in Unit 4.

41

42 And in Unit 2 there's a lot of players
43 in this game as well. You know, as we've discussed
44 here, there is -- you know, mostly dominated by
45 communities here on the island and by the orange slice
46 you see there, Ketchikan, so that gives you an idea of
47 what portion of the overall deer harvest is taken by
48 the residents of Ketchikan, and then, you know, that
49 other slice, again, consists of communities throughout
50

1 Southeast Alaska. I mean as this Council has found in
2 the past, you know, people move throughout the region
3 from their home communities to go hunt throughout the
4 region, you know, depending on their individual
5 circumstances.

6
7 And then in Unit 3, here we're talking
8 about a lot fewer deer, 700, you know, about 800 deer a
9 year on average and that is dominated by Petersburg and
10 Wrangell. So, you know, throughout all of these
11 unsurprisingly folks hunt deer where they are but we
12 still have a handful of folks -- not that many people
13 -- you know, going to Unit 3 specifically to hunt deer
14 so I suspect a lot of this is incidental to other
15 activities, you know.

16
17 And then, again, in Unit 1A, so, you
18 know, Southeast mainland, Revillagigedo, utterly
19 dominated by Ketchikan residents, a few folks from
20 Metlakatla and just a, you know, smattering of folks
21 from other communities as well. But almost entirely
22 Ketchikan folks harvesting deer in 1A.

23
24 And probably the smallest pie in this
25 whole bunch is Unit 1D, which is sort of the central
26 mainland so we're only talking about 100 deer a year
27 taken on average here and the vast majority are
28 Petersburg folks with actually weirdly a handful of
29 non-residents I suspect are taking a few deer
30 incidental to other activities is what I suspect there.

31
32 And then moving up to sort of the
33 northern mainland to Juneau area, 250 deer a year in
34 Unit 1C almost entirely Juneau folks. Not exactly a
35 huge hot spot for deer hunting so, you know, almost
36 only Juneau folks taking deer there.

37
38 Moving on to Mountain goats. You see
39 the table below shows the last four years of mountain
40 goat harvest, you know, the number of hunters, this is
41 actually hunting and the number harvested. And, you
42 know, the numbers are bouncing up and down here year to
43 year, but for the most part it seems to be fairly
44 stable trends in both effort and harvest of mountain
45 goats, you know, throughout the primary mountain goat
46 hunting areas.

47
48 There is a few little odd balls like
49 2019 was apparently a great year in the Sitka area, you
50

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1 know, Unit 4 where 38 out of 40 people actually hunting
2 got a goat and then not so great the next couple years.
3 But for the most part seems to be relatively stable.

4

5 And then just so you can see where
6 these folks are coming from, this is just a snapshot of
7 who's hunting goats just this last year in 2022. One
8 of the main features of goat hunting is it is a fairly
9 popular, you know, animal for non-resident guided
10 hunters to come into Alaska and hunt so -- and those
11 folks who paid good money for a guide due tend to have
12 a much higher success rate as you would think they
13 would so while there's fewer non-resident hunters they
14 do do quite a better, so about 40 percent, roughly, of
15 locals get a goat when they go hunting, while about
16 close to 75 percent of the non-residents. So you know
17 they harvest more goats per hunter there.

18

19 And then on sort of a unit by unit
20 basis, Unit 1A down there, southern mainland 85 percent
21 resident hunters and it's almost all Ketchikan
22 residents with just a smattering of folks from other
23 nearby communities, but mostly folks from that area are
24 hunting goats in Unit 1A.

25

26 And then in Unit 1B we sort of see sort
27 a similar story, mostly residents and mostly folks from
28 that area of Petersburg and Wrangell area hunting goats
29 in 1B.

30

31 Unit 1C closer to Juneau is a little
32 bit of a different story, this seems to be where a
33 higher proportion of, I think, those guided non-
34 resident hunters are hunting so it's, you know, 50/50
35 resident, non-resident hunters, close to it. But since
36 those non-resident hunters are employing a guide
37 service, have a higher rate of success, they actually
38 harvest a few more goats than the locals. But the
39 locals hunting there are mostly -- or the residents
40 hunting there are mostly actual Juneau residents or
41 from nearby.

42

43 And then Unit 4, you know, Sitka,
44 Baranof area, you know, high proportion of residents
45 and almost all of those are Sitka folks,
46 unsurprisingly, and Rob Cross is going to dive into
47 that, I think, into a little more detail, our Unit 4
48 goat management when I'm done here.

49

50

0261

1 Moving on to moose. Similar story here
2 as with goats. Looking over the past four years, you
3 know, it's up and down and up and down but things
4 throughout the region seem to be fairly stable in the
5 -- in terms of both effort and harvest, with some
6 better years, worse years or whatever but for the most
7 part pretty level across the region. You know, no
8 drastic declines or precipitous crashes or anything.

9
10 And I'm just -- I just learned a few
11 days ago, we got our harvest reports back from this
12 years Berners moose hunt who is actually drawn by a 12
13 year old girl from Petersburg so I was really rooting
14 for her but it sounds like she did not get a moose so I
15 was kind of disappointed to hear that. But also
16 talking to State biologists that population, they have
17 a conservation concern so we can expect that there
18 probably will not be any Berners moose permits issued
19 until we see that population improve.

20
21 And then moving on to elk. You know
22 most of this is in that Etolin Island area and, you
23 know, there's a handful of different permits offered by
24 the State there as well as the Federal permit. On the
25 Federal permits we have issued a bunch but last I
26 checked we still have yet actually get a successful
27 harvest on those Federal permits. And if you look at
28 the State numbers, the story seems to be everyone
29 starts the year full of optimism, gets a permit, then
30 decides that that's maybe going to be harder than they
31 thought and either don't go and if they do go they
32 don't get one. So -- yeah, so fairly low success rate
33 there, so handful of animals harvested each year under
34 each of those seasons. So I've heard that's
35 notoriously tough out there.

36
37 And then Yakutat kind of needed their
38 own slide basically because they're operating under
39 their own, you know, situation there. So of course the
40 big story in Yakutat is moose so, you know, looking
41 over the past few years, I think this is '20 to '22,
42 this is sort of the break down of, you know, the number
43 of permits hunted and the resulting harvest by
44 community. So as you can see it's largely Yakutat
45 folks hunting and harvesting moose there with, you
46 know, some folks from Juneau, a handful of non-
47 residents and such and that seems to be going fairly
48 well and Susan does a great job up there, yeah.

49
50

0262

1 As far as goats in that area, fewer
2 than 20 permits a year generally are hunted and it's
3 mostly Yakutat folks with just a handful of mostly
4 northern Southeast communities seem to hunt there, it
5 seems like there's somebody from Pelican who goes there
6 every year to go hunt a goat I noticed and some years
7 they get one, maybe one or two or maybe none. So, yeah.

8
9 Then there is some deer hunting there,
10 it's never been traditionally a big thing but for
11 whatever reason in 2020, maybe Covid related, people
12 needed something to do, everyone tried to go out deer
13 hunting and that fad seems to be wearing off, so, you
14 know, 50 folks went out or something like that in 2020
15 and now that's sort of tapering so it's back down to
16 just dozen -- two dozen people, you know, harvesting a
17 handful of deer there. There's a fairly low success
18 rate.

19
20 And I think one of the most powerful
21 tools, honestly, that we have here in our Federal
22 system is this designated hunter permit and so this is
23 just a breakdown over, you know, the entire life span
24 of this since 2003 to 2022. Sorry if that print is a
25 little too small, but 3/4's of the hunter designated
26 permits are issued to Petersburg, Sitka and Wrangell,
27 are the big communities that, you know, utilize those.
28 You know a few in Craig and a handful from the rest of
29 Southeast and such. But -- and then just to give you
30 some idea of how many deer we're talking about, you
31 know, it's 100-ish folks a year, 80 to 100 designated
32 hunter permits given out and then they're, you know,
33 fluctuating with the overall sort of amount of harvest
34 but, you know, several hundred deer are typically
35 harvested each year under the designated hunter
36 program.

37
38 But one of the things I think is
39 especially valuable about that program is it, in my
40 mind it allows folks to follow that sort of traditional
41 model of a handful of people bringing in the bulk of
42 the harvest for a community. So, you know, just to
43 explain this graph, this is the number of people that
44 harvested four deer, five deer, six deer and so on, so
45 there are people who harvested up to 33 deer in a year,
46 you know, and just looking through the data there's
47 somebody in Klawock who routinely harvests 25 deer a
48 year under the designated hunter program. So it feels
49 to me like this is a tool that we have in our toolbox
50

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1 for -- to have that model -- to have that model of a
2 handful of people providing for the larger community,
3 with a lot less restrictions than say the State proxy
4 system, that kind of thing. So I think that's a bit of
5 a success story.

6
7 Yeah, and I think with that I'm happy
8 to take any questions.

9
10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
11 Jake.

12
13 Question, Cathy.

14
15 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
16 Can you flip back all the way to the beginning, the
17 slide that was Unit 4 deer, the pie chart.

18
19 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Yeah.

20
21 MS. NEEDHAM: On this slide, on the
22 main pie chart there's the outside Alaska sliver, which
23 I'm assuming is the.....

24
25 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Non-resident.

26
27 MS. NEEDHAM: My question is, has -- I
28 know this is like an average or whatever but the Board
29 of Game recently changed the harvest limit so I'm
30 wondering if we're seeing, did that affect the average
31 at all or.....

32
33 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: No, this is.....

34
35 MS. NEEDHAM:you know, did
36 it.....

37
38 MR. MUSSLEWHITE:so 2020 to 2022
39 and when does that new restriction, maybe just came
40 into effect this season so it does not reflect that.

41
42 MS. NEEDHAM: Okay.

43
44 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Yeah.

45
46 MS. NEEDHAM: And then do you know what
47 the average for that slice of pie is, about, the
48 number?

49
50

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1 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: I could look it up
2 and give you the number but it's -- I imagine it's
3 like, you know, under 50 deer for sure, you know.

4
5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other
6 questions.

7
8 (No comments)

9
10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I just have one.
11 Do you have any numbers on the moose take in Unit 3
12 this season yet?

13
14 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: This season?

15
16 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: This season, yeah.

17
18 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: I do not have, yeah.

19
20 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: The season
21 concluded a few weeks ago, so, yeah, okay.

22
23 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Right.

24
25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody else.

26
27 Mike.

28
29 MR. DOUVILLE: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I
30 was wondering if you could get the Unit 2 one up there
31 again.

32
33 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Yep.

34
35 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. Which one is
36 Craig?

37
38 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Craig is the blue one
39 towards the bottom, the medium blue towards the bottom,
40 yeah.

41
42 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. I just wanted to
43 see if Klawock was out hunting Craig and they're not.

44
45 MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Okay.

46
47 (Laughter)

48
49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Any other
50

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1 questions for Jake.

2

3

(No comments)

4

5

6

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, maybe not,
thank you Jake.

7

8

MR. MUSSLEWHITE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10

11

MS. NEEDHAM: Rob was going to add
something on goats.

12

13

14

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Oh, yeah, excuse
me, Rob, you had something to add there.

15

16

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29

MR. CROSS: Yes, Mr. Chair. Again, for
the record my name is Rob Cross and I'm the Subsistence
Program Manager for the Tongass National Forest. And I
just wanted to address specifically some of the
concerns for the Unit 4 goat management strategy
because I think that we could do -- or I know that we
could a lot better job of explaining the strategy there
and maybe dispel some of the concerns over what seems
like a weekly closure in that area and as a matter of
fact there's one that's going to take place today so as
I mentioned before that list of special actions is a
living document.

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So I just wanted to touch on a few
things. The current Unit 4 goat strategy, it's a
cooperative effort between ADF&G and the Forest Service
and there was a switch back in 2019 to managing by the
unit and the switch was to manage by smaller zones, by
watersheds. So although we do see the goats move
around between watersheds there is quite a high
fidelity to particular watersheds. And so what the
State has done, has gone through and figured out
essentially harvest quotas or sustainable harvest by
watershed and assigned quotas so there's a certain
number of billies, it's usually between one and maybe
five billies, or if a nanny is killed then that closes
that unit down. So I would say from a wildlife and a
management and a hunt opportunity perspective it's been
hugely successful because it's allowed us to leave the
greater unit open while targeting closures and
particularly the areas that are very susceptible to
overharvest, like the ones that are very close to town
or there's easy access to the Alpine, things like that,
those ones get closed down pretty quickly but

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1 historically those ones were closed down for the whole
2 season because of the access issue and lack of targeted
3 in-season management.

4

5 So, again, I think a product of this --
6 what I would consider, and I would hope the larger
7 public would consider very successful strategy, is
8 that, optically it looks like there's never been more
9 closures and that's true, but there's also never been
10 as much hunting opportunity as there is now. So yeah,
11 I just -- again, I think we can do a much better job of
12 explaining that to folks and we do have a pre-season
13 hearing every year and we take suggestions on how
14 people feel that we should be moving forward with this
15 in-season management and are very open to
16 suggestions, specifically from the Council and from the
17 public as far as how you would like to see these in-
18 season managements actions take place to offer a
19 Federal priority.

20

21 And so as of right now -- and I'll try
22 to keep this short -- but as of right now the Federal
23 preference there is that there is a Federal season but
24 it is concurrent with the State season and then we also
25 have the designated harvester permit. So that's the
26 only Federal preference right now. That being said,
27 again, we are trying to do a lot more outreach, we're
28 doing subsistence workshops with Ashley Bolwerk and
29 Heather Bauscher have been going around to a bunch of
30 communities and telling -- and teaching them how the
31 Federal Subsistence process works, how to testify, how
32 to put in proposals, and then also explaining things
33 like how this in-season management works and how folks
34 can affect that, all the way to how the rural/non-rural
35 designation process works and how that can affect
36 folks.

37

38 So I think that that's helpful.

39

40 As part of that, I'll just say that I
41 would implore folks from the Council and folks in this
42 room that if you hear that these workshops are coming
43 to town that you drag as many folks in t here as
44 possible because those are the folks that we need to
45 hear from to help guide how we're doing this in-season
46 management.

47

48 So, again, all that is just to say that
49 I think we need to do a better job of explaining how

50

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1 this is working and how we feel that it's successful
2 but also I would be soliciting comments from the
3 Council at any point in time and comments from the
4 public as to how we can do a better job of both
5 explaining that and how we can set aside a Federal -- a
6 meaningful Federal priority for this hunt.

7

8 And, lastly, I'll just end with
9 reiterating what Jake Musslewhite presented that as of
10 right now it's roughly 84 percent of the goats that are
11 harvested in Unit 4 are by either residents of Sitka or
12 Federally-qualified harvesters so any sort of
13 adjustment to this needs to keep that in mind that,
14 again, 84 percent are already Federally-qualified
15 folks.

16

17 So that's my spiel.

18

19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Rob.
20 Any questions from the Council.

21

22 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman.

23

24 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Albert.

25

26 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
27 This is kind of just a comment. I was asked by someone
28 at home, the Chilkat blanket weaver, to put a plug in
29 for them to encourage people to bring mountain goat
30 hides back so that they could utilize them, so I've
31 done my job.

32

33 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
36 Any other questions.

37

38 (No comments)

39

40 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
41 Rob. And I think next up would be Ian Johnson from
42 Hoonah Indian Association.

43

44 MR. JOHNSON: Hello. Good afternoon.
45 I have a projecting voice so I'll stay back from this
46 microphone.

47

48 (Laughter)

49

50

1 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Ian Johnson, I
2 live in Hoonah, I work for Hoonah Indian Association.
3 And through the deer proposals that have come up over
4 the last few years we've been working on behalf of
5 Hoonah and the surrounding communities to do some
6 research and some topics that might help inform the
7 decisionmaking processes that are happening right now,
8 so, yeah, I'm reporting today on some of the social
9 research that we conducted in the communities and on
10 some biological monitoring that we're doing in Hoonah
11 and some stakeholder meetings that we've been working
12 on. And, yeah, there's some extra information that's
13 being handed out to Council members. I do apologize
14 that some of this is coming in very late to the Council
15 so there won't be a projected presentation behind you
16 but you'll have the information in front of you that
17 I'll be talking about.

18
19 So I hoped to kind of make this a
20 dialogue of sorts, I want to basically talk about these
21 three areas and after we talk about some of these
22 research results just ask for questions, I guess, or
23 like see if there's questions and then go on to the
24 next section.

25
26 So we conducted social research in
27 Hoonah, Gustavus and Pelican. We hired local
28 individuals to conduct surveys and the goals of those
29 surveys were four-fold, there. So I'm looking at Page
30 2 of the preliminary results you may have in front of
31 you now. The goals were to quantify competition in the
32 communities to more fully account for effort and try to
33 confirm a record of harvest over the years through the
34 proposals that were on the table before, the closure
35 proposals, and to help us identify primary issues and
36 possible solutions to these items.

37
38 And so we -- in just getting into some
39 of the results of that work, in Gustavus we had 14
40 respondents to the survey, in Hoonah 19 and Pelican.
41 So my first pause button on all of this and disclaimer
42 is I want to make sure that it's -- we acknowledge the
43 assumptions that are in these results, these aren't
44 necessarily considered -- I don't consider them to be
45 statistically robust but I do think they do a very good
46 job of capturing a snapshot of community opinion around
47 topics and so I think they're worthy of being used to
48 advise your decisionmaking. But, yeah, the sample
49 sizes were a little smaller, especially in Hoonah, that
50

1 I might have hoped we could have received, we're going
2 to be doing more of these surveys for the next four
3 years, this isn't a one-off deal, so I think we can
4 continue to get new data around these topics. One of
5 the statistics that I did generate was there was a
6 question of just whether or not in the 2021 season,
7 which was the last season before these surveys were
8 conducted, whether or not your deer needs were met,
9 whether or not you harvested enough deer to meet your
10 needs and in Gustavus 50 percent of respondents said
11 no, in Hoonah 44 percent of respondents said no and in
12 Pelican 23 percent of respondents said no.

13

14 So just thinking about subsistence
15 priority and how these results might align with how the
16 Council thinks, the -- let's see a big factor of -- or
17 one of the kind of core goals of the survey was just to
18 tease apart the issue of competition and ask people
19 where they thought that was coming from. So some of
20 the next, like Table 3 -- or sorry Table 4 in your
21 packet there does have a breakdown of what perception
22 was and in Hoonah, the perception was that 83 percent
23 of people believe that competition was coming from non-
24 local sources. Gustavus -- actually the main issue was
25 around wolves was reported -- when it comes to deer,
26 specifically, it was around wolves and the issues on
27 Pleasant Island. And then in Gustavus there wasn't a
28 high -- a high perception of non-local competition from
29 the respondents that came from Pelican.

30

31 And the -- let's see, we -- yeah, okay,
32 and so the next table, I think this is pretty relevant.
33 I want to link this next table to actually what was p
34 resented in the wildlife analysis a little bit.
35 There's just a lot of questions from the Council about
36 how accurate effort -- the effort reporting on harvest
37 tags is and so we tried to get a better feel for
38 harvest effort from our respondents and so Table 5 and
39 the following graph do break that down. In Gustavus
40 the average number of harvest days was approximately --
41 or days per hunter was about six to eight. In Hoonah
42 it was 21 to 23, and then Pelican it was 12 to 13. And
43 then I guess, you know, like contrasting that a little
44 bit against the analysis for WP24-05, you know, the
45 harvest data suggests the average effort -- number of
46 days of effort for a Hoonah hunter is 3.6 days and this
47 result suggests that it's more like 20 days. So,
48 again, these are data to, you know, juxtapose against
49 each other and think about how accurate effort

50

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1 reporting -- I'm also -- again, remember this is not --
2 I'm not suggesting these results are statistically
3 significant but it's another data point to take into
4 consideration when thinking about effort on the ground.

5

6 Let's see is there any questions so far
7 on this?

8

9 (No comments)

10

11 MR. JOHNSON: Okay. The next -- in
12 your report, so there's a section for each community.
13 Those were some of the kind of takeaways across
14 communities but then there were takeaways that were
15 specific to each community. So I'll just rank really
16 quickly -- or I'll kind of highlight the number 1 issue
17 that popped out for each community. So we asked
18 respondents to pick up to three issues that they saw as
19 a primary concern for deer harvest in their community
20 and the -- in Gustavus the top issue was actually the
21 time available for hunting, followed pretty closely
22 just by the amount of time it takes to harvest a deer.
23 In Hoonah it was competition was ranked -- 83 percent
24 of respondents ranked it as an issue in Hoonah,
25 followed by time available for hunting. And in
26 Pelican, the expense and abundance of the resource were
27 listed as the top two resources. And so one of the
28 things that just seems important to acknowledge is that
29 each of these communities have different kinds of needs
30 and we've -- that's been expressed during these
31 stakeholder meetings, too, you know, every community is
32 individual and that's not a secret. We -- so, yeah, I
33 think this reflects that.

34

35 One of the things that I guess I want
36 to cross these results over a little bit over a little
37 bit with the Hoonah analysis as well, and, you know,
38 the Hoonah analysis, the data show that the deer -- the
39 number of hunters and deer harvest by Hoonah users has
40 decreased but overall population or harvest of deer has
41 remained essentially stable. So, you know, between
42 5,000 and 7,000 across the unit. Well, you know, if
43 rural usership is decreasing but harvest is remaining
44 stable there is -- the only -- you can infer that
45 there's extra pressure or effort occurring from, you
46 know, non -- outside sources. Like, again, Hoonah's
47 concern that competition is a factor well, you know,
48 another way to think about the data that is being
49 reported through the harvest tags is that maybe

50

0271

1 competition is increasing. So the -- let's see, I
2 guess the last thing as you're reviewing this, I'll
3 just say that, you know, the goal of the survey was
4 also to have community members help suggest what could
5 be solutions in their communities to address the issues
6 that they're seeing and so there's a list in each
7 community, these are the unique responses, basically
8 unedited that came from community members to address
9 the issues that they see in their community. And some
10 of them definitely line up with the proposals that are
11 in front of you.

12

13 Let's see, and so, yeah, is there any
14 questions? I don't have any more highlights on the
15 social interview side. I think there's other questions
16 we might be able to answer with the data set, but these
17 are the ones that I pulled out because they're aligned
18 with the goals of the survey when we created it, which
19 I will say -- I'd just like to acknowledge Lauren and
20 David Coster for helping create the survey to get good
21 support from the State on creating this and it was a
22 good process there.

23

24 So pause button, is there any questions
25 on this stuff?

26

27 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, Patty, you
28 have a question.

29

30 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
31 Hernandez. Thank you, Ian, that was -- it's good to
32 see the results of your surveys. Were you going to
33 talk about your cameras, have you gotten any results on
34 that?

35

36 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I will be. I can
37 do it right now. It's like a three -- this project has
38 three aspects, so this funding through the Southeast
39 Alaska Sustainability Strategy Initiative, this is
40 Forest Service funding that we're operating under, the
41 tribe received that. There's three parts. Social
42 surveys every year for five years in the communities; a
43 long-term biological data set which we're doing through
44 camera traps in collaboration with the State; and then
45 regular stakeholder engagement.

46

47 And so in Hoonah this year we deployed
48 121 cameras across the road system. Steve Bathune and
49 Dan Ecker came over, they gave us -- it was excellent

50

0272

1 having them on site to give us essentially the protocol
2 that the State uses to deploy these and so we followed
3 their protocol, we're going to be providing all that
4 data back to them next spring for analysis and we'll
5 start to establish a long-term population trend in
6 Hoonah. Would like to expand that to other
7 communities, we just need to find the resources to
8 purchase the cameras and deploy them. So we don't have
9 any results yet, we'll be pulling the cards in the
10 spring.

11

12 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other
15 questions from the Council.

16

17 MR. SLATER: Hi, Ian.

18

19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, it sounds
20 like Jim.

21

22 MR. SLATER: Yeah, this is Jim.

23

24 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

25

26 MR. SLATER: Yeah, hi. Thanks, Mr.
27 Chair. Yeah, Ian, just curious, how did you select
28 your census takers or your people administering the
29 survey?

30

31 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, I just worked
32 through my community networks to find someone who was
33 willing to do the work and then I -- once we identified
34 the individual there's some standard kind of protocol
35 stuff that when the State of Alaska Subsistence Program
36 hires people in communities, you know, they are able to
37 provide people information on how the surveys are
38 conducted and, you know, like the appropriate things to
39 do so we did that and, you know, I worked with them
40 basically, daily a lot of times across the communities
41 to make sure things were going well and that surveys
42 were being done.

43

44 MR. SLATER: And that process would
45 kind of filter out anyone who had extreme views on
46 either side, right, I would guess?

47

48 MR. JOHNSON: Not necessarily. I mean
49 I was more concerned about finding someone who was

50

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1 going to be reliable. I feel that everyone did a good
2 job of taking their own views out of it, whatever they
3 were, I don't actually know, but, yeah, it was just
4 work in the community and collected the data.

5

6 MR. SLATER: Okay. All right, well,
7 thanks, appreciate it.

8

9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other
10 questions.

11

12 Patty.

13

14 (Teleconference interference -
15 participants not muted)

16

17 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
18 Hernandez. So, Ian, under my Council comments I noted
19 that false azaleas are taking over where blueberries
20 and huckleberries normally grow, is that something you
21 could be observing for or that you observe for or are
22 you noticing that in the Hoonah area?

23

24 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, we haven't -- I
25 don't know in Hoonah we haven't necessarily seen that.
26 We have a lot of false Rusty Menziesia, false
27 blueberry. Yeah, it would take a -- there's ways we
28 could -- we could document it in your community, set up
29 surveys to do it.

30

31 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other Council
34 members with questions.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 MR. JOHNSON: The last thing I'll
39 report on then is the -- I just want to give a quick
40 update on the stakeholder meetings that we've been
41 holding and I felt -- I will say we were hoping to have
42 one more before the RAC meeting this autumn but I
43 wasn't able to get that together just based on the
44 time. But the first meeting focused a lot on what we
45 would like to accomplish as a group. And the group has
46 been engaged and very diverse. We have a wide pool of
47 folks across State and Federal agencies and then
48 representatives from almost every community. So far
49 not from Angoon, which we would like to have

50

0274

1 represented at the table for these stakeholder
2 meetings. But let's see, you should have this
3 provided, each of these meetings -- or every meeting we
4 hold I'm publishing all of the notes, very copious
5 notes to our websites, making sure everything is public
6 record, it's intended to be searchable, Google, so what
7 you have is a printout from Hoonah Environmental's
8 website and with the highlights of what we want to
9 increase. But I just think that there's some really
10 good goals here and I'm just going to highlight them.

11

12 Documenting local knowledge regarding
13 deer hunting, increasing trust among user groups in
14 communities -- or communities to communities and
15 agencies to communities, increasing the richness of
16 biological data sets, increasing local work force
17 development around deer research and data collection,
18 developing a better understanding of user conflict and
19 issue and increasing the understanding of deer
20 management topics and issues and tools and just
21 creating like a collective body there. So we're going
22 to be meeting every two to three months, is the goal,
23 as a group for at least the next five years and there's
24 some -- working towards those topics and there's a lot
25 to dive into there and actually like start creation
26 solutions. We've done a good job so far of identifying
27 what we'd like to accomplish and how that might look
28 but now it's time to let the rubber hit the road a
29 little bit and work towards some solutions for these
30 things.

31

32 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Do you have
33 another question -- Albert, go ahead.

34

35 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
36 mentioned Angoon and I'd love to be added to your
37 process but, Mr. Chairman, what's going to happen is if
38 I volunteer Angoon for that, Angoon tends to volunteer
39 Albert for stuff. So currently I'm sitting here and
40 now they want to put me back on the school board and
41 the students have always been my priority as well as
42 elders. So maybe we can have a conversation about it
43 and I can find someone else in Angoon.

44

45 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
48 Anybody else with a question.

49

50

0275

1 Go ahead, Patty.

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MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman Hernandez. I would say, you know, that Ian Johnson has made this like a very smooth process coming into it with an agenda, following that agenda, you know, giving everyone an opportunity to speak and seeking them out if they're not speaking and it's been a really collaborative process so thank you very much Ian.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Patty. Anybody else, question or comment.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. You had your hand up Albert.

MR. HOWARD: Yes.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, go ahead.

MR. HOWARD: I just wanted to thank you for the work you're doing, it kind of justifies what we're trying to accomplish. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I want to echo that. I mean this is something new for the Council to consider, this is something we haven't seen before so, yeah, it's pretty exciting really, something that we've been looking for and now it's actually happening so we appreciate your efforts there.

MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, if I may make one more comment just about the model that I think we're trying to achieve is that these surveys, the household surveys and biological surveys can be completed with local people and it's a way to employ people in the winter and, you know, give ownership in the process and so all the camera work that we're doing is, you know, with a local work crew. We hired local people to do these surveys and I'm hoping that maybe the same people we hired last year will want to, you know, do them again this year. It won't be the same questions on the survey but it'll be a process so just offering that up. But, you know, that is the model, it helps create ownership and it's cost efficient too, you don't have to mobilize people to communities to do some of this work.

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1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Hopefully this
2 type of work can expand throughout the region so
3 there's a lot of opportunities here. It's a really
4 good project. Okay, well, thanks again, I'm glad you
5 were here in Klawock and could present that in person.

6
7 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, thank you.

8
9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, thank you.
10 So I think maybe we have an opportunity here before we
11 get into proposals, maybe to listen to one more report
12 -- one more report and take a break, maybe give the
13 Council a chance to maybe look over some of this new
14 information we just got before we get into proposals.
15 But we do have somebody here from Yakutat, also I
16 believe it was under old business with a report on --
17 it's actually fisheries projects that are going on in
18 Yakutat so maybe we could hear that before we get into
19 wildlife proposals.

20
21 (Pause)

22
23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, excuse me,
24 this is also an item of new business. It's under new
25 business, I believe this is Item E, Fisheries Program
26 updates and part of that is Partners for Fisheries
27 Monitoring Program with Yakutat Tlingit Tribe so go
28 ahead.

29
30 MS. ROHLOFF: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
31 other Council members for being a little flexible with
32 the agenda and pushing me a bit forward. My name is
33 Havaleh Rohloff, I am the Fisheries Program Manager for
34 the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe. My position, along with the
35 Fisheries Program at YTT started back in 2020 when we
36 received funding through the Partners for Fisheries
37 Monitoring Program. We recently got another four years
38 of that funding so the projects I'll be overseeing for
39 you today will be extended through 2027.

40
41 So our Federal partners under this
42 funding is the U.S. Forest Service and most commonly
43 the Yakutat Ranger District. The Yakutat Ranger
44 District began a program called the River Ranger
45 Program, which was created because the Situk River in
46 Yakutat is a highly productive system. We receive all
47 five species of salmon, we have the highest run of
48 steelhead in the state and so since 2020 I've spent 6
49 months a year patrolling the Situk River by foot and by
50

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1 float to monitor river use. We also educate visitors
2 on stewardship and my partner at the Yakutat Ranger
3 District can also enforce regulations when necessary.
4 This has been a really important program to be part of
5 for the tribe, it puts a tribal employee on the river
6 to gain more information and report that data to the
7 tribal council each year.

8

9 So this is an example of some data that
10 we collect. Our primary goal is to make as many
11 contacts with river users as we can during the six
12 month period. So this graph is those number of
13 contacts from 2020 through 2022. I like this graph, it
14 gives a nice summary of our season in Yakutat, our fish
15 runs so that first hump on the left being our steelhead
16 run and that's the number of visitation we receive in
17 the spring for steelhead. So while river ranging
18 during the spring we really focus on boat traffic,
19 that's our highest boat traffic time of year on the
20 Situk and we really emphasize educating users on
21 spawning areas.

22

23 The second and middle hump you see in
24 the graph is our sockeye season. We emphasize really
25 just general regulations during that time of year but a
26 focus is on snagging issues during sockeye.

27

28 And our third hump there and our
29 obviously busiest time of year is coho season and
30 that's when we deal with a lot of bear issues with
31 river users. We try to reduce the negative bear
32 encounters to limit the number of bears being put down
33 each year which we haven't officially had to in the
34 last four years so that's a win.

35

36 The second project we work on under the
37 Partners funding is monitoring important subsistence
38 species to the community, eulachon and coho through
39 environmental DNA sampling. eDNA sampling is just a
40 simple water grab in the Situk River that we filter and
41 we send those filters to our partner lab at Oregon
42 State and they're able to analyze the DNA that's shed
43 by the target species to approximate abundance of that
44 species in the system. And so not much is known about
45 eulachon in the Yakutat area or throughout the region
46 really so we're trying to learn more about their run
47 timing and distribution through these sampling events.
48 In the last three years we haven't had a return of
49 eulachon to the Situk -- I'm sorry, we've had one
50

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1 return of eulachon to the Situk and that was this
2 spring so that was exciting to see. People were able
3 to harvest them again this spring.

4

5 We also sample for coho in the fall and
6 that is because we have really difficult sampling -- we
7 have really harsh fall weather so we receive high
8 rains, high water in the fall which makes it difficult
9 to keep a weir in the river or do visual surveys so
10 this is our way of supplementing other methods of
11 sampling and monitoring.

12

13 And the last project that we do under
14 the Partners Funding is what we've been calling the
15 salmon partnership and that's made up of YTT, the
16 Yakutat Ranger District, city and borough of Yakutat
17 and the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition. There
18 are many restoration opportunities in Yakutat due to
19 World War II era infrastructure. Many ditches lining
20 our roads contain both resident and anadromous fish and
21 we have many culverts that need replacing or removal
22 and so these photos on this slide are an example of a
23 project we completed this summer with the salmon
24 partners. I'm not sure if you can make it out but
25 there is an abandoned road prism in one of the photos
26 and that road prism contained five abandoned small
27 pipes that we removed and we had 11 sites that we added
28 woody debris in and that's because the very ditch
29 channelized simple system that we're hoping to add
30 complexity to.

31

32 That's all I've prepared for you today
33 and I'm happy to answer any questions or comments.

34

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you
36 Havaleh. Any questions from the Council.

37

38 Patty.

39

40 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
41 Hernandez. So Ms. Rohloff.

42

43 MS. ROHLOFF: Yes.

44

45 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. So you said you
46 give presentations to the tribes, how is that going?

47

48 MS. ROHLOFF: Yeah, thanks Ms.
49 Phillips. It's going well. I hold an annual fisheries

50

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1 board meeting, actually Larry is on that board and it's
2 usually held each fall and they give me guidance and,
3 yeah, it's been really useful.

4

5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Cathy, go ahead.

6

7 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 The eDNA work that you're doing, like specifically with
9 coho, I think that's great that you're using that to
10 supplement, to kind of capture the harder times that it
11 is to use other methods of estimating or counting fish.
12 Did you have to do any kind of calibration, like do it
13 during the regulator months to see if eDNA was matching
14 up to what traditional weir counts would have done
15 before you switched over to doing that in the falltime?

16

17 MS. ROHLOFF: Yeah, thanks, Ms.

18 Needham, that's a great question. We haven't
19 calibrated, we went forward on our own. There are some
20 studies out there that have done it side by side with a
21 weir -- weir counts. We don't have a ton of coho data
22 to compare it to in Yakutat so I'm just trying to
23 figure out other ways we can document our coho run,
24 really, so.

25

26 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, go ahead,
27 Cathy.

28

29 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

30 The reason why I was curious is I think that, you know,
31 eDNA is picking up a lot of traction in the region and
32 can be a less expensive way of potentially counting
33 fish but I think there's a lot of question about
34 whether or not it does calibrate with them --
35 expensive way of weir counts and stuff so if there's a
36 way, that even our Council could potentially support
37 you in funding requests to be able to do that, to help,
38 I know -- I mean we might be interested in doing
39 something like that, sometimes we support -- I think we
40 actually might have supported your guys original
41 request for Partners funding. So I think it would be
42 important to try to do so it'd be great if you guys
43 could think about doing that.

44

45 MS. ROHLOFF: Yeah, I agree. I think
46 it has been slow to pick up traction with other
47 entities so that would certainly be helpful.

48

49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Patty, go ahead.

50

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1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
2 Hernandez. You mentioned something about enforcement
3 along with you, so what are you finding if there is an
4 enforcement issue and then you also mentioned snagging
5 so maybe you could elaborate on that a little bit.

6
7 MS. ROHLOFF: Yeah, thanks. So I'm
8 partnering with the Forest Service River Ranger and he
9 has the authority to enforce on Forest Service lands
10 and we've only issued one citation in the last four
11 years so we don't see that many issues. And the
12 snagging, yeah, snagging is illegal in Yakutat and
13 really that's the only regulation that comes up during
14 sockeye season that we focus on, we see a lot of that
15 but it's hard to write a ticket, you have to, you know,
16 actually witness someone kill a snagged fish so that's
17 why -- yeah.

18
19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other Council
20 members with questions.

21
22 Albert, go ahead.

23
24 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
25 referenced spawning grounds and not sure if you said
26 you're educating the public on spawning grounds. Mr.
27 Chairman, the reason I'm asking is we've been asking
28 the Forest Service to ask a company to stop running jet
29 boats up a shallow river and our concern is just that,
30 the spawning grounds, but we're told they don't have
31 jurisdiction over navigable waters. On one hand that's
32 what we're being told, on the other hand they also have
33 jurisdiction over freshwater. So that's kind of the
34 same thing in my mind but is that part of what you're
35 educating user groups on is the impact a jet engine has
36 on spawning grounds.

37
38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

39
40 MS. ROHLOFF: Yeah, thanks Mr. Howard,
41 that's a good question and it's something that comes up
42 in our public comment sessions quite often. Yeah, in
43 our public comment forums we try to educate the public
44 on those impacts but I think what we see more of on the
45 Situk River is people actually hiking through these
46 spawning grounds and not identifying reds and spawning
47 fish so that's more of an issue on the Situk than jet
48 boats, I would say.

49
50

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1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody else with
2 a question.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
7 Havaleh for bringing that before us. It sounds like a
8 really worthwhile project and part of our fisheries
9 monitoring efforts here. So something the Council has
10 supported in the past and probably will continue to
11 support. So let's take a break. When we come back
12 we're going to get into wildlife proposals.

13
14 (Off record)

15
16 (On record)

17
18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. It looks
19 like we got all but one Council member seated at the
20 table so I think we can proceed. As I said we're going
21 to start our deliberations on wildlife proposals. And
22 before that we need a little preliminary proposal
23 procedure review from our Coordinator, DeAnna.

24
25 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
26 the record my name is DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator
27 for the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory
28 Council. I'd like to remind our newer Council members
29 and the public about our procedure for proposal
30 presentation. As we go through each proposal you can
31 refer to Page 119 in your books to follow the process
32 and we also have it on the screen as well. Since the
33 printing of the book there has been a slight change in
34 the procedure. I'd like to bring everybody's
35 attention, the step that says tribal and ANCSA
36 Corporation consultations, these will actually be
37 scheduled after the fall Council meetings and before
38 the end of this year, however, the Chair may invite
39 comments from any tribal or ANCSA Corporation
40 representatives who are present at this meeting for
41 Step No. 2. If there are individual tribal members who
42 would like to make comments on proposals the
43 appropriate time for that would be actually under Step
44 3 of the procedure. The Chair will announce each step
45 in this process which provides an opportunity for
46 various agencies, Councils, Committees, Commissions and
47 the public to participate. For those on the phone who
48 may wish to provide a comment I would ask that you
49 press star, five at the beginning of the presentation
50

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1 of the proposal on which you want to provide comment
2 that way we can line up everyone and know who wants to
3 comment. I will ask for your patience and indulgence.
4 This is a little bit different than what most people
5 are used to with our meetings. Our lines are not
6 operated assisted so using this feature is the only way
7 for us to know that you wish to speak and we can
8 identify you by the last two numbers in your telephone
9 number, so when you hear that and it's your line you
10 can go ahead and deliver your comment after pressing
11 star, six to unmute.

12
13 I'll also remind folks that if you've
14 submitted a written comment it will not be necessary to
15 also provide that comment by phone. All comments
16 received will be shared with the Council and will be
17 included in the administrative record. I understand
18 last time we did have a lot of duplicate comments so I
19 wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of that,
20 that you didn't have to also verbally give your comment
21 if you have submitted a written one.

22
23 Then for Step No. 7 a member of the
24 Council will make a motion to support the proposal just
25 to bring the issue on the table for discussion. As a
26 reminder all motions are made in the positive so even
27 if you do not plan to support a proposal, if you're
28 'making the motion to put it before the Council you
29 would still need to make a motion to support.

30
31 And, Council members, there are some
32 questions in Step No. 8 to help guide your discussion
33 and deliberation and I can scroll down the screen to
34 that when we get to that point.

35
36 Each of these proposals are action
37 items so we would be looking at closing each proposal
38 procedure with a vote to support, support with
39 modification, oppose or take no action.

40
41 Mr. Chair, if you and the Council are
42 ready, Dr. Jason Roberts is ready to present our first
43 wildlife proposal -- actually there are two, Wildlife
44 Proposal 24-02 and 03 were combined into one analysis
45 since they are similar.

46
47 Thank you.

48
49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, very
50

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1 much DeAnna. Mr. Roberts, you can proceed and we'll
2 get started.

3

4 MR. ROBERTS: All right, thank you, Mr.
5 Chair. Members of the Council. My name is Jason
6 Roberts, I'm an Anthropologist at OSM. I'll be
7 presenting a summary of the analysis for Wildlife
8 Proposal WP24-02/03. The analysis of this proposal
9 begins on Page 120 of your meeting book.

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Before I get started there I need to make a note of something that I messed up in the process and that is I forgot to attach the written comments to 02, 03, 04 and 05. Hopefully you've all received those written comments since then in the mail and email. We've also got those available on the meeting table outside. And they're also available under the supplementary information listed for this meeting on our website.

So with that said I'll jump into it.

Proposal WP24-02 was submitted by Nicholas Orr of Juneau and requests to extend the Federal subsistence season for mountain goats in Unit 1C on Federal public lands within the drainages of the Chilkat range south to the south bank of the Endicott River -- this is also known as the State's RG015 permit area to run from July 24th through December 31st.

Proposal WP24-03 was submitted by the Southeast Council and requests to extend the Federal subsistence season for mountain goat in the same area of Unit 1C to run from August 1st through November 30th and to close goat hunting in this area to non-Federally-qualified users from August 1st through August 31st.

So Figures 1 and 2 on Pages 124 and 125 of your meeting book display maps of this area.

So both of proposals were analyzed together because they are requesting similar things.

The proponent of WP24-02 states that extending the Federal subsistence season for mountain goat in the proposal area would provide a more meaningful priority for Federally-qualified subsistence users hunting in this area. Similarly, the proponents

1 of WP24-03 state that they submitted their proposal to
2 establish a meaningful preference for the continuation
3 of subsistence uses of goat in this area. The
4 proponents of WP24-03 further explain that the proposal
5 area was the site of a timber sale in the 1970s which
6 created logging roads near Alpine zones. The renovated
7 docking area at the Couverden log transfer facility now
8 has a ramp where people can unload fourwheelers and
9 hunt goats via this logging road system, however,
10 there's only room to anchor three or four boats here at
11 once without worrying about boats getting blown away.
12 The proponents of WP24-03 note that this creates access
13 issues. The logging roads can provide relatively easy
14 access to Alpine zones and the proponents note that
15 people set up camps which block the roads and prevent
16 access to the best areas to hunt goats limiting
17 opportunities for Federally-qualified subsistence users
18 who must compete with non-Federally-qualified users for
19 limited access.

20

21 The proponents also state that a
22 priority opportunity to hunt goats during the month of
23 August without competition from non-Federally-qualified
24 users is important because the State moose season opens
25 in this area on September 15th and the area gets
26 considerably more crowded after this moose season
27 opens.

28

29 So looking a bit at the regulatory
30 history here, at the beginning of the Federal
31 Subsistence Management Program in Alaska in 1992 the
32 Federal Subsistence Board adopted the State's customary
33 and traditional use determination for goats in Unit 1C
34 which included residents of Haines, Klukwan and Hoonah.
35 In 1998 the Board adopted two proposals submitted by
36 the Wrangell and Petersburg Ranger Districts of the
37 Tongass National Forest. This action expanded C&T
38 determinations for goats in Unit 1C to include the
39 residents of Petersburg and Kake. In 2018 the Board
40 adopted Proposal WP18-12 submitted by Member Casipit to
41 add the residents of Gustavus to the C&T for goats in
42 Unit 1C. In 2020 the Board adopted Proposal WP20-14
43 submitted by the Southeast Council. This action
44 expanded the C&T determinations for goats in Units 1, 4
45 and 5 to include all rural residents of Units 1 through
46 5. This regulatory change was in keeping with the
47 Southeast recently stated preference to recognize
48 customary and traditional uses of subsistence resources
49 more broadly. At their January 2023 meeting, the
50

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1 Alaska Board of Game adopted Proposal 31 to extend the
2 resident goat season in the southern end of the Chilkat
3 range in Unit 1C from September 1st through November
4 30th to August 1st to November 30th.

5
6 And so there are currently four
7 different zones within Unit 1C that are covered by
8 three specific Federal seasons for mountain goat
9 harvest. Kind of surprisingly complicated. These four
10 zones within Unit 1C correspond to four State permit
11 areas for mountain goat harvest. These are RG12, 13,
12 14, and 15. The Federal season in the portion of Unit
13 1C draining into Lynn Canal and Stevens Passage between
14 Antler River and Glacier -- Eagle Glacier and River is
15 the RG12 permit area, and all drainages of the Chilkat
16 range south of the Endicott River is the RG15 permit
17 area and the Federal season in that area currently runs
18 from October 1st to November 30th. There's currently
19 no Federal season in the portion of Unit 1C draining
20 into Stevens Passage and Taku Inlet between Eagle
21 Glacier and River and Taku Glacier, that's the RG14
22 permit area. The Federal season in Unit 1C remainder,
23 or the RG13 permit area currently runs from August 1st
24 through November 30th. Under State regulations all
25 four registration permits in Unit 1C are combined under
26 a single registration hunt permit whereby a user may
27 sign up for one registration hunt but hunt all four
28 permitted goat hunting areas.

29
30 So I can explain that more if we need
31 to later on.

32
33 Looking at the biological background.

34
35 Goats in Alaska inhabit Alpine areas
36 adjacent to steep cliffs or rocky terrain that provide
37 escape from predators. They usually graze on grasses,
38 forbs and low growing shrubs in high Alpine meadows.
39 As winter approaches most goats migrate downhill and
40 spend the winter months below treeline or on south face
41 cliffs where they feed on hemlock, grasses and shrubs.
42 Forested habitat near Alpine ridges may provide
43 critical winter range especially during periods of
44 heavy snow accumulation. Goats are generally
45 susceptible to overharvest in localized areas due to
46 their group site facility and typically low productive
47 rate as well as the difficulties that hunters can have
48 distinguishing between males and females. Predation by
49 wolves can also have a significant impact on goats,
50

1 especially when they are forced into smaller ranges due
2 to logging or development. The harvest of even a few
3 females can be unsustainable in these conditions and
4 hunting mortality can depress goat populations for
5 several years.

6
7 Looking at the general population
8 information for goats throughout Unit 1C, goat harvests
9 are currently managed through a point system which is
10 designed to promote a sustainable yearly harvest of
11 about four to five percent of the overall goat
12 population in this entire unit. Changes in the goat
13 population in Unit 1C are primarily monitored through
14 required hunter harvest reporting and aerial minimum
15 count surveys, which are intended to be conducted in
16 areas of high use at least once every three years.
17 However, specific population levels are not
18 consistently available for many Unit 1C mountain goat
19 populations and so minimum count surveys and reported
20 harvest data typically provide the basis for mountain
21 goat management in this unit since individual
22 registration hunts are closed when a certain number of
23 animals are taken from a hunt area.

24
25 Survey data on mountain goat
26 populations in the proposal area has not been collected
27 in the last 10 years due to funding constraints,
28 generally low harvest patterns in the area, and greater
29 management priorities in other areas. Poor weather
30 conditions have also prevented many surveys from being
31 conducted in this part of the Southeast region for the
32 last three years. The most recent survey data for the
33 proposal area I could find is summarized on Table 1 on
34 Page 130 of your meeting book. This survey data shows
35 an increasing total number of goats over time, however,
36 the most recently published survey information I could
37 find for this area dates back to 2011. In general, the
38 Antler River to Taku Glacier permit area has been more
39 heavily utilized than the proposal area because it is
40 closer to the Juneau road system and provides easier
41 access to goat habitat. Guided goat hunts increased
42 steadily throughout the early 2000s with accompanying
43 increases in goat harvest and harvest success rates.
44 In Unit 1C the U.S. Forest Service began limiting the
45 number of clients that guides could take out through
46 commercial service permits in 2002 which helped to
47 stabilize overall harvest levels within Unit 1C at 30
48 to 50 goats per year. And there are currently two
49 guided hunts available specifically within the proposal
50

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1 area.

2

3

4 Looking at the cultural knowledge and
5 traditional practices section of the analysis, the
6 rural residents of Southeast Alaska have used mountain
7 goats continuously throughout recorded history wherever
8 goat has been found. Mountain goats have been an
9 important resource for the Tlingit and Tsimshian and
10 Haida groups of Southeast Alaska. The Tlingit
11 historically exhibited a pattern of hunting goats in
12 the fall, early winter and spring. Hunts regularly
13 took place in the mountainous areas during the fall and
14 early winter when goats are typically at their fattest.
15 Temporary camps were utilized and berries picked and
16 preserved while smoking fish and processing goat meat.

16

17

18 Oberg's sources indicated that any meat
19 to be stored was hunted and dried in August. Goats
20 were hunted in timbered areas in the spring when snow
21 pushed goats into the treeline. Goat fleece was also
22 collected from brush and branches for use in weaving
23 ceremonial blankets in the spring. The people of
24 Southeast Alaska have also employed a variety of means
25 of handling, preparing, preserving and storing various
26 parts of mountain goats which have traditionally been
27 used by numerous generations. Mountain goats have been
28 used by the indigenous people of the region as a source
29 of food, clothing, tools and fat. Goat horns, skin and
30 fleece were common trade items among the Tlingit. The
31 horns were used to make spoons, personal ornaments,
32 boxes for storing powder and shot, tool handles and
33 feast dishes. Goat skin was thought to make the best
34 drum heads. Goat wool is used to weave ceremonial
35 blankets. Goat hunting knowledge, skills and values
36 were traditionally passed down to young men by their
37 maternal uncles. In Tlingit tradition the meat of a
38 young man's first kill is divided up and distributed
39 with the belief that this act of sharing brings the
40 hunter luck in future hunting efforts. Goat meat
41 continues to be shared and traded within and among the
42 communities of Kake and Petersburg as well as many
43 other communities which have used Unit 1C to harvest
44 goat.

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

And then getting into some general
harvest history and this is looking at harvest history
throughout Unit 1C.

Mountain goats have been hunted in Unit

1 1C both for meat and as trophy animals by resident and
2 non-resident hunters. The average reported yearly
3 mountain goat harvest for all users throughout all of
4 Unit 1C was 43 for the most recently published 5 year
5 reporting period. This occurred between 2013 and 2017.
6 This yearly average was higher than the 36 goat per
7 year average previously reported during the last five
8 year reporting period between 2008 and 2012. The
9 average annual number of goat hunters throughout Unit
10 1C also increased during the most recently published 5
11 year period.

12
13 The monthly percentage of harvest
14 within Unit 1C generally increased across the season.
15 During this most recent reporting period harvest
16 typically peaked in November, in part, because the bulk
17 of guided harvest occurs during this month. This
18 general harvest pattern occurs because snow often
19 drives goats down from higher elevations as the season
20 progresses and the become easier to access. Table 3 on
21 Page 134 of your meeting book shows that on average
22 about 14 more Unit 1C residents reported hunting goats
23 each year from 2008 to 2017, the non-residents,
24 however, the overall success rate of non-resident
25 hunters throughout Unit 1C has been substantially
26 higher than that of resident hunters in recent years
27 and this is possibly because non-resident hunters are
28 required to hire a hunting guide, or hunt with a
29 resident Alaskan relative. The average success rate of
30 other Alaskan residents hunting throughout Unit 1C was
31 similar to that of Unit residents.

32
33 Boating was the most commonly reported
34 transportation method used to reach goat hunting
35 locations throughout Unit 1C during this period. 80
36 percent of hunters reported using boats for their
37 hunts, while 10 percent reported using aircraft, six
38 percent reported highway vehicle use. The use of
39 commercial services about 31 hunters per year.
40 registered hunting guides about 27 hunters per year,
41 and transporters 3 hunters per year throughout Unit 1C
42 was stable during this period. However, as the
43 Southeast Council member from Gustavus explained, the
44 primary use of boats to reach favorite hunting
45 locations in the proposal area can lead to issues of
46 user conflict and competition for access in their own
47 bay and places with limited spots for safe anchorage.
48 And so you can see that quote from Member Casipit, it's
49 fairly lengthy on Page 135 of your meeting book.

1 So moving into the specific proposal
2 area, looking at harvest history specifically in this
3 area.
4

5 It's important to note that based on
6 reported hunter harvest data the differences in
7 reported harvest and success rates for Federally-
8 qualified users, non-Federally-qualified users and non-
9 residents are not as substantial when looking
10 specifically at the proposal area from 2003 to 2022.
11 This information is listed in Table 4 on Page 137 of
12 your meeting book. Because of issues of timing and
13 accessibility the proposal area has generally not been
14 as popular of a goat hunting location as some of the
15 other Unit 1C areas mentioned earlier in the analysis.
16 Stormy weather and poor anchorage tends to restrict
17 accessibility to the proposal area during the latter
18 months of the season when snow typically drives goats
19 down to lower more easily reachable locations. As the
20 Southeast Council Member from Gustavus explained
21 hunting goats in the proposal area in August is easier,
22 there's better weather, you don't have to worry about
23 storms as much so we thought that that seemed like a
24 reasonable thing to do, extend the season into August
25 to maintain a meaningful subsistence priority.
26 Similarly the proponents of Board of Game Proposal 31
27 also noted this issue as part of their justification
28 for extending the State resident season in the proposal
29 area. They noted the resident goat season for the
30 southern area of the Chilkat range doesn't start until
31 September 1st, which is when storms frequent the area
32 making access from the Coast and hunting much more
33 difficult. According to ADF&G information over the
34 past five years there were three to nine goats
35 harvested off of the entire Chilkat Peninsula with very
36 few nannies taken. Goats have increased on the Chilkat
37 Peninsula from the lows of the past and the current
38 harvest quota is not being met so we see no reason to
39 continue the later season opener for the southern part
40 for the Chilkat Range.

41
42 This issue of weather and accessibility
43 restricting goat hunting opportunities later in the
44 season could be heightening issues of competition and
45 user conflict earlier in the season in an area with
46 limited spots for anchorage. It may also generally
47 limit the use of the proposal area for all user types.
48 Though hunting effort and harvest did vary from year to
49 year an average of about three and a half Federally-
50

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1 qualified subsistence users and seven non-Federally-
2 qualified users reported hunting each year in the
3 proposal area from 2003 to 2022. Reported hunting
4 effort and harvest in the proposal area by non-
5 residents was minimal. Federally-qualified subsistence
6 users reported harvesting an average of about one goat
7 per year from this year, non-Federally-qualified users
8 harvested an average of about two goats per year and
9 non-residents harvested less than one goat per year in
10 the proposal area during this time. Federally-
11 qualified subsistence users and non-Federally-qualified
12 users both reported average success rates of about 28
13 percent, while non-residents reported an average
14 success rate of approximately 50 percent during the
15 years in which they hunted in the proposal area. On
16 average Federally-qualified users and non-Federally-
17 qualified users reported hunting for about 10 days to
18 harvest one goat while non-residents reported hunting
19 about nine days to harvest one goat in the proposal
20 area. The highest number of Federally-qualified
21 subsistence users hunting goats in the proposal area
22 during this time came from Hoonah, Gustavus and Sitka.
23 Over 80 percent of the non-Federally-qualified users
24 hunting in the proposal area during this time came from
25 Juneau.

26

27 Looking at the effects of the proposal.

28

29 If the Board adopts WP24-02 it will
30 extend the Federal subsistence season for mountain
31 goats in the proposal area to run from July 24th to
32 December 31st. This change would provide Federally-
33 qualified subsistence users in the area with greater
34 harvest opportunity by extending the length of the
35 Federal subsistence season here and providing two
36 windows where user competition for goats and conflicts
37 of access to favorite hunting locations should be
38 reduced. If the Board were to adopt this proposal only
39 Federally-qualified users would be able to hunt from
40 July 24th to July 31st and December 1st through
41 December 31st.

42

43 If the Board adopts WP23-03 [sic] it
44 will extend the Federal subsistence season for mountain
45 goats in the proposal area to run from August 1st
46 through November 30th. Adopting WP24-03 would also
47 close goat hunting to non-Federally-qualified users
48 during the month of August.

49

50

0291

1 The OSM preliminary conclusion on these
2 two proposals is to support WP24-02 with modification
3 to extend the Federal season for goat hunting in the
4 proposal area to run from July 15th to December 31st,
5 so adding an additional week in July, and to oppose
6 WP24-03.

7
8 The justification is that extending the
9 Federal season for mountain goats on the Federal public
10 lands listed in the proposal area to this time period,
11 July 15th through December 31st would provide for a
12 more meaningful preference for Federally-qualified
13 users in this area. The Federal subsistence season in
14 the area is currently only open from October 1st to
15 November 30th, while the State resident season in the
16 same area was recently extended to August 1st to
17 November 30th. The OSM modified version of WP24-02
18 would provide Federally-qualified users with an
19 extended season to harvest goats from the proposal area
20 as well as two windows to hunt goats without potential
21 competition from non-Federally-qualified users from
22 July 15th through the 31st and the entire month of
23 December. Extending this preferential opening to
24 Federally-qualified users further into the month of
25 July may be particularly beneficial considering the
26 difficulties posed by stormy weather conditions in the
27 proposal area later in the season and the fact that
28 this is a quota management system. Adopting the OSM
29 modified version of WP24-02 would also provide a more
30 meaningful subsistence preference without enacting a
31 closure to non-Federally-qualified users during any
32 period of the current State season.

33
34 Based on the data available WP24-03
35 does not appear to meet the requirements for closure to
36 non-Federally-qualified users. Current available
37 information does not appear to suggest that there is a
38 substantial conservation concern or threat to the
39 continuation of subsistence uses of mountain goats that
40 would necessitate a closure to goat harvest by non-
41 Federally-qualified users in this proposal area.

42
43 So that was a lot so -- sorry, a little
44 long-winded there but that's the end.

45
46 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
47 Jason. Questions from the Council.

48
49 (No comments)

50

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1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any questions.

2

3 (No comments)

4

5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Well, that usually
6 means it was a pretty good presentation if you don't
7 have any questions, so, yeah, I think it was excellent,
8 so, okay I guess we can move on. Thank you very much.

9

10 A comment.

11

12 MR. ROBERTS: I've just got summary of
13 written public comments when you need them.

14

15 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Right. Okay, so
16 there's been no consultation on this. Next up would be
17 agency comments, Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

18

19 MR. CHURCHWELL: While my computer is
20 starting up I just want to say that for the record my
21 name is Roy Churchwell, I'm the Regional Management
22 Coordinator for Fish and Game for the Southeast region.

23

24 (Pause)

25

26 MR. CHURCHWELL: So the Alaska
27 Department of Fish and Game comments on these two
28 proposals combined. The Alaska Department of Fish and
29 Game opposes excluding non-Federally-qualified users
30 from hunting on Federal public lands in the RG015 hunt
31 area during August. Federally-qualified hunters almost
32 never use the northern two-thirds of this unit with 97
33 percent of use in the southern portion. This proposal
34 closes all of RG015 to non-Federally-qualified hunters
35 but this proposal is really about one place to keep a
36 boat, one place where you can drive up to the Alpine
37 and one place where you can hunt in the Alpine. I know
38 access to the Alpine is very rare in Alaska and that
39 this is a commodity that is very useful to subsistence
40 users but in this case it really is one location that
41 we're talking about for this proposal.

42

43 Other Federally-qualified hunters
44 hunting in other spots than this one location in RG015
45 do not have issues with competition and rarely, if
46 ever, see another person on their hunts.

47

48 This is a lot of hunting opportunity to
49 take away from non-Federally-qualified users for this

50

1 one hunting spot.

2

3

4 Furthermore, this proposal is based on
5 a false premise that the State season has encroached on
6 Federal opportunity. The proposal would needlessly and
7 pointlessly deprive all Alaskan residents, both
8 Federally-qualified and non-Federally-qualified of
9 sustainable mountain goat hunting opportunity
10 throughout the RG015 hunt area during August. The
11 current Federal season for this area opens on October
12 1st. The previous State season opened on September
13 1st, one month earlier than the Federal season. Rather
14 than diminishing opportunity for Federally-qualified
15 users the recent expansion of the State season created
16 an additional month of opportunity for all Alaska
17 resident hunters including Federally-qualified users.

17

18

19

20 So I'm trying to -- let me try to
21 explain this a little bit.

20

21

22

23

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35 Further comments.

37 In Section .802 of ANILCA subsistence
38 uses of wildlife shall be the priority consumptive use
39 on Federal public lands. When it is necessary to
40 restrict taking in order to assure the continued
41 viability of a fish or wildlife population or the
42 continuation of subsistence uses of such population.

44 Section .815 of ANILCA authorizes
45 Federal restrictions on non-subsistence uses on the
46 public lands only if necessary for conservation of
47 healthy populations of fish and wildlife, or if
48 necessary to continue subsistence uses.

1 There is no conservation concern for
2 mountain goats in the RG015 hunt area. The hunt has
3 been closed by emergency order -- has not been closed
4 by emergency order in nearly 20 years and the State
5 season was recently expanded to offer an additional
6 month of opportunity for Alaska resident hunters.
7 Furthermore, our records on hunter participation from
8 RG015 permits issued and mandatory hunt reports clearly
9 demonstrate a decline in goat hunting and harvest by
10 Federally-qualified users in this area from declining
11 interest and participation in the hunt. I will also
12 say that we did get a goat survey in. We had about
13 five hours of flying weather this fall that we were
14 able to take advantage of. It was the only goat survey
15 we got done but we did survey this Chilkat area. We
16 saw over 300 goats in that area so we don't expect the
17 number of points to change, if anything they may
18 increase a little bit.

19
20 The recent expansion of the State
21 season created an additional 31 days of hunting
22 opportunity for all Alaskan residents during the month
23 of August, which is a month where it is normally much
24 easier to access this area to hunt goats. Based on the
25 first year of the State season it seems like this is an
26 opportunity hunters were waiting for and we have had
27 increased participation during the month of August of
28 this year.

29
30 Before contemplating any changes to
31 existing Federal regulations, the Department of Fish
32 and Game suggests that the Southeast Regional Advisory
33 Council should monitor whether Federally-qualified
34 users are taking advantage of this opportunity to
35 better understand how these changes will really impact
36 subsistence uses.

37
38 And then I will say for Proposal 24-02,
39 this proposal was written in response to the submission
40 of Proposal WP24-03 in hopes of finding an alternative
41 to eliminating non-Federally-qualified hunters from
42 recently recreated August extension of the RG015
43 mountain goat hunt.

44
45 With that that concludes my comments on
46 these two proposals.

47
48 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
49 Roy, what was your last name, I didn't get it.
50

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1 MR. CHURCHWELL: Yeah, Churchwell.

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay.

4

5 MR. CHURCHWELL: Churchwell, C-H-U-R-C-
6 H-W-E-L-L.

7

8 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.

9 Any questions.

10

11 (No comments)

12

13 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Did you raise your
14 hand, Bob -- no, okay.

15

16 Cal, yeah.

17

18 MR. CASIPIT: Just one quick question,
19 what's the -- what is the point system, what is the
20 point limit, I guess for this year?

21

22 MR. CHURCHWELL: Yeah, off the top of
23 my head I think it's 18, plus or minus one. And then
24 I'd just say that this is the first year where we've
25 ever even approached it. Before 10 was the closest
26 we've ever come, and 10 was a really popular year.

27

28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other
29 questions from the Council.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, I guess not,
34 thank you so much Roy. We'll move on here.

35

36 Any other Federal agencies with
37 comments on these. Yes, Mr. Roberts.

38

39 MR. ROBERTS: Yeah, I just wanted to
40 clarify Mr. Churchwell talked about some confusion on
41 24-03, there was some confusion for both of these
42 proposals but we called and talked to both of the
43 proponents and got their intent straightened out as
44 there was confusion about the wrong area being
45 referenced, or the wrong time period but we
46 straightened that out and this is the intent, we
47 believe, of both proposals now.

48

49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, for

50

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1 that. So we didn't have -- anybody have any questions
2 on that, anybody from the Council with a question on
3 that.

4

5 (No comments)

6

7 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, I guess not.
8 So is it other Federal agencies comments on this.

9

10 (No comments)

11

12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Apparently not.
13 Any tribal comments on this proposal.

14

15 (No comments)

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Other Regional
18 Councils.

19

20 (No comments)

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any Fish and Game
23 Advisory Committee comments on this proposal -- these
24 proposals.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Nope. Subsistence
29 Resource Commission comments.

30

31 MS. PERRY: No, Mr. Chair.

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: No. Okay. How
34 about written public comments. Do we have written
35 public comments. Yes, go ahead, Jason.

36

37 MR. ROBERTS: Yes, this is Jason
38 Roberts again. We got on public comment, it was
39 submitted in opposition to WP24-02. The writer of this
40 comment did not provide a reason for opposing the
41 proposal. Three public comments were submitted in
42 opposition to WP24-03. The commenters noted that there
43 currently is no conservation concern that would justify
44 a closure to mountain goat hunting by non-Federally-
45 qualified users and that competition alone is not a
46 valid reason to restrict opportunities for non-
47 Federally-qualified users. They also noted that recent
48 harvest quotas have not been met in the proposal area
49 and that people living in places like Juneau should
50

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1 also have the opportunity to hunt to meet their needs
2 in a place that is relatively close by.

3
4 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
5 that. Is there anybody in the room who wanted to give
6 public testimony or on the telephone. Do we have
7 anybody on the phone.

8
9 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, we do have one
10 caller with their hand raised. The phone number ends
11 in 3-2. So if this caller would like to provide a
12 public comment at this time, please unmute your line by
13 pressing star, five -- or star, six. Unmuting is star,
14 six. And I see you are now unmuted, you can now
15 deliver your comment starting with your name and
16 spelling if you would please. Thank you.

17
18 MR. ORR: Yeah, Nicholas Orr, N-I-C-H-
19 O-L-A-S O-R-R. I just offered up WP24-02 as a
20 compromise to the proposal WP24-03. I felt that not
21 every proposal needs to be at the expense of non-
22 qualified users and this proposal, I think, has some
23 interesting elements like unifying the end of the
24 season dates with adjacent areas in Unit 1 as well as
25 using a start date that has worked for Prince of Wales
26 on deer. I see that OSM has suggested seven more days
27 and I'm not necessarily opposed to that but that's why
28 I chose the July dates that I did.

29
30 Having said that, I didn't realize that
31 the utilization of the resource by non-Federally-
32 qualified users was as low as it was. In my view it's
33 so low, I mean we're talking about single digits of
34 Federally-qualified users every year -- or I mean I
35 should say I didn't realize the utilization of the
36 resource by Federally-qualified users was as low as it
37 was, because we're talking about single digits every
38 year and what looks like an average of maybe 10 users
39 total on most years that I don't even think that the
40 non -- hello?

41
42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yep, we still hear
43 you.

44
45 MR. ORR:that restrictions on
46 non-Federally-qualified users seem warranted. I think
47 it's important to look at this issue with ANILCA in
48 mind as that's the criteria that's going to be used by
49 the FSB to evaluate the merits. And so we've got two
50

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1 criteria, which you guys are all aware of, which is
2 conservation concern, which there is none here, and the
3 continuation of subsistence uses which it's hard -- I
4 think it's hard to make a case that the very low number
5 of users, non-Federally-qualified users are impacting
6 subsistence uses in this area. So -- and finally I'd
7 point out that Federally-qualified users have a
8 priority via the Federal designated hunter program
9 which I think would be a great way to hunt these
10 things, having done it a few times, and it's pretty
11 brutal. So I don't know if I'd even support either of
12 these proposals now that I know the data but that's my
13 two cents.

14

15 Thanks.

16

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
18 And you were the proponent of Wildlife Proposal 02; is
19 that correct?

20

21 MR. ORR: Yes. Yep, I wrote 02.

22

23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.

24 Any questions.

25

26 (No comments)

27

28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, I guess we
29 don't have any questions. Thank you, very much for
30 your testimony.

31

32 MR. ORR: Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Oh, we have
35 another, okay, somebody else is on the line so DeAnna.

36

37 MS. PERRY: So for that caller whose
38 phone number ends in 3-7 if you would press star, six
39 to unmute your line and go ahead and deliver your
40 comment. Thank you.

41

42 MR. BEASON: Thank you everybody. My
43 name is Ryan Beason, I'm with Territorial Sportsman,
44 we're an outdoor organization in Juneau. I'll try to
45 keep this brief as I know time is of the essence. But
46 we are opposed to WP24- -- Wildlife Proposal 24-03.
47 The Fish and Game comments are some of the best
48 comments I've ever seen and if you haven't read those I
49 highly recommend you read those. It clearly states
50

0299

1 there's no conservation issue whatsoever. There's no
2 issues regarding the continuation of subsistence use.
3 And, in fact, if you look at their comments three out
4 of the last five years there hasn't been any residents
5 of Hoonah or Gustavus hunting in this unit which goes
6 to show you just how little hunting effort there is. I
7 personally hunted this unit this year successfully. In
8 the two days I was hunting I saw over 20 goats and it
9 just goes to show you that there's very little issues
10 as far as conservation. I will say I had no issues
11 with other hunters. I had no issues anchoring my boat
12 as kind of stated in the proposal. I will kind of
13 leave it at that.

14
15 I believe the Council should not
16 support this proposal, 24-03 based on information I
17 said and based on the information from the Fish and
18 Game comments.

19
20 Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Any
23 questions from the Council.

24
25 (No comments)

26
27 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Not seeing any
28 questions. Thank you for taking the time to call in.

29
30 DeAnna, anybody else.

31
32 MS. PERRY: No others.

33
34 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. No other
35 public comments on these proposals. So it's time for
36 the Regional Council to take action and we had a -- we
37 had our presentations on the two proposals combined but
38 we should probably take them up one at a time I think
39 so up to the Council. It's time for a motion.

40
41 MR. SCHROEDER: Move to adopt.

42
43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: 24-02?

44
45 MR. SCHROEDER: 24-02.

46
47 MR. HOWARD: Second, Mr. Chair.

48
49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We have a
50

0300

1 motion to adopt and a second for Wildlife Proposal 24-
2 02 so Council discussion.

3

4 Cal, do you want to lead us off.

5

6 MR. CASIPIT: Well, I wasn't going to
7 discuss this, I was going to propose a modification on
8 the original motion as basically as it appears on Page
9 139, that we support WP24-02 with modification to
10 extend the Federal season from July 15 to July 31st so
11 it's basically the OSM's preliminary conclusion.

12

13 MS. NEEDHAM: Second.

14

15 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: So we had a motion
16 to amend and now we have a second. Any discussion on
17 the amendment.

18

19 MR. HOWARD: Call for the question on
20 the amendment to the main motion.

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Question's
23 been called for on the amendment to the main motion.
24 All in favor of the amendment to the main motion say
25 aye.

26

27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28

29 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed to
30 the amendment say nay.

31

32 MS. PERRY: And for those folks on the
33 phone, Member Wright and Member Slater if you would
34 press star, six to unmute yourselves just so we make
35 sure that we hear your votes as well.

36

37 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Oh, yeah.

38

39 MS. PERRY: Thank you.

40

41 MR. SLATER: This is Jim, aye.

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That sounded like
44 Jim.

45

46 MS. PERRY: Uh-huh.

47

48 MR. SLATER: Did you get me on that
49 one?

50

0301

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, we got your
2 vote Jim.

3
4 MR. SLATER: Yeah, okay. Yes, it's
5 Jim.

6
7 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed,
8 say nay.

9
10 (No opposing votes)

11
12 MR. WRIGHT: Aye.

13
14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: I think that was
15 Frank with an aye, okay.

16
17 (Laughter)

18
19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We might have to
20 do roll call voting, being on the phone is awful
21 cumbersome.

22
23 Okay, so we've approved the motion to
24 amend the proposal to reflect the modification
25 suggested by OSM Staff which appears on Page 139 in
26 your meeting books. So we could discuss the amended
27 motion now, Council members.

28
29 Bob.

30
31 MR. SCHROEDER: Well, I'd just like to
32 say that I think the presentation was very thorough and
33 covered most of the basis so thank you, Jason, and
34 don't feel bad that we didn't ask you a whole lot of
35 questions. You could leave some essential stuff out
36 next time and then we'll ask you a lot of questions.

37
38 I think, given the thoroughness of the
39 analysis and then the notion that what we need to do is
40 under our procedure is we need to provide a meaningful
41 subsistence preference that adopting this proposal
42 would be particularly reasonable because it obviously
43 does provide a meaningful subsistence preference by
44 providing a longer hunting season at the beginning of
45 the season and continuing the hunting season after the
46 State season closes. So that would be with respect to
47 this.

48
49 I know that we have two proposals

50

0302

1 before us, The other proposal which would close Federal
2 lands has a -- we have another criteria that would need
3 to be met, which would be to show that it's really
4 necessary for continuing subsistence uses and so we
5 have to have reasonable evidence before we could go
6 along with that.

7

8 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob.

11

12 Cal.

13

14 MR. CASIPIT: Yes, thank you, Mr.
15 Chair. Yes, I support 24-02 as modified by OSM. I
16 think the extended season helps to provide that
17 meaningful priority. I did want to mention some -- I
18 heard earlier intent -- I did want to mention something
19 about the designated hunting for goats. Because of the
20 way our designated hunting regulations for goats are
21 put, I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, Staff, is that
22 it's -- you can only have one harvest limit with you at
23 a time, while you're designating hunting for goats,
24 which to me is not much of a meaningful priority
25 because I'm already allowed to have one goat with me
26 when I'm hunting so I'm not sure that we should be
27 pointing to the designated hunting provisions for goat
28 as a meaningful priority.

29

30 I think the modifications to the
31 seasons gives us a meaningful priority for sure.

32

33 I also like the idea of the July 15th
34 start date. It gives folks more of an opportunity to
35 use that anchorage when the weather's better and access
36 the Alpine when the weather's better and hopefully
37 during that first two weeks you won't have a whole lot
38 of crowding and blocking of camps and that sort of
39 thing, by camps on the road and that sort of thing that
40 happens later when the moose hunting gets going big
41 time in September and that sort of thing. So anyway I
42 plan to support this motion.

43

44 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
45 Any other Council members want to weigh in on this
46 proposal as modified.

47

48 (No comments)

49

50

0303

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. I think the
2 other point that's worth noting is that I think we
3 recognize that this would not be any restriction on
4 other users so it will not unnecessarily restrict any
5 other users in this aspect as long as there's a healthy
6 goat population giving subsistence users an early
7 opportunity at that hunt probably will not
8 significantly impact the ability of hunters that come
9 later to harvest a goat in my opinion. So I think
10 that's a reasonable proposal.

11
12 Are we ready for the question.

13
14 MR. HOWARD: Call for the question on
15 the main motion.

16
17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. The
18 question has been called for on the Wildlife Proposal
19 24-02 which would extend the goat season in this area
20 of Unit 1C to run from July 15th to December 31st for
21 Federally-qualified subsistence users.

22
23 So we can do a roll call vote on this,
24 DeAnna, if you want to do the roll call.

25
26 MS. PERRY: Okay. This is on the
27 motion as amended just stated by the Chair.

28
29 Larry Bemis.

30
31 MR. BEMIS: Yes.

32
33 MS. PERRY: Frank Wright, on the phone,
34 star, six to unmute.

35
36 (No comments)

37
38 MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.

39
40 MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

41
42 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Frank.

43
44 Cal Casipit.

45
46 MR. CASIPIT: Yes.

47
48 MS. PERRY: Mike Douville.

49
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0304

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MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Jim Slater on the phone.

MR. SLATER: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Thank you.

Robert Schroeder.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Albert Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Patricia Phillips.

MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Louie Wagner, Jr.

MR. WAGNER: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Harvey Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Yes.

MS. PERRY: John Smith, III.

MR. SMITH: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Cathy Needham.

MS. NEEDHAM: Yes.

MS. PERRY: And Don Hernandez.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes.

MS. PERRY: Motion passes on a
unanimous vote.

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
DeAnna. Now we should consider Wildlife Proposal 24-
03. Just a second, we're conferring.

(Pause)

0305

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Cal, go ahead.

2

3 MR. CASIPIT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
4 light of some of the testimony we heard earlier and
5 trying to provide an opportunity to see how this new
6 season works out before making any additional changes I
7 suggest we take no action on WP24-03.

8

9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Is that your
10 motion.

11

12 MR. CASIPIT: That is my motion.

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. The motion
15 is to take no action on 24-03.

16

17 MR. WAGNER: I'll second it.

18

19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We have a second.
20 Further discussion.

21

22 Cal.

23

24 MR. CASIPIT: Just to put some
25 rationale on the record, I would like to provide some
26 opportunity for a couple -- you know, at least until
27 the next cycle to see how this Federal season works
28 out, how the harvest works out and how well people are
29 able to work with this before we make any closures to
30 any non-Federally-qualified users. Also with 18 goat
31 points I think this is a good place where we can show
32 that -- where subsistence can still have their
33 opportunity to harvest and still provide an opportunity
34 for non-Federally-qualified users to harvest in this
35 area.

36

37 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
38 Any other comments, justifications from the Council on
39 this action.

40

41 (No comments)

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, not hearing
44 any, can I call for a unanimous consent on this and is
45 there anybody opposed to the motion.

46

47 (No opposing votes)

48

49 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Hearing no

50

0306

1 opposition, motion passes unanimously to take no action
2 on Wildlife Proposal 24-03. Okay, let's move on to 24
3 -- 23-04 [sic], I believe. So that would be another
4 presentation from Mr. Roberts, Federal Staff.

5

6 MR. ROBERTS: Hello, Mr. Chair, members
7 of the Council. Again, Jason Roberts, Anthropologist
8 at OSM. And I'll be presenting a summary of the
9 analysis for Wildlife Proposal WP24-04. The analysis
10 of this proposal begins on Page 145 of your meeting
11 book. And apologies in advance, this one is even
12 longer than the previous one, not much of a summary,
13 but hopefully I will be able to limit the next two deer
14 proposal discussions to the more specific topics
15 related to those areas.

16

17 Proposal WP24-04 was submitted by the
18 Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. The
19 proponents are requesting to close the Federal public
20 lands on Admiralty Island draining into Chatham Strait
21 south of the Thayer Creek Drainage but excluding the
22 Hasselborg Lake and Hasselborg Creek drainages to non-
23 Federally-qualified users from November 1st through
24 November 15th. This proposed closure area corresponds
25 approximately to Wildlife Analysis Areas 4041, 4042,
26 4045 -- 4055. You can see maps of these areas in
27 Figures 1 and 2 on Page 149 and 150 of your meeting
28 books. I'm not sure why those maps came out so blurry,
29 I think this was another issue we had with our
30 contractor on preparing the books. Another thing to
31 note, the large table found on Page 173 should have
32 been labeled Table 9, not Table 8, I got a little table
33 happy and lost track of the count there.

34

35 The proponents note that they submitted
36 WP24-04 to establish a meaningful preference for the
37 continuation of subsistence uses of deer by Federally-
38 qualified users in the Angoon area. Angoon residents
39 depend on deer as a key component of their subsistence
40 lifestyles, however, the proponents assert that
41 residents in this area have been experiencing
42 difficulty harvesting enough deer to meet their
43 subsistence needs because of increased competition and
44 user conflict with non-Federally-qualified users. The
45 proponents explained that non-Federally-qualified users
46 anchor boats in small bays often inhibiting access to
47 subsistence users primary hunting areas. They note
48 that non-Federally-qualified users may also decrease
49 the success rates of subsistence users if they shoot at
50

1 deer and miss causing deer to become more skittish and
2 wary of hunting presence. The proponents further note
3 that high fuel costs, depressed economies, small boats
4 and inclement weather are all impacting the ability of
5 Angoon residents to meet their needs. Angoon residents
6 cannot afford to have unsuccessful deer hunts or travel
7 far from the community to hunt deer. The proponents
8 note that non-Federally-qualified users exacerbate
9 these concerns by obstructing access, competing for
10 deer, and potentially altering deer behavior all of
11 which decrease the chances of successful subsistence
12 hunts and hinder the continuation of subsistence uses.

13
14 Subsistence livelihoods require
15 effective and efficient harvest. The proponents
16 explained that the proposed two week closure window in
17 early November is the most efficient time for
18 subsistence deer hunting in Unit 4 for several reasons.

19
20 First, the deer are still fat providing
21 the highest quality and amount of meat.

22
23 Second, the deer are in rut making them
24 more susceptible to harvest.

25
26 Third, weather conditions are typically
27 favorable for hunting and proper meat processing.

28
29 The proponents assert that this two
30 week closure would allow for the continuation of
31 subsistence uses and provide a meaningful subsistence
32 priority enhancing opportunity for subsistence users
33 and helping them meet their needs by reducing
34 competition and improving access to hunting areas
35 during the most important time of year for subsistence
36 deer hunting. Additionally, the proponents note that
37 the proposed closure area is limited in scope but
38 represents the area most hunted by Angoon residents.
39 The proponents believe that this closure will have a
40 relatively small impact on non-Federally-qualified
41 users who would maintain significant time and space to
42 hunt deer in Unit 4 but the closure would greatly
43 benefit local subsistence users. The proponents also
44 acknowledge that while tide lands are State managed
45 lands unaffected by any Federal closures that should
46 not decrease the effectiveness or necessity of this
47 proposed closure. Deer are primarily pushed to beaches
48 by heavy snowfalls which usually occur after the
49 requested closure period. Additionally much of the
50

0308

1 proposed closure area is very steep and does not
2 contain many beaches. Lastly, the proponents assert
3 that when deer are on beaches they are usually feeding
4 above the mean high tide line, which is under Federal
5 jurisdiction.

6
7 All right.

8
9 So looking at the regulatory history
10 and I'm going to read through the whole thing here
11 first and then kind of use that for the other two as
12 well.

13
14 Throughout most of the Federal
15 Subsistence Program's existence the Federal harvest
16 season for deer in Unit 4 has been scheduled to run
17 from August 1st to January 31st with a harvest limit of
18 six deer. However, harvest of antlerless deer has only
19 been submitted from September 15th to January 31st. In
20 1992 in response to several deep snow winters the
21 Northern Baranof Island area harvest limit was reduced
22 to four deer, the season was shortened to December 31st
23 and the area closed to non-Federally-qualified users.
24 In 1993 the Northeast Chichagof Island area was closed
25 to non-Federally-qualified users after November 1st.
26 Since 1992 the State deer season has taken place from
27 August 1st through December 31st with a harvest of
28 antlerless deer only permitted from September 15th
29 through December 31st. For Chichagof Island east of
30 Port Frederick and north of Tenakee Inlet including all
31 drainages into Tenakee the State resident harvest limit
32 has been three deer. The State resident harvest limit
33 for the remainder of Unit 4 was four deer until 2019
34 when it was increased to six deer. In 2000 two
35 proposals addressing Federal deer regulations in Unit 4
36 were submitted by members of the public. These
37 proposals were motivated by conservation concerns
38 following heavy snow winters during the 1998-99 season,
39 the increased winter deer mortality typically associated
40 with heavy snows decreased deer habitat due to recent
41 logging in the area and increased hunting pressure
42 enabled by logging road construction. One proposal
43 requested to rescind the January Federal deer season in
44 Unit 4 while the other requested to rescind the January
45 deer season and reduce the harvest limit from six deer
46 to four deer, both proposals were rejected by the
47 Federal Board consistent with the recommendations of
48 the Southeast Council. The stated justification was
49 that the available deer population and harvest survey
50

1 data for Unit 4 did not indicate a conservation concern
2 and the proposed changes would unnecessarily restrict
3 subsistence opportunity. In 2010 three proposals were
4 submitted addressing deer regulations in Unit 4. These
5 proposals were submitted, again, following significant
6 deer population declines that had occurred during deep
7 snow winters of 2006 through 2009. WP10-13 was
8 submitted by the Southeast Council requesting to close
9 the female deer season on January 15th in that portion
10 of Unit 4 draining into Chatham Strait, including
11 Tenakee Inlet. WP10-14 was submitted by the Southeast
12 Council requesting to close Federal public lands in the
13 Northeast Chichagof Controlled Use Area to the harvest
14 of female deer by non-Federally-qualified users in
15 December. And WP10-21 was submitted by the Southeast
16 Council requesting that deer harvest on Federal public
17 lands of the NECCUA be restricted to residents of
18 Hoonah. None of these proposals were adopted by the
19 Board, instead Federal and State managers worked
20 together closing the female deer season in the
21 Northeast Chichagof Controlled Use Area for the 2010
22 regulatory year and parts of the 2011 and 2012
23 regulatory years. In 2012 another proposal was
24 submitted that sought to address deer population
25 concerns caused by the deep snow winters, 2006 through
26 2009. This proposal requested to rescind the January
27 deer season in Unit 4. The Board rejected this
28 proposal because it was determined that rescinding the
29 January season would unnecessarily restrict subsistence
30 users while providing little conservation benefit. In
31 2019 the Alaska Board of Game adopted Proposal 18
32 increasing the State harvest limit from four deer to
33 six deer in Unit 4 remainder. The stated justification
34 was that additional sustainable harvest opportunity
35 could be provided because there were no conservation
36 concerns. In 2022 four proposals WP22-07, 08, 09, 10
37 concerning Unit 4 deer regulations were submitted.
38 These proposals covered similar areas and sought
39 similar changes to the ones we're discussing today and
40 possibly tomorrow. WP22-07 was submitted by this
41 Council requesting to close the Federal public lands of
42 Admiralty Island draining into Chatham Strait between
43 Port Marsden and Point Gardner to deer hunting from
44 September 15th to November 13th except by Federally-
45 qualified users. The current proposal is similar to
46 this proposal in that it requests a closure to deer
47 hunting by non-Federally-qualified users on a portion
48 of Admiralty Island, however, this current proposal is
49 approximately half the size and nine weeks shorter in
50

0310

1 length than the closure originally requested under
2 WP22-07. WP22-08 was also submitted by this Council
3 requesting that the Northeast Chichagof Controlled Use
4 Area annual deer harvest limit for non-Federally-
5 qualified users be reduced to two male deer. WP22-09
6 was submitted by the Southeast Council requesting that
7 the Federal public lands draining into Lisianski Inlet
8 be closed to deer hunting by -- from October 15th
9 through December 31st except by Federally-qualified
10 users. WP22-10 was submitted by Patricia Phillips,
11 this proposal requested that the deer harvest limit for
12 non-Federally-qualified users in Lisianski Inlet and
13 Strait be reduced to four deer. At its April 2022
14 meeting the Board rejected WP22-09 as part of the
15 consensus agenda. The Board deferred Proposals 07, 08
16 and 10 to its winter 2023 regulatory meeting requesting
17 the various user groups in the area work together to
18 create more mutually acceptable solutions to the issues
19 surrounding deer harvest in Unit 4.

20

21 OSM organized an open public meeting
22 regarding these deer proposals in August 2022. The
23 Southeast Council modified its recommendations for
24 WP22-07 and 10 following deferral and open meeting
25 discussion reducing the size of these areas requested
26 for closure to focus on the areas most utilized by
27 qualified subsistence users and to reduce the potential
28 impact to non-Federally-qualified users.

29

30 The Southeast Council supported WP22-10
31 with modification to reduce the harvest limit for non-
32 Federally-qualified users to two male deer and to
33 maintain the same proposal area.

34

35 All three proposals were subsequently
36 rejected by the Board at its February 2023 regulatory
37 meeting. The stated justification was that the
38 available data on deer populations in Unit 4 did not
39 meet the criteria necessary to close land or implement
40 harvest restrictions for the purposes of conservation
41 or the continuation of subsistence uses. However, the
42 Board member from the Bureau of Indian Affairs
43 dissented on the basis that local ecological knowledge
44 and testimony had been provided through the regulatory
45 process which indicated that Federally-qualified users
46 were having difficulty harvesting sufficient deer in
47 the areas covered by these proposals. The State Board
48 of Game acted on State Proposals 10 and 11 at their
49 January 2023 meeting. These proposals requested

50

1 reducing the harvest limit for residents and non-
2 residents to four deer in Unit 4 remainder. The
3 proponents for both proposals listed the possible
4 closure of Federal public lands to deer hunting by non-
5 Federally-qualified users as a key factor in submitting
6 these proposals. Both proponents suggested that a
7 harvest limit reduction would protect deer populations,
8 help reduce user conflicts in Unit 4 and avoid a
9 closure of Federal public lands to non-Federally-
10 qualified users. The Board of Game adopted Proposal 10
11 with modification to reduce the non-resident harvest
12 limit throughout Unit 4 to two male deer, the resident
13 harvest limit remained three deer in Unit 4, Chichagof
14 Island east of Port Frederick and north of Tenakee
15 Inlet and six deer in Unit 4 remainder.

16

17 Looking at the biological background
18 here.

19

20 Sitka black-tail deer spend the winter
21 and early spring at low elevation where less snow
22 accumulates and Forest provide increased foraging
23 opportunities. Fawning occurs in late May and early
24 June as vegetation greens up providing abundant forage
25 to meet the energetic needs of lactating doe.
26 Migratory deer follow the greening vegetation up to
27 Alpine for the summer, resident deer remain at lower
28 elevations. The breeding season generally occurs in
29 October through November and peaks in late November.
30 Wolves and black bears are not present in Unit 4 and
31 the primary predators of deer are humans and brown
32 bears. Brown bears are estimated to kill an amount of
33 deer equal to 15 to 20 percent of the total annual deer
34 harvested by hunters. Significant changes in deer
35 populations and localized deer density levels are
36 relatively normal over time in Unit 4. Periodic
37 declines are often attributed to severe winter weather,
38 particular deep snow events and this issue is
39 illustrated in the regulatory history and the frequency
40 with which proposals to change Unit 4 deer hunting
41 regulations follow heavy snow winters.

42

43 Old growth Forests are considered
44 primary deer winter range. Areas -- some areas of Unit
45 4 have been significantly impacted by large scale
46 changes in habitat due to logging while other areas,
47 the habitat is largely intact. Areas with substantial
48 timber harvest such as in the Northeast Chichagof
49 Controlled Use Area are expected to have lower deer
50

0312

1 carrying capacity compared to pre-harvest conditions.

2

3 Much of the area covered under this
4 proposal is located in older growth Forests.

5

6 Looking at the population information.

7

8 Monitoring deer populations in Forested
9 habitat is challenging as the total number of deer
10 cannot be directly counted through ground or aerial
11 surveys. Changes in deer populations in Unit 4 have
12 historically been monitored using three complimentary
13 methods; deer pellet surveys, hunter harvest reporting
14 and hunter surveys and more recent aerial Alpine
15 surveys. Winter body condition and beach mortality
16 surveys may also be conducted to understand changes in
17 health and abundance of area deer populations. Deer
18 pellet surveys have been used in the Southeast region
19 for a long time to monitor deer population trends and
20 document substantial changes in deer density in
21 specific watersheds. Deer pellet survey data, however,
22 should be interpreted with caution as there are many
23 factors other than population size can affect deer
24 pellet group density. A recent deer pellet study
25 conducted by Brinkman and colleagues on Prince of Wales
26 Island using newer DNA based methods found that current
27 ADF&G and US Forest Service deer pellet survey
28 techniques did not provide an accurate index of deer
29 populations when extrapolated across time or beyond the
30 local scale. The researchers concluded the variation
31 we reported between estimates of pellet group counts
32 and deer counts at the transect level do not support
33 the use of pellet group count surveys to reliably
34 monitor trends in deer populations at larger spacial
35 scales. Indeed during our study pellet group data
36 aggregated within watersheds did not reflect the
37 decline in deer count within those watersheds. For
38 instance in the Stoney Watershed DNA results indicated
39 a 24 percent decline in minimum deer count from 2006 to
40 2008 whereas pellet group counts indicated a 17 percent
41 increase over the same years. There have been no
42 recent deer pellet surveys conducted in the proposal
43 area. However recent pellet surveys conducted in other
44 parts of Unit 4 have generally indicated increasing
45 populations from prior years. The last surveys
46 conducted on Admiralty Island took place in Pybus Bay
47 in 2019, Barlow Cove in 2018 and Hawk Inlet in 2017.
48 Each of these surveys indicated a high density
49 population. As the ADF&G regional supervisor explained
50

0313

1 during a recent Southeast Council meeting deer pellet
2 densities in Game Management Unit 4 no matter where you
3 do them are always the highest in the region. However,
4 he also noted the Department does not monitor deer
5 populations in the relatively small areas affected by
6 the proposal. We monitor deer populations on a unit-
7 wide level. This statement, as well as the previously
8 mentioned study by Brinkman and colleagues lends
9 credence to local testimony presented at recent Council
10 meetings that deer populations may not be tracked at a
11 fine enough scale to capture a periodic localized
12 declines.

13

14 Aerial Alpine work began in 2013 as an
15 effort to provide a new timelier method to assess and
16 monitor the abundance of deer in Alpine areas. These
17 surveys are intended to be flown each summer before the
18 hunting season with deer seen per survey hour
19 considered the standard unit of measurement. Alpine
20 surveys were conducted over two locations in Unit 4
21 between 2015 and 2018. Surveys were flown over
22 southern Admiralty Island in 2015, '16, and '17 and
23 Northeast Chichagof Island in 2017 and '18. Southern
24 Admiralty Island exhibited the highest deer seen per
25 hour of any survey conducted in Southeast Alaska during
26 this time. Aerial surveys were not conducted in 2019
27 and 2020 due to Covid restrictions. Figure 3 displays
28 this information in more detail on Page 157 of your
29 meeting book.

30

31 Annual harvest data estimated from
32 harvest reports and hunter surveys can also provide
33 another indicator of deer population status and
34 potential change over time. The estimated average
35 yearly harvest in the proposal area increased by about
36 11 deer between 2011 and 2015 and the 2016 to 2020
37 reporting periods. This increase in harvest was
38 accompanied by a small increase in the average number
39 of reported hunters and a substantial increase in the
40 average number of reported hunter days witnessed in the
41 proposal area between these two reporting periods.
42 Overall, however, there's been a slight increase in
43 average reported hunters per year, a 10 percent
44 increase in average reported hunter days per year, and
45 a 13 percent decrease in average reported harvest per
46 year in the proposal area between the 2001 to 2005
47 reporting period and the most recent 2016 to 2020
48 reporting period. Among the different user groups in
49 this area only non-Federally-qualified users reported
50

0314

1 increases in average yearly hunters, hunter days or
2 harvests between these two time periods. And this
3 information is shown in greater detail on Table 3 on
4 Page 160 of your meeting book as well as Table 9 on
5 Page 173.

6
7 Based on the combination of harvest
8 data, pellet survey data and aerial surveys and related
9 information, managers in the area assert that the
10 overall deer population in Unit 4 has recovered from
11 the population decline suffered during the severe
12 winters of 2006 to 2008 and it may be reaching winter
13 carrying capacity in some areas. Most recently, the
14 most heavy snowfall that took place in December of 2021
15 led to concerns about overwinter mortality, however,
16 the rest of the 2021/2022 winter exhibited mild to
17 average weather conditions and the mortality surveys
18 conducted in the spring of 2022 found that overwinter
19 mortality was not higher than normal and that the body
20 condition of live deer was similar to that seen in
21 previous years.

22
23 All right.

24
25 Moving on to community characteristics.

26
27 Angoon is a Tlingit community of
28 longstanding located on the southwestern shore of
29 Admiralty Island at the entrance to the Kootznoowoo
30 Inlet. It's now one of the older and more remote
31 communities in Alaska with a history that can be traced
32 back hundreds of years. It's the only permanent
33 community on Admiralty. It can only be accessed by
34 float plane, boat or ferry. Commercial fishing and
35 processing have been economic mainstays and key sources
36 of employment and income for residents of the area for
37 many years. These commercial activities have become
38 important compliments to the more traditional
39 subsistence hunting and prac -- fishing practices that
40 have taken place in the area for generations. However,
41 the commercial fishing industry in the area has been in
42 decline since the 1990s. This decline in the
43 commercial fishing industry has contributed to the
44 population decline witnessed in Angoon since a round
45 the same time as people have moved away in search of
46 employment and other economic opportunities residents
47 of Angoon have also had to change their subsistence
48 practices as a result of declining incomes. Although
49 subsistence hunting and fishing practices have been
50

1 highly important for food provisioning in Angoon, the
2 Tlingit and many other indigenous and rural Alaskan
3 communities regard subsistence as much more than the
4 acts of harvesting, preparing and eating the food
5 required for nourishment.

6
7 As Thorton notes, the Tlingit regard
8 subsistence as an intricate and profound set of
9 relationships with particular geographic settings where
10 the social groups have dwelled historically. For them
11 subsistence is not just the minimum necessary to
12 support life but our way of living.

13
14 Deer have been a key subsistence
15 resource utilized by Angoon residents for generations
16 and generally represent the most significant
17 terrestrial source of meat for rural residents in
18 Southeast Alaska. Angoon residents have historically
19 hunted deer on Admiralty, Baranof and Chichagof Islands
20 traveling farther in pursuit of deer than any other
21 subsistence resource. In comprehensive household
22 surveys conducted in Angoon by ADF&G over the past four
23 decades deer have consistently ranked as the first or
24 second resource in terms of bulk contribution to local
25 diets trailing only salmon or non-salmon fish.

26
27 Angoon residents previously harvested
28 significant numbers of deer along west Chatham Strait
29 and northwest Admiralty Island during the years when
30 the commercial fishing industry was stronger and fish
31 canneries operated in these areas. Broad participation
32 in the commercial seine fishery allowed Angoon fishers
33 to travel long distances safely and harvest various
34 foods like deer in the process of catching and
35 delivering their commercial harvests, however, the loss
36 of income from commercial fishing, coupled with the
37 rising cost of fuel, the rising cost of store bought
38 food and supply chain issues have all contributed to
39 food security issues and population declines witnessed
40 in Angoon and similar rural Alaskan communities in
41 recent years. And as Member Howard described at recent
42 Council meeting, in 1988 we had ferry service you could
43 rely on, the price of food was reasonable, every home
44 in Angoon had a commercial permit so we were able to
45 support ourselves with financial opportunity through
46 fishing. We had food security because we could go out
47 and rely on the resources our elders decided were here
48 when we stopped in and decided this is where we were
49 going to be. An increase in the hand troll fleet and
50

1 the use of skiffs paralleled the decline of large
2 seiners in the community. Loss of seiners and decline
3 in fishing as a commercial activity also required a
4 shift in subsistence harvest technologies to smaller
5 boats making shorter trips. These hunting trips can be
6 particularly important in November as food security can
7 often become an issue around this time. As the use of
8 smaller boats and the rising fuel prices has requested
9 the distance that many local hunters can travel to
10 harvest deer and other subsistence resources.
11 Residents of Angoon and similar communities have noted
12 that their increasing reliance upon smaller boats,
13 navigating narrow embayments, closer to home, has made
14 hunter competition and user conflict in these areas a
15 significant issue. Overall about 80 percent of all
16 recent deer harvest in Unit 4 have been made by boat-
17 based hunters. Though boat-based beach hunting is
18 typically the most efficient of deer harvests in Unit 4
19 it can be restricted by issues of access and
20 competition.

21
22 A recent study of eight rural Alaskan
23 communities in the Yukon Flats region quantified the
24 significant impacts of rising fuel costs and depressed
25 local economies among subsistence harvesters. Overall
26 81 percent of the subsistence harvesters participating
27 in the study noted that they had reduced the distance
28 they traveled to conduct subsistence activities over
29 the past 10 years because of gasoline costs. Similarly
30 89 percent of the study participants noted they had
31 reduced the number of yearly trips they took to conduct
32 subsistence activities for the same reason. And so
33 similarly recent reductions in deer hunters, hunter
34 days and harvest reported by Angoon residents during
35 the most recent five year reporting period could be
36 related to the impact of rising fuel prices in an area
37 with declining commercial opportunities. Reduction in
38 the number and distance of trips that Angoon residents
39 can afford to take to harvest subsistence resources
40 could also be expected to contribute to issues of user
41 conflict and competition in the proposal area.
42 Available harvest and effort data also does not
43 specifically account for the impact of declining, aging
44 populations in communities like Angoon. It would be
45 reasonable to expect that a community's harvest, total
46 number of hunters and total days hunted would decrease
47 as their population decreases. And Member Howard has
48 made comments to this idea before stating; my
49 interpretation of that hunter effort data is that
50

0317

1 there's less of an effort by Federally-qualified users
2 because there's less of a population here. However, it
3 should be noted the number of reported Angoon hunters
4 as a percentage of overall community population has
5 remained relatively stable for the years where this
6 data exists. Still an aging population of hunters
7 might be more reliant upon beach and low elevation
8 hunts in an otherwise steep and rugged landscape.
9 However, some Federally-qualified and non-Federally-
10 qualified users have suggested that observed declines
11 in the local deer populations could be related to
12 recent mild winters which resulted in deer being spread
13 out through the Forest rather than concentrated and
14 easily visible on beaches.

15
16 And so looking at food security and
17 contemporary economic conditions in the area.

18
19 During the most recent comprehensive
20 subsistence study conducted by ADF&G in 2012 nearly
21 half of the households in Angoon were considered to be
22 experiencing low or very low food security. The
23 percentage of food and secure households in Angoon 42
24 percent, was roughly three times higher than the
25 average for the State of Alaska and the nation overall.
26 And the rate of very low food security experienced by
27 Angoon households was greater than that experienced in
28 any other of the four rural Southeast Alaska
29 communities surveyed in that study. Consequently, the
30 study highlighted the importance of successful deer
31 hunting in November as this was the time when many
32 Angoon residents noted that food insecurity increases
33 the most. It's also the time when the greatest amount
34 of deer hunting occurs, both by Federally-qualified and
35 non-Federally-qualified users.

36
37 Looking at the harvest history and
38 effort reporting more closely.

39
40 We see that proximity to Angoon appears
41 to be a key factor for when residents select deer
42 hunting -- where and when residents select deer hunting
43 locations. According to the available data,
44 approximately 38 percent of Angoon residents reported
45 harvest and 41 percent of the reported hunting days
46 took place within the Wildlife Analysis Areas covered
47 by the proposal area. The Angoon area and Hood Bay
48 being the most significantly represented of these
49 areas, while a minimal, relatively minimal amount of
50

1 reported Angoon hunting effort and harvest took place
2 in Whitewater Bay, Wilson Cove area. Angoon residents
3 utilize the Pybus Bay and fishery Thayer Creeks areas
4 the most of any of the other Wildlife Analysis Areas
5 located outside the proposal area. Based on the
6 reported data, an average of approximately 59 users
7 hunted for 207 days harvesting 94 deer within the
8 proposal area each year from 2000 to 2021. However,
9 the total number of hunters, hunter days and deer
10 harvested in this area by both Federally-qualified and
11 non-Federally-qualified users was variable between
12 years. In most years, Federally-qualified and non-
13 Federally-qualified users was variable between years.
14 In most years Federally-qualified users harvested more
15 deer from this proposal area due to the larger numbers
16 of hunters. On average roughly 45 percent of all
17 hunters utilizing the proposal area were Federally-
18 qualified users from Angoon. The second largest
19 proportion of hunters each year were non-Federally-
20 qualified. Other Federally-qualified users from
21 communities outside Angoon typically composed about 16
22 percent of hunters utilizing the proposal area each
23 year. The available harvest data on reported hunter
24 days and harvest within the proposal area shows similar
25 trends. However, it's important to note that the
26 proportion of non-Federally-qualified user hunter
27 effort and harvest within the proposal area increased
28 fairly substantially over the two most recent reporting
29 periods. So from 2011 to 2020. During this 10 year
30 period non-Federally-qualified users accounted for an
31 average of 48 percent of all reported hunters, 57
32 percent of all reported hunter days and 47 percent of
33 all reported harvest taken from the proposal area.
34 This change also corresponded with a substantial
35 decline in human population in Angoon and a decline in
36 the average number of hunter days and harvest reported
37 by Angoon residents. Between 2013 and 2019 a
38 substantial amount of reported Angoon harvest shifted
39 out of the proposal area. This change corresponded
40 with a larger proportion of non-Federally-qualified
41 users hunter days and harvest taking place within the
42 proposal area around the same time. At a recent
43 Southeast Council meeting Mr. Howard noted that this
44 trend was the result of increasing competition in and
45 around the community. In 2020 and 2021, however, the
46 majority of deer harvest by Federally-qualified users
47 from Angoon took place within the proposal area again
48 as the proportion of non-Federally-qualified users
49 decreased. Yet despite reports of favorable hunting
50

0319

1 conditions throughout Unit 4 the average number of hunt
2 -- days hunted per deer harvested increased for both
3 Angoon users and non-Federally-qualified users in this
4 area in 2020 and 2021. Though non-Federally-qualified
5 users composed a significant proportion of the hunters
6 utilizing the proposal area each year during this time
7 period the area actually accounted for a relatively
8 small amount of non-Federally-qualified users overall
9 hunting efforts and harvests within Unit 4 as a whole
10 so less than two percent. Non-Federally-qualified
11 users tended to focus their deer hunting efforts on
12 Admiralty Island in the northern portions of Admiralty
13 Island located closest to Juneau such as in Hawk Inlet.

14

15 And so I have in here other
16 alternatives considered.

17

18 Harvest limit reduction. This current
19 proposal responds to critiques of previous proposals
20 from last round where a proposed harvest limit
21 reduction to two male deer for non-Federally-qualified
22 users was not considered sufficient to provide for a
23 meaningful conservation benefit or substantially
24 improve the success rates of Federally-qualified users
25 as recently reported harvest data shows that relatively
26 few non-Federally-qualified users currently take their
27 full harvest limit in this area.

28

29 Reducing the extent of the closure area
30 or period of the closure. The current proposal
31 responds to, again, this alternative, reducing the size
32 of the closure area by roughly half as well as the
33 length of the period of closure. However, based on the
34 reported data there are portions of the proposed
35 closure area such as the Whitewater Bay area that do
36 not appear to be essential to recent local subsistence
37 deer hunting efforts from the data reported.

38

39 And then, of course, another
40 alternative suggested was the working group through --
41 since this time the north Unit 4 deer working group has
42 been established under the guidance of the Hoonah
43 Indian Association Environmental Programs and we're
44 going to be working on updating these analysis with the
45 data that we've been provided from them going forward.

46

47 And this is tough for me because I've
48 analyzed all of this data about as much as -- a lot,
49 we'll say a lot and trying to come up with a potential
50

0320

1 compromise or something that might work, to the point
2 that I decided not to do that and potentially let the
3 Council discuss that amongst themselves. I just don't
4 know what to propose at this point.

5

6 The OSM preliminary conclusion at this
7 time is to oppose WP24-04.

8

9 And the key issue is that it's still
10 not clear that current levels of competition created by
11 non-Federally-qualified users in the proposal area pose
12 an imminent threat to the continuation of subsistence
13 at this time.

14

15 And the key thing here is we would like
16 to hear, you know, from a greater number of local
17 people in the Angoon area before supporting a potential
18 closure and determining whether that's something we'd
19 support.

20

21 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
22 Jason. Opportunity for Council members to ask
23 questions on quite a lengthy presentation there with a
24 lot of data so, Bob.

25

26 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you. Jason I was
27 following along and I'm really distressed you left out
28 a lot of paragraphs.

29

30 (Laughter)

31

32 MR. SCHROEDER: That we could have
33 followed -- but I think this is a really thorough
34 analysis and other Council members have also said, oh,
35 my gosh what happened at OSM, maybe they put good stuff
36 in the water and now people are writing really
37 excellent analysis.

38

39 I just bring up, you know, something
40 that could be included, would be some qualification of
41 data available and that would be my suggestion to
42 improve analysis of this sort because, of course, we
43 want to use all available data. This analysis, certain
44 parts of it rely very heavily on harvest report data,
45 which is, on the one hand the best source of data that
46 we have for harvest locations and from where deer are
47 taken from and community's harvest data. However,
48 though, oh, gosh, forever, it's been a bit problematic,
49 you get a particularly fine grained so, you know, if

50

0321

1 we're talking about one Wildlife Analysis Area and we
2 have very few data points for very few years, well, I'm
3 not sure what that means. We also note that, at least
4 in my experience in previous times, reporting from
5 Angoon was not particularly robust for a variety of
6 reasons, and at different times there were comparisons
7 made between much more intensive and expensive efforts
8 to talk to all the deer hunters in the community and
9 with the much more regular and repeatable, yearly
10 repeatable harvest ticket data. So that would e
11 something to look at, not for this proposal, but just
12 that there have been major discrepancies in that realm
13 in the past.

14
15 So just some of the observations are
16 true and the data may show that, for instance, one
17 particular Wildlife Analysis Area wasn't used very much
18 by Angoon but I wouldn't bet on it.

19
20 I'm also noting something that -- well,
21 let's see you did present the population figures for
22 Angoon and, you know, there's clearly a lot going on in
23 Angoon and I'm sure Council Member Howard may comment
24 on that, but just a very serious decline in population
25 over the years. I just looked from 2000 to 2023 the
26 population goes from 572 to 326 and the population's
27 also gotten a lot older so those are also demographic
28 features that come in.

29
30 But otherwise I don't think I have any
31 questions at this time.

32
33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob.
34 No questions but a lot of comments, thank you, Bob.

35
36 MS. NEEDHAM: Cathy, a question.

37
38 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
39 have a couple of questions. I'll ask one and see what
40 other Council members have to say and then maybe come
41 back to another one.

42
43 Can you clar -- I don't want to
44 diminish this analysis at all because I think there's a
45 lot of really good information in here and I'm very
46 appreciative of the amount of time and thoroughness
47 that went into it but kind of at the end of the day,
48 something that I didn't pick up when I read, but when I
49 was listening to your presentation of it -- I do
50

0322

1 appreciate your thorough going back over it because,
2 again, we only got our books on Thursday so it's really
3 helpful to get the information both my skimming and
4 your telling us, but essentially the effect of the
5 proposal going to be closing the hunt in these Wildlife
6 Analysis Areas for two weeks to only two percent of
7 non-Federally-qualified users that hunt all of Unit 4;
8 is that a fair statement/summary?

9
10 MR. ROBERTS: That would be a fair,
11 yeah, I think -- according to my understanding it would
12 be a fair statement.

13
14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other Council
15 members with a question.

16
17 Albert.

18
19 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20 During your analysis did you also include Monument
21 language in this because in Monument language it says
22 Admiralty Island is created for the health and well
23 being of the indigenous people of the island. Nothing
24 in there says Federally-qualified or residents of
25 Alaska. None of it says that in there. This was
26 Federal law. This was signed by Jimmy Carter into
27 Federal law. So if Angoon wants to, according to the
28 1990 Act we can shut the whole island down just in case
29 we don't get enough deer in Angoon and now we're
30 getting a legal opinion on what that means to co-manage
31 the island with the Forest Service and the Corporation,
32 which I happen to be a Board of Director of and we're
33 using Corporation funds now to get that legal opinion
34 because we're not being heard. Apparently, though, if
35 Kootzoonwoo Incorporated wants to start a deer farm
36 there we might be able to have a better process within
37 that area without objection from anybody.

38
39 Mr. Chairman, I'm just basically being
40 a smart aleck because it seems easier to create a kelp
41 farm than it is to address the needs of Angoon hunters.
42 Granted, you don't have the population of people here
43 speaking for themselves you know what they're doing,
44 they're hunting. They're trying to figure out how to
45 put this stuff on the table before winter gets here
46 and by golly they're not just hunting, they're -- Mr.
47 Chairman they're also packing wood now because the time
48 I'd be packing wood would be next week because the
49 temperature. It drives me crazy to pack out in the
50

0323

1 heat. Having been in the desert, I guess, anyone would
2 understand the reason why. So there's many things that
3 play into this and I'm not going to stress over it like
4 I did the first time this failed because we have other
5 avenues now and the more this rock gets pushed up the
6 hill, the more I look for another avenue, and Monument
7 language kind of gives me that avenue as well as the
8 corporation and the attorney's opinion.

9
10 A good example, I guess, is I heard
11 some good news, Mr. Chairman, on Greens Creek, EPA got
12 involved and everyone's coming to the table over the
13 tailing's expansion and that has to do with Monument
14 language. It has to do with the fact that they have to
15 abide by Monument language because the President of the
16 tribe sent a resolution stating if they don't there was
17 going to be litigation and Angoon has grounds for that
18 based on irreparable harm. Now, these are all
19 connected, Mr. Chairman, because it's all Admiralty
20 Island. We aren't asking for -- and I know I'm
21 preaching to the choir because you guys agreed with me
22 before and this came from you guys, not me, because I
23 was sitting at home trying to figure out now what -- so
24 having a conversation on the jet and I'm not going to
25 mention any names but we thought we should have closed
26 Seymour Canal and by golly Albert could have been
27 hunting in Whitewater Bay by myself or, you know,
28 Chyieek because the mentality is, oh, geez, we better
29 go hunt in Seymour Canal in case they close it. And,
30 Mr. Chairman, Albert's budget, to be honest, the money
31 I'm allowed to spend this trip is \$200. What did the
32 State of Alaska spend on the YouTube video to tell
33 everyone else that Angoon has -- or Admiralty Island
34 has the highest population of deer right after we
35 submitted a proposal to close it. So that's just
36 little 'ol me against now the whole State of Alaska and
37 someone else -- and my new concern, Mr. Chairman, is
38 our high school students are doing this now and I'm
39 pretty proud of them. They're going out getting deer
40 and bringing them back to the elders. They're using
41 their six tags, they're not using the process, there's
42 nothing in law that says they can't use their six tags
43 and say, hey, do you want one of my deer, there's
44 nothing that says that and they're doing it. My
45 concern now, Mr. Chairman, is I'd rather see them hunt
46 on the south end of Admiralty where there's -- there's
47 no proof these gentlemen are hunting there. I read
48 through all of these, there's no proof, they -- even --
49 there's no documentation in their language, their
50

0324

1 words, anything in here that says they've hunted in
2 Whitewater Bay, Pybus Bay -- I won't even hunt in Pybus
3 Bay, that's a bit of a reach for me to be honest, Mr.
4 Chair, I'm sitting here -- I use daylight. I'm like
5 well I got this much daylight, this is how far I can
6 go. I can't imagine you leave Juneau in a boat, get
7 down here to Thayer Creek and start hunting south and
8 get back to Juneau before dark, I don't see that
9 happening. Safely. And if it doesn't happen, I'll put
10 this on record, Mr. Chairman, Albert Howard's going to
11 come get you and bring you to Angoon safely, if it
12 doesn't work out for you, I promise you that much. All
13 I'm asking for is the right for us to subsist as
14 protected under the laws in this book we're given,
15 that's all I'm asking, two weeks. And I appreciate
16 this Council coming up with this solution, and I
17 believe that's what we're here for.

18

19 So that's all I have to say about it,
20 Mr. Chair, because we do have another avenue if this
21 one doesn't work.

22

23 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.

26

27 Mike.

28

29 Or, go ahead Harvey.

30

31 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
32 Jason, I just was curious as to have you ever gone into
33 an area and hunted after somebody else had hunted it
34 the day before?

35

36 MR. ROBERTS: Through the Chair. Mr.
37 Kitka. I'm not much of a hunter.

38

39 MR. KITKA: I have a comment on this,
40 if I can follow up.

41

42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure, go ahead,
43 Harvey.

44

45 MR. KITKA: Noting what Albert has -- I
46 just kind of tag along with that because I grew up and
47 having hunted with my father for many years and for the
48 early parts of the year you don't find very many bucks
49 on the beach, you don't actually see them so we don't
50

0325

1 usually beach comb, we usually find a bay to park and
2 go hunt in that area and if somebody has gotten in
3 there before us the deer are so skittish you can't get
4 them to come to your call. This is basically, I
5 believe, what Angoon is suffering from, because there's
6 very few bays in which they can park their boats and go
7 hunt for the bucks up on the hill. If it was just
8 subsistence meat they were after then it wouldn't
9 matter if they were just going after does or bucks,
10 then they could hunt, the way that they insinuate on
11 this, that it's all beach combing. But for hunting
12 bucks, where we go after them because they are a
13 different breed of animal than a lot of people realize.
14 When they get skittish they'll go back up into the
15 Alpine and that's where they'll have to go.

16

17 Thank you.

18

19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Harvey.

20

21 Mike, you have a question.

22

23 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
24 I would like to hear Cathy's comment again. And before
25 that, nobody's saying there isn't the resource, the
26 resource is there. But what we were focusing on is the
27 competition factor and I believe I heard you say that
28 you could not verify the competition, was that correct?

29

30 MR. ROBERTS: Through the Chair. Not
31 quite. Our concern is whether the level of competition
32 being experienced merits a closure.

33

34 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Cathy, do you want
35 to answer Mike's question?

36

37 MS. NEEDHAM: I do and then I want to
38 follow up on what he just said.....

39

40 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Sure.

41

42 MS. NEEDHAM:because that led
43 into my other question.

44

45 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Very good, go
46 ahead.

47

48 MS. NEEDHAM: My question to Mr.
49 Roberts was, essentially the effect of this proposal

50

0326

1 was to close the portion of Unit 4 for two weeks for
2 two percent of the non-Federally-qualified users that
3 hunt Unit 4. So the analysis showed that Unit 4 has
4 non-Federally-qualified users that hunt in it but in
5 these Wildlife Analysis Areas it was only two percent
6 of all of those hunters hunt these Wildlife Analysis
7 Areas, and so we would only be closing it for two weeks
8 for that two percent of all non-Federally-qualified
9 users throughout Unit 4. And that was my question and
10 he verified that that was true.

11

12 MR. ROBERTS: Well.....

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Do you have
15 another.....

16

17 MR. ROBERTS:a couple caveats,
18 through the Chair. Two percent of reported hunters and
19 it's according to my calculations, which I would want
20 to check again before I -- yeah.

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Cathy, do
23 you have another question.

24

25 MS. NEEDHAM: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
26 Chair. So my other question that you kind of led in to
27 with your previous answer is, you know, I read through
28 the analysis and you started having me convinced that
29 there -- I mean there's more information in here and
30 documented that that competition is acknowledged, that
31 there is competition within these Wildlife Analysis
32 Units and the OSM conclusion was that it didn't -- like
33 you just said, that's not what was written, but you
34 said it didn't meet the merits of a continuation for
35 subsistence uses, and I'm wondering what that threshold
36 is? Like -- because I really felt like we were really
37 starting to kind of like say -- the analysis was really
38 kind of saying there is competition here but it didn't
39 meet -- or we didn't feel it met for continuation of
40 subsistence uses and so what is the threshold for that
41 analysis, what is the transition point for where it
42 would meet that?

43

44 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

45

46 MR. ROBERTS: Through the Chair. Ms.
47 Needham, that's a good question that's not really
48 defined in our language. The best we do is go back and
49 look at kind of historically where this is has

50

0327

1 happened, where they've been able to close to non-
2 Federally-qualified users so a good example would be
3 here, Prince of Wales, the amount of information, the
4 amount of different people that had to testify about
5 the issues, the combination of population declines,
6 increasing competition. Berners Bay moose hunts where
7 it was determined that, basically, Federally-qualified
8 users were not really receiving an opportunity to
9 engage in that hunt because of how restrictive it was.
10 And so these are kind of the historical, looking back
11 at how that's been defined, things that have passed
12 through the Board.

13

14 However, like many things we rely on
15 the Council to kind of give us our lead on a lot of
16 these things. And so just to reiterate, this is OSM's
17 conclusion, it certainly does not have to be the
18 conclusion of the Council.

19

20 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

21

22 Mike, do you have a question.

23

24 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25 Yeah, I do. Okay, there's three WAAs there, what
26 percentage of Unit 4 do those WAAs represent?

27

28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Can you -- do you
29 have a number there to kind of an estimate of what
30 percentage of Unit 4 these Wildlife Analysis Areas
31 encompass?

32

33 MR. ROBERTS: Is that what the question
34 was? I could get back to you but I can't tell you
35 right now, yeah.

36

37 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That's a question
38 you'd like to have answered, though, right, Mike.

39

40 MR. DOUVILLE: Say that again?

41

42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: That's a question
43 you would like to have answered?

44

45 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.

46

47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, these
48 Wildlife Analysis Areas, what percentage of the total
49 Unit 4 they comprise of.

50

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1 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
2 The reason I ask that is because the two percent looks
3 really disproportionate. But on the other hand, the
4 area that we're looking at or is proposed to -- for
5 this closure is very small also compared to the overall
6 Unit 4 area so I wanted to have some perspective out
7 there is how much you're asking to set aside for that
8 short period. So if you're just looking at the two
9 percent, well, that doesn't look fair, but when you
10 look at the overall area compared to all of Unit 4 then
11 that would give you a different perspective also.

12
13 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
14 Jason, you want to respond to that?

15
16 MR. ROBERTS: I can say that if you
17 look on Page 148 those would correspond to
18 approximately 24 percent of Admiralty Island is
19 requesting to be closed during this time period through
20 this proposal. If you look at the other two proposals
21 we have on board requesting to close over half of
22 Chichagof Island during the same time period, so the
23 three proposals together it's a fairly significant
24 amount of Unit 4 that you'd be requesting to close.
25 Individually it may not be that much, but, yeah.

26
27 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well, that
28 will be something to consider in deliberations so thank
29 you, Mike.

30
31 Patty.

32
33 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 So these are community based proposals, you know,
35 centered around this proposal, centered around Angoon,
36 and you made a statement that I wish to question
37 somewhat, is that, you're not -- the Program -- OSM
38 didn't hear from community members of Angoon to support
39 this proposal. Where in the regulations does it say
40 that they have to submit comments in support or against
41 a proposal for a proposal to move forward if there's
42 being such a heavy weight on that criteria that is from
43 where?

44
45 Thank you.

46
47 MR. ROBERTS: Through the Chair. Thank
48 you for the question, that's a good question, Ms.
49 Phillips. This is more going back to kind of standards
50

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1 of what you want to call social science, triangulation,
2 is everyone in the community experiencing this to the
3 same level as Mr. Howard. Of course we depend on RAC
4 members to inform us on what's going on in their
5 communities, but for the purposes of a closure it would
6 be very good to have a number of community members so
7 that we could triangulate the situation. It would be
8 kind of hypocritical, you've seen me critique somewhat
9 ADF&G methods, but what I would be doing here would be
10 similar to situations we've critiqued with other areas.
11 So, no, it's not in the regulations, this is more about
12 the kind of way we gather and judge data.

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other
15 questions.

16

17 Albert, go ahead.

18

19 MR. HOWARD: I learn a lot sitting here
20 next to Patricia. And I'm actually calmer than I
21 usually am. So according to Executive Order 13175, did
22 you go to Angoon Community Association and ask them
23 what their thought was on this?

24

25 MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Howard, that's a no.
26 No, I did not. However, tribal or ANCSA Corporations
27 can schedule consultations with OSM at any time on any
28 issue.

29

30 MR. HOWARD: So, Mr. Chairman, just to
31 give you an idea of how this works in Angoon, when I
32 got elected as Mayor I was responsible for making sure
33 things got accomplished and don't bother anybody in the
34 public because Albert we elected you to do it, and same
35 thing when I was elected President of the tribe. We've
36 got stuff to do. We know you can get it done so, yeah,
37 don't bother us, we've got kids to take care of and
38 food to put on the table, that's the mentality of
39 Angoon. Now, I think there's definitely criteria here
40 that says you should go consult with Angoon on
41 something this important and hear firsthand if that's
42 what needs to be heard.

43

44 This is just something we're trying to
45 address and I could bring it back to the tribe from
46 another angle because, Mr. Chairman, I tried to get
47 away from politics but now they hired me as their
48 transportation director and resource person so this
49 kind of falls into my lane of work, I suppose.

50

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1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Jason,
4 response.

5

6 MR. ROBERTS: I thank Mr. Howard for
7 that comment, that is helpful to have that on the
8 record, that you're speaking for a much broader
9 community and that you've been given that power to do,
10 that does help us in this analysis. I'm not sure if I
11 missed it before in going through the qualitative
12 transcript analysis but that is something that will
13 give more weight to what we have here.

14

15 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Bob, go ahead.

16

17 MR. SCHROEDER: Well, you know, this is
18 something is I've been involved with the Council, it's
19 really puzzled me and I think it may be something that
20 we include in our annual report for how proposals are
21 dealt with because while it is true that anyone can
22 submit comments on proposals, that it might be -- it
23 would make the job of Staff and this Council easier if
24 we always had tribal councils, city governments, Fish
25 and Game Advisory Committees weigh in on proposals. I
26 think it might be better if we suggest that that become
27 a normal part of procedures for Staff analyzing
28 proposals, to do a little bit of soliciting of that
29 input. It hasn't been something that is a regular
30 thing in the past to my knowledge. So that doesn't
31 really reflect on this analysis in my mind.

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob. I
34 think Jason wants to respond to that.

35

36 MR. ROBERTS: Just a slight rebuttal.
37 This proposal was submitted by this Council, not
38 Angoon.

39

40 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Bob.

41

42 MR. SCHROEDER: Really, not to get into
43 a detailed discussion on this it just has to do with
44 what would be a really good procedure for our
45 Subsistence Program and I don't really think that our
46 Council is somehow separate from the Federal
47 Subsistence Program. I think last I heard we were part
48 of the Federal Subsistence Program so this is as much
49 -- this is a friendly suggestion and it obviously would
50

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1 improve things if we did have input from affected
2 people on proposals and just because this hasn't been
3 done on a regular basis for the 30-plus years that the
4 Federal Program has been in existence doesn't mean that
5 that's a good idea, maybe it's a good idea to explore
6 regular consultation with tribal councils and city
7 governments.

8

9 Thank you.

10

11 But I don't think we're going to solve
12 this right now so I don't want a response, thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Bob.
15 Any other questions for Mr. Roberts.

16

17 Larry.

18

19 MR. BEMIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As
20 I'm listening to this it seems like to me a lot of work
21 has went into this, a lot, and when we get down to the
22 details and it boils down to the most effective group
23 has the least amount of input. And, you know, even if
24 they appointed a person to represent them, that still
25 doesn't weigh in on the actual person to say so because
26 when it boils down to it we don't usually allow just
27 one person -- and his situation's a little different,
28 but when you're getting into something you're going to
29 take away from somebody and later on they say, well, I
30 didn't realize it was that serious, they just told
31 Albert when he got here, we should have known about
32 this 30 days ago, or we should have seen something that
33 the seriousness of what is about to take place, you
34 better weigh in on it or that means you weren't
35 interested, but given that as a preemptive
36 communication ahead of time might get a little bit of
37 reaction to it and help base the analysis and your
38 algorithm that you're trying to put together and
39 basically take all your information and weigh it out
40 and then you'll get a little closer.

41

42 But it seems like to me where we're
43 sitting at this point and we're dealing with climate
44 change, we're dealing with snow fall, we're dealing
45 with some hunters hunting some of the time, more
46 hunters hunting all the time and as we see, we closed
47 it, we opened it, we added, we subtracted, this thing
48 is like a roller coaster and now we're getting into
49 refine down to a two percent or a couple percent here

50

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1 and a left out group of people that really didn't have
2 that final say so when it affects them to the point
3 where, I know it's just two weeks, but the object is I
4 don't think they had their final say in it, and I don't
5 think it was put into the equation regardless of where
6 we're sitting at today, it just seems like to me. And
7 I agree with Bob, that we can facilitate a little
8 better communication to all the entities before it
9 comes to us. I would admit if this came through my
10 front door, we haven't had a meeting from our President
11 for AC, we've never even posted anything for fish or
12 game and the State of Alaska hasn't come from Board
13 Support and said, hey, Yakutat, we're going to take you
14 off the roster if you guys don't get in there and wake
15 up somebody and get a meeting, we got to get you on the
16 paperwork, they're not even recognizing us or asking
17 us, are you going to get in on this Board of Fish
18 meeting, or are you going to get on this Board of Game
19 meeting, do you have anything say? It just -- we're
20 all standing here, and I kind of feel that's what's
21 happening in this situation, and the people are just
22 standing there and they didn't get motivated on
23 anything because until the analysis comes out and the
24 seriousness of this and all the work that's put into
25 this, I don't think they realize just how serious it
26 is, and for me not knowing anything about this, I can
27 tell you that this is serious because one small group
28 that is standing right on the beach on the edge of
29 where all this is happening is -- can be impacted. And
30 we're not sure how the other non-two percent is going
31 to react and we're not sure how those other people that
32 decided under the study are going to react.

33

34 So, you know, it got -- it all goes and
35 it changes the valuation of the study, just that little
36 bit, and that way it eliminates the doubt when it come
37 to us on the final decision.

38

39 So I really like what Bob has to say.
40 I like what you're doing. And maybe we're at a point
41 to where we just have to look a little harder, ask a
42 few more questions and secure the final yes or no type
43 thing.

44

45 Thank you.

46

47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
48 Larry. We do have another question from Cathy, Cathy,
49 go ahead.

50

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1 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 This question kind of goes along the same lines as what
3 I was -- when I asked about like what is the threshold
4 for OSM's decision to not support the proposal and what
5 was that threshold. Are there other examples in the
6 state of Alaska where non-Federally-qualified users
7 have been restricted and there might not necessarily be
8 a conservation concern? And if so, I think there might
9 be, but if so why -- like what was the threshold for
10 making that decision and how -- because I'm just kind
11 of trying to gage -- like this analysis was really good
12 and there were parts of it that really changed for me
13 in reading it from the last go around of proposals that
14 we submitted, but -- and then at the end you said it
15 just didn't meet it, so are there other examples of
16 when non-Federally-qualified users could be restricted
17 to continue subsistence uses when there isn't
18 necessarily a conservation concern?

19
20 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Jason, before you
21 answer that, I don't know how long you've been with the
22 Program.....

23
24 MR. ROBERTS: Yeah.

25
26 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ:and what
27 research you might have to do to answer that question.
28 But, you know, I've been to Board meetings and that did
29 come up at a Board meeting that I attended so, you
30 know, I do have some perspective on that. But, go
31 ahead, I don't know if you have some information on
32 that.

33
34 MR. ROBERTS: (Shakes head negatively)

35
36 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: No, okay. Cathy,
37 there was a Board meeting that I attended that had to
38 do with an issue of a proposal, I think it came out of
39 Arctic Village and it dealt with sheep hunting. And
40 there was a specific area that was really important to
41 the people of Arctic Village for hunting dall sheep.
42 And it was identified that there was no conservation
43 concerns for that sheep population. There was a
44 proposal from a non-subsistence user, I think it was a
45 guide, who wanted to access that area for hunting for
46 his guide business and it was not open to him at the
47 time and he felt without a conservation concern that
48 there was no reason why he could not hunt that area.
49 The argument was made by the people of Arctic Village
50

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1 that the presence of a guiding business in that area
2 that was really important to them would interfere with
3 their use of that area. And there was a long
4 discussion on this. I don't know who was the
5 anthropologist at the time that did the analysis but
6 there was back and forth, it went on to 7:00 o'clock at
7 night, and the Council eventually decided to keep that
8 area closed based on that argument that the presence of
9 the hunting effort that would probably be fairly
10 sustained over the period of time, who was a guide, who
11 was going to be having clients, there was permits
12 issued to make sure that he, you know, didn't affect
13 the viability of the population or, you know, no
14 conservation concerns were identified, but the Board
15 did side with the people of Arctic Village and
16 instituted that closure based on that argument, that it
17 would interfere with the use of the subsistence users
18 in that area.

19

20 So, you know, I remember that pretty
21 clearly because it was, you know, kind of burned into
22 my memory that that was a pretty significant action by
23 the Board.

24

25 So I don't know if I'm wrong about
26 that, maybe you can correct me later, but that was my
27 recollection. I thought that was a significant
28 decision that, you know, had real bearing on a lot of
29 issues throughout the state.

30

31 MR. VICKERS: Mr. Chair, if you don't
32 mind.

33

34 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

35

36 MR. VICKERS: For the record this is
37 Brent Vickers from OSM. A couple comments. First of
38 all there's a lot of great suggestions, again, this is
39 a very stressful and emotional proposal. I just want
40 to clarify that OSM Staff does not do, reach out and do
41 primary research. We do clarify with proponents on
42 proposals, but we don't have the Staff, the money and
43 also we don't want the optics of advocacy and so we
44 have made it as a guideline to not reach out and try to
45 handpick some phone calls and such. It's a guideline
46 that we're following currently. We would love to have
47 that capacity but it's just -- given the time, the
48 Staff and the power it's not in our ability and it
49 would just produce bad optics for what we're able to
50

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1 do.

2

3

4 And, second, you're absolutely correct,
5 Mr. Chair, that was the -- the Arctic Village closure
6 was the first thing I thought of and one thing I wanted
7 to also bring up is that the number of people that were
8 involved from the village in the outcry for maintaining
9 or doing this closure -- in fact, we just had the
10 Eastern Interior Council meeting in Arctic Village that
11 they'd been pushing for and pushing for because the
12 four year review was up and we had both -- wanted both
13 consultation and had numerous testimonies on the
14 closure and I think having that overall participation
15 spoke very highly, very strong to the Board and the
16 decisionmakers. We are -- and I -- Jason was banging
17 his head on the wall on this -- this one, certainly the
18 phenomena exists, we know the phenomena exists, we know
19 that this happens from what we've heard and the
20 decision was made and the decision, not knowing how
21 much this has happened, to the extent, the frequency,
22 that we've seen this and as he said, this is just what
23 he felt -- there was no decision that he felt
24 completely comfortable with and this is what he decided
25 to go with, with the intent of helping with discussion.
26 And I just wanted to bring that up and we support his
27 conclusion, so thank you.

27

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CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
that. Yeah, judging competition is a very subjective
thing. The data, it's really hard to glean at from
data, in my opinion. So, you know, the Council will
make a subjective recommendation on this, I'm sure, so
that's probably just the nature of the issue.

So, Albert, question.

MR. HOWARD: An observation, Mr.
Chairman. Something is missing in the data that --
there was something missing in the data that we've
talked about in previous meetings and that's the guided
bear hunting. Guided bear hunting. I mention that now
because it just sparked a memory because I was running
down to Chyieek to check my crab pot and anyone that
hunts, if there's eagles or ravens or bears -- or not
bears -- eagles or ravens on the beach feeding on
something, chances are somebody shot a deer there
before you got there. So we've heard -- and I've asked
the question, if bear hunters are allowed to take a
deer and at one point a Fish and Game official, and

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1 this has got to be in record, it's got to be in the
2 meeting minutes, you can go back and look it over -- at
3 one point a Fish and Game official told us no, and then
4 he got corrected by another Fish and Game guy saying
5 that, in fact, yes, they do allow bear hunters to take
6 deer because the bear hunter customer pays so much to
7 get a bear that they should take something home. That
8 was the justification for that and that should be in
9 the record.

10

11 So having said that, you have to keep
12 in mind, if you didn't put it in your data the fact
13 that bear hunters are there in the beginning of spring
14 until it's time for us to go hunting, they're already
15 having an impact and I know them now because they text
16 me. Albert, did you see this guy go by, because
17 there's two -- now there's two bear companies competing
18 for the same area so when they text me and ask if I saw
19 the other guy I'm like I don't know, I stay out of that
20 because that's between the two of them, but they are
21 hunting in Whitewater Bay and Hood Bay and Chyieek
22 because there's two companies now versus having just
23 one so they're both vying over the same area but
24 they're also taking deer as an opportunity.

25

26 So that's another thing, maybe add that
27 to data somewhere.

28

29 But as Mr. Kitka was trying to get to
30 when he asked the question; have you ever gone
31 somewhere where someone has hunted the day before. I
32 have. And now I try not to. So I will call another
33 hunter in Angoon and say where'd you go yesterday. If
34 he says he went to Chyieek I'm going to go past it and
35 go to Whitewater Bay. If he says he's been in Chyieek
36 and Whitewater Bay then I'll go past that and go south
37 of Whitewater Bay. I may be the two percent of the
38 entire Federal subsistence user group of Southeast or
39 all of Angoon could be that population of two percent.
40 So that data -- I don't know if that represents all of
41 Southeast subsistence users or is it two percent of
42 Angoon Federally-qualified subsistence users; that
43 wasn't clear to me?

44

45 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Is that a
46 question you can answer Jason?

47

48 MR. ROBERTS: I think so. No, that was
49 the question that Ms. Needham asked about non-

50

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1 Federally-qualified users in the proposal area, it
2 wasn't about Angoon residents or Federally-qualified
3 users, that two percent.

4
5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. I just want
6 to remind Council members that let's keep this to
7 questions, I don't want to get into too much discussion
8 on things that we're going to be deliberating on, let's
9 try and focus on questions on the analysis.

10
11 Anyhow, Louie, go ahead.

12
13 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
14 This is not a question, but what was passed previous
15 when Dolly Garza was the Chair and we applied for early
16 hunt on the moose because we couldn't compete with the
17 airplanes, they were flying, hunting and flying the
18 same day, so we were given September 5th until
19 September 10th and this was passed without all this
20 here, and it seems like the last meeting we went
21 through where everything got thrown out and everybody
22 here has been working really hard on everything and
23 just after awhile I think it makes a person start to
24 give up.

25
26 So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I mean those
29 are the kind of comments that we're going to want to
30 hear when we get into deliberation to bring into our
31 discussion. So we do want to focus on questions at
32 this point that the Staff can actually answer so any
33 more questions.

34
35 (No comments)

36
37 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, maybe we're
38 done. Thank you, very much.

39
40 Okay, so that introduced the proposal.

41
42 So now we have other agency comments
43 and that would be the Department of Fish and Game
44 first.

45
46 MR. CHURCHWELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
47 For the record my name is Roy Churchwell, I'm the
48 Regional Management Coordinator for the Southeast
49 Region. I'll start with our position.

50

1 The Alaska Department of Fish and Game
2 opposes this proposal because there are no
3 justifications under the Alaska National Interests
4 Lands Conservation Act for Federal Subsistence Board to
5 approve this closure. If enacted it would
6 unnecessarily deprive non-Federally-qualified users of
7 sustainable deer hunting opportunity contrary to terms
8 in Title VIII of ANILCA.

9
10 The Ninth Circuit Court ruled that
11 under ANILCA the Federal Subsistence Board may regulate
12 subsistence use but it's prohibited from limiting non-
13 subsistence use. A reduction in non-Federally-
14 qualified users opportunity for hunting deer in GMU 4
15 is inconsistent with ANILCA under applicable case law
16 on Federal preemption. As directed by Congress, in
17 Section .802 of ANILCA subsistence use of wildlife
18 shall be the priority consumptive use on Federal lands.
19 When it is necessary to restrict taking in order to
20 assure the continued viability of a fish and wildlife
21 population or continuation of Federal Subsistence Board
22 uses of such population. Section .815 of ANILCA
23 authorizes Federal restrictions on non-subsistence uses
24 on the public lands only if necessary for conservation
25 of healthy populations of fish and wildlife or if
26 necessary to continue subsistence uses.

27
28 Based on the following analysis of the
29 only annually collected objective and quantifiable data
30 available none of these reasons apply.

31
32 There is no conservation concern for
33 the Admiralty Island deer population and no
34 restrictions on non-Federally-qualified user
35 opportunity are needed to continue subsistence use of
36 deer. Several indices indicate deer remain abundant in
37 the area affected by the proposal so there is no need
38 to restrict harvest to conserve the population.

39
40 The stated purpose of the proposal is
41 to establish a meaningful preference for the
42 continuation of subsistence use of deer, however, the
43 proponents provide no substantial evidence in support
44 of claims that the very few non-Federally-qualified
45 users hunting in this area inhibit harvest by
46 Federally-qualified users. The data provided by
47 Federally-qualified users residing in Angoon clearly
48 indicate that the decline in harvest by the community
49 results from declining participation and effort by
50

1 Angoon hunters.

2

3 As laid out in detail below few Angoon
4 residents are participating in deer hunting and those
5 who continue to hunt do so for fewer days each year.

6

7 Despite that, Angoon hunters continue
8 to enjoy some of the most efficient hunting in Alaska.

9

10 In addition, according to reports
11 submitted by Angoon hunters the proposed closure area
12 is of limited importance to them in recent years and
13 has accounted for less than one-quarter of their total
14 reported deer harvest. Angoon residents report that
15 they harvested -- they harvest most of their deer in
16 areas distant from the proposed closure area where they
17 enjoy a high rate of success.

18

19 Further we could find no reference in
20 Title VIII of ANILCA to the term, meaningful
21 preference, nor could we find justification for
22 limiting non-Federally-qualified users hunting based on
23 safety concerns, economics for Federally-qualified
24 users or the potential for altering deer behavior due
25 to poor non-Federally-qualified user markemanship --
26 marksmanship.

27

28 We conclude there is no lawful
29 justification for adopting this proposal and it should
30 be rejected under Section .805(c)(1).

31

32 Finally, we find no justification for
33 limiting non-Federally-qualified users' hunting based
34 on safety concerns, economics for Federally-qualified
35 users, or the potential for altering deer behavior due
36 to poor non-Federally-qualified user marksmanship.
37 Public safety is addressed in .816(b) but only if that
38 -- it refers to the temporary closure of public lands
39 to subsistence uses for reasons of public safety. We
40 believe closing public lands to non-Federally-qualified
41 users while leaving them open to Federally-qualified
42 users for safety purposes related to normal seasonal
43 changes in weather and daylight would be a misuse of
44 .816(b). Further, Angoon hunters reported taking 65
45 percent of their deer outside the proposed closure area
46 which suggests most hunters are not limited by the
47 listed safety or economic concerns, which could also --
48 which we could also find nothing in Title VIII of
49 ANILCA that would tie limiting non-Federally-qualified
50

50

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1 user opportunity to the economic fortunes of Federally-
2 qualified users.

3

4 (Pause)

5

6 MR. CHURCHWELL: Then like the Federal
7 analysis, we have a very lengthy Fish and Game analysis
8 that you guys all have access to so I won't read
9 through that for you guys but I will give just a quick
10 summary of our findings.

11

12 So we present ADF&G's deer abundance
13 survey data and deer hunting effort and harvest data
14 provided to Alaska Department of Fish and Game by GMU 4
15 hunters including Angoon residents. To gage changes in
16 measures of hunting effort and harvest we compared the
17 decade prior to the severe winter of 2006 and 2007 with
18 the decade since, 2013, when the deer population was
19 considered recovered. Those comparisons support the
20 following conclusions:

21

22 Deer remain abundant in the proposal
23 area. Deer pellet group transects, aerial Alpine
24 surveys and late winter mortality surveys all indicate
25 that in GMU 4 and on southern Admiralty Island
26 particular deer occur at among the highest densities in
27 the state. Consequently there is no need to restrict
28 take on non-Federally-qualified users to either
29 conserve the deer population or to ensure continued
30 subsistence use of the deer population. Although the
31 number of non-Federally-qualified users hunting deer in
32 the proposal area has increased slightly over the last
33 25 years that increase is small and offset by the
34 decline in the use of this area by hunters from other
35 Federally-qualified communities. Total hunting
36 pressure in the proposal area is light. It is also
37 likely that some of the non-Federally-qualified hunting
38 in the proposal area have family ties to Angoon and
39 have moved to Juneau for employment or other
40 opportunities but return to hunt with and on behalf of
41 relative and friends in Angoon. The average number of
42 Angoon residents participating in deer hunting each
43 year and the days of hunting effort by those hunters
44 have declined. Between the two comparison periods the
45 average annual number of Angoon residents who obtain
46 deer harvest tickets declined by 20 percent. Reported
47 hunting declined by 23 percent. And the days of
48 hunting effort by Angoon residents declined by 43
49 percent. Since 2000 the U.S. census indicates the

50

0341

1 population of Angoon has declined by nearly 40 percent
2 so declines in the number of hunters hunting of Angoon
3 -- oh, sorry -- so the declines in the number of
4 hunters, hunting effort and number of deer harvested
5 are expected. The days of hunting effort Angoon
6 hunters require to harvest one deer remain very low at
7 1.9 days of hunting per deer harvested. The proposal
8 emphasizes that subsistence hunters need to be
9 efficient, and this is among the most efficient hunting
10 anywhere in Alaska. Reports submitted to ADF&G by
11 Angoon hunters indicate that in the last decade the
12 area affected by this proposal has accounted for only
13 23 percent of the deer they harvest and there are only
14 three records of Angoon hunters harvesting deer in
15 Wildlife Analysis Area 4041. Angoon hunters report
16 that they harvest most, as in 65 percent of their deer
17 outside the proposed closure area including Catherine
18 Island, Northern Baranof Island, Eastern Chichagof
19 Island and Southern Admiralty Island.

20

21 And I'll conclude my comments there.

22

23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
24 Questions from the Council.

25

26 Cal.

27

28 MR. CASIPIT: Just one quick question,
29 you had mentioned a case from the Ninth Circuit, if you
30 could provide the actual case citation, like Alaska v
31 U.S., and there's usually some numbers so that I can
32 look at Lexus-Nexus and actually see what the decision
33 was, review the decision for myself.

34

35 MR. CHURCHWELL: Through the Chair.
36 Member Casipit. I do have that information, it's in
37 Alaska versus Federal Subsistence Board 544F.3d.1089,
38 1100 Ninth Circuit 2008.

39

40 MR. CASIPIT: Thank you.

41

42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.

43

44 Albert.

45

46 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
47 So we just heard that -- and I sent this to the
48 President of the tribe to see if this is, in fact,
49 true, that the State had stated Angoon residents state
50

1 that these areas have no significance to Angoon, those
2 are your words, I don't know if she can read it back to
3 you but that is what you said, so can I see in black
4 and white where Angoon said that, because that's what
5 you said, that the Angoon residents stated that these
6 areas of no significance to us. Now, keep in mind I
7 mentioned earlier that my grandfather had a fort down
8 there (In Tlingit) is my grandfather's name, mine is --
9 in our culture I'm not supposed to introduce myself,
10 I'm supposed to be introduced by an Eagle from the
11 opposite tribe so you're never going to hear me say my
12 name, ever.

13
14 Mr. Chairman, there's also a court case
15 where Organized Village of Kake decided they needed
16 moose and deer for the purposes to feed their
17 community. The State took that to court and lost, is
18 that true or not, because they were allowed to feed
19 their tribal members based on the law as put in front
20 of them, and that's the simplest thing I'm trying to,
21 Mr. Chairman, is to create a safe environment for high
22 school students now who are now going to be a part of
23 your data. We're going to teach them to hunt these
24 areas because by golly I don't want to go look for
25 them. And by preventing us from making this little
26 change, you're creating an environment where these high
27 school students are going to have to go there and
28 compete with other user groups and that could prove to
29 be unsafe. And I can promise you, Mr. Chairman, as
30 I've always mentioned in other meetings, that data from
31 Catherine Island all the way up to Chichagof Island
32 area is being hunted by Angoon, that would be myself
33 and my father and my sons. The reason we do that is we
34 trust our ability to hunt those areas, safely, and we
35 know where to hide out of the weather. This is
36 knowledge I've gained over years and years of doing
37 this with my dad.

38
39 We're not asking for -- I guess another
40 way to look at it, Mr. Chairman, is Angoon's tired of
41 people saying Native's are lazy, they don't want to
42 work, so when we ask for something like this, we don't
43 want to be a burden on the State anymore, we want to be
44 able to provide for our families off the God given
45 resources out in our front yard, that's all we're
46 asking for. And it's amazing to me that it bothers so
47 many people that never came and have a conversation
48 with us, a simple, if you and I sat down and talked
49 maybe you would understand there's nothing in here that
50

0343

1 talks about what Mr. Kitka was talking about, the fact
2 that if somebody goes in and -- I've gone into a bay
3 and hunted before and my son came in after me and he
4 was pretty disappointed in the fact that now there's
5 nothing there and that's just the reality of what we
6 deal with. We've made adjustments to our original
7 proposal. My original proposal started south of Hawk
8 Inlet.

9

10 The gentleman from Gustavus was
11 concerned about Gustavus residents, people moving that
12 way so I moved it closer to Angoon. Juneau residents
13 decided to say well, we usually hunt in this area so
14 then I moved it again closer to Angoon. Now, you heard
15 the gentleman from OSM say this is 24 percent of the
16 island, the southern 24 percent of the island. So, you
17 know, it's interesting to hear this type of -- the fact
18 that Angoon residents think this area is not
19 significant to us, it is.

20

21 The Dog Salmon Clan comes from
22 Whitewater Bay. The Dog Salmon -- Mr. Chairman, the
23 history of the Dog Salmon is because Angoon invited the
24 Dog Salmon Clan to Angoon, every time Angoon went to
25 war guess who went first, the Dog Salmon, to honor the
26 fact that we brought them to Angoon. So they have the
27 history of Whitewater Bay and we brought them to Angoon
28 to be a part of us. The (In Tlingit), that's the Raven
29 Beaver, that's my grandfather's people. The (In
30 Tlingit), the bears were the first there from Sitka.
31 My grandmother has a blanket with Mt. Edgecumbe on it,
32 she's (In Tlingit) that -- the Kaagwaantaan are from
33 Sitka, we respect their boundaries. This is all we're
34 asking is to respect what we know is there and what we
35 know is happening.

36

37 At some point I think, Mr. Chairman, as
38 part of our analysis of what the document we need to
39 create, we need to add traditional ecological knowledge
40 to that because I believe that's why we're around this
41 table, because each of us understands where we live
42 better than someone else. Unfortunately in my lifetime
43 I'm learning more about wolves than I need to but
44 that's part of my responsibility of sitting at the
45 table. So I can fairly decide if, yes, in fact, wolves
46 are having an impact on Area 2 and what can we do about
47 it. I don't throw anything out. I consider
48 everything. And that's all I'm asking, is
49 consideration by the State to consider this. It's two
50

0344

1 weeks. It's not a lifetime and it's on the south end.
2 All the data proves that what's happening is happening
3 because the residents of Angoon see it. I don't expect
4 you to see it, you're probably a busy man, it's a big
5 responsibility having your job so I wouldn't -- I don't
6 exactly expect you to understand what I see and what I
7 see out here everyday.

8

9 I explained to the Council, Mr. Chair,
10 that this is the first summer I spent at home. I had
11 my reasons, my daughter and my son. My son had
12 problems and I used the environment to get him back.
13 You see it probably where you're at. Addiction's a
14 terrible thing. But I found a way to deal with it so
15 it doesn't become a burden on the State. And we're
16 trying to do that here, give us the ability to feed
17 ourselves and we'll be less of a burden on the State of
18 Alaska.

19

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair. I saved up all
21 my time for this, so, thank you.

22

23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
24 Like I say, those are all things that, you know, the
25 Council needs to hear and it really should be a part of
26 our deliberations, which would probably be more
27 effective, you know, to make sure that they get
28 included in deliberations, they may not show up in
29 questioning Staff here.

30

31 So, Patty, question.

32

33 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 Do you know what percentage of hunters from Angoon
35 actually report harvest?

36

37 MR. CHURCHWELL: Through the Chair.
38 Member Phillips. Last -- this last hunting season it
39 was 58 percent reported.

40

41 MS. PHILLIPS: Follow up.

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

44

45 MS. PHILLIPS: So I have one of those
46 lifetime, you know, Fish and Game permits, am I counted
47 every year as having a license in my community or not?

48

49 MR. CHURCHWELL: Through the Chair.

50

0345

1 Member Phillips. I don't know the question. I think,
2 though, that what we counted for participation was the
3 number of folks that got harvest tickets.

4

5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Question, Albert,
6 go ahead.

7

8 MR. HOWARD: It's more for -- or, I
9 guess, the Council around the table, did anyone else
10 get a phone call from Fish and Game to see about your
11 harvest ticket? Because I -- it kind of surprised me,
12 first time in all the years of hunting I got a phone
13 call from Fish and Game. Good afternoon, Mr. Howard,
14 I'm so and so from Fish and Game, we're calling to see
15 where you harvested your deer and how many deer you
16 harvested. And that kind of caught me off guard and
17 I'm finally glad to see that the Facebook analysis was
18 left out of this from the last meeting when the
19 gentleman called in and said he saw I got four, but
20 according to Facebook it didn't say where I got it
21 from. So, anyway, Mr. Chairman, I did get a phone call
22 and asked me for my harvest record.

23

24 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
25 Interesting. Cathy, you have a question.

26

27 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
28 our OSM analysis it pointed out the fact that during
29 the last round of proposals that we put together that
30 the proponents were supposed to try to work together to
31 try to solve this issue and, you know, the Council put
32 this set of proposals together after, you know, a -- we
33 had a working group that did that. But one piece of
34 information, or one thing that they alluded to when
35 they opposed -- when OSM opposed it, was that more
36 information needs to be collected and the Alaska
37 Department of Fish and Game does these household
38 surveys which sometimes provides opportunity for local
39 residents to bring up additional issues just besides
40 what they harvest, what they share, and all of, you
41 know, aside from just the data pieces of it, additional
42 comments and stuff, and the household harvest surveys
43 for Angoon in the citation from OSM were from probably
44 2011 because the report came out in 2012, does the
45 Department have any plans in the near future to do
46 household harvest surveys in Angoon in the next year or
47 so to shed additional information. We are getting
48 additional information from Hoonah Indian Association
49 but not for Angoon so I'm wondering if the Department
50

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1 is planning on doing any of that additional social
2 science data collection?

3

4 MS. SILL: For the record my name is
5 Lauren Sill. I am with the Division of Subsistence
6 with Fish and Game. Through the Chair. Ms. Needham.
7 We do not have any plans to do any surveys in Angoon.
8 I'll talk about it tomorrow, but we have plans to do
9 surveys in Pelican and Gustavus. But not for Angoon.
10 Our ability to do surveys in communities relies both
11 upon community interest in doing the surveys and
12 funding so.

13

14 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As
15 a follow up. Do you know from the last time the
16 surveys were done whether or not competition was cited
17 or addressed by residents of Angoon? It seems like in
18 our previous analysis we saw that for Hoonah but I
19 don't remember if we ever saw that for the community of
20 Angoon.

21

22 MS. SILL: Through the Mr. Chair. Ms.
23 Needham. That's a good question and I don't know it
24 off the top of my head. I don't want to say yes or no
25 because I'm not positive but I could look and get back
26 to you later on.

27

28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, any other
29 questions for Fish and Game Staff.

30

31 (No comments)

32

33 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, very good.
34 Thank you both. Let's see, any other Federal agencies
35 want to weigh in on this DeAnna.

36

37 MS. PERRY: Not to my knowledge.

38

39 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: No. What?

40

41 (Pause)

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, in regards
44 to other Federal agencies. Cathy Needham has a
45 question for one of the Federal agencies that's here in
46 the room, I believe. Maybe she -- I don't know if they
47 made any comments on this but she might want to ask a
48 question and we'll see what she has to ask, go ahead,
49 Cathy.

50

0347

1 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 I'd like to ask the question of the Bureau of Indian
3 Affairs, if they're willing, because this was part of
4 OSM's analysis regarding the last round of proposals
5 and BIA had dissented on the Board's decision to oppose
6 the proposals and it goes back to the question
7 regarding threshold, of like continuing subsistence
8 uses. The -- you know, to restrict non-Federally-
9 qualified users in ANILCA it seems to be about two
10 things, whether or not there's a conservation concern
11 or whether or not there's not a continuation for
12 subsistence uses and I wanted to ask the Bureau of
13 Indian Affairs what their -- when they dissented, if
14 there was a threshold they used or if there's any kind
15 of guideline that they could provide for what that
16 might be. If they're willing to answer the question.

17
18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. I see Glenn
19 Chen has come to the table, maybe he's willing to
20 answer that question.

21
22 Glenn.

23
24 MR. CHEN: Mr. Chair. Ms. Needham. So
25 I was the BIA Board member at that particular meeting
26 that you referenced. And our agency felt that there
27 was sufficient oral testimony that we heard, not only
28 during the Board meeting but during the Council meeting
29 about the difficulties that people had with obtaining
30 deer in Unit 4, particularly the residents of Angoon.
31 And we didn't really have a threshold that we used but
32 the preponderance of oral testimony provided through
33 all these different menus convinced us that there was
34 an issue with folks being able to harvest enough deer
35 and this is why we dissented with the rest of the Board
36 with regards to our vote.

37
38 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Does that satisfy
39 your question, Cathy?

40
41 MS. NEEDHAM: Yes.

42
43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, very good.
44 Thank you, Glenn.

45
46 So there was our comment from another
47 Federal agency. How about tribal groups, any comments
48 from tribal groups on this proposal. DeAnna?

49
50

0348

1 MS. PERRY: Not that I'm aware of.

2

3 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Advisory
4 Committees, I believe there was Advisory Committees
5 that commented on this, am I correct?

6

7 MS. PERRY: I believe Dr. Roberts is
8 going to fill us in on that.

9

10 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, Mr. Roberts.

11

12 MR. ROBERTS: Advisory Committees?

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Advisory
15 Committees.

16

17 MR. ROBERTS: I don't have that, I have
18 written public comments.

19

20 (Laughter)

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, okay. I
23 think one of the written public comments was from an
24 advisory groups but I'm not -- you can clarify that.
25 Let's see other Regional Councils.

26

27 MS. PERRY: No other Regional Councils
28 weighed in.

29

30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Subsistence
31 Resource Commissions.

32

33 MS. PERRY: No.

34

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: No. Okay.
36 Summary of written public comments.

37

38 Mr. Roberts.

39

40 MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chair. Members of
41 the Board. This is Jason Roberts at OSM again. We
42 received a total of 37 written public comments on this
43 proposal. Some of which we've been receiving, you
44 know, as the course of this day has gone on.

45

46 We received one in support. The
47 commenter in support noted that subsistence hunting and
48 fishing are subject to disproportionate levels of
49 regulation and scrutiny. The commenter thought that

50

0349

1 this proposal was an innovative way to not only support
2 but to prioritize subsistence users household needs and
3 invest in local food security.

4

5 The 36 in opposition. This is a
6 summary.

7

8 The commenters noted that ADF&G data
9 shows that there are no conservation concerns regarding
10 deer populations in the area and the level of
11 competition for deer in the area does not warrant a
12 closure. Some noted that the primary issue impacting
13 deer hunting recently has been the impact of warmer
14 winter weather that has not produced as much snow and
15 this lack of snow means that deer are not being pushed
16 down to the beaches. They also state that this
17 proposal would restrict the rights of long-term
18 seasonal residents and others with local ties to the
19 area to hunt deer.

20

21 The commenters also note that the
22 proposal does not consider the impact of other
23 Federally-qualified subsistence users coming into the
24 area to hunt deer.

25

26 And that's the summary of those
27 comments.

28

29 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you
30 for that. Now it's an opportunity for more public
31 testimony. Is there anybody in the room that wanted to
32 testify. I don't see anybody -- I have one blue card
33 here but I think it's for somebody that's on the
34 telephone.

35

36 (No comments)

37

38 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, so we do
39 have people on the telephone who want to give
40 testimony. I'll go first to Mark Richards, he was the
41 person who called in this morning and said that he
42 could be available during the designated time for
43 public comments on agenda items so Mr. Richards, are
44 you available?

45

46 MS. PERRY: And, Mr. Richards, just a
47 reminder, if you're trying to speak, press star, six to
48 open your line.

49

50

0350

1 (No comments)

2

3

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: He may be having
4 dinner. We'll stand by for Mr. Richards if he heard
5 our request. But we do have other callers, DeAnna, go
6 ahead.

7

8

MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair. The caller
9 whose number ends in 3-2, go ahead and press star, six
10 to unmute your line. Currently you are muted. If
11 you'll press star, six and begin your comment.

12

13

Thank you.

14

15

MR. ORR: Okay. My name is Nicholas
16 Orr, do you want me to spell it again?

17

18

REPORTER: No, you're good.

19

20

MS. PERRY: We have you on record, go
21 ahead, Mr. Orr.

22

23

MR. ORR: All right. Well, I've got a
24 couple of issues with the proposal just in the sense
25 that it's asking for closures in areas that Fish and
26 Game has noted to have low utilization by Angoon
27 hunters, and if you look at the numbers in Fish and
28 Game's proposal there's only about an average since --
29 and over the last 10 years there's only about 21
30 hunters that have reported hunting in the proposal area
31 and only 29 that -- that's from Angoon, and only 29
32 non-Federally-qualified users, and so I think that if
33 you guys passed this, the main people that are going to
34 get hit are people that live in Juneau or other places
35 and they're from Angoon. Because there's not a lot of
36 people from Juneau that are making it over to that
37 area. As you've noted in the two percent. And as
38 Albert Howard has noted like, you just don't see those
39 people from Juneau because it's so far. So that was
40 one of my issues.

41

42

And then I really think there's a way,
43 like when we talk about the continuation -- because we
44 know that there's no conservation concern here. I
45 think that was established at your last meeting. You
46 guys noted that. And at this meeting I think for you
47 to pass this proposal you need to focus on the
48 continuation of subsistence uses, and I think the best
49 way to kind of measure that is the hunter ethicacy, so
50

0351

1 the days that it takes to harvest a deer and, you know,
2 Fish and Game's figure shows it's 2.4 and it's like
3 third in the state, it's the third best number in the
4 state, 2.4 days to harvest a deer after Hoonah and
5 Pelican which is the other two proposals. So it's kind
6 of hard to make a case for continuation of subsistence
7 uses when you're that successful.

8

9 And I guess my last point, given the
10 impact that the closure would have on non-Federally-
11 qualified users, I mean it's right during the middle of
12 the rut, this proposal would effectively be -- is a
13 repeat of the proposal that was sent back to the RAC by
14 the FSB for reconsideration in 2022 and then
15 overwhelming denied in 2023. So I would urge you to
16 not pass this proposal.

17

18 So thanks.

19

20 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Any
21 questions.

22

23 Albert, you have a question. If you're
24 willing to answer questions we do have one from the
25 Council.

26

27 MR. ORR: Was that a question?

28

29 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, one question
30 from Council Member Howard. Go ahead, Albert.

31

32 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, we heard
33 from OSM that there was no local support for this and
34 yet we're hearing over and over again that people from
35 Angoon moved to Juneau and, Mr. Chairman, I know every
36 single one of them that moved to Juneau and I don't see
37 their name on any of the documents opposing what we're
38 trying to accomplish in Angoon and I have had
39 conversations with them about it. I've even had a
40 conversation with the gentleman that thought it
41 affected him because he was non-Native and I explained
42 to him that, no, that you're qualified because you're a
43 resident. So we're sitting here considering stuff that
44 isn't in black and white and we're hearing comments
45 about residents that moved to Juneau without any
46 comments in black and white from them. Under the same
47 standard we're saying that there's no comments from
48 anyone in Angoon other than Mr. Howard, me, but I'm not
49 hearing anything or seeing anything in black and white

50

0352

1 from the Juneau residents that are being mentioned. So
2 we need to decide does that hold water or does it hold
3 the same -- do we hold the same standard that OSM's
4 holding us to that there's no other organization
5 talking about this except Albert Howard.

6
7 So it's something to think about.

8
9 I know every individual that lives in
10 Juneau, my daughter being one of them, and she knows
11 she doesn't qualify so she won't be hunting in
12 November, Mr. Chair.

13
14 Thank you.

15
16 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
17 I don't believe I heard a question there but commenting
18 on the testimony, I think.

19
20 MR. HOWARD: You just gave me two more
21 minutes. So the question is, can I get the names of
22 the people mentioned that were residents of Angoon and
23 can you please email me something in black and white
24 that says they oppose this?

25
26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert.
29 Any response to that?

30
31 MR. ORR: Through the Chair. I don't
32 know all of the members who previously lived in Angoon
33 that may go back there, I'm just suggesting that the
34 difficulty in accessing that area and the distance from
35 Juneau suggests that the people who have moved from
36 Angoon or that area to Juneau, or other areas of the
37 state. That's all I'm suggesting, and it does kind of
38 pass the common sense test. But, no, I'm not going to
39 give you a list of people because I don't know
40 everybody so don't wait up for it.

41
42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you
43 for responding. I think we can move on to the next
44 caller. DeAnna.

45
46 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair. The next
47 caller that we received a hand up on our end ends in 4-
48 2-3-7. It looks like you're already unmuted so caller
49 who's number ends in 4-2-3-7, please go forward with
50

0353

1 your comment.

2

3

4 MR. BEASON: Yes, thank you. This is
5 Ryan Beason with the Territorial Sportsmen. I guess
6 we're on record opposing this proposal and all three
7 deer proposals. I think the best comment for these
8 proposals, it's kind of disheartening to see these
9 proposals up again after they were rejected, or very
10 similar proposals were rejected earlier this year.
11 I've talked to many people I know and they've continued
12 to ask what is the problem, and if you look at the data
13 it's just there's less people hunting, less people
14 hunting means there's going to be less deer taken. And
15 I think what we should be doing is what Mr. Howard
16 already mentioned, is work together and get the next
17 generation to hunt, get them out there, get them off
18 the couch, off social media, off the computer and get
19 them to hunt so they can provide for their family and
20 for their elders, but at the same time we shouldn't be
21 putting down another group of hunters when there's
22 plenty of deer out there. My family's going to be
23 negatively affected by this proposal so I will no
24 longer be able to hunt during the time that we've
25 hunted for years and years.

25

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Like I said, let's work together, let's
try not to put each other down, let's not make enemies
out of each other, let's figure out a way to do this
while working together and seeing what we can do.
Let's say in five years from now we do have another
2006/2007 winter, when there was huge winter kill then,
yes, at that point let's do something, there may be
some restrictions for non-Federally-qualified users,
but right now the deer population is the best its ever
been, at least in my lifetime, in the last 35 years.

And, again, the one thing I will ask of
this Council is how are these proposals different than
what the Federal Subsistence Board overwhelmingly
rejected. There has to be something different here
which there is not. I ask you, the Council members, to
look at the facts in front of you and base off of that,
don't vote based on some other people's input on the
Council, vote on what is in front of you, that's what
you are asked to do.

I thank you for your time, I appreciate
it and if there's any questions I'll do my best to
answer those.

0354

1 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Any
2 questions for Ryan.

3
4 (No comments)

5
6 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Ryan, did you also
7 submit written comments to us?

8
9 MR. BEASON: There's comments from
10 Territorial Sportsmen, I believe, that should be in
11 there. I'm not 100 percent sure if they are but they
12 should be in there.

13
14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, I believe I
15 saw them so, yeah, that might provide some more detail
16 to your comments so thank you very much.

17
18 Another caller, DeAnna.

19
20 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair. We have a
21 caller whose number ends in 4-9-0-6. If you are a
22 caller whose number ends in 4-9-0-6 press star, six and
23 that should open your line. If you've pressed the mute
24 button on your phone you may have to do it twice, but,
25 again, star, six and it looks like you are now unmuted
26 so please go ahead with your comment.

27
28 MR. DECKER: Yeah, my name is Zach
29 Decker. I'm from Juneau and I am not only a resident
30 that owns land in this affected area around Angoon, I
31 also have a cabin there, but I'm also the -- one of the
32 registered guide outfitters that provide commercial
33 hunting in the area. I'd like to clarify a couple of
34 things that were mentioned earlier.

35
36 In 2018 the Forest Service did a
37 Shoreline 2 EIS Record of Decision and during that time
38 the Angoon community proposed a letter indicating they
39 wanted closure on the entire Admiralty Island to
40 commercial hunting. The Forest Service restricted that
41 to the area referred to as 0406, which is around this
42 affected area around Angoon. We, as a company, lost
43 our ability to provided deer hunts in that area. I
44 believe that there could be one or two that have a few
45 commercial hunts that they still participate in but for
46 the most part as far as the commercial guiding side is
47 pretty limited. We do provide bear hunting and that in
48 the region. Kind of interesting to listen to the
49 comments on the proposals that have come forth, it was
50

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1 interesting to hear that 15 to 20 percent of bear
2 harvest of the harvest is -- predation from brown bear,
3 a little bit different data that what we've heard from
4 Fish and Game in the past. But that does lead to the
5 fact that, you know, this area up around Angoon has
6 basically a bear sanctuary in the north shores of
7 Mitchell Bay and that complex and furthermore -- and
8 the other areas, up around Chichagof, Pelican,
9 Northeast Chich, those -- those are some ideas of some
10 proposals of coming together and thinking -- and asking
11 the question, have we done all we could. The annual
12 harvest of brown bear across Unit 4 is down between 40
13 to 50 bears before the -- 40 to 50 bears below the
14 harvest objective and so, you know, there are some
15 proposals that the members of this community that could
16 propose, you know, the Mitchell Bay area, is one of the
17 only few areas in the state that has a State
18 restriction on any type of hunting and, you know, it
19 doesn't have to be guided or unguided or whatever, but
20 these things do -- can affect the deer population for
21 that community. And I'd just like to bring those
22 things -- those ideas forward.

23

24 And I'd be happy to answer any
25 questions if you have any regarding the commercial
26 activity as far as guiding in the area, you know, we --
27 like I said, we have a small cabin in Hood Bay and, you
28 know, it's not our intent to really use it at all for
29 deer hunting, we do other activities around, but thank
30 you for the time and letting me speak.

31

32 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
33 Are there any questions.

34

35 MR. HOWARD: I didn't hear if he
36 supported this or not.

37

38 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Do you want to ask
39 the question.

40

41 MR. HOWARD: Sure.

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Albert.

44

45 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
46 guess there's three or four questions here. The first
47 one being, I don't understand if you support the
48 proposal or not, that would be one.

49

50

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1 MR. DECKER: I don't in the fact that
2 there's no biological concern for the deer population.
3 And so for that reason if we're talking about -- you
4 know, we'd all love our own -- you know as hunters we'd
5 all love our own little private retreat to hunt but
6 there's no biological concern for the population and if
7 there was I would be toe to toe with you, arm and arm,
8 to supporting a priority to Angoon or these other
9 communities, but currently there's not.

10

11 MR. HOWARD: Okay. So, Mr. Chairman,
12 you do understanding being within the city limits of
13 Angoon, you are considered a Federally-qualified
14 subsistence user if you're a resident within a certain
15 amount of time -- I know you just bought property and
16 you own property everywhere else, and.....

17

18 MS. PERRY: Mr. Howard.

19

20 MR. HOWARD: Okay, anyway, Mr.
21 Chairman. We're hearing from a gentleman that makes a
22 living off the environment, that's totally different
23 than my take on this at all and, DeAnna's making sure
24 I'm walking the line, and the line's hard to walk when
25 I know the gentleman's resources and what he has
26 compared to your every day subsistence user.

27

28 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I know,
31 let's try not to get into people's personal histories
32 here. So thank you.

33

34 We have one more caller on the line.

35

36 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair, and just
37 for anyone who may have just joined us if you would
38 like to make a public comment you'll need to press
39 star, five on your phone so that our system can pick up
40 that you'd like to make a comment. Currently our last
41 commenter that I see your phone number ends in 7-4-3-6
42 and I see you have unmuted yourself so please go
43 forward with your comment.

44

45 MR. RICHARDS: Thanks. Hello, Mr.
46 Chairman, can you hear me?

47

48 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, we can.

49

50

1 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you. For the
2 record, my name is Mark Richards and I'm representing
3 Resident Hunters of Alaska, a statewide organization of
4 about 3,500 Alaskan hunters. While we have members
5 from Utqiagvik to Craig and Holy Cross to Eagle and
6 other rural communities our membership is primarily
7 composes of non-Federally-qualified Alaskan hunters.

8
9 I'm speaking today for our organization
10 in opposition to Wildlife Proposals 24-04 and also 24-
11 05 and 24-06 to close deer hunting to non-Federally-
12 qualified users from November 1st to the 15th on
13 portions of the ABC Islands in Unit 4. Respectfully,
14 we don't see any real evidence that subsistence needs
15 aren't being met. If we did we'd sincerely have a
16 different opinion. We don't see any real safety issues
17 either. What this really seems to be about is
18 competition between local and non-local hunters for an
19 abundant wildlife resource. As we told the Federal
20 Subsistence Board last year when similar proposals were
21 before them, competition alone is not a valid reason
22 under Title VIII of ANILCA to restrict non-Federally-
23 qualified hunters from participating in a hunt. The
24 one aspect of the Federal Subsistence Board process
25 that is so offensive to our organization is that we,
26 Resident Hunters of Alaska, are considered just the
27 same as a hunter from Idaho or Europe. Under ANILCA
28 guidelines the Federal Subsistence Board cannot
29 differentiate between a non-Federally-qualified Alaskan
30 hunter and an out of state or country hunter. To that
31 Board anyone who isn't a Federally-qualified
32 subsistence hunter whether they live in Juneau or
33 Timbuktu are the same, this is a big Catch 22 for this
34 Council as these proposals will also eliminate hunting
35 opportunities for those with ties to the communities
36 who now represent -- for whatever reason have moved to
37 Juneau or elsewhere. I don't know if we'll ever bridge
38 the rural/urban divide that continues to separate us
39 and bring us apart and that sincerely makes it doubly
40 hard for me, and our organization to oppose these
41 proposals coming from our fellow Alaska hunters in
42 rural areas. Our members hunt to put food on the table
43 too. It is a way of life for us to well.

44
45 To close, I think we can all agree that
46 the most important thing is the resource. Our
47 organization focuses on the sustainability of our
48 wildlife resources and the future hunting opportunities
49 for all Alaskans. We also highlight the harm the
50

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1 commercial hunting industry is doing to our wildlife
2 resources and our hunting opportunities and how money
3 and greed are unduly dominating decisions.

4
5 Thank you for the opportunity to
6 comment, agree or disagree. I sincerely want to thank
7 you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Council for your
8 service on the Council and efforts to protect your way
9 of life and the wildlife resources we all care so much
10 about.

11

12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
13 Richards. Are there any questions. Albert, you have a
14 question -- if you're willing to answer a question.

15

16 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman. I'm
17 wondering where that idea that Alaska Resident Hunters
18 are the same as -- I don't know where Timbuktu is so
19 I'm going to use Wisconsin because that's where my
20 brother's at. Because my brother comes up here and he
21 wants to hunt, he's no longer a resident of Alaska, his
22 hunting tags are expensive, his fishing license, he can
23 get a fishing license for one week because he's no
24 longer a resident of Alaska. So while you're over
25 there celebrating, this gentleman, you've got to listen
26 to what he's saying. He's saying that the gentleman in
27 Timbuktu has the same rights as he does and when you
28 read ANILCA, not for your own personal benefit, but you
29 read the intent of it, it says otherwise.

30

31 So, sir, my brother lives in Wisconsin,
32 he's got to buy a real expensive license to do what I
33 do every day and he's jealous of it and it bothers him
34 to no end but I didn't tell him to move to Wisconsin
35 and he won't even consider hunting because that license
36 is out of the park, so you're talking apples and
37 oranges and you know wherever Timbuktu is should have
38 never been part of this equation.

39

40 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41

42 MR. RICHARDS: If I could just respond
43 to that.

44

45 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

46

47 MR. RICHARDS: Yeah, all I was alluding
48 to is the frustration we have that someone who lives
49 out of state or in another country is considered the
50

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1 same as an Alaska resident under the Federal
2 Subsistence Board guidelines.

3

4 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, okay.....

5

6 MR. RICHARDS: We don't think it's
7 right. That should have never happened, where somebody
8 that doesn't live here -- a hunter that doesn't live
9 here is considered the same under ANILCA as a hunter
10 that does live here.

11

12 Thank you.

13

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, I mean you
15 are correct, we don't differentiate between non-
16 resident hunters and Alaska residents who are non-
17 qualified hunters, they're dealt with the same.

18

19 MR. RICHARDS: Yeah.

20

21 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: If there's a
22 restriction on non-subsistence use it applies to --
23 yeah, equally to non-residents as Alaska residents who
24 are not qualified so you are correct in that and that's
25 the way Title VIII of ANILCA reads and so until
26 somebody changes that that's the rules we follow. We
27 follow the law.

28

29 MR. RICHARDS: And that's the Catch 22
30 that this Council has with these proposals is that you
31 are eliminating people with ties to the community who,
32 for whatever reason, have moved elsewhere.

33

34 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yes, I'll agree
35 that is a consideration and thank you for bringing that
36 forward. Something we -- something we can consider in
37 our deliberations.

38

39 MR. RICHARDS: Thank you.

40

41 MS. PERRY: No more.

42

43 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: No more, okay,
44 thank you to all of the people who have been standing
45 by on the telephone to this late hour, we do appreciate
46 your comments. They're very helpful. And let's see
47 that concludes all of the actions up to the point where
48 the Council makes a motion and then we deliberate,
49 which I think we're going to have to hold off on given
50

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1 the late hour here. I think there's going to be a lot
2 of deliberations on this. I think it would be
3 beneficial if we maybe slept on it tonight, a little
4 more opportunity to go over some of the analysis which
5 have been extensive. I think a lot of the analysis
6 will be common to maybe all three proposals we're going
7 to deal with so I think it's a good opportunity to
8 review and come back tomorrow morning and get right
9 into deliberations with fresh minds.

10

11 Just a quick question, I don't know if
12 the working group who's going to work on the
13 aquaculture questions.....

14

15 REPORTER: I can't hear. I can't hear
16 you.

17

18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Gavel.

19

20 REPORTER: We're still in session.

21

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: If the audience
23 could just hold it down here for a second, I got a
24 couple questions for Council members. Is the
25 aquaculture work group, do they have a time scheduled
26 to have a discussion, have you gotten together on that
27 Bob.

28

29 MR. SCHROEDER: I think we could
30 probably do that at the hotel after we eat and I think
31 that that's going to be a really short meeting and
32 it'll be a short fun meeting, everybody will put on
33 their happy face.

34

35 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Because
36 tomorrow is the last day of the meeting.

37

38 MR. SCHROEDER: Let's see what we can
39 do tonight, it would probably be in an hour or so, an
40 hour and a half.

41

42 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah. We want to
43 conclude that topic tomorrow.

44

45 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes.

46

47 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: So that'll be good
48 if you could do that. We also have a request for a
49 group Council photo, I don't know if anybody feels up
50

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1 to that this evening, or not -- I guess our
2 photographer will not be here tomorrow so if Council
3 members can hang here for a little while. Also
4 reminder that Council members should be prepared to
5 settle up for the lunches that we've been provided, we
6 have to pay for those before we leave tomorrow so keep
7 that in mind. Any other housekeeping.

8

9 MS. PERRY: I think that's it.

10

11 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay, that's it
12 for the housekeeping announcements. If you could stick
13 around for a picture that would be great. Thank you,
14 very much. Recess until tomorrow morning at 8:30.

15

16 (Off record)

17

18 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

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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:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered ___ through ___ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SOUTHEAST FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME II taken electronically on the 25th day of October;

THAT the transcript is a true and correct transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and ability;

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

DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 3rd day of December 2023.

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