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SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

TED FERRY CIVIC CENTER
Ketchikan, Alaska
October 22, 2024

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donald Hernandez, Chair
Cathy Needham
John Smith III
Patricia Phillips
Albert Howard
James Slater
Theodore Sandhofer
Frank Wright
Harvey Kitka
Larry Bemis
Calvin Casipit
Michael Douville
Louie Wagner

Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry

Recorded and transcribed by:

Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp
787-239-0462
Info.@lighthouseonline.com

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Ketchikan, Alaska - 10/22/24)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Good morning, everybody. We can call our meeting to order here very shortly. As is custom at the beginning of our meetings if anybody would like to give an invocation, we will allow that. I'm looking over Orville Lind over there. You've done it in the past. Did you did you want to give an invocation this morning? Yes.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we all stand, please. Heavenly father, Lord, we just come to you and give you all the praise and glory, father, that you would just bless us, father, with your wisdom and knowledge to go through the days we have here with you, father, and to honor and respect each other, father, to work together to figure all these issues we have before us. Father, God bless each and every one of us to talk honestly and respectfully to each other. Make this meeting glorious, father, that we may learn from each other and bless each and every one of them. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

IN UNISON: Amen.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Orville. And now I think we have just about our whole Council here. Maybe one person has yet to show up coming in on a flight this morning. So, we can start. I will now call the meeting to order, and we'll establish a quorum with a roll call. Let's see our Secretary, Frank is not here yet. I know he's with us, but. DeAnna, do you have the roll there?

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Larry Bemis.

MR. BEMIS: Here.

MS. PERRY: Cal Casipit.

MR. CASIPIT: Here.

MS. PERRY: Michael Douville.

MR: DOUVILLE: Here.

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MS. PERRY: Ted Sandhofer.

MR. SANDHOFER: Here.

MS. PERRY: Albert Howard.

MR. HOWARD: Here.

MS. PERRY: Patricia Phillips.

MS. PHILLIPS: Here.

MS. PERRY: Louie Wagner.

MR. WAGNER: Here.

MS. PERRY: Harvey Kitka.

MR. KITKA: Here.

MS. PERRY: John Smith.

MR. SMITH: Here.

MS. PERRY: Cathy Needham.

MS. NEEDHAM: Here.

MS. PERRY: Frank Wright.

(No response)

And Jim Slater.

MR. SLATER: Here.

MS. PERRY: And Don Hernandez.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Here.

MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You have 12 of your seated 13 Council members, you have a quorum.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, DeAnna. Do you have some announcements for us here before we move on?

1 MS. PERRY: I do, Mr. Chair. For the
2 record, my name is DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator for
3 the Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory
4 Council. This is a fisheries regulatory meeting, and we
5 do have a packed agenda for the Council. So, I have
6 quite a few housekeeping announcements to go over. For
7 those joining us on phone or by Microsoft Teams, you can
8 find the agenda and meeting materials online. That's at
9 the Federal Subsistence Program website. And the
10 internet address is www.doi.gov/subsistence. Under the
11 Regions tab, choose Southeast and then Meeting
12 Materials. For those attending our meeting in person,
13 please make sure that you sign in at the front table.
14 As you came in this first set of double doors, it would
15 be to your right, right there on the corner of the table,
16 and we'd ask for you to sign in every day that you're
17 present. If folks in the room would like to address the
18 Council during the meeting, please fill out a blue
19 testifier form. It's a half sheet, and it's also on the
20 intake table next to the door. That helps us keep track
21 of anyone who'd like to speak. And also, if you could
22 indicate if your testimony is for a specific agenda item,
23 we can call on you at the appropriate time. The Chair
24 will announce the time for tribal and public comments
25 on non-agenda items each morning. That will be an
26 opportunity for those present, as well as those
27 participating on the phone to speak on non-agenda items.
28 We would ask you to hold any comments on proposals or
29 agenda items until such time as they come before the
30 Council so that the Council can hear all pertinent
31 information when they're working on that item. For those
32 folks on the phone or on Teams we'll provide further
33 instruction later on how to speak during public comment
34 opportunities. We would appreciate everyone's attention
35 to the mute feature on the phone and on Teams so, that
36 we can mitigate distractions in the meeting and be able
37 to capture a clear record of our proceedings. For this
38 regulatory meeting, if you would like to provide a
39 comment on a particular proposal, you can speak during
40 the proposal process or you may consider submitting a
41 written comment instead. You can do that by emailing
42 your comment to subsistence@doi.gov -- that's
43 subsistence@ios.doi.gov. Those will be sent to myself
44 and staff and will be shared with the Council.

45
46 A reminder to folks in the room who
47 might have not attended a meeting before. Our meetings
48 are conducted by Robert's Rules. It helps us provide
49 structure and maintain order throughout the meeting.
50 Because of our very full agenda, we'd like everyone to

1 be respectful of the Council's responsibility for
2 managing their time to cover all the action items that
3 we have, and those are marked on the agenda with an
4 asterisk. And copies of the agenda as well as meeting
5 books are on the intake table again, just as you come
6 in the front door. One last thing, I'd like to bring
7 folks attention that we are capturing a recording of
8 this meeting a little bit differently than we have in
9 the past. The previous court reporters for our program,
10 who probably knew everybody by name and voice will no
11 longer be covering our meetings. So, it will be extremely
12 important for everyone to identify themselves each time
13 they speak. We are welcoming Jonathan Butzke with
14 Talking Circle Media to serve as a recorder. He'll then
15 hand off his recording to a transcription service, and
16 they won't have the benefit of putting voices to faces
17 and name plates. So, if we could remember to identify
18 ourselves when we speak, that would be great. Before we
19 begin, Mr. Chair. And for those in the room, we would
20 ask you to take a moment to look at your cell phones and
21 silent any ringers, and with that, Mr. Chair, thank you
22 for letting me take care of those housekeeping items.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
25 DeAnna. And just let the record show that Frank Wright
26 is now present. So, we have a full Council all present
27 for this meeting so, that's good. So, let's start off
28 with some introductions, and I'll just ask that for the
29 record, go around briefly, and each Council member can
30 introduce themselves and say where they're from. I'll
31 start over there with Larry Bemis.

32
33 MR. BEMIS: Larry Bemis from Yakutat.
34 Thank you.

35
36 MR. SANDHOFER: Good morning. This is Ted
37 Sandhofer from Petersburg.

38
39 MR. DOUVILLE: Good morning. Mike
40 Douville from Craig.

41
42 MR. SLATER: Good morning, Jim Slater
43 from Pelican.

44
45 MR. HOWARD: Good morning. Albert Howard
46 from Angoon.

47
48 MR. PHILLIPS: Good morning. Patricia
49 Phillips, Pelican.

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1 MR. KITKA: Good morning. Harvey Kitka
2 from Sitka, Alaska.

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4 MR. WRIGHT: Good morning. Frank Wright
5 from Hoonah.

6
7 MS. NEEDHAM: Good morning. Cathy Needham
8 from Juneau.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Don Hernandez
11 from Point Baker.

12
13 MR. WAGNER: Louie Wagner, Metlakatla.

14
15 MR. SMITH: John Smith III, Juneau,
16 Alaska.

17
18 MR. CASIPIT: Calvin Casipit. I'm from
19 Gustavus.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
22 Council members. And we do have a number of staff people
23 that are meeting that assist us. Maybe we could have the
24 staff just introduce themselves. And maybe we'll start
25 with you. Orville.

26
27 MR. LIND: Good morning, Chair, Council
28 members. Orville Lind, Native liaison for the Office of
29 Subsistence Management. It's good to see everyone here.

30
31 MR. AYERS: Mr. Chair, members of the
32 Council, Scott Ayers. I'm the Fisheries Division
33 supervisor at the Office of Subsistence Management. And
34 I'll be the LT Lead for this meeting. I hope we have a
35 great and productive meeting, and I'm looking forward
36 to all the great discussions. Thank you.

37
38 DR. VICKERS: Good morning. Great to see
39 everyone here. This is Brent Vickers, the anthropology
40 division supervisor for Office of Subsistence
41 Management. And I'm greatly looking forward to this
42 meeting. So, glad to see everyone here. Thank you.

43
44 MS. WESSELS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
45 members of the Council. Katya Wessels, acting Deputy
46 Director for OSM. It's wonderful to see all of you here.

47
48 DR. ROBERTS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
49 members of the Council. My name is Jason Roberts,
50 anthropologist with OSM. I'm happy to be here.

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MS. MORROW: Good morning, Mr. Chair, members of the Council. My name is Kristen Morrow, I'm an anthropology pathways intern with OSM.

MR. CROSS: Good morning. My name is Robert Cross. I'm with the Forest Service and I'm the Tongass Subsistence Program manager.

MR. MUSSELWHITE: Morning. I'm Jake Musselwhite, North Zone subsistence biologist for Tongass.

MS. BOLWERK: Good morning, everybody, Ashley Bolwerk. I'm the South Zone subsistence biologist with the Tongass.

MS. RAMOS: Good morning, everyone. My name is Kim Ramos and I'm an admin assistant for the Forest Service and DeAnna's helper. Thanks.

MR. CHEN: Hello, Council members. My name is Glenn Chen. I'm the Subsistence Branch Chief for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Always a pleasure to attend meetings.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you all. Is there anybody on the telephone lines that would like to introduce themselves? Staff.

MS. LEONETTI: Good morning, Mr. Chair.

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. RISDAHL: Good morning, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, I hear.....

MR. RISDAHL: Please, go ahead.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Two people, so.

MS. LEONETTI: Sure. I'll start. This is Crystal Leonetti. I am the acting director for the Office of Subsistence Management. I am Yup'ik and I live in Anchorage. And my normal position is Alaska Native Affairs Specialist for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. But I've been in this role for the last five months, and I'm looking forward to fulfilling it until the end of

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1 November. Glad to be here, Mr. Chair, and looking forward
2 to a good meeting. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
5 Crystal and somebody else.

6

7 MR. RISDAHL: Yeah. Hi, Don, this is Greg
8 Risdahl. Welcome to you and the Council, I'm happy to
9 be online. I'm sorry, I could not be there. Some family
10 things have kept me back here in town, but I will be
11 here for the entire meeting, and I'm looking forward to
12 it. Thank you very much.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
15 Greg. Anybody else?

16

17 MS. DAY: Good morning mister -- yeah.
18 Good morning, Mr. Chair and everyone at the meeting. My
19 name is Janel Day, and I'm the cartographer for Office
20 of Subsistence Management, and I wish I could be there
21 in person. Unfortunately, I will be attending remotely,
22 and I'm looking forward to the discussions and
23 conversations that happen this week. Thank you.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
26 Anybody else?

27

28 (No response)

29

30 Okay. I think we've covered it. Is
31 there.....

32

33 MR. WERWA: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Can
34 you hear me?

35

36 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, go ahead.

37

38 MR. WERWA: Hi, my name is Erick Werwa.
39 I'm deputy assistant Secretary for Policy and
40 Environmental Management within the Office of the Policy
41 -- the Office of Policy, Management and Budget in Office
42 of the Secretary Interior, and you'll hear more about
43 this later in the meeting. But I am the new supervisor
44 for the director of the Office of Subsistence
45 Management. I'm learning -- trying to get up to speed
46 on subsistence management issues. And I've had the great
47 pleasure of joining a number of the RAC meetings
48 virtually throughout this season. I am currently
49 traveling in Hawaii so, I'm only gonna be able to attend
50 parts of this meeting. But I will try to be here as much

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1 as I can and look forward to working with all of you and
2 learning more about the issues that are important in
3 Southeast.

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5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Very good.
6 Thank you. Anybody else?

7

8 MS. KLEIN: Good morning. My name is Jill
9 Klein, and I work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
10 out of the Anchorage Regional Office. In my permanent
11 position, I'm the Regional Subsistence Coordinator. So,
12 I help support our regional director and her
13 participation as a Federal Subsistence Board member, and
14 I'm currently acting as our Deputy Assistant Regional
15 Director for Fisheries and Aquatic Conservation. And I'm
16 happy to join you for your meeting. Good morning.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
19 Anybody else?

20

21 MS. DETWILER: No. One more. Yes, this
22 is Sue Detwiler calling in. I was formerly the director
23 for Office of Subsistence Management until I retired in
24 December. And I'm currently temporarily helping the
25 Office of the Secretary make -- help OSM make the
26 transition. So, I will be listening in for parts of this
27 meeting. Thank you.

28

29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
30 Anybody else on the line?

31

32 (No response)

33

34 Apparently not. Is there anybody in the
35 room who would like to introduce themselves that might
36 be representing a group or a tribal organization. You're
37 welcome to do so. Come up to the microphone if you want
38 to introduce yourselves.

39

40 MR. NIX: Good morning, everybody. My
41 name is GeorgeNix. I'm here representing the Organized
42 Village of Kasaan. I'm a Councilman and also the Food
43 Security Specialist for the organization. So, thank you
44 for establishing this forum.

45

46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thanks for
47 joining us. Anybody else? Step up to the microphone,
48 please.

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1 MS. DOLL: Good morning. My name is Emily
2 Doll and I'm representing Alaska Department of Fish and
3 Game Division of Subsistence. And I'm here with my
4 colleague.

5
6 MS. BROWN: Good morning. My name is
7 Molly Brown. I'm a subsistence resource specialist for
8 the Division of Subsistence focusing on Southeast.

9
10 MR. RAMP Good morning, Mr. Chair and
11 Council. My name is Steve Ramp. I'm here primarily as a
12 chaperone for Heather's wonderful group of high
13 schoolers, but I also hold the resident sport fishing
14 seat on the Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee. I'll
15 be submitting a blue sheet to somebody to talk later.
16 Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. And I'll
19 make note of the fact that we do have a group of students
20 with us here for this meeting. I think there are nine,
21 as I recall, from three different high schools around
22 Southeast, which is great. And we'll probably give them
23 an opportunity to speak with the Council at some point
24 during the meeting if they wish to do so. So, just to
25 acknowledge that they are here with us. So, very good.
26 I think we have covered it. I don't see anybody else
27 coming forward in the room, so. Let's see. Excuse me a
28 second.

29
30 Okay. We can move on to reviewing and
31 adopting the agenda for this meeting. So, at this point,
32 we'll look for a motion to adopt the agenda as a guide.
33 And we can make amendments here as we go forward. Cathy.

34
35 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
36 move to adopt the agenda as a guide.

37
38 MR. SANDHOFER: Second.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you very
41 much. Seconded by Ted Sandhofer. So let me say we have
42 the agenda before us, and there probably need to be a
43 few adjustments. I don't know if anybody on the Council
44 wanted to add anything. I would like to maybe start off
45 by taking note that we do want to add an action item,
46 which would be any Council actions on regard to Board
47 of Alaska -- Board of Fish proposals coming up this
48 winter. And it's been suggested that we move that to
49 Agenda Item I, as an action item. So, you might want to
50 make note of that. Let's see, are there any other changes

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1 or additions to the agenda from Council members?

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(No response)

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5 Okay. I'd also like to point out that
6 we do have a few time certain items on the agenda. So,
7 in reviewing our agenda before the meeting, I wanted to
8 make sure that this, you know, important issue of the
9 rural determination for Ketchikan or non-rural
10 determination affords the people in Ketchikan, you know,
11 a good opportunity to testify here at our meeting. So,
12 I set that agenda item as a time certain agenda item for
13 tomorrow morning so that folks that wanna come and
14 testify will not have to, you know, keep track of where
15 we are on the agenda to know when to be here, if they
16 want to testify. So, we will be taking up that item
17 tomorrow morning, right after we have our normal
18 opportunity for testimony on non-agenda items, where we
19 start our meeting. And we also have a time certain for
20 people from the Office of Management and Budget for this
21 afternoon that want to address the Council. So that'll
22 be at -- and that will be at 1 o'clock, right after
23 lunch. It has to coincide with the time difference back
24 in Washington, D.C. So, we really want to make sure that
25 we're here at 1 o'clock to be able to do that after
26 lunch. So, keep that in mind as we break for lunch,
27 please be back by 1 o'clock. And we also have a time
28 certain for Thursday morning from the National Park
29 Service and the Department of Fish and Game wildlife
30 director would like to be here on Thursday morning to
31 talk about the wolf management plan. So, you might want
32 to make a note of those on your agendas that we will be
33 taking those up at those particular times. So, any
34 questions from the Council or comments before we approve
35 the agenda?

36

37

(No comment)

38

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So, questions been called for. So, all
in favor of approving this agenda as a guide say aye.

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IN UNISON: Aye.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed,
say nay. Okay. Thank you. We have our agenda set. Next
up on the agenda is to approve our minutes from our
previous meetings. And we actually have two sets of
minutes here because we have a set of minutes for the
All Council meeting -- all the Councils attended up in
Anchorage, which was -- also, during the course of that

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1 meeting, we had our individual Council meetings. So,
2 there are meeting minutes for both of those meetings in
3 the book. Hopefully Council members had a chance to look
4 those over and once again we'll look for an -- a motion
5 to adopt the minutes. Cathy.

6

7 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
8 move to adopt the minutes for March 8th and March 5th
9 through 6.

10

11 MR. CASIPIT: Second.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Second by Cal.
14 Thank you. Okay, Council members, if you have any changes
15 you like to note, you can do that now before we vote to
16 approve them.

17

18 (Pause)

19

20 Need a minute or so to look over in case
21 you made any notes.

22

23 (Pause)

24

25 Nobody has anything to add. Can I call
26 for a vote? Are we ready? Okay. All in favor of approving
27 the minutes as published, say aye.

28

29 IN UNISON: Aye.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed,
32 say nay. Okay. Thank you. Minutes have been approved.
33 And now, on the agenda, it's time for the Council members
34 reports. Opportunity for the Council to bring to our
35 attention all the issues and happenings around their
36 local communities. And we do cover the length and breadth
37 of Southeast Alaska with our memberships. So, we'll
38 start maybe with the Cal Casipit from Gustavus. Are you
39 ready to give your report?

40

41 MR. CASIPIT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
42 gonna try to keep this brief. I know we're trying to get
43 through a bunch of stuff today, but our moose season
44 went well, it was kind of warm. They didn't act like
45 they normally did, but the quota was reached, I think,
46 on the 4th of October. So, it closed early and there's
47 14 bulls, only one was sublegal. So, that -- the moose
48 season went well. Halibut fishing was -- we live on icy
49 straits so, if you know how to catch halibut, you got
50 your halibut, so. The one issue that came up with a lot

1 of folks was the coho season with us up there. They were
2 just really thin, and they moved through fast, and they
3 didn't seem to hang around when they did come through.
4 So, a lot of people had trouble getting their cohos this
5 year. But as far as the town and the community I kinda
6 measure how many people show up during the summer in
7 Gustavus by how many people show up for the 4th of July
8 parade and the 4th of July parade this year, there was
9 so many people there. I don't know if anybody's been
10 there, but it basically runs from the Salmon River Park
11 to what we call Four Corners. And usually there's just
12 a bunch of people around the park, over the bridge and
13 stuff that watch the parade. But there was lines of
14 people on both sides of the road, all the way down to
15 Four Corners. It was -- I couldn't believe the number
16 of people that were in town this year -- this summer.
17 But anyway, that's about all I have. I tried, like I
18 said, tried to keep it short and move on. So, thanks.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
21 About the -- John Smith, Juneau, report for us.

22
23 MR. SMITH: (In Native) It's good to see
24 your faces today. You know, deer season just starting,
25 but it's seen from many folks, it's been pretty
26 productive. Bear -- the number of black bears, they're
27 going up pretty much. Seeing a lot of, you know, in the
28 last few years bears, maybe one or two cubs, but now
29 we're seeing them with three and four. And seeing them
30 quite often and they're, you know, coming through town
31 early in the morning. And I see that visually because I
32 dropped my wife off pretty early in the morning and
33 actually see them going through the garbage and whatnot.
34 And in my neighborhood, it's rarely -- you don't see
35 them, but they're getting pretty big, these bears. You
36 know, I'm from Chichagof Island, Hoonah and, you know,
37 I've seen the growth of them really getting bigger and
38 bigger. As far as the salmon and talking, you know, I'm
39 a mechanic so, I work on a lot of the gillnetter boats
40 and stuff, keeping them working. But hearing that the
41 numbers are about the same from last year, but the
42 poundage of them have, you know, they're getting
43 smaller, a lot smaller this year. So, you know, that's
44 pretty much it. Thank you. It's good to see you all
45 today.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
48 Louie Wagner from Metlakatla.

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1 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I got
2 a little help with mine so, I'm more accurate on my
3 report. My granddaughter works for our fisheries in
4 Metlakatla, so. This is coming from the work that they're
5 doing every day. I'll start with the Department of Fish
6 and Wildlife, DFW, current process is an emphasis on
7 early (indiscernible) streams to monitor for hatchery
8 strays in August, and then transitions to natural
9 escapement survey process. DFW operates on a rotational
10 index stream schedule that focuses on pink chum
11 escapement and continues its monitoring effort into
12 October. As for sockeye escapement, Upper Trout Lake is
13 monitored bi-weekly. This occurs from mid-September into
14 October. This year's harvest, our surveys suggest that
15 the pink escapement is developing well. Heavy rain
16 throughout the escapement season has fluctuated salmon's
17 access to local creeks. Our index streams are used to
18 help give a broad understanding of how the reserve is
19 doing. For example, Ned Sahin and Hemlock are major index
20 streams and have had acceptable returns that meet the
21 creek's population capacity. Sockeye escapement is still
22 being monitored and the surveys have shown promising
23 results. Reflection and innovation, the European green
24 crab on Annette Island and beyond. The Metlakatla Indian
25 Community, Department of Fish and Wildlife, MIC, DFW,
26 was the first organization to detect live European green
27 crab, EGC in Alaska on Annette Island on July 19th,
28 2022. Since then, MIC has been on the front line of the
29 invasion, working hard to monitor and trap the EGC while
30 protecting and conserving Native species that are
31 historically important for subsistence and cultural
32 harvest. 2024 marks the second full year of EGC trapping
33 that MIC has conducted, bringing new discoveries and
34 understanding of EGC in Alaska.

35
36 In June 2024, MIC, DFW conducted molt
37 walk surveys alongside Alaska Sea Grant to evaluate
38 areas in Southeast Alaska for evidence of EGC. Molts
39 were found on Gravina Island and Bostwick Inlet. And
40 MIC, DFW spearheaded a trapping effort that led to
41 finding the first live EGC in Alaska State waters on
42 June 26th, 2024. This led to a statewide response by
43 ADF&G. On September 4th, MIC, DFW staff found 43 small
44 live young of the year in a salt truck on the south end
45 of Annette Island via hand removal. MIC, DFW brought
46 seven staff members the next day and collected 119 EGC
47 from the carapace width range of 8mm, 51mm. As of
48 September 27th, there have been 913 EGC specimens hand
49 removed from the Salt Chuck. And then MIC, DFW began on
50 and continues to be on the leading edge of the EGC

1 invasion in Alaska and strives to understand the
2 dynamics of EGC now and in the future. And we also had
3 Keenan over here. He brought a bunch of the students
4 over in a van, a couple of weeks ago now. And spent a
5 day with our fisheries crew going out and showing them
6 all the traps they have set on the green crab. So, maybe
7 he can give a little bit of report on that when he talks.
8 It was really interesting and neat to see from K-High.
9 And there's a note here that EGC did not and does not
10 originate in the Annette Islands. The EGC are
11 distributed by currently and the ballast water from
12 ships. So, that's it. Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
15 Louie. I'll move over to Larry Bemis from Yakutat.

16
17 MR. BEMIS: Thank you. I'm glad to be
18 here and I'm sorry I missed the earlier meeting in
19 Anchorage. I had some other things going on, medical
20 stuff. So, I was unable to make that meeting. Overall,
21 Yakutat just finished up on the moose hunt, but it took
22 a little while, we just closed today. Started on the
23 eighth for 30 subsistence use moose. And I would say,
24 out of all the years that I've hunted it seemed like the
25 temperature usually decreases sooner where the leaves
26 fall and move the moose along. It seems like they haven't
27 quite come out of the mountains as early as they normally
28 do, and the cold weather just hit, say, in the last week
29 or less. Overall, our problem with our moose hunting in
30 Yakutat is we have been unable to have an aerial survey
31 say, come in the fall when we get some snow so we can
32 get an accurate count. We're going on about five, six
33 years now without an accurate count of the herd and the
34 strength of it. We've got an increase in the bears
35 locally, along with the wolves are getting closer, and
36 they're being seen in larger packs. But it's my concern
37 that we don't really know where we're at in our moose
38 stock is because you've got to wait until when the moose
39 come out of the mountains and come down, and you got
40 snow on the ground where you see the mountain, I mean,
41 the moose herd up to where you can get an accurate count
42 for each sector. We're seeing more outside people
43 hunting on the east side of the Dangerous, which is --
44 has a 30 most count, and it is looking like we're pretty
45 good up on the harvest, now that goes through November
46 15th, I think or... Across the bay is slow, basically
47 the Malaspina across the bay, the Malaspina Glacier side
48 has 25 moose. There's a portion of people that go over
49 there and hunt that. But again, it seems like we had a
50 warmer fall, and that has a lot to do with the moose

1 getting together and herding up.

2

3 Our salmon fishing starting off was a
4 little slow for the sockeye, the king salmon, river
5 king's overall, maybe we made, I think, half or two
6 thirds of the goal. And I think it was last year we met
7 our goal and they were seemed to be a little larger
8 fish. And the sockeye return has been pretty good. Yeah,
9 they were slow getting here and then they came at a
10 pretty good lot. The silvers, the ocean silvers were not
11 very good. I don't know if they just didn't show --
12 usually, we got a pretty good flow of all the silvers,
13 either going south or going to the salmon streams. They
14 usually build up in a bay, and we get a couple weeks of
15 ocean fishing on them. And it was pretty slow this year
16 compared to others. But the river -- later the river
17 fish showed up pretty good. And I have a feeling that
18 some of that has to do with the temperatures, cause some
19 of the rivers are a lot colder than the ocean, and they
20 received good returns. The halibut has increased over
21 last year. Last year was dismal, and I was very concerned
22 that they did not set a quota or they didn't say that,
23 hey, we're gonna watch this week by week or month to see
24 whether we need to decrease or hold on the halibut quota
25 system as far as sport and commercial. They pretty much
26 left it open and said, we'll see what happens, because
27 we don't know what the conditions of the ocean is doing
28 or how it is gonna respond from -- last year was very
29 dismal, it was at the point you couldn't even find any
30 fish. Along with the longliners and commercially and
31 subsistence. This year we have a little better return
32 over last year, but it is hard to say without having any
33 identified information about what the commercial is
34 doing versus the sports doing versus subsistence. We
35 don't have a real good baseline of -- you can take your
36 average years, and then all of a sudden here we are just
37 kinda like nil and then an increase. So, I'm not sure
38 what is going on. But you know, we got ocean conditions
39 and different things that we're dealing with as well.

40

41 Trying to establish some kind of --
42 looking at our tour ships, the amount that is coming
43 into the bay. We're very concerned that where we went
44 from a few ships during Covid to an increase of 180, -
45 90, and now we're up to 270 or -80. And these are
46 massively big ships. They're having to take turns to go
47 up to the glacier. And this increase doesn't seem to
48 slow down. It doesn't -- we're not even sure how they
49 justify how many boats you're allowed in that bay, but
50 it's a big concern. My biggest concern is, if you look

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1 at the emergent response equipment to handle something
2 if it had an accident or some kind of disastrous
3 situation where they started leaking oil or needed any
4 help, we don't have the infrastructure there. The same
5 raft that was brought to Yakutat in a couple barges with
6 a small outboard running a chase boat to pull these
7 things and stuff, would not meet in an emergency. There
8 isn't large boat there to really take care of them,
9 other than the pilot boat that comes and goes. But as
10 far as the response goes and the equipment needed to
11 contain something, it's not there. That is one of my
12 biggest concerns about the -- possibly the pollution
13 that they leave behind in the bay and how long it's
14 gonna take before we start to see it on our shores.
15 There's just no way of recording -- having a record when
16 they dump their posted dump three miles offshore. But I
17 personally have seen remnants of small 150 feet by
18 several hundred yards of gray water or kind of like the
19 bilge being pumped out. And they don't do it in one big,
20 large thing they cover, you know, 12,000 gallons goes a
21 long ways when they do a pump. So, what I'm seeing is
22 small amounts being pumped out. I'm really concerned
23 about having these many boats in our area and not being
24 able to monitor them and not knowing just what all
25 they're leaving behind. It's a big concern and it's
26 something we're gonna have to deal with eventually, is
27 the amount of boats that come there. The safety of them
28 being there and the water conditions. Overall, I'm
29 hoping that the fish maintain what they have. Our winter
30 king fishery just started on the 8th, and there's only
31 a few people that are fishing it. And we've had some
32 LiDAR people from the Yurok tribe come up and do some
33 LiDAR work from up at the glacier all the way down to
34 Dangerous River. And this will really give us a good
35 look at all the salmon streams that are there and the
36 ones that used to be there. And one of the biggest
37 things, once these -- all I seen was a template of the
38 temporary black and white before the color and the 3D
39 gets put in. But one of the concerns about this LiDAR
40 I'm thinking is about the Hubbard Glacier is on a
41 traveling mode right now that it's hooking around
42 Gilbert's point, and it seems like it's going farther
43 in the fjord than normal. And the glacier is -- it looked
44 like it backed off for a while and then it went forward.
45 But eventually, if this glacier closes off, it might be
46 a little more -- a little harder for it to break through
47 on this next go round. So, the possibility of having
48 flooding in the Yakutat area is -- it got within, I
49 think 16 or 18 feet the last time it closed off. And
50 what that LiDAR is gonna do is show us the paths that

1 were taken when this happened, either what came down by
2 the Situk River or in the Situk River, or off the left
3 of it, heading east down towards the Dangerous -- the
4 Ahrnklin River area. So that is a very -- they are on a
5 grant through the tribe -- Yakutat Tlingit tribes, which
6 also I'm a Council member, and we've had several
7 different LiDAR things shown in the different parts of
8 the Yakutat area, helping us with stuff we're doing in
9 restoration for salmon streams and stuff on the roads
10 and whatnot close by. I am glad to be here, and I'm
11 looking forward for this meeting. Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
14 Larry. Ted Sandhofer, Petersburg.

15
16 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
17 the most part, in central Southeast. It's been a good
18 year for subsistence harvesting. The moose harvest was
19 well over 100 animals. That population is pretty strong
20 in most areas. The deer populations are good. You know,
21 hunting will start increasing here with the rut and the
22 winter, but it's been pretty good. Halibut stocks seem
23 to be down. You had to go further out to get them and
24 sizes down, much like a was pointed out across there. I
25 think it's gonna continue to be that way. I hope it
26 improves. Chinook fishing was very limited, as in most
27 areas in the Southeast, there was no subsistence fishing
28 for chinook on the Stikine. Sockeye harvesting on the
29 Stikine was average, I think it went all right. Coho
30 were somewhat scarce, I think he had to put in a lot of
31 effort to get them, but they were there. You know, one
32 thing, Crystal Lake Hatchery had a concern with getting
33 broodstock back to the hatchery this year, and they
34 actually did a live capture event a couple of weekends.
35 And it was pretty interesting. I think they got over 140
36 fish, most of them females. They went from the water to
37 a four-wheeler and coolers up to the parking lot, into
38 totes to the hatchery. Only one fatality, like I said.
39 And that fish -- the smolt from those from that hatchery
40 goes all over Southeast Alaska for all user groups. So,
41 it's a good thing, hopefully that worked out well and I
42 think it did. You know, there's still some concern with
43 the sea otter population growth in central southeast.
44 And I think that MOU with the tribes will help with
45 that. I'm hoping that that's gonna help. Berry crops in
46 Southeast were really good. My -- I was fighting with
47 my wife for freezer space this fall, but the best it's
48 been in years. And I think, you know, people are really
49 happy about that. You know, the rural determination for
50 Ketchikan was often discussed in Petersburg. And I think

1 we'll, you know, cover that later. The Keex' Kwaan
2 Community Forest there in Kake -- Forest Partnership in
3 Kake is presently analyzing household data and reports
4 due out in early spring. I think it's going to really
5 highlight the subsistence needs of that community. And
6 I think that can be shared across the Tongass.

7
8 Now, there was a lot of restoration
9 enhancement projects on stream courses in central
10 Southeast. This not only helps the ecosystem health, but
11 the fish populations and jobs for the communities, so
12 that's good. The National Capital Christmas tree was
13 harvested from Zarembo Island last weekend. It's
14 actually in Wrangell right now, and it's gonna head to
15 Washington, D.C., I think, next week. I saw all kinds
16 of nice ornaments from all over Southeast and stuff, and
17 it's something to be proud of. I think it's a good thing
18 for the Tongass. I know we're gonna have a report from
19 the Forest Service on the revision to the forest plan,
20 and there's an emphasis on subsistence in that plan. So
21 that's a good thing, and I hope to get more involved
22 with that as it goes along. And lastly, I'd like to give
23 out a shout out to the tribes in central Southeast.
24 They've had a lot of funding to a lot of trails and
25 infrastructure work across the central Southeast. And
26 this enhances the quality of life in those communities.
27 And we know that mental health is extremely important,
28 and I think them doing that is outstanding. And I wanted
29 to give out a shout out. And that's all I got. Thanks.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ted.
32 Mike Douville from Craig.

33
34 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
35 have a couple areas of concern. We may address -- I'm
36 not sure, via the of Board proposals. One is king salmon
37 and the unregulated in-season management, which doesn't
38 exist for sport charters -- have used up all of our
39 quotas so we don't get a second opening and this has
40 happened two years in a row. The first year we got one
41 day. The other concern is a proposal for -- to expand
42 the herring pound area, which I think is very dangerous.
43 Those areas that had herring pounding in a Hoonah Sound
44 (indiscernible) Prince William Sound were all depressed
45 as a result. I don't know if we will address those.

46
47 We don't know this year yet how hunting
48 will be, but we have had a declining deer population as
49 a result of a higher wolf population. We don't see any
50 Federal involvement in that biology. We don't have a

1 Federal game biologist on the island, to my knowledge,
2 and we haven't had one since -- for -- anyway several
3 years. And why not? The resources are extremely
4 important. And one of the problems is the department
5 doesn't take indigenous or local knowledge seriously.
6 They won't really use it. And on the other hand, I feel
7 the same way about their biology, which resulted in a
8 roller coaster ride of wolf population that resulted in
9 an ESA filing, which caused a lot of problems. So, I
10 firmly believe that they need to be fact checked and
11 looked at by a Federal biologist. That needs to start
12 learning about the dynamics of wolf and deer
13 populations. And take indigenous and local knowledge
14 seriously. That's all I have. Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
17 Jim Slater from Pelican, go ahead.

18

19 MR. SLATER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
20 wanted to share some continued trends that I think are
21 concerning for Pelican. Large pressure is continued to
22 be very high. I think it's, as you guys have probably
23 learned from previous testimony, we have had over the
24 last decade a growth of a very large, large presence and
25 several other smaller ones. But recently there's been
26 an addition of a self-charter lodge, which is a pretty
27 significant size. Excuse me. And it continues to impact
28 the community in a way where the harbor is crowded and
29 busy and most of the boats from the bigger lodges go
30 outside. But the self-charter boats are -- look to be
31 fishing inside the inlet, which is a concern for local
32 rockfish populations and things like that. We've just
33 moved to a kind of a winter schedule in the ferry with
34 a -- using a catamaran. We are a community that has one
35 of the older docks, and it only can be accessed by two
36 of the older ferries, the LeConte and the Aurora. And
37 so, when that goes into -- they go into service in the
38 winter. Then we get a substitute ferry, which is a
39 aluminum catamaran that the State leases, and it's hand-
40 carry cargo only. No way to get real cargo out in an
41 easy way to get pallets and stuff from Costco and so on.
42 The local fish processors have been growing in Pelican
43 and for several years now, and he's doing okay at Jacobi
44 Fisheries. He's had a real positive impact on the
45 community. And the school, as we've struggled for with
46 keeping our population of students above ten for a number
47 of years, but that's -- we've had some large families
48 move in and that's doing well. So, that's a stable thing
49 for us, which is unusual. And early reports from deer
50 hunting it's still slow, but I guess that's kinda normal

1 without the weather. That's all. Thanks.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Jim.
4 Albert Howard from Angoon, go ahead.

5

6 MR. HOWARD: Good morning, thank you, Mr.
7 Chair. The salmon fisheries overall has been -- was
8 pretty good compared to recent years. And I believe that
9 has a lot to do with the lack of commercial fishing
10 effort in the area due to the salmon market, the
11 commercial fisheries that used to have an impact on our
12 sockeye, as mentioned in the ETJ petition is less than
13 it was when we submitted the petition. So, it's my belief
14 and my Traditional Ecological Knowledge is telling me
15 that since there is no commercial fishing, that all the
16 salmon are making it back to Angoon, the only way you're
17 not gonna get what you need is for lack of effort this
18 summer. Now, I don't know if that has anything to do
19 with the streams when they were spawning, what was
20 happening in the streams then. Because I don't think
21 that's part of our data that we receive and I know we've
22 asked for stream gauging to be a part of fish monitoring,
23 just so you have a complete picture of what's happening
24 in the stream. So, when we go back and look, say as an
25 example, well, according to the data the streams were
26 getting enough water, the water quality was good, the
27 temperature was good. So that isn't the reason why the
28 salmon aren't coming back for that apparent year. So,
29 it must be the commercial effort that's having the
30 impact. So, if you have a complete picture of what's
31 happening to the salmon when they're spawning, you're
32 gonna know why they're coming back or why they aren't
33 so, that's just my thought. The deer population seems
34 to have figured out that they're safe within the city
35 limits of Angoon. I'm not sure what's happening there.
36 For a guy my age, I've never seen deer run past the
37 school or past my house for that matter. I don't know
38 if it's the cherry tree in the yard or why they're doing
39 that, but they seem to be doing that.

40

41 I think what I appreciated about the
42 summer, and I haven't seen it in years, since I was a
43 teenager, was to go into a bay and see all the salmon.
44 You can look and everywhere you look there's a salmon
45 jumping. Now, they've mentioned cohos, we had the same
46 issue at home. I'm not sure what's happening with the
47 cohos, but they're there, then they're not there. And
48 they didn't make it to the stream. I'm not sure if it's
49 -- when I used to commercial fish out on the ocean. We
50 used to have a ten-day closure. I don't know if they

1 still have that or not and that seemed to allow the
2 salmon to go by. We still have the same issues with
3 crab. We catch our crab till the commercial parts are
4 dumped in the bays close to Angoon, and then they're
5 gone. So, I have my spots where I put my pots now, and
6 you'll never see those spots on Facebook because lesson
7 learned. Someone saw all the deer I got on Baranof, and
8 they decided to use that as their data to show that I
9 got a lot of deer, but they didn't realize I got it on
10 Baranof instead of Admiralty. Bear population seemed to
11 be up. We seem to see them when we're running around on
12 the boat more than we saw them last year so, I don't
13 know if that's why the deer coming into town, because
14 bears don't wanna do that. I actually went berry picking
15 with my daughter this year. There was a lot of berries,
16 if I do things with my sons, I guess I have to do things
17 with my daughter as well. So, we even made jam for crying
18 out loud. King salmon -- locals are having a hard time
19 with that. I've always said this in the past that living
20 in the City, you can go to Costco. You can't do that in
21 Angoon. If you want something, you have to go get it.
22 And that's the lifestyle we want to live but decisions
23 are being made that impact Angoon and the residents
24 without us having any say over it. One day you wake up
25 and oh, by the way, you can't go fishing for kings. You
26 know, like, who decided that? And I've mentioned this
27 before, imagining our elders on a stream doing something
28 they've done for generations, catching salmon and one
29 day the elder gets up and he's going to do what he
30 normally does. And somebody shows up and says, you can't
31 do that anymore because the State changed the regulation
32 on you, but they didn't come to your house and tell you,
33 this is what's happening and this is why. We had this
34 conversation, and it still bothers me to today. My
35 sister, she's a big part of why I do what I do. I'm --
36 I don't pay attention to what happens on AFN because
37 they don't represent Southeast Alaska. That's my
38 opinion, my personal opinion. But she asked me if I saw
39 the resolution that was passed at AFN. They're trying
40 to make changes to ANILCA that I don't agree with, and
41 I think we need to pay attention to what's happening
42 there, because even though they don't represent
43 Southeast the way I'd like them to, they're gonna have
44 an impact on us if they continue doing what they're
45 doing. It probably isn't an intended impact because
46 they're trying to solve their own problems. But I think
47 when we talk about trying to co-manage something. We
48 should mention waterways. I know the jurisdiction was
49 taken away from us through a higher process and listening
50 to fellow Council members, but I think that process is

1 flawed because they never came and asked, how is this
2 gonna impact Angoon? When you take the jurisdiction of
3 the waterways away from us, we no longer have any say
4 over salmon, or halibut, or rockfish. So even if we have
5 the knowledge to help manage or co-manage a system, we're
6 not allowed to because they're gonna tell us we don't
7 have jurisdiction. You have jurisdiction over freshwater
8 because that falls under Federal on our island. The other
9 conversation was the fact that -- and I'm happy to see
10 the younger generation here, because if you love to live
11 off the environment, you need to know people that make
12 changes to that -- to your ability to do so. I'm
13 concerned at home that if we don't have someone to sit
14 in this Chair when I'm not here anymore, we're gonna
15 lose everything we've sat here to take care of. I mean,
16 I'm trying not to talk so long because I've been warned
17 yesterday. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
20 Albert. Patty Phillips.

21
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
23 So, I'm from Pelican, Alaska. I'm the mayor. I've also
24 served on the Council. I'm in my year 13 as mayor and
25 broken service. I'm not gonna run for my seat again, but
26 I bring a lot of local knowledge. I've been in Pelican
27 over 50 years. I'm almost on the water every day and out
28 on the outside coast quite frequently so, I too bring a
29 lot of indigenous knowledge to this Council and to see
30 the capacity building of this Council is just really --
31 I really respect these people. So, we all learn from one
32 another, as you can tell. Anyways, I'm gonna repeat some
33 of the things I heard, but in a different sort of, you
34 know, from a Pelican slant. The Pacific Salmon Treaty
35 negatively impacting the local year-round rural
36 residents and extended season for charter salmon harvest
37 was in place and the local commercial fisher fleet had
38 to shut down. It was a reduced season for the trawl
39 harvest. Who -- you know, the local participants are
40 federally qualified rural residents of Alaska, and they
41 had to stay tied up to the dock, while these seasonal
42 charter fleet kept going with, you know, with their non-
43 resident clients. The north end of Southeast Alaska
44 Cross Sound had a diminished catch rate due to colder
45 Gulf waters caused by rapidly melting glaciers. Fish
46 stayed offshore until they moved into spawn, which was
47 like in September. So yeah, we have a local -- a new
48 charter, you know, and Jim indicated a new charter lodge
49 going in a three million dollar lodge. It didn't even
50 go into full production in 2024. Maybe they'll go into

1 full production in 2025. But, you know, and we also have
2 the non-resident people with their seasonal homes in
3 Lisianski Inlet. And so, I went up Lisianski River and
4 there's a lot, you know, a lot of the non-residents in
5 there, and they're telling me to move out of their way
6 cause they want to catch a fish. And it's just like,
7 what? Well, so, you know, I really enjoy going up to
8 Lisianski River and seeing, you know what fish is there,
9 what's returning and on a regular, you know, when you
10 have those 12-foot tides, you're able to go up there and
11 see the seasonal changes. The gas -- you know, the price
12 of gas is \$5.15 a gallon. So, you know, we're spending
13 quite a bit of money to get out in the field. But you
14 know, I don't travel out of State much. So, this is my
15 form of travel is buying a tank of gas to, you know get
16 out in my environment. In end of September, we had
17 capelin moving through our harbor and in the inlet, and
18 it was reported to me that there was like a two-foot
19 berm of capelin rolled up dead on the beach over by
20 Elfin Cove. So, you know, we do have a lot of resources
21 moving through. We just don't see them a lot of times.
22 We had a dead whale wash up on the beach over by Elfin
23 Cove, and then there was another reported dead whale
24 that showed up on the beach. They did a necropsy on both
25 of them and found that they were collisions with likely
26 cruise ships. So, you know, we see a lot of cruise ship
27 -- and a lot more cruise ships going through Cross Sound,
28 and they don't slow down. They just keep going, the
29 speed they're going and then we have these collisions.
30 So, and then with the more cruise ship docks going in
31 so that they could bring more cruise ships in, we're
32 gonna see more of that. And you know, why isn't there a
33 concerted effort to manage that traffic, not just in
34 Glacier Bay but, you know, maybe out to the State line
35 in, you know, in Cross Sound. Because there's a lot of
36 resources other than humpback whales out there. So, you
37 know, the temperatures this year didn't drop below 40
38 until last week, and we had a lot of rain, and I mean,
39 like torrential rain. And I didn't think it was gonna
40 freeze until November. And lo and behold, it froze this
41 week. One week later, after not dropping below 40 degrees
42 it, you know, it froze. So, it was like kind of, this
43 is weird weather but and a lot of rain, you know,
44 torrential rains going through the stream systems. We
45 went out berry picking. Yeah, it would've been a good
46 berry year if we weren't competing with everything
47 that's eaten the berry bushes. So yeah, I just wanted
48 to say that. And we are having a return on abalone.
49 There was a time when abalone you couldn't even find a
50 shell but now we're starting to see abalone shells wash

1 up in the tide.

2

3 Alaska Department of Fish and Game
4 Subsistence Division came into Pelican this, you know,
5 this in 2024. And so, I've been interviewed and a lot
6 of the community have been interviewed. And they were -
7 - it was very culturally respectful. You know, I really
8 appreciate, you know, the care that they had in that
9 subsistence survey. The migratory birds are less in
10 abundance. I mean, they were last year, you saw a lot
11 of sick birds. So, this year you see a lot less birds,
12 waterfowl and, you know, forest birds. It's sort of sad
13 to see diminished returns of something that you used to
14 see a whole lot of. I was out at Hoktaheen for our
15 subsistence sockeye. There was a lot of competition
16 there, a lot of charter boats snagging sets trying to
17 snag fish. We got out of there because we came in after
18 somebody else and there weren't no fish left. So, we
19 went over to Surge Bay and there was competition there.
20 But, you know, that's the resource that we all, you
21 know, rely on for our subsistence needs. So, I shouldn't
22 be surprised about the competition. What I should --
23 what I did learn is I need to go early before the
24 competition is there. So, we need to protect that
25 resource for continued subsistence harvest. And the
26 unguided impacts to Lisianski Inlet are uncertain at
27 this time, but we know they're gonna be impacting us
28 heavily in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

29

30 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
31 Patty. Harvey Kitka from Sitka. Go ahead, Harvey.

32

33 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sitting
34 here listening to all our communities, I made notes on
35 some of it. Some of it is still the same. One of our
36 real concerns is the North Pacific Trawl Fishery, which
37 is pretty much taking all kinds of stuff that's out
38 there, and they have no idea where most of it comes
39 from. The one that I -- one of the things that was
40 brought to our attention was the unlimited amount of
41 herring they can bycatch. There's no limit on how much
42 they can bycatch and kill, along with all the salmon,
43 crabs and bottom things that they catch. I just -- it's
44 kinda frustrating to our people that commercial fish,
45 as well as some of the streams that really get affected
46 by non-returning to the salmon. This was one of our
47 concerns. We also have a -- we had a great sockeye return
48 to one of our systems in Sitka. And I asked them, the
49 tribe, I said this would be a great time for them to do
50 a study on the habitat as to why the population and the

1 stream system has almost quadrupled in a couple of years.
2 I know there's been lots of studies on escapement, but
3 the study of habitat is -- it needs to come around, and
4 we need to start finding out why some of our streams are
5 failing and need you to help them get better. I have a
6 lot of different opinions on ocean temperature and what
7 it's causing. The ocean has stayed so warm that sometimes
8 the salmon don't come into the into the waters for
9 subsistence areas until the temperature drops enough to
10 where they all come in, but they don't stay in the lower
11 parts of the river for very long. Usually they come in
12 and then they're gone and they're up in their spawning
13 areas. And this happened so quick. Even the pink salmon,
14 they don't come in and when they do come in, they're up
15 the river real fast. Almost all the salmon are that way
16 right now. The silver salmon, they don't stay in the
17 salt water very long, they just gone. They're -- they'll
18 be miles up the stream already. Along with the mild
19 temperatures that we've been having, the bear population
20 has increased, you can tell. There must be plenty of
21 food out there for them, because we see the brown bear
22 in Sitka with three cubs. And that definitely a sign
23 that there's there are plenty of food for them, but they
24 -- the population is really getting scary in the Sitka
25 area, because they're not only taking the dogs and other
26 animals that are out there, but they -- they're walking
27 amongst the people. And it's really scary for some of
28 our young people that are out playing. We have concern
29 with abalone. We don't know what's happening. Parts of
30 our abalone in Sitka Sound, some of the shells have
31 gotten soft. In some cases, you can almost poke your
32 fingers through the shells, it's kind of scary. We don't
33 know what's happening with that part. We have to worry
34 about that.

35
36 We have an ongoing concern with our
37 herring population. This last year, when we finally got
38 some herring that showed up along the road system after
39 a long time of not seeing any. We also had -- starting
40 to see an increase in the population on the southern
41 shores of our Sound. We haven't seen that in a long,
42 long time. But we -- this will be an ongoing thing. Sea
43 otter -- the Sitka Tribe Sea Mammal Commission have
44 managed the sea otter within our area for quite a while,
45 and a couple of years ago we start to see abalone
46 returning in our gumboots in some of our shellfish areas
47 like the cockles and clams. It was good to see them come
48 back. But the Sitka Sea Mammal Commission has been
49 working hard at trying to regulate it and making things
50 easier. Also, they worked hard enough to where we got a

1 little more release on what was significantly altered
2 as far as the hides, worked really tirelessly with
3 enforcement to where they were getting closer to be on
4 the same page as all the other definitions. And that's
5 all I have at this time. Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
8 Harvey. Frank Wright from Hoonah. Go ahead, Frank.

9

10 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
11 know this -- we -- in this Regional Advisory Council,
12 we -- what we do is we try to make sure that all the
13 resources are kept up. And one of the resources, you
14 know, one of the things that we -- I do is I collect
15 plastic. And, you know, one time I was in the airport
16 with my wife and I was sitting there and I was watching
17 this older guy. He was one of the people that cleaned
18 up the place, empty the garbage. And I saw him and I
19 said -- told my wife, I said, look it he's emptying the
20 garbage that people are just throwing plastic in. And
21 then there -- on the side of it, there was one for
22 recyclables and look at him. An elderly guy is cleaning
23 out the plastic and taking it out of the garbage and
24 putting it into recyclable. And I told, you know, my
25 wife and I have been collecting plastic for many, many,
26 many, many years. We don't buy bottled water but do
27 taking care of us and seeing elderly guy that is working
28 as a janitor, cleaning out garbage and putting it so
29 that he can recycle it, I thought that elderly man is
30 worried about what's going on in this world. And I said,
31 what we are doing, my wife and I is collecting plastic.
32 And I said, that's a raindrop in a storm. I mean, one
33 little drop, I mean, imagine what the plastic is that's
34 being -- not being recycled and thrown out into the
35 environment. That's crazy. And I -- every time I see a
36 plastic, I always go, look at it, look at it. Is it
37 number two or number one? And I just -- that elderly man
38 just struck me. He cleaning out of that -- cleaning the
39 dirt out of the plastic and then putting it into -- so
40 it could be recycled. That was something that struck me
41 very well. I told my wife, I said, I'm gonna mention
42 this. We are an organization that protects our
43 environment, protects the animal life in this world. And
44 I think that if there's a way we can, I don't know, hit
45 some people on the side of the head and say, hey, why
46 don't you take care -- help take care of this world,
47 even if it's just a little drop in a rainstorm. We do
48 our plastic, we take it to Juneau. So that's just
49 something I wanted to mention, because this organization
50 is to protect the environment and the resources within

1 our little communities.

2

3 You know, in Hoonah there's a river --
4 little river in middle of town, it's called Spud Creek
5 but Tlingit you call it Gunsightini. When we were kids,
6 we were happy when that river flooded because it blocked
7 us off from going to school. We couldn't go to school
8 because our road was getting washed out. So, we were
9 having a -- all right, we don't have to go, you know,
10 and that's but now even though we have a big rain, the
11 river runs for a little while, and then in a day it's
12 some -- day or two, it's dried up again. There used to
13 be steelheads in that river. When we were kids we used
14 to go up in the river, there was a little falls up behind
15 the school and be able to catch little steelheads in
16 there. Not at -- Hoonah is, how do you say, getting up
17 in the world? There's no more river there, no more
18 steelhead, you know. So, how do we start -- just because
19 of progress, we're losing. This year there was a dungy
20 fishing. You know, I live in Front Street, and I see
21 some boats coming in with dungy crabs, and dungy pots
22 coming up, and then they go up the bay. Usually, they're
23 up the bay for quite a while, but this year they were
24 coming back in two or three days with loads of pots
25 sorted because they weren't catching any crab. Is it the
26 sea otters? I don't know, but there's something going
27 on when there's no ones catching any dungies, you know.
28 Some communities have a hard time catching up, getting
29 dungies and because of the sea otter, and last year I
30 was out tanner fishing and I saw a sea otter with a
31 tanner crab on his stomach just rolling around, having
32 a good time, he having chow. This year we had, we also
33 have a CDQ in Hoonah, and we have -- we had about eight
34 people that were able to do the CDQ in Hoonah. So, it
35 helped out some fishermen, some young people that were
36 able to apply for it with the city and then we were able
37 to go out and fish. What percentage of city, takes is
38 40%, and a 60% all the rest goes to the fishermen that
39 did the fishing.

40

41 You know, like I said, I always -- I
42 live in Front Street and I see -- every year I see jumps,
43 fish jumps. This year I was home pretty much most of the
44 time cause I didn't have to get to go fishing because I
45 had surgery. And this year I saw three jumps, three. I
46 live in Front Street, right in front of Pitt Island and
47 I saw three jumps. Usually, I saw jumps all the time,
48 even when I was real active. In the black -- you know,
49 the black cod prices were down, and we didn't, you know
50 and I had to call the congressional person, I told him

1 and say, hey, we need to figure out how we can stop the
2 Russians from importing seafoods to us. Cause -- so, the
3 prices were down. I don't know what the -- why the prices
4 were down last year they're fair. So, the black cod is
5 down, you know. I think the small ones were 40 cents a
6 pound when last year was a dollar forty, you know. So,
7 how do we deal with that? It's -- the halibut it's all
8 right, the prices are all right. But black cod is way
9 down. Deer. This summer I was -- since I live on Front
10 Street, you know, a person called me up, he says, hey,
11 there's some tourist walking, picking your flowers in
12 my -- in your yard. And I said, oh, so I looked outside,
13 and I saw tourists looking in back of my house here.
14 There was two deer back in my house, and I tried to
15 chase them away, but they wouldn't go. They had --
16 they're just ignoring me eating. So, I thought, that's
17 all right, I guess. I was just worried about my wife's
18 raspberry patch, that's all.

19
20 We still have on -- the tribe is still
21 -- still has a understanding with the Park Service, an
22 understanding with the Forest Service. We deal with both
23 organizations, a government to government -- this last
24 year, I had -- we had two consultations with the Forest
25 Service and we -- my concern with -- in talking to them
26 was, what do we do about forest fires? The beetle has
27 killed so many trees that they're drying up. If we have
28 a dry summer, like a few years ago, where all the rivers
29 dried up and everything was just brittle, I was just
30 worried about some person having a fun time, having a
31 picnic and then starting a forest fire. So, I was wanting
32 to see if the City would talk with the Forest Service.
33 Let's make a plan, let's not make a plan when it happens.
34 So, I don't know how far that went. I had two talks with
35 the Forest Service. We had -- the tribe had talked,
36 telling them that we needed to make a plan. Hoonah is -
37 - just got forest all around it so, we're hoping that
38 someone comes up with a plan. So, we don't say, oh, we
39 should've talked about this earlier. I know we had a
40 forest fire there and it burned, but it was out in a
41 muskeg more than out in the trees. The tribe has also
42 bought -- had a grant where -- a rescue boat. So, where
43 we're gonna talk with the City Police so that they could
44 have someone have -- be trained on using a rescue boat.
45 We don't know where these officers are from so, they are
46 gonna do good training. One of the things is I -- my
47 boat has gone out four times to go find people because
48 Hoonah does not have a rescue boat. You know, I remember
49 one time we were coming from Sitka and I had to stop in
50 Tyonek and I parked in Tyonek, and then I said, look at

1 that. This little place here has a rescue boat, Hoonah
2 does not. And we have boats going out all the time,
3 every day. Every day I see little skiffs going out and
4 I see, you know, one of the people -- one time my dad
5 had rescued this one guy. He had untied his boat before
6 he started his motor. And this is in February when we
7 were (indiscernible) fishing, and he -- this guy was
8 going up to the camp up there, and he -- my dad had just
9 said, look it up, Anika Bay. He saw a little spot up
10 there and he said, I'm gonna go look what that is, and
11 it was a guy sitting in his skiff just ready to freeze
12 to death when he -- when they got to him, because in
13 February, that's tough weather. Just because he did --
14 he untied his boat before he started his motor. He
15 couldn't start it when he got out and this -- two years
16 ago, we had to rescue a guy, that idiot was coming from
17 Juneau. It was blowing 60 knots out in Chatham Strait
18 and the boat was ready to go. So, because we were tied
19 up in Hoonah and we had to go out and get him. You know,
20 and the Coast Guard had even made a film on it and shown
21 it on TV -- in national TV. So, of the boat being, you
22 know, and one time we had to rescue a Coast Guard's, a
23 small Coast Guard boat, and at the time we had to go
24 find another person out in Icy Straits. So, having a
25 rescue boat in Hoonah, where you can just call up the
26 police station and let's go. We need to see that, get
27 those guys. We've also -- the tribe has also had -- we
28 started a proxy hunt for elders. You know, we're a
29 certain age, and he -- like, I can't run around in the
30 woods anymore, but they have a proxy hunt for deer for
31 elders in Hoonah and that started last year. So, the
32 younger people with the tribe go out and get. We also
33 started a greenhouse. We're gonna -- we have a large
34 greenhouse in Hoonah that's gonna be starting up this
35 year so that we can give fresh vegetables to the school
36 and to the local grocery stores.

37
38 This year we had 240 ships, tourist
39 ships, 240, imagine that. You know I live -- like I
40 always said I live on Front Street. It's like a 4th of
41 July parade every day. People walking down the street
42 wanting to know what's what to see, you know. For me,
43 living in Hoonah, what is there to see? But when you're
44 from Nebraska or any place like that, they're happy to
45 see what it is. They say that this is what we came to
46 see. I asked one couple, they said -- I said -- they
47 said, yeah, we were talking to some people about this -
48 - these houses here. And I said, oh, you're -- were
49 talking to us. And I said, how many times have you been
50 here? He said, we've been here four times, we like to

1 come to Hoonah. And then I was talking to a guy that was
2 carving totem poles, and I told him that, yeah, this
3 couple came here four times, he said and he said, since
4 he carves a totem pole, they come talk to him all the
5 time, he says, I had one couple that was here ten times.
6 Ten times coming to Hoonah. You know, I have mixed
7 feelings about that place, but it's good employment for
8 people here -- people there. Hoonah is moving along, and
9 I wish I can get some crew. Pretty tough to get a crew
10 around there, you got young people that wanna stay home,
11 but like, even my grandson, goodness sake. I ask him to
12 go with me. He said, oh, no, my mom's gonna miss me. I
13 said, what? I mean, I guess you're not gonna go fishing.
14 Anyway, thanks for listening. Gunalchéesh

15

16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
17 Frank. Cathy Needham from Juneau, go ahead.

18

19 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had
20 all these comments that I wrote out cause I was like, I
21 have a lot of things to say. I'm not even gonna read
22 them. Because something has really struck me at this
23 table that I -- that was in my comments that I'd like
24 to kind of address. But before I do that, I just wanna
25 say that over the past 15 years, it has been an honor
26 and a privilege to represent subsistence users in this
27 region. And that's coming from a non-federally qualified
28 user. And so many of you know that I am leaving the
29 Council, it was a really hard decision to make. I'm
30 gonna miss working with these people immensely. I'm
31 gonna miss the vision and the work that we do. The one
32 thing I wanted to kind of bring forward something --
33 last night, it was said, oh, folks are gonna miss my
34 ability to work with the bureaucracy or my understanding
35 of the bureaucracy and work of bureaucracy, which struck
36 me. I've heard it before, but it struck me as -- I was
37 like, really? Cause I don't really feel like I understand
38 the bureaucracy at all. I don't understand how our system
39 -- how it becomes really difficult to work together to
40 accomplish the things that we both have the bureaucracy
41 and like, a body like this FACA committee have to kind
42 of work together. I don't understand when we can't work
43 together. I feel like when I first started on this
44 Council it was stronger staff. We had champions within
45 our staff that really would listen, and they would see
46 us struggle and they would help us through the
47 bureaucracy. So, I didn't feel like that was necessarily
48 something that I brought in terms of an asset to the
49 work that we do. But then I was like, well, if that's
50 the case, if that's how I feel, why did they say it? And

1 I think it's because maybe I have spent a lot of time
2 over the last number of years finding ways, even though
3 I didn't understand the bureaucracy. It's like, okay,
4 we have a problem, member Howard is probably gonna laugh
5 at this analogy cause we kind of chuckle about it, but
6 there's a toolbox and what are the tools of that toolbox,
7 and if we can't find it in that toolbox, can we find
8 another toolbox to be able to pull a tool to be able to
9 move forward with what we're trying to do? Our Council
10 is tenacious in what we do, we know that there's
11 something that we wanna accomplish. We don't always know
12 how to get there, but we stick through it until we
13 accomplish it, and that's been an amazing facet to work
14 within. So, what I was hearing around the table this
15 morning -- recently I was approached and was asked, what
16 is a good way to put traditional and local knowledge
17 into some of the work that the agencies are doing. That
18 approach came specifically from folks that are gearing
19 up to work on the revision to the Tongass Forest plan.
20 And they're really trying to figure out, like, how do
21 we really integrate subsistence into the forest plan and
22 how do we integrate traditional and local knowledge? And
23 sitting here today, I was like, you know what? We have
24 30 plus years of knowledge in a public record from not
25 only members of this Council, we have five members on
26 this Council that have been here for 20 plus years. So,
27 almost all of that time they've heard reoccurring
28 themes, they've brought up knowledge from their
29 communities. That's written in transcripts, that's
30 documented knowledge, that's traditional, that's
31 documented knowledge, that's local. We also have in that
32 record testimony from all of the communities that we
33 have visited and information there. That is a huge body
34 of knowledge. And why isn't it used? Well, it's in
35 transcripts, it's difficult to dig through if you don't
36 sit through our meetings and have the conversations,
37 it's really kinda difficult to encapsulate that. And it
38 struck me, I was thinking back to Unit 2 deer and how
39 the -- at that time, the bureaucracy or our staff put -
40 - we were allowed to have a true subcommittee, a true
41 FACA subcommittee in that, and that allowed for
42 representatives of this FACA committee to sit down and
43 work through a problem with land managers and local
44 people. And I think that that could be a tool that can
45 be utilized in order to maybe get at, how do you
46 incorporate subsistence? How do you incorporate
47 Traditional Ecological Knowledge? How do you incorporate
48 local knowledge? Into something big that's coming up
49 that this organization wants to be -- this Council wants
50 to be involved in and we wanna be involved in it. We

1 have been involved in most land management planning that
2 has happened in our region for the entire time that I've
3 been on this Council. And so, I would ask staff to find
4 ways to work within their agencies to figure out how can
5 we come up with funding, because that always seems to
6 be our biggest obstacle. How do we come up with funding
7 and have a co- or have a subcommittee of members of this
8 Council to be able to guide and offer subsistence,
9 traditional knowledge, and local knowledge to be
10 incorporated into the revision of the Forest Plan. And
11 they -- you know, especially the 20 -- the members who
12 have been here for 20 plus years, member Douville, Ms.
13 Phillips, Harvey Kitka, Frank Wright, Don Hernandez.
14 They might be able to help staff with that starting
15 point, with the information and the knowledge that they
16 have listened through Council reports, through
17 testimonies that have been provided through. So yeah, I
18 wanna end with that. As with that suggestion of something
19 of moving forward with the future. I wanna say it has -
20 - it's not only been an honor and a privilege to work
21 on behalf of subsistence users, but an honor, privilege
22 to work on with you guys and an honor and privilege to
23 be your Vice Chair. Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you very
26 much, Cathy.

27
28 (Applause)

29
30 Yeah, well, hopefully that applause will
31 show up on the record in some way because yeah, your
32 work here has really been appreciated, and your comments
33 just now I think were just really spot on. You know,
34 just to be able to sum up what we do here with this
35 session of, you know, Council member comments, it is,
36 you know, extremely important in my view, it always has
37 been. Asking the public to come forward and give us, you
38 know, their testimonies in our meetings on other, you
39 know, issues with subsistence, just extremely important.
40 And yeah, being able to use that knowledge would be very
41 valuable moving forward. So, appreciate, yeah, you kinda
42 summing up what we've -- what we do here. Thank you very
43 much. And I do still have a Council Chair's report and
44 I think my colleagues there from Petersburg and Craig
45 have done a really good job of kinda outlining what's
46 going on in central Southeast in Prince of Wales Island.
47 And I echo all of their comments, but I -- as the Chair
48 I did -- I do want to report on, you know, what's
49 happened at the Board meeting this past April, which I
50 attended and it was a wildlife meeting where the Board

1 made its final decisions on our recommendations on
2 wildlife proposals. And I -- pleased to report that I'd
3 say that we had very good results from the Board. They
4 approved all of our proposals. A little bit of
5 modification. They, you know, always have the option to
6 do that, but it was all well within things that I think
7 the Council would approve of. Particularly want to talk
8 about our Unit 4 closures, that we brought before the
9 Board, highly controversial -- our Council spent many
10 hours, over numerous years working through that process.
11 I was a bit surprised that we got a unanimous approval
12 from the entire Board on those proposals. And I think
13 that is in large part due to just all the work that this
14 Council put into those proposals. And part of that work
15 was, we took the extra effort to write a position
16 statement paper that we submitted to the Board that
17 outlined how this Council views a couple of key
18 provisions in Title 8 of ANILCA, where it talks about,
19 you know, closure that is necessary for the continuation
20 of subsistence uses. We address that in particular. And
21 we talked about what a meaningful priority means to this
22 Council. And we put that before the Board. And in our --
23 - my presentation to the Board I made sure that I
24 referred back to those -- that position Statement. So
25 that was in the Board's mind when they reviewed our
26 proposals. And I think we made a -- some what could be
27 significant of -- things happen there, in our proposals.
28 When the Board decided in our favor on those
29 recommendations, I think they took into consideration
30 how much competition can affect how subsistence uses are
31 affected within local areas. Regardless of the fact that
32 there may be -- there may not be a conservation concern
33 in the broader area. I think we made a very good point
34 of showing how, just a lot of competition can be
35 concentrated in areas that are very important to
36 subsistence users, and this can have an effect. I think
37 we made a very strong argument on that, and I think the
38 Board heard us and took that into consideration. The
39 other thing, I noticed that the Board seemed to focus
40 in on was this Council's effort to really try and
41 identify those specific areas and times that are most
42 important for subsistence harvest and how we focused our
43 closure on those specific times and areas. And at the
44 same time, we took real efforts to try and minimize what
45 the impacts would be to non-subsistence -- non-federally
46 qualified hunters. And that's something that ANILCA
47 requires and I think this Council did a really good job
48 of working through that issue. So, I think those were
49 kind of the main points that the Board was taking into
50 consideration when they approved our recommendation. So

1 I wanna, you know, commend the Council for doing some
2 really good work in that regard. And the other thing the
3 Board was also very interested in, which goes directly
4 back to what our Council put before the Board previously,
5 was our position statement on co-management, and that
6 subject came up in the context of -- the Board, you
7 know, approved our closures and reminded us that
8 closures are reviewed every four years. And the Board
9 would really like to see that when they institute a
10 closure such as they did, they would like to have some
11 way of knowing, you know, over the course of time, if
12 that has a desired effect on the benefit to subsistence
13 users and the minimal impact to non-federally qualified
14 users. So, in this case the Council has been supportive
15 of, you know, co-management efforts. We're on record
16 with that, and the Hoonah Indian Association has
17 initiated a co-management project of doing just what we
18 need to see happen, is in doing community assessments
19 and interviews of subsistence uses in the affected
20 areas. And our regional forester, you know, pointed out
21 -- that out, that that effort has been funded and it
22 needs to be -- continue to be funded, you know, through
23 the course of at least the next, you know, foreseeable
24 years where we wanna evaluate the effects of this
25 closure. And he expressed, you know, support to keep
26 that program going and I think this Council also needs
27 to support that effort. And I think our Council members,
28 when they go back to their local communities that are
29 in these affected communities need to, you know, talk
30 to their neighbors and just tell them how important it
31 is that, you know, somebody, you know, Fish and Game
32 Subsistence Division may be doing surveys, local tribes
33 may be doing surveys, but it's important to just really
34 give them good information that hopefully will, you
35 know, validate what the Council has done with our
36 proposals. So, that's what I took away from our Board
37 meeting. I wanted to present that to the Council. So,
38 with that, I think we can take a 15 minute recess, and
39 when we come back, we have a training session that we
40 are gonna have presentation on dealing with delegation
41 of authority. So be prepared for that, I think there's
42 some information in the book. Oh, excuse me, I misspoke.
43 After our Council members reports, we offer an
44 opportunity for public comment. And at the start of this,
45 I didn't see any comment cards, but now I do see that
46 there is one here. DeAnna, do you have somebody who
47 wanted to testify?

48
49 MS. PERRY: Mr. James, I have a comment
50 card from Franklin James. The non-rural determination

00036

1 issue will be discussed tomorrow. Are you also going to
2 be around tomorrow to give a comment during that time?
3 I'm sorry, I don't know, Mr. Franklin by sight.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Is he in -- yeah,
6 he must be in the room.

7

8 MS. PERRY: Oh! Are you available
9 tomorrow as well? With non-rural? Okay, great. Yeah, if
10 we can keep all of the non-rural proposals together,
11 that would be great.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Looks like we
14 have somebody else, maybe.

15

16 MS. PERRY: Yes. Mr. Ramp from Sitka
17 ADF&G Advisory Committee, Mr. Chair.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Steve Ramp
20 from Sitka. Yes, your opportunity, step up.

21

22 MR. RAMP: Good morning, ladies and
23 gentlemen. My name is Steve Ramp and as I said before,
24 I'm here to help Heather chaperoning these great high
25 school kids that are learning about the process. But I'm
26 also the Resident Sport Fish Seat on the Sitka Fish and
27 Game Advisory Committee. And your body has submitted a
28 proposal to the current Southeast Cycle of Board of Fish
29 proposals about establishing a subsistence king salmon
30 fishery in Southeast Alaska. And our AC is gonna be
31 taking that proposal up either tomorrow night or next
32 Wednesday night. I want to let you know that if you want
33 to Zoom in and share your thoughts with us as we ponder
34 whether to support or oppose that proposal. And we thank
35 you for submitting it and I can -- I've got the Zoom
36 link I can put on a sticky note on the back for anybody
37 that wants it. Busy season for us, it's a Southeast
38 Cycle so, we've got a 150 some-odd proposals that we're
39 going through. So, we're meeting every Wednesday night
40 till probably New Years.

41

42 But anyway, on another note, our AC and
43 me in particular for four years has been trying to get
44 a handle on the unguided rental boat issue within
45 Southeast Alaska. And apologies to Larry, but we're
46 kinda limiting this proposal to Area 2C not into 3A
47 where you're located, but it could. And halibut as you
48 all know, it's a tough nut to crack because they're
49 caught in State and Federal waters. They're managed by
50 the Federal government through the NPFMC and the catch

1 data on the sport end is collected by the State and
2 shared with the Federal government. And we've been --
3 three years ago, we submitted a proposal and they didn't
4 act on it, and since then we've -- I've testified for
5 our AC at the Council twice -- three times, twice to
6 their resident or their Charter Halibut Committee and
7 we keep -- we're a ball that keeps getting bounced back
8 and forth by the management entities. So, we submitted
9 another proposal this spring for this upcoming cycle.
10 And basically, what we're trying to do is get a handle
11 on how many of these boats are in Southeast, get them
12 registered, kinda like charter boats, but with a
13 different color sticker. Get data gathered that breaks
14 out the rental sport harvest that doesn't have a guide
15 on Board. So, we can quantify the take of the resource.
16 And we're also asking that they restrict their take from
17 the normal unguided take of two halibut of any size
18 every day to the charter guided halibut take of one
19 specific sized halibut every day, and generally it's
20 either 40 inches or less in Area 2C or over 80 inches,
21 which is a great big one. So, after we submitted it, we
22 actually had the Commissioner of Fish and Game meet with
23 a few of us on our AC, to ask us some questions to
24 address his concerns that were centrally around how do
25 you define an unguided rental boat and who's gonna
26 response -- be responsible on the boat for any log
27 keeping. Is it the boat owner? Is it everybody
28 individually? Is it the person that rented the boat and
29 signed for it? So, we went back to the drawing Board,
30 did some research and amended our proposal for kinda his
31 eyes only to address his concerns. And we're waiting to
32 hear back for his official feedback. But initial verbal
33 feedback from his aide is positive. He likes what we're
34 doing and about the time after we met with him, we found
35 out that the Board of Fisheries Board Support section
36 had chose not to accept our proposal for inclusion in
37 the proposal book. So, we're -- we track down the reasons
38 why and we have an option, the Board of Fisheries is
39 meeting October 29th and 30th in a work session, and we
40 have an option there to ask them to reconsider that
41 decision, their admin support section made and get it
42 back into the proposal book under which case it would
43 go out to the public that, hey, here's another proposal,
44 late inclusion in the book, that's what we're hoping
45 for. And then we can address the Commissioner's concerns
46 with an amended proposal which we can't really share
47 yet, cause it's an amendment to a proposal that
48 technically doesn't exist cause it didn't make the book.

49
50

So, we're hoping that will happen. So,

1 I guess I would ask anybody that's interested. I know
2 you probably can't as a Council, but as individuals, if
3 you want to Zoom in on the Board of Fisheries work
4 session late this month and share your comments, we'd
5 appreciate it. I think this Board, this Council probably
6 is in support of this proposal. Any support we can get
7 would be good to get it. We think whether -- the main
8 reasons for them not including it, are questions on who
9 has the authority to act on the various parts of the
10 proposal, whether it's the Board of Fisheries or the
11 Commission and Commissioner himself. And we think the
12 proposal merits a vetting of public comment from
13 individuals and all the ACs in the region in the
14 formalized Board of Fisheries proposal process before
15 their meeting. So, that's what we're hoping will happen
16 and I'll have -- after the lunch break, I'll have the
17 original proposal with me if anybody wants to look at
18 it. We're not ready to share the amended ones cause it's
19 an amendment to a proposal that doesn't exist yet. But
20 like I say, I'll put the Zoom meeting for the AC -- our
21 ACs meetings for tomorrow night and next Wednesday. I'm
22 not sure which night they're gonna deal with your
23 proposal. But anyway, I'd entertain any questions and
24 thank you for your time.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you,
27 Mr. Ramp. Are questions? Albert, go ahead.

28
29 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
30 Albert Howard from Angoon. Is your proposal is to limit
31 self-guided boats or what exactly is your proposal?

32
33 MR. RAMP: Not to limit the number of
34 boats. It's to limit the catch to match the guided
35 halibut catch limits from two a day of any size to one
36 a day of specific size.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead,
39 Albert, if you could follow up.

40
41 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, is this
42 something -- if the RAC as a whole decides we wanna
43 support that, we can do that? It seems like we've done
44 stuff like that in the past. My thought process is to
45 maybe, possibly even take it a step further and limit
46 the amount of boats in an area or if you already can
47 show proof you've done the self-guided operation. Cut
48 that whole thing off all together. Make it limited entry,
49 I guess, so to speak.

50

1 MR. RAMP: The problem with that is
2 deadlines, cause the deadlines were May 10th for the
3 proposals for this cycle, and we did get one in. So, we
4 can't submit a new one. We can support it in the comment
5 process with amendments recommended. And like I say, to
6 do what you're saying, you would probably have to go
7 through the Federal process with the North Pacific
8 Fishery Management Council to actually limit the number
9 of boats. And that would create a new limited entry
10 thing. And I know there's a lot of support for that
11 under the guided charter boats. A lot of people want to
12 limit them and put them under a limited entry procedure,
13 but that hasn't gotten much ground yet.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Albert, do you
16 have one more follow up?

17
18 MR. HOWARD: Just a comment, Mr. Chair
19 and a thought. As the Federal Subsistence Board we deal
20 with -- and we're being told that we don't have
21 jurisdiction in Federal waters, and we're sitting here
22 having a conversation where you're dealing with State
23 and Federal agencies in the same waters. It's amazing
24 to me that a new user group, newer than the subsistence
25 user has more say in jurisdiction in waters we've lived
26 in forever. And now we have no say in it but yet, when
27 you're trying to accomplish something, as this gentleman
28 is trying to do, you have to deal with Federal and State
29 agencies in those same waters we're trying to help co-
30 manage. And we're not trying to hurt the system, we're
31 trying to help solve a problem that [sic] just an
32 observation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
35 Albert. John.....

36
37 (Simultaneous speech)

38
39 MR. RAMP: With the Chair's permission,
40 I can address that real quick.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead and
43 respond.

44
45 MR. RAMP: Yeah, it's -- it is
46 frustrating and I've been bounced around between both
47 of them. It's kinda the way it is. Similar to your
48 subsistence chinook fishery, you're trying to establish
49 with your proposal. I think it's the very first proposal
50 in the book this year. So, you guys got prime time on

1 your proposal, but that's a State Board of Fisheries
2 proposal that may come up against Pacific Salmon Treaty
3 issues as well, which is an International-Federal thing.
4 So, it's kinda the way fisheries management has come to
5 be where we've got local, State, and Federal, and
6 International hands in the pie. Like with halibut, you
7 got the International Pacific Halibut Commission. So,
8 it's Federal, State and Federal -- and International.
9 So, I don't know, Patti, she's testified with the Council
10 like I have. She's got a lot of background in how this
11 works and thanks for all your testimony, Patti. And so,
12 thanks.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John, did you
15 have a question?

16

17 MR. SMITH: Yeah, basically I like what
18 I'm hearing, and I like your data. You know, being able
19 to identify the guided and unguided and be able to
20 recognize them on the water. But we're data driven so,
21 I really like that point of view. Thank you.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Patti, go ahead.

24

25 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Ramp, for
26 bringing this to our attention. Mr. Chairman, what more
27 can we do to be more effective? Other than to, you know,
28 join a Zoom meeting, can we submit a letter of support
29 for the original proposal to be added in -- onto -- into
30 the regulatory process that's in place now? You know
31 what exactly, Mr. Ramp, can we do to be as effective as
32 we can be to support your -- Sitka's proposal.

33

34 MR. RAMP: Thanks, and through the Chair.
35 Patti, as I said, the thing you could do is Zoom in or
36 go to Anchorage and go to the Board of Fisheries work
37 session on October 29th and 30th. And we've already
38 submitted the request in writing and submitted the
39 original proposal for that meeting, asking them to
40 reconsider their decision and then include it. And then
41 once it's a official proposal, then anybody public or
42 ACs can comment on it, recommended amendments, which
43 we're ready to do but we can't until it's a proposal.
44 So, I can get that information, it's on the Board's site
45 on that work session. We've -- the 15th was the deadline
46 for written comments, which we made. But there's -- it's
47 open to the public and I'm sure you can submit written
48 comments, like all Board of Fisheries meetings right up
49 until it starts.

50

00041

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Cal, do you have
2 a question?

3
4 MR. CASIPIT: I just have a quick
5 comment. You know, State Board of Fish proposals is
6 already on our agenda to discuss. I'd really like us to
7 hold -- we're trying to get through some other stuff
8 today. But also, I want to remind the Council that we
9 submitted similar proposals to both the Board of Fish
10 and the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, and
11 we've gotten that, go talk to them. So, I think this is
12 a valid topic, but let's -- can we move that to where
13 it is on our agenda. Anyway, cause we got a lot today.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you,
16 Cal. I was gonna point that out. It is an agenda item.
17 We can make comments to the Board of Fish from this
18 Council. We'll probably need some kind of a little
19 working group to be put together in the course of the
20 next few days to hash out some of this stuff. It's rather
21 complex, but Mr. Ramp is here with a lot of expertise,
22 Council members can corral him, you know, during the
23 course of the meeting and pick his brain. And like I
24 say, we do have an opportunity to make comments to the
25 Board of Fish. So, there's other proposals out there on
26 a lot of different topics we may want to weigh in on as
27 well. So we need to get those -- all those topics
28 together at some point during the meeting. Bring them
29 before the Council, ask for the Council's wishes on what
30 they want to do. So, this is one of the more complex
31 ones. In regards to our subsistence king salmon
32 proposal, Sitka Board Advisory Council was just asking,
33 I guess, more as a courtesy, if somebody from our Council
34 would wanna help explain to them what we're trying to
35 accomplish and maybe some details on that proposal. So,
36 we may have a discussion here. If there is somebody
37 available to call in to their meeting and help do that.
38 But that's kind of a separate issue. It may -- I'll
39 consult with our Coordinator. It may even require, you
40 know, a vote from the Council to designate somebody to
41 do that. I don't know, but we'll hash that out, and this
42 will all come back to us probably on Thursday. So, keep
43 all this in mind until then. So, thank you very much,
44 Mr. Ramp.

45
46 MR. RAMP: Thank you very much for your
47 time.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Was there -- I
50 think we have all the blue cards addressed, although I

1 see somebody with a blue card in their hand that might
2 wanna come forward and this is the time. Go ahead.

3
4 MR. SANDERSON: My name is Keenan
5 Sanderson. I represent myself here, I live here in
6 Ketchikan. I have Board of Fish comments, but I'll
7 reserve those till Wednesday. But I was asked by Council
8 member Wagner to come and give a brief report on green
9 crab, on our activities that we had past couple of weeks.
10 I'll be brief, though. I coach an academic ocean science
11 team here in Ketchikan, we're called the Saber Tooth
12 Salmon. And every year we have to write an academic
13 research paper on a topic that's provided to us by
14 University of Alaska Fairbanks. And this year, our theme
15 of the paper is all about invasive species in Southeast
16 Alaska or, I guess, Alaska in general. But they want us
17 to write about something that's close to home. My varsity
18 team decided that they wanted to write about European
19 green crab. And one of the things that we did to help,
20 I guess, give them more background and inspire them to
21 write a better research paper, was we brought that team
22 over to Metlakatla two weeks ago. I don't know everybody
23 who works in the fisheries department over there, but
24 the main person we've been working with is Ian Hudson a
25 really great guy. He brought our students out for a day
26 in the various places -- a few places that the tribe
27 over there traps for European green crab. They learn
28 about, like, the history of how they got there, what the
29 tribe is doing to mitigate the issues of the invasion
30 of European green crab over on the island. And some
31 potential future mitigation measures to help with the
32 issue all across Southeast Alaska. And basically, what
33 we're gonna be doing with our research paper is providing
34 background information on the crab and the history of
35 how they got from Europe to the East Coast to the West
36 Coast, and ultimately to Southeast Alaska. They're gonna
37 discuss the various cultural, financial, and ecosystem
38 impacts of the European green crab in Southeast Alaska.
39 And then the big point of the paper is both short-term
40 eradication of European green crab and then ultimately,
41 the long-term mitigation strategies to be able to reduce
42 the impacts on local species and people in Southeast
43 Alaska as they establish themselves here. They got some
44 crazy ideas. I don't tell them how to write their paper,
45 they're doing their -- all their own research. All I do
46 is answer questions to them if they have any of me. But
47 we're working with a ton of different people to help
48 make this possible. The Ketchikan Indian Community is a
49 big one with their environmental specialist and cultural
50 resources department. Obviously, we've been working with

1 Metlakatla Indian Community -- Indian Community and
2 their fisheries department. We've been in contact with
3 the State invasive species coordinator and Tammy Davis.
4 Oceans Alaska also, but more in a passive way. Alaska
5 Sea Grant, Washington Sea Grant, and a few other entities
6 to, like, really put together some sort of mitigation
7 management plan that the, you know, ultimately, this is
8 just a competition, but this is something that can be
9 taken from any entity and applied potentially anywhere
10 in Southeast Alaska, but -- got [sic] an army of 18 kids
11 this year that I'm super excited about teaching them
12 about this problem. And my other JV team is learning
13 about invasive tunicates, which is a lesser known
14 problem in our area, but definitely an issue with marine
15 fouling. But I'm super excited about it and we'll
16 hopefully have a finished product by the end of November.
17 If anybody is curious to read what my students have put
18 together. So, I'm not a green crab expert by any means.
19 I generally heir to the KIC Cultural Resources
20 Department and their environmental specialist, but
21 that's what we're up to. So, I just wanted to provide
22 that update because I was asked by Mr. Wagner to do
23 that. Happy to answer any questions about that, cause
24 it is a big issue coming up, especially in our southern
25 Southeast area.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
28 Mr. Sanderson. John.

29
30 MR. SMITH: Yeah. I just want to thank
31 you for your report and it's really good to see your
32 face in the years of serving, you know, seeing you being
33 mentored by the elders and being visible and
34 participating. And then now you're mentoring some of the
35 younger youth. I really appreciate that. But the
36 question is, out in your adventures setting the pots and
37 this, what's your data? Have you seen some? Are you
38 catching some or...?

39
40 MR. SANDERSON: So, kind of taking off
41 my coach hat and having my KIC hat back on. So, I also
42 work at the Cultural Resource Department at KIC. And
43 we've been -- we have been doing some early detection
44 and monitoring on our island here in Ketchikan. We've
45 been throwing out, you know, a handful of pots on a
46 couple of different beaches. We've been doing molt
47 surveys on pretty much most of the coast -- the road
48 access coastline that we have here and to today, we have
49 not observed any European green crab in Ketchikan. MIC
50 and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game have observed

1 a couple of carapaces over on Gravina Island. I believe
2 it was in July -- mid-July sometime, where they found
3 some in Bostwick Bay, which is a significant Dungeness
4 crab harvesting area for Ketchikan. But so far none in
5 -- along our road system. In terms of what's going on
6 over in Metlakatla, I'm -- definitely won't speak to
7 that because I don't know the numbers specifically, but
8 they are being hit hard. The one thing I will share from
9 our -- back to my coaching hat was in some of the areas,
10 it does appear that they're trapping efforts are working
11 in reducing the numbers there. There's a couple of
12 beaches, I can't remember the names of them. It might've
13 been one of the places in Tamgas Harbor, but they --
14 compared to when the invasion like it was really
15 starting, compared to now they have been seen reduced
16 numbers of European green crab. But I am definitely not
17 the expert of what's going on in Metlakatla. So, I'd air
18 to somebody else on that. And also, I just want to point
19 out, like I wish I was able to bring some of my team
20 here. Unfortunately, it's the end of the quarter for
21 them this week and we're heading to Sitka the week after,
22 so it is -- simply couldn't make time to be able to come
23 this week. So, maybe during the winter meeting I can try
24 to drag some here.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Frank.

27
28 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How
29 large do they get? You know, when I was in -- when I was
30 down in -- down on the beach in Hoonah, I saw a crab
31 only but it was green so, I -- just curious how big they
32 get and how do they affect all the Dungeness and all
33 that kind stuff. Thank you.

34
35 MR. SANDERSON: So, I kinda do my best.
36 The carapace, that's about, usually about their bigger
37 end or so about that. Now, an adult dunge is far bigger
38 than an adult European green crab. But where the big
39 issue comes in is when the Dungeness are still in their
40 juvenile stage and they're -- they are the same size of
41 European green crab. Those European green crab will
42 definitely outcompete juvenile Dungeness. And that's
43 where the big issue where competing comes in. There's a
44 ton of other things that they do to the ecosystem. They
45 create a -- they disrupt sediment within the localized
46 area, they eat pretty much everything, mussels, clams,
47 eelgrass is another big one that, for eelgrass, they
48 essentially act as like a nursery for a bunch of juvenile
49 anything, salmon, crab, flounder, etc. But odds are
50 there probably isn't any European green crab north of

1 Prince of Wales as of this moment, I could be wrong, but
2 it does take some time for them to migrate north. And
3 you do bring up a good point. There are crab that are
4 green, but they aren't necessarily European green crab.
5 And the only way to identify a European green crab from
6 anything else is their carapace shape, in which there
7 is a -- they have 13 spines on the front of their
8 carapace, five on the left side of their eye -- on the
9 left side of their carapace, five spines on the right
10 side of their carapace, and three spines in between their
11 eyes. And even then, European green crab aren't always
12 green, sometimes they appear brown or black or some other
13 color. And that's part of the reason why like the state
14 of Alaska doesn't necessarily tell people to go out and
15 kill European green crab, because it's possible that
16 people might misidentify them as a local species. Which
17 is difficult, but that's why there's a lot of education
18 outreach, you know, you've probably seen tons of posters
19 on different beaches and stickers, that kind of thing.
20 But that is one of the difficulties, is misidentifying
21 crab species along our coastline.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Patti, can
24 we move on to the next person?

25
26 MR. SANDERSON: I'll be around for the
27 whole meeting if anybody else has any questions about
28 this.

29
30 MS. PHILLIPS: A quick question, Mr.
31 Chairman.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay.

34
35 MS. PHILLIPS: So, they say that they
36 come into ballast. Is there measures in place to filter
37 ballast water so that it doesn't spread, continue to
38 spread?

39
40 MR. SANDERSON: So, there is a couple of
41 different vectors on how European green crab are thought
42 to be -- have gotten to Southeast Alaska. My
43 understanding and my conversations with Ian Hudson is
44 actually -- at least from how they got to Metlakatla was
45 they were brought in by ocean currents from Haida Gwaii.
46 It's not to say that they -- the larvae European green
47 crab don't get -- aren't transported by ballast water,
48 because that's definitely how they got to California, I
49 think it was like 70 years ago or something like that.
50 But it appears that the ocean currents flowing northward

1 into Clarence Strait in the west coast of Prince of
2 Wales. Is that when the eggs hatch, they are -- they
3 float up into the water column. The ocean currents push
4 them north and it seems to be that in south facing bays
5 and inlets, it's where they're really starting to
6 establish themselves in southern Southeast Alaska. There
7 is laws and regulations on how to deal with ballast
8 water in the United States. I'm certainly not an expert
9 in that, though, and I wouldn't be able to tell you off
10 the top of my head.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
13 Sanderson. Is there anybody on the phone who want to
14 make a public comment at this time?

15
16 MS. PERRY: And to speak by phone, if
17 you'll press star five, star five will show up on our
18 system that you'd like to speak.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Apparently not.
21 One more call in the room. Does anybody want to come
22 forward who -- we've seen all the blue cards that were
23 submitted. I'll just check, see if anybody else wanted
24 to come forward.

25
26 (No comment)

27
28 Okay. Thank you all for bringing your
29 comments to the Council. And now we will take a 15-
30 minute break and come back for our training session.
31 Okay.

32
33 (Off record)

34
35 (On record)

36
37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John and Louie,
38 you wanna come back to the table? We'll get started. Got
39 everybody. Okay, we have Kristen Morrow here to run us
40 through some of the things we need to know about the
41 delegation of authority letters that we do. So, go ahead.
42 Kristen, go ahead.

43
44 MS. MORROW: Thank you. Mr. Chair,
45 members of the Council, my name is Kristen Morrow, and
46 I'm with the anthropology division at the Office of
47 Subsistence Management. Today I'm going to be presenting
48 the delegation of authority training. I know the slides
49 are behind some of you, so I don't know if you want to
50 maybe turn to see them, but they're also in your Council

1 book starting on page 22 if it's easier to follow along
2 with the slides in there. So, moving forward, OSM plans
3 to hold one training session for each Council meeting.
4 We feel these trainings will help new Council members
5 become more familiar with the Federal Subsistence
6 Management Program, and can serve as a refresher for
7 more seasoned Council members. Today we're going to go
8 over the basics of delegation of authority. And this
9 training is meant to be informational and is not an
10 action item. Before I get started, I wanna situate you
11 to some of the example materials that I'll be referring
12 to throughout the presentation. You should each have two
13 example delegation of authority letters in front of you,
14 one for the Admiralty District Ranger and one for the
15 Hoonah District Ranger. Those were not in your meeting
16 books, they were stapled and outside of the meeting book
17 materials. So, with that, we might as well get started.

18
19 So, the objectives of this training are
20 to provide information about delegated authority to show
21 the Council where to find information about delegated
22 authority, and to discuss the Council's role in
23 delegated authority. This training is meant to be a broad
24 overview of delegated authority, and there will be time
25 for Q&A at the end of the training if you have questions
26 about specific issues in your region. To start with,
27 this is the regulation that allows the Board to delegate
28 their authority to agency field officials. The
29 regulation describes what kind of actions can be
30 delegated, for example, setting harvest and possession
31 limits, opening or closing seasons, etc. From here on
32 out, we will try to use plain language to more
33 specifically define and describe delegation of
34 authority.

35
36 So, to start with, what is delegation
37 of authority, in the broadest sense, delegation of
38 authority is the transfer of limited decision making
39 power from the Board to Federal managers and delegated
40 authority is what gives Federal managers the legal
41 authority to make in-season decisions to manage fish and
42 wildlife populations. When authority is delegated by the
43 Board, it is delegated to Federal managers. So, for
44 example, this may be National Park Service
45 superintendents or U.S Forest Service district rangers,
46 or Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge managers. These
47 local Federal managers often have greater connection to
48 an understanding of the resource than any of us at OSM
49 in Anchorage might have. Which is why delegating
50 authority to those local on the ground managers might

1 be very helpful. Beyond giving decision making authority
2 to Federal managers who have boots on the ground,
3 delegation of authority is important for multiple
4 reasons. One of the first reasons why delegation of
5 authority is important is that it allows Federal
6 managers to make quick management decisions as data and
7 local knowledge become available in season.

8
9 So, for example, it may be that the pre-
10 season forecast for certain fish populations suggested
11 that this run would be strong, but in-season data showing
12 that the run is weak and will not meet escapement goals.
13 And the Federal managers delegated authority would allow
14 them to quickly close fisheries to all or some users to
15 protect the fish population and allow for continuation
16 of subsistence users -- uses, sorry. This delegation of
17 authority also allows for people who live locally to
18 provide input to Federal managers who have that
19 authority delegated to them, provided that there's a
20 close relationship between managers and people living
21 in the area.

22
23 So, authority can be delegated from the
24 Board to local managers in two ways. The first is through
25 unit specific regulations. Currently, only wildlife
26 regulations have delegated authority in unit specific
27 regulations, primarily because wildlife management
28 includes a lot of routine management actions. For
29 example, a Federal manager may have delegated authority
30 to announce the harvest quota for a moose hunt each year
31 before the season begins. And this optimizes harvest
32 opportunity and conservation since the quota can be
33 adjusted annually in response to population data.
34 Authority can also be delegated through delegation of
35 authority letters. These letters allow Federal managers
36 to issue special actions, which we'll discuss more in
37 just a minute.

38
39 How the Board delegates authority
40 depends on if the authority has been delegated in unit
41 specific regulations, or in these delegation of
42 authority letters. For delegation of authority letters,
43 the Board can delegate authority or issue those letters
44 at any time. This is done through an administrative
45 action which requires the Board to vote either by email,
46 poll or during a Board meeting. But the issuing of
47 delegation of authority letters does not have to go
48 through the formal regulatory process. Being able to
49 issue these letters at any time gives the Board the
50 ability to act quickly and to be responsive to changing

1 conditions and issuing letters in this way does not
2 require public input. However, the Board understands the
3 value of public feedback and may ask for feedback from
4 the Councils before creating or modifying any delegation
5 of authority letters. In contrast, delegation of
6 authority and unit specific regulations can only happen
7 through the public regulatory process. In other words,
8 it requires a proposal to change existing fish or
9 wildlife delegation of authority through the regulatory
10 cycle. While public input is at the Board's discretion,
11 when its -- authority is delegated through the letters,
12 public input is required when authority is delegated
13 through unit specific regulations that are put in place
14 through the regulatory cycle. So, for example, this is
15 an example of authority that's been delegated to a
16 manager in unit specific regulations. So, these again,
17 currently only occur in wildlife regulations and are for
18 routine annual management decisions. So, the authority
19 in this example you see on the slide is a bit more
20 limited in scope in unit specific regulations than you
21 might see in delegation of authority letters. In this
22 example, the authority only pertains to setting permit
23 conditions and announcing closures for a winter hunt.
24 If anyone, including the Councils or the public, wanted
25 to change or modify this authority, they would need to
26 submit a regulatory proposal that would go through the
27 same process that we go through each year.

28
29 In contrast to authority that's
30 delegated in unit specific regulations, the managers may
31 also be delegated authority through the delegation of
32 authority letters, and these letters give managers the
33 authority to issue special actions. So, the special
34 actions issued by Federal managers are subject to
35 regulatory requirements. For example, public hearings
36 are required for any temporary special actions, which
37 are those that would last longer than 60 days. And public
38 hearings are encouraged for emergency special actions,
39 which are those that may not exceed 60 days. The managers
40 must also seek Council recommendations when the timing
41 of the Council meetings allow. Delegation of authority
42 letters can be issued or rescinded by the Board at any
43 time. Issuing or rescinding the letters does not need
44 to take place at a Board meeting or during the regulatory
45 cycle. Having the -- this process sort of structured in
46 this way, gives the Board flexibility to adapt to
47 changing conditions and make sure that the local
48 managers have the tools they need to manage and protect
49 populations well, and as well as to optimize subsistence
50 opportunity. Changes to the existing delegation of

1 authority letters can be requested by the Councils or
2 by the public, by sending a letter to the Board, or by
3 putting in a request at Board meetings.

4
5 The current delegation of authority
6 letters are not published online at this time, but if
7 any member of the Council or the public would like to
8 see a copy of the delegation of authority letters, they
9 can contact OSM or the local in-season manager. So,
10 continuing on with the delegation of authority letters,
11 while the letters issued to the managers are specific
12 to the areas and species covered, the general language
13 and requirements of each letter are the same across
14 different regions and throughout the State. So, for
15 example, all letters require communication with affected
16 parties such as the Council Chairs and ADF&G, and tribal
17 consultations must be conducted if practicable. The
18 managers may also defer actions on very contentious
19 issues if immediate action is not required.

20
21 So, currently the Federal program has
22 fisheries regulations and wildlife regulations, and
23 authority is delegated in separate letters for fish and
24 for wildlife. So, those delegation of authority letters
25 will not be in one single letter for both fish and
26 wildlife, even if it's in the same region. For fisheries,
27 the scope of the letter is broad and consistent, and
28 they cover all fish species for that particular area. A
29 list of Federal fisheries managers with delegated
30 authority by area can be found on page 98 of the
31 Fisheries Regulation Handbook. This contrast a little
32 bit with wildlife -- wildlife delegations, which tend
33 to cover specific hunts species, and hunt areas, and
34 most wildlife actions are routine and occur every year.

35
36 The unit specific regulations of the
37 Federal Wildlife Harvest Regulations book. You can see
38 that image of -- on the slide of the exclamation point
39 in a red triangle. Anytime you see that in your
40 regulations handbook indicates that authority has been
41 delegated for that hunt in that area, and the local in-
42 season manager may take certain actions like setting
43 harvest quotas. So, if you see that icon in your
44 regulations handbook, that lets you know that there may
45 be some additional actions taken that aren't specified
46 in regulation, and you may need to contact your local
47 in-season manager to get the most up to date information
48 about that hunt. All of the authority delegated through
49 letters are listed in the Wildlife Regulations Handbook
50 beginning on page 152. They're organized by Federal

1 manager and list the area, species, and authority that's
2 been delegated, which essentially means what specific
3 actions that manager could take for that species in that
4 hunt. Each row on that table in the handbook corresponds
5 to a separate letter that's been issued. For example,
6 on page 154, you can see that the Izembek National
7 Wildlife Refuge manager has authority to close the moose
8 season in Unit 9D once ten bulls have been harvested.
9 And the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve
10 superintendent has authority to manage the caribou hunt
11 in a portion of Unit 12. Specifically, they can open and
12 close the season, announce the harvest quota, and the
13 number of permits to be issued. So, in summary, we have
14 delegation of authority, which means the Board transfers
15 limited decision making power to on the ground Federal
16 managers, and this authority can be in unit specific
17 regulations or delegation of authority letters. For unit
18 specific regulations, delegated authority can only be
19 added to or modified during the regulatory process, and
20 the delegation tends to be for routine annual management
21 decisions, such as closing seasons once harvest quotas
22 are met. The delegation in unit specific regulations is
23 currently only for wildlife regulations, which has more
24 routine management actions such as closing seasons.

25
26 The Council's role in delegation of
27 authority for the unit specific regulations is by
28 submitting proposals to change authority that's been
29 delegated, making recommendations to the Board on
30 associated regulatory proposals and consulting with
31 managers before special actions are taken or in this
32 case, since it's unit specific regulation, it wouldn't
33 be a special action, but a management action. Delegation
34 of authority letters are a bit easier for the Board to
35 change or rescind. They give the Board more flexibility
36 to act quickly and respond to changing conditions. And
37 again, changes to the letters can happen outside the
38 regulatory cycle. So, delegation of authority letters
39 give the Federal managers the ability to issue special
40 actions. These letters are generally broader in scope,
41 but subject to more requirements, such as requiring
42 public hearings, and both Fisheries and Wildlife
43 regulations have delegation of authority letters. The
44 Council also has a role in the delegation of authority
45 letters. Councils may request to add to or modify them
46 through sending letters to the Board, or by making a
47 request at Board meetings. And the Board may ask Councils
48 for feedback on proposed changes to delegation of
49 authority letters when time allows.

1 The letters also require that managers
2 consult with Council Chairs before issuing special
3 actions, and the Chair is encouraged to seek feedback
4 from other Council members. So, some of the takeaways
5 here are that -- is that delegation of authority allows
6 for quick in-season management actions, which allows
7 Federal managers to help protect fish and wildlife
8 populations and protect the continuation of subsistence.
9 Managers are required to consult with affected parties
10 before taking action, which commonly includes Councils,
11 ADF&G, and OSM. Council Chairs are encouraged to bring
12 in other Council members when consulting with in-season
13 managers. And is sort of bringing this back to those
14 examples, I pointed out at the beginning, if you look
15 at, for example, the Admiralty District Ranger letter,
16 that delegation of authority requires that the district
17 ranger hold a public hearing and consult with necessary
18 parties before they might take an action, like adjusting
19 harvest limits for deers [sic]. And that special action
20 would be required because that authority has been issued
21 in a letter. Whereas if that authority was issued in
22 unit specific regulations, the administrative process
23 of holding a special action public hearing would not be
24 required. So, that concludes the training. You can
25 always contact OSM or the in-season managers if you have
26 any questions. I'd be happy to try to answer questions
27 now, but may also rely on some of the Forest Service
28 staff that are here, or the OSM biologists that are
29 online as well. Thank you.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
32 Kristen. Council members have some questions on this?

33
34 (No response)

35
36 And you say you may think of some
37 questions over time, but there's staff here that can
38 answer those. Mike, go ahead.

39
40 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
41 Mike Douville. Could you give an example of what triggers
42 a special action or DAL. I guess my curiosity can be
43 initiated by a Council member, a biologist, or just how
44 does this come to be when the alarm goes off?

45
46 MR. CROSS: Yeah, for the record, my name
47 is Rob Cross. I'm the subsistence manager for the
48 Tongass. Through the Chair, member Douville. Yeah,
49 there's a lot of examples. I guess from the fisheries
50 side, you know, we saw that there was a conservation

1 concern for ooligan on the Unuk River. We used emergency
2 special action to close it to non-federally qualified
3 harvesters. We can also use special actions to modify
4 methods and means and take for Federal harvest. So,
5 that's where we set the five gallon per household limit
6 for ooligan as well. Special actions for wildlife are
7 taken for a number of reasons, some of which are meeting
8 quotas for, say Unit 5 moose or Unit 4 goats. Special
9 actions can also be taken to increase subsistence
10 limits, like for example, out at Redoubt Lake when there
11 was a very large or larger than expected return of
12 sockeye, we used a special action to increase harvest
13 limits out there. I don't know if that covers it.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Mike,
16 follow up.

17
18 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
19 most of these are for closures, for conservation
20 reasons, but I believe that they can also be used for -
21 - the only example I can think of is a wolf trapping
22 season. So, say you have a target mark of 70 and you've
23 got 50 and you ran out of time. So, on Federal public
24 land, the district ranger could extend the season to get
25 closer to your target harvest number.

26
27 MR. CROSS: So, the -- through the Chair.
28 So, the reasons to use a special action, whether
29 temporary or emergency are outlined in the delegation
30 of authority letter, and it's for reasons of
31 conservation concern. For the continuation of
32 subsistence uses, which put on the spot could address
33 what you were talking about to lengthen a season to
34 continue subsistence uses or for reasons of public
35 safety. And so, they're very limited in the scope of
36 what an in-season manager can do outside of the
37 regulatory process.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Patti, go ahead.

40
41 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 Following up on that question so, there's a delegation
43 of authority issued saying that we're going to shut down
44 the wolf season at 50. But then the training said that
45 a member of the public could say -- can ask for a change.
46 So, as a member of the public or a tribal member could
47 ask for a change via letter. We request the change to
48 meet our subsistence needs to not close it until you
49 reach 70. Is that what you're saying this process could
50 do?

1

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MS. MORROW: Thank you, Member Phillips, for that question. For the record, this is Kristen Morrow. That information regarding what the -- how the Councils can request changes was more focused, as far as I understand, on the scope of the delegation of authority letter. So, for instance, the letter might say the Federal in-season manager can set the harvest quota, and the Council may request that the Federal in-season manager not be allowed to set the harvest quota, for instance. I don't know if the current process would allow for that sort of back and forth like you were describing. That may be something that the venue of the public hearing that's required of special actions -- of temporary special actions could allow for that sort of dialogue. I hope that answers the question and clarifies a bit about how the Council can request changes to the structure of the letters. Not necessarily changes to the in-season actions being taken, if that makes sense. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Mike, you have another question?

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MR. DOUVILLE: I'm having trouble appearing, really to get to your explanation. So, what are you saying is that you cannot extend the season. We're not talking about extending the (indiscernible) or the quota, if you will, but extending the time to harvest that quota. Kind of an example of maybe three years ago I believe that the season on -- in Unit 2 was extended like 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 days, I can't remember. And that was done by the district ranger because of such bad weather the guys were having trouble getting out there to retrieve their gear. That was of the example I was talking about, but.....

MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Yeah, I think that would be a good example of a continuation of subsistence harvest. And I think some of this will be addressed in the -- not to delay an answer, but I think some of this will be addressed in the next presentation because OSM is proposing a change to the delegation of authority letters for wildlife. And I guess to give a preview looking at using regulations more and putting in regulations as Kristen mentioned that a quota will be announced. And sort of taking that out of the delegation of authority letter and putting it into regulation, which will also give more opportunity for it to go through the regulatory process and be presented

1 to the Council as far as what parameters to put on that
2 -- on the setting of the quota and things of that nature.
3 So, yeah, I'm sorry, that's kind of a roundabout, but
4 it might be explained a little bit more in the next
5 presentation, and if not, I'm happy to answer it at that
6 point.

7
8 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. I have a
9 question. It's Don Hernandez. What initiates the letter
10 -- delegation of authority letters? Does that come
11 through a request from Councils, or does the Board
12 generate them or like I say, what initiates that in-
13 season -- a delegation of authority?

14
15 MS. MORROW: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
16 is Kristen Morrow, for the record. As far as I
17 understand, the delegation of authority letters can be
18 issued in response to requests from the Council,
19 requests from in-season managers, potentially. They
20 could emerge from a proposal request that's been put
21 forward. I know sometimes that's a modification that's
22 -- that can be made where you know, this regulation is
23 updated and authority will also be delegated. So, I think
24 there are multiple venues at which those letters can
25 come to be. The sort of main, I guess, thing to hold on
26 to is that they don't have to only come through the
27 regulatory process. They can be issued at any time.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
30 Anybody else?

31
32 (No response)

33
34 And what's this other presentation
35 you're referring to, Rob? Is that to come at a future
36 meeting or - not his meeting, right?

37
38 MR. CROSS: I believe it's up next, Mr.
39 Chair. And also, just to answer member Douville's
40 question. So, in the Federal wildlife regulation book,
41 the Craig District ranger has a delegated authority to
42 close, reopen, or adjust the Federal hunting season or
43 trapping season for wolves. And generally, the season
44 is set through special action prior to the start of the
45 season based on the State and Federal management plan
46 of wolves and that's for reasons of conservation
47 concern. But the example used where the weather's bad
48 and so, folks aren't able to go out and harvest and the
49 ranger can extend that season, that's well within the
50 delegated authority too, or for the reasons of

1 continuation of subsistence.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Follow up, Mike.

4

5 MR. DOUVILLE: Oh, okay. Mike Douville,
6 here. So, the district ranger can extend the season
7 without reopening the season. Not because of weather,
8 but because -- well, because of -- usually it's weather
9 that causes the disruption in your ability to harvest.
10 It's freezing, just really bad weather, snow and stuff
11 like that. So, I guess I asked the question because it
12 is important that we harvest the quota. Because I have
13 no confidence in the ability of the State to come up
14 with an accurate estimate of the population, and our
15 deer population is declining as a result of more wolves
16 so, if we can't harvest a given quarter, then it makes
17 it worse. So, that was my question or my concern, I
18 guess. Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
21 Are there any other questions on delegation of authority
22 letters? Patti.

23

24 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25 So, looking at page 152 of the, you know, the Harvest
26 of Wildlife blue book. It says, I mean -- and Mr. Cross
27 referenced the Craig Ranger district portion of Unit 2
28 for wolves. To issue emergency special actions not to
29 exceed 60 days, or temporary special actions to set
30 Federal subsistence harvest quotas, close or reopen
31 Federal seasons, or to adjust harvest and possession
32 limits for deer, or close Federal public lands to the
33 take of deer by all users, or close, reopen or adjust
34 the Federal hunting and trapping seasons for wolves. So,
35 it doesn't say anything about weather conditions. It
36 just says that you can change, close, reopen, or adjust
37 the Federal hunting and trapping seasons for wolves with
38 no criteria attached. So, if the RAC or if a member of
39 the public has objections to the in-season action, do
40 they -- when do they submit their concern to keep the
41 season open to meet the 70 quota rather than a 50 quota?
42 When would somebody submit a letter objecting to a
43 closure prior to meeting the 70 quota?

44

45 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Member
46 Phillips. So, I think -- well, first of all, so for Unit
47 2 wolves, there isn't a traditional quota system there.
48 It's a set season length through special action. But
49 using Unit 5A moose as an example, the quota is 30 west
50 of the Dangerous. And so that -- I'm trying to think of

1 the right way to respond to this. We -- so, there we try
2 to get as close to the quota as possible. And so, I'm
3 not sure that there's a means to object to closing it
4 prior to the quota being met, but the objection -- the
5 objective is to get to 30 bulls, and that's when we
6 would close that system or Unit 4 goats is another
7 example, when the quota is met, you -- either five
8 billies in an area or one nanny, when that quota is met,
9 then we use a special action to close that. So, I can't
10 think of a whole lot of examples where we're closing it
11 prior to a quota if a quota is actually in place.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Patti.

14

15 MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman. So, my
16 question was specific to wolves. So, are you saying that
17 there's a set season length for wolves so, if they don't
18 meet their quota in that set season length, then there's
19 no special authority given to extend that season.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: If I could jump
22 in here. This is Don Hernandez. There is no more quota,
23 they've moved away from the actual quota. Now there's
24 just a management objective so, it's a different
25 situation. And they set the season length hoping to meet
26 that desired harvest but there is no actual quota. Go
27 ahead, Patti.

28

29 MS. PHILLIPS: So, our Traditional
30 Ecological Knowledge is saying that in order to -- they
31 would prefer to -- of a desired harvest of 70 and they
32 want this because their needs are not being met to
33 harvest deer, because they feel like wolves are taking
34 more deer than they actually think. But if the set season
35 length is -- you only harvest 50, then you're saying you
36 can't get the desired harvest of 70 because there's a
37 set season length. That's -- is that what you're saying?
38 And there's no changing to the delegation of authority
39 to meet that?

40

41 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair, member
42 Phillips. There is authority within the delegation of
43 authority letter to change that season length. And it's
44 actually the delegation of authority letter that gives
45 the authority to the in-season manager to set that season
46 length. And it's based off of a estimated catch per unit
47 effort per day. And then that catch per unit effort per
48 day is applied to the number of days that they think it
49 will take to reach that harvest limit. So, the examples
50 provide or the example provided by member Douville of

1 bad weather and the ranger having the authority to extend
2 that season based off of bad weather that's fully within
3 the delegation of authority letter. And then I'll also
4 add that using Unit 2 wolves as an example. So, that's
5 gonna be a temporary special action and that triggers
6 consultation with ADF&G, with the Regional Advisory
7 Council. There's a requirement for a public hearing and
8 then there's tribal consultation as well. And so, that's
9 gonna take place on the evening of the 24th. And that's
10 the time when the public has and the tribal entities
11 have to voice concerns over season length or whatever
12 in season action is being taken because it's going to
13 be over 60 days.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, are there
16 any more questions?

17
18 (No response)

19
20 Can we move ahead to the proposed
21 changes then in this delegation of authority?

22
23 MR. CROSS: Yes, Mr. Chair, again, for
24 the record, my name is Rob Cross, and I'm the Subsistence
25 Program manager for the Tongass. And I'm gonna give a
26 brief overview from OSM on the proposed changes to
27 wildlife delegated authority. So, this is meant to be a
28 brief introduction to this effort. And the Councils will
29 have additional opportunity at future meetings to
30 further review and comment on these changes. The Office
31 of Subsistence Management is proposing to move the
32 authority and the existing delegation of authority
33 letters back into wildlife unit specific regulations.
34 And so, while staff have not thoroughly reviewed every
35 single wildlife delegation of authority letter, the vast
36 majority of them are for routine management actions that
37 happen every year such as announcing harvest quotas.
38 Having the delegated authority for these routine
39 decisions and unit specific regulations is more
40 appropriate than issuing special actions year after
41 year. This also provides a clear public process for
42 changing delegated authority through regulatory
43 proposals and decreases the administrative burden on
44 Federal managers by eliminating all of the regulatory
45 requirements associated with special actions and the
46 delegation of authority letters. And some examples of
47 that would be public hearings, tribal consultation,
48 record keeping, analyses, all the things that are
49 required for special actions for the in-season manager.
50 And the timeline for these proposed changes is as

1 follows. In March of 2025, during the next open window
2 to submit wildlife regulatory proposals, the Office of
3 Subsistence Management will submit a proposal to move
4 wildlife delegated authority into unit specific
5 regulations and to rescind many of the existing letters.
6 In the fall of 2025, so, a year from now, at your next
7 fall meeting, the Councils will consider and make
8 recommendations on this proposal. And in April 2026, the
9 Board will take final action on the proposal at the next
10 wildlife regulatory meeting. That completes my brief
11 overview of the proposed changes to wildlife delegated
12 authority, and I'd be happy to address any questions or
13 receive feedback on this topic. But again, this is just
14 meant to be an introduction to this idea, and there will
15 be plenty of additional opportunity for the Council to
16 comment and hear these changes.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Rob.
19 Do we have any questions on the proposed changes? Cathy,
20 go ahead.

21
22 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
23 changing, how does this affect? Can you use the Unuk
24 River ooligan as an example of how that might be under
25 delegated authority now and then could be changed into
26 putting it into a unit wide regulation and what the
27 effects of that would be.

28
29 MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair,
30 member Needham. So, this is only for wildlife delegation
31 of authorities right now. But I can pivot if it's okay
32 with you to Unit 4 goats, I guess would be a good
33 example. So, we've split Baranof Island or Unit 4 into
34 all these very small management zones to try to increase
35 harvest opportunity across Unit 4 or really across
36 Baranof Island. And so, in doing so, instead of using
37 these really big zones and saying, you know, if you
38 harvest ten goats anywhere out of these larger zones,
39 then it's gonna be shut down, we've met the quota.
40 They've shrunk the zone so that it's down into watershed
41 level. And the reason why this, I think is a good example
42 is that as the Council sees, you know, we have seven
43 special actions so far to manage Baranof Island goats.
44 And really, it's just that we've met the quota and the
45 zone and so, that triggers a special action to then
46 close that zone. So, what this is proposing is to move
47 that into wildlife regulation, where it just says that
48 the in-season manager or the district ranger is going
49 to announce a quota and then it will be closed after
50 that quota is met.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Follow up.
Cathy, go ahead.

MS. NEEDHAM: Okay, thanks for bringing it back to the wildlife piece of it. And so, just in general, I guess I'm trying to get a feel for does that make it less flexible once it becomes in regulation for concerns that may arise in any given season or will special actions through delegated authority still be able to occur, especially with that goat thing? If something unforeseen comes up in a specific unit when the quote hasn't been met.

MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair, member Needham. That's a really good question. And I think that's something that needs to be addressed by the Council and concerns like that need to be addressed by the Council when this comes up again. But I do think, you know, when the language says a quota will be set for zones on Baranof Island for mountain goats, that really gives flexibility to the managers to say, you know, South Baranof Zone, for example, has been closed through temporary special action for a number of years cause it doesn't really sustain a viable population of goats. And so, that one can be set as zero due to a conservation concern, pre-season. Oh, and Lisa Grediagin from OSM, OSM says that she would like to address this question, so, defer to her if that's okay. I don't know if we can -- she can.....

MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay, thank you. Mr. Chair, can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yep, go ahead.

MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay. Yeah so, in response to Cathy -- Lisa Grediagin, Wildlife Division supervisor with OSM. And in response to Cathy's question, the intent is to move all the routine management actions that happen every single year from these delegation of authority letters into unit specific regulations, because it's not really appropriate -- I mean, special actions are intended to be used for like extenuating circumstances, emergency situations that weren't able to be anticipated. They're not really meant to be used for a routine thing that happens every year and you're gonna, you know, if you're issuing a special action every year, it should be regulation, not a special action, but in response to your specific question or

1 concern. I mean, these delegation of authority letters
2 are administrative. They're not regulatory. So, the
3 Board could issue them at any time. You know, they don't
4 need to have a meeting, they don't need to act on a
5 proposal. They can just, you know, decide through an
6 email poll, we wanna issue this temporary delegation
7 authority letter, and then the in-season manager can
8 have that authority for you know, whatever particular
9 situation may arise that it's appropriate to have that
10 letter. So, it's kinda trying to reduce the
11 administrative burden on the in-season managers and
12 announcing, you know, routine management actions. But
13 it's certainly, you know, again, it's an administrative
14 procedure for the Board can issue authority letters at
15 any time.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
18 Lisa. And I hope that clarifies a lot to Council members
19 because we really need to break for lunch, cause we do
20 have people at 1 o'clock who are gonna call in, one of
21 whom is back in Washington, D.C., where it will be 5
22 o'clock, so. We're gonna recess till one o'clock and
23 we'll hear from the folks on high. So, thank you very
24 much.

25
26 (Off record)

27
28 (On record)

29
30 MS. PERRY: Good afternoon, everyone. As
31 folks come back into the room, if we could have you take
32 your seats. This is the Southeast Subsistence Regional
33 Advisory Council meeting. We're here in Ketchikan, and
34 we're going to be getting started promptly at 1:00. We
35 do have some speakers that are available at that time.
36 So, yeah, if we could have all the Council members and
37 public come back into the room, that would be great.
38 We'll be getting started shortly. Thank you.

39
40 (Pause)

41
42 Again, good afternoon. This is DeAnna
43 Perry, council coordinator for the Subsistence Regional
44 Advisory Council. We're getting folks back in seats and
45 getting ready to get our afternoon session started. Up
46 front, we do have a time certain for policy, management
47 and budget folks. We have Joan Mooney with us and Raina
48 Thiele and Mr. Chair, I'm going to hand it over to you.
49 And if we could go ahead and see if Ms. Mooney is
50 available to go ahead with her comments, that would be

1 great.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
4 DeAnna. We still have a couple of Council members that
5 are just entering the room, but yeah, we got most of the
6 Council here. I know it's very difficult to find a place
7 to have lunch and be back in an hour. But thank you,
8 Council members, for making the effort, and I'll bear
9 that in mind for the rest of the meeting. It does take
10 a little time here for people to find something to eat,
11 but we are ready. So, Ms. Mooney, are you ready to
12 address the Council?

13

14 MS. MOONEY: I am, thank you so much, Mr.
15 Chairman. And I'm really honored to be here today. Raina
16 Thiele wanted to join us, but she's had a conflict that
17 has run over. So, she asked that I extend her apologies
18 to all of you. And she looks forward to engaging with
19 you in the future. And I'm also going to share with you
20 some of her thoughts and some of her remarks. But since
21 I'm meeting many of you for the first time, I'll keep
22 my camera on. So, those of you who are online can see
23 me. My name is Joan Mooney and just by way of
24 introduction, I grew up here in the Washington, D.C.
25 area and with my parents, my brother and sister. I have
26 a wonderful daughter, Kate, and -- who has a -- I have
27 a new grandchild, Tommy who is a four-month-old. And so,
28 you can imagine a lot of my time is spent actually
29 between here in North Carolina visiting with them. And
30 I'm privileged to serve Secretary Deb Haaland and
31 President Biden here as Principal Deputy Assistant
32 Secretary for the Office of Policy, Management and
33 Budget, which is an Office of the Secretary. As you may
34 know, on July 15th, the Office of Subsistence Management
35 transitioned employee systems and operations to the
36 office of the Secretary's Assistant Secretary for
37 policy, Management and Budget, or PMB. And that's the
38 position that I'm executing now. So, a top ask, as you
39 know, of participants during the statewide 2022 Tribal
40 Consultation and listening sessions on how to improve
41 the Federal Subsistence Management Program to better
42 meet Alaska Native subsistence needs, was that the
43 Department take immediate action to move f -- OSM outside
44 of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and moving was also
45 one of the top asks during the Secretary of the
46 Interior's comprehensive statewide review of the Federal
47 Subsistence Management Program that was carried out 14
48 years ago in 2010. A proposal to move OSM out of the
49 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and under an assistant
50 Secretary to the Interior was finally included in

1 President Biden's proposed budget for fiscal year 2024.
2 And of course it was approved by the Congress. So,
3 elevating OSM to this office within the Office of the
4 Secretary will help ensure that the program gets high
5 level visibility and access to necessary resources to
6 carry out its mission. And we're already seeing the
7 results thanks to the good work done by OSM and the PMB
8 team. So, just last week, we were happy to report that
9 the addition of three new public members on the Board
10 has now been published in the Federal Register, and we're
11 now accepting nominations from federally recognized
12 tribes. The final rule requires three new members to
13 possess personal knowledge of and direct experience with
14 subsistence uses in rural Alaska, including Alaska
15 Native subsistence uses, and to be nominated or
16 recommended by a federally recognized tribal government
17 in Alaska. The public members of the Board are to be
18 appointed by the Secretary of Interior with the
19 concurrence of the Secretary of Agriculture and tribes
20 are welcome to nominate or recommend public board
21 members for these three new seats, and nominations will
22 be considered upon their receipt. So, please feel free
23 to -- actually do not hesitate to direct any questions
24 or nominations or recommendations to Raina Thiele or
25 Sarah Taylor, and I'll include their email addresses in
26 the chat. And of course, the staff that is there
27 representing OSM can provide that information of Raina
28 and Sarah's contacts. So, now OSM is organizationally
29 situated here within the Office of Policy and
30 Environmental Management, which is one of the divisions
31 here. That division is supervised by my Deputy Assistant
32 Secretary Eric Werwa, who's currently on travel status,
33 and he will be calling into the meetings periodically.
34 He attended this morning and introduced himself then.
35 So, I want to assure you that OSM staff in the
36 organizational chart remain the same, and the physical
37 location of the office will remain in Anchorage.
38 Additionally, please know that the Federal Subsistence
39 Fish and Wildlife regulatory cycles, operating
40 procedures, regulation making process and meeting
41 schedules remain unchanged. And OSM is going to continue
42 to provide support to the Federal Subsistence Management
43 Program for the benefits of all rural users, consistent
44 with the requirements of Title 8 of ANILCA. The Fish
45 Resource Monitoring Program and the partners for
46 Fisheries Monitoring Program remain critical under OSM,
47 and they will not change. With the elevation of OSM to
48 the department level and the Secretarial level, the
49 Secretary looks forward to continuing active engagement
50 on all issues directly affecting subsistence users. So,

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1 I want to thank you for this opportunity to be with you
2 all today, and I look forward to hearing the discussion,
3 as well as learning from all of you. Thank you. Thank
4 you, Mr. Chair.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you,
7 Ms. Mooney. Are you available to take any questions from
8 the Council?

9

10 MS. MOONEY: I will try. Yes, and I know
11 we have staff that can help if I don't know the answer.
12 Yes.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
15 Any Council members have any questions for Ms. Mooney?
16 Who is now the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for
17 Policy, Management and Budget back in Washington, D.C.
18 So, do we have any questions? Cal, go ahead.

19

20 MR. CASIPIT: Yeah. This is Cal Casipit.
21 I'm from Gustavus. I just had a quick question. The last
22 name in the -- last word in the title was budget. And
23 one of the things I know this Council is very concerned
24 with, and I know the rest of the Councils that there --
25 our winter All-Council meeting was very concerned about
26 the amount of funds that are available for undertaking
27 fisheries resource monitoring projects and also starting
28 up a Wildlife Resource Monitoring Program. You know,
29 some of the numbers have been talked about is, you know,
30 \$1 million to start wildlife or \$3 million to start
31 wildlife or something like that. But, you know, I
32 appreciate the attention to providing budget, but quite
33 frankly, \$1 million doesn't go very far in pulling off
34 a, you know, a fisheries stock assessment or a wildlife
35 study or something like that. The needs -- the financial
36 needs of providing the information to these Councils,
37 all these ten Councils, it's pretty significant. And I'm
38 just wondering, you know, what's underway or what's
39 happening to try to improve our budget situation so that
40 we can spend a bit more on you know, the Traditional
41 Ecological Knowledge and the studies that are needed to
42 manage fish and wildlife populations statewide?

43

44 MS. MOONEY: Sure. So, I'm going to
45 attempt this. And Ciisquq, you can chime in or any of
46 the OSM team but, you know, Congress directed that OSM
47 be transferred, but it didn't provide additional funding
48 for the Wildlife Resource Monitoring Program. However,
49 a request for funding to initiate such a program will
50 be considered as the Department's budget proposals are

1 developed. And I think the staff might tell you, you
2 know, the proximity to the Secretary and to the
3 formulation of budget, I can't guarantee anything
4 because right now we're operating under a continuing
5 resolution awaiting our FY25 request. And 26 is already
6 in formulation. But over time, you will see, I think,
7 I'm hopeful you will see more responsiveness both to
8 requests overall, but a greater understanding at a
9 higher level on the budget. So, I'd open it up to the
10 team if anyone wants to add anything.

11
12 MS. LEONETTI: Hi. I can add this is
13 Ciisquq, and I'm sorry. I'm experiencing a cold that I
14 caught at AFN so, my voice is a little bit scratchy. One
15 thing that I will add is that, you know, the OSM staff
16 who are very close to you, the Council members are in
17 tune to what the needs are. And this year is the first
18 year that the staff has had input into the budget
19 formulation process. So, that's really exciting. And we
20 did ask for more funding under the Fisheries Resource
21 Monitoring Program. And for the new -- if we can get the
22 funding what would be the new Wildlife Resource
23 Monitoring Program and definitely more than \$1 million.
24 I don't have the numbers straight in front of me, but
25 yeah, we did do that. So, it's a good question and we're
26 glad to be in the position we are now.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
29 that response. Any other questions from the Council?
30 Patti, go ahead.

31
32 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
33 Hernandez. Yes, Ms. Mooney. So, also at the RAC level,
34 over these many years, we've supported co-management of
35 resources, which means bringing tribes in to -- building
36 capacity within the tribes. And oftentimes it's through
37 the Fisheries Information Program. So, -- and we'd like
38 to see more of that co-management going on. And if the
39 agencies could you know, incorporate that into their
40 management. But within Southeast Alaska, like, you know,
41 I don't know the percentage, but over 90% of the land
42 is Federal lands. So, I mean, it's really important that
43 that there be enough funds in the budget for our region.
44 So, anyways, my main question was about you know,
45 developing more co-management programs in Southeast
46 Alaska. Thank you.

47
48 MS. MOONEY: All right. Thank you. I
49 don't know, Ciisquq do you want to do you want to take
50 that one?

1

2 MS. LEONETTI: Yeah. Hi, and I should
3 identify myself, and it's so refreshing by the way --
4 this is Crystal Lionetti and it's refreshing to hear my
5 native name the Office of the Secretary has taken on and
6 speaks my native name on a daily basis. So, that's
7 Ciisquq. That's my Yup'ik name. And thank you, Joan, for
8 saying it every day. Yeah. Co-stewardship and co-
9 management are a top priority. And the Office of
10 Subsistence Management is definitely here to support the
11 agencies in those efforts. We certainly don't have a
12 budget to do so, but we have the drive and the desire
13 to pass messages and to support any discussions that are
14 ongoing for co-management and co-stewardship.

15

16 MS. MOONEY: And I should say, we're
17 hosting a co-stewardship, co-management training in
18 Anchorage in December. One of Secretary Holland's key
19 priorities has been to ensure that our workforce is
20 trained and understands trust and treaty obligations and
21 our history and the ability to carry these out
22 effectively. So, and we understand that there may be
23 funding coming in from other Federal departments that
24 the program has been such a success for actually for our
25 workforce here. So, we're hoping this year was the first
26 of many years on training our employees. Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Any other
29 questions from the Council for Ms. Mooney or Ms.
30 Leonetti? Patti, go ahead.

31

32 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
33 Another part of our effectiveness has been able for the
34 RAC to participate in the Board of Fish and the Board
35 of Game meetings, and that takes funding for our RAC
36 members to attend those meetings. So, we hope that
37 there's adequate and more than adequate funding for that
38 to continue. Thank you.

39

40 MS. MOONEY: Thank you. And I know that
41 the Secretary understands the costs in terms of
42 financial costs, time away from families and communities
43 that Council members have. And she very much appreciates
44 the expertise that Council members offer, providing
45 adequate compensation for Council members is a high
46 priority for us, and we're looking at ways to incorporate
47 that into the budget as well as obviously protecting the
48 funding that we currently have for all the services and
49 programs that we currently pay for. So, we'll keep you
50 informed, and I appreciate you sharing that perspective

1 with us. Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any other
4 questions from the Council? Albert, go ahead.

5

6 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
7 know we had the conversation on funding in the past
8 about having enough funding for OSM to come to their own
9 conclusion for us on why we're submitting proposals
10 because a lot of the times we use the State's data and
11 it is inaccurate and I could give a lot of examples of
12 how it is inaccurate, because when we tried to do the
13 deer proposal for Admiralty Island, that was a good
14 example of why we need our own -- and more funding for
15 OSM to help us do our job. If they can come to their own
16 conclusion without the State's data, then then we can
17 justify why we're trying to accomplish what we're trying
18 to accomplish for our tribal members and rural users of
19 subsistence. So, I'm not sure if you need anything from
20 us. Maybe, Mr. Chair, you can answer what part of the
21 process we need to go to assist OSM to have the funds
22 available to come up with our own data versus the State
23 using the State's data. There's many examples we could
24 use. I mean there's the -- I'm becoming an expert on
25 wolves, even though we don't have any wolves on
26 Admiralty. So, that's kind of another example of the
27 State versus feds. For no other way to say it. I'd rather
28 take Mr. Douville's words on -- his thoughts on the
29 wolves versus the State's thoughts on wolves. And I know
30 we're going to have the conversation later. And I'm
31 pretty excited about that for the first time ever being
32 on the RAC, because now I know so much about wolves. But
33 I guess my point being is I think we need to figure out
34 how to get OSM more funds so they can support our
35 positions better. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
38 Albert. I'll let somebody else speak to that before I
39 do. So, go ahead.

40

41 MS. MOONEY: I can say we would
42 definitely support that. And that's -- it's super
43 important to hear directly from you. This right now,
44 we're in the midst of like I said, our 25 budget is
45 before the Congress. The 26 budget is formulated but
46 working on future budgets. I'll look forward or the
47 Office here looks forward to continuing engagement and
48 really digging into the reasons why the office was moved
49 closer to the Secretary here in the Office of Policy,
50 Management and Budget. So, look forward to those

1 continuing conversations and getting data to support the
2 need. Correct. Thank you.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Any
5 other questions from Council members? Okay, I'm not
6 seeing any. So, I'll say thank you to Ms. Mooney and Ms.
7 Leonetti up there in Anchorage and back in Washington,
8 D.C. and I think I heard that Raina Thiele is still not
9 available, so we'll just.....

10

11 MS. MOONEY: She's not. But, Mr.
12 Chairman, I'd like to introduce Eric Werwa. If he can
13 come, I know he was there earlier. He is in consultation
14 with the Native Hawaiian community in Hawaii at the
15 moment, but he's joined us as well. So, thank you all.
16 And he's trying to attend as many different RAC meetings
17 as possible. And, thank you.

18

19 MR. WERWA: Yeah. Thanks, Joan. Yeah. Hi.
20 I mentioned that earlier. And I'm going to have to leave
21 to go out into the field here in Hawaii in a few minutes
22 so, I won't be able to attend the rest of the afternoon.
23 But it's been good to be able to listen to this
24 conversation and the conversation you've been having
25 throughout the morning. And so, I just want to echo the
26 things that Joan has said. Thanks, everyone.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Well,
29 thank you for yeah, being able to keep track of our
30 meeting as well on your busy schedule. So, thank you,
31 Mr. Werwa. So, I think that wraps up our reports from
32 the -- on the new way forward here for subsistence
33 management in Alaska. So, we appreciate hearing that.
34 And now, moving on, on our agenda, we come to our first
35 action items, which is the -- our Federal fisheries
36 proposals. And before we get to that, we'll have a report
37 on our subsistence fisheries from Mr. Musselwhite, and
38 then review of the proposals. So, Jake, come on up.

39

40 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yes, sir. Thank you,
41 Mr. Chair. For the record, I'm Jake Musselwhite, North
42 zone biologist for the Tongass. I'm going to spare you
43 my usual PowerPoint this time, just in the interest of
44 brevity and time, and just give you just a quick
45 overview, focusing mostly on our FRMP projects. Give you
46 some kind of preliminary results from this past season.
47 So, moving roughly north to south starting at Neva there
48 and excursion inland our project there, we had a good
49 year. In fact, it was basically just a good year for
50 sockeye almost everywhere. So, I was very happy to see

1 that. Still finishing just, the last couple days of video
2 review for Neva, but we're looking at about 5,900
3 sockeyes into Neva, which is better than we've had in
4 about 6 or 7 years, I think. So, that was a bright spot
5 and you know, we recently increased the harvest limit.
6 And it seems like there's been more people fishing there
7 just anecdotally. And we still had some really strong
8 escapement. So, that was great to see. So, moving to
9 Klag which has been a bit of a trouble spot here and
10 there lately, there was relatively good escapement of
11 just over 7,100 fish and close to 600 harvested there.
12 Last year we had -- or the Fish and Game closed it mid-
13 season. And you know, we still got about 7,000 fish in
14 there. So, similar to last year, but without a closure
15 in the middle of the season. So, that was -- we're --
16 I'm hoping that that kind of long-term decline at Klag
17 is maybe starting to turn around a little bit. Siko,
18 I've got a ton of video to watch, and so I can't give
19 you any numbers there, but I'm almost certain it's over
20 10,000 fish. Probably the best there in about 7 or 8
21 years. You know, just, you know, looking at the spawning
22 grounds and everything, it's looking the best there I've
23 seen there in quite a while. So, pretty happy about
24 that. And then, of course, Redoubt, yet another record
25 setting season. There was 210,000 fish counted through
26 the weir there, about another 100,000 taken in the
27 commercial fishery. So, you know, well over 300,000 fish
28 returning to Redoubt. So, you know, the management plan
29 now seems, you know, kind of like a quaint artifact
30 where it caps out at 40,000. So, some sort of regime
31 change going on there, I wish I could explain it. You
32 know, I'm sure everybody has a theory, but we'll see if
33 it continues. But yeah, we'll just see if it's going to
34 -- the other question is, will the lake support those
35 kinds of escapements, you know, in the long term. So,
36 it's kind of a drama unfolding there at Redoubt so,
37 fascinating to watch. On the other side of the coin,
38 moving down to the Hydaburg area, a whopping 162 fish
39 made it into Eek with observed harvest of 380 fish so,
40 and this has been kind of a long-term pattern at Eek who
41 with relatively few fish, just a few hundred fish making
42 it into the lake there. So, I've been talking with Cody
43 there, and it may be time for some management actions
44 there. So, I was talking with him about getting Hydaburg
45 and the tribe behind, you know, asking the department
46 to take some management actions there at Eek. And then
47 next door, at Hetta they had the best year ever since
48 monitoring started. So, over 40,000 fish escapement,
49 3,000 fish harvest. So, you know, side by side, those
50 two systems are two very different stories. I can't

1 explain it. I don't know how much of that is due to you
2 know, harvest and other fisheries, you know. I know
3 they've been moving lines around, changing some of the
4 same fisheries there, but yeah. Anyway, and then you had
5 another good story on the Unuk with the hooligan surveys
6 there sure were characterized since it's a qualitative
7 survey and assessment rather than quantitative. They
8 were considered abundant, and you know, reading the
9 monitoring report sounds like it's the strongest return
10 there, really, since you know, regular surveys have been
11 done. And I know, Louie, you probably can know better
12 than I do, but anyway, it looks like promising there
13 where there was nine permits and everybody came home
14 with the one bucket limit of a fish. And yeah so, that's
15 a success story and hopefully that continues. So, that's
16 my quick, fast as I could overview I'd be happy to take
17 any questions.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Jake.
20 Questions? Comments? Somebody? Oh, Albert, go ahead.

21
22 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
23 have one question. The large escapement amounts, is
24 there a direct correlation between the escapement that's
25 returning to the systems and the lack of commercial
26 fishing effort? Do you take the -- does anyone take the
27 numbers that the state has from commercial fisheries and
28 put them side by side with the escapement to show, in
29 fact, that there's no interception happening so you have
30 a larger escapement?

31
32 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Through the Chair,
33 member Howard. Yes. I mean, this was a lousy year for
34 pinks, so there was relatively little seine effort,
35 especially on the north end and in the Chatham Corridor.
36 I don't know how much that contributed to you know,
37 Chatham Strait area sockeye returns, which I assume is
38 what you're talking about. I suspect a fair bit, it's
39 not a coincidence. I couldn't -- I can't tell you the
40 magnitude of that effect, but it's definitely been a
41 factor. And we've had a number of fairly weak pink years,
42 and I think that's definitely helping.

43
44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any other
45 questions, Patti?

46
47 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
48 Chairman. Mr. Musselwhite. Like on Eek, I mean, what is
49 the escapement? I mean, ideal escapement and why does
50 it take the tribe to take, you know, to take management

1 action? Why isn't the, you know, the agency taking action
2 if they're only having 160 fish returning? I mean,
3 there's something there. I don't know about that. Maybe
4 you can explain to me.

5
6 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah. Through the
7 Chair. Member Phillips, I don't know what the ideal
8 escapement is, but it's more than 162, I'll tell you
9 that. I'm not super familiar with that system, but I,
10 you know, I know that there's been historical
11 escapements of at least several thousand fish. Cody
12 might know better than I do, but yeah. And I don't know
13 that that's on the Department's radar. And they would
14 be the one opening and closing, you know, taking some
15 sort of, you know, emergency order type action on that
16 which is, you know, why I was discussing with Cody that
17 to maybe Hydaburg and the tribe should approach the
18 Department with numbers in hand and, you know, ask for
19 some kind of action, if that's indeed what the community
20 supports. Yeah. Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Jim
23 Slater.

24
25 MR. SLATER: Yeah. Mr. Musselwhite. I
26 just want to make sure I didn't misunderstand the
27 question about correlation to other fisheries. Was the
28 higher escapements we're talking about due to a lack of
29 bycatch by the seine -- pink seine fisheries, is that
30 what you're implying, or...?

31
32 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Oh, yeah. Through the
33 Chair, member Slater. Yeah. You know, we've -- I've
34 worked on monitoring projects in the Chatham Strait
35 Corridor and there's, you know, a fair number of, you
36 know, a fair amount of seine effort in that area from,
37 say, Point Augusta South and Hocking the shoreline and
38 such. And it's really hard to, you know, really quantify
39 that. But there is definitely small Chatham Strait
40 system sockeye caught in those, you know, pink salmon
41 directed seine fisheries. Probably the best illustration
42 of that was, you know, there was a number of really
43 strong odd year pink runs with weak even year pink runs
44 like a 2011, 13, 15 were just huge pink years and you
45 know and then weak in the middle, right. And you know
46 so, there's a ton of saint effort one year not so much
47 you know very little the next. And so, it was like
48 flipping a light switch. And we saw in Chatham sockeye
49 escapements that we were monitoring at the time, Cook
50 Lake, Sitka Lake, Kanalku, that it was an inverse

1 pattern. So, the strong pink years, seiners are fishing
2 like hell. All the sockeye escapements go down, the next
3 year flip the switch the other way and it would reverse.
4 So, there's at least, you know, indirect evidence. There
5 was also a genetic study done by the department to try
6 to really tease that out a little bit right around 2012
7 or so, but they really didn't get enough samples to
8 really, you know, to further enlighten us that much.
9 Yeah.

10
11 MR. SLATER: And does the senie fishery
12 report the bycatch at all? Is that quantified by any
13 reporting or is it...?

14
15 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Well, it's not bycatch.
16 I mean, it is a directed mixed stock fishery. So, they're
17 there to catch whatever.....

18
19 MR. SLATER: Okay.

20
21 MR. MUSSELWHITE:salmon are
22 swimming. So, it's and yeah, they are, you know, measured
23 on fish tickets and stuff. It's just that, you know,
24 2000 sockeye go into Kanalku, is a blip in the figures
25 especially because it's mixed in with a whole bunch of
26 fish.....

27 MR. SLATER: Right.

28
29 MR. MUSSELWHITE:going north to the
30 Chilkat and Chilkoot. So, you know, and even all the way
31 around towards Snettisham and Taku and that sort of
32 stuff, because that Icy Strait corridor, they kind of
33 mixed right there. And that's why the fisheries are
34 taking place. So, you know, those little bitty sockeye
35 runs get lost in that noise.

36
37 MR. SLATER: Right. Okay. Thank you.

38
39 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Certainly.

40
41 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Cathy, go ahead.

42
43 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
44 wanted to take a step back and address Patti's question,
45 if I can, as somebody who has worked for the Fisheries
46 Resource Monitoring Program hand in hand with Hydaburg
47 on their both their Hetta and their Eek project in the
48 past. The Council may remember that Hydaburg gave a
49 presentation to the Council about, like, how they have
50 been handling management of those two fisheries within

1 the community. And Patti's question, you know, kind of
2 sparked the conversation about, well, how come if this
3 occurred at Eek, where the harvest was more than what
4 the escapement was, why there wasn't action -- like,
5 what kind of actions can be taken? It just kind of
6 questions this whole management and in the past there
7 have been voluntary closures to fish Eek for a number
8 of years consecutively, where the tribe has gone out and
9 asked the community not to harvest at Eek specifically,
10 because of the low returns that they were seeing from
11 being able to count fish that come back through the FRMP
12 program. And I think in this part is a little anecdotal
13 on my part, because I have not been working on the
14 program for a couple of years now. But I think that
15 before when it was voluntary closure the community and
16 the tribe were working pretty much hand in hand on that.
17 But now community members are getting a little bit
18 frustrated about not being able to fish in a system that
19 is closest one to their community and going to other
20 places and there's a little bit of a shift within the
21 community in terms of whether or not they feel it's a
22 good idea to fish at Eek or not. And so, the question
23 becomes, can the area management biologist then
24 subsequently close down the fishery in the middle of the
25 season? And to the credit of Alaska Department of Fish
26 and Game, they have constantly worked with the natural
27 Resources department at the Hydaburg Cooperative
28 Association to try to do things that are more voluntary
29 and work so that the tribe is managing and making those
30 decisions before they do anything regulatory or within
31 regulation. And so, those conversations do happen during
32 the season, I know. And the area management biologist
33 has always tried to A, think about like whether or not
34 they're going to open Cordova Bay for more commercial
35 fishing and B, not trying to close off something by a
36 special action or closure, because it sort of takes away
37 the trust between the community and the department of
38 being able to do it. I think we're just now starting to
39 see that 2024 was a mistake, and that maybe we do need
40 the tribe, and the community probably needs to think
41 about whether or not they want to do that, not have it
42 as a volunteer thing anymore, but actually look at
43 special actions or actions that can do that. And I wanted
44 to provide some of that clarity, because I think the
45 department deserves a little bit of credit for the work
46 that they have been doing with Hydaburg hand in hand on
47 that. And the hard part about Eek is, yeah, it has
48 traditionally supported more sockeye in the past, but
49 it's a difficult system, we don't know -- it's a short
50 run, it's a small run and it's just really difficult to

1 know what's going on with sockeye if you're not looking
2 at the greater picture throughout Cordova Bay.

3
4 Second thing I wanted to add and this
5 is a little bit of a message maybe to you, Mr.
6 Musselwhite, to bring back. Is that commercial fishing
7 in District 3, there was a study that was done to look
8 at the Klawock River drainage specifically, and the
9 genetics. So, genetic sampling on the commercial fishery
10 to determine where fish, when they're in the mixed stock
11 are destined and how many of those fish are going back
12 into Klawock to look at whether or not interception is
13 having an effect. And the department did a three-year
14 study based on that and did the analysis on it. And
15 their conclusion was that there definitely are fish that
16 are being intercepted. And I talked to the biologists
17 at that time who was Steve Heintz, and I was like, well,
18 sockeye salmon that go into Cordova Bay also are a part
19 of that -- of the fish that were sampled and can that
20 analysis be done or what can happen so that Hetta can -
21 - or Upper Cordova Bay, Hetta and Eek can both have that
22 data taken and they said, well, the data is there. They
23 just need money for the analysis. And it -- they even
24 provided a quote for what that analysis would cost for
25 the biologist to go through it. But it might be something
26 that you really need to think about. It wasn't a very
27 large quote in terms of the amount of money it would
28 take to actually do the analysis, but looking at how
29 commercial -- potential commercial interception is
30 playing into that, I think is prudent at this point in
31 time, especially given that anecdotally, it looks like
32 Hetta has the highest return of sockeye in history, and
33 the pink salmon fishery didn't do so well in that
34 district potentially leading to the secondary factor
35 that sockeye salmon were intercepted in the commercial
36 fishery for that district. So, those fish were allowed
37 to come up the bay and be there. So, I would encourage
38 staff to try to find some money or to actually do the
39 analysis themselves with the data that exists that was
40 taken as part of Klawock that study. Thank you, Mr.
41 Chair.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
44 Cathy. Any other questions? Larry.

45
46 MR. BEMIS: Mr. Chair. Thank you. Are you
47 aware of the escapements and stuff that are going on in
48 the Yakutat on the sockeye run?

49
50

1 MR. MUSSELWHITE: I'm sorry. On which
2 system did you say? On the Situk?

3
4 (Simultaneous speech)

5
6 MR. BEMIS: On the sockeye escapement.

7
8 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah, I certainly do
9 follow it. Especially the Chinook things, because that
10 seems to be a constraining factor.

11
12 MR. BEMIS: Well, here's the deal. In the
13 last five years we've over escaped the sockeye according
14 to the low-end target that we need. Because the concern
15 about the king salmon our days are cut. And when the
16 sockeye do come in, they just rush up the stream, and
17 commercial fishing doesn't really get a chance because
18 we're sitting hampered by the idea that we got a low end
19 escapement on the king salmon, which again happens to -
20 - if we don't have the salmon, we get shut down, taken
21 a day off or whatever. Meanwhile, we increase the bag
22 limit for the sport fishing, and we allow the fish to
23 just keep going through. And the other thing is by having
24 the weir down at the lower part of the mouth within a
25 half mile or whatever it is to the estuary, and the
26 amount of sport fishing that impacts that river from the
27 9-mile on down, we do not know how much actual fish are
28 going to the spawning grounds. And we have asked to
29 maybe look at putting that up at the 9-mile where it
30 used to be, to where you can actually know the amount
31 of fish that are going to the spawning grounds. But
32 there's this thing about sharing the weir with sport
33 fish to find out what's going on with their steelhead.
34 Sport has more money. So, they put the weir in, they
35 manage it and up to a certain point when they're done
36 doing their studies and stuff, there's a cutoff point
37 of the weir being pulled out of the water. Now, I've
38 went to the Fish and Game, talked with Ric there in town
39 and said, listen, we've got money in our aquaculture for
40 habitat. The city is willing to put money in, the tribe
41 is willing to put in money in, and even the Forest
42 Service might go along with us to help do any pool
43 funding for, say, a weir or sonar or anything that is
44 needed and never got a response back on it, because I
45 feel that somehow we're just letting years go by on top
46 of years, and we don't know how much actually escapes
47 up to the lake. We know how much is caught. We know how
48 much is escaped down at the lower level of the weir, and
49 the rest is just estimate. My concern is, as we keep
50 looking at these king salmon going up and down, are we

1 over escaping the habitat that sustains the sockeye? And
2 if we didn't have a good return, would that be based on
3 the over escapement or is it the ocean conditions? These
4 are the catch 22 that were playing with, and it got to
5 the point where the sport fishermen two years ago got
6 nine fish a day. So, and this year they went up to six.
7 So, what that does is impacts the Situk River where you
8 can wade all the way from top to bottom, darn near in a
9 pair of chest waders. And this just brings more people
10 to the town to go and hear about the harvest. I mean,
11 Facebook and whatever just is right on cue of what's
12 going on. I mean, you can see it in the steelhead
13 fishermen when there's a good run going on, most of
14 Alaska shows up. But it ain't so much the out of town.
15 I mean, Anchorage and Juneau and the rest of the place.
16 They come and camp out and -- but what I'm getting here
17 is I'm very concerned about the wait and see attitude
18 that we have with what we've got. I mean, every year we
19 sit there and wait and see. And then all of a sudden,
20 whoops, we got a lot fish here. We've got to do something
21 about it. And for somehow with those fish coming in the
22 estuary, even if you did extend it out to the commercial
23 fishermen, that river is so big and wide that if you
24 don't have days to catch them, you're not going to get
25 it in 24 hours to make up for that, the amount. There's
26 been as many as 10 to 12,000 fish go through the weir
27 in a matter of a day or so when they push, they push.
28 And it seems like we're just continuously doing this on
29 a watch and see basis. And I'm, I'm concerned that either
30 that the habitat is going to get ruined by tromping the
31 grounds, as well as the amount of fish being taken that
32 might be under registered, or are they over escaping and
33 ruining the spawning ground? So, I sit back, and I see
34 this -- I commercial fish, I know the area, I know the
35 fish. I know how -- I've been doing it all my life. I've
36 been on that estuary and the Situk River. In fact, I
37 moved there in 1991, and me and my wife have been there
38 ever since. So, I sit on the Advisory Board, which is
39 inactive, and I discuss things personally with Rick
40 whenever I see or give a chance to observe and say, ask
41 him about market placement. Some of these things that
42 we're doing, like Lost River. We sit and wait on that
43 escapement which eats up -- right now we've got so many
44 corridors, there's six miles of river that is just
45 blocked off, either for king salmon or for the escapement
46 of the Lost River. And pretty soon we're down to this
47 narrow little patch from the mouth of the river to
48 halfway up the estuary that the very few fishermen get
49 the fish and we don't have this open escapement -- I
50 mean, open markers. So, to see this thing looked over a

1 little more and if there's a finance problem, let us get
2 involved in it, because I don't want to see commercial
3 piggybacking off of sport, and then sport controls the
4 entity that serves us all. And they have been all along,
5 and they all seem to get along with that, because every
6 time I talk to Ric, you know, we don't have the budget
7 to do that. So, that's my concern about it, over you
8 know -- I got no complaints about the fish there. Not
9 at all, but the way it's being managed is another story.
10 And I feel that -- I've offered that we would find
11 funding for them to monitor every single stream from the
12 Lost River to the Dangerous River and see what's in all
13 the streams that we don't know about that we aren't
14 fishing and what kind of -- what's coming and going. I
15 mean, there's a lot of territory that we don't know
16 about and here we are just focused on the Situk River
17 in the Lost, which -- it's just my thought, and I was
18 just wondering where we're sitting at the Situk level,
19 on the management part of it. Thank you.

20
21 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah. Through the
22 Chair, member Bemis. Yeah, I'm not super familiar with
23 the Situk, although it's -- I mean, I can certainly
24 appreciate what a complicated machine it is between out-
25 migrating steelhead and then a fairly weak chinook
26 return that is kind of sometimes makes the escapement -
27 - does an escapement especially co-mingled with it has
28 been a really healthy sockeye return, as you say lately.
29 I mean, that's kind of an old problem in fisheries is
30 protection of a weak stock that is mixed in with a strong
31 one is kind of a intractable problem. So, yeah, I don't
32 have any good answers for you, or I don't even know the
33 questions, but I certainly appreciate all the, you know,
34 intricacies and problems that are going on there for
35 sure. I hope that helps. Yeah.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Frank, go ahead.

38
39 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the
40 systems that you had really high escapement, on the
41 outside when was there a high commercial catch of the
42 same species in those in those areas? You know, somebody
43 that's on -- I think it says some one system had about
44 40,000- 20,000 escapement. Is that what you said?

45
46 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Right. Well, Hetta had,
47 you know, 40,000 this year, which was the highest, I
48 think, since it's been monitored. And Cathy, I think,
49 spoke to that entire, you know, system far better than
50 I ever could for what you know, is going on there

1 possibly with, you know, the role of commercial catch
2 in those. The other ones I know, you know, Neva just
3 across the way from Hoonah there, there's hardly been
4 any seine fishing in Icy Strait. You know, Point Augusta
5 is about the, you know, closest and I rarely see more
6 than 2 or 3 boats lined up there lately. So, I don't
7 think -- I know it's not a factor there. You know, and
8 then farther down the way is Sitkoh and such. You know,
9 we had fairly weak -- I do think it's a factor, but I
10 also think that probably the bigger factor is ocean
11 conditions that, you know, have been favorable to
12 sockeye. I mean, we're kind of seeing that all over.
13 Yeah, you know, is that it's been a couple good years
14 now for sockeye. And I also think it was like a fairly
15 good water year, the flows throughout all the streams.
16 I was, you know, measuring where high but not too high.
17 Kind of Goldilocks you know, all summer. So, I never saw
18 any periods where there's passage problems and, you
19 know, Sitkoh I've seen that quite a bit in, you know,
20 the years I've been doing it. So, yeah, I think it's --
21 a lot of things kind of coming together there between
22 ocean conditions, wind peak returns and, you know, and
23 decent, you know, decent water flows.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Louie, did you
26 have your hand up?

27
28 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd
29 like to thank Mr. Muckleshoot [sic] for the report. The
30 best one I've heard that I'm happy with it. And we were
31 up there on the river. I had my son with me, my daughter
32 and my granddaughter who's sitting behind you. And with
33 the proxies, we were able to share a lot of that fish
34 with our elders, but they've been missing out. But the
35 younger kids, the small ones aren't getting it, and
36 they're not going to probably want to eat it as they get
37 older so, it really hurts our culture. We really need
38 that -- we need that river. And I spent my life on that
39 river. And it's -- it feels good to see things improving
40 because it's starting to get late for me. It's getting
41 hard for me to get in and out of the skiff now. And so,
42 I can't go without my children so, I need their help.
43 So, thank you for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Albert, you had
46 something else.

47
48 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
49 kind of want to encourage the Council to start using
50 this data in a different manner. My thought process is,

1 we want to leave things for the next generation better
2 than we found it. And by doing so, we need to figure out
3 why are these systems failing and why are they succeeding
4 at times? And part of that is the fact that these are
5 being intercepted, we need to say that; or if they're
6 not being intercepted, we need to say that as well. I'd
7 like to see a formula created. So, Mr. Musslewhite, I
8 could say, well, next year you're going to have a good
9 year based on this formula, Albert, or you're not going
10 to have a good year based on our formula. But either
11 way, you have a formula to constantly look at and the
12 next generation don't have to recreate this wheel we've
13 been sitting here spinning for quite a while.

14
15 I think it's important for us to figure
16 out how to come up with that formula. And I'm sure maybe
17 you have ideas on how to do that. But part of that is
18 stream gauging. You have to figure out the environment
19 these fish are going back to spawn to, is that having
20 an impact on whether they're returning the year they're
21 supposed to return or not, or is interception having the
22 impact? But in order to know the reasons why things are
23 happening, you have to have the entire picture. So, I -
24 - there's someone smarter in this room and -- than I am,
25 that could probably create the formula, that we could
26 always look at and refer back to. I know Hetta has become
27 a good example on something that works, but it seems to
28 me like whenever I take an idea that that works there
29 and ask the State if we could do that, they're going to
30 say no. And it's nothing against the State, it's just I
31 wish you'd find common ground because in my mind, we're
32 here for the same reason the State is, we're trying to
33 make sure the resource survives into the next few
34 generations -- was seven in our culture. But still, you
35 don't see what I saw growing up as a young person in
36 this -- in the environment I grew up in. You used to
37 catch cohos off the dock, goofing off, trying to catch
38 a codfish for halibut. You throw a piece of herring out
39 there and what do you know? You got a coho instead. You
40 don't see anything like that anymore. And this is in the
41 harbor at home. And we used to catch halibut off the
42 dock at the harbor at home. So, there's a lot of things
43 that have changed in my lifetime and I don't want to see
44 that trend continue into the next generation because --
45 I said this at the Tlingit & Haida meeting, as Natives
46 we've never brought the resource on the brink of what
47 it is now. Never. We were managers of a system and an
48 area way before any of us sat here, we've managed it.
49 And if I went into Harvey's country, I'd have to go to
50 Harvey's house and ask him, can I fish here? Can I hunt

1 here? How much can I take? It was a respect for his clan
2 and his country. They did the same thing. But it was a
3 management system. It wasn't an ownership system. It was
4 based on Harvey's knowledge of the area and what was
5 available. If Harvey says there ain't much deer here,
6 so we can't allow you to take any because our people
7 need it for ourselves. If we had a lot of deer, we'd let
8 you take a couple, but we don't. And that was the system,
9 and I think the data that Mr. Musselwhite's been
10 providing can help us get to that type of system where
11 you co-manage it and you actually co-manage it. So, it's
12 just a thought. And I have a couple others, and I'm
13 trying to hold you to the beginning of your meeting
14 yesterday of not talking too much. So, thank you, Mr.
15 Chair.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you,
18 Albert. You covered a lot of topics there. And yeah,
19 this this Council is focusing in on co-management and
20 yeah we need to pursue that. You're absolutely right.
21 So, thank you. Anybody else? Cathy, go ahead.

22
23 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
24 the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program in Southeast
25 Alaska, is -- that's still largely funded with the U.S.
26 Forest Service, which is Department of Agriculture, and
27 if the answer is yes, then how has the move of the OSM
28 program into the -- under, directly under the Secretary.
29 Has that changed? I'm asking the question because I'm
30 like, are you still able to get the funds that you
31 currently have at the level that you have to fund these
32 Fisheries Resource Monitoring Programs that we're
33 talking about? Because one thing I noticed as we were
34 talking and you were giving your presentation for the
35 status of the streams as we know it in Southeast Alaska,
36 is that there were just a very small handful of streams
37 that FRMP is addressing and able to fund, and there are
38 a lot of other systems that have sockeye salmon our most
39 important resource that aren't being monitored. And so,
40 you know, we heard just before your presentation about
41 how OSM is going towards funds, but -- going for more
42 funds to help fund FRMP and then there may be potentially
43 wildlife, but how does that working through the
44 Department of Agriculture side of things?

45
46 MR. CROSS: Yeah. This is Rob Cross for
47 the record, subsistence program manager for the Tongass.
48 To the Chair, member Needham. So, the first question is,
49 is the majority of the FRMP funding for Southeast USDA
50 funding? And that's yes. The move for OSM hasn't really

1 changed our funding to my knowledge, at all. It's still
2 USDA funding that is going towards the FRMP program for,
3 for Southeast. We've been -- funding wise, we've been
4 fairly static over the last many years for SMSM
5 subsistence funds. I don't really know what the funding
6 is going to be for FY25, I would imagine probably quite
7 static. And I think you've identified a really big issue
8 and that the funding is static, the number of projects
9 are increasing, or it's a very small subset of the
10 projects that we would like to see. And the price of
11 these projects are increasing. So, it seems like the
12 general trend is that our money is staying static. The
13 projects are more expensive. We're able to fund less
14 projects. So, I can't really speak to the OSM funding
15 and what that's going to look like. OSM has funded some
16 FMP projects in Southeast, I believe Eek would be an
17 example of that. So, it's not out of the question that
18 OSM is capable of funding FRMP projects in Southeast. I
19 just am not sure what that funding is going to look like
20 on their end.

21
22 MR. RISDAHL: Mr. Chair, this is Greg
23 Risdal. I could add a little bit to Rob's explanation,
24 which was perfectly accurate. With regard to the Forest
25 Service Department of Agriculture funding, we do have a
26 -- our budget for subsistence is a line item in the
27 congressional budget. And as Rob has said, it has not
28 changed in many, many years. And currently our
29 expectation is that the subsistence budget will remain
30 the same. Although we are extremely aware of the concerns
31 that Cathy has brought up -- member Cathy Needham has
32 brought up, that we are falling further and further
33 behind in our ability to monitor our fisheries resources
34 down in Southeast Alaska. So, that is part of our
35 discussions in the budget realm with the Forest Service
36 and Department of Agriculture. But right now, we have
37 no real crystal ball to anticipate how things may change
38 one way or the other. At the moment, we are pretty sure
39 we're going to have the same budget that we have had the
40 last -- well, certainly as long as I've been here, but
41 it's been happening. The same budget has taken place
42 long before I was with the Forest Service the last four
43 years. So, I'm sorry we can't give you a better answer,
44 member Needham at this point, but that's where we're at.
45 Thank you.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Greg,
48 and we will be discussing the Fisheries Resource
49 Management projects later on in the meeting. So, I think
50 I'd like to move on here if we could. And we're coming

1 into our Federal proposals. Before we do that, we need
2 a procedural overview from our Council Coordinator, and
3 we'll get that. Then I think we'll take a break and come
4 back, and we'll start hearing our presentations on the
5 proposals. So, DeAnna.

6
7 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a
8 moment to go over the procedure for proposal
9 presentations. I know we have a lot of folks in the room
10 who might not be familiar with that. As we go through
11 each proposal, you can refer to page number 32 in the
12 meeting books, and you can follow along that process.
13 For those online, you'll see the document named
14 Presentation Procedure for Proposals and Closure Reviews
15 on the website. The Chair will announce each step of
16 this process, which provides an opportunity for various
17 agencies, Councils, committees, commissions and the
18 public to participate. I wanted to bring a few things
19 to your attention. There are a couple of times during
20 this process for the public to participate. So, under
21 step C or step 3C, there will be a time for tribal public
22 comment. And under number 6, step 6, there will be a
23 time for public testimony. Now, for those on the phone
24 who may wish to provide a comment, you'll need to press
25 star five at the beginning of the presentation of the
26 proposal on which you want to provide a comment. That
27 way, we can line up everyone and know who wants to
28 comment, and we can call on you at the appropriate time.
29 The Chair will recognize people on the phone, in the
30 room and by Teams through name or phone number. Once you
31 are recognized, you'll need to press star six to unmute
32 your phone or if you're joining us through Teams, you'll
33 need to use the microphone feature that's up to the top.
34 It looks like a little microphone. Just click that off
35 so there's no bar across it. If you have submitted a
36 written comment on any of the proposals, it will not be
37 necessary to also provide that comment by phone. All
38 comments received will be shared with the Council and
39 included in the administrative record. We understand
40 that the nature of some of the issues discussed at these
41 meetings can be difficult and controversial, and
42 although some comments shared throughout this meeting
43 may be passionate, no insults, personal attacks or foul
44 language will be tolerated. Towards the end of the
45 proposal procedure at step number 7, a member of the
46 Council will make a motion to support the proposal just
47 to bring the issue on the table for discussion. As a
48 reminder with Robert's Rules, all motions are made in
49 the positive, even if you plan not to support it. Then
50 for step 8, there are some questions listed there that

1 help guide the Council in its discussion and
2 deliberation. And of course, during that part of the
3 process, you can make reference to anything in the
4 analysis, like specific data or information that
5 influenced your vote. That's all part of your
6 justification for your vote. Each of these proposals are
7 action items so, we will be looking at closing each
8 proposal procedure with a vote to support, support with
9 modification, oppose or take no action. Thank you, Mr.
10 Chair.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Right. Thank you
13 DeAnna. Any questions? That's just our standard
14 procedure. I do have one question, though or maybe
15 something you might want to remind everybody of. So,
16 this -- the non-rural determination that is a proposal,
17 right. So, we will follow this format when we get to the
18 non-rural determination as well. This is not just for
19 our Federal fisheries proposals. So, that will be the
20 procedure. Thank you DeAnna. That's the way it will be.
21 So, before we take a break just a couple of things to
22 keep in mind. We're doing really good on our time. I'm
23 really happy with where we are. It's something I want
24 people to keep in mind and while maybe they're on break
25 or is that before we recess this evening, we want to
26 establish some working groups, and we're probably going
27 to need working groups to review some State fisheries
28 proposals so that you can come back to the Council and
29 inform the rest of the Council of what proposals we
30 might want to support or oppose, and we might want to
31 put together a working group that will talk about the
32 revision to the forest plan. So, for the rest of the
33 afternoon, if you would think about maybe a working group
34 that you think you might want to participate in, that
35 would be great. And I'm thinking we may want more than
36 one working group to look at fish proposals. We may want
37 to have a group focus on, you know, export fish, somebody
38 focus on maybe herring or something along those lines.
39 So, be thinking about all that and we'll establish those
40 before we leave this afternoon. So, let's take a let's
41 take a 15-minute break. Come back at 2:20 and we'll do
42 our proposals.

43
44 (Off record)

45
46 (On record)

47
48 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, first on
49 the list of proposals is the one dealing with the Taku
50 River fishery. And Jake Musselwhite will present the

1 analysis on that one for us. So, Jake.

2
3 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yes. Thank you, Mr.
4 Chair. For the record my name is Jake Musselwhite, North
5 Zone subsistence biologist for the Tongass. So, I'm here
6 to talk to you about Fisheries Proposal FP2501 for the
7 Taku River, which starts on page 33 of your meeting
8 book. FP2501 submitted by the Council request to
9 establish harvest regulations for salmon fishing on the
10 Taku River. The proposal includes seasons, harvest
11 limits, fishing area, gear restrictions and harvest
12 reporting requirements. This proposal follows the Winter
13 2023 board action to end a long-standing closure of the
14 Taku River to subsistence salmon fishing. With the
15 closure rescinded and no Taku specific regulations in
16 place, subsistence salmon harvest on the Taku River is
17 currently subject to the Southeast Alaska General
18 Federal Regulations. This proposal seeks to establish a
19 set of Federal regulations specific to subsistence
20 salmon harvest on the Taku River. Under the proposed
21 regulations, there would be three seasons; a chinook
22 season running from June 1st to June 30th, with an annual
23 household limit of five chinook. The sockeye season from
24 July 1st through July 31st, with a limit of 40 sockeye
25 and a coho season from August 1st through October 1st
26 with a limit of 20 coho. Salmon taken incidentally, may
27 be retained under the terms of the permit. A permit
28 would be required to participate in the fishery and catch
29 must be reported on the permit. The gear would be limited
30 to set gillnets not exceeding 15 fathoms in length, with
31 an 8inch maximum mesh during the chinook season and a
32 5.5inch maximum mesh during the sockeye season. The Taku
33 River is a major salmon producing river and supports all
34 five species of Pacific salmon. There's an extensive
35 stock assessment program in place, including in-season
36 catch monitoring, a basin wide mark recapture study,
37 spawning ground surveys, and enumeration weirs in
38 several spawning systems. The sockeye and coho
39 populations in the Taku are quite healthy and typically
40 exceed escapement goals, while supporting substantial
41 commercial and sport fisheries. However, the chinook
42 population has declined in recent years and is listed
43 as a stock of concern. While the proposed regulations
44 include a chinook season, the in-season manager will
45 likely close the season if the chinook forecast does not
46 provide for harvestable surplus. This approach has been
47 used successfully on the Stikine, a similar trans
48 boundary river fishery. Salmon fisheries on Taku River
49 stocks are managed under the Pacific Salmon Treaty and
50 the Pacific Salmon Commission or PSC. Any new proposed

1 fishery will be evaluated by the Trans Boundary River
2 panel of the PSC, which will provide input for
3 consideration by the Board. Existing fisheries on the
4 Taku stocks include a commercial gillnet fishery in
5 marine waters, a Canadian in-river commercial gillnet
6 fishery, and a State personal use fishery. The personal
7 use fishery primarily targets sockeye salmon and has an
8 annual harvest limit of ten sockeye for a single person
9 household and 20 for a multiple person household. The
10 vast majority, 97% of permit holders reside in the Juneau
11 area, with only 1.6% residing in rural Southeast Alaska
12 communities and 1.4% residing outside of Southeast
13 Alaska. Harvest of sockeye salmon has averaged 1,239
14 fish between 2017 and 2022, with an average of 104 permit
15 holders each year. Effort and harvest in the proposed
16 Federal Subsistence Fishery is expected to be quite low
17 based on participation in the personal use fishery, with
18 less than 2% of permit holders being federally
19 qualified, the number of households participating in a
20 subsistence fishery is likely to be in the single digits.
21 The preliminary OSM conclusion is to support FP25-01
22 with modification to modify the area to the Taku River
23 mainstem upstream of the Taku Lodge. The proposed
24 regulations will comply with Title 8 of ANILCA by
25 providing for a subsistence salmon fishery in the
26 federal public waters of the Taku River, under
27 regulations specific to the Taku, which will be
28 necessary to effectively manage the fishery under the
29 Pacific Salmon Treaty. Using the Taku River Lodge as the
30 defined lower boundary of the fishery area will provide
31 users with clear delineation of open and closed waters.
32 Typically, Federal public waters are defined as ending
33 at the mean high tide line, but in the shallow braided
34 channels at the mouth of the Taku River, the high tide
35 line is difficult to identify. Also, the State personal
36 use fishery uses the Taku River Lodge as the downstream
37 boundary, so using it as the lower boundary would provide
38 regulatory consistency and avoid enforcement issues in
39 the Federal Subsistence Fishery. That's my summary of
40 the analysis. I'd be happy to take any questions.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Jake.
43 Questions from the Council? Ted.

44
45 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah. Thank you, Chair.
46 Mr. Chairman, just a question with the incidental catch
47 if -- it says you have to record it. But does that --
48 if I'm fishing for sockeye salmon from July 1st to July
49 31st and I catch a coho salmon, I record that. Does that
50 count against my quota from August 1st to October 1st

1 for the 20 fish? Just curious. Thank you.

2

3 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Through the Chair.
4 Member Sandhofer. Yes, I think that as written, they're
5 a little ambiguous on that. And I think that that
6 incidental catch is going to be an issue when this is
7 before the Transboundary panel. So, I think the intent
8 is to have, you know, each season have its own limit and
9 such. And then anything, you know, beyond that limit.
10 So, if you catch a chinook during the sockeye season,
11 you can retain that. I believe the intent of the Council
12 was to have that happen. But I do believe that the
13 regulations as written are a little ambiguous in terms
14 of does that apply to that five fish limit during that
15 one month or may you retain you know, chinook outside
16 of the month that it's designated. So, yeah, it's a
17 little ambiguous. And I think that there some discussion
18 of Council intent would be probably a good idea. Thank
19 you.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any follow up,
22 Ted, or...?

23

24 MR. SANDHOFER: I just think we should
25 clear that up, I guess is my comment. So. Thank you.

26

27

28 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
29 So, that might be some way we may want to amend this
30 proposal to address that. And, Cal, do you have comment
31 on that?

32

33 MR. CASIPIT: I don't think we're at a
34 point to amending anything yet, but I just wanted to ask
35 a question of Jake, is in that question that Ted had,
36 How is that handled on the Stikine? I mean, because I'm
37 reading these regulations for the Taku and they're
38 really similar to what we put in place for the Stikine.
39 So, how is this issue that Ted is talking about handled
40 on the Stikine River fishery?

41

42 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah, through the
43 Chair. Member Casipit. You're right. These are very
44 similar to the Stikine. They're basically used, you
45 know, developed using the Stikine Regulations as a
46 model. I believe in the Stikine, you know, to use my
47 example, you know, if you catch a chinook during the
48 designated sockeye season, you may retain that, I don't
49 know, off the top of my head how it counts towards the
50 limits, you know, the designated limits. But luckily,

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1 there's enough run timing separation that it's not a
2 huge issue. And I believe that's -- if you look at the
3 runtime and curves and the analysis, the Taku is much
4 the same, you know, by the time the July 1st sockeye
5 season comes around, almost all the chinook are above
6 Canyon Island and above the border. But I do know that
7 that is an issue that's going to get some scrutiny. That
8 could definitely use clarification.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any other
11 questions? James -- Jim.

12
13 MR. SLATER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I --
14 Mr. Musselwhite, in looking at the proposed regulation
15 and looking at one of the comments, they talked about
16 the presence of or the high number of seals and the
17 frequency of -- they suggesting that the monitoring
18 frequency needs to be continuous rather than just twice
19 a day. Can you comment on that?

20
21 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Through the Chair, Mr.
22 Slater. Yes, I spent some time up to Taku. Not a whole
23 lot. But I will tell you, I've seen seals all the way
24 above the border and well into Canada so, they're
25 definitely present throughout the river. There's one
26 bar, you know, kind of in the lower river where I've
27 seen probably 300 seals hauled out during sockeye
28 season. So, they are an issue. And I think that comment
29 probably has some validity that you know, you will
30 probably get your net robbed by seals if it is not
31 somewhat attended.

32
33 (Pause)

34
35 MR. SLATER: And so, I think the intent
36 of the impact or the comment was given, because if you
37 lose most of your catch to seals, you'll keep catching.
38 So, it might have a bigger impact than a result in a
39 higher take. I think that was the intent of the comment.
40 So, that's -- I don't know if something that we should
41 consider as we discuss this further or not. Thanks.

42
43
44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you,
45 Jim. John.

46
47 MR. SMITH: Just going to throw this up
48 there. You know, you have a card, and you actually write
49 down the fish. So, keeping the 5, 40, 20, you know, and
50 as long as you during that time catch 5 king salmon, 40

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1 and then 20, and then by the time you turn it in, you're
2 okay.

3

4 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah. Sounds like you
5 were suggesting a solution then.....

6

7 MR. SMITH: Right, yeah. So, if June 1st
8 through the 30th you only have 5, but you only caught
9 2. But then all of a sudden, you're doing your sockeye
10 fishing, and you, catch a couple more of the kings, you
11 know, as long as you don't go over your limit during
12 that time, right. So, it's like -- does that make sense
13 or I'm not explaining myself.

14

15 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yes, yeah yeah. I think
16 what you're suggesting is that the limit of 5 chinook,
17 40 sockeye and 20 coho should apply for the entire
18 calendar year, right? Yeah. It's a -- it feels to me
19 like it's a little ambiguous in the regulation is written
20 so that -- I'm suggesting that the Council make their
21 intent and we can maybe -- I believe Mr. Cross would
22 like to say -- add something.

23

24 MR. CROSS: Yeah. For the record, my name
25 is Rob Cross, subsistence program manager for the
26 Tongass. So, as far as incidental harvest is concerned,
27 it's in the general Southeast regulations that salmon
28 taken incidentally with the subsistence gear may be
29 retained. You do need to report that harvest, but it
30 doesn't count against a previous or potentially incoming
31 season. So, for in the Stikine, for example, you're
32 allowed to retain chinook, you just need to report it.
33 The chinook season there starts and ends before the
34 sockeye season even occurs so, you're not retroactively
35 catching chinook against a previous season's limit. The
36 way that the State handles this for the personal use
37 fishery is there's a limit of two chinook per day caught
38 incidentally, and they also have a incidental harvest,
39 I believe it's 5 coho per day. It's 6? 6 coho per day.
40 And so, that will be something that I think will be a
41 point of contention or concern for the Transboundary
42 River panel and Pacific Salmon Commission is basically
43 this open ended, you can retain as many chinook as you
44 want if it's caught incidentally during the sockeye
45 season. I will reiterate what Mr. Musselwhite said in
46 that nearly 100% of the chinook have passed through the
47 fishery prior to the start of the sockeye fishery.

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49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Rob.
50 Other questions? Mike.

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MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Michael Douville. This is -- this proposal is worded similar to the Stikine River Fishery and if the escapement goal for king salmon -- well, let's put it this way. If the prediction is less than the escapement goal, then that chinook would not be open, would that be correct?

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MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah. That's correct. The in-season manager would probably close the season ahead of time if the preseason forecast does not meet -- it's actually the escapement goal plus a little bit to, you know, for other fishery mortality kind of thing. So, it's got to be the escapement plus a little bit in order to meet the threshold for opening a chinook fishery.

19
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MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: And going back to the Stikine again where there has been, you know, king salmon conservation for a number of years now. I don't recall exactly, have they delayed the sockeye season at all, or does the sockeye season still begin at the normal time?

28
29

MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah. The sockeye season always begins at the normal time.

30
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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Right, okay. But there has been a king salmon closure for.....

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35

MR. MUSSELWHITE: Correct, yeah.

36
37

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you. Anybody else with questions?

38
39

(No response)

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Hey, not seeing any more questions. So, thank you both. Next on the procedure is, do we have any consultation with the tribes or ANCSA corporations on this proposal?

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MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair, Council members. Orville Lind, native liaison for OSM. We did conduct consultations on July 9th, the first round and the second round is coming about in November, but we did not have any specific questions or comments on that

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1 proposal, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ Thank you,
4 Orville. Agency comments, do we have comments from the
5 Department of Fish and Game?

6

7 (No response)

8

9 Do we have any other Federal agencies
10 that submitted comments?

11

12 (No response)

13

14 And others? Okay. How about any tribes?
15 Any tribal comments other than the consultation or
16 written comments?

17

18 (No response)

19

20 No. Okay. How about advisory group
21 comments? Do we have anything from Fish and Game Advisory
22 Committees on this proposal?

23

24 (No response)

25

26 Apparently not. Or the Subsistence
27 Resource Advisory Commission? Probably not.

28

29 MS. PERRY: No, Mr. Chair

30

31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: How about
32 written public comments? Do we have any of those?

33

34 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yes, Mr. Chair, there
35 were two written public comments.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, Jake. Go
38 ahead.

39

40 MR. MUSSELWHITE: The first was from
41 Wanda Culp, coordinator of Tongass Women for Forests.
42 And her comment addressed additional topics, kind of
43 outside the scope of this proposal. So, I'm just going
44 to read her comment rather than try to summarize it. It
45 comes in several headings. First, what regulations to
46 change stated statutes should begin up front specifying
47 ANILCA Title 8. Second heading how would new reg read
48 wording, other salmon should be specified to chum, dog,
49 and pinks, humpies since ADF&G reports required number
50 of species caught in Southeast Alaska has five species

1 of salmon traveling into our waters whose populations
2 are important to us. Why changes? Title 8 is ANCSA
3 compromise to extermination of further aboriginal rights
4 claims to customary and traditional use. ADF&G dual SB,
5 FSB, ANILCA subsistence management severely departs from
6 CTU priority open to all federally qualified users,
7 eliminating federally recognized tribes from matching
8 sovereign rights. Taku Tlingit has recorded prior use
9 and occupation of the Taku River territory connected to
10 Canadian relatives. The Douglas Indian Association
11 legally represents that bloodline history and provides
12 and shares Juneau's tribal membership with sockeye
13 salmon from the Taku River under Title 8. The Alaska
14 Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty is always tied to the Taku
15 River people to innate transboundary caretaking, an
16 asset tie for U.S. government's public interests. 111,
17 District 111 I think, ADF&G commercial fishing permits,
18 recreational and sports access and vague personal use
19 permitting must legally follow behind CTU designation
20 priority use rather than its most bottom of the barrel
21 priority usage. It is time to hold ADF&G feet to the
22 self-built fire of non-compliance to Federal laws given
23 two of the majors, Alaska's major Alaska Canada rivers
24 are closed to subsistence for the past two years under
25 a failed sustained yield management scheme. The original
26 occupants of all salmon rivers been made invisible by
27 FSB, ADF&G to accommodate commerce generated businesses
28 and visitor status access across Native lands to
29 overtake and export unregulated tons of boxed salmon
30 attached to traveling visitor luggage. Meanwhile,
31 Tlingit are regulated to six salmon per day per family,
32 primarily freshwater transformed salmon of zero
33 commercial value commercially. When cited for Title 8
34 infractions in State magistrate court, number one, we
35 stand alone with no legal due process access to a
36 knowledgeable attorney. Number two magistrate judges are
37 not versed on Title 8 infractions and require court time
38 to catch up and usually finding the minimum since fishing
39 violations did occur. Consequently, we have widespread
40 state of Alaska court records with the Department of
41 Corrections even if found not guilty. Changes for
42 subsistence users proper definition of Title 8 begins
43 with customary and traditional use priority, enabling
44 the ability to self-determined governing limitations.
45 When all other users are threatening this legal
46 obligated authority to initiate wild food first
47 protections, identify tribal uses priority, assuring
48 cultural and family survival, designations afterwards,
49 urban, rural. Alaska Natives are third largest
50 landowners in Alaska, we are not tenants. How will sport

1 rec and commercial be affected? The state of Alaska owns
2 our ancient navigational waters, U.S. controls connected
3 salt waters i.e. if a seal on a rock is shot and killed
4 in GBN P&P, it lies in federal jurisdiction. If when it
5 rolls off that rock into the water, it becomes state of
6 Alaska controlled waters. FSB, ADFG, ANILCA dual-
7 management only works for commerce-based interest groups
8 who jealously see indigenous uses exterminated. Thus, a
9 free for all take allowed. Federal management must begin
10 with the full inclusion of existing grassroots
11 intelligence of prior contact use and way of managing
12 internal and external use of salmon and game during hard
13 times. Today must include the global warming crisis,
14 conditions of all wildlife, local and transient,
15 migratory, and how to identify which is which. Mere fine
16 print wording that ANCSA and ANILCA are related is far
17 enough from management emphasis without legal mention,
18 of Alaska's 228 federally recognized village based
19 tribal existence. Also, individual ANC shareholders, we
20 hold major land and National interests and should be
21 regarded as local capital. Thank you for hearing me out.
22 Kashudoha Wanda.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you for not
25 summarizing that, Jake. So, and you have another,
26 another.

27

28 MR. MUSSELWHITE: I have one more. Okay.
29 That I was able to summarize. The second comment is from
30 Cathy Hansen, executive director of Southeast Alaska
31 Fishermen's Alliance or SEAFA. SEAFA noted that the Taku
32 River fishery was subject to the Pacific Salmon Treaty
33 and encouraged the RAC and OSM to work with the PSC for
34 approval of the fishery. SEAFA also expressed a
35 conservation concern with Taku River chinook and
36 requested clarification of the provision allowing
37 retention of incidentally caught fish. SEAFA made
38 several specific suggestions, including requiring
39 acquiring permit holders to be physically attending the
40 net while fishing due to seal predation. To clarify that
41 the fishing area is from the Taku River Lodge to the
42 U.S. Canada border, to specify that harvest limits
43 cannot be accumulated with State personal use or sport
44 fisheries, and to require return of tags or transmitters
45 used in stock assessment projects to ADF&G.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Jake.
48 Yeah. Some good public comments there, and some of them
49 we've incorporated into our discussions. So, that was
50 written public comments. Do we have any comments from

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1 anybody here in the room or on the telephone?

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(No response)

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I don't see anybody or hear anything. So, with that, we are ready for the Council's recommendation, and that would come in the form of a motion.

Cathy, go ahead.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I moved to adopt FP25-01. To establish a harvest regulations for subsistence salmon fishing in the Taku River.

MR. CASIPIT: Second.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Second by Cal. Okay, Council members so, it's now up for deliberation. So, where do we want to start? We have some issues before us that have been brought forward that we might need to address on this proposal. And this is our proposal. This is our best effort to, you know, craft a proposal, and it may need a little work. So, Cathy, were you offering something? No. Cathy.

MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was thinking maybe the first thing we should talk about would be the suggested modification by the Office of Subsistence Management to establish that lower boundary at the Taku River Lodge. Personally, I am -- I mean, it seems like it would make regular -- like sense in terms of aligning regulations so that it is clear where that boundary is. So, I'm not opposed to actually adding that, but I would like to hear if other Council members think that we should consider this modification, and if so, we can amend the original motion.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cathy. Just a procedural question here. If we're going to make amendments, should we have a list of amendments and vote on them all at once or should we go through the process of making each amendment individually and voting on it as an amendment before we go back to the main motion? We have a suggestion from our Coordinator on that.

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, it depends on how complicated the amendments are. We could follow through

1 the amendments but at some point, it may be that we do
2 a clear amendment.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So, Cathy, you
5 put that forward as an amendment, correct?

6

7 MS. NEEDHAM: I did not. I said that I
8 think that we should discuss that first in terms of the
9 actual proposal and whether or not we need to consider
10 that boundary. But I didn't make the motion to amend
11 because I wanted to hear from other Council members about
12 whether or not we feel that that is appropriate for the
13 proposal.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. That
16 makes sense. So, discussion. Cal, you had a hand up.

17

18 MR. CASIPIT: Yeah, I -- you know, I
19 understand the reason why we would -- why staff was
20 suggesting to modify that lower boundary, you know, for
21 a regular -- regulatory, I guess, make it easy for
22 everybody to know where that line is. I'm just -- want
23 to be sure that we're not unknowingly giving something
24 away. Like, if there's some Federal jurisdiction below
25 that line that we're somehow going to disclaim or give
26 away. I'd be a little concerned about that, but I'm
27 willing to listen. Does staff have an idea of where the
28 actual line is compared to what's proposed?

29

30 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
31 We have Rob Cross coming forward to just clarify that.

32

33 MR. CROSS: Yeah. Thank you. Through the
34 Chair, member Casipit. So, the staff did an exercise
35 between Forest Service and OSM and tried to decipher
36 independently where we thought that lower boundary was,
37 and we all came up with the exact same lower boundary
38 of Federal waters and it's right at the Taku River Lodge.
39 And so, that's also what the State is identifying as the
40 lower boundary. That's independent of how we came to
41 that conclusion. It just -- after mapping it, we're like,
42 what is this little bald spot in the trees? That's the
43 Taku River Lodge. And that's kind of where we came up
44 with. So, it's my belief that no, there is not any or
45 there is very minimal Federal waters below that. But
46 that's what we came up with.

47

48 MR. CASIPIT: Thank you. That's very
49 helpful.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
2 Any other discussion on the boundary question? So, I'm
3 going to kind of conclude that we'll probably have
4 consensus on that. So, maybe we don't need a separate
5 motion to amend for that one. So, let's take on another
6 topic. How about the incidental take issue? Do we have
7 thoughts on that from Council members and a little more
8 complicated? Cal, again.

9
10 MR. CASIPIT: On that matter of
11 incidental take, I mean, we've had the same almost a
12 very similar fishery going on the Stikine for how many
13 years now? And I haven't heard any issues about
14 incidental take on the Stikine. I'm not sure why we
15 would be too concerned about it here on the on the Taku,
16 when it's basically the same style fishery.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
19 Ted. Go ahead.

20
21 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, Cal I agree, I'll
22 withdraw my concern. I mean, it's not an issue. I guess
23 we shouldn't make it one.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you
26 both. I guess my thought on that is whether or not the
27 wording that we have in front of us in this proposal
28 kind of reflects that. I think the comment was that it
29 wording is a bit ambiguities -- ambiguous. Excuse me.
30 Do we need to maybe change the language a little bit to
31 reflect our intent? And, Patti, you have your hand up.

32
33 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
34 I mean, this proposal basically mimics the Stikine River
35 regulations already in place. So, why would we want to
36 be more restrictive in any manner? I mean, I think just
37 the way it's written now is sufficient, Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
40 Patti. Any other thoughts on this one? Mike.

41
42 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mike
43 Douville. One of the comments requests your presence at
44 your net. And to me, it's kind of responsible to tend
45 net, but my question is we don't require that in this
46 Stikine. I guess I'd like to hear the rationale behind
47 that and would the same situation apply in the Taku?

48
49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
50 I might need to have staff address that. I remember we

1 had a proposal dealing with net tending, and I don't
2 remember if that proposal got put in place or not. I
3 think the proposal was something to the effect that you
4 had to, you know, check your net, like once a day on the
5 Stikine. I don't know, Rob Cross again. Maybe you can
6 clarify that.

7
8 MR. CROSS: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
9 So, this is a topic that came up with the International
10 Transboundary River panel as being an issue, and I've
11 not fished the Taku, I believe Member Casipit has, if
12 I'm correct. But one of the issues that they brought up
13 is that where the fishery occurs is a relatively small
14 area in breadth and width. And so, one issue is that --
15 I guess it's my understanding that fishermen often need
16 to move the net out of the way to let folks go by. And
17 there was also an issue with seals picking the net. So,
18 again, this came up time and time again during the
19 deliberations with the Transboundary River panel as
20 being an issue maybe specific to the Taku River.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. That's
23 helpful. Could you answer the question just for the
24 Council's general knowledge, is there a net tending
25 requirement on the Stikine fishery? Do you recall? And
26 -- oh, Patti's probably found it in the reg book for us.
27 Go ahead.

28
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Patti Page, 82, in the reg
30 book, says fishing nets must be checked at least twice
31 each day. And if I recall correctly, when it was a
32 proposal before us that it was traditional practice that
33 they don't net tend. I mean, I was a concern with me,
34 but that was in the Stikine, it was their practice to
35 not be at their net all the time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
38 Patti. I remember that discussion as well, but it sounds
39 like in the final action we did -- or that I don't know
40 if the Council recommended it, but it was put into
41 regulation that you do have to tend your nets on the
42 Stikine. And as Rob, you pointed out, I mean, we have
43 to get the approval of the, you know, International
44 Salmon Commission on this or Pacific Salmon Commission.
45 So, if they've identified it as a concern, it might be
46 in our best interest to, you know, put that into the
47 regulation just so we know we have a better chance of
48 getting approval. And I see some comments on that. Larry,
49 I think you're first.

50

1 MR. BEMIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We had
2 a similar situation that we dealt with also. We had a
3 closure because the king salmon was starting to be such
4 an issue on the return of the Situk that the interceptor
5 fishery inside Yakutat Bay before they went to the river.
6 We had a subsistence open pre month or so early. And our
7 concern was, -- is that the setting of the net and
8 unattended, it just left it open for the seal and the
9 sea lion to take amount of fish that you're not there
10 getting on your own, and then you're going to get your
11 fish that you're allowed, along with the seal and the
12 sea lions taking. We felt that we put in a proposal and
13 to -- if you're going to set your net, you have to stay
14 with it. And if you leave it, you should tie it up or
15 either take it out of the water during the times that
16 we were in a situation where we weren't meeting
17 escapement after. We had met the escapement, we
18 rescinded that with still the -- we took that back to
19 where you could set your net and do several checks a
20 day. But during the low end of the king salmon, we had
21 that put in place. And I think that if you've got a
22 situation in-river where you've got a lot of seal, that
23 you're not accounting for what they're eating as well
24 as what you're trying to take, and that takes off the
25 escapement. And that net can take 5 to 6 fish a day in
26 a good day, or at least a couple per day. So, just for
27 the Taku River with the seal harvest, I see that in
28 proposal from SEAFA that they said we strongly object
29 from the F25 where it states the nets should be checked
30 twice a day. Instead, this proposal should move forward,
31 we strongly recommend the permit holder must be
32 physically present while the net is in water and must
33 not be left unattended. In the Taku River mainstream
34 area, while fish is being considered, there is now large
35 rafts of seal in the area. Without tending the net at
36 all times, the intended mortality to be -- unintended
37 mortality by seals would make the fishery have
38 detrimental effect on the population that we are trying
39 to rebuild. That's probably coming from the members of
40 SEAFA, along with people being concerned. It is
41 something -- I know it's a game changer. But then at the
42 same time, the seal population and the sea lion
43 population seems to be on the upswing everywhere. I mean,
44 in Yakutat, they're really overpopulated on all the
45 streams. I don't know, you got one river having it one
46 way. You got -- I don't know how many seals are in the
47 Stikine, but I know anywhere you got seal around a net,
48 it is detrimental. And attending it is really important
49 thing.
50

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
2 Larry. Cal, do you have something to add here?

3
4 MR. CASIPIT: I don't know. We probably
5 went past this by now, but the comment that we got from
6 SEAFA or whatever this group is, they are not the
7 Transboundary panel. So, their concerns that they're
8 expressing in their letter are their concerns. They're
9 not the panel's concerns. And I see no comments from the
10 panel in any of this. I'm right where -- right now,
11 where I'm sitting. I'd like to just go ahead and make
12 the modification for the lower boundary as staff
13 suggested, but leave the rest alone and let the panel,
14 you know, let the panel look at it and they can tell us
15 what they think, and then we'll take it from there.
16 That's how we did it with the Stikine River. That's how
17 we should do it with this one. Let's not give away
18 everything before we even go to them. That's just where
19 I'm at.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
22 I know you have some expertise there. I would just pursue
23 that a little more John, before we move on. So, we're
24 told that the that the Tranboundary panel weighs in on
25 this. Do they have the authority to just kind of not
26 approve this fishery or I mean, how does that work? Do
27 they -- how much power do they have? I'm not really sure
28 about that. You say they will weigh in and we can respond
29 to that. What does that look like? I'm a little
30 uncertain. I may have somebody else who can answer that
31 question.

32
33 MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
34 is Scott Ayers. I'm the fisheries division supervisor
35 at OSM, and I do have a little bit of information on
36 that front. I was with Rob when we went to speak with
37 the Transboundary panel, both the U.S. portion of the
38 panel at a meeting in Juneau earlier, late last year,
39 and then also at a joint meeting of the panel specific
40 to the Council and Board's action to rescind the closure.
41 And they were -- expressed frustration that they weren't
42 a larger part of that process and have been a little bit
43 frustrated by the kind of lack of communication between
44 the programs as part of that process. And so, we have
45 been kind of in this sort of dance with them to try and
46 find out how to better interact with them as we move
47 forward. And we knew that this proposal was going to be
48 coming. And so, what we told them at the start of this
49 process, when last we met with them at the very start
50 of this year, was that should any proposals come up

1 related to Transboundary fisheries or Transboundary
2 fisheries systems, that we would provide them with a
3 copy of the proposal early in the process when the
4 booklets went out with the proposals, and then we would
5 also reach back out to them following the Council's
6 meeting and recommendations in the fall to provide them
7 with a copy of the analysis and information about the
8 Council's recommendation. And we anticipate that what
9 they are going to do, given that there's kind of two
10 different entities that are working, we have the Federal
11 Subsistence Program but we also have the Transboundary
12 Program and the Treaty that we would kind of -- this
13 proposal would probably take a detour off of the normal
14 cycle at that point in time so that the Pacific Salmon
15 Commission would have an opportunity to kind of work it
16 through their process. And this is effectively what
17 happened with the Stikine, is my understanding, is that
18 it took, you know, 3 or 4 years for it to get from start
19 to finish as a means of kind of working it through both
20 ends of that process. They have expressed some concerns
21 about an additional fishery in this system and we tried
22 to be very clear and lay out the justifications for why
23 the closure was rescinded. And so, we're just trying to
24 do our best to work this process forward. I hope that
25 helps answer the question that you have.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: But do they have
28 the authority to just say, no, we don't approve. It
29 can't happen.

30
31 MR. AYERS: That's a question that I
32 don't really have the ability to answer. We've gone to
33 our Solicitor to ask questions kind of about that
34 authority jurisdiction between laws and treaties. And
35 find out, you know, how do we thread the needle on this
36 and figure out if we get to the point that the other
37 group says, no, you can't do this or we don't support
38 this, are we able to still move forward? And I have not
39 yet gotten an answer back from them. But I think that
40 we can find a way forward. We're trying to make sure
41 that -- they've been very supportive of the idea in the
42 meetings that we've had with them. They've just raised
43 concerns about the fact that chinook runs have been low
44 and coho runs have been variable and so, they want to
45 be very cautious with their approach.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
48 Scott. So, I think what I'm hearing is we just need to
49 work with them basically. Yeah and maybe, we can all
50 come to agreement. John, you had a question first. Thank

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1 you, Scott.

2

3 MR. SMITH: I -- just to comment in
4 feelings of, you know, having a net out there and nobody
5 monitoring. I think we should be monitoring it in
6 respects to the other animals and the seal and whatnot.
7 And just think all of a sudden, a big school of fish go
8 through and just nail it and bury your net and it sinks,
9 you know, you being there to manage how many fish you're
10 getting. But thinking that both of these rivers, if you
11 look at the Stikine, it's actually not really that big
12 of water. And you look at the Taku, it's bigger. And so,
13 there's more room in the Taku. I truly believe, too,
14 that we should service them both the same and have the
15 same rule, same law. But I stand by monitoring your net.
16 And that's just my personal feelings. I mean, even me,
17 I wouldn't leave my net out, you know.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
20 Was it Albert? Go ahead.

21

22 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A
23 couple of things that -- what Cal had mentioned concerns
24 me giving up jurisdiction. The other one is hearing that
25 Transboundary may have say in something that could
26 impact our residents and subsistence users. It's similar
27 to king salmon, someone in BC decided that their King
28 Salmon goes through Chatham Strait, and now Angoon can't
29 fish king salmon for a certain amount of time. Are we
30 going to let them do that to our subsistence users and
31 our residents of Alaska the same way they've done it to
32 Angoon? And how do we prevent that from happening and
33 tell them, you guys can't do this to us anymore? You
34 guys need to set your own regulations to put yourself
35 in check before you tell us it's our fault that your
36 system is failing.

37

38 Mr. Chairman, a good example of the king
39 salmon is they're allowed to fish commercially. Trawl
40 caught fish with six, three gurdies on each side.
41 Southeast Alaska inside, I believe it's south of -- I
42 forget the name of the place, Spencer. You can only fish
43 for lines so, you know that's a good example of them not
44 changing their regulations to fix their own problem. But
45 they wanted us to change our way of living because they
46 have issues with their resource management and they're
47 putting the blame on us so to speak. So, I don't agree
48 with -- are they going to say no to this? And if they
49 do, my personal opinion is so what? They've hurt
50 Southeast Alaska enough. And at some point, when do we

1 say that that's enough, you know, they took away the
2 king salmon resource from Angoon because they don't
3 adjust their own fishing regulations in BC. You know,
4 the environment heals itself. And I say that because
5 Seattle also -- some of their people are saying the
6 killer whales eat a certain amount of king salmon, and
7 those king salmon are endangered species. Killer whales,
8 like anything else in the environment, will adjust. The
9 king salmon goes away. They'll find something else to
10 live off of. They're not going to just go away. So, in
11 my mind that -- I'm glad Cal had mentioned the
12 jurisdiction idea. We've got to stop giving things away,
13 or you're going to end up like the Natives where you
14 don't -- we won't have any say over anything as a group.
15 So, that's my thoughts. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Albert. Frank,
18 did you have your hand up?

19
20 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
21 thought we were talking about incidental catch, you
22 know, and now we're talking about transboundary. You
23 know, when I was applying with the State to go fishing
24 for chum salmon Excursion Inlet, they had -- the state
25 had told me that I was only allowed 600 fish. But when
26 I went and made a set, I catch about 7-800 fish. There's
27 nothing I can do about it. But they just let me go
28 because it was incidental catch. So, if a net is set out
29 and all of a sudden you had a big hit and you had more
30 than what was allowed then what are you supposed to do
31 with the over catch? So, incidental catch is something
32 that is kind of -- kind of makes me confuse the what is
33 what it's about. You're supposed to be out there to try
34 to get a fish so that you can survive in this world. So,
35 incidental catch, is that the issue that we're talking
36 about or is it transboundary of different governments
37 that's going to tell you that you can -- you kill the
38 fish, you have to throw it away because it was an
39 incidental catch, but you went past your numbers. So,
40 correct me if I'm wrong. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
43 Frank. Any other comments along those lines? So, as far
44 as amendments go, I'm not hearing a lot of support for
45 amendments. Maybe other than we had some consensus on
46 the Taku Lodge as being the southern boundary. Any other
47 Council members want to weigh in on that? Albert.

48
49 MR. HOWARD: I forgot I was going to ask,
50 did you get the answer to the jurisdiction question?

1

2 MR. CASIPIT: Through the chair Mr.
3 Howard, yes, I did. And it sounds like both the feds and
4 the State seem okay with the Taku River Lodge being the
5 downstream boundary. So, as long as that's all everybody
6 agrees there. I'm okay on that. But as far as I'm
7 concerned, that's the only modification I would make to
8 these regs and just let the -- give it to the panel and
9 if they want to rip it up and tell us to do something
10 different, why it's on them, and we can take it or leave
11 it or talk to the Board or whatever we're going to do
12 with the DOI attorney, whatever. But again, I just don't
13 want to give away anything on this before, you know, we
14 even begin the negotiations. So, that's kind of where
15 I'm at.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
18 Cal. Mike.

19

20 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mike
21 Douville. After listening to all the comments and
22 discussion I will be supporting the proposal with the
23 modification without any change.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
26 Mike. Cal.

27

28 MR. CASIPIT: Well, I'm just going to go
29 ahead and propose it then, I moved to amend this proposal
30 to read -- will basically we'll support the proposal --
31 we will modify the proposal to modify the area of the
32 Taku mainstream upstream of the Taku River Lodge. Is
33 that good enough for staff? But basically, the -- we
34 will modify the proposal so that the lower boundary of
35 where the fishery would occur would be the Taku River
36 Lodge. Maybe that's the better way to put it.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. So,
39 now we have a motion to amend. Do we have a second?

40

41 MR. SANDHOFER: I second it.

42

43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. We have a
44 motion and a second. So, any other further discussion
45 on the amendment? Pat -- Patti. Yes.

46

47 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Mr. Chair, I
48 would just say that our original motion included section
49 F that said, fishing nets must be checked at least twice
50 each day. So, that is in the proposal already. Just for

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1 clarification purposes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes, you are
4 correct. So, would you like to have that wording removed?
5 Is that what you're saying?

6

7 MS. PHILLIPS: No, Mr. Chair. I wish to
8 leave it in there.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Leave it in.
11 Okay.

12

13 MS. PHILLIPS: That about the fishing
14 nets.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Any other
17 discussion on that topic.

18

19 MR. SLATER: That aligns it with the
20 regulations on the Stikine River as well, so.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Correct. Okay.

23

24 MR. BEMIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd
25 like to rescind the net -- I didn't know that the
26 transboundary -- I was thinking this was more down below
27 the river, but the trans boundary goes right to the
28 mouth of the river. Is that covered the whole river, in
29 both incidents?

30

31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Excuse me, the
32 answer to that would be yes. The Transboundary
33 Commission does have jurisdiction, I believe, over the
34 entire river. So, it's not just on the Canadian side.
35 So, they -- we have to agree with them on any fishery,
36 whether it's in U.S. or Canadian waters. And that would
37 it -- would extend all the way to the mean high tide
38 line, which has barely been established as approximately
39 where the Taku River Lodge is located. So, does that
40 answer your question?

41

42 MR. BEMIS: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
43 I'd like to rescind the manning of the net. I didn't
44 realize that this could be impacting another system. I
45 misunderstood. I was thinking it was more in the waters
46 of our choice, as being in U.S. waters and not Canadian
47 waters. So, if this is going to lay an impact on this
48 proposal, I rescind that. The information that I was
49 reading. Thank you.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
2 Larry. So, we still have a motion to amend with one
3 amendment put forward, and that was on the jurisdiction
4 boundary. And if we've had enough discussion on that,
5 we would have a vote on the amendment, and then we would
6 go back to the main motion. Albert, do you have something
7 else to add?

8
9 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Call
10 for the question on the amendment to the main motion.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
13 Albert, question has been called for. Just -- let me
14 look at the wording suggested here one more time. Right,
15 for the.....

16
17 Okay. So, the amendment to the motion
18 is with the modification to modify the area of the Taku
19 River mainstream to be mainstream upriver of the Taku
20 River Lodge. That's the amendment. All in favor say aye.

21
22 IN UNISON: Aye.

23
24 Is there anybody opposed? Say nay. Okay.
25 The amendment passes. So, now we get back to the main
26 motion, which would be the amended version. Any further
27 discussion on the main motion now amended. Albert.

28
29 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chair, I'll call for the
30 question on the main motion, as amended.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
33 I think I might call for a roll call vote on this, do
34 we -- Oh, Mike, you have a comment? Go ahead.

35
36 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's
37 not my expertise, but we need to do the justification
38 as well.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
41 You're right. Yeah, we do need to put our rationale on
42 this. So, is anybody prepared to do that? Cal.

43
44 MR. CASIPIT: I'd be happy to go through
45 some rationale for you, Mr. Chair. The first issue that
46 we can -- we consider is, is there a conservation
47 concern? And I think we all recognize that there is a
48 conservation concern for chinook salmon throughout
49 Southeast Alaska. However, with our in-season manager
50 and the way we've handled chinook concerns on the

1 Stikine, I think we've taken care of conservation issues
2 with that particular species, chinook salmon in these
3 Transboundary River Subsistence Fisheries. Is it
4 supported by substantial evidence? I think there is
5 substantial evidence that -- in our proposal that shows
6 that there is a harvestable surplus of sockeye and coho
7 salmon for subsistence users in the system. The analysis
8 also recognizes the fairly low subsistence harvest that
9 probably will occur there. Mostly because Taku is quite
10 geographically apart from most of the subsistence
11 communities that would use it. It will be beneficial to
12 subsistence users, the few that would be able to take
13 advantage of this opportunity. So, anybody you know, I
14 don't care if it's one person or two persons [sic] that
15 benefits from this. It benefits subsistence users And
16 that's what we should be concerned with. And I don't
17 think this is going to unnecessarily restrict other uses
18 either. We're not proposing any closures. We're not
19 affecting any other commercial fisheries. And you know,
20 this is basically a fairly low impact -- I think it's
21 going to be a fairly low impact as far as users and that
22 -- I think it's going to be easily manageable by the
23 local manager. Just the way the Stikine is managed. So
24 -- and the Stikine is a much bigger system and has much
25 more users, much more harvest. And that seems to work
26 just fine. So, I'm prepared to vote in favor of the main
27 motion. And that was somewhat rationale. I'm sure people
28 might have some more. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
31 Cathy, you want to add anything?

32
33 MS. NEEDHAM: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
34 I too will be supporting this proposal. I agree with the
35 justification that member Casipit has put into the
36 record, and I appreciate him doing so thoroughly. One
37 discussion that we had was regarding the net tending
38 requirements, and I know that staff will be, you know,
39 between our meeting and the Federal Board meeting will
40 be communicating back to the transboundary panel. And I
41 want to just sort of task staff to look at what our
42 justification was when we had the net pending proposal
43 before us on the Stikine. We actually had a lot of
44 conversation about that. I remember member John Yeager
45 was sitting with us at that point in time, and there
46 were some very specific reasons why those net tending
47 requirements were decided to be what they are on the
48 Stikine. And I believe -- I don't know, but I believe
49 that probably will translate as a good starting point
50 for the Taku, which is why we you know, took that

1 information and put it in as Member Phillips had pointed
2 out to us. So, some of that justification or some of
3 that discussion could actually be used to hopefully
4 direct those conversations and potentially ease concerns
5 about net tending down the line. And so, on top of Cal's
6 justification, I just wanted to remind that we have a
7 record on past actions from what we have -- from work
8 that we have done before for the model that we use for
9 establishing this fishery. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
12 Cathy. Any other council members want to add anything
13 to the justification on this proposal? Patti.
14

15 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On
16 page 52, the effects of the proposal states only about
17 1.6 of permanent holders in the personal use fishery are
18 federally qualified subsistence users. So, the effect
19 on the resource will be minimal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
20

21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
22 Patti. Anybody else?
23

24 (No response)
25

26 Okay. I think we're ready for the
27 question. I might do a roll call vote on this. It's
28 pretty significant proposal. We've had a lot of
29 discussion on it. DeAnna, do you want to go through the
30 roll?
31

32 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair, unless
33 Secretary Frank Wright would like to do so.
34

35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Frank's
36 got the roster there. You want to do that, Frank?
37

38 MR. WRIGHT: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 Motion is for FP25-01. Calvin Casipit.
40

41 MR. CASIPIT: Yes.
42

43 MR. WRIGHT: Michael Douville.
44

45 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.
46

47 MR. WRIGHT: Jim Slater.
48

49 MR. SLATER: Yes.
50

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1 MR. WRIGHT: Ted Sandhofer

2

3 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes.

4

5 MR. WRIGHT: Albert Howard.

6

7 MR. HOWARD: Yes.

8

9 MR. WRIGHT: Donald Hernandez.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes.

12

13 MR. WRIGHT: Patricia Phillips.

14

15 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

16

17 MR. WRIGHT: Louie Wagner.

18

19 MR. WAGNER: Yes.

20

21 MR. WRIGHT: Harvey Kitka.

22

23 MR. KITKSA: Yes.

24

25 MR. WRIGHT: John Smith.

26

27 MR. SMITH: Yes.

28

29 MR. WRIGHT: Cathy Needham.

30

31 MS. NEEDHAM: Yes.

32

33 MR. WRIGHT: Larry Bemis

34

35 MR. BEMIS: Yes.

36

37 MR. WRIGHT: Frank Wright, yes. Motion
38 carried. Mr. Chair.

39

40 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
41 Frank. So, let's move on to the next proposal. And this
42 one deals with the Unuk River Hooligan fishery. And for
43 that, we have Ashley Bulwerk from the Forest Service.

44

45 MS. BULWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
46 the record, my name is Ashley Bulwerk and I'm a biologist
47 for the Forest Service on the Tongass National Forest.
48 Next to me, I have Jason Roberts, anthropologist for the
49 Office of Subsistence Management. Federal Fisheries
50 Proposal 25-02 can be found on page 59 of your meeting

1 book and request closing the Federal waters of the Unuk
2 River to non-federally qualified users. The proponent,
3 you all, the Southeast Alaska Regional Advisory Council
4 states that a closure to non-federally qualified users
5 will help the Unuk River hooligan population recover,
6 while continuing to provide harvest opportunities to
7 federally qualified subsistence users. In 2005, the Unuk
8 population in district one containing the Unuk River
9 collapsed resulting in State and Federal closures to
10 hooligan fishing between 2005 and 2020. A limited
11 Federal subsistence fishery occurred on the Unuk River
12 from 2021 to 2024, only for federally qualified
13 subsistence users. All closures since 2005 for District
14 1 hooligan have been conducted using in-season
15 management actions. If this proposal is adopted, it
16 would set in regulation the special actions that the
17 Federal in-season managers have been implementing for
18 years. And this system has an active monitoring project
19 for hooligan escapement. From 2005 to 2009, less than
20 100 fish were observed in the Unuk River system. From
21 2011 to present, hooligan were observed in both the Unuk
22 River and other nearby areas of District 1, but numbers
23 have been variable and remain much lower than those
24 observed prior to the 2005 population collapse.

25
26 The preliminary OSM conclusion is to
27 support proposal FP 25-02, with modification to close
28 the Federal public waters throughout District 1 to the
29 harvest of hooligan, except by federally qualified
30 subsistence users in the Unuk River. The limited
31 subsistence opportunity provided through recent
32 emergency special actions has not been able to meet the
33 needs of federally qualified subsistence users in the
34 area. The OSM modification to close all of District 1,
35 except the Unuk River to all users, will help continue
36 the conservation actions taken by State and Federal
37 managers to improve the population status of District 1
38 hooligan stocks. This closure will reduce total harvest
39 effort allowed during current State and Federal hooligan
40 regulations and allow Federal managers to continue to
41 offer harvest opportunities in the Unuk River system for
42 federally qualified subsistence users as the fishery
43 recovers. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can take questions at
44 this time.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
47 Ashley. So, questions from the Council on this proposal?
48 And once again, this also was a proposal put forward by
49 this Council. So, do we have questions? Any questions?
50

1 (No response)

2

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We all know the issues involved here? Okay. So, it can move to comments. Did we have any consultation on this proposal? Orville.

MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Council members, Orville Lind, Native liaison for OSM. During the consultation sessions on July 9th, we did not have any specific questions or comments on that proposal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Orville. How about, agency comments, ADF&G put in any comments on this one? Apparently not. Any other Federal agencies comment? Don't think so. How about tribal entities? Any tribes submit any comments or anybody here in the room with a comment from a tribe? Apparently not. Advisory group comments, any Fish and Game Advisory Committees submit comments? Any other Councils or Resource Advisory Commission?

MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, there were no other councils that commented on this proposal.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you, DeAnna. How about written public comments? Do we have written public comments, Ashley? Yes, we do.

MS. BULWERK: We did. We got one -- oh, sorry. For the record, this is Ashley Bulwerk, and we had one public comment from Wanda Culp, coordinator for the Tongass Women for the Forest. And that can be found on page 72. Her comment address additional topics outside the scope of this proposal. As such, I'll read the comment to you. The commenter stated that they would like to see Title 8 strengthen to initiate customary and traditional laws of conservation, and remote community use rather than all subsistence users, and to recognize that Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian tribes have historically used hooligan for its oil and food value. Today, that use is minuscule, while personal and local commercial uses are otherwise indistinguishable. They offer that the language should read except by federally recognized tribal members and qualified rural subsistence users. This change would force compliance to the intent of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Law. The name is self-described and the FSB must end the dual management scheme with ADF&G recognizing their failure to protect Title 8 priority

1 protections, thus destroying customary and traditional
2 access while widening use opportunities to all rural
3 residents and recognize tribal intelligence as the
4 original conservationists. They mentioned the impact to
5 hooligan population would include rebounded populations
6 through possible habitat repair and preparation for
7 surviving returnees. Subsistence use will be affected
8 by deepened strategies of sustainability through CTU
9 watchful management of tried-and-true methods. They
10 offer that hooligan is not, nor should be allowed for
11 commercial use, stating that sport recreational users
12 have access to other popular alternatives to bait
13 fishing and that indigenous use is at the front lines
14 of risk without proper protections in place.
15 Additionally, mere fine print wording that ANCSA and
16 ANILCA are related is far from enough management
17 emphasis without legal mention of Alaska's 228 federally
18 recognized village based tribal existence. Also,
19 individual ANC shareholders, who hold major land and
20 National interests and should be regarded as local
21 capital.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
24 Ashley. Is that the only written comment?

25
26 MS. BULWERK: That was the only written
27 comment.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Any other
30 public testimony? Is there anybody on the phone who
31 wanted to testify on this proposal?

32
33 (No response)

34
35 Does anybody in the room who wanted to
36 testify?

37
38 (No response)

39
40 Okay, time for the Council's
41 recommendation and action on this proposal. Form of a
42 motion. Cal.

43
44 MR. CASIPIT: Making sure I have the
45 right page here. Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Cal
46 Casipit. I move to support for proposal FP25-02 as
47 written on page 59.

48
49 MR. SLATER: I'll second it.

50

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. We have a
2 motion and a second. Once again, I'll point out that
3 there is a suggested modification from the staff on this
4 one. So, we'll maybe start the discussion and maybe
5 address that as well. So, Council's thoughts. Discussion
6 on this proposal.

7
8 MR. SLATER: I asked some clarifying
9 questions. Since it was opened as a Federal subsistence
10 fishery in 2021, that allows both federally qualified
11 and non-federally qualified fishermen -- it's only
12 federally qualified right now?

13
14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: That's correct.

15
16 MR. SLATER: So, since it's already
17 federally qualified only, Isn't that the point of this
18 proposal?

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Well, a
21 clarification there. It's been dealt with by in-season
22 management every year. The in-season manager has elected
23 to close it to non-federally qualified users. This
24 proposal would put that into regulation. So, there would
25 not be an in-season management action every year.

26
27 MR. SLATER: Got it. Thank you.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Anybody
30 else? Patti.

31
32 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
33 just think it's really important to note in the analysis,
34 and it's very well written, by the way. The cultural
35 knowledge and traditional practices on page 65, the
36 Tongass, Tlingit and Cape Fox are Sanyaa Tlingit of
37 Ketchikan and Saxman regard the mouth of the Unuk river
38 as their place of origin, and then harvested hooligan
39 from the Unuk, Klahini and Chickamin River since the
40 pre-contact period. One current Ketchikan resident
41 explained the importance of the Unuk River, stating we
42 speak of the Unuk River, and we speak of the last river.
43 Those are migration trails that we came out of. Those
44 are survival trails that we came out of. The Sanyaa
45 Kwaan came out of that Unuk River. When you go up in the
46 Unuk River, you see the petroglyphs at minus tides. It
47 tells our history of who we are and where we came from.
48 Similarly, the river has also been an important area for
49 harvesting chinook salmon, seal and moose for many
50 years. And when we were told that the Unuk hooligan was

1 nearly wiped out, I mean, we said that not on our watch,
2 whatever it takes to rebuild that stock. And that's where
3 we're at. We're finally getting to a point where the
4 federally qualified harvester is allowed one five-gallon
5 bucket, and that's not very much. But we're still trying
6 to rebuild the stock so that the Ketchikan Indian people
7 could go and harvest what they have culturally taken
8 for, you know, since time millennia. We're trying to get
9 to that point, but the resource isn't ready yet. So,
10 that's my comment, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
13 Patti. Thank you for reading that. Other comments? So,
14 Cal, do you have something? Oh, okay. So, that's kind
15 of interesting, Patti. I mean, you know, we're meeting
16 here in Ketchikan and this, you know, this proposal does,
17 you know, exclude anybody from Ketchikan of harvesting
18 there, which is as it has been for many years now, but
19 now we're just putting it into regulation. I guess I
20 thought maybe we might have heard something about that,
21 but not hearing anything. I guess maybe it is just an
22 accepted fact that you know, this hooligans have not
23 recovered. And as long as Ketchikan is not qualified
24 subsistence users, that they probably won't have an
25 opportunity there. And they're obviously hoping for that
26 to change at this meeting. So, maybe that's why we
27 haven't heard anything. So, but yeah, it's I mean, we
28 do recognize that it was a very important area to the,
29 you know, the tribal people here in Ketchikan as well.
30 And I guess this is all trying to help out in that
31 recovery effort. And I'm not, you know, personally, I -
32 - I mean, I think it was my very first meeting when that
33 stock collapsed and, you know, there was a lot of
34 discussion about it. And it was like a catastrophe, you
35 know, that had to be dealt with. And I don't think I've
36 ever really heard a satisfactory explanation for what
37 caused that collapse and you know, how to fix it. It's
38 been a lot of, a lot of ideas put forward. And I know
39 Louie probably has a lot of opinions on it. But like I
40 say, we're trying to we're trying to let it rebuild. And
41 I guess this is just one more effort to kind of put into
42 regulation what we've been doing by in season management
43 for 20 years now. So. Any other comments? Questions?
44 Louie, go ahead.

45
46 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
47 family is the one who fished the hooligans, brought them
48 to Ketchikan, Saxmen and the Metlakatla. No one else has
49 gone up there. There was the other side of our family
50 in Saxman, fishermen brought 'em [sic]. Sure, Ketchikan

1 got the hooligans, but they got him after we brought him
2 into Ketchikan. So, that and the petroglyph, because
3 it's above high water tide, below mean low water. And
4 the second one up, up on Lake Creek there, which is
5 approximately 15 boat miles to get up to it. So, I just
6 wanted to make that correction on there. And anyone can
7 tell you this that, you know, my time -- my brother was
8 with the Pep, his little seine boat the Pep, and then
9 the his new steamboat that he built in 1958, the
10 Satellite. And then he started going to Sitka to fish
11 the herring. And I started fishing so, we were always
12 there. We only missed miss them, usually if it's bad
13 weather, it's usually because we were too late. And there
14 was no -- fishing game -- Alaska Department of Fish and
15 Game knows this. That had enough meetings with them and
16 the Forest Service. Yeah. We've been speaking on this
17 for so long and just. I'm Tsimshian Tlingit and I'm
18 Teikwedí of the Sanyaa Kwaan, the Brown Bear clan and
19 that's the clan that -- and Tlingit law states that. So,
20 it's just it's tough when other your own people are
21 trying to move in and claim that, you know, they've done
22 this up there and it's just not true. And I just I gotta
23 put my opinion in you. I can't sit quiet to that. I've
24 spent my whole life on that river and not completely,
25 but every year, you know. So, I think it's just it's
26 important that I can -- I get to at least say that. And
27 I appreciate being allowed to say that. And -- but it's
28 something that we've always done and we've loved it. And
29 it's been mentioned at our meetings were people are
30 scared to go up there because there is -- it's open, no
31 harbor. And it gets very rough out there out of any
32 wind. So, you have to know. And that's what I did. I
33 learned from my brother and learned well, and I've been
34 passing it on to my children. So, thank you for allowing
35 me to speak. (Indiscernible).

36
37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
38 Louie, for imparting your knowledge to the rest of the
39 Council and on the record. I appreciate that. Patti, you
40 have something.

41
42 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman
43 and thank you, Mr. Wagner, for sharing your traditional
44 ecological knowledge all these many years. I've really
45 valued it, and I know the Council has so, thank you. On
46 page 68, it says in 2024, for the first time since the
47 fishery collapsed, large high-density schools of 10,000
48 Hooligan were widespread along multiple major channels
49 and present beyond one week. This is 20 years after
50 2005. We're finally starting to get a return there. We

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1 just have to keep working to rebuild that stock. Thank
2 you, Mr. Chair.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
5 Patti. Frank.

6

7 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
8 know, there was a time when we had a big deer killing
9 in Hoonah, and I was told that we asked -- I was
10 literally asked. Can we close it down so that the deer
11 can rebuild? This is a same kind of situation where
12 we're down in this river is where indigenous people
13 fought to uphold who they are. Being a Tlingit Indian,
14 I told -- I said, yes, we'll close the deer hunting down
15 because I had a big winter kill. Some people got mad at
16 me. They said, why'd you do that? I said, well, we have
17 to have some for next year or the year after that, or
18 the year after that. And here to you, Unuk River is
19 rebuilding itself. So, the indigenous people can be
20 here. This this RAC -- RAC Committee is this -- this is
21 our purpose. Our purpose is to be conserving what we
22 have. If we see a depletion in any resource, this is our
23 purpose. So, and I always say that, well, be who we are
24 is to take care of what resource we have. It's like the
25 beginning when we started, when I spoke. We're here to
26 take care of what we have. If we don't, then there is
27 no reason for the Regional Advisory Council to be here.
28 We're here because whenever we see something that is
29 going to hurt our resource, we're here to say, no, you
30 can't take anymore. So, I stand on with the people that
31 are proposing to take care of what they have. And I
32 always do that. I believe in the people that are fighting
33 for what is theirs, because I know this RAC would protect
34 me too, and my people and I -- I'll always be that way
35 because I just -- I always -- I would say what's going
36 on in this world? We don't know. But anyway, we're here
37 to protect. We're here -- we're also here to protect
38 this world. So, to decide on how we act. So, if this
39 proposal is to take care of what's left, then that's
40 what we're supposed to do. Gunalchéesh.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
43 Frank. Albert. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

44

45 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
46 think part of this process we should consider the formula
47 I spoke about earlier where, as an example, that of a
48 five gallon bucket when you see the population of -- the
49 fish go up in the river even significantly that you up
50 the total allowable catch by the user group and not just

1 hold them to a five gallon bucket. I've been up to
2 Klukwan where I've watched them fill a great big tub to
3 get what they need for the oil. So, I can imagine you're
4 gonna get what, a couple of jars of oil out of a five
5 gallon bucket versus what they used to get. So, this
6 type of thing seems to happen across the Board in
7 Southeast Alaska, where a system crashes and the
8 subsistence user pays the price every time, every time.
9 Not just once in a while, but every time we pay the
10 price for a system crashing. I mentioned this to the RAC
11 several times, where elders used to come into Angoon
12 when I was a kid and their boat was full of fish and
13 nobody said anything, I mean full, I mean, we were
14 concerned they were gonna sink watching them come back
15 to the community as two elders. And then the bummer was
16 my parents would send us down and we'd have to help them
17 bring all the fish up to their smokehouse. But I think
18 part of the process should be to create a formula for
19 when this type of system comes back and that the user
20 groups are allowed to get what they used to get. Mr.
21 Chairman, we heard from subsistence users out of Sitka
22 when they used to bring shrimp in -- great big fish
23 totes of shrimp. And the commercial group found out about
24 it and they start fishing the area. And don't take this
25 the wrong way, it's just the way the State did it, was
26 the user grouper -- grouper... too much TV shows, the
27 user group that originally found the shrimp was limited
28 to a five-gallon bucket. So, it isn't -- it's documented,
29 I mean, it's there, but I think we should come up with
30 a formula that when the system comes back that my
31 grandfather's people over there at the end of the table
32 can get what they used to get. And I say my grandfather's
33 people because my grandfather was Teikwedí. So, I'm
34 full-blooded Tlingit by the way. So, I was in the Army,
35 and they thought I was Mexican in Texas and believe it
36 or not, they thought I was Filipino in Sitka so couldn't
37 win. But thank you, Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
40 Albert. Mike.

41
42 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr.
43 Wagner was talking, he mentioned that he supplied
44 hooligans for Saxman and Ketchikan, but he also forgot
45 that he supplied them for Craig also. It was big news
46 for the hooligan boats coming in, I remember that, you
47 know. But you were wondering what happened and caused
48 the -- what happened that cause the collapse. And if you
49 look back the State blessed a commercial fishery. And
50 to my knowledge, that was the beginning of the end for

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1 that run. Probably Louie could add more to that, but
2 that was the beginning of the downhill spiral of the
3 hooligan run.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Louie, you want
6 to shed some light on that?

7

8 MR. WAGNER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It had
9 started in the late 90s, and the mining started up there
10 about the mid-90s. Brucejack mine was the first one, and
11 they were putting all their tailings in this lake up on
12 the mountain, and the runoff started going right into
13 the river and it was kept quiet, that mine. And it was
14 known about by the Fish and Game, but they never told
15 anybody about that mine going on up there. And then this
16 one guy who flew up there, he told me about the mine.
17 But that was the beginning of the problem. And so, the
18 fish move around like in 2011, Carroll Inlet was plugged.
19 We went up there and we just took one skiff load so we
20 could make our ooligan grease. But there was so much
21 ooligan in there and I brought samples to the Forest
22 Service. They did the DNA on them and it was the same
23 fish as the Unuk. So, and then later that, what is it,
24 the KSM mine. So, there's two mines going up there right
25 now, the third one is waiting on their permits to start,
26 and it'll be the second to the third largest mine in the
27 world. It's -- and they've been blasting up there.
28 They're supposed to -- they got a permit to put the road
29 in, and -- well, come to find out, they started their
30 open pit mine. So, they're up in the mountain there, you
31 know, you can only find the stuff out from pilots and -
32 - but that's gonna be devastating to that whole river
33 if that mine goes in and they have that huge retaining
34 wall up there and it lets go like that Mount Polley,
35 everything will be gone out of that river. So, being on
36 the Southeast Alaska Indigenous Transboundary Committee
37 as a Board member, we've been working very hard on that.
38 I've been traveling all through Canada down to
39 Bellingham and Reno. I've had interviews done from
40 Anchorage, Vancouver, BC, Toronto, and Texas. They're
41 calling and all these different news outlets are very
42 concerned too on what this mine is going to -- can cause
43 and happen to the river. So, there's been a lot of
44 interest in the whole story.

45

46 So, our committee has been working very
47 hard on it and doing the best we can to -- I don't know,
48 there's no way to make it safe if they have that
49 retaining wall in there. But, far as we know, that was
50 the beginning of it. And when -- I wasn't the one who

1 took that fish, I didn't fish that year with that little
2 bit up there so, that wasn't me. When I met with the
3 Federal Subsistence Board in Anchorage, I think it was
4 2001, in then 2002, I agreed and told them that, you
5 know, if they're not there, we won't touch them, we
6 won't take them because we want them, we need them to
7 come back. And so, all that was, geez umpteen years ago
8 now. I hope that answers. That's the farthest we can
9 tell of what's happened on the river. And nothing was
10 mentioned about the king salmon. They disappeared on the
11 river, too. For six years, my son and I, we didn't see
12 'em [sic]. We go on and check up at Kingsbury and going
13 to Lake Creek and went and see the king salmon in there.
14 Geez, they were big soakers there. And they too go around
15 the other streams. But that was the main stream we found.
16 And then pretty soon the cohos pretty well disappeared.
17 The humpies, the dogs. Used to be when you go out here,
18 hard to breathe sometimes from all the bear droppings
19 on the way up, and all the dead fish that were -- they
20 didn't finish and were rotting on the bank. And now it's
21 pretty darn quiet, you don't see the salmon up there,
22 but we don't hear about that.

23
24 And I asked for information from the
25 Alaska Department of Fisheries there because they've
26 been up the river for well over 30 years, setting their
27 minnow traps and catching the fry, and keeping records
28 of that. They're up in the spring after the ooligans,
29 and in moose hunting time they're up there. They have a
30 whole camp setup up there, and they used to gillnet, the
31 coho up there. Very soon there wasn't any coho to gillnet
32 so, they stopped doing that. They even used sport poles,
33 which I could have videoed everything that we'd seen up
34 there. But I wish they would mention what's, you know,
35
36 there's more to it than just saying, well, gee, there's
37 no king salmon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you,
40 Louie. Yeah, you pointed out a major concern, is this
41 transboundary mining, which is gonna affect other rivers
42 as well. So, and we, you know, we have been involved in
43 that as you know, as well. So, yeah. No -- not a simple
44 solution, unfortunately. I see a hand up, Patti.

45
46 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
47 I have a question. Probably should've asked staff, but.
48 Will the designated fishermen and there's a definition,
49 designated fishermen means a federally qualified
50 fishermen who may take all or a portion of another

1 federally qualified fishermen's harvest limits only
2 under situations approved by the Board. So, could a
3 designated fisherman get another bucket for another
4 federally qualified user in this fishery or could the -
5 - a cultural and educational permit be issued for
6 federally qualified users?
7

8 MS. BOLWERK: For the record, my name is
9 Ashley Bolwerk. I can answer the first part of your
10 question about designated fishing. You can get a
11 designated fishing permit for this system. You're
12 allowed to have two limits at any time with a designated
13 fishing permit. So, you can go fish for sort of one
14 other person at a time.
15

16 DR. VICKERS: Thank you, thank you for
17 those questions. This is Brent Vickers. I'm the
18 anthropology division supervisor at OSM. At first Ashley
19 is, again, very accurate and I just wasn't sure in the
20 regulations if that allowed for in this situation. I
21 just wanna add that it's -- the designated permit is
22 basically for any federally qualified it doesn't make
23 stipulations based on age like the proxy program under
24 State regulations. Just want to add that, as long as
25 they are also from a community with customary and
26 traditional use determination for that particular
27 resource. And a culture and education permits can go
28 through a proposal at any time, not during the regulatory
29 cycle through OSM. And essentially what that allows --
30 what that is, is for a some sort of program with an
31 education component to it, where there are a, you know,
32 sort of assign, you know, teachers more or less, there's
33 a curriculum more or less, and students that are gonna
34 be registered in it can apply for these permits. And
35 what they allow is for some harvest under any
36 (indiscernible) conditions so, harvest for that
37 resource. But this can be what I -- what meant under any
38 conditions, this can be a resource -- a fishery that's
39 closed, for example, to all users. But a culture and
40 education permit, which are gaining a lot of attention
41 on Yukon, Kuskokwim, where there are pretty devastating
42 declines and a real need to continue subsistence
43 learning of tradition to have these permits so that they
44 can -- elders can teach children how to continue
45 harvesting, processing salmon in that case or ruling it
46 in this case a year after year. But there -- it has to
47 be some sort of program that can be set up, and it can
48 -- that permit would go through us at any time of the
49 year.
50

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

2
3 DR. VICKERS: Thank you.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John.

6
7 MR. SMITH: Yeah, just to share that
8 we've done that in Juneau cause Juneau, there's no
9 subsistence harvesting there. But we went to the Fish
10 and Game and did a camp, and we were able to put together
11 a net with the kids and they gave us a limit, and we
12 went and set it out and caught some fish. But also, we
13 were trying to get them to help us, of course, that's a
14 whole different program was to set a skate, you know,
15 to catch some fish, but they wouldn't allow us that. But
16 I drew a picture of a bobber, a traditional bobber,
17 which is just a two-hook skate set and they were like,
18 hey, that's legal. And they let us use those so, we
19 caught a lot of halibut skates and some, you know, so
20 it was -- and even at another time where it was out of
21 season where they okayed us to get a harvested deer. So,
22 we got a permit and our hunters had a permit and a copy
23 of it to go out and do that. So, it's really positive
24 to do that to have some time to teach our kids, yeah.
25 Thank you, guys for having that available to us, really.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
28 Albert.

29
30 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
31 This is -- Mr. Wagner's comment about the mines and the
32 possible impact they're having. Do you guys have any
33 data that -- or any information that says why the ooligan
34 go back to that specific river system? I've asked this
35 in the past, Mr. Chair, when we were doing the ETJ
36 petition. I asked the State Fish and Game biologist if
37 there's something about -- if there's something in
38 Kanalku River that causes the salmon to go straight back
39 to that system. And could a mine on the north end of the
40 island affects them based on the minerals being put back
41 into the ocean at the mine? Could that impact the salmon
42 trying to return to Kanalku River and they didn't have
43 an answer, alright. Y'all know -- there's Texas for ya
44 [sic] you all -- you guys know that I mentioned this
45 several times, that I only have a 12th grade education
46 so, I have to ask these questions to put my own formula
47 together. Now, if in fact, that they are having an impact
48 on the river. Maybe we're looking the wrong place to
49 find a solution to the problem. And if it in fact is the
50 mine is having the impact, maybe we need to switch

1 directions and hold them accountable for the impact
2 they're having on the river. There is an impact on the
3 north end of the island that's been ignored. And it
4 bothers me that even if I presented it to the
5 Transboundary Commission, they don't want to talk about
6 it. It's going to impact Juneau, I promise you. Because
7 the data that came out of that and all the science that
8 one person brought to the table, and you can look this
9 up online. We took a seal out of that area, and that
10 seal had the highest concentrations of mercury in it out
11 of any seal tested in the state of Alaska. Mercury is a
12 carcinogen. I sit in this seat because a friend of mine
13 (pause) lost his fight with cancer. And he ate nothing
14 but our traditional foods. So, makes you wonder and kind
15 of sets me off in a bad direction to the fact that we're
16 not looking at our foods and the impact the mines are
17 having on it. So, I don't know. Lost a mother-in-law to
18 cancer recently, not recently a couple of years ago. She
19 lost her daughter to cancer. So, when are we gonna say
20 enough of that's enough. And when we brought the seal's
21 attention to the State, they said, oh, by the way, you
22 can only eat six ounces of salmon, or you can only eat
23 eight ounces of seal. You know, you come to my house and
24 watch me eat, there's no way I'm gonna measure eight
25 ounces of seal and six ounces of salmon. I'm gonna eat
26 what I'm hungry for. But I didn't realize in doing that,
27 I'm jeopardizing my own life. So, I think we need to
28 find a solution before it's too late for everybody, I
29 guess, I don't know.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, I don't
32 want to get too sidetracked on trans boundary mining,
33 cause that's another topic. I know it relates to this,
34 but that's not what this proposal is about. But I do
35 want to remind the Council that the staff recommended a
36 modification to this proposal that we've kind of danced
37 around a little bit as to whether or not the hooligans
38 and all of District 1 should be included in this. I
39 think we kind of alluded to the fact that you know, in
40 other places in the area there were, you know, hooligans
41 observed that were probably same stocks as the Unuk River
42 hooligans. I believe that's what I heard. And there was
43 a suggested modification that this closure would extend
44 to all of District 1. So, I'd kinda like to hear
45 Council's thoughts on that suggested modification.
46 Patti.

47
48 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. So, maybe staff
49 wouldn't go away so quickly. So, has there been a -- has
50 there been harvest on other areas other than the Unuk

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1 during recent years?

2

3 MS. BOLWERK: So, my understanding is
4 that a few years ago, there was some small harvest on
5 another system within District 1, and that caused us to
6 start using in-season management to close all of
7 District 1. Which is a State and Federal closure. So,
8 the modification request was to continue with that trend
9 that we've been doing for a number of years now. Does
10 that answer your question?

11

12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I just have a
13 clarification on that. The rest of the waters of District
14 1, is there actually Federal waters? I mean, are we
15 talking about State waters there? Are there other river
16 systems that these hooligans use in District 1?

17

18 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mister Chair.
19 This is Ashley Bolwerk, for the record. Yes, one example
20 is Carroll Inlet. Hooligan have been seen in Carroll
21 Inlet. And so, the Federal waters, you know, the map in
22 the book there sort of highlights all of the saltwater,
23 but any fresh water that flows into there would be
24 included in that closure. And there are a couple of
25 places where the hooligan have shown up.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: In the streams.

28

29 MS. BOLWERK: In the streams, yes.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

32

33 Albert.

34

35 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, I
36 guess the question was -- is, with everything you guys
37 have learned about the system, is -- are the mines having
38 an impact on the hooligan returning to that system?

39

40 MR. CROSS: Yeah. For the record, my name
41 is Rob Cross with the Forest Service. I'm not sure that
42 we have a satisfactory answer on that. As you said, the
43 State didn't either. I know that Ketchikan Indian
44 Community and the Forest Service, along with the
45 Chilkoot Indian Community, is also doing some monitoring
46 up there. I'm not sure if water quality is part of that.
47 I don't see Keenan Sanderson here. But I know that that's
48 of specific interest to them. Maybe not the mine
49 specifically but trying to answer that question of why
50 is there low site fidelity with this species. Really,
what's going on with the collapse. And I know that

1 they're taking a much -- more in-depth look at the
2 population on the Unuk, because in the past, we've sort
3 of just done sight surveys. And are there fish there or
4 are there not fish there, how many fish totes do we
5 think that that would comprise, you know, to try to have
6 some sort of quantitative data on it. But again, the
7 efforts that are going on for that monitoring are just
8 ramping up. They're looking at eDNA and water quality
9 and things like that. So, I think, I hope that we'll
10 have an answer here soon for that. But just the way that
11 we've been monitoring it in the past has not given us
12 any sort of answer there.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
15 Cathy.

16

17 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
18 I think in our justification for supporting this
19 proposal, just adding in our continued concerns with
20 trans boundary mining as well could be a point of one
21 of the reasons why you know, we need to restrict users
22 as well so that you know, we still provide for the
23 meaningful subsistence opportunity for federally
24 qualified users. But we need to close down other things,
25 other users, because trans boundary mining is also a
26 compounding factor for the population of hooligan in
27 this river. And I'd like to actually make a motion to
28 amend our -- the motion on the table to include the
29 modification to close Federal public waters through
30 District 1 to the harvest of hooligan, except by f
31 federally qualified subsistence users in the Unuk River.

32

33 MR. CASIPIT: Second, this is Cal.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
36 Cathy. Thank you, Cal. Okay, so, let's have a little
37 discussion on closing all the waters in District 1 as
38 proposed in the motion. Cathy, more (distortion).

39

40 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
41 would support this amendment. I seem to recall, or I do
42 recall a number of conversations that we've had over the
43 years about hooligan and their site -- their non-site
44 fidelity, I guess you would say. And I can remember
45 presentations that we received from the Forest Service
46 when they have been trying to monitor hooligan
47 populations for the Unuk River and how they're starting
48 to see small portions of hooligan return to areas nearby
49 which are likely genetically linked to the Unuk River
50 hooligan. And so, I think since we are looking at trying

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1 to conserve this population a little bit longer to
2 continue to rebuild the stock, we need to include those
3 areas that those fish are, or the genetics of those fish
4 are actually going to the spawn. And so, I would support
5 the amendment.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any other
8 Council comments on the amendment? Cal.

9

10 MR. CASIPIT: I too support the amend
11 [sic] and will be voting in favor of it. And for the
12 same reasons, many of the same reasons that Cathy
13 mentioned. The conservation issue of trying to protect
14 those -- that -- those genetics, no matter where they
15 return in Unit 1. I think there's substantial evidence
16 that there is a problem there. I mean, we've -- been for
17 20 years now or so. And I think this also would probably
18 take some pressure off the in-season manager by just
19 putting it -- putting the closure in regulation so that
20 he or she doesn't have to constantly do that year after
21 year, after year until we get this population back to
22 where we want it.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
25 Any other justifications on the amendment? Harvey, Go
26 ahead.

27

28 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before
29 I could support this, I'd like to hear comments from the
30 Ketchikan Indian Community. I really think that since
31 they're not qualified to subsistence, if this passes as
32 written, I'd like to hear their comment.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
35 Harvey. We haven't received no comments from the
36 Ketchikan Indian Community on this -- here on the
37 proposal, I do not believe.

38

39 (Pause)

40

41 Any other? Patty.

42

43 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah, is that Burrows Bay
44 in Unit One?

45

46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Burrows
47 Bay, that's where the Chickamin River flows out of. Is
48 that correct, Louie? It's also in District 1. Albert.

49

50

1 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The
2 questions I'm asking aren't always necessarily in
3 compliance with your order of doing things. But, I guess
4 the question is, and I was waiting for Rob to go sit
5 down cause -- so, he can come back up and answer. But I
6 guess the question is, is there a benchmark for the
7 population in that system where you're gonna allow Mr.
8 Wagner to up his limit? And did you guys consider that
9 benchmark? I'm not concerned about anyone else, cause
10 he's demonstrated to me that he's been a part of that
11 system for a while, and he could possibly start bringing
12 some to Craig again.

13
14 MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair,
15 member Howard. That's a great question and it's a really
16 difficult question. To me, I guess my benchmark is 802
17 says one necessary to restrict the take of fish and
18 wildlife. Subsistence is given priority over all other
19 consumptive uses. And I -- from everything I've heard
20 over the years, it sounds to me like a five-gallon bucket
21 would be a restriction to federally qualified
22 subsistence users. So, this is a discussion that we have
23 every year for these in-season management actions, you
24 know, at what level would sport harvest not interfere
25 with or add to the restriction to federally qualified
26 harvesters. So, all that's to say, I'm not exactly sure
27 what that benchmark is, but we will continue to use in-
28 season management actions to set the limits. And if we
29 keep seeing years like we saw this year, then I see no
30 reason why we can't up the limit, and up the limit, and
31 then get to a point where we're hearing, you know, I got
32 my hooligan for the year and I'm happy with that. And I
33 think at that point, that's when that four-year review
34 of this closure would kick in. And then that's when we
35 reevaluate the situation and see if it's amenable to
36 having sport harvest or State harvest.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
39 We do have a motion with an amendment. I mean, we really
40 need to deal with that before we get back to main motion
41 discussions here. Does anybody else have any other
42 discussions or justifications on our amendment, which
43 is to close all of the waters of District 1 to non-
44 federally qualified users. So, we do need to deal with
45 that. We're kinda getting back to main motion questions
46 here, so. Let's deal with the amended motion.

47
48 MS. PHILLIPS: Call for the question.

49
50

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. So, the
2 question has been called on the amendment to the motion
3 to include the staff suggestion for modification that
4 would close Federal public waters throughout District 1
5 to the harvest of hooligan, except by federally
6 qualified subsistence users in the Unuk River. So, on
7 the amendment, I'll call for a voice vote. All in favor
8 of the amendment, say aye.

9
10 IN UNISON: Aye.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed
13 to the amendment, say nay.

14
15 (No response)

16
17 Okay, so now we have an amended main
18 motion back on the floor for discussion. So, on these
19 other topics -- Jim, you had your hand up.

20
21 MR. SLATER: Is a question for Mr. Cross,
22 Cross. The fish have demonstrated low site fidelity. And
23 what kind of measurement technique do you use to know
24 when they've rebounded since they don't necessarily
25 return to the same spot every year?

26
27 MR. CROSS: Yeah. Through the Chair. So,
28 traditionally we have been doing kinda visual surveys
29 and walking as many of the, I guess, braids to the Unuk
30 River or tributaries of the Unuk River. And then using
31 an index that is you know, is it abundant, not existent
32 you know, I -- off the top of my head, I can't remember
33 exactly what the ranks are. And that's how we've been
34 doing it. But in cooperation with some other researchers
35 that are working on the northern Tongass for hooligan,
36 they've started to look at environmental DNA and
37 quantitative DNA and trying to come up with a more
38 quantitative way to assess the population. But in terms
39 of site fidelity, I mean, it's really just trying to
40 chase these fish around and hit as many spots as
41 possible, and they're in and out of the river very
42 quickly. So, and it's a very braided system. So, it just
43 presents a very difficult population to try to assess.
44 And so, I think you know, kind of following what the
45 other Council members have said, taking a more
46 conservative approach to managing this population has
47 been the way that we've been going with it. But again,
48 I mean, we saw a really good return this year in relative
49 terms to post collapse and seeing things like that. I
50 think we can start to ease off of the restrictions and

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1 then, you know, kind of do adaptive management to see.
2 I mean, we have no idea what next year is gonna look
3 like. They could go to Carroll Inlet, they could go to
4 one of the many other braids in the river and effectively
5 look like they didn't return to our monitoring staff.
6

7 MR. SLATER: Right, thank you.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: There
10 is somebody else at that end of the table? Patti, go
11 ahead.
12

13 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Why
14 would -- why wouldn't we allow federally qualified
15 subsistence users to harvest ooligan in Carroll Inlet
16 or Burrow Bay? Why are we only allowing it in Unuk if
17 there -- if there's low site fidelity and they might be
18 going to one of those other systems.
19

20 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair, member
21 Phillips. It's -- I'm not the fisheries manager there,
22 but it's my understanding that that is the river that
23 they most consistently return to. And so, yeah, going
24 back in the history, the majority of the harvest was on
25 the Unuk River. And then I believe they started seeing
26 them in small amounts at these other various systems.
27 And so, at that point, they closed down District 1
28 because it was already an imperiled population of fish.
29 So, I think the answer is really the main river that
30 they're coming back to is the Unuk River.
31

32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Other
33 discussion, John.
34

35
36 MR. SMITH: Yeah, just sharing. (In
37 Native) You know, my history comes from Klukwan in Dáašú.
38 I'm Kaagwaantaan Eagle Nest even though that I look of
39 so, I come from Martha and Mary Jack was married to
40 Sitka Jack. And you know, our stories talk about our
41 hooligan. Actually, it's an awesome story, it's
42 beautiful. But it shares about how our hooligan, you
43 know, how they go up -- the males will actually come up
44 into the river first and they're actually checking the
45 temperature, they're actually sensing and cleaning up
46 the area. And then they'll leave and then they'll come
47 back into the stream and let the rest of them know it's
48 okay. You know, so our hooligan are very sensitive. You
49 know, they're -- in our stories, they're bright and shiny
50 and they're happy, you know, so understanding the

1 temperature and the water and the -- do you guys do a
2 lot of the -- and I truly believe they're all related.
3 And I'm sure you find that out during that -- your DNA.
4 You were just sharing earlier about how they were pretty
5 close related, they're all relatives. So, my question
6 is do you guys do a lot of water testing, temperature
7 testing and even looking to testing the hooligan himself
8 to see if any chemicals or anything that's damaging them,
9 that might be spooking them, like Albert was sharing.
10 And, you know, our fish come back to their same locations
11 pretty much because of their -- the scent and the, you
12 know, where they were born. You know, maybe some of
13 that, too. Thanks.

14
15 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair, member
16 Smith. I don't believe that they're sending samples off
17 to look for, like, heavy metals or anything like that.
18 I mean, this -- if that's a concern, that is certainly
19 something that we can look into. I think that this -- I
20 wish that there was a member from KIC or the KMRD crew
21 here, cause they're the ones actually on the ground doing
22 this work. But I know that the efforts are really ramping
23 up as far as how they're looking at this. Again, most
24 of the data that we've been using is really just boots
25 on the ground. Are the fish there, are they not there,
26 the weather conditions that member Wagner has brought
27 up over and over, it's just a really difficult place to
28 get to. There's usually 3 or 4 efforts to get out before
29 they finally do make it out. That being the monitoring
30 crew. Yeah so, all that being said, that would certainly
31 be something that we would look into, hearing these
32 concerns. I don't think it's out of the scope at all,
33 but it's not something that we've been looking at.

34
35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: (Indiscernible)
36 Okay, we still need to hear some justifications and how
37 Council members intend to vote on this proposal. Ted.

38
39 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
40 just think it's real important to point out that we
41 haven't got -- had any comments or opposition from the
42 Ketchikan Indian Community. I think it's just real
43 important to point that out, and then I will be
44 supporting this proposal, thanks.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Any
47 other Council members? Cal.

48
49 MR. CASIPIT: I too will be supporting
50 this proposal as modified by us just now, as suggested

1 by staff. Again, I talked about some of these, some of
2 my justification on the -- when we were talking about
3 the main motion before we amended. But, yeah, I mean,
4 20 plus years of a conservation issue there. Still
5 concerned. You know, we've allowed some limited harvests
6 there, but I think there's still a conservation concern
7 there. It's supported by substantial evidence. The
8 Traditional Ecological Knowledge on this one is
9 outstanding. I mean, we have Louie here who's lived his
10 whole life with those fish, I think. So, you know, I
11 think there's plenty of information to support our
12 suggested action here. And also, I just mentioned again
13 that, you know, this has been done over the past few
14 years by the in-season manager, every year. And this
15 will take the pressure off of them, and you won't have
16 to do that anymore. So, I -- I'm in support of this
17 proposal as modified.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
20 I'm glad you pointed out the extensive traditional
21 knowledge we have on this, it's very important. Anybody
22 else?

23
24 (No response)

25
26 Question. Are we ready for the question?
27 Okay. Motion was to support fisheries proposal 25-02,
28 which would close Federal public waters of the Unuk River
29 to all non-federally qualified users. And it would also
30 close all waters in District 1 to all users, including
31 federally qualified users who would only be allowed to
32 fish on the Unuk River. So, Frank, do you want to call
33 the roll on this one?

34
35 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Larry
36 Bemis.

37
38 MR. BEMIS: Yes.

39
40 MR. WRIGHT: Oh sorry. Motion FB 25-2.
41 Larry Bemis is yes?

42
43 MR. BEMIS: Yes

44
45 MR. WRIGHT: Cal Casipit.

46
47 MR. CASIPIT: Yes.

48
49 MR. WRIGHT: Michael Douville.

50
MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.

1
2 MR. WRIGHT: Jim Slater.
3
4 MR. SLATER: Yes.
5
6 MR. WRIGHT: Ted Sandhoff.
7
8 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes.
9
10 MR. WRIGHT: Howard. Albert Howard.
11
12 MR. HOWARD: Yes.
13
14 MR. WRIGHT: Don Hernandez.
15
16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes.
17
18 MR. WRIGHT: Patricia Phillips.
19
20 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.
21
22 MR. WRIGHT: Louie Wagner.
23
24 MR. WAGNER: Yes.
25
26 MR. WRIGHT: Harvey Kitka.
27
28 MR. KITKA: Yes.
29
30 MR. WRIGHT: John Smith.
31
32 MR. SMITH: Yes.
33
34 MR. WRIGHT: Cathy Needham.
35
36 MS. NEEDHAM: Yes.
37
38 MR. WRIGHT: Frank is yes. Motion
39 carried.....
40
41 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay.
42
43 MR. WRIGHT:Mr. Chair.
44
45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
46 Frank. We have one more Federal proposal. It's actually
47 a closure review on the Mahknati Island herring. As I
48 told the Council members last night, a little social
49 gathering, we would try and get through all of our
50 proposals today, even if it involves staying a little

1 bit late. And kinda front load the meeting with action
2 items so we don't get jammed up at the end. And I really
3 appreciate the fact that the members of the public have
4 sat through the entire meeting here, and it's getting
5 to be a long day. So, we may go a little late tonight,
6 but just thought I'd let you know that we want to
7 complete our proposal process here. And we'll hear about
8 the Mahknati Island herring closure from Jason Roberts.
9

10 DR. ROBERTS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair,
11 members of Council. My name is Jason Roberts. I'm an
12 anthropologist at OSM. I'll be presenting Federal
13 Fisheries Closure FCR 25-03. This is a standard review
14 of a Federal subsistence fishery closure to the harvest
15 of herring and herring roe, to all but federally
16 qualified subsistence users in the waters under Federal
17 subsistence jurisdiction in the Mahknati Island area.
18 This closure review can be found starting on page 73 of
19 your meeting book, with a map of the Federal closure
20 area shown on page 74. It's the Board's policy that
21 Federal public lands and waters should be reopened when
22 closures are no longer necessary, and that closures will
23 be reviewed at least once every four years. The purpose
24 of this review is to determine if the Mahknati Island
25 area herring and herring spawn closure to non-federally
26 qualified users is still warranted.
27

28 So, I'm gonna try to keep this pretty
29 short. As you know, you saw a preliminary analysis at
30 your All Council meeting and gave us a lot of good
31 feedback during that preliminary review. We also
32 received some really important comments from the Sitka
33 Tribe. Since that review that motivated us to take
34 another look at everything in the analysis. And we've
35 kind of been going back and forth on this one quite a
36 bit, but our conclusion now is to retain the status quo
37 on this closure. And so, I'm just gonna jump to the
38 justification here, because I think it hits most of the
39 key points in the analysis.
40

41 So, the waters under Federal subsistence
42 fisheries jurisdiction in the Mahknati Island area have
43 been closed to all but federally qualified users since
44 2015 due to conservation concerns and the need to
45 continue subsistence uses. These waters are an important
46 location for traditional harvests of herring spawn.
47 Local and traditional knowledge emphasizes the
48 historical importance of the area as a refuge for herring
49 and herring spawn harvesters, where eggs can be accessed
50 relatively easily and harvested safely by subsistence

1 users even during periods of inclement weather. Though
2 the estimated mature herring biomass returning to Sitka
3 Sound has exhibited a strong increasing trend since
4 2019, this is a short period of improvement that
5 partially corresponds with minimal commercial harvest,
6 taking place from 2018 to 2020 due to a lack of suitable
7 size fish. Further, it's been noted that the metric of
8 mature herring biomass returning in any one year is not
9 a particularly good predictor of subsistence harvest
10 amount, as issues like spawning location, duration and
11 density of spawn, quality of spawn, and the amount of
12 spawn intercepted by commercial fisheries before they
13 reach locations accessible to subsistence harvesters
14 complicates predictions of subsistence harvest success.
15 Overall, local knowledge holders have asserted that
16 herring spawn is generally not as dense in Sitka Sound
17 as it was further in the past. Spawns are shorter in
18 duration, and the yearly amount of spawn is typically
19 smaller in and multiple traditional harvest areas. Those
20 subsistence hearing spawn harvests in Sitka Sound and
21 the number of harvesting households appeared to have
22 decreased since monitoring surveys began in 2002. This
23 could be an indication that it's becoming increasingly
24 difficult and time consuming for subsistence users to
25 harvest enough spawn to make it worth the effort and
26 expenditure.

27
28 Conclusions that can be drawn from this
29 data are also complicated by the growing importance of
30 community harvester boats, and how those boats are
31 accounted for in the surveys, and less than ideal
32 response rates in some survey years. Overall,
33 subsistence harvests have not exceeded the lower end of
34 ANS range in 13 of the 21 years since monitoring of
35 these harvests in Sitka Sound began. And there's
36 evidence presented by the Sitka Tribe in their comments
37 on this proposal of substantial declines in subsistence
38 catch per unit effort, in many of the years where the
39 lower range of ANS was not met. The Board of Fisheries
40 took significant action to reduce conflict between the
41 commercial herring roe fishery and subsistence
42 harvesting, including closing a large area important to
43 subsistence harvesting to commercial fishing in 2012,
44 and then increasing the area of this commercial closure
45 in 2018. This closed area includes most of the waters
46 under Federal jurisdiction in the Mahknati Island area.
47 However, there have been proposals to reduce or rescind
48 the State commercial closure area in recent years, and
49 it's unclear how long this closure might remain in place.
50 Commercial harvesting activity in Sitka Sound appears

1 to be the primary factor impacting successful
2 subsistence harvests here. However, closing the Federal
3 public waters of the Mahknati Island area to commercial
4 harvesters or commercial harvest methods only is a
5 modification that is outside the Board's authority on
6 closures. So, that concludes my summary of the analysis
7 for this closure review, and I'm happy to try to answer
8 any questions.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
11 Jason. Do we have questions from the Council?

12
13 (No response)

14
15 Maybe not, because it was a very
16 excellent analysis and I was very pleased with your
17 justification there. I thought it was very well written.
18 So, I say it's a issue that this Council has been very
19 familiar with, so maybe there are no questions. Okay.
20 Thank you, Jason. So, Orville, do we have consultation
21 on this closure review?

22
23 MR. LIND: Good afternoon, Chairman,
24 Council members. Orville Lind, Native liaison at OSM.
25 During the consultation session we did not have any
26 questions or comments on the closure review. Mr. Chair,
27 thank you.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
30 Orville. Do we have agency comments from the Department
31 of Fish and Game on this?

32
33 (No response)

34
35 Apparently not. Any other Federal
36 agencies?

37
38 (No response)

39
40 How about tribal comments, do we have
41 tribal comments on this closure review? Yes.

42
43 DR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chair, we received one
44 written comment from the Sitka Tribe. That's on page 103
45 of your meeting book. The Sitka Tribe submitted this
46 written comment in favor of retaining the status quo.
47 They noted that Sitka Sound remains the only reliable
48 source of substantial subsistence herring egg harvest
49 in Alaska, and that the Mahknati waters remain important
50 for harvesters who cannot access more distant and

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1 exposed waters. They also explained that returning
2 biomass is not the best metric to evaluate subsistence
3 herring egg harvest opportunity as issues like where,
4 when, and how long spawn occurs are much more important
5 for subsistence harvesters. Therefore, it's important
6 to preserve the most accessible and suitable herring egg
7 harvest habitats to ensure that all harvesters have
8 areas where they can obtain eggs. They also note recent
9 reductions in catch per unit effort as a further reason
10 to retain the closure.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
13 Jason. How about other Advisory Committees, any Fish and
14 Game Advisory Committees comment on this one?

15
16 (No response)

17
18 Nope. No resource commissions?

19
20 MS. PERRY: No, Mr. Chair.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Nope. How about
23 written public comments, do we have any written public
24 comments? Jason.

25
26 DR. ROBERTS: Not other than the ones
27 submitted by Sitka.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Is there anybody
30 on the phone who would like to comment on this? We do
31 have somebody on the phone. Kyle Rosendale, are you
32 there?

33
34 MR. ROSENDALE: Yes, Mr. Chair, thank you
35 very much. This is Kyle Rosendale with Sitka Tribe of
36 Alaska. Can you hear me okay?

37
38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes, loud and
39 clear, go ahead.

40
41 MR. ROSENDALE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And
42 thank you to staff for that wonderful summary of our
43 written comments. I know that the Council has our
44 comments, and so I'll try to be really brief. STA
45 supports continuing the closure of the Mahknati Federal
46 waters. Herring eggs are a culturally significant
47 subsistence food, and Sitka is by far the largest source
48 of subsistence herring eggs in Alaska. We don't have
49 systematic data through our herring egg surveys that we
50 conduct with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. But

1 we found herring eggs from Sitka shared across the State
2 in almost every community in the State. We found them
3 in Florida, we found them in Hawaii. Sitka herring eggs
4 are shared and shared all over with family, friends and
5 loved ones. Staff did a nice job of summarizing some of
6 the traditional knowledge around changes in special
7 temporal distribution of spawn. And if I could just add
8 a bit of context to that. As one example in 2023, the
9 biomass here was relatively large for contemporary times
10 but more than 75% of estimated herring egg deposition
11 occurred on the southern shore of Kruzof Island. This
12 is an area far from town, exposed to heavy swells and
13 strong currents, and it's unsuitable for subsistence
14 herring egg harvest by -- to contrast, the Mahknati
15 Federal waters are close to town and accessible for
16 harvesters, no matter what vessel they have. I've seen
17 people towing branches with kayaks in the harbor, so
18 people will use any means at their disposal to try to
19 get out and get herring eggs to share.

20
21 And so, I think that the tribe would
22 like to stress to the Council that when considering
23 protecting subsistence herring egg harvest every little
24 bit counts. On another note, I would just like to share
25 some appreciation for the staff working on this issue.
26 Staff reached out to STA well in advance of the meeting
27 to make sure that STA was aware of issues on the agenda
28 that might affect tribal citizens, and make sure that
29 we are aware of all the ways to participate in the
30 meeting. Furthermore, it appears that staff thoughtfully
31 considered the Council's comments and STAs comments on
32 this herring issue and incorporated them into their
33 final analysis here. And, you know, sometimes this sort
34 of public meeting, it's so big and sprawling that
35 participants, I think, worry that their input, their
36 concerns gets lost in the shuffle. And so, it was really,
37 really nice to see the effort that staff put in and the
38 process in place and would just like to share an
39 acknowledgment of that and an appreciation of that.
40 Thank you very much for your time. I'm happy to try to
41 answer any questions you may have and with that, thank
42 you and gunalchéesh.

43
44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
45 Rosendale. Do we have questions for Mr. Rosendale of the
46 Sitka Tribe?

47
48 (No response)

49
50

1 I'm not seeing any questions, Kyle. So,
2 thank you very much. Appreciate your good words to the
3 staff as well. Okay, if that's the only public testimony,
4 I believe it is. No one else online. There is somebody
5 in the room, however. Okay, one of our students. Turn
6 on the microphone and go ahead.

7
8 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
9 name is Thomas Smith, for the record. I'm from -- I'm a
10 student from Mount Edgecumbe High School. I speak on
11 behalf of myself. I would like to share that the herring
12 eggs that the people around Sitka harvest provide not
13 only food for themselves, but for the students at Mount
14 Edgecumbe. We've had totes and boatloads delivered to
15 us from all around the waters in Sitka. They take us on
16 kayaking trips that help us gather herring eggs, and
17 those can't be far away so, we cannot travel very far
18 to get those. And it's really amazing to see the herring
19 in their natural habitat and to see the spawn that they
20 produce. We use those herring eggs to feed families
21 around Alaska, not only in Sitka or Southeast. Last year
22 we donated at least a couple hundred pounds of herring
23 eggs to families of the seniors that were graduating.
24 And Sitka Tribe also uses them to donate to the families
25 around Sitka as well, which I find amazing. MEHS provides
26 herring eggs to students and families across the State,
27 which also go to [sic] rest of the United States, as we
28 -- as was mentioned before. So, I would just like to
29 make that known and put that under consideration for the
30 Council. Thank you, quyana.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
33 Thomas. Are there any questions for Thomas?

34
35 (No response)

36
37 Thank you very much for your testimony.
38 Good job well stated. So, is there anybody else, public
39 testimony? So, time for the Council's action.

40
41 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Albert.

44
45 MR. HOWARD: I move we support FCR25-03
46 as presented.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, we have a
49 motion and a second. Just a second, I see Mr. Ayers
50 wants to come forward.

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MR. AYERS: Thank you, Mister Chair and Council members. I just wanted to note that since this is a closure review, as DeAnna may have just noted we need a motion either to retain the status quo, a motion to rescind. Those are pretty much the two that I'm comfortable with us getting into at this point in time. It seems like we're going one way, but I just wanted to put that out there for the record. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thanks, Scott. So, it's just a wording issue here, I guess we want to hear for the record, is the motion to retain the status quo on this closure review?

MR. HOWARD: That is an implied and has presented, Mr. Chair. So, Mr. Chair I (pause) I made the motion to support FCR 25-03 to maintain status quo. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Albert. And Harvey, you were the seconded? [sic] Okay. Okay, discussion on this closure review. Council members. Harvey, go ahead.

MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the reasons that Mahknati is the only spot in Sitka that's got Federal waters around, it took us a long time to get it recognized as Federal waters. One of the reasons they -- we asked to have it closed was that it is -- it was one of the places where the spawn Sitka Sound collected on both sides from the southern stock and as well as the western stock that they spawned on both sides of the island, and it was really close for us to subsist. When the commercial industry found out that the corridors of how the fish got there, they basically blocked it off so that the spawn didn't happen within our area anymore and bigger the area we closed, the more they blocked it off. And forced the herring to spawn in other places. When the price of the herring roe dropped, the fishing industry start to go a little different and they start co-managing, well, actually cooperating and fewer boats fished. So, then these corridors start to get open. In the last year or so, we start to see a skim of herring eggs in some of the traditional spots again. It's gonna take a while for it to come back. We keep a close eye on it. As far as the herring goes the Sitka Sound is starting to rebuild itself and not only on the western side, but on the southern side of us. So, we're getting -- we might end

1 up with two separate stocks coming into Sitka Sound
2 again. Which was back in the state where eventually all
3 the Southeast or Baranof Island would get covered by
4 herring spawn. We use to see herring spawn that went
5 from Ketchikan all the way up to Lisianski. When they
6 started the commercial fisheries and -- the oil
7 reduction plans wiped out big portions of it. When they
8 finally stopped that, then the stock started to rebuild
9 themselves. They rebuilt themselves to a good point
10 where we were able to get qualities of this subsistence
11 eggs again. And the commercial industry started on the
12 herring roe, and it start to collapse again. We put in
13 many proposals to try to conserve the fishery. That's
14 gonna come in a later time. But one of the reasons I
15 support this is because we hope to have it come back to
16 where our people don't have to go out in small boats
17 anymore into some of the hazardous areas where they have
18 to go to get herring eggs. A couple of years ago, a
19 couple of boys were going out and they lost their lives
20 (indiscernible) on the way out, two things happened and
21 just sometimes we get some real nasty weather that
22 associates with the fishery and when that happens, it
23 gets really dangerous to travel in small boats. So, we
24 want to see this stay closed. So, that eventually we'll
25 have a good spawn again. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26
27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
28 Harvey. Does anybody need any -- add anything else to
29 what Harvey said? John, go ahead.

30
31 MR. SMITH: I was talking to Harvey
32 earlier, but also understanding the fisheries and how
33 they fish, and how they use a lot of tactics to push
34 your -- collect or team up to keeping the herring in
35 specific places. They don't go over here and over there.
36 So, I see a lot of school kids that are out here, and
37 there's drones that you have cameras on there. It would
38 be really interesting, I encourage an educational video
39 of actually filming their process, even if they have
40 other skiffs that are running out there, that are pushing
41 the herring out there or do they have planes up in the
42 air that are flying, that are spotting them. You know,
43 there's a lot of different tactics of it, but it'd be
44 really encouraging to have videos watching how they're
45 using their tactics so that we can set regulations on
46 making it equal challenge for them fishing and making
47 it an equal challenge for our herring people to have a
48 chance. Thank you.

49
50 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John. Patti.

1
2 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
3 I was born at Mount Edgecumbe Hospital. My parents lived
4 on Mount Edgecumbe Island until they started building
5 the bridge. And then they moved us over to Sitka side.
6 So, I grew up eating herring eggs. And I've seen, you
7 know, when there was plenty of herring. And I've seen
8 when there's not plenty of herring and having observed
9 -- been an observer of these herring management
10 proposals over the years and this divisiveness that it's
11 caused. I hope that there's, you know, that the ComFish
12 realizes that the traditional users are wanting to
13 rebuild the stock for the benefit of all. But the harvest
14 of the herring eggs is like a -- is a minimal amount of
15 the overall, you know, eggs that are laid within the
16 area. But on page 85, on the bottom, it says there are
17 locals and scholars who argue that herring population
18 here are still being managed in a historically depleted
19 state, which is the result of a shifting baseline whereby
20 lower populations come to be seen as normal over time.
21 So, what they thought was normal is being shown that
22 this population is increasing and it needs to increase
23 because there's a whole ecosystem that relies on that
24 resource. I noticed that, you know, off of Yakobi Island
25 during the pandemic we had super schools of herring come
26 to the surface. I'd never seen so much herring in my
27 entire life. A herring as far as you could see and super
28 pods of humpback whales feeding on them. I mean, this
29 isn't just for subsistence users and commercial users.
30 This is for all species that thrive off of this resource.
31 And it just -- it was mind blowing to me to see this
32 quantity of herring. And it happened for two years in a
33 row. And so, it kind of made me change my mindset about
34 this resource. And I travel from Pelican to Sitka quite
35 frequently. Sometimes I'll come down in my skiff during
36 the herring season, but I have -- sometimes I have to
37 get right back if I don't want to be weathered out. So,
38 I, you know, I see what he's talking about -- they're
39 talking about when those herring are spawning on that
40 west -- on the western side of Sitka Sound, on the Kruzof
41 sign where the swell is rolling in. And so, but you see
42 the herring, the humpbacks feeding on them, the sea lions
43 feeding on them. But it is rolling in the swell, is
44 rolling in there and causing, you know, the sand to, you
45 know, mix up into the herring eggs and so some of those
46 herring eggs, you know, they're for other resources to
47 feed on. But, you know, I think that we put in place
48 these large -- well, not necessarily that large, but
49 these -- we put in these closed areas because of the
50 conservation concern. And now it's to meet subsistence

1 needs -- continue to meet subsistence needs and it's
2 continued to meet the cultural benefits of that
3 subsistence needs, because there was a time when it was
4 our early food that we ate and we needed after a winter
5 of not having plenty. So, it a cultural component that
6 dates back millennia. So, it's important that we have
7 these closed areas to maintain that cultural way of life.
8 So, that's my comment, Mr. Chair.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
11 Patti. Did I see Ted, did you have your hand up?

12
13 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
14 Chair. You know, this to me seems like a no brainer. You
15 know, I mean, this regulation is serving the Sitka Tribe
16 of Alaska exactly like it was intended to do. So, I
17 mean, this is to me a drop dead yes. Yeah, thank you.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ted.
20 Anybody else? Cal.

21
22 MR. CASIPIT: Well, I can't add any to
23 the justification that was provided by Ms. Phillips and
24 Mr. Kitka. I -- and I agree with Ted, it's a no brainer,
25 but I do want to compliment the staff on the
26 justification that they wrote in their -- in the staff
27 analysis, and I don't think I could've said it better.
28 I can't say it any better than Mr. Kitka and Ms.
29 Phillips. That's why I'll be voting yes on this.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
32 I think we've had extensive traditional knowledge given
33 to us on this area. And I think it's one of those
34 proposals where, you know, it's just kind of fortunate
35 that there's this little bit of Federal waters there in
36 the spawning area. And this Council has an opportunity
37 to protect the continuation of subsistence uses in that
38 area and has virtually no effect whatsoever on other
39 users of the resource. So, I think it's yeah, a very
40 worthwhile closure to maintain. And we've had a lot of
41 justification for it. Is there anybody else?

42
43 (No response)

44
45 MR. CASIPIT: Question.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Question is
48 [sic] been called for. Frank, you wanna do a roll call
49 vote on the motion to retain the status quo on Fisheries
50 Closure Review 25-03?

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1
2 MR. WRIGHT: Okay, motion on FCR 25-03.
3 Cal Casipit.
4
5 MR. CASIPIT: Yes.
6
7 MR. WRIGHT: Michael Douville.
8
9 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.
10
11 MR. WRIGHT: Jim Slater.
12
13 MR. SLATER: Yes.
14
15 MR. WRIGHT: Ted Sandhofer.
16
17 MR. SANDHOFER: Yes.
18
19 MR. WRIGHT: Albert Howard.
20
21 MR. HOWARD: Yes.
22
23 MR. WRIGHT: Don Hernandez.
24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes.
26
27 MR. WRIGHT: Patricia Phillips.
28
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.
30
31 MR. WRIGHT: Louie Wagner.
32
33 MR. WAGNER: Yes.
34
35 MR. WRIGHT: Harvey Kitka.
36
37 MR. KITKA: Yes.
38
39 MR. WRIGHT: John Smith.
40
41 MR. SMITH: Yes.
42
43 MR. WRIGHT: Cathy Needham.
44
45 MS. NEEDHAM: Yes.
46
47 MR. WRIGHT: Larry Bemis.
48
49 MR. BEMIS: Yes.
50

1 MR. WRIGHT: Frank is yes. Motion
2 carried, Mr. Chair.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
5 Frank. Thank you, Councils -- Council members. We got
6 through our proposals. I think that is just excellent.
7 We are really on track right where we wanted to be. And
8 it's only five minutes after five, so congratulations.
9 But before we recess for the evening, we do need to take
10 care of a little bit of business. As I mentioned earlier,
11 if we want to form some working groups to review
12 fisheries proposals to the Board of Fish and the Tongass
13 Forest plan revision, we need to do that this evening
14 so we have time to do that for the remaining day,
15 essentially, that we have to work on those so we can
16 come back probably Thursday, when I think we're actually
17 gonna have some time to talk about these things because
18 you did so well today. Say, tomorrow, I know we're gonna
19 devote a lot of time to the non-rural petition. So, have
20 you thought about who might want to serve on a working
21 group to work on proposals. And I think I mentioned we
22 might want to identify possibly more than one group to
23 work on Board of Fish proposals. So, Cathy.

24
25 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
26 would volunteer to work on a work group for the Tongass
27 plan revision and the reason why I wanted to bring that
28 one up first is that I think that work group work
29 wouldn't be very long. So, it should not preclude people
30 who are on that work group to participate in a Board of
31 Fish proposals work group as well. If we decide to split
32 up a couple. So, I would volunteer for the plan revision
33 and then depending on how you do the Board of Fish work
34 groups, I probably would volunteer for one of those as
35 well.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
38 Cathy. So, Cathy brought up the plan revision. Anybody
39 else want to volunteer for that one?

40
41 MR. SLATER: I will. Jim.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Jim Slater, very
44 good. Ted Sandhofer.

45
46 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I can do the forest
47 plan, too.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I think I would
50 like to volunteer for that as well. And I say hopefully

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1 might be able to get involved in Board of Fish proposals
2 as well. So, we have four people for that working group.
3 Okay. Board of Fish proposals. What's Council's interest
4 there? Cal.

5

6 MR. CASIPIT: I would like to volunteer
7 for the Board of Fish proposals.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Is there any
10 particular (simultaneous speech) you'd like to focus on?

11

12 MR. CASIPIT: I've got some feedback from
13 some folks on our king salmon management plan proposal.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. So, maybe
16 I'll just see what other Council members interests are
17 here. John. King salmon? Okay. Anybody else?

18

19 MR. BEMIS: I would like to also.....

20

21 (Simultaneous speech)

22

23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Larry.

24

25 MR. BEMIS:on king salmon.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: For king salmon,
28 okay. Albert. Harvey. Let me just hear from other Council
29 members. Go ahead, Albert, you're up.

30

31 MR. HOWARD: You skipped me so, I was
32 gonna decide not to. But anyway, I'll work with Cal on
33 the fish proposals. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. And,
36 Harvey, were you volunteering? And, Frank, did I see you
37 as well? Okay. It's almost -- let's see. So, maybe I'll
38 just let, you know, all these volunteers work out, you
39 know, which proposals they want to focus on. And maybe
40 as you first get together. But any other volunteers?
41 Well, there could be you know, the unguided sport fishery
42 is another topic that's of interest. And, I don't know,
43 maybe there's some others that people have identified
44 that they think they might want to talk about. Cathy.

45

46 MS. NEEDHAM: And Mr. Chair. It seems
47 like we might have more than a quorum of volunteers for
48 Board of Fish proposals and so, I wonder if we should
49 actually specifically try to split it out so that we
50 don't have seven plus working on Board of Fish proposals

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1 as a whole.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, that's a
4 good point. I wasn't keeping track. Yeah, I think we did
5 have seven, you're right. So, let's break it up and
6 let's break it up into two work groups then, cause I
7 think we did have what essentially amount to a quorum
8 of the Council, which we can't do on a work group. So,
9 is there anybody who would like to say focus on non-
10 guided sport fishing? Patti. Albert. Okay. Patti and
11 Albert. Anybody else? Frank. Very good. Everybody else
12 want to work on king salmon? Cal, John, Mike, king
13 salmon? Larry and Harvey. Are you counting? So, we make
14 sure we're under seven, I think we are. Albert, what did
15 you want to focus on?

16

17 MR. HOWARD: I was gonna work with Patty
18 on the non-guided boat issue.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, very good.

21

22 MR. HOWARD: If there's room on the king
23 salmon, that one's pretty important to Angoon, Mr.
24 Chair. But if there isn't, I understand, thank you.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Larry.

27

28 (Pause)

29

30 Okay, working it out. John.

31

32 (Pause)

33

34 Also on the nine guided, we have, you
35 know, a representative from the Sitka Advisory Committee
36 who put the -- put one of the proposals in and he's
37 here. So, you can bend his ear maybe before you get
38 together. Yeah and right, we have written their written
39 proposals to look at, yes. So, DeAnna were you keeping
40 track of who's on what? So, we make sure we're all good
41 here?

42

43 MS. PERRY: Yep.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. So,
46 tonight would be the first opportunity where folks could
47 get together if they care to at dinner time. So, do we
48 need anything else to discuss?

49

50 MS. PERRY: We need a motion.

1

2 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Oh, we need a
3 motion, okay. One more question from Cathy, and then I
4 guess to form a working group, we will need a -- working
5 group, we will need a motion. So, Cathy. Question first.

6

7

8 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
9 you have two Board of Fish proposals working groups, one
10 to work on unguided, one to work on king salmon. But
11 what about any other Board of Fish proposals that might
12 be of interest for the Council to comment on? So, that's
13 my question. And then also to remind that when we make
14 the motion, if we want staff to assist us, I think that
15 has to be a part of the motion. And I'm just gonna throw
16 it out there. In the past, we've had students sit in on
17 those work groups to, you know, give us some of their
18 enlightenment. And I think that if they're interested
19 in doing that, we should make accommodations to allow
20 for that. Thank you.

21

22

23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: That kinda
24 brings up maybe a broader topic. I know we have had
25 students participate. Can other members of the public
26 who have expertise join in a work group or is that -- I
27 don't know.

28

29

30 MS. PERRY: As long as it is inform --
31 for the record, this is DeAnna Perry. As long as it is
32 just informational. They're not making any types of
33 decisions, but they're just bringing information and
34 sharing it with the group. That is permitted under the
35 FACA rules.

36

37

38

39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
40 DeAnna. So, I'm gonna take that to mean that if the
41 students would like to participate or maybe Mr. Ramp if
42 you would like to participate in a working group. That's
43 kinda what the working groups do, they don't make
44 decisions, they just fine tune the discussion so they
45 can come back to the Council and impart what they've
46 learned and bring that to the whole Council for the
47 Council's consideration. So, yeah. And we need a motion.
48 I guess the motion would be to form three working groups
49 and DeAnna, you would have the names of who's on the
50 groups. So, let's put up a motion here. Somebody. Word
it the best you can. I don't think so.

41

42

43

44

45 MS. NEEDHAM: Mr. Chair, I move to form
46 a work group for the Tongass plan revision consisting
47 of Cathy Needham, Jim Slater, Ted Sandhofer, Don

48

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1 Hernandez with a request for staff to assist us and for
2 students to potentially participate at their leisure.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Do we
5 have a second?

6

7 MR. CASIPIT: Second.

8

9 UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Any
12 other -- any discussion?

13

14 (No response)

15

16 Question. All in favor of forming a work
17 group to work on the Tongass Forest plan revision with
18 the four Council members, say aye.

19

20 UNIDENTIFIED: Aye.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Is there anybody
23 opposed, say nay. Okay. Work group number one. Cathy.

24

25 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
26 move to form a work group for the Regional Advisory
27 Council to provide recommendations for Board of Fish
28 proposals regarding king salmon. Work group members
29 would consist of Cal Casipit, John Smith, Larry Bemis,
30 Harvey Kitka and Albert Howard. Again, the motion
31 includes the inclusion of staff to assist, as well as
32 for students and to participate in their leisure.

33

34 MR. HOWARD: Second, Mr. Chair.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
37 Motion and a second, any discussion on the formation of
38 that work group?

39

40 (No response)

41

42 Question's been called for, all in favor
43 of forming a working group to review Board of Fish
44 proposals, say aye. Is there anybody opposed, say nay.
45 Okay, work group number two, Cathy.

46

47 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
48 move to - for -- to develop a work group for Board of
49 Fish proposal recommendations from the Council on
50 unguided fishermen proposals. The work group would

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1 consist of Patty Phillips, Larry Bemis, Frank Wright.
2 We would also like for staff to assist us and to invite
3 students to participate at their leisure.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
6 Cathy.

7
8 MR. CASIPIT: Second.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
11 Any discussion, further discussion on forming this work
12 group?

13
14 MS. NEEDHAM: I have a.....

15
16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Wait a minute.

17
18 (Simultaneous speech)

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ Cathy.

21
22 MS. NEEDHAM: I still think that we need
23 to cover other proposals to the Board of Fish that are
24 not under those two topics. And so, I'm wondering if we
25 can task that or group that was specifically formed for
26 unguided fishermen, proposals to also kinda look through
27 the other potential proposals that may affect
28 subsistence that this Council would like to provide
29 recommendation for. Just a few extra, at least to put a
30 list together for us so that we have -- when the work
31 group comes back to the Council, we have sort of -- we
32 have guidance on that.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
35 I think, you know, any of these work groups and as you
36 pointed out, even if our Forest plan work group can --
37 concludes their discussions, you know, any of the work
38 groups I think could delve into other proposals as well.
39 I think there's plenty of leeway to do that. Patti.

40
41 MS. PHILLIPS: Did you say that there's
42 this proposals for us to look at somewhere or -- I didn't
43 bring my booklet.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: The Board of Fish
46 proposals -- I don't know if the Council was provided
47 with any paper copies of those. Maybe there's some
48 around. I know they are online, and I have them
49 downloaded, but I don't know how everybody does. DeAnna.

50

1 MS. PERRY: Yeah. Mr. Chair, I do have
2 one hard copy with all of the Southeast Yakutat
3 proposals. And then staff could pull those up online as
4 well. And everyone should have at least a table of
5 contents in there. I believe it's the supplemental
6 materials book. That at least might be able to narrow
7 down just by title what you want to look into further.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John, did you
10 have something to add?

11
12 MR. SMITH: I was just gonna share with
13 the staff. I sent an email with that link to the
14 proposals. If you're looking for it, you might -- if you
15 have your computer or your phone, you'd be able to look
16 at it.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yep. Thank you,
19 John. I do have that when you say hard copies are always
20 really handy too. Hopefully there might be some
21 available or could be made available before we conclude
22 our business. So, do we have the vote on that yet? Okay.
23 So, we're still looking for an approval vote on the
24 formation of the second Board of Fish workgroup. Call
25 for the question.

26
27 MR CASIPIT: Question.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. All in
30 favor of forming a workgroup for the Board of Fish
31 proposals, say aye.

32
33 IN UNISON: Aye.

34
35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody opposed,
36 say nay. Okay, I think we've -- Cathy, one more thing.

37
38 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
39 Member Wright just pointed this out to me, in our
40 supplemental materials on page 92. There is an index of
41 all of the Board of Fish proposals so, that might be
42 just a good place to go through and start highlighting
43 some of the other proposals that we might wanna make
44 recommendations on. And I think any member could
45 actually potentially do that and then start discussing
46 them in the work group.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Very good. Thank
49 you for pointing that out. Anybody else, anything to add
50 before we recess for the evening? And I'll leave it up

000148

1 to the work group members to decide how they'd like to
2 get together and when and where, so. Patty.

3

4 MS. PHILLIPS: Will this building be open
5 or does it lock or.....

6

7 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Good question.

8

9 (Pause)

10

11 We don't have an answer to that yet,
12 Patty. So might have to -- till we find that out for at
13 least for this evening, might have to find other places
14 to get together. I know everybody is gonna go to dinner
15 somewhere, so maybe that could, you know, be a starting
16 point. Anybody else?

17

18 (No response)

19

20 Okay, we'll recess until 8:30 tomorrow
21 morning, at which time we will take any public comment
22 on non-agenda items before we get into the Ketchikan
23 Rural Determination petition. Thank you very much.

24

25 (Off record)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Rafael Morel, for Lighthouse Integrated Services Corp, do hereby certify:

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 148 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I recorded on the 22nd 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 Isabela, Puerto Rico this 21st day of November 2024.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager