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WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

PYKE'S WATERFRON LODGE  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
February 25, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jack L. Reakoff, Chairman  
Donald V. Honea, Jr.  
Pollock Simon, Sr.  
Robert Walker  
Timmthy P. Gervais  
Tommy Kriska  
Jenny K. Pelkola

Regional Council Coordinator, Nissa Pilcher

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

(Fairbanks, Alaska - 2/25/2025)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right, Thank you. So, we're going to bring the meeting to order. It's a little after 9:00. So, we're in Pike's Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks today and tomorrow and we'll be doing the Western Interior Regional Advisory Council winter meeting. So, we're going to go through the agenda -- the invocation. Would you like to do an invocation, Jenny?

(Pause)

So, call to order. Meeting is called to order and housekeeping announcements, Nissa.

MS. PILCHER: Good morning, everyone. This is Nissa Pilcher for the record, Council Coordinator for the Western Interior. This is the Western Interior Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meeting. For those joining us on the phone, you can find the agenda and meeting materials online on the Federal Subsistence Program website. That address is [www.doi.gov/subsistence](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence) under the Regions tab, choose Western Interior and then Meeting Materials. For all the participants on the phone -- sorry, I'm going to scoot in. Please remember to mute your phones when you are not speaking. If you do not have a mute button on your phone, you can press star-six and that will mute and also unmute your phone.

For those -- sorry reading my script. Also, for those in the room, the meeting materials are also located on the side table as well as a sign in. So, if folks could please sign in as well, that would be appreciated. So, a current membership update. So as everyone knows, this Council does have ten seats. Currently only eight of those are filled. The application deadline was February 16th so we're now past it. Hopefully those two vacancies will be filled by any applications, but I won't know any of that information until your fall -- well, maybe not even at your fall meeting until we get the notice from Department of Interior. So, just as a reminder, Council functions best with the robust and diverse membership and hopefully soon we will have Kuskokwim representation. Moving forward, any assistance in helping spread the word about

1 applying to sit on the Council would be appreciated. Not  
2 only Council members but also agency, NGO, tribal  
3 partners, anyone. And again, thank you, member Kriska,  
4 for your help in the arena. You have channeled several  
5 people in my direction, and I do appreciate that. So,  
6 anyone listening or present, please feel free to hand  
7 out my contact information and I'll work with anyone  
8 interested in getting a hold of applications and getting  
9 them submitted during the appropriate time. So, anyone  
10 wishing to address the Council on non-agenda topics,  
11 there will be an opportunity for this later today after  
12 the Council member reports. At that time, the Chair will  
13 announce this opportunity and call on individuals who  
14 wish to address the Council. For folks here in person,  
15 please fill out a blue card, hence the name because they  
16 are blue cards, located on that information table to  
17 indicate your wish to address the Council, either during  
18 this time or during a specific agenda topic. And then  
19 you can hand them to anyone from OSM and we will do  
20 meeting -- room introductions here shortly. We will  
21 relay that information to the Chair. The Chair will also  
22 ask if there is anyone on the phone that would like to  
23 provide comments after people comment in person. For  
24 those on the phone who would like to speak, please press  
25 star five to raise your hand and wait to be recognized  
26 before speaking. When this happens, please identify  
27 yourself for the record by stating your first and last  
28 name and if you are representing an affiliation other  
29 than yourself. If you would like to submit written  
30 comments instead, or in addition to oral comments, you  
31 may turn those into any OSM staff in this room or email  
32 them to subsistence@ios.doi.gov. Also, make sure you  
33 include your name and affiliation on those as well.

34  
35 So, a quick reminder on Council member  
36 conduct and ethics. So, our meetings are conducted by  
37 Robert's Rules, which help us provide structure and  
38 maintain order throughout the meeting. All participants,  
39 including Council members, staff and public members, are  
40 expected to be courteous and respectful in all  
41 interactions as a matter of meeting etiquette. It is  
42 understood that the nature of some of the issues  
43 discussed at these meetings can be difficult and  
44 controversial, and although some comments shared  
45 throughout this meeting may be passionate, no insults  
46 or foul language will be tolerated in the public meeting.  
47 So, if any kind of unruly behavior or insulting language  
48 from anyone occurs during the meeting, please be advised  
49 that I, operating as a designated federal office would  
50 need to intervene.

1

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3 All right, there is a quick note I would  
4 like to make. There's going to be an evening session  
5 tonight. It's going to be an outreach and engagement  
6 session between this Council and members of the North  
7 Pacific Fisheries Management Council that will start in  
8 this room at 6:30 tonight. So, the North Pacific  
9 Fisheries Management Council is currently considering  
10 new management approaches to reduce chum salmon bycatch  
11 in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery and that analysis and  
12 management action is ongoing by that body. At its October  
13 2024 meeting, the North Pacific Council discussed  
14 opportunities for outreach and engagement on the chum  
15 salmon bycatch issue, and staff contacted myself and  
16 Brooke McDavid, who coordinates the Eastern Interior and  
17 the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Councils about moving forward  
18 with available North Pacific Council members, as well  
19 as their analytical staff attending these Council  
20 meetings to provide a presentation on the current  
21 analysis. This will be an opportunity for the Council  
22 to discuss the issue with the North Pacific Council  
23 members in attendance. Please be aware that the members  
24 of the North Pacific Council that are attending do not  
25 make up a quorum of that Council, and the session is not  
26 testimony to the North Pacific Council as a whole if  
27 public testimony -- if there is time for public  
28 testimony. That session will break for the evening by  
29 8:30 tonight, as we still do have a full day tomorrow.  
30 Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for allowing me the time  
31 to share this information.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Nissa.  
And so, we're going to call, roll and move into election  
of officers. Would you like to call roll? Go ahead,  
Nissa.

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MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher, for  
the record. Don Honea, Jr.

MR. HONEA: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Pollock Simon, Sr.

MR. SIMON: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Jack Reakoff.

MR. REAKOFF: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Robert Walker.

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MR. WALKER: Yes.

MS. PILCHER: Tim Gervais.

MR. GERVAIS: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Jenny Pelkola

MS. PELKOLA: Here.

MS. PILCHER: Tommy Kriska

MR. KRSKA: here.

MS. PILCHER: and then Darrell Vent, are  
you online?

(No response)

All right. Darrel is attending a YRDFA  
meeting at the same time so I believe he'll be in and  
out and he should be physically present tomorrow. But,  
with seven members of eight seated, we do have a quorum.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thank you,  
Nissa. So, election of officers after we established the  
quorum. And so, the election of the Chair, I turn that  
over to you, go ahead.

MS. PILCHER: All right, again, Nissa  
Pilcher, for the record, I have this -- flip flop to  
something else in my notes. But -- so this is Nissa,  
Council Coordinator with OSM. In accordance with the  
Council Charter, Council members elect a Chair, a Vice  
Chair and a secretary for a one-year term during the  
winter meeting. Member Reakoff is the current Chair;  
member Pelkola is the current Vice Chair and member Vent  
is the current Secretary. At this time, I would like to  
open the floor for nominations for the Council's Chair.  
Please keep in mind the nominations do not need to be  
seconded in this case.

MR. HONEA: Madam Chair, I nominate Jack  
for Chair -- Chairperson.

MR. WALKER: I second it.

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1 MS. PILCHER: Well, thank you member  
2 Honea for the motion and member Walker for the second.  
3 Are there any others?

4  
5 MR. HONEA: Motion to close.

6  
7 MR. WALKER: Second.

8  
9 MS. PILCHER: All right, I believe that  
10 means that since there's only one nomination then we can  
11 move forward, and I can turn the mic back over to Chair  
12 Reakoff.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We should vote.

15  
16 MS. PILCHER: Okay.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I will -- maybe  
19 somebody who doesn't want me to be Chair.  
20 (Indiscernible) we have a new administration, want the  
21 record to be clear.

22  
23 MR. WALKER: I believe the majority rule.

24  
25 MS. PILCHER: How about -- we can do --  
26 by everyone in favor, say aye.

27  
28 IN UNISON: Aye.

29  
30 MS. PILCHER: Everyone opposed, say aye  
31 now.

32  
33 (No response)

34  
35 All right.

36  
37 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're going to have  
38 to have a clear record for this meeting because we're  
39 under a microscope at this time. So, we want to make  
40 sure that everything is going well so that -- we're  
41 going to -- this -- Chair now. Thank you very much. I  
42 appreciate your confidence. Open the floor for  
43 nominations for Vice Chair.

44  
45 MR. KRISKA: I nominate Jenny for Vice  
46 Chair.

47  
48 MR. SIMON: I second.

49  
50 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any other

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1 nominations?

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3 MR. KRISKA: Nominations closed.

4

5 MR. SIMON: Second that.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Nominations  
8 closed. Those -- Well, again, I would like a vote. Those  
9 in favor of Jenny being Vice Chair signify by saying  
10 aye.

11

12 IN UNISON: Aye.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed Same sign.

15

16 (No response)

17

18 Okay, Thank you very much, Jenny.

19

20 MS. PILCHER: And for the record, that  
21 was member Kriska that made the initial motion and member  
22 Pollock that made the second.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, for Secretary  
25 -- current secretary is Darrell. And so, the Chair will  
26 open the floor for nomination for Secretary. You  
27 nominating Darrell?

28

29 MR. WALKER: I nominate Darrell.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right.

32

33 MR. KRISKA: Second.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any other  
36 nominations for Secretary?

37

38 (No response)

39

40 Okay.

41

42 MR. WALKER: Move to close.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Move to close. We  
45 have a second for that?

46

47 MR. KRISKA: Second.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Those in  
50 Favor of Darrel as Secretary for the Western Interior

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1 Council signify by saying aye.

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3 IN UNISON: Aye.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed?

6

7 MR. GERVIAS: Aye.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Opposed  
10 same sign. Your affirmative vote, tight, Tim?

11

12 MR. GERVIAS: Yes, I was aye on the  
13 affirmative.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right, Okay.

16

17 MS. PILCHER: Just to clarify, I believe  
18 it was Member Walker that made the original motion and  
19 member Kriska that seconded. Okay, yes. Correct.

20

21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. So,  
22 elections are accomplished. We have quorum, meeting  
23 announcement, we've done that. Welcome and introduction.  
24 So, I would like to know who's on the phone. I know I  
25 have Tim on the phone. Did you join Darrell? Darrell's  
26 still off. Who else is on the phone with us this morning?  
27 Give your name and your affiliation.

28

29 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa. Jack If  
30 you'd like, I can run through a list.....

31

32 (Simultaneous speech)

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Nissa.

35

36 MS. PILCHER: .....I might streamline  
37 things. So, if there's anyone listening that is not  
38 representing anybody that is just a member of the public,  
39 if they could introduce themselves right now.

40

41 All right, and if I start going too fast  
42 and I jump over someone that hasn't got the opportunity  
43 to unmute themselves, please feel free to just pipe up  
44 when you can. So, the next is there anyone on with tribal  
45 governments or native organizations?

46

47 MS. ERICKSON: Good morning. This is  
48 Diloolo Erickson with Tanana Chiefs Conference, and I  
49 think we got Brian Lepping on with us for Tanana Chiefs  
50 Conference.



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MS. PILCHER: Good morning, Diloolo and Brian. Anyone else in that category?

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MS. HERZNER: Yeah. This is Katie Herzner with the Intertribal Agriculture Council.

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(Pause)

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MS. PILCHER: All right, thanks for joining, Katie. I don't believe I've heard, or I haven't -- I'm not as familiar with your organization. I'll have to Google it on a break. Anybody on representing a non-government agency?

15

16

(No response)

17

18

19

All right, how about Alaska Department of Fish and Game?

20

21

22

23

MR. NELSON: This is Mark Nelson with the Fish and Game and Fairbanks wildlife. And I'll be there in person tomorrow.

24

25

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Welcome, Mark.

26

27

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29

MR. BEMBENIC: Good morning. This is Tim Bembenic with Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence division. I'll also be attending tomorrow.

30

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MS. FISHER: Hi, this is Brooke Fisher with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, in the Subsistence Division as well and I will also be there tomorrow.

35

36

37

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning. Anybody else with ADF&G?

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(No response)

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MS. PILCHER: All right, how about Bureau of Indian Affairs?

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(No response)

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All right, how about Bureau of Land Management? And once again, as a reminder, it is star six to mute and unmute. Unless your phone has a capability or if you're on teams and you have to hit the microphone. So, Bureau of land management.

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(No response)

National Park service?

(No response)

MS. FLOREY: Good morning, it's Victoria  
Florey National Park Service down here in Anchorage.

MS. PILCHER: How about U.S. Fish and  
Wildlife Service?

(Simultaneous speech)

MS. KLEIN: Good morning.

MR. RANSBURY: Good morning

MS. KLEIN: Oops. This is Jill Klein. I'm  
the regional Subsistence coordinator based in Anchorage  
listening in for today and tomorrow. Thanks.

MR. RANSBURY: Good morning. This is  
Shane Ransbury. I'm a fishery biologist for U.S. Fish  
and Wildlife Service here in Fairbanks and I'll be in  
this afternoon. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
Shane.

MR. HARRIS: Good morning, this is Frank  
Harris, fish biologist with the Fish and Wildlife  
Service, the Southern Alaska Fish and Wildlife field  
Office in Soldotna, Alaska.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
Frank. Anybody else with Fish and Wildlife?

MR. MOSES: This is Aaron Moses fisheries  
Subsistence specialist at Yukon Delta.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
Aaron.

MR. MOSES: Morning.

MS. BECK: Good morning. This is Lori  
Beck, also with Yukon Delta Refuge, deputy refuge  
manager.

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
2 Lori.

3  
4 MR. HAVENER: Hey. Good morning. This is  
5 Jeremy Havener. I'm the refuge Subsistence coordinator  
6 for Koyukuk, Nowitna, and Innoko National Wildlife  
7 Refuge and on here with us is our RIT Marie Cleaver,  
8 also attending.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
11 Jeremy. Anybody else, U.S. Fish and Wildlife?

12  
13 (No response)

14  
15 MS. PILCHER: All right, how about U.S.  
16 Forest Service?

17  
18 MR. RISDAHL: Good morning, Nissa. This  
19 is Greg Risdahl, Subsistence program lead for the Forest  
20 Service and ISC and I'll be joining you today and  
21 tomorrow, Thank you.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning.  
24 Greg.

25  
26 MR. RISDAHL: Hey, Jack. Good to hear  
27 you.

28  
29 MS. PILCHER: All right, And then, last  
30 office of Subsistence management. Anyone online?

31  
32 MR. GRAHAM: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
33 Members of the Council, this is Corey Graham, fisheries  
34 biologist with OSM.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
37 Corey. And on that we need to know is there any DOI  
38 people on this call? From the -- we've had DOI  
39 participating-- listening in to these regional Council  
40 meetings. Has anybody from DOI on this call? Washington,  
41 D.C..

42  
43 (No response)

44  
45 Hearing none. So I think.....

46  
47 MS. LA VINE: Excuse me. I'm sorry. I'm  
48 so sorry. I wasn't able to unmute myself in time. Hello,  
49 Jack. Mr. Chair, members of the Council, this is Robbin  
50 La Vine. I am with the office of Subsistence management.

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1 Now within the Department of Interior. Well, as always,  
2 thank you, Mr. Chair.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Good  
5 morning, Robbin and so, you will be sitting in for DOI  
6 then. Is that just -- you're just OSM not DOI? I've  
7 encouraged DOI as we switched over to this, that they  
8 participate in our meeting so that they -- because I  
9 feel that its - gets a little -- gets them a little  
10 closer to the issues, so. But I understand the transition  
11 at this time. Do you have a question, Robert? Go ahead.

12  
13 MR. WALKER: Yes. You said DOA?

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: DOI, Department of  
16 Interior.

17  
18 MR. WALKER: Oh okay.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So OSM is now under  
21 the Department of Interior.

22  
23 MR. WALKER: It's kinda [sic] like, you  
24 know, using an acronym sometimes it kind of throws you  
25 for what the attention was, Thank you.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'll try and  
28 clarify next time, thank you. So, is anybody else on the  
29 phone that's joining the call that hasn't identified  
30 themselves?

31  
32 MS. KENNER: Yes. This is Pippa Kenner  
33 with the office of Subsistence management here in  
34 Anchorage, good morning.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
37 Pippa.

38  
39 MR. MCKEE: Good morning, Jack. Good  
40 morning, members of the Council. My name is Chris McKee.  
41 Normally, I'm the statewide Subsistence coordinator for  
42 the Bureau of Land Management but, for the next few  
43 months, I'll be the acting deputy director at OSM, Thank  
44 you.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh okay, good to  
47 hear you on there, Chris. Anybody else on the on the  
48 call now that joined during the introductions?

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1 MS. MCDAVID: Good morning, Jack and  
2 Council members. This is Brooke McDavid. I'm the  
3 coordinator for Eastern Interior RAC. I'll be listening  
4 in as I can today. Thanks.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
7 Brooke. And anybody else?

8  
9 (No response)

10  
11 So, hearing none, we have a room full  
12 of people and so we'll start with Glen Stout in the  
13 back. We'll work towards the front. Go ahead, Glenn. Oh  
14 yeah, we got to get...

15  
16 MS. PILCHER: So, this is for the record.  
17 Sorry. Everybody's got to come up and talk into the mic,  
18 unfortunately. Thanks, Glenn.

19  
20 MR. STOUT: Glen Stout. Alaska Department  
21 of Fish and Game, the Galena area biologist.

22  
23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
24 Glenn.

25  
26 MS. MORAN: Morning Council, this is Tina  
27 Moran. I'm the deputy refuge manager for Kanuti National  
28 Wildlife Refuge.

29  
30 MS. FOX: Good morning, everybody. Joanna  
31 Fox. I'm the refuge manager for Kanuti National Wildlife  
32 Refuge.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Morning, Johanna.

35  
36 MR. YASKA: Good morning. George Yaska,  
37 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Indigenous Knowledge  
38 Liaison, Thank you.

39  
40 MR. HARWOOD: Good morning, Chris  
41 Harwood, wildlife biologist for Kanuti Refuge.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
44 Chris.

45  
46 MS. JALLEN: Good morning, Deena Jallen  
47 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Yukon  
48 River summer season. Fishery manager. Good to see  
49 everybody.

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.

2

3 MR. OLSON: Good morning, Matt Olson.  
4 Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Normally the  
5 assistant fall season manager for the Yukon River, but,  
6 currently the acting manager, Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Acting fall season  
9 manager? Okay, Thank you.

10

11 MS. OKADA: Good morning. Marcy Okada  
12 Subsistence coordinator for Gates of the Arctic National  
13 Park and Preserve.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Morning, Marcy.

16

17 MR. CAMERON: Good morning, Council  
18 members. My name is Matt Cameron, wildlife biologist  
19 with the National Park Service for Gates of the Arctic.  
20 Really nice to see you all.

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Morning, Matt.

23

24 MR. RUNFOLA: Good morning. David  
25 Runfola. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I'm the  
26 assistant management biologist for the Yukon summer  
27 season.

28

29 MR. WILLIAM: Good morning. Steve  
30 Williams, I'm the Oregon representative to the North  
31 Pacific Fishery Management Council. Listening with you  
32 this evening, Thank you.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
35 Steve.

36

37 MR. WILLIAMS: Good morning.

38

39 MR. BEYERSDORF: Good morning, Mr.  
40 Chairman, Members of the Council, Geoff Beyersdorf. I'm  
41 with the Bureau of Land Management here. District  
42 manager for the Fairbanks district, thank you.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Morning, Geoff.

45

46 MS. JULIANUS: Good morning, everybody.  
47 Erin Julianus I'm a wildlife biologist (distortion)  
48 Central Yukon field office.

49

50 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're here.

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1  
2 MR. MERRILL: Good morning, Clayton  
3 Merrill. Subsistence Coordinator for Arctic Kanuti and  
4 Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
7 Clayton.

8  
9 MR. MARTIN: Good morning, I'm Ross  
10 Martin. I'm a PhD student at the Yale School of the  
11 Environment.

12  
13 MR. PATSY: Good morning, good morning,  
14 Doug Patsy from Nulato. Just a public participant.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning.

17  
18 (Distortion)

19  
20 MR. VICKERS: Oh, I thought the white was  
21 on. Okay, red's on. Good morning members of the Council.  
22 Mr. Chair, I'm Brent Vickers. I am the anthropology  
23 division supervisor at Office of Subsistence Management.  
24 I'll be representing (distortion) leadership team this  
25 -- these next couple of days. Very excited to be here,  
26 and I just want to make one point of little clarification  
27 for vocabulary sake. So, we are -- OSM was moved within  
28 the Office of Secretary within DOI. So, but no one from  
29 the Office of Secretary seems to be on the phone just  
30 letting you.....

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, when we address  
33 them, we're going to be addressing the office of the  
34 secretary?

35  
36 MR. VICKERS: I believe so, I mean, you  
37 know, there's a -- we're within an Office of Secretary,  
38 then there's a couple other little branches but, I think  
39 Office of Secretary will suffice. And that's why I think  
40 maybe Robbin got tripped up and she's like, well, I am  
41 in DO. but anyway, yeah. That's all, Thank you.

42  
43 MR. UBELAKER: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
44 Council members. Brian Ubelaker, wildlife biologist with  
45 OSM.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Good morning,  
48 Brian.

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1 MS. WILLIAMS: Good morning. Liz Williams  
2 cultural anthropologist with OSM. Nice to see you.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Morning, Liz. And  
5 that's everybody in the room. Vince are you going to --  
6 so we're getting the introductions and so, you're in the  
7 room too, Vince go ahead.

8  
9 MR. MATHEWS: Yeah, Vince Mathews.  
10 Retired Federal employee.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, we're going  
13 to -- let's see, where are we at here? Review and adopt  
14 the agenda. So, the -- we have a -- an updated agenda  
15 before us. This green colored agenda. And so, any  
16 adjustments inclusions to this agenda? go ahead Nissa.

17  
18 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for  
19 the record. Just to let you guys know the difference  
20 between the agenda that's in front of you and the agenda  
21 that was in your meeting book is 1. We moved the agenda  
22 item, WP 2401 statewide sale of brown bear hides from  
23 under agenda item 15 other business to agenda item 12B  
24 under action items, and under -- an addition under  
25 reports we -- I added -- or it was added the Tanana  
26 Chiefs Conference Tribal Resource Stewardship Department  
27 and Kuskokwim River Inter Tribal Fish Commission joint  
28 presentation on the chum bycatch EIS. And that is -- if  
29 you guys accept it would be at a time certainly today  
30 at 4 p.m. Also, there was the update from ADF&G  
31 Subsistence division update and also a Unit 26A update  
32 and this wasn't separated out correctly on the original  
33 agenda. But Gates of the Arctic National Park Service  
34 submitted a report and an SRC re-appointment request,  
35 and the re-appointment request was not separated out  
36 specifically on the original agenda. So those are the  
37 differences between the one in the book and the one in  
38 front of you now.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Nissa.  
41 That clarifies the updated agenda. So, any comments on  
42 this agenda? Any assertions from the Council? Do you  
43 have anything? Tim Gervais? Are you still there, Tim?

44  
45 MR. GERVIAS: Not at this time, Jack.

46  
47 MS. PILCHER: I think he said "not at  
48 this time."

49  
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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thank you.  
2 So, any additions from the Council members here? The  
3 Chair will entertain a motion to adopt this agenda...

4  
5 MR. GERVIAS: Jack, can I interrupt?  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The -- yes, go  
8 ahead.  
9

10 MR. GERVIAS: Yeah, I forgot to put in  
11 my opening comments but, maybe it could get added to the  
12 agenda. Could somebody from Department of Interior or  
13 Office of Secretary at some point during the meeting  
14 explain what's the likelihood of ANILCA title 8 or the  
15 OSM being amended or circumvented by presidential  
16 decree?  
17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's a sticky  
19 issue. You can -- we could request that -- we don't have  
20 anybody from the office of the Secretary of Interior on  
21 the phone. We could ask that of OSM when it comes to  
22 that point when we're discussing issues with OSM. Can -  
23 - does that fall under that agenda item Nissa?  
24

25 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa for the  
26 record. I mean, it could -- you could certainly ask the  
27 question whether that answer-- I mean, I'm not sure we'll  
28 be able to give you a satisfactory answer, but you can  
29 certainly ask the question. Okay.  
30

31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Is that good, Tim?  
32

33 MR. GERVIAS: Yes. That's good. Thank  
34 you.  
35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay so, the Chair  
37 will entertain a motion to adopt the agenda. That's nine  
38 green that's update before us.  
39

40 MR. HONEA: Motion to adopt with the  
41 changes.  
42

43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's Don Honea.  
44

45 MR. KRISKA: Second.  
46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Tommy  
48 Kriska. Any further discussion? questions? All those in  
49 favor of adopting the agenda before us. Signify by saying  
50 aye.

1

2

IN UNISON: Aye.

3

4

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed?

5

6

(No response)

7

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No -- and that was an affirmative for Tim. Those opposed, same sign?

10

11

(No response)

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MS. PILCHER: Pollock wasn't at that meeting either.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: But -- so I want (indiscernible). Council still looking the minutes over. Don.

46

47

48

49

50

MR. HONEA: Wow, Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is a -- it's a really good to be here present because I had a hard time telephonically on there, and I wanted to say some closing comments on the one in Galena. I'm glad it turned out -- they were, I'm sure, a good host

1 and I just wanted to comment on the fishing issues and  
2 stuff at that time, but I -- right now I'm just out to  
3 the public. I wish anybody in TCC had any issues --  
4 there was that meeting that we're having here tonight,  
5 and it'd be great if the hunting and fishing Department  
6 of TCC was here. Even right now, we -- there's plenty  
7 of room available, but I just wanted to comment. It --  
8 on the last day, my phone gave out, and I wasn't able  
9 to do any closing comments, but, you know, in  
10 consideration, it's really much easier to sit here and  
11 discuss our problems and bring them up here to the  
12 Council as a whole instead of trying to do that over the  
13 phone. So, I wanted to -- you know, express some of the  
14 concerns that were expressed in Galena on the hunting  
15 issues and maybe in closing comments or something, I'll  
16 bring it up again. But I just wanted to mention that my  
17 -- in fact, I think Jenny brought it to the -- before  
18 that, we should be compensated. At least buy us a doggone  
19 phone, because I have one of these old flip top things  
20 and I can barely hear out of it. So, it's really great  
21 to -- for Nissa to bring us all in, in a timely manner,  
22 Thank you.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Don.  
25 There's going to be a chance for TCC to speak at 4:00  
26 today on our agenda and I want to recognize this lady  
27 that just came in. You want to come up to the mic here  
28 and state for the record who you are? Because we're  
29 keeping track of who's in the meeting.

30  
31 MR. LAPP: Good morning and I apologize  
32 for my lateness. A moose held me up in the dog yard this  
33 morning. So, my name is Krystal Lapp, and I'm the natural  
34 resource policy analyst for Tanana Chiefs Conference.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. I -- you  
37 bring up an important point for the Department of  
38 Interior that these face-to-face meetings are integral  
39 to this forum under title eight, section 805 of ANILCA.  
40 The regional Council structure was set up and so, it's  
41 a forum for public comment, it's a forum for interaction  
42 of the Council to provide information and -- for the  
43 Federal Subsistence Board process or the managing agency  
44 processes. So, face-to-face meetings are very important  
45 and if, you know, teleconferences with the phone systems  
46 in rural Alaska, we have phones dropping galore in our  
47 Galena meeting it was a big mess. And the Department of  
48 Interior is going to have to understand that these in-  
49 person meetings are really important. I don't care if  
50 it's the advisory committee process for the Alaska

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1 Department of Fish and Game or the Boards themselves,  
2 Federal and state Boards, they need to be in person. So  
3 that's an important thing and you bring that important  
4 issue up I appreciate that, Don. So, these -- going back  
5 to these minutes as any further additions, Don wanted  
6 to say his phone dropped out and that should be included  
7 that he had some closing comments, which is -- actually  
8 should be registered on these minutes at the -- that's  
9 before us. Any other comments? The Chair will entertain  
10 a motion to adopt the minutes of our Galena meeting  
11 October two and three with the additions.

12  
13 MS. PELKOLA: Motion.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Motion by Jenny  
16 Pelkola.

17  
18 MR. HONEA: Second.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don Honea, second.  
21 Any further discussion? We have a question? Questions  
22 called, those in favor of the minutes, as amended signify  
23 by saying aye.

24  
25 IN UNISON: Aye.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Those opposed same  
28 sign.

29  
30 (No response)

31  
32 So, minutes are adopted from our last  
33 meeting. Let's see, Council members' reports. And so, I  
34 will start with Tim. He's on the phone and then we'll  
35 move through our Council members' reports and then the  
36 Chair's report is last. Go ahead Tim. You still there,  
37 Tim?

38  
39 MR. BEMBENIC: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair  
40 and Council members, staff and attending public. The  
41 first item in my report I wanted to cover was the Board  
42 of Fish meeting that just recently concluded in  
43 Southeast Alaska, where Board of Fish voted down on a  
44 proposal to reduce hatchery production by 25%, and this  
45 is a significant development because we've been talking  
46 for a few years now about how a high level hatchery  
47 leases from Alaska and from other countries in the  
48 Pacific rim are depleting the food supply for all salmon  
49 in the marine environment and it's tallying or  
50 disturbing from my point of view that The Board of Fish

1 would not take a more conservation style approach to  
2 this proposal. So, something that we just need to keep  
3 track of and understand that one of the main issues that  
4 the WIRAC has brought up is affecting viability of salmon  
5 and the marine environment is -- it's not getting  
6 traction on the Board of Fish. Throughout the -- with  
7 the Board of Fish process the main adversaries to that  
8 proposal being passed was commercial fishermen and to  
9 some extent, the Department of Fish and Game was not in  
10 favor of that proposal. The second item is if any time  
11 during the course of this meeting, if anybody with Alaska  
12 Department of Fish and Game could explain if they know  
13 that if the Chinook Salmon Research Initiative, which  
14 was started around 2014, is still in play, or if that  
15 project has been defunded? At the time it was supposed  
16 to be a significant research project where certain  
17 initiatives are going to be taking place to try to define  
18 better what's going on with chinook salmon and one of  
19 them was genetic testing from many of the different  
20 locations around the state and we just never saw hardly  
21 any feedback or scientific information come out of that  
22 Chinook Salmon Research Initiative. The third item, with  
23 the change of administration in Washington, there's a  
24 few new players -- or not, I guess I shouldn't say  
25 players. New secretaries that are going to affect our  
26 interaction as Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of  
27 Interior. So new Secretary of Commerce is Howard Lutnick  
28 from New York City. He's involved with hedge funds and  
29 Wall Street culture, and he doesn't really have, that I  
30 know of, any experience in marine fisheries.

31  
32 So, I know we were -- as a Council, we  
33 were trying to get more` interaction and potentially  
34 like a memorandum of understanding between the Secretary  
35 of Interior and Secretary of Commerce regarding chinook  
36 salmon protection and with this newly appointed  
37 Secretary of Commerce just based on his work history,  
38 career history, he just doesn't have much background  
39 with fisheries. So, the extent we'll be able to make  
40 inroads into getting any kind of -- get it -- getting  
41 increased understanding of problems where we're dealing  
42 with our chinook salmon and chum issues may be limited.  
43 And then the second secretary, Secretary of Interior  
44 Doug Burgum, he grew up in North Dakota. His family was  
45 involved with farming, but, during his working career  
46 he's been mostly involved with real estate, software  
47 development and venture capital and I don't have very  
48 much more information about Mr. -- Secretary Burgum. And  
49 then, the final item was I'm wondering with the -- with  
50 this present administration -- presidential

1 administration, I'm wondering what effect regarding  
2 ANILCA Title VIII and the Subsistence program. How --  
3 if by presidential decree, if the intent or the funding  
4 of the program, could potentially be affected. That's  
5 all I have for this morning.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Tim.  
8 It's my understanding that the House and the Senate hold  
9 the purse strings and so, the funding is in their court.  
10 And so, I -- that's constitutional. So, I have high  
11 hopes for our U.S. government -- I took U.S. government  
12 in school, and it works certain ways. And I mean the  
13 president can decrease staff, but that doesn't mean it's  
14 going to hold up in court. So, I have high, high hopes  
15 for our check and balance system. And so, I don't -- I  
16 do know that, you know, OSM's spending was frozen  
17 yesterday and I'm a little concerned about that. That's  
18 like stuff that should not happen -- not funding that's  
19 already been appropriated. That's not the way this is  
20 supposed to work. But that'll sort out, I think it'll  
21 sort out over time. So, thank you for your comments, Tim  
22 and -- so, we're going to start with Tommy over here.  
23 We're going to move around the room. Go ahead, Tommy.  
24 You got a good list here. You save them up and Tommy's  
25 got his hand on the pulse of the land. So, we're  
26 interested in what Tommy's got to say about what's  
27 happening. Go ahead, Tommy.

28  
29 MR. KRISKA: Well, okay, I -- you know,  
30 for me, I do a lot of writing when I'm alone and take  
31 notes, but I've been taking notes for, like, 35 years,  
32 since 1990, when we -- the Yukon Drainage Fisheries  
33 Association was formed and thought we were going to get  
34 into something and change things. But here we are 35  
35 years later, sitting here in in a worst situation back  
36 then, we had smart, strong older guys that were great  
37 leaders and good inspiration, and they hollered, they  
38 swore they did everything to try to change things. But  
39 other people had to feed the -- I don't know, the whole  
40 United States and everybody else and not worried about  
41 any of these issues that were talked about then and it  
42 still be -- and today we're still in the same boat --  
43 in the worst boat. We don't even know what a salmon  
44 looked like. It might -- government or one of those guys  
45 might have to start sending us pictures or whatever  
46 because it's been seven years now, and I know -- I'm  
47 kind of sad because we have people that are, you know,  
48 in these departments from Northern Pacific, the  
49 Department of wherever you're coming from and being back  
50 in those meetings back in those days and still nothing

1 is done. Nothing ever will be done. Might as well just  
2 take that to heart because it's sad, it's really sad  
3 that I have to look at my grandchildren and like, you  
4 know what? to hell with the damn government and all  
5 those guys, they're just going to keep on doing what  
6 they're doing, and we're never going to ever get  
7 anywhere. They're never going to see a fish and I try  
8 to -- I usually write everything. All I wrote was  
9 fishing, hunting and hatcheries and the ocean and they  
10 changed their names and do all this kind of cool stuff  
11 to be who they are. They have their bread and butter in  
12 order to, you know, for their families to live on. But  
13 you guys took our -- some of our ways and taken more of  
14 it, too. It's got into the fish now. It's getting into  
15 our moose and our country, our land, everything. So sorry  
16 to have to talk like this, but it's the damn truth and  
17 I wake up -- I mean, I been straight for 40 years and  
18 wake up in the morning and think this is going to get  
19 worse today. Think of the best thing you can do for your  
20 family today. Now, we don't have no, Fred Meyers or  
21 Costco or anything around us. We don't have anything.  
22 We have a bunch of you know -- I just no offense, but  
23 you know, I always thought of all the people in the in  
24 the crowd and the people who are listening, people who  
25 are recording you and what they do with that information?  
26 We're going to meet with somebody else tonight. Maybe,  
27 I don't know, they're getting all booked up and see what  
28 we have to say today and get into their defense tonight.  
29 I don't know where this information goes or how it's  
30 dealt with or whatever, but I found out something in the  
31 last past few years that a lot of our tribes, they go  
32 directly to DC because they want to figure out what's  
33 going on. And these tribes go to DC, and they ask these  
34 questions and the government President Norman Baxter  
35 saying, we never got that information. We -- where is  
36 it? We - well what -- all we go to the Board of Fish,  
37 Northern Pacific, Board of Game. All that information  
38 comes here but, then you have Board of Fish, Board of  
39 Game, Northern Pacific trawlers fishery industry and  
40 then you have the government over here. I don't think  
41 this information -- it hits right here and it's like a  
42 screen, its thrown out, thrown away because it never  
43 gets to where it needs to be. I'm kind of fed up with  
44 it. That's why I was going to write up some things about  
45 what's going on out there but I think what I was doing  
46 was giving the information, what's going out there and  
47 then better and these guys attitudes and their whatever-  
48 - put another dollar in the pocket or whatever I'm -- I  
49 don't know I'm confused and my people are paying for it  
50 throughout the whole state of Alaska. Alaska is the third

1 -- one third you know, biggest United States. Three  
2 Alaska fits in the United States but we're a forgotten  
3 state. We're forgotten people. They want the minerals.  
4 They want the whatever they can -- you know, they're  
5 trying to get this Ambler Road going through there.  
6 They're working for development, and the development is  
7 money, and the fishing is money, and they're going to  
8 fish that fish to the end, and they're going to starve  
9 themselves out and finally realize what was going on but  
10 it's going to be too late for their own selves, and it's  
11 going to be -- and it's already pretty much too late for  
12 all of us here. I mean, I think I'm going to die like  
13 this, I guess maybe in a worse situation. But it's sad  
14 to see that the government and the U.S., you know, they  
15 say live free. Yeah, that's for some people. Not us up  
16 here in Alaska. But I could go on and on and all this  
17 stuff. I mean, I quit talking about the moose and what's  
18 out there, all this stuff. Because if I mention it,  
19 it'll probably be used against me in another way. So,  
20 I'm just going to leave what's out there and protect it  
21 physically myself, I guess, for around our area and I  
22 hope everybody else will do the same. And like -- just  
23 other folks, you know, I hope Doyon was here, TCC and  
24 maybe a rep from each one of our AC Councils and it's  
25 kind of hard to do because it's a -- this is serious.  
26 We're in a serious situation and like I said before, no  
27 offense to a lot of you out there, but, you know, I feel  
28 like some things entering my back here in some way, the  
29 sorry to say that. But I have to say it because when I  
30 go home, I don't know what's going to happen with --  
31 going on in the future unless I don't know. I don't know  
32 what's going to -- I don't think anything is ever going  
33 to be done. It's going to get worst, worst, worst [sic]  
34 and until maybe be better, we just run out of everything  
35 now so that we will figure out what to do, and they can  
36 help us and figure out what we could do. So anyway, I  
37 could go on and on. So, I just want to thank the Board  
38 for being here and, you know, giving it all our -- trying  
39 everything we can. So, I'll leave it at that and thank  
40 you for that.

41  
42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Appreciate those  
43 comments, Tommy, I think everybody feels the same way.  
44 I mean, we make all these comments to the Board of Fish,  
45 you know, all these various North Pacific Fisheries  
46 management. It's like it gets it goes into a sound,  
47 deadened room. They don't hear what we're saying, don't  
48 want to hear it and so, it gets frustrating. But we just  
49 got to keep trying. That's -- I've been doing this for  
50 30 something years just like you and I -- you just got



1 to keep -- I mean, it's like you're breaking trail in  
2 deep snow. You keep getting stuck over and over, but you  
3 got to just keep going. You got to sit there and die.  
4 You got to keep going. So, I appreciate your comments.  
5 Pollock.

6  
7 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name  
8 is Pollock Simon Sr. I live in Aztec at Upper Koyukuk  
9 River and there hasn't been any fish for the last several  
10 years. First years we were restricted to taking king  
11 salmon and chum salmon population also crash [sic] and  
12 we're not fishing for anything now. That makes life kind  
13 of tough. But where I live upper Koyukuk River there's  
14 caribou hasn't returned for many years and there no  
15 population of moose and the black bears has disappeared,  
16 and life is kind of tough. With the new president, the  
17 new administration -- not so much free money would be  
18 available so it's going to get tougher yet. But  
19 (indiscernible) about salmon. (Indiscernible) kitchen  
20 timer set for 1940 there was no fish (indiscernible)  
21 and- but, in five years 1945, it improved. So, there  
22 were some lean years but, the elders or -- our elders  
23 has always told us to respect the animals and the fish,  
24 and we did that. Yeah, when salmon coming up, we go to  
25 fish camp and take what we need and that's what the  
26 elders wanted us to do and that worked good. Then there  
27 was (indiscernible) and then of course, the state  
28 therefore mentioned the fish with (distortion) the fish  
29 and then, there's no more salmon. But we all work, we  
30 all try to bring the salmon back. I believe personally  
31 that the wild salmon stock is a better fish than the  
32 hatchery fish. Sometimes you talk about putting in the  
33 hatchery into this river, which could release a million  
34 fish but these fish up to our ears but that wouldn't be  
35 the answer either. Maybe, we prefer to eat the wild  
36 stock salmon. I'm a little bit concerned about the non-  
37 salmon species like sheefish and whitefish. If there's  
38 no king salmon, no chum salmon, then we depend on these  
39 for the success, and we want to fish too much on the  
40 whitefish and sheefish. We have to be careful that if  
41 this whitefish and sheefish (indiscernible) we left the  
42 rest of the country no fish. I'm glad I came back here,  
43 I missed a couple of years of meetings, but I'm glad  
44 that Jack Reakoff and Jenny still send after the officers  
45 running the meeting. But I'm glad to see all of you.  
46 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you,  
49 Pollock. We appreciate you. They got you tuned up, you're  
50 looking great, and I always enjoy your comments and your

1 input. You know, we had the marine systems have crashed  
2 in other years. In 1919, the fish came back so bad that  
3 people had to kill all of their dogs in the interior of  
4 Alaska and Hudson Stack, who built the Episcopal mission  
5 in Allakaket, had to go to Congress to get Congress --  
6 because it was a territory -- to close the canneries at  
7 the mouth of the Yukon River that were wiping out all  
8 the remaining fish. The fish came back. The fish came  
9 back because there were no trawl fisheries and there  
10 were no hatchery fish being dumped out by 1.9 billion  
11 fish smolt into the North Pacific, into a marine crash.  
12 And those -- and the salmon returned fairly quickly once  
13 they went back to protection of the spawning returns.  
14 The problem we have right now is warmer water, we have  
15 a marine crash in the North Pacific Gulf of Alaska, and  
16 they just keep -- they don't stop dumping the smolt and  
17 the fish are competing with the wild fish. They take the  
18 food right out of the wild fish's mouth. And so, I'm  
19 getting really concerned that the Board of Fish did not  
20 see the handwriting on the wall. All the fish are getting  
21 smaller and smaller. They're really skinny, all these  
22 sockeye that they bring back to the -- they send them  
23 out by TCC People: like, "I don't like these fish,  
24 they're too skinny". Yeah. Even the sockeye are really  
25 skinny. Sockeye aren't supposed to be that thin. Their  
26 spawning viability of the sockeye and the salmon that  
27 are actually going to get into the river -- or actually  
28 I don't know if they're really viable stock, their egg  
29 loads and stuff. I don't know their survivability. The  
30 eggs could be not nearly what they should be. So, this  
31 -- it's a -- you know, Pollock remembers the stories of  
32 those salmon crashes and the stories -- and I remember  
33 people have told me about -- you know, Sydney and those  
34 people told me about these -- those days. Those were the  
35 bad old days. And so, we -- I'm glad you brought that  
36 up, Pollock about these -- you know there's been crashes,  
37 but it's a different landscape now. We're still  
38 overtaxing the oceans. So that was a good point.  
39 Appreciate that, Pollock. Jenny.

40  
41 MS. PELKOLA: Good morning, everyone. I'm  
42 Jenny Pelkola, living in Galena. I'm originally from  
43 Koyukuk, but I live in Galena now. Very good, Tommy and  
44 it's good to see you back. Like you say, you've been  
45 gone for two years, Pollock and I'm glad you're back.  
46 And you're -- like Jack said, you're looking younger and  
47 good to see Don back. I'm always pushing for having our  
48 members present and I know it's -- one day we'll all be  
49 -- all of us will be setting up here, but I don't -- I  
50 still don't understand why we have two vacant seats. I

1 think we need to work harder and get those filled,  
2 because the more members we have up here, you know, we  
3 learn from each other. I wasn't going to run again on  
4 this last one, but I was talked into it again. And I  
5 keep saying this, it's going to be my last time, but I  
6 learned a lot from these younger folks and our elder.  
7 So, I enjoy just meeting with the guys, and I'm always  
8 pushing for women -- more women on the Board but as you  
9 can see, it's hard to get, I guess. But there's a lot  
10 of women out there that I know can also be sitting up  
11 here. I had an opportunity to go to a training in Galena  
12 for -- to understand that North Pacific Fisheries a  
13 little bit more and thanks to TCC And Krystal was there.  
14 Thank you, Krystal. That was very enjoyable. And I wish  
15 more tribes would take the opportunity to try to learn  
16 a little bit more about the North Pacific Fisheries and  
17 from that, I got an opportunity to go to Anchorage to  
18 testify along with folks from all over Alaska. And I  
19 don't know if we did anything, but they listened to some  
20 of -- they listened because one of the members came up  
21 to me later and thanked me for what I had to say and --  
22 so maybe I don't know. But, anyway, we're going to meet  
23 with them tonight, and hopefully they put on their  
24 listening ears. We've had a lot of snow in our area in  
25 Galena, and I know the wolves are out there doing their  
26 thing, and -- but we have -- thank God we have men that  
27 -- and women that go out and look for the wolves that  
28 are doing their things and some of them are having  
29 success. So, I just thank the guys that can, you know,  
30 go out in the cold and do that -- still do that for --  
31 to keep the moose population up. I enjoy sitting on this  
32 Board, like I said, and it's good to see all your faces  
33 out there. Sometimes we have -- all the Chairs are filled  
34 and sometimes they're not. But I hear there's a lot of  
35 people online, which is good. I see new faces, and I see  
36 faces from the past that I've known. Good to see you,  
37 Vince and obviously oh -- thank you for the honey, gee.

38  
39 CHAWIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's.....

40  
41 MS. PELKOLA: I forgot your name.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Jeff.

44  
45 MS. PELKOLA: Oh, Jeff. Thank you, Jeff,  
46 for the honey and we all got -- we must be sweet or  
47 something so, thank you. But, with that, I'll just end  
48 my Comments. Thank you.

49  
50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.  
2    Appreciate that. And Robert.

3  
4                   MR. WALKER: How come you skipped  
5    yourself, Jack? I mean.....

6  
7                   MS. PELKOLA: He's last.

8  
9                   MR. WALKER: Oh, thank you, Mr. Chair,  
10   for giving me this opportunity to speak. Members of the  
11   Board, Nissa and our coordinator. And I'd like to give  
12   a big, warm welcome to our former warden, who gave us a  
13   lot of inspiration back in the day when we were a lot  
14   younger.

15  
16                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: He's referring to  
17   Vince Mathews in the audience.

18  
19                   MR. WALKER: Thank you.

20  
21                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: He used to be the  
22   coordinator for this Council.

23  
24                   MR. WALKER: And, you know, Mister  
25   Beyersdorf was working with us for years with BLM and  
26   part of 21E there -- it's called Lower Yukon subregion  
27   in the TCC area with tagging moose and having the  
28   students in the classroom following on their computers,  
29   which was very inspirational to them. Something learned  
30   that they will never forget. Even at this age, we never  
31   had that done ever again. Thank you again, Geoff, for  
32   doing that. And thank you all the Board members and all  
33   the staff here for all the work they've done. I know  
34   it's a turmoiled time just listening and watching the  
35   news, talking with staff members on what's going on, but  
36   I don't know if it's for better or for worse. Sounds  
37   like a marriage to me, but, I don't know. We'll find out  
38   what happens in the end, but I hope everything turns out  
39   right and our Board, Western Interior, how long are we  
40   going to be able to function with this also, in the  
41   Eastern Interior and all the other interiors that have  
42   to work with this. And I just want to say one thing, we  
43   testified, like where Jenny was a week ago with the  
44   inter-tribal (indiscernible) and the fish Commission  
45   from Bering Sea, and it went on for seven days  
46   testifying. Every three minutes there was somebody up  
47   testifying. It didn't matter who you were, you were from  
48   the interior, the coast, southeast, Aleutian chain,  
49   whatever. But I watched the people who sat at that desk  
50   up and watched, a lot of them didn't really pay attention

1 to what people were saying because they heard it over  
2 and over and over again. I don't know, but some of them  
3 did pay attention and John Moller was there. I've known  
4 him for a long time, and he paid attention because he's  
5 from the Aleutian chain, and he knew what we were -- or  
6 what was going on our way of living our lives so far.  
7 But one thing when I testified, they gave me six minutes  
8 and I did talk for our tribes, I did talk for an animal  
9 because nobody ever speaks for them. They are being  
10 mercilessly killed for starving because there's no fish.  
11 We shot so many bears in our area, it's not funny, then  
12 to open them up and see they have no fat on them because  
13 they're coming down to our village eating dogs and  
14 killing all the moose, calves in our area, which is  
15 really something that [sic] hard to see in the last five  
16 years. There used to be 120 moose on the island and now  
17 there's only 10. I mean, we don't hunt in our -- right  
18 around town so, you know that if you kill 30 bears within  
19 five miles of Anvik or Grayling, they're out there eating  
20 and hunting moose. So that's a new trait for them. It's  
21 not really in Anvik, but it's all through the Yukon  
22 Valley from Fairbanks all the way down. And I find this  
23 really irresponsible because this never should have  
24 happened. Talking with the fish Commissioner, Doug Lang  
25 and I explained that to him and he says, no, I have to  
26 follow to what the governor has told me to do and the  
27 Fish Board and now, Mr. Walker, what we're going to have  
28 to do we're going to have to put a seven moratorium on  
29 fishing on the Yukon River and I asked him why. He said,  
30 well, this is the spawning ground and I said, are you  
31 for real? He says, I have to follow orders like everybody  
32 else and I said, well, what about Bering Sea? Why don't  
33 anybody do anything about putting a seven-year  
34 moratorium on the Bering Sea? and he says, you have no  
35 jurisdiction and walked away. I kind of felt a little  
36 irritable, because I think if we're going to have to  
37 bear the burden for food. The Bering Sea fishermen should  
38 bear the burden of having no money. But you know money  
39 is going to win because it's a billion fishery. We see  
40 it, you know it all too, but you're not going to speak  
41 up. Because when I do talk to people, it's like something  
42 that-- afraid to speak that you might be heard by  
43 somebody else or something. But I am a tribal chief  
44 also. So, I have to speak for all our tribes as it goes  
45 and being back on the west Interior RAC, I was hoping  
46 that we could all work with our government and the  
47 Federal government on this issue, but it seems like we're  
48 split so many different ways that we're never, ever going  
49 to be together to finalize this. Now we have another  
50 burden that has come to all of our departments and our

1 own on how the door is going to be functioning and  
2 working to -- what government efficiency is, is going  
3 to be something else for us too. it's going to fall  
4 right down on the bottom of us. CDQ is part of a federal  
5 monies and state monies. I don't know what's going to  
6 happen there, but they are in a better position than we  
7 are in the interior because they have monies, and they  
8 have fisheries. We don't have anything, and we're just  
9 going to have to tighten our belt and try to figure out  
10 how we're going to use that front door to get to places  
11 or is there a back door somebody can show us on how to  
12 go out there and to work at this. I'm afraid to say that  
13 our young people are learning how to steal from the  
14 government, going out and taking salmon and passing it  
15 out to the elders. This is something that -- what I  
16 hoped I didn't want to have to see, but it is coming to  
17 that, and you can't blame them, they're hungry too. So,  
18 Mr. Chairman, I will leave it at that. I know we're all  
19 in the same boat together here. So how are we going to  
20 row it forward and backward? How are we going to do  
21 this? Split the boat in half. I know there's no happy  
22 ending to this one. It might not be in my lifetime  
23 anyway. So, Mr. Chair, thank you. Members of the staff,  
24 Thank you. Members of the Board, Thank you.

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Robert.  
27 I appreciate all your comments and yeah, like a lot of  
28 people -- subsistence people don't know what's going to  
29 happen, not just with the government. We just don't know  
30 what's going to happen with the way the climate is and  
31 how the populations of fish and wildlife are going. We  
32 just don't know. It's getting like, really concerning  
33 about what are we going to do if stuff just goes  
34 completely down to nothing? There's lots of snowshoe  
35 hares, and I know that elders told me that when they had  
36 salmon crashes in the -- long time ago, they had to eat  
37 snowshoe hares and muskrats was there -- a large food  
38 source. Those were tough days. There were no moose. It  
39 was bad times. So, we might be looking at that. Hopefully  
40 not and so, Don -- appreciate your comments. Don, go  
41 ahead.

42  
43 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's  
44 good to be back on the Board, but I -- it's kind of odd  
45 the way it fell into place so, I'm just filling the seat  
46 till 2025, which is right now. So, I just got back on,  
47 and I got a refile. I guess that's the process, but,  
48 hey, I -- it's interesting listening to the comments and  
49 I appreciate the Board as a whole. I -- it's always been  
50 my concern-- is still my concern. Why don't TCC? Why

1 don't we? Why don't somebody [sic] that can get reps  
2 from out of McGrath, Red Devil, Aniak? We should be  
3 striving for that. You know, I've always been told, hey,  
4 you can know -- you're only speaking of your -- from  
5 your subregion or your village, your refuge. Well, of  
6 course, I mean, I don't know what's going on. I don't  
7 know what's going on in Kaltag or Huslia or something  
8 like that. That's why I just deem it important. We have  
9 people like Pollock, with wisdom coming from over there,  
10 and my cousin Jenny, I appreciate her comments and all  
11 of you, Robert and Tommy. Those of you who don't know  
12 that guy is a go getter. He goes out and he gets wolves  
13 and stuff like that. I wish I could be the same way, do  
14 the same thing, you know, we all have gifts of some  
15 sort, but, I just -- I -- I'm kind of really unclear as  
16 to whether I gave a report on the numbers of moose on  
17 the Novi this fall, but, I just hear there's a large  
18 wolf population between Ruby and Galena, maybe around  
19 Bible camp or maybe around Novi, on the south of the  
20 Nowitna River there hasn't been a -- those people up  
21 there for maybe three years now, a couple of years at  
22 least and so, there's actually nobody up there. We have  
23 a cabin at the Marten River on a Native allotment, but  
24 I haven't been able to get up there. I did have a couple  
25 of friends from TCC staff that went -- I let them go  
26 down there, and they used the cabin about this time of  
27 the year. They traveled by Snowmachine, and they were  
28 able to take some. So, I think anything that we could  
29 do to strive to keep our population -- our moose and  
30 just one other thing I wanted to mention you know, when  
31 we talk about fish, dang, there's a myriad of things  
32 that are happening and so I'm -- you know, I guess maybe  
33 this could be posed in North Pacific, but, how much is  
34 that bycatch really taking a toll? I mean, okay, we  
35 crashed. We -- I mean, you know, like a friend of mine  
36 years ago when we were in Galena or somewhere we  
37 mentioned that, hey, we could always rely on the summer  
38 chum, the fall chum and to this day, we can't. That's  
39 really distressful and, you know, we didn't care about  
40 the king run. Hey, we could pour -- we'll just let that  
41 go. but, since then, you know -- and so how much, how  
42 much bycatch of chum -- I'm more concerned about the  
43 bigger picture, like Area M. Okay, if they say, well,  
44 those fish, they were targeted for the -- maybe the West  
45 Coast, not the Yukon and the Kuskokwim, but, I don't  
46 know, you know, are they tagging them? How do we -- how  
47 do they actually know where they go? So, there's a lot  
48 of lot of questions and I haven't been keeping up with  
49 the Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. I missed a couple of  
50 meetings there, but I just -- I'm kind of anxious to see

1 what the forecast is for this year. Other than that,  
2 it's good to be here, and I appreciate each one of you  
3 guys for your comments and your concerns, Thank you.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thanks, Don. I want  
6 to find out if Darrell Vent has come back onto the phone  
7 or did you ever get on Darrel? So, I would like a Council  
8 member report from Darrel and so, it's the Chair's  
9 report. I'm on the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence  
10 Resource Commission. We had a meeting in November. We  
11 talked quite a bit about dall sheep and caribou  
12 populations. That's a -- kind of a thing in the mountains  
13 is the dall sheep population and the status of that. We  
14 had a presentation from the Alaska Department of Fish  
15 and Game. They have GPS collars on ewes and rams in the  
16 park and then east over to the outside of the park. And  
17 so that's a multi-year study of the dall sheep  
18 population. They had some mortalities. They flew and  
19 found that wolverines had killed one of the dall sheep,  
20 and one died from pneumonia, and they had a necropsy.  
21 So, we're learning stuff about the dall sheep from that  
22 project. I have high hopes for that project and so, that  
23 -- I wanted to bring that before this Council, because  
24 this Council is also concerned about the dall sheep  
25 population in the Brooks Range. We -- we've had a  
26 considerably different winter than most people are  
27 experiencing the rest of Alaska. The Brooks Range has  
28 received a lot of snow when it's raining, and in  
29 Anchorage it's raining, in Fairbanks, it was snowing and  
30 snowing we had 51 inches of snow that fell in Wiseman  
31 in January alone. We've had 90 -- over 91 inches of snow  
32 this year. I take weather for the National Weather  
33 Service. We had an apex of snowpack at 52 inches. It  
34 rained in January 18th on that snow and melted for nine  
35 hours. It made a crust in the snow. The moose were to  
36 their belly and snow. We've got good strong stock. We've  
37 got big moose that have survived 2018, 19, 20. And so  
38 we had a cool summer, and our moose camp seem to be  
39 still surviving this. There was blood on the snow.  
40 There's where they rake themselves up in those cross and  
41 the calves are getting cut up a little bit. The snow is  
42 really deep in the mountains, and it only rained on the  
43 valley floor fortunately, I didn't find crust in higher  
44 elevations. I'm trapping higher -- wolves at higher  
45 elevations. I didn't find crust when the -- there was  
46 deep snow for basically three weeks, and the sheep had  
47 a real hard time with that, and so did the caribou. We  
48 have -- I think they're Teshekpuk Caribou to the west  
49 of us and the wind blew really hard about a week ago,  
50 ten days ago. Rip the snow right off the mountains. So



1 now the caribou are way up. They've gone higher on the  
2 ridges. The wolves that we've caught are really fat.  
3 That's because they -- they've had quite a bit of snow.  
4 They got the advantage on the moose, and they got the  
5 advantage on the Caribou. So, we're working on this wolf  
6 thing, you know you can ask Glenn back there. Basically,  
7 one wolf is worth 7 to 12 moose -- when you say that,  
8 Glenn? something like that. 7 to 12 moose you catch a  
9 few wolves you take away; it makes credits for the human  
10 harvest. So, it's like a teeter totter. You have to take  
11 moose, caribou and sheep on this side. You got to take  
12 predators off the other side, and we take bears also.  
13 If we can get a bear, usually in -- someone in our  
14 community will get a bear and -- at some point, and a  
15 lot of the bears that we -- have brown bears, they need  
16 vegetation in the fall. They want to fatten up on eating  
17 roots and stuff. So, they're really good eating bears,  
18 even if they eat moose calves in the spring. So, we do  
19 catch bears. So, one of the elders or person that I knew  
20 a long time ago said that if you catch a moose or a  
21 caribou, it's your obligation to take a wolf or a bear.  
22 And so that's what everybody, you know, if you're out  
23 moose hunting and you see a bear, take it. If you see a  
24 wolf, take it. And so, Tommy's -- at one point he told  
25 me how many wolves he got, and I calculated it was around  
26 1100 moose savings and about a 3- or 4-year period. So,  
27 Tommy is making all of the -- pretty much all of the  
28 harvest and people around in that area. The harvest of  
29 the local people there. Of all the communities in your  
30 central Yukon area, you're saving the moose that are  
31 going back into the human consumption. This is part of  
32 the rural methods is to take predators, everything, not  
33 just go get a moose in the fall and go home and watch  
34 football all winter. You're out there beating yourself  
35 up. Theres -- two weeks ago, I was in snow breaking  
36 trail in my Muskeg on Willow or something, and I'd sink  
37 to my chest stuck. That's never fun, but we got to keep  
38 -- that's what I keep -- I use that as an analogy. So,  
39 our winter is really hard, but our game is healthier and  
40 so, our sheep population was starting to come up. We  
41 showed 41 lambs per 100 ewes. There's hardly any ewes,  
42 but I mean there's 41 per 100 ewes. And so, they're good  
43 strong stock. And so, they're also -- they had a rainy  
44 summer and rainy summers -- when they don't get caribou  
45 and sheep surveys are actually extend [sic] the blossom  
46 periods for the flowers and the sheep and the caribou  
47 benefit highly from rainy summers and the insect  
48 numbers. Kanuti gave us a report last fall that the  
49 bumblebees were down to about 90%. Well, that's across  
50 the board. There's not -- there's ants pollinating

1 insects are not there. I don't know what in the world  
2 that's about. There weren't even a lot of mosquitoes  
3 last summer. So, these things affect the birds, you know,  
4 the grouse and so forth. The bird flu is decimated the  
5 wild raven population. I drove the Haul Road down. There  
6 are hundreds of ptarmigan from north of the Yukon River  
7 all the way to the south slope of the Brooks River.  
8 Literally thousands. They're getting run over by trucks.  
9 If the ravens are in the country, they're going to eat  
10 those carcasses. I only send -- seen ten ravens between  
11 Fairbanks and lives, call it Livengood in the Brooks  
12 Range. Raven populations they've been killed off by bird  
13 flu. Hawks and -- you know, on the Yukon River peregrine  
14 falcons have gone way down so, the number of predators  
15 are down. So, grouse and ptarmigan are doing really,  
16 really well. There is lots of ptarmigan so, those are --  
17 -- and the snowshoe hare population is low but, stable.  
18 The Lynx we're catching are fat and so, the Lynx --  
19 Riverbank Lynx with kittens moving in back into the  
20 Brooks Range right now. And I caught two kitties just  
21 about a week or so ago and they're pretty good sized and  
22 they have fat on them. So, if you got a kitten with fat  
23 on it, that shows that the habitat is really good for  
24 them. So, I am -- I'm really concerned about these salmon  
25 stocks. I -- I'm concerned that we're not going to ever  
26 get them back, when the Board of fish just puts their  
27 head in the sand and re-allocates all of the resource --  
28 -- all of the food resource, the trophic of the North  
29 Pacific to the hatchery fish, wild stocks are going to  
30 continue to decline. We cannot come back unless they get  
31 it through their head, their studies -- I'm reading a  
32 study from Washington State University in British  
33 Columbia about hatchery influence. 1.2 billion pink and  
34 chum salmon smolts are having a giant effect on wild  
35 chinook, coho and wild chum. That's what's beating us  
36 up and so, I don't know that bycatch of the returning  
37 few that are coming back is a problem. But the main  
38 problem is hatcheries. The big -- the elephant in the  
39 room is the hatchery release. Washington state -- here's  
40 what Washington state releases 200 million pink salmon  
41 and one year on the high year and then they don't release  
42 the next year because pink salmon have an alternate year.  
43 The state of Alaska allows hatcheries to release every  
44 year, millions. It's a problem, there's no science  
45 involved in the hatcheries in Alaska, and I'm highly  
46 annoyed with the Board of Fish for not addressing the  
47 issue. A 25% decline -- reduction in hatchery release  
48 would not -- it would help -- it's not going to fix the  
49 problem. Their hatcheries were not even getting enough  
50 returns so that they could even row strip their own

1 fish. They're affecting their own returns. The hatchery  
2 -- hatcheries are owned by the Aquaculture Association,  
3 which is the seining industry and there's people that  
4 work for the hatcheries, and that's the main obstacle.  
5 They're going to cut off all those jobs. Well, there's  
6 too many hatcheries. They're industrial hatcheries. They  
7 need get it through their head. They need to stop the  
8 hatchery production. I'm not opposed to raising chinook  
9 and dumping those in the harbors of Juneau and people  
10 catch these fish, some coho and chinook I'm talking about  
11 in pink salmon industrial millions, hundreds of  
12 millions, 750 million pink salmon release. That is way  
13 too much fish. Our chinook stocks move into the marine  
14 system. The pinks are there to eat the fish in front of  
15 them and so, it's a giant problem. We do need to talk  
16 about this as the few chums that survive -- some of the  
17 stocks -- and Don touched on that, there's no genetic  
18 work done to a large degree of Area M. What chum salmon  
19 stocks are going where? They just basically want to put  
20 their heads in the sand. They don't even want to talk  
21 about the chums moving through Aea M. Those are the  
22 survivors; there's like huge mortalities of our wild  
23 chums so the few survivors need to be protected. We need  
24 to talk about the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
25 Councils there. There's going to give us various options  
26 and I encourage your Council to be prompt at 6:30 for  
27 that meeting tonight. This is going to be a big part of  
28 this meeting. Is this North Pacific Fisheries Management  
29 Council. So that's my report and Tommy has a question  
30 or comment. Go ahead, Tommy.

31  
32 MR. KRISKA: Okay so, I see that, you  
33 know, the -- all these hatcheries are a big issue with  
34 our, you know, our fish. So, you know, why is it that  
35 all the hatcheries are along the coast of Alaska? Why,  
36 if they all belong to the government or the Northern  
37 Pacific fisheries, why don't they move back down to the  
38 middle of the United States, down there, away from the  
39 -- our Yukon River? Why can't they have their fisheries  
40 hatcheries down there instead of right on the mouth of  
41 our river?

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: These are Alaskan  
44 hatcheries. We're the problem. We've got to look in the  
45 mirror. Alaska is the problem. We're the largest release  
46 of hatchery of fish into the North Pacific and North  
47 America. Yeah, they release fish down in the Washington,  
48 Oregon, Northern California. Nothing like the Alaskan  
49 release and they don't release pink salmon at this level.  
50 Everybody knows that anybody that knows anything about

1 pink salmon, they're voracious. They grow to full  
2 maturity in two years. They eat everything in front of  
3 them. They eat all the plankton, and then they start  
4 moving into small fish and a lot of our -- the second  
5 year pinks are wiped. I'm sure they're eating a lot of  
6 our chum and our chinook because there's so many. They  
7 ate all of our smolt that are moving into the ocean.  
8 They can't. They - there are just too many pinks in the  
9 ocean. They're not supposed to be like that. Yeah, and  
10 then they'll say, well, there's lots of hatchery lakes  
11 over in Asia. But, Asian stocks, they don't go -- they  
12 move into the North Pacific, but they're more to the  
13 West. They're not so far into our fish. A lot of our  
14 fish out of the Yukon move into the North Pacific. The  
15 Japan currents running along the south Alaska coast and  
16 our stocks of salmon go along the southern part of  
17 Alaska. They're moving all the way and they're right in  
18 among all that pinks. And so, they're our wild fish that  
19 we got by the time they get to the North Pacific, the  
20 pinks have beaten them, and the pinks move all the way  
21 in, and our pinks move up halfway into the North Pacific.  
22 So, it's a -- the hatchery is the elephant in the room.  
23 No one wants to talk about it because it's. There's too  
24 many jobs involved. We got to look ourselves in the  
25 mirror. It's not the other states doing it. It's us. We  
26 are doing it to ourselves, and we're wrecking our  
27 fisheries. I don't care. It'll come out in the wash, and  
28 someday they're going to be deeply regretting that  
29 they've done this to the wild salmon stocks of the North  
30 Pacific and Alaska in particular. I appreciate that  
31 comment, Tommy. Any further questions or comments on  
32 those issues? So.....

33  
34 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, this is Tom.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We -- go ahead.  
37 Tim. Tim, go ahead.

38  
39 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I would -- I have two  
40 things on Tommy asking about the ownership of the  
41 hatcheries and why they're at the mouth and for the most  
42 part, they are close to the coast. They're -- we need  
43 to always remember there is a king salmon hatchery up  
44 in Whitehorse that is -- was put there to mitigate the  
45 effects of Whitehorse Dam. So, we actually have hatchery  
46 enhancement on the Yukon River. As far as I know, the  
47 only major -- no, I shouldn't say that. I just wanted  
48 to say that I don't think there's any hatchery influence  
49 on the Kuskokwim. The -- a comment you just said-- oh,  
50 and then the ownership of these hatcheries. So, Prince

1 William Sound Regional Aquaculture, Cook Inlet Regional  
2 Aquaculture Association, I don't know the exact name of  
3 the Southeast Alaska Aquaculture Association. These are  
4 non-profit companies that are kind of -- they're an  
5 association. It mostly all started up when the state was  
6 rich with oil and pipeline money and then people were  
7 like, oh, wow, we should -- we got all this money, why  
8 don't we manufacture more salmon? And I think originally  
9 it started out with good intentions, but, then over the  
10 course of decades, people were like, wow, the more  
11 hatchery production we put out, the more commercial  
12 hatchery fish we can catch and the more money we can  
13 make. And then the fishermen started making more money  
14 and they were buying bigger boats, and they wanted more  
15 hatchery production to pay for their bigger boats. And  
16 this whole, this whole economic model snowballed on  
17 itself, and it got to the point where the increased  
18 demand for hatchery production to increase commercial  
19 harvest affected the actual food supply of the ocean,  
20 enough that wild stocks are affected. And, Jack just  
21 said that nobody wants to talk about it. I think a lot  
22 of people want to talk about it. I know mostly everybody  
23 in the Subsistence community wants to talk about it. I  
24 know researchers and scientists that are getting their  
25 funding that's not -- I would call it like dirty money  
26 in research, like there's scientific research or  
27 ostensibly scientific research, but some of it's, you  
28 know, is funded by industry groups that are trying to  
29 push a certain agenda, such as we've seen increased  
30 research into salmon shark predation and other research  
31 projects that are kind of intended to deflect the blame  
32 from problems with salmon survivability in the marine  
33 environment. And we all had really good presentations  
34 last March and the All Council meeting with those  
35 scientists and researchers talking about the effect of  
36 hatchery production in the North Pacific. So, I believe  
37 there's a lot of people that are -- that want to talk  
38 about hatchery production and want something done with  
39 it. But I feel at this point on this day here, February  
40 2025, we're not getting cooperation from the Alaska  
41 Board of Fish. We're not getting enough cooperation and  
42 buying in from Alaska Department of Fish and Game. We're  
43 not getting enough cooperation or admission of that  
44 they're part of the problem from the commercial fishing  
45 fleet. And I'm talking about the state regulated  
46 fisheries like salmon seiners, salmon gillnetters. And  
47 so, we need to exercise our voices and whatever rights  
48 we have. I mean, obviously WIRAC is an advisory Council,  
49 we can't -- we don't have rights beyond what's outlined  
50 in in title eight of ANILCA. But title eight does have

1 a lot of rights in there but, for some reason, I think  
2 because it's inconvenient to advocate or enforce  
3 Subsistence rights or -- I don't even know what the  
4 exact terminology of it. What's the right of a species,  
5 king salmon or chum salmon or coho salmon -- what's  
6 their right to actually have a sustaining population?  
7 There must be there must be some term for that. So, I  
8 know everybody's tired of getting on the short end of  
9 the stick, but, basically, when you're a subsistence  
10 user rural Alaska, you don't have very good legal  
11 resources. You don't have good financial resources. Your  
12 population numbers are less than the general population  
13 of the state in whole. But I want all the Council members  
14 and the staff members to realize that what we're  
15 advocating for and fighting for, with maintaining  
16 healthy Fish and Game stocks is super important.  
17 Probably -- I mean, other than taking care of the  
18 immediate needs of your family and your village, these  
19 are really like the most important thing that you can  
20 do in your life is to -- so when we're dead the next  
21 generation, ten generations down the road and 100  
22 generations down the road, they can have fish and game  
23 populations in which to feed their family and it's not  
24 just it's not about calories either or culture. It's  
25 like what's coming out of -- what's the -- like what I'm  
26 seeing from state government and Federal government  
27 saying we don't have to really pay attention to how much  
28 salmon is available on the Koyukuk or the Kuskokwim River  
29 Yukon River. We can just give these people food stamps  
30 or whatever the card is where you can get food. But,  
31 when the diet of like the population of the people who  
32 live on the river changes to ultra-high processed foods,  
33 it's like -- it's basically poison. It's damaging  
34 everybody's health, super high rates of chronic diseases  
35 that are rooted in poor nutrition quality and then  
36 there's additional impact where just mental health,  
37 sense of self-worth, your ability to take care of  
38 yourself and your family is compromised because you are  
39 being eliminated from access to a resource that no longer  
40 exists. So, I would -- I just wanted to expand on Jack's  
41 assertion that nobody wants to talk about it. It's like  
42 a lot of people want to talk about it, and it needs to  
43 be talked about, and we need to do better at whatever  
44 it's going to take to get these resources back into  
45 sustainable populations and back into harvestable  
46 populations. Sorry to talk so much.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Tim.  
49 I didn't mean that nobody wants to talk about it. I  
50 mean, the Board process and the Department of Fish and

1 Game, they don't want to think about it. They're like  
2 in a state of denial. There's studies that -- you pointed  
3 out that there's a hatchery at the -- in Whitehorse and  
4 they release fish hatchery fish chinook salmon that go  
5 out and compete. So, they're basically they're have  
6 [sic] the same problem. The hatchery fish from  
7 Whitehorse go down into the Bering Sea, they move into  
8 the North Pacific and there's no food for them and  
9 they're coming back instead of -- we had escapement goals  
10 of 42,000 555,000. They upped that to 75,000. Yeah. What  
11 did they get? 32 -- almost 30,000 this year with full  
12 closures. It's like it shows that there is a problem  
13 even when they're hatchery fish, which are actually a  
14 little bit larger than wild stock, they still can't  
15 compete in the ocean. This is what we're looking at.  
16 That hatchery is actually a -- that should be analyzed  
17 scientifically about what that effect is. And so, it's  
18 not that no one wants to talk about it. Everybody's  
19 starting to realize, I don't think a lot of people  
20 realize the hatchery problem. You just go on the website,  
21 go on and look at the -- there's papers published by the  
22 Department of Fish and Game about the hatcheries, and  
23 it shows this increasing releases. This keeps going up  
24 like on and on. It doesn't stop, it doesn't top out and  
25 they just -- it's -- and if you look at the decline of  
26 the wild stocks, it's exponential to this increase in  
27 hatchery fish. That's the elephant in the room. But the  
28 science doesn't -- the Department of Fish and Game  
29 doesn't want to use science. Can't be talking about  
30 science. We've got an economic -- it reallocates the  
31 resource of the ocean to the cost recovery. It's the  
32 seiners have to get money back for all that money they  
33 spent on that hatchery fish. It's cost recovery, all the  
34 staff and all that stuff. It's a fiasco. It's not that  
35 no one -- it's the Board of Fish and the Department of  
36 Fish and Game is going to stay in a state of denial  
37 until they hit the wall, period and so, we're paying the  
38 price. The people who rely on those wild stocks are  
39 paying the price and they're under a state mandate for  
40 sustained yield management and they're not doing it. So,  
41 it's really super frustrating. We got to look ourselves  
42 in the mirror. The state of Alaska is the problem. So,  
43 we -- that's probably enough for our Council comments.  
44 We get super frustrated. That's part of our platform  
45 here is to voice our -- blow some steam out and all  
46 that. So, we do have one blue card here for Vince  
47 Mathews, but I might take that after a short break or  
48 make -- take a ten-minute break here, and then we'll  
49 have Vince come up and for non-agenda discussion. So,  
50 ten-minute break. We'll be back on record at about 11:00.

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(Off record)

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(On record)

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're going to come back on record. If I could get everybody to come back to their seats. And so, we're going to have Vince Mathews come up and then I found out that Geoff Beyersdorf with BLM is here, but he cannot -- he has to leave. He's here this morning and so he -- I would like this Council to have the benefit of the -- of Jeff Beyersdorf to talk about the Ambler Road and some other aspects while he's here so that I -- so I'm going to-- want to go to Vince. Vince is going to make a public comment, and I would like to have -- oh, well, we got some more. Let's see, I wasn't expecting that. So, we have some public comments here. Oh, gee. Okay, so we got to get the public comments because that's our agenda item. So, I'm not sure that I can get you up here Vince. We'll see how -- or correction Geoff, I'm not sure if we can get you up here or not. So, Vince Mathews go ahead, Vince, say state your name for the record.

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MR. MATHEWS: Yes, my name is Vince Mathews, and Mathews is spelled M A T H E W S, one T cause [sic] I'm Irish. I can give you a long story on that. but, anyways for those that don't know me, I was a regional Council Coordinator for Alaska Department of Fish and Game way back in the 80s for 14 advisory committees, and then I advanced, I suppose, one way of looking at it to Regional Coordinator for Western and Eastern Interior since 1993, and retired -- and moved on to a refuge position in 2009. The reason I'm here is, one of your former Council members I discovered was ill and that's Benedict Jones. So, I visited him a couple of times and for those that don't know, Benedict Jones, he's an Native elder from Koyukuk. He served on the Middle Yukon, I believe advisory committee and on this Council. His illnesses as he broke part of his hip. So, he's in a long-term healing phase and for many elders, Benedict -- I mean Pollock just did it a few minutes ago. They're like an encyclopedia. For me it's like going to a friend's house that got a new encyclopedia, and you pull out the different books and you look and learn about all different stuff. With Native elders they don't -- you don't have to pull out a book they start sharing. So, what he did share with me, Pollock just mentioned, he said there was a fish crash in 1939. He said 1940. Benedict went on about Sidney Huntington, that one of



1 the crashes was because one winter, I don't know which  
2 one, it was 100 below zero, and it killed all the fish  
3 -- or the -- you know, the eggs and the spawning grounds.  
4 So, my objective meeting with Benedict was to thank him  
5 and to apologize. I apologize to him that I listened,  
6 but we didn't listen when he gave us insights on why  
7 there's no salmon and I get very angry reading the paper  
8 years later that there's some study confirming that it's  
9 water temperature -- when he told us many, many years  
10 ago. So, he then went on and asked me to share that he  
11 says, leave our fish alone. He's talking about tagging  
12 and other stuff. He says that the fish get confused and  
13 can't figure on where to go and for those that have been  
14 around a long time, Benedict, when he talked about fish,  
15 always shared that he knew when to put his net in the  
16 water; was when this certain bird would be in the bushes.  
17 So, I asked him, and his wife was there, Eliza, and she  
18 quickly spoke up and said it was a savannah sparrow. So,  
19 for those that are into ecology, this is something that  
20 I will look into further. Now for the rest -- for the  
21 new staff to OSM and others. I came from a blue-collar  
22 family so, when my brothers and sisters would say, what  
23 did you do as a regional coordinator? I drew a blank.  
24 So finally, I came up with something. People within OSM  
25 are the clutch. The engine is a subsistence user, and  
26 the vehicle is the Federal Subsistence Program. So, all  
27 of you, your team people, your -- on that you're the  
28 clutch between that engine which is Subsistence, which  
29 was defined in ANILCA title eight, and you help that  
30 power from that engine be transferred into the Federal  
31 Subsistence Program so it can go forward. I'm not going  
32 to hoodwink you guys, as a clutch you get burnt both  
33 ways, but that's okay. It's part of a learning process.  
34 You're the front face of the program many times, and the  
35 program and government can be very slow. So, with that  
36 I would share with you that I want to thank you for your  
37 continuing dedication. I just was talking to staff back  
38 there. Yeah. It's very frustrating to hear these same  
39 concerns about hatchery fish and all that. For those  
40 that know Virgil, he'd be yelling in my ear. My memory  
41 here years ago saying the same thing. So, I want to  
42 thank you for staying in there and, yes, we need to get  
43 more involved, more Council members. Hopefully that will  
44 happen. So, with that I'll stop. But Benedict is in town  
45 here recovering. He concerned me, when I asked him how  
46 he's doing, he says I'm really tired. So, I'm hoping  
47 that was just because I broke them away from lunch and  
48 not that it's any indication of his overall health. So,  
49 with that, I'll stop.  
50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Vince.  
2   Any questions for Vince or comments?

3  
4                   (No response)

5  
6                   I will comment on your -- you know, the  
7   decline in the late 30s, 40s. There's other -- there's  
8   other marine -- there's factors but one of the drivers  
9   is the marine declines and so, we had this -- in the  
10  90s. There was this chum salmon decline, and we went  
11  into restrictions and then -- I remember these 90s  
12  restrictions. So, we get into these restrictions. But,  
13  if you look at when those were happening and where the  
14  hatchery releases were then, they weren't nothing like  
15  they are now. So as time goes on, as the hatcheries keep  
16  continuing to put out more and more fish, the recovery  
17  time has gotten to the point where the returns can't  
18  return. They didn't come back in 2 or 3 --  
19  (indiscernible) three -- in three years or four years.  
20  They're not coming back. It's like-- so I do -- you  
21  know, there are other declines, but there's documented  
22  declines in 1919. I mean, significant declines in 1919  
23  where people had to kill all their dogs and were  
24  starving. That was a problem. So, any -- oh Don. Go  
25  ahead.

26  
27                  MR. HONEA: Yeah. Mr. Chair. Thank you,  
28   Mr. Chair. I just want to compliment you on your remarks.  
29   I believe that when I first got on this particular  
30   Council, you were our coordinator at the time and  
31   appreciate that many years and some of the Board members  
32   aren't here, but you are, like, a mentor to myself, and  
33   a good role model. I appreciate that.

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35                  CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Tommy. Go  
36   ahead.

37  
38                  MR. KRISKA: Yeah. Well, Vince, I  
39   appreciate everything that you did back in the -- all  
40   your days up to now. I was on the Western Interior  
41   Regional Council up to 2005 from, I think 98, 99 back  
42   in those days and once I moved here, I had to get off  
43   of it. And then after I moved back, I wound up back on  
44   it but Benedict -- yeah, it's kind of sad to see that  
45   old man. He's 90 years old. He was just going out, you  
46   know just to enjoy a grouse hunting here this last fall,  
47   and he with a four-Wheeler, and he stepped off the four-  
48   Wheeler he shot a grouse, and he was tipping off the  
49   four Wheeler to go get it. And he stepped off the four-  
50   Wheeler at the same time he stepped into a hole and

1 fell. Then he broke his hip and he -- well, actually,  
2 he walked away from the four-Wheeler, grabbed the grouse  
3 was turning around and he fell. It was about a -- I  
4 don't know, 50, 60ft from the four-Wheeler. Then he had  
5 to crawl all the way back to the four-Wheeler. No one  
6 knew where he was. So, they started looking for him.  
7 They found him, and he couldn't get himself back onto  
8 the bike and it was already getting dark, but his  
9 grandson found him in the -- and he had a rough healing  
10 thing -- he broke it two more -- or, I guess, two more  
11 times ever since he'd been in the hospital. He can't  
12 stay in one place, and he don't give it time to heal.  
13 He fell and broke it again at the hospital or somewhere.  
14 Was this going to get up and walk out but, yeah, he he's  
15 still trying, but he -- yeah. He's getting -- seemed  
16 like his voice is changing and everything and I have a  
17 lot of concerns for him, and I intend to visit him while  
18 I'm here. Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Tommy.  
21 Yeah. Ben used to be on our Council here, and he told  
22 us a lot of stuff. He told us back when we were, you  
23 know, they would initiate commercial harvest at the  
24 quarter point on the Yukon River for chinook. And Ben  
25 said that's the Koyukuk River stocks. They -- if they  
26 open at the quarter point, it'll wipe the Koyukuk stocks  
27 off. So, they started reanalyzing when they had  
28 commercial openings. Ben knew a lot about salmon. So,  
29 Ben was a huge part of this Council, and we deeply missed  
30 him. Vince was a big -- was a -- our coordinator for a  
31 long time. Vince did a great job for this Council and  
32 when he was a Subsistence for the refuge, he interacted  
33 with this Council a lot. So, we really appreciate all  
34 the work you've done in your work life, Vince. And thanks  
35 for coming to speak to us.

36  
37 MR. MATHEW: Well, good luck and have a  
38 great meeting.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead there,  
41 Robert.

42  
43 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair and  
44 thank you for being the coordinator for all these years.  
45 You know something that we do talk about some of those  
46 guys that are not on the Board anymore. We ask where you  
47 are, and I'd have to call Nissa to find out where you  
48 are. So, we kind of kept an eye on, you know, where knew  
49 where you were So. But, again, thank you for all the  
50 time that you gave to us. Thank you, Vince.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Pollock.

MR. SIMMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Vince. You had pretty good comments. I know Vince for a long time, and I went to a lot of Fish and Game and virtual meeting and benches. I was sitting there and today he's still here in Cook County, concerned about our way of life so, good comments, Vince. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And Jenny.

MS. PELKOLA: I would like to echo the words. Thank you to you too. You were the coordinator when I first got in over 20 years ago, and I was wondering why they were calling you chief or warden, and I was wondering, is he a warden? I couldn't figure it out, you know? And I guess it's just a name that the boys gave you then. And I just want to thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That was a term that Robert and his cousin Jimmy used to call Vince when he would, like, get them to get -- show up on time and do various things. He -- they -- he -- they felt he was more like a prison warden. So, thanks so much, Vince. So, we're going to go through these public comments on non-agenda items. So oh, George Yaska and so, yeah, they got out of order there. Good to see you again, George.

MR. YASKA: Good morning, Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council, it's good to be here and speaking on these issues. I work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and my job title is Indigenous Knowledge Liaison. So, I sought permission to speak on issues that I'm familiar with indigenous knowledge of the people. So, I'll back up briefly and say that I have a traditional knowledge that's been passed on to me through my own observations and growing up in fishing on the Yukon River and living on the Kuskokwim and then fishing again on the Yukon. And my father, George Yaska Sr., has always spoken to me ever since the first time that I started talking to people about -- and asking questions of issues of importance. So, all of a sudden, he realized I'm an extension of him and I had better be taught the right way to talk about these things. So, I thank him for that. I can speak to some of these issues, and I hear my cousin Tom talk about the role of us and the audience, and I take that to heart. And this is why I asked for permission from my boss to relay what I know about our way of life. And so, I grew up fishing on the

1 Koyukuk River. I was operating the boat by 1967, and I  
2 was only five years old, no, seven years old. So, but  
3 times were different then by the time I was five and was  
4 dragging the can of gas down to the boat. So, times were  
5 a lot different, and we were taught to be independent  
6 and to think and do things safely. And we're taught  
7 about survival, and we're taught about caring for the  
8 country out there, that these things can't speak for  
9 themselves. So, it's our responsibility to talk about  
10 those things. So, we began to notice the weight of king  
11 salmon in the 70s already coming down and I remember  
12 late Uncle Franklin Madras talking about seeing oil  
13 slicks in that 1920 fishing disaster, 1919 or 1920. And  
14 I was traveling down the Yukon two years ago and saw the  
15 great oil slicks coming out of the Novi River. It ran  
16 for miles and miles and miles, and I recall seeing oil  
17 slicks like that in the Koyukuk River way back in the  
18 1960s. And so, I asked a scientist about it, and he  
19 said, well, these lands have been releasing hydrocarbons  
20 for a long time. Climate change has been happening for  
21 a long time. The end of the Ice age has been happening  
22 for a long time so, there's been a warming and a loss  
23 of permafrost and the release of the frozen things into  
24 the water and he says perhaps it's related to that and  
25 certainly on the Novi River today with all of that  
26 permafrost that's been released and the release of those  
27 hydrocarbons, it's evident on the face of it. And so, I  
28 wanted to relate that this has been happening for a long  
29 time. But, along with the recent issues from the 1970s,  
30 when we started seeing dramatic declines in weight of  
31 king salmon and when my late aunt Angela Huntington asked  
32 her late husband, Sidney Huntington, why the weights  
33 have gone down -- this was in 1980 of the king salmon --  
34 he didn't really have an answer and we now know that  
35 you're right, Mr. Chair, about Roger Owen's work in the  
36 University of Washington and the analysis of the science  
37 of the release of pink salmon into -- from the Prince  
38 William Sound into the Gulf of Alaska. That as they  
39 increased more in 1973 to 1975 to 1979, from 12,000 to  
40 20,000 to 45,000 to 200,000, that there was a direct  
41 correlation to the increase in releases of pink salmon,  
42 to the decline of the weight and productivity of king  
43 salmon. There are direct correlations. It's clear as  
44 day. So, you're definitely right in that respect. So, I  
45 just wanted to say that I saw that. Many people noticed  
46 it from early on and I'll stop on that point, but you  
47 are definitely correct Mr. Chair. The -- on another point  
48 on the loss of black bears. I was asked in 1995 by the  
49 late John Starr Junior to bring him down to the Novi  
50 River. He said, can you call somebody and have us go

1 down? I want you to go down with me. I was working at  
2 Tanana chiefs, and so I called the Tanana Tribal Council  
3 to bring us down and Fred Nikolai for the Tribal Council  
4 brought John and I down to the Novi River. He said he  
5 saw -- that he heard that there were no more black bears  
6 in the Novi River, that grizzly bears were taking over  
7 and this was years ago, and it was something that the  
8 late Edward Simon talked about in the 1975. He said,  
9 ever since you guys made us stop hunting grizzlies in  
10 the 1950s, this population has boomed. So, where's our  
11 black bears? Where's our moose? These grizzlies are  
12 having a field day, and it took a while for it to reach  
13 the rest of Alaska but, by 1995, when John and Fred  
14 Nikolai and I went up 75 miles up the Novi River, we  
15 walked, I think, in five different places where John  
16 knew of black bear dens. All those black bear dens were  
17 old and collapsed. We saw no black bear tracks. We saw  
18 a lot of grizzly tracks. So, the understanding that I  
19 have from my father was that his people before him his  
20 father, (in native) and (in native) father. They always  
21 talked about; you have to keep those populations down.  
22 That's what my father told me. You have to keep those  
23 populations of the things that are eating all of these  
24 other things down and try to get it early. Populations  
25 of grizzly, of wolf and of eagle and another story from  
26 1995, I had a fish biologist on staff at Tanana chiefs.  
27 He and members of fisheries staff from the U.S. fish  
28 Wildlife service were waiting for salmon to come up the  
29 hog River into Clear Creek. They hadn't come up, and  
30 they noticed an eagle sitting on the cottonwood there  
31 in an island -- back in the island where slack water,  
32 but there was water. Great amount of geese and ducklings,  
33 goslings and ducklings. And the late Bergman Sam said  
34 they're waiting for those birds to become a little  
35 bigger. And so, sure enough, they sat there for two  
36 weeks. They didn't move for two weeks, and right when  
37 they were bite sized, they swooped in, and one day they  
38 took 90% of that population of goslings and ducklings.  
39 So that illustrates to me that my grandfather and great  
40 grandfather were definitely correct. They knew what they  
41 were talking about. So, when we think of the wildlife  
42 and the interactions of people and wildlife and animals  
43 it's been happening for a very long time, perhaps  
44 thousands of years. We've impacted and managed fish and  
45 wildlife, and it was our own style of management. And  
46 so, I just wanted to relate that, Mr. Chair. I had other  
47 comments, but I'm blanking right now. Thank you.

48  
49 CHAIRPE REAKOFF: I appreciate those  
50 comments that customary and traditional knowledge is

1 being transcribed. And so, we have people who are looking  
2 at our transcripts over time. There's a lot of knowledge  
3 that gets conveyed from the public into these regional  
4 Councils, because this is a forum for that to happen.  
5 And I really appreciate you pointing out these various  
6 things, because we had a meeting in Galena several years  
7 ago right before Sidney passed on, and he was deaf. I  
8 had him -- I broke the meeting. I say, come to the mic.  
9 He says I can't hear what you're saying. I say, we're  
10 here to listen. Sidney and his discussion was, you've  
11 got to take these brown bears. He is shouting, as Sidney  
12 always did, as loud as he could into the mic. The grizzly  
13 -- the brown bears will eat all the of all of the black  
14 bears, then they'll eat all the moose, and they're going  
15 to control your lives. And he was pointing at us just  
16 like that, and they're going to control your lives and  
17 that -- as the salmon decline in the bear, the brown  
18 bears don't have salmon. They're really starting to put  
19 the herd on the moose and I -- and there's hardly any  
20 black bears. There are black bears are gone. I don't  
21 know that the black bear population is been this low for  
22 a long, long time. So, thanks for those comments and I  
23 got -- Pollock wants to say something. Go ahead.

24  
25 MR. SIMON: Yeah. I want to make a  
26 comment to (indiscernible). You were a lot of grizzlies  
27 last few years, and I guess they've been eating black  
28 bears, which is no -- don't see any more black bears.  
29 Used to be if you can't get moose, you just now they  
30 wouldn't - you could pack a black bear and cook meat,  
31 but, today there's nothing, really has been  
32 (indiscernible) and the last several years is  
33 (indiscernible) blueberry crops or such (indiscernible)  
34 impacting them. Good comments George, thank you.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: From Jenny.

37  
38 MS. PELKOLA: George, thank you for that.  
39 That was very interesting. I hope more -- I mean, you  
40 know whatever your scientist -- is that what you said  
41 or...?

42  
43 MR. YASKA: Well, Native, Native  
44 scientists.

45  
46 MS. PELKOLA: Oh okay. Well, I think  
47 they're very important because that's where I learned a  
48 lot of my stuff from my parents, and I never really knew  
49 my grandparents but, years ago, we used to have a Fish  
50 camp in between Koyukuk and Nulato. It was called Nine

1 Mile and the people from Huslia used to come down to  
2 Atlas. Your grandpa George Atla, the Bifelts and the  
3 Sams, Tony Sams family and there were others, but those  
4 are the ones that I remembered. And in fact, my mother  
5 delivered George Atla Jr. at fish camp, and she always  
6 talks about it, but, thank you for that. That's very  
7 interesting and I think the people don't listen to the  
8 elders. They think they're just old timers and they don't  
9 know what they're talking about, but they do know what  
10 they're talking about because they lived it. And I think  
11 it's very important that we get a more traditional  
12 knowledge you know, going unrecognized in the state of  
13 Alaska or wherever in the world. But thank you very  
14 much. That's very encouraging. And keep your work up.

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.  
17 And Don, you want to comment?

18  
19 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Thank you, Mr.  
20 Chair. Thank you, George, for that presentation. I also  
21 like Robert and all of us are concerned about the brown  
22 bear population and stuff. I mean, I've seen it on the  
23 on the Novi itself. Where they've taken black bears.  
24 There's just nothing there except hair. They eat  
25 everything, but I just had a comment on, you know,  
26 whether it was on the Novi or whether it was on the  
27 Koyukuk or something. The studies of that oily -- I'm  
28 just wondering if anybody ever studied that or do they  
29 -- you know, does it come and go or something? I mean,  
30 I remember a few years ago, I was at a fish meeting and  
31 we had a presentation, I think it was in the evening at  
32 the university, at the campus there. And they knew  
33 intricately, really studied the population that goes  
34 into the Novi, goes into the Susitna or whatever  
35 tributary there is and now I'm just wondering is that -  
36 - you know, I'm trying to figure out why, as we go up  
37 the river, less and less fish and stuff -- but I just  
38 had a question on that, You know, it's interesting. I  
39 mean, the very fact that that Sheen or something that I  
40 see, I mean, I wonder if it's -- is it constant? Do you  
41 just notice it? Does anybody ever figure out is it coming  
42 from up toward McGrath or, you know, the way the Novi  
43 runs?

44  
45 MR. YASKA: Mr. Chair, thank you. If I  
46 might answer.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead.

49  
50



1 MR. YASKA: So, as I understand it, the  
2 way I hear it now from the scientists that the release  
3 of oil or hydrocarbons into the water from the  
4 degradation or the melting of the permafrost has been  
5 going on for a long time. We see it physically around  
6 Huslia, where lands that were high, 25ft high in the  
7 past, and perhaps a landmark on the land are now sunk  
8 and they're low Tundra, they're bog from either melting  
9 -- some melting occurring down there. Some of this  
10 melting of the permafrost occurs near riverbanks. And  
11 there is work now, but I'm not sure if it's understood  
12 yet or have been analyzed. And the Kobuk River, where  
13 there's heavy release of hydrocarbons and minerals into  
14 water. So heavy that the water is orange. So, the USGS  
15 and the National Park Service, and I don't recall the  
16 college, maybe it's University of Colorado are looking  
17 at that right now.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I live in the  
20 Brooks Range, and we got more of the creek that I live  
21 on Wiseman Creek has just turned orange since 2017. Lots  
22 and lots of iron oxide coming out. Did you have a comment  
23 on George's presentation? We're going to move on with  
24 some other comments.

25  
26 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You  
27 know, George, you're right about this grizzly bear. We  
28 followed one about five springs ago. It went to all the  
29 dens of where the black bears were and dragged the mother  
30 out, injured her so bad. Take the cubs out, eat the  
31 cubs, and we would find all these little heads, you  
32 know, like, you know, it's kind of -- they wouldn't eat  
33 the head. Then we would track it some more, and then a  
34 couple later. Then we'd catch the bear again where it  
35 would drag another bear out. And I think this is just  
36 like a constant thing for all of them. Not only one  
37 bear, but that's what they do all spring long. Another  
38 thing we found out, you know, the days of the 30, 30 and  
39 30 out of 6 are over. All these young guys are getting  
40 like, 375, 300 now because of the numerous bears right  
41 in our town. People got them on their cameras, standing  
42 on their porch, looking in their windows. So, this is  
43 something that we have to really kind of invent ourselves  
44 on how to use a bigger gun, because before it never was  
45 needed. You know, you had the moose stew 30, 30 and 30  
46 out of 6 and that was about it, because the moose didn't  
47 have such adrenaline in its system to reposess itself  
48 and attack you. So that's -- thanks for that commentary,  
49 George.

50

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1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.  
2 Appreciate your comment and look forward to working with  
3 you in the future. And so, then we got another Doug  
4 Patsy on to speak to us. Come on up, Doug.

5  
6 MR. PATSY: Thank you, guys, for seeing  
7 me. I just want to thank you guys, all of you, for what  
8 you're doing. I know you guys have been in here for  
9 years, and you always say the younger ones got to get  
10 in there. Well, I'm one of them younger ones now. So  
11 now, over the years...

12  
13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Would you like to  
14 state where you're from?

15  
16 MR. PATSY: Oh, I'm from Nulato, Yeah, I  
17 live in Nulato there. Oh, just -- I'm a Subsistence  
18 user. I grew up -- was raised in the Subsistence  
19 lifestyle by my grandparents, Justin and Marianne Patsy.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You want to be on  
22 the regional Council?

23  
24 (Simultaneous speech)

25  
26 MR. PATSY: I was on the middle Yukon.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: At this regional  
29 Council?

30  
31 MR. PATSY: Oh.

32  
33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: On the Western  
34 Regional Advisory Council?

35  
36 MR. PATSY: Sure, yeah.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're looking for  
39 membership. Okay. Yeah.

40  
41 MR. PATSY: I've been in contact with  
42 Nissa before.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're looking for  
45 younger people to work into the system so, continue on.  
46 Get in there.

47  
48 MR. PATSY: It was good comments that  
49 George was making about the Grizzly bear, Robert brought  
50 that up also. I know since Tommy moved to Nulato there,

1 he -- I kind of -- he took me under his wing and showed  
2 me the outdoor lifestyle. Bear hunting. I already kind  
3 of knew about the wolf hunting there, but every spring  
4 we go out and we're harvesting I don't know, 5 or 6  
5 grizzly bears. But, since then, our moose population has  
6 boomed. The middle of Yukon, I don't know if you guys  
7 know or heard about it. I'm sure Glen knows about it.  
8 Glen keeps the numbers in check there, but, from --  
9 correct me if I'm wrong, Glen but, from 2012, we went  
10 to 2000 moose in our area. Four years later, I think  
11 2016, we're at 4000 and now we're up over 6000 moose in  
12 our area. That's due to a lot of predator control. I'm  
13 one of the ones that's out there every day when I'm not  
14 working, riding -- the villages in our area, they do a  
15 bounty. I think Nulato is sitting at 350 per wolf. I  
16 don't know what the other villages are doing. But grizzly  
17 bears -- this fall, I was over in Kaiyuh, heading towards  
18 my cabin, and there's a couple of young guys from Kaltag,  
19 they shot a grizzly bear. I know you guys are familiar  
20 with grizzly bears, you don't eat them in the fall time.  
21 They stink. They're musky. The meat's no good. This thing  
22 was perfect. It was like a springtime bear. Almost like  
23 a black bear. Kaiyuh, we've never seen grizzly bears up  
24 in there before, but they've kind of migrated in there.  
25 And the -- you could tell if a grizzly is good by the  
26 color of the fat. The fat was white. yeah, it was -- I  
27 made bear dogs out of it and it was -- it's freaking  
28 delicious. You can't tell the difference between beef,  
29 pork or whatever. The hot dogs. And two weeks later,  
30 same spot 200 yards away, my wife and I and my daughter  
31 and my son were in the boat, and there was another one  
32 there. I was like, where the heck are these things coming  
33 from? But -- and all my riding I do, I do a lot of  
34 thinking. We're not going to take no pressure off of  
35 trawlers or anything, but I see our buddy from North  
36 Pacific is not in here anymore, but, what should we call  
37 it? Grizzly bears. I don't know, Fish and Wildlife in  
38 here studied them or not, but, with the amount of grizzly  
39 bears that there are in the interior of Alaska and the  
40 tributaries for the Yukon but they, I'm sure, eat a lot  
41 of our fish also. I don't know if they're spawned out  
42 yet or what, but I'm getting off the point of I don't  
43 want to take nothing, no pressure off of trawlers or  
44 anything on that point. But, no, there -- like I said  
45 about that grizzly bear though, with no smell in there  
46 and the end of August that's very unlikely to have  
47 especially interior of Alaska when they -- you know, the  
48 bears should be eating fish all summer long and all its  
49 living off of is meat and vegetation and berries. We  
50 opened it up, and there's -- the intestines were blue.

1 It was, yeah, it was like a black bear almost, you know.  
2 I was going to bring up another point. I heard it from,  
3 I think it was Ivan Demientieff, grayling jet boats and  
4 our tributaries especially in the -- when the salmon are  
5 spawning or whatever. We get it a lot in the Nulato  
6 River with jet boats going up there. I think someone  
7 mentioned in the Anvik River before the sport fishers  
8 there, their jet boats were going up in there and they  
9 were wiping out the gravel that was -- the salmon were  
10 spawning. It's things like that, you gotta [sic] little  
11 things like that that you gotta look at. In order for  
12 us to help our fish. Again, not taking pressure off of  
13 the trawlers, but help ourselves, you know. It's like  
14 the people that live here in the city. It's like you  
15 take something away and you're sick for it. It's like,  
16 take every coffee shop off the corner here, take that  
17 coffee pot away there, you're going to be sick for it.  
18 Everybody will be sleeping in here. But that's what they  
19 did with our salmon. You know, we're sick for it.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I have a question  
22 about these jet boats. Is that something that's new?  
23 These jet boats going up to Nulato River? They run right  
24 over those -- where the kings spawn, right over the  
25 river. They blow all that out?

26  
27 MR. PATSY: Yeah, I -- was it -- I think  
28 it was Ivan that said it before. Correct me if I'm wrong  
29 on that, Robert. I think I was at a meeting and Robert  
30 mentioned that before, I think also. They said those jet  
31 boats in the Anvik River, they were cruising up the  
32 river and they could see the row on the sides of the cut  
33 banks there where those jets were washing them up on the  
34 banks. Yeah, and that that kills a lot of the fish also.  
35 No, I was going to make a post. I see all -- like Pollock,  
36 Jenny, Robert, they're elders, you know. And I think  
37 it's time for us as younger generation to step up and  
38 get on board with these guys, get their knowledge from  
39 them. You know they've been in there fighting the good  
40 fight for years, and it'd be good for some of us younger  
41 ones to learn from them while they're still in there.  
42 Thank you, guys.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Appreciate that.  
45 question Jenny.

46  
47 MS. PELKOLA: I didn't get your name.

48  
49 MR. PATSY: Doug Patsy. I'm from Nulato.

1 MS. PELKOLA: Okay. Thank you, Doug. That  
2 was very, very good. Like we said, we have two vacant  
3 seats on the Board right now. All you got to do is put  
4 your name in there, but thank you. You know for coming  
5 and talking to us. It makes us feel like we're doing  
6 something, and I'm ready to step off the Board and this  
7 is going to be my last term, for sure.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tommy.

10  
11 MR. KRISKA: Yeah. Thank you, Doug, for  
12 your comments there. One of the things that -- were I  
13 was saying a few years back was why a lot of the grizzly  
14 bears, you know, there are -- a lot of people wouldn't  
15 eat them, but they're never realized that in this last  
16 few six, seven years, there's hardly any fish there and  
17 so they don't really have a lot of fish to eat. They eat  
18 what they can, but then they're forced to go into the  
19 hills and eat the blueberries and that's one of the  
20 reasons that now that the bears that were taken are  
21 really fat and they taste different because they're  
22 forced to eat the berries and it's -- which is good. I  
23 mean, you know, we're not shooting them for nothing and  
24 just throwing them away. So, and I wish there was another  
25 way, Ms. Nissa, that we could just add this guy to a  
26 Board. As a Board, you know, voted on and put up here  
27 instead of the state. They go through a lot of  
28 regulations -- rules and regulations, background checks,  
29 all this stuff when we know these people and it'd be a  
30 big step that if we ever can get something like that for  
31 a recommendation or just -- I don't know, I lost my  
32 words, but, to appoint him ourselves so, it would be  
33 nice, thank you.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. Well, the way  
36 the appointments go, they have to be vetted and a whole  
37 bunch of stuff and the Federal Board actually reviews  
38 those applications, and so -- but we're -- it's not that  
39 hard to get on here, but it's a whole process and that's  
40 -- we're not the appointing source. It's not like  
41 Advisory Committee where we vote them in there. This is  
42 a regional Council that has to work through the Federal  
43 -- were an arm of the Federal Subsistence Board. We had  
44 Brown Bear up north. I live in the Brooks Range. We hunt  
45 them quite a bit. We don't have very many salmon in the  
46 valley that I live in, but there are predatory bears.  
47 And predatory bears, you know them -- watching bears.  
48 Predatory bears got really long claws because they don't  
49 dig a lot of those bears dig rut vegetation. If they got  
50 really long, smooth claws, they don't dig that much.

1 They walks [sic] crosswind. When you see them, they're  
2 always walking crosswind hunting the wind so that they  
3 can go kill something. Those kind, I don't really want  
4 to eat those kind that much. Those have bum flavor.  
5 Whereas those -- the ones that dig roots a lot, they got  
6 a dirty face, they got the short claws or they're out  
7 in the blueberry patch. Those are the ones with the  
8 white fat. The white fat is the thing. I see somebody  
9 killed a bear last spring. I was like, oh, white fat.  
10 He says you want half I say, I'll take as much as you  
11 want to give me. That was a nice bear -- excellent made  
12 -- and I jarred quite a bit. The really nice jar. Jar  
13 that bear made takes a long time. Jar the fat jar the  
14 meat, you like that? Really good meat. Yeah. Oh, Pollock.  
15 Go ahead.

16  
17 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
18 (indiscernible) Doug's comments to me and Jenny, we are  
19 getting kind of old, but we keep coming back and things  
20 like this. And then the interesting part is we should  
21 have more young people get interested in the sport. Yeah,  
22 good comments Doug.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert.  
25

26 MR. KRISKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank  
27 you for that Discussion here Mr. Patsy, which is true,  
28 you know, like I have worked with my son and some other  
29 people on how to hunt grizzly bear without, you know,  
30 kind of endangering themselves and endangering other  
31 people too. So, this is something that we have to learn,  
32 and we use the word incentive when we do things. We  
33 don't use the bounty, because I know the friends of  
34 animals will eventually catch up with us. So that's why  
35 we use the word incentive. And one of the things too,  
36 that we learned that if you hang a wolf skin on your  
37 porch, that bear will never come on your porch, because  
38 that grizzly bear has respect for that wolf, even though  
39 it's dead, it's hanging there because they're both  
40 carnivorous animals. Something to remember if you have  
41 a lot of bears in your area, just hang a little skin on  
42 your step. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.  
45 Appreciate your comments Doug, hope you get your  
46 application in. And so, we need to have people on this  
47 Council, and I really enjoy having people that are on  
48 the Council that are out doing stuff out in the field,  
49 been around a lot of elders and implying that knowledge  
50 of the elders. So, I appreciate that.

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MR. PATSY: Thank you, guys, again.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, before lunch, I want to have Geoff Beyersdorf come up to the mic because he's not going to be able to be here later today and tomorrow. And there's important issues with the Bureau of Land Management. So, I would like to know the status of the Ambler Road and some other aspects of the BLM and the interior of Alaska within our region. Thank you, Geoff, for coming to the mic and thanks so much for the for the treats that you've given us here. Go ahead.

MR. BEYERSDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the Chair to the members just -- I apologize that I'm not here for both days. Today's just the kind of the day that I can be here and all I wanted to do really was give you an update in regards to some bigger picture issues that are going on. Just to give -- I don't have a lot of final decisions or anything like that, but as I think many people are well aware, President Trump has been issuing executive orders, and he gave a specific executive order for Alaska in regards to unleashing Alaska's energy resources. That was also followed up by Secretary Burgum, issued a secretarial order. Within the executive order and the secretarial order, there are many different things, but, in particular the BLM there's a reference to the Ambler Road and the decision. There's also a reference to the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan and that decision, and then also to Public Land Order 5150. The -- what was in the executive order, and the secretarial order was a little bit confusing to us. And so, we've gone through them both and then prepared some comments to kind of better understand what their goals are and in addition to that, I've been preparing some briefing papers that have been taken up to our headquarters level through our state director. Not only to understand what the goals are, but, then if we understand what the goals are, here are some options to be able to help you to reach whatever your goals are within this administration. I think that the last two things I will leave you with is that it's becoming very obvious to this administration that Public Land Order 5150 is kind of the key to what they're looking at trying to obtain through the Ambler Road decision or through the Central Yukon RMP. We don't -- I don't have anything final yet. A week ago, Friday, I sent up those briefing papers to our state director to meet with the national director

1 in Washington, D.C., and I haven't heard anything back.  
2 So, I would just say at this point, those are in the  
3 process. I just kind of wanted you to know that they're  
4 embedded in secretarial and executive orders, and I know  
5 that those are some things that have been of interest  
6 to this Council. Thank you.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I would like to  
9 obtain those -- your responses to that -- the or -- I  
10 would like to get up -- the order, see the orders -- the  
11 presidential orders myself and I would like to see your  
12 responses to those. This Council is -- been involved in  
13 the whole Ambler Road, the RMP process and the 5150 and  
14 so -- and in the western interior Bering Sea public land  
15 orders -- issues. We've discussed all those. I'll state  
16 for the record right now that if those orders are lifted,  
17 it will have an extreme impact on Subsistence uses of  
18 the people of who reside in this -- Because it -- what --  
19 -- yeah, like conveyance of the 5150 takes away the  
20 Subsistence opportunity for 2.1 million acres. I  
21 reminded an individual just the other day that was  
22 talking about the 5150, I says [sic] that eliminates  
23 Subsistence the rural Subsistence priority for many  
24 people. I mean, it's not that there's people from  
25 Kaktovik. They're going in and out of an Kaktovik all  
26 the time lately because they got Ice roads in there. So,  
27 there's a bunch of people that are using the road.  
28 There's people from Allakaket came up into the Brooks  
29 Range. They don't have caribou down there. So, an  
30 individual from Allakaket came up and got seven caribou  
31 up there -- were up in -- up the valley from us under  
32 Federal Subsistence and took them back to Allakaket.  
33 It's an important Subsistence for me. That's what I do.  
34 I live from predominantly from that 5150 lands and so  
35 that's a -- it would take -- completely take away our  
36 Subsistence uses. So, I do want the record to reflect  
37 that, you know, the Resource Management Plan allows  
38 mining and so forth in the, within the Dalton Highway  
39 Corridor area, the 5150 area. Placer mining has little  
40 effect on what -- the animal resources and the fishery  
41 resources we have because they're settling ponds and so  
42 forth. There's a place where they mined extensively just  
43 to the west of Wiseman about ten years ago, that's  
44 growing back in brush. There is a -- right now the moose  
45 of deep snow are going to that mining area where it's  
46 all these willows are growing back there. It's like a  
47 burn or something. So, the moose are -- there's a bunch  
48 of moose back there because they it's growing back to  
49 the age classes of willows that they like. So, I think  
50 that there's opportunities in the area for mining and



1 so forth, which the administration's wanting to have  
2 mining in this on these 5150 lands but it's -- there's  
3 no reason to throw the baby out with the bathwater  
4 either. So, I wanted to state that on the record because  
5 this thing is in play. I would like to know your  
6 response. So that would be my comment. Any further  
7 comments on Geoff's' presentation on what's going on in  
8 the changing political climate and lands in Alaska?

9

10 (Simultaneous speech)

11

12 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair...

13

14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Rob.....

15

16 MR. GERVIAS: This is Jim.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'll take -- okay.  
19 Go ahead, Tim, and then it's Robert.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
22 Geoff, this is Tim Gervais. Can you briefly -- I don't  
23 quite understand the status. Like, how far did the Ambler  
24 Road decision not to be built get advanced during the  
25 Biden administration? And then how complicated -- or  
26 what timeline would it take to unwind that if the Trump  
27 administration was heavily in favor of putting that road  
28 in? And I just take your response, but I just want to  
29 emphasize that having that area of Alaska remain  
30 roadless is a huge factor in the fish, wildlife and the  
31 residents of the area. It really would be a very  
32 detrimental development for the Subsistence of --  
33 Subsistence economy, if that -- if a road was put in as  
34 planned.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Do you have a  
37 response, Geoff?

38

39 MR. BEYERSDORF: Through the Chair, to  
40 the member Gervais. Hi Tim, by the way. You know, as far  
41 as the Ambler decision. The Ambler decision, the record  
42 of decision, the final SCIS was this last -- was in June  
43 of 2024. And within that the proposal had been to issue  
44 a right-of-way grant for them to be able to build the  
45 road, you know, starting off the Dalton Highway  
46 Corridor, our decision at that time was that because of  
47 the impacts the Subsistence under ANILCA title eight  
48 that we ended up turning down the proposal and then not  
49 issuing the right-of-way grant. So that was final at

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1 that time, Tim, and I'll stop there to see if you have  
2 questions.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Is there a question  
5 on that, Tim?

6

7 MR. GERVAIS: No, no, that's what I  
8 wanted to know, and I thought it was final. So now that  
9 it's final, does that -- how long can that take  
10 precedence or are we actually in a rule-making regime  
11 where whatever it is, every 4 or 8 years, the Bureau of  
12 Land Management flips flops, you know, basically 180  
13 degree turn on what the road policy is going to be.  
14 Like, what's it going to take for the Trump  
15 administration to unwind that -- the June 2024 decision,  
16 if they want to be pro road?

17

18 MR. BEYERSDORF: Well, through the Chair  
19 to the member. I guess, one thing -- to clarify, it's  
20 not that the BLM is quote unquote flip flopping. It is,  
21 you know, we work at the behest of the of the president  
22 and the Congress. So, it's whatever the administration  
23 priorities are and so, if they change, then we have to  
24 -- then we work with that. As far as the timeline to  
25 unwind, Member Gervais, I guess what I would say is it  
26 all depends on where the Secretary of the Department of  
27 Interior and the BLM is the agency where they end up  
28 going in terms of these executive orders. As I said, PLO  
29 5150 is kind of key to that and so, it will depend on  
30 where they want to go with public land order 5150. And  
31 we don't have any direction on that yet. I don't have  
32 direction on any of these on the public land order, on  
33 Ambler or around central Yukon, you know, I've just  
34 provided options basically for them. You know, if this  
35 is your goal, this is a way to get there. But, you know,  
36 we're still kind of in the beginning phases of the  
37 conversation trying to understand what their goal is.  
38 Is that helpful? Member, Gervais.

39

40 (Simultaneous speech)

41

42 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, that answers my  
43 question.....

44

45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That answer [sic]  
46 your question?

47

48 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you.

49

50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And then I had  
2 Robert with one question then be Tommy. Did you have one  
3 question, Robert?

4  
5 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes,  
6 I did, but seemed like Geoff has answered that about the  
7 Ambler Road. That was my question about Ambler Road.  
8 What's going to happen now since we have a new president  
9 here with that's going to -- working with opening the  
10 oil and everything is to -- and I'm -- you're going to  
11 be leaving today Geoff? And this could be the last time  
12 you're going to be -- this the last meeting -- this the  
13 last time you're going to be meeting with us?

14  
15 MR. BEYERSDORF: It's probably the last  
16 time that I will meet with this Council. Yes.

17  
18 MR. WALKER: Well, how many years?

19  
20 MR. BEYERSDORF: 25.

21  
22 MR. WALKER: 25 years. God, I was a young  
23 guy. So are you.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Are you retiring?

26  
27 MR. WALKER: Yeah. Well, I wish you all  
28 the best, Geoff. I wish you everything -- I've -- all  
29 the things that we have done together. I think we did a  
30 lot to really do a lot for the tribal people and I thank  
31 you for all that work that you've done for us. That  
32 makes us -- you know, I'm going to go back and tell the  
33 other guys that are still alive. Hey, Geoff finally  
34 retired, I'm going to tell. They gonna [sic] say what?  
35 That's what they used to say, again. Mr. Beyersdorf,  
36 thank you for all your work.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Tommy had a  
39 question. Go ahead. Tommy.

40  
41 MR. KRISKA: Oh, yeah, I was I don't  
42 know, a lot of things. I was running through my mind in  
43 different ways. I know they're after minerals, and I  
44 don't know how far the minerals is from the ocean, the  
45 coast. And why can't -- if they want those minerals so  
46 bad, they're probably going to run through around Red  
47 Dog Mine wherever those roads go and build a road out  
48 to the ocean and barge everything all the way around the  
49 other way and leave our country alone. I don't know.  
50 Just ideas.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And then Pollock had a comment. Go ahead, Pollock. Did you raise your hand?

MR. SIMON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The past president and administration has started the hard road for (indiscernible). Now, this new president and new administration and possibly the hard road will go through. But it has some concerns. And the people from (indiscernible). We have no more salmon, no more chum salmon, no king salmon and low number of moose and the caribou hasn't returned and that's a concern. The people are afraid about the development of the whole road. The past (indiscernible) said it would be for commercial industrial use only. But now, with the new administration, that road could be open to the public. And people are concerned back home about flocks of people coming up to the road, not only to look at the mountains, but trap, hunt and fish in the area where there's always already low number of whitefish and (indiscernible) also. (Indiscernible) the people back home in Allakaket, Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Pollock. I'll comment on the Ambler Road aspect. If the PLO is lifted or the approval of the Ambler Road, there's still the Doyon and the Nana are not on Board. They've not opened the road corridor and so they have not actually -- there the final -- will be the final say on whether that road is actually completed, because the road has to cross some Doyon land. And so, they -- Doyon and Nana have retracted their support of the Ambler Road, and even Nana did and so that's not a given that that road is going to be built well tomorrow -- until they deal with the Native lands also. And in a sense, this may be the last time we see Geoff before this Council. In his professional life I do want to say that Geoff was Subsistence coordinator down at Koyukuk Nowitna, worked with BLM, with this Council and through his other jobs. He's always worked very well and had very good understanding of this Council and the rural lifeways, having lived in Galena and stuff like that. So, I really appreciated you -- all of the work you've done. And I wanted to state that on the record that we highly appreciated your quality of work with this Council and always informative and to the point and so I -- short and sweet and I appreciate that. So, thanks so much -- my -- you got a seat at my table anytime you happen to be wandering up the road again. And so that'll be my

1 final comment. And so go ahead, Don. One more final.

2

3 MR. HONEA: Yeah, Mr. Chair, thank you.  
4 Geoff, as a personal favor, I appreciate in the late 90s  
5 to build -- to be able to harvest my -- harvest some for  
6 my health, for my home. And with your position and, you  
7 know, we go back to the 90s and stuff like that. So  
8 grateful to have your friendship all these years and  
9 hey, we'll probably see you down the road. I don't think  
10 you're old enough to retire, Thank you.

11

12 MR. BEYERSDORF: Through the Chair. Could  
13 I address both Pollock and member Kriska?

14

15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. Please do.

16

17 MR. BEYERSDORF: So, member Kriska, in  
18 the supplemental environmental impact statement that we  
19 did for Ambler, we did look at that alternative route  
20 that you're talking about. One thing, I guess I wanted  
21 to note is that what we found there is that there would  
22 actually be more salmon stream crossings and then, you  
23 know, with the potential for a road that way the impacts  
24 to Caribou habitat Jim Dau from -- retired from ADF&G  
25 provided some critical information in regards to what  
26 that might look like. So that was incorporated. That's  
27 why we didn't look at that route at that time just to  
28 be aware. And then to member Pollock I wanted to thank  
29 you. We did incorporate extensive information in regards  
30 to caribou and sheefish and salmon and I know that some  
31 of my staff spent considerable time in Allakaket and  
32 Alatna visiting with some of your elders to get that  
33 information, which was then incorporated into that  
34 supplemental EIS as part of that decision. So, thank you  
35 for that. And then, you know, just on a personal note I  
36 want to go around the table just a little bit. You know,  
37 member, Kriska, I've always appreciated your getting out  
38 there, getting on the ground you know, with your wolf  
39 hunting, etc. I know that you spent a considerable amount  
40 of time with Benedict Jones and that, you know, I think  
41 you saw him as a mentor and I also I've appreciated it  
42 in these years, as Benedict is maturing in age that  
43 you've been looking out for him. Because I just kind of  
44 kept in touch over the years, and I know that you've  
45 been doing that. And so, I want to say thank you for  
46 that, to member Simon, for 6 or 7 years I ended up  
47 running the, the Nowitna check station, and so I was  
48 never able to go out moose hunting and yet, every single  
49 fall, I would come home and there would be moose in my  
50 freezer and it's because your son did that. And I wanted

1 to say thank you for that, for raising him that way.  
2 Jenny -- Member Pelkola, you invited me into your Fish  
3 camp. You allowed me to bring our assistant secretary  
4 into your fish camp to learn about your lifestyle and  
5 your culture. I've never forgotten that trip and I would  
6 say on Saturday nights, having the privilege to sit  
7 around and play cards with you and listen to your stories  
8 and make my belly hurt because I was laughing so much  
9 has always meant a lot to me. Member Reakoff, Chairman  
10 Reakoff you and I have shared bread together, sat around  
11 a kitchen table and talked about big picture issues and  
12 providing your input into how we might address that.  
13 Thank you for that. Member Walker, Robert, there's a  
14 couple of things that really stand out in my mind. One  
15 of them was when we were going through the H1N1 bird flu  
16 and I flew into your village and I brought fruit, and  
17 there were kids lined up out the door. It was like  
18 Christmas, and your wife made me like an herb pillow to  
19 help with my dreams and such, thank you for that. In  
20 addition to that, you and your cousin Jimmy and I got  
21 to go on a -- we took a flight, and you re-educated me  
22 on where the moose and 21E were going, which then started  
23 the interagency Fish and Game, Fish and Wildlife and  
24 Park Service Collaring Project that we did, which indeed  
25 showed your indigenous knowledge was true. Moose were  
26 migrating a lot farther than we had thought and we ended  
27 up utilizing that as a platform because your wife was a  
28 schoolteacher, to be able to teach the kids not only  
29 about kind of the Western science, but about indigenous  
30 knowledge, and then being able to -- the kids that did  
31 really well at the end of that year, we ended up taking  
32 them on a flight to go -- actually go out and track  
33 their moose. Member Honea my first relationship with you  
34 was a little bit embarrassing because I had started at  
35 the at the Nowitna check station, and I was out cutting  
36 firewood to get ready for that year. And it turns out  
37 your dad shows up, and I was cutting firewood on your  
38 dad's allotment. And I've never -- I've always -- I was  
39 embarrassed about that. Your dad was very gracious about  
40 that, and I know you and I go back 20 some years as  
41 well. So, I think the thing that I want to emphasize  
42 here, because there's a lot of people behind me that  
43 some of them have extensive time in their agencies,  
44 organizations, and some of them are kind of coming in  
45 new. All of that is to speak to the importance of the  
46 relationships. I was blessed enough to have spent 16 of  
47 my 35-year career in villages, and with many of you, and  
48 getting to know many of you, and it's that, that has led  
49 to the success of the relationship that we have had and  
50 I just want to underscore to others that having

1 relationships with you is important because it helps us  
2 to understand what your issues, concerns are and to be  
3 able to reflect and be able to carry them forward. So,  
4 thank you very much for your time over the last 25 years.  
5 Hopefully our paths cross again in the future.  
6 Blessings.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, my final  
9 comment on the Ambler Road is that there are four  
10 options. One was a railroad that went from Ambler,  
11 basically the upstream of the Ambler River, across the  
12 Kobuk River, with one large river crossing to the base  
13 of the Seward Peninsula went to Port Darby, which is in  
14 Norton Sound, which is an 80ft deep port for large ships.  
15 It was 286-mile railroad. The railroad could haul  
16 natural gas to mine the mineral and Ambler and take the  
17 mineral back to the coast. That option has never been  
18 discussed, because that -- there was -- the state of  
19 Alaska has been fixated on a road. That option should  
20 have been in the forefront, and I've said that over and  
21 over. That is the most accurate -- and that's what the  
22 industry wanted 15 years ago, because I read it in a  
23 magazine, out of resource magazine and the pocket in an  
24 Alaska Airlines flight, flying down to the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board. That's what the industry wanted. They  
26 wanted a railroad to the coast, you know, now they're  
27 going to have to ship the mineral all the way across  
28 Alaska, all the way down to Seward, when they can make  
29 the shortcut right to the Ocean Park. Arby's open right  
30 now. Norton Sound is open. So, there's really no reason  
31 not to. I would encourage the BLM to remind the current  
32 -- new administration, the new Secretary of Interior and  
33 the presidential process, that that was the most viable  
34 option. That was the cheapest, because you don't have  
35 to maintain the roadbed. I mean, you don't have to plow  
36 snow all winter. You don't -- there's a whole bunch of  
37 pluses about that. Bringing the -- there's a lot of  
38 energy consumption. It brings -- the liquefied natural  
39 gas could be used to mine the mineral. I would encourage  
40 the BLM to remind the Secretary of Interior, that's what  
41 the industry originally wanted. The state of Alaska got  
42 involved with the road idea and they couldn't get off  
43 the road. The paradigm but, the railroad was the most  
44 viable aspect of transporting mineral to the coast that  
45 would not impact the rest of the interior of Alaska. So  
46 that's my final statement on that issue. Thank you, Jeff,  
47 and appreciate that. So, I think it's time to go to  
48 lunch. And so, some people ate lunch and so let's see  
49 what time we got here. A quarter after 12. What time  
50 should we come back, Nissa. About quarter after one. Can

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1 you eat -- Can people get lunch in an hour? An hour and  
2 a half? No, I'm -- I've been drinking coffee. I'm wound.  
3 So, okay, we'll come back at 1:45 is an hour and a half  
4 right now. So, 1:45 but I want prompt. We got we got a  
5 lot of agenda. Everybody has to be seated at one -- I  
6 don't know you're all kind of on your own, yeah.

7

8 (Off record)

9

10 (On record)

11

12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're back by  
13 the mic here. Are you there, Tim? Are you back on the  
14 line?

15

16 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I am.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim Gervais. Say  
19 again.

20

21 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Jack. I'm here.

22

23 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Tim is there.  
24 We're gonna [sic] come back on the record and Pollock,  
25 he was around. Oh, he did go back out. So -- but we do  
26 have a lot of agenda to go today. So, Pollock will come  
27 back in. We're gonna [sic] be back on record after lunch.  
28 I got what, is it? 1:50 p.m. So, we did our -- let's  
29 see. Where are we at here? So, we're public members,  
30 Tribal Council training, proposed changes?

31

32 MS. PILCHER: Yes.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, that's  
35 Brian.

36

37 MR. UBELAKER: Right here.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, there you are.  
40 I got the sun on my card here, let me turn it slightly.  
41 That's all right. I just -- getting the light straight  
42 off that card there. So, let's see. Oh, Tommy, we're  
43 looking for Tommy. I thought he was here. Does anybody  
44 know what happened to Tommy? Nissa.

45

46 MS. PILCHER: I think him and Darrell  
47 were planning on flip flopping at the Watershed meeting,  
48 so. I think Darrell is supposed to be here, and Tommy  
49 is supposed to be there. I just did message Darrell to  
50 find out where Darrell is.



1  
2 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, I didn't know  
3 that Tommy was going.

4  
5 MS. PILCHER: We do have -- we still do  
6 have quorum.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, that  
9 would've been good if Tommy was here, Darrell, one of  
10 them. So, we should continue, though, because we don't  
11 -- can't wait all day. So, you have your PowerPoint  
12 there? Go ahead, Brian.

13  
14 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
15 the record, Brian Ubelaker, wildlife biologist with OSM.  
16 Are we good? Okay. Good morning, Mr. Chair and Council  
17 members. We are currently in the open period for wildlife  
18 proposals. This call for proposals closes April 4th of  
19 2025. So, for the 2025 Winter Council training, I'm gonna  
20 [sic] briefly cover proposing changes to Federal  
21 Subsistence hunting and trapping regulations.

22  
23 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher, for  
24 the record. This is also found on page one of your  
25 Supplemental Material Packet.

26  
27 MR. UBELAKER: Okay. There are two ways  
28 in which you can change Federal Subsistence regulations.  
29 First, is via Special Action Request, and the second is  
30 by proposal during the open period. Key difference  
31 between these two is that Special Actions are for  
32 temporary short-term changes, and can be submitted at  
33 any time, whereas a proposal changes codified  
34 regulations and can only be submitted during the open  
35 period. And since we are currently in that open period  
36 for wildlife proposals, I'm gonna [sic] walk through the  
37 proposal submittal process. If the Council would like  
38 to submit a proposal, all we need is for one of you to  
39 make a motion and have a vote to submit the proposal on  
40 record and OSM staff will draft it up to submit and this  
41 can happen at any time during this meeting. Any member  
42 of the public can also submit a proposal as well, and  
43 this would occur via either standard mail to our office  
44 in Anchorage. You can hand a written proposal to me or  
45 any other OSM staff during this meeting, or you can  
46 submit it through the regulations.gov website. I  
47 probably should've started this off with we're gonna  
48 [sic] breeze through this pretty quick. I think you're  
49 all pretty familiar. If there are questions afterward  
50 though, definitely answer them.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, that's fine.

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MR. UBELAKER: Proposals must include -- when the public submits a proposal, please make sure to include who is submitting the proposal with your contact information, what regulations you want changed, and in which Unit they apply to, what you would want the regulation to say and why you want to change it. Any supporting information that you can include with it would help the Board to evaluate it. Next one. Sometimes a submitted proposal may be invalidated. This is because they pertain to things that are outside of the Board's jurisdiction. Examples are, if there are requests to change anything to do with halibut, that's out of the Board's purview. Marine mammals, migratory birds, and non-Federal lands all fall into that category as well. Next. For reference, the subsistence regulations that can be changed through regulatory proposals are found in the Code of Federal Regulations, subpart C and D. Next. These cover a wide variety of regulations from general, such as sealing requirements and definitions to more specific regulations like harvest limits, seasons, permit requirements, and customary and traditional use determinations. As I said, brief. Thank you. That is the end of the presentation. And please remember, we are currently in an open period for proposals, and they need to be submitted by April 4th. If you have any questions or would like to see some examples of past proposals and regulation changes, we can help you out with that. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, earlier I got -- I was in the middle of plowing a lot of snow. Like, there's -- didn't you have a couple of issues that we may address at this meeting for proposals?

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MR. UBELAKER: Yes, there was a list of those, and did you want to get into those now?

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MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had a quick question. Okay, you said by April 4th we should have -- are you talking about, like, hunting and fishing proposals for next year to be submitted to you guys by April 4th?

MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Chair. Yes, it is the -- currently, it's the open call for wildlife

1 proposals to change hunting and trapping regulations.  
2 And that period is open until April 4th, and that will  
3 change for the 26-28 regulatory seasons.  
4

5 MR. HONEA: Oh, that -- okay. Mr. Chair,  
6 through the Chair. I just think (indiscernible) that's  
7 really fast. I didn't realize that we had to have them  
8 in so -- if it's beyond that date, then it's not  
9 considered or...?

10  
11 MR. UBELAKER: If there is an emergency  
12 situation that you would need to have looked at, you can  
13 submit a Special Action Request, which can be analyzed  
14 at any time. But the typical Wildlife Proposal process  
15 takes about a year. So, we call for the proposals right  
16 now, we get all the proposals entered, and then I, as  
17 an analyst, write the analysis for these. And through  
18 the review process and all the different levels that we  
19 send it through, it takes about a year to get the  
20 analysis finalized and presented to the Board.  
21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, any other  
23 questions, comments about proposals? Does any of the  
24 Council members understand how this process works? Go  
25 ahead, Robert.  
26

27 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This  
28 is only for Federal land, right?  
29

30 MR. UBELAKER: This is for proposals to  
31 change Federal hunting and trapping regulations, yes.  
32

33 MR. WALKER: Thank you.  
34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I -- you know,  
36 we have this shape management strategy, and the question  
37 is, how would that -- we would like to have this before  
38 the Federal Subsistence Board. We would like that to be  
39 part of our management under 805 of ANILCA. We can talk  
40 about sheep management strategies. How does that fit  
41 into this. What the authority, how the Federal Board  
42 would address that. Do you have an idea how that works?  
43

44 MR. UBELAKER: We actually do. We had  
45 some pretty deep discussions with the solicitor and  
46 Justin, our new regulation specialist. What we came up  
47 with is no, this -- there's not a proposal that you can  
48 enter for the management strategy. You -- Nissa maybe  
49 can correct me if I'm wrong, but you can advise and you  
50 can develop the strategy and get it in as part of your

1 Annual Report and then put it in for -- before the Board  
2 in that way. But it wouldn't be through the proposal  
3 process.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: The objective of  
6 the strategy is that the Federal managers continuously  
7 change -- it's a flux staff, and it's gonna [sic] get  
8 even more convoluted as time goes on, as staff comes on.  
9 We would like to stop having to say the same things over  
10 and over and over. This is what (indiscernible). This  
11 is how they have to be managed. You know, under the  
12 Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission, we  
13 have a hunting plan, recommendations. We have a book of  
14 all these various, basically management strategies of  
15 how park resources are gonna [sic] be managed. If --  
16 then we should submit an idea to the Federal Subsistence  
17 Board that this is -- that within this region, they  
18 should contemplate that this aspect or this issue that  
19 they should have discuss. But I would like to have it  
20 submitted at this meeting for the wildlife, cause it's  
21 a wildlife issue. How they would initiate that so that,  
22 you know, the agencies -- this is the template of how  
23 we're going to manage in this region, BLM, U.S. Fish and  
24 Wildlife, Park Service. This is the template of how we're  
25 gonna [sic] manage sheep. I was talking about a survey  
26 methodology with Arctic Refuge just at break here.  
27 There's specifics and I said that's in the management  
28 strategy. Get the management strategy out and read it  
29 again, has to do with continuity and a bunch of  
30 biological -- staying within biological parameters. So,  
31 I would like either through a letter to the Federal  
32 Subsistence Board how to initiate this management  
33 strategy position of the Council for our region and how  
34 the Board is going to have this as a -- endorse it. So,  
35 the Federal Subsistence Board has endorsed the Koyukuk  
36 River Moose Management Plan. They've endorsed the Bison  
37 Management Plan for the Innoko, they've -- the Board has  
38 endorsed various planning processes and strategies. So,  
39 this is a strategy that this Council is making, and we  
40 have probably more authority than a lot of other entities  
41 that are coming up with planning processes and how I  
42 would like either it now or not right this second. But  
43 sometime during this meeting, I would like OSM to develop  
44 a response on how we're going to approach the Board with  
45 having a management strategy, which we've worked on  
46 extensively, as you know, and before the Federal  
47 Subsistence Board so that's the way the dall sheep are  
48 managed in this region. So, you don't have to answer the  
49 question right now. I'm just asking you, do you know,  
50 or do you have a way (indiscernible) it's not on the

1 list and so, how are we gonna [sic] get it on the list?  
2 Let's put it on the list. Customary traditionals weren't  
3 on that list either, customary traditional uses weren't  
4 on that list either. But the Council has talked  
5 extensively about being on that list, being involved in  
6 how the customary and traditional use determinations  
7 were determined. So, that's a question out there.  
8 That's, putting that out there right now Brian, you got  
9 a statement or comment or. So, you're in a quandary  
10 right now because there is no such thing. Well, we want  
11 that to be before the Board. Do we put that into our --  
12 another hunting plan recommendation or our --  
13 correction, our annual report topic, which that's not  
14 the question. It's not a -- it's something that we've  
15 telegraphed to the Federal Subsistence Board that we're  
16 making this sheep management strategy. Now we -- how do  
17 we get it for this region? That's the question. They  
18 endorsed it for the Wood Bison Plan in our region, for  
19 the ANILCA. They endorsed the plan in our region. How  
20 did they do that and how are they going to address this  
21 Sheep Management Plan? So, that's a question, I want OSM  
22 to tell us before the end of this meeting so that we can  
23 enter that into the record. That's what I would like.  
24 You have a comment there, Don.

25  
26 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah, I have a comment.  
27 Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is really good information.  
28 To me because I -- you know, I didn't really know the  
29 process of submitting these because sometimes we have  
30 like Eastern Interior and Western Interior are kinda  
31 [sic] merged at the Novi River there and we have like -  
32 - oh what do you call it? We support each other because  
33 we're that close, Tanana and Ruby, to making  
34 measurements for that. So, if I had you know, a like  
35 concern that Eastern Interior and we supported each  
36 other because we utilize the Novi River quite a bit  
37 there. That their proposal, that they submit, or we  
38 submit, if we didn't do it by April 4th, would have to  
39 wait for a year. So, I'm really glad to know the process  
40 of this, because I guess I did not know that the ones  
41 we submitted in the past went protocol went to OSM. And  
42 so, it's actually good to know how these are formed,  
43 know how these are submitted. Thank you.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's good to review  
46 that, how this process actually works and the division  
47 of where it applies to, the Federal lands versus State,  
48 etcetera. That was excellent. Robert.

49  
50

1 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brian,  
2 you know, right now I think we're looking at probably  
3 what Game proposals? And I think when we have our RAC  
4 meeting in October that's our fishing proposals, right?  
5 Or just -- it's just either or anytime we need to do it,  
6 right?

7  
8 MR. UBELAKER: No, we're -- through the  
9 Chair, sorry. We are currently in the wildlife open call  
10 for proposals so, they get submitted this time around,  
11 and then the fall meeting coming up in 2025 will present  
12 the RAC versions of our analyses to you to get, to kinda  
13 [sic] inform you on which direction we're heading and  
14 get your input on what we're doing with that. Before we  
15 send it to the Board in April of 2026.

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Robert, you  
18 were here on this Regional Council when we addressed  
19 Fish and Wildlife simultaneously and the Board met on  
20 those mixed proposals at meetings. Several years ago,  
21 they divided them out. So, one year is wildlife cycle,  
22 the next year is fishery cycle. So, we're -- we've just  
23 come out of the fishery cycle now we're moving to the  
24 wildlife cycle. Now it's the time to submit the  
25 proposals. The fall meeting will discuss those  
26 proposals, then all the proposals that come before this,  
27 in this region were crossovers, and then we'll make comm  
28 -- we'll make a recommendations on those. So, you  
29 remember back in the old days when we did both at the  
30 same time. So, I -- so that's -- we're on the -- at this  
31 point we're gonna [sic] be talking about submitting any  
32 proposals. If there's proposals, this is when we talk  
33 about submitting those. So.....

34  
35 MR. WALKER: Okay, thank you for that  
36 information. It's been a while. So, thank you, Jack.  
37 Thank you, Brian.

38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And Tommy's back  
40 again. Let the record reflect. And so, we're talking  
41 about how the process of submitting wildlife proposals  
42 on Federal public lands and Brian just went over an  
43 overview of how that works. So, but I -- I'm asking  
44 because this is a wildlife proposal window. I'm asking  
45 the Federal Subsistence Board and OSM to develop a  
46 response to the Western Interior Council of how the  
47 Western Interior Regional Advisory Council's Dall Sheep  
48 Management Strategy will be endorsed by the Federal  
49 Subsistence Board. For the record, for the agencies  
50 that are managing dall sheep in this region. They did

00071

1 it in our region for bison. They've done it in our region  
2 for the Koyukuk Moose Management Plan. Those are all  
3 within this region, those -- the Board adopted  
4 management plans within our region before. So, we need  
5 to know how -- okay that was a state process or a Federal  
6 process. How does the Council process fit into that, the  
7 Board endorsing management strategy. That's the  
8 question. So, Liz and everybody here can -- Brian can  
9 figure out what -- Brian.

10  
11 MR. UBELAKER: I do have an answer to  
12 that question.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, you got one.  
15 Okay, good.

16  
17 MR. UBELAKER: Yeah. So, we had -- from  
18 our discussion on the sheep management strategy, we had  
19 two possible outcomes, and you can do one or either or  
20 both. So, OSM can also facilitate getting the sheep  
21 guidelines to the Board through the Council's annual  
22 resort report process. The Council can request the Board  
23 do one or both of the following. Option one is to direct  
24 OSM to use the sheep guidelines while forming future  
25 analyses evaluating relevant proposals and or number two  
26 requests that the Board draft correspondence to relevant  
27 DOI land managers and or apartment -- the Alaska  
28 Department of Fish and Game requesting that a  
29 cooperative working group be formed to address the  
30 guidelines, perhaps with the intent of creating a  
31 management plan out of that. So, there's two options.  
32 You would -- you have it drafted; you would include it  
33 in your annual report and then you would ask the Board  
34 to do one of two things. And so, basically what we can  
35 do is you submit the plan, if you just wanted to stay  
36 in-house and apply to this region only. Anytime I draft  
37 an analysis having to do with sheep manage -- or sheep  
38 harvest, I will take that management strategy and use  
39 it as part of the analysis. Or you can ask the Board to  
40 draft correspondence to other agencies to get everybody  
41 on board with what the management strategy is asking  
42 for. We'd have to do that because OSM does not have --  
43 we can't tell BLM how to manage or how to survey for  
44 sheep. We don't have that regulatory. It's not part of  
45 OSM's or the Board's purview, I guess.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I feel there  
48 should be a blend, you know, the Federal Subsistence  
49 Board can adopt the management strategy, you use it in-  
50 house. But it also should be recognized because the Board

1 members who are these Federal Board members anyways,  
2 they're the land management, I've met several of the  
3 BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service and  
4 Forest Service. Forest service doesn't have that many  
5 sheep, they're mostly goats. But they do have some sheep,  
6 a few, but those land managing agencies should have --  
7 as Board members should endorse the management strategy  
8 as far as on our -- within our region. So, I think that  
9 there could be a blend. I do feel that it should be  
10 always used in house but should be suggested for the  
11 other land managing agencies. And so, with the National  
12 Park Service we're working on -- in April, the end of  
13 April, we're gonna [sic] be over at Ambler. We're gonna  
14 [sic] be talking about that management strategy and how  
15 it's gonna [sic] be made into a hunting plan  
16 recommendation, and how sheep are gonna [sic] be looked  
17 at and surveyed and etcetera, within the gates of the  
18 Arctic National Parks. With the other agencies, the  
19 Board is made up of the other agencies. That's what it  
20 is. So, I think that there can be a blend. And so, I  
21 would -- my response would be that there should be a  
22 blend. The OSM always uses the management strategy, and  
23 the other agencies should look strongly to it. Arctic  
24 Refuge and the other agencies should be looking strongly  
25 to that management within this region. This is how the  
26 - cause [sic] we get new people all the time and people  
27 got all kinds of ideas about how sheep -- what happens  
28 with dall sheep, but the reality is they don't really  
29 understand the ecology. And there's not a lot of  
30 schooling on the ecology of when dall sheep are doing  
31 various things. There's a lot of TEK in that thing. It's  
32 like, oh, that's not science, no, it is traditional. Ask  
33 George back there with TEK has got -- actually got --  
34 will reflect scientific investigation. The lynx don't  
35 migrate, they told me that for years. Well, come to find  
36 out if you put a GPS collar on them, we got lynx that  
37 were in the Brooks Range that are down in northern  
38 British Columbia. They do migrate. TEK said they  
39 migrated and now they -well the science -- if you don't  
40 have science, your scientific data, there's a whole  
41 bunch of scientific data that's lacking in the current  
42 sheep management. A composition of the ram component is  
43 completely lacking in current management, that has to  
44 be an -- so, if you got -- if you're surveying moose,  
45 you got eight structures of the moose, you're looking  
46 at stuff like that. The management strategy is talking  
47 about how to scientifically manage the sheep. So, I think  
48 that there should be a blend. And I think that this  
49 Council can write a letter to OSM and to the Federal  
50 Subsistence Board that states that we feel that there



1 should be a methodology in place, like the authorities  
2 of this Council is to develop management strategies and  
3 how does that enter? We have a management authority under  
4 the Title Eight 805 ANILCA that we can make management  
5 strategies and how do we submit those? It's a glitch in  
6 OSM is what it is. So, you need to fix.....

7

8 MS. GREDIAGIN: Mr. Chair.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. That's sounds  
11 like Lisa. Go ahead, Lisa.

12

13 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, this is Lisa  
14 Grediagin, Wildlife Division supervisor with OSM. And I  
15 just wanted to point out that in section 805(c) of  
16 ANILCA, it specifies that the secretary, meaning the  
17 Board, shall consider the report of the Regional  
18 Advisory Councils concerning the take of Fish and  
19 Wildlife. And so, that report they're referring to is  
20 the Annual Report, which includes the harvest management  
21 strategy. And so, I mean, the Board already, you know,  
22 should be considering the harvest management strategy.  
23 You know, it's in statute that they need to consider the  
24 Council's reports and associated, you know, management  
25 strategies when they're considering the take of Fish and  
26 Wildlife. And also, I mean, with like the endorsement  
27 of, say, the 40 Forty-mile Caribou Management Plan or  
28 the Western Arctic Caribou Management Plan, the Board  
29 endorses it. But that doesn't mean they're necessarily  
30 tied to it when they're making decisions. I mean, just  
31 because they endorse a plan doesn't mean they have to  
32 follow it exactly to a T. But I mean, generally they do  
33 so, I mean, I think unless the Council wants to make  
34 significant changes to the strategy they've already  
35 submitted as part of their Annual Report. I mean, like  
36 Brian said, OSM will consider that harvest strategy  
37 whenever we're analyzing proposals concerning sheep in  
38 the Western Interior Region. And then obviously the  
39 Council will do the same when you're delivering  
40 proposals and recommending them to the Board. And then  
41 the Board also per statute will have to consider that  
42 when they're deliberating on proposals for the take of  
43 you know, sheep in the West Interior Region. So, I guess  
44 I'm not clear you know, beyond that, you know what  
45 you're.....

46

47 (Simultaneous speech)

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well.....

50

1 MS. GREDIAGIN: What you're seeking.

2  
3 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I wanted to make  
4 perfectly crystal clear is that the management strategy  
5 will be swept under the rug, and the next -- in five  
6 years, nobody will know anything about it. That's what  
7 happens. I've been here a long time I see stuff happen.  
8 The Board endorses a management plan, they said bull-  
9 cow ratios for the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, the  
10 Koyukuk River Moose Management Plan, their specific  
11 biological parameters that are in those plans and those  
12 analysis are revolving around those management  
13 objectives. That's not like they're endorse it and don't  
14 pay any attention to it. If there's a problem with those  
15 populations, they're gonna [sic] look heavily at those  
16 management plans and are we staying within the  
17 biological parameters. So, they're just not lost in the  
18 shuffle. The Board's endorsed these various plans and  
19 they basically are -- or should be adhering to them in  
20 the analysis. I do feel that it's very important for  
21 option one minimum to be used for the management strategy  
22 that OSM uses in the analysis, but I don't want it swept  
23 under the rug, lost in the shuffle along the way.

24  
25 So, somebody's talking off mic there  
26 that's your how. But, anyways, I want OSM to think again  
27 about this. How do you know - where -- we got a  
28 management strategy; we want that before used in the  
29 process. We also want the agencies to stop reinventing  
30 the wheel, I get a whole other administration with some  
31 refuge. And so, then we have to reinvent the -- we have  
32 to go back over it again. Well, this gets lost over  
33 time. It should be some more to the forefront. This is  
34 a management strategy for dall sheep, this is in the  
35 Western Interiors realm and so, that should be embedded  
36 into our -- into this region, into our -- how this shape  
37 is managed. We do the same thing with moose on Koyukuk.  
38 We do the same thing with other areas where we have  
39 management strategies or management plans. So, option  
40 one is a real viable thing, that's a given, as far as  
41 I'm concerned. Option -- your option one, that's a given.  
42 But I do feel that the other agencies should be --  
43 understand if OSM is reviewing and making an analysis  
44 that they should also notify the affected Federal land  
45 managers. This is our management strategy and this is  
46 the way we're going on that. So, when you're gone  
47 (indiscernible) this stuff does not change. This is --  
48 we're talking nature here. We're talking science and  
49 nature. This stuff doesn't go away with politics or  
50 anything. So, at this point we're going to have to take

1 a position. Since we've spent all this time on this one.  
2 I would like the Council to make a motion to submit this  
3 sheep management strategy to -- as a -- to the Federal  
4 Subsistence Board to be part of our documentation, to  
5 be utilized by OSM and in the future and for future  
6 analysis for dall sheep within our region as part of our  
7 -- part of the process for analysis and that's exactly  
8 what you, what you're endorsing. So, the -- which was  
9 referred to as option one, so, we'll go with option one.  
10 But I do feel that the -- it should be also an addendum  
11 to that, that if you're -- if OSM is analyzing a proposal  
12 and it affects certain Federal lands that they wouldn't  
13 be in contact with those other Federal land managers  
14 about how this is the way this Council feels strongly  
15 about dall sheep management and what's wrong with that.  
16 That's just part of what you're gonna [sic] be doing  
17 anyway, isn't it, Brian?

18  
19 MR. UBELAKER: Yes. I mean, when I write  
20 a sheep analysis, when you submit a proposal regarding  
21 sheep, I will take the Sheep Management Strategy and put  
22 that in, as part of my analysis. And that goes out for  
23 team field review, which is our second step of reviews,  
24 and all affected land management agencies get to read  
25 it over and have a say in the direction that we're  
26 heading, just as same as you guys do when we present it  
27 to you at the fall RAC meeting.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I don't have  
30 a lot of confidence in the Statewide planning group  
31 thing, that just fell apart. I wasted a bunch -- I wasted  
32 two years of my life with it, Dall sheep management  
33 planning process for the State, it fell completely flat.  
34 Where they even got Israelis and Arabs to agree on ibex,  
35 they could not get anybody to agree on the Dall Sheep  
36 Plan. So, I don't know, I have no faith in the -- in  
37 that kind of a planning process. So, we'll go with that.  
38 We're gonna [sic] go for option one with the  
39 understanding that it's gonna [sic] be used throughout  
40 the -- through the analysis and the other agencies that  
41 have land managers are also involved in the whole -- in  
42 that process for that analysis. Is that clear for the  
43 record. So, motion by Robert. Do we have a second?

44  
45 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.  
48 Any further discussion? Don.

49  
50

1 MR. HONEA: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 Under discussion so, would this be part of our Annual  
3 Report submitted to have those -- to have that request?

4  
5 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher for  
6 the Chair. So, you guys do have that already in your  
7 Annual Report. It is an action item a little further  
8 down. So, what you guys are gonna [sic] do when we get  
9 there, it's agenda item 12D is -- what we -- we can  
10 reference this conversation about adding additional  
11 language into what is already in existence on that motion  
12 that you just made and the conversation that Jack just  
13 had and then we can -- I can add it into the current  
14 annual report because it's already in there, it's just  
15 not.....

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Fresh on our minds.  
18 I wouldn't want to pass this motion now so that when we  
19 get to that, we just paste it in. So, just paste right  
20 in. So, that when we get to that Annual Report topic.  
21 You're right, we do have it on the Annual Report. We  
22 just gotta [sic] -- we're gonna [sic] add to it.

23  
24 MR. HONEA: Okay I would just like the  
25 wording on that motion. What exactly is that motion?

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Motion is that the  
28 OSM is presented there -- they had a discussion. They  
29 had two options one was a public, wider process where  
30 they get a whole bunch of people involved. And the other  
31 first option was that the management strategy would be  
32 used for doing analysis. When OSM is doing an analysis,  
33 it would be in the forefront for this region, and we're  
34 making an addendum to that, that they would be heavily  
35 -- work with the agencies and if they don't have the  
36 management strategy at that time, they give it to the  
37 agency who doesn't have the manage - cause [sic] I was  
38 handing it out to Arctic Refuge, they didn't have it. I  
39 sent, -- we sent it out, when? April of 23. They didn't  
40 have it. So, I had to give it again back to -- I keep  
41 having to give it to these various -- they should have  
42 it in their portfolio. So, that's the motion. The motion  
43 is to go with OSM to option one that it's gonna [sic] -  
44 - the strategy will be used in their management -- at  
45 their analysis and that they use the other agencies and  
46 involve the other agencies with the understanding that  
47 this is what this region would like, how dall sheep  
48 should be managed. So, that's clear Don?

49  
50 MR. HONEA: Yeah.

00077

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, any further  
3 discussion? Questions called, those in favor of that  
4 motion signify by saying aye.

5  
6 IN UNISON: Aye.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed, same  
9 sign.

10  
11 (No response)

12  
13 Motion passes. That'll be added on to  
14 our -- in our discussion on the annual report. So, thank  
15 you, I appreciate that, Brian and being out in front of  
16 me on that one with the two options. Good job, again.  
17 And so, now we're -- call for proposal, which is action  
18 item A call for Federal Wildlife proposals. Brian.

19  
20 MR. GERVAIS: Jack.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Tim.  
23 Oh, go ahead, Tim. Go right ahead.

24  
25 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
26 Brian, so, looking at your PowerPoint and you have a  
27 slide about why may a proposal be invalid and you got  
28 marine mammals, migratory birds, fishing in marine  
29 waters. When I look at section 801.5 in ANILCA and it  
30 talks about the national interest in the proper  
31 regulation, protection and conservation of fish and  
32 wildlife on public lands in Alaska and the continuation  
33 of the opportunity for subsistence way of life by  
34 residents of rural Alaska require that administrative  
35 structure be established for the purpose of enabling  
36 rural residents who have personal knowledge of local  
37 conditions and requirements, to make a meaningful role  
38 in the management of fish and wildlife, and of  
39 subsistence uses on public land. So, if this proposal  
40 process restricts or makes it invalid for us to have  
41 proposals like, I know this is a game cycle, but let's  
42 just -- I wanted to use fish for right now. Why if  
43 ANILCAs saying that there has to be an administrative  
44 structure available and then the proposal process is  
45 saying that we can't talk about certain topics like  
46 marine mammal, migratory birds, or fishing, commercial  
47 fishing in the EEZ then what's the solution? How do we  
48 meet the requirements of ANILCA and still have proposals  
49 that can be invalidated based on jurisdiction, when you  
50 have migratory species, such as fish that are swimming

1 through multiple jurisdictions. But they are keystone  
2 subsistence resources.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, that's your  
5 question? Can you answer that question?

6

7 MR. GERVAIS: My question is, it's ANILCA  
8 grants, and administrative structure be established and  
9 then this particular -- like the proposal process is  
10 kind of the bread and butter of our management ability  
11 with the RACs. But then the PowerPoint is saying we're  
12 not allowed to make proposals on these certain topics.  
13 So, I'm asking, how do we address these invalid topics  
14 if they affect our keystone subsistence species  
15 resources?

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Nissa, you're  
18 gonna [sic] answer to that?

19

20 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa Pilcher, for  
21 the record. I think the short answer that you're looking  
22 for, Tim, is the way that the Council can address it is  
23 through correspondence. Since that you can't -- there's  
24 no regulatory process for this Board with the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board. You're -- basically the only answer  
26 is correspondence, and we can certainly do that.

27

28 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. I would like to  
29 comment, if I may, Mr. Chair. That correspondence is not  
30 a meaningful role in management of fish and wildlife,  
31 when it can just be ignored by ADF&G or the Commissioner  
32 of ADF&G or the North Pacific Management Council or  
33 whoever the respective agency may be. So, I would like  
34 to get past this situation where people are saying that  
35 we don't have authority to have any meaningful role in  
36 management because it's a migratory species and it's out  
37 of our jurisdiction. I think what this ANILCA 801.5 is  
38 saying is that Congress is requiring an administrative  
39 structure be established for meaningful role in  
40 management of fish and wildlife, and that correspondence  
41 does not meet that means and we have a biologic [sic]  
42 crisis on our hands because of that.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, it's a  
45 jurisdictional restriction. This Council can deal with  
46 Fish and Wildlife. We can write to the Federal  
47 Subsistence Board. We can tell the Federal Subsistence  
48 Board that we need to do this or that, and they can move  
49 that up the chain to, into the Interior Department to  
50 deal with, you know, marine mammals or whatever issues

1 that we can't deal with that was on the list. But we  
2 have the administrative structure for a meaningful role,  
3 that's the Council process, that's the Federal  
4 Subsistence Board process, the expanded Board with  
5 additional public members, that's, you know, that's the  
6 meaningful role part. But then we get into  
7 jurisdictional boundaries where we can't talk about  
8 migratory birds because there's a migratory bird  
9 Council, that's their authority. And so, this getting  
10 into the EEZ, we're, you know, North Pacific Fisheries  
11 is gonna [sic] be here to talk to us tonight. That's --  
12 you know, we've made so many waves with the Federal  
13 Subsistence Board process that they're actually  
14 responding to these letters and things that we've  
15 written. But we don't -- this Council does not have a  
16 seat on the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.  
17 That's a different realm. But I'm really super happy to  
18 have North Pacific here to talk to us this evening at  
19 6:30 p.m. So, but yeah, I feel your frustration, but you  
20 know, we got a marine crash, we've got too many -- you  
21 know, if it was up to me, we'd just, like, pull about  
22 50% of the hatchery release. We would, you know, try to  
23 stay off of the passage of fish moving out of the South  
24 Alaska Peninsula and protections in the Bering Sea for  
25 our salmon to move into the Yukon and Kuskokwim River.  
26 But that's -- I can't do all that. We can't do that; we  
27 don't have authority to do that and the other Boards,  
28 everybody just got their own idea how this is gonna  
29 [sic] go. Eventually it will go the right way, but it's  
30 gonna [sic] have to go to like zero and then back all  
31 the way out. They'll -- their hatcheries will crash.  
32 That's what's gonna [sic] happen to them. So, then  
33 they're gonna [sic] have a -- then they're going to be  
34 -- they'll have us come to the plate and actually start  
35 using real science again. This has always happened. They  
36 wiped out bison and now we're trying to get them back  
37 again. This happened over and over and over in American  
38 history. They push beyond the -- it's all for economics.  
39 First, they sold all the buffalo hides, then they just  
40 ground up all the bones into phosphorus. And it's just  
41 -- this is what America does, and they always forget how  
42 that, these are finite resources and there's not an  
43 unending supply. This has happened over so many times,  
44 but we can't do anything and we're doing as much as we  
45 can. And I'm happy we got North Pacific Fisheries  
46 Management Council coming to see us. So, I'll just leave  
47 it right there. We can't just keep going on that. I do  
48 appreciate your comment on that though Tim. You had a  
49 comment there Robert, go ahead.  
50

1 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brian,  
2 with all this conversation that we're having here, is  
3 that Federal proposals and all this and I see it on the  
4 bottom down here, the State proposals. What would happen  
5 if, let's say, the Anvik tribe or the West Interior RAC  
6 put a proposal in to declare all the fish, chum salmon,  
7 chinook salmon as a extinct fish, in a proposal of what  
8 would happen here. I mean, would that say that since  
9 there's no more fish up the Anvik River, how do we do  
10 that? Do we just say, well, we're just gonna [sic] fish  
11 'till [sic] we get the last one, or it's gonna [sic] be  
12 the fish to the last one, or bycatch or, you know,  
13 something like that. Who declares in that proposal to  
14 declare a disaster or extinction for the chinook salmon  
15 or both species?

16  
17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert, I'll  
18 answer that one. You do just what -- you go ahead and  
19 answer. I can answer it, or you can answer it. Why don't  
20 you take your.....

21  
22 MR. UBELAKER: I'll defer to you, Mr.  
23 Chair.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You're asking for  
26 an endangered species or threatened species status,  
27 which you'd have to submit that to NOAA. That's under  
28 that's what's going on right now with chinook. They --  
29 somebody submitted that the south Alaska coast is  
30 endangered. What about the Yukon? They forgot the Yukon  
31 on that one. But the reality is the -- so the NOAA is  
32 going through an endangered species analysis for chinook  
33 salmon and that's who deals with that. OSM, Federal  
34 Subsistence Management is on Federal public lands and  
35 of associated waters. That's what we're -- that's where  
36 we're at. So, the jurisdiction your tribe could submit  
37 a proposal that chum salmon on the Anvik River are  
38 becoming extinct, and we want them under threatened  
39 species status, and they might start to do something,  
40 the North Pacific Fisheries management. But it's still  
41 under analysis, they're probably not gonna [sic] go for  
42 it. I don't know, especially now. Political climates  
43 changed now, as is the weather. So, go ahead, Robert.

44  
45 MR. GERVAIS: Well, I got a comment about  
46 something you said that is relevant.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tim. Well, Tim  
49 is.....

50



1                   MR. GERVAIS: I'll be brief. So, they  
2 didn't, NOAA didn't forget to put Yukon River or  
3 Kuskokwim River salmon in the ESA. What NOAA's position  
4 is, is that's outside of their jurisdiction. So, they  
5 need to talk about it. They'll need to think about it.  
6 They'll need to do anything about it. And that's the  
7 whole problem, is we're gonna [sic] hear it tonight.  
8 Everything we say to North Pacific counts or the like  
9 Dr. Stram, the main staff member that's dealt with this  
10 chinook issue for decades. She said in 2009, in the  
11 rulemaking meeting for amendment 51, she said that her  
12 working as NOAA, they did zero analysis of the in-river  
13 population level of chinook salmon. So, somehow, we need  
14 to break the stalemate and stop this deal where oh,  
15 that's out of our jurisdiction, that doesn't matter, or  
16 we don't have to account for that because the fish are  
17 migratory. Because what's happened is the resource has  
18 been destroyed. The fishing culture on these rivers is  
19 destroyed. And we just -- we have to develop different  
20 management structures that protect the species and  
21 protect the subsistence users. And I mean, it's -- we're  
22 just gonna [sic] hear it. I can tell you what's gonna  
23 [sic] happen tonight is they're gonna [sic] say, oh,  
24 it's out of our jurisdiction and everybody's gonna [sic]  
25 to go home and would come back next time and they'll say  
26 the same thing. And meanwhile the salmon stocks continue  
27 to be deteriorated, and we don't meet subsistence needs  
28 and we don't have viable stocks.

29  
30                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Tim.  
31 Tonight the meeting is about -- tonight the meeting is  
32 not about, you know, it's about the options for chum  
33 salmon management on the Bering Sea. That's what the  
34 meeting is about tonight. So, Robert, you have a comment?  
35 Go ahead.

36  
37                   MR. WALKER: Yes. The reason why I asked  
38 that question was because the Anvik River used to have  
39 between 8 and 1,500 chinook salmon spawn every year, and  
40 the last three years there haven't been one chinook  
41 salmon come back. So, we're looking at how many other  
42 side streams in the lower Yukon and all the way up the  
43 Middle Yukon that don't have any salmon come back  
44 anymore. So, that's something that -- where we're gonna  
45 [sic] go and how long will it take to get there, seems  
46 like we're not doing anything about it. We're just kind  
47 of like talking about it and talking about it and NOAA  
48 whoever they are, they're not gonna [sic] do anything.  
49 Not as far as I can remember, they never even talked  
50 about how these small streams and everything. And like

1 I said earlier about this, Doug Lang declaring the Yukon  
2 River a seven-year moratorium and there's no more  
3 chinook salmon going up these side streams? How are we  
4 gonna [sic] do that? They'll never come back the chinook  
5 salmon to Anvik River because they're all gone. The  
6 species has been wiped out.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Alright. I mean,  
9 all we're hearing in this room is the extreme frustration  
10 that the people who live on the land are just -- we're  
11 just frustrated to no end that this is getting to this  
12 point where we can't stop the powers that be that keep  
13 raping the oceans and we can't stop it. And so, we're  
14 like, we're just standing there on the other side of a  
15 fence watching bad things happen to the -- to this  
16 resource. But we can't just keep belaboring this. We've  
17 gotta [sic] move on in this agenda. I mean, we're just  
18 gonna [sic] keep going in circles. So, we're up for,  
19 call for proposals. And so, Brian we're gonna [sic] start  
20 talking about call for proposal.

21  
22 MR. UBELAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
23 do have a little blurb for that too. So, I'll spit that  
24 out and then we can start talking about the good stuff.  
25 Once again for the record, still Brian Ubelaker OSM. Now  
26 is the call for wildlife proposals and the Council's  
27 opportunity to submit proposals to change Federal  
28 Subsistence Wildlife Harvest regulations. An  
29 informational flyer on how to submit a proposal to change  
30 Federal Subsistence regulations can be found on page  
31 asterisks-asterisks of your meeting book. I did not fill  
32 in that blank, and I apologize, it's in your book  
33 somewhere. As we mentioned during the training, Councils  
34 must make a motion and vote to submit proposals. Also,  
35 the opportunity for Councils to submit proposals is  
36 available during this entire meeting. If a Council  
37 member thinks of a proposal later or in response to  
38 another agenda item, they are welcome to suggest  
39 submitting a proposal then. Of course, anyone can submit  
40 a proposal as an individual before the submission window  
41 closes. That is the end of the blurb, Mr. Chair. I'd be  
42 happy to answer any questions or have more discussion  
43 on the topic.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any Council  
46 comments?

47  
48 (No response)

49  
50

1                   So, no. So, you had some ideas about  
2 alignment with some previous actions taken by Boards.  
3 Go ahead, Brian.

4  
5                   MR. UBELAKER: Okay. Thank you, Mr.  
6 Chair. So, my supervisor, Lisa Grediagin, keeps a  
7 running tally throughout the year. Things that have  
8 changed by Board of game actions and whatnot. So, we  
9 have a couple - Nissa emailed you that list of them,  
10 correct?

11  
12                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I got that list. I  
13 was plowing snow. You don't understand how busy I was,  
14 and I couldn't -- I looked at it, it sounded good, but  
15 I wanted to talk about it at the meeting so, I turned  
16 off my brain on that one, and now I've turned my brain  
17 back on. So, now it's the time to talk about it.

18  
19                   MR. UBELAKER: Okay, let me -- Nissa, do  
20 you have that email handy?

21  
22                   MS. PILCHER: I do. Nissa Pilcher, for  
23 the record. The first one is Unit 19, and I did just  
24 turn off the projector. I might need to turn it back on  
25 again. It's to revise or eliminate the Upper Kuskokwim  
26 controlled use area. The rationale is, as it exists now.  
27 So, this is to revise or eliminate it in Federal  
28 regulations because as it exists now, there is no Federal  
29 land within that current controlled use area boundary.

30  
31                   MR. UBELAKER: I will modify that  
32 statement a bit. There is Federal public land, but it  
33 is not open to subsistence it is Native or State  
34 selected. But I guess a brief history and if you can get  
35 the map up -- brief history is 2000 and the 90s, maybe  
36 the State established the CUA. They expanded it  
37 experimentally, two different stages and when it  
38 expanded to its largest size, the Federal regulations  
39 adopted it. And then like two years later, the -- on the  
40 State side, the CUA shrunk to two miles to either side  
41 of several of the rivers, whereas in Federal regulations  
42 it remained humongous. It did cover a little bit. It  
43 does currently cover BLM land down at the southern end  
44 of it. But for the most part inside the State boundaries,  
45 there is no subsistence, no Federal lands open to  
46 subsistence uses.

47  
48                   CHAIRPERSON        REAKOFF:       It's       my  
49 understanding the State Board has eliminated this  
50 controlled use area now.

1

2 MR. UBELAKER: No, they didn't eliminate  
3 it, and I dug into a little bit of the Board of Game  
4 history, they expanded it. So, it was two miles on either  
5 side of the rivers as it sits right now. They expanded  
6 it for whatever reason, and then they expanded it again  
7 for whatever reason. That's when the feds adopted it.  
8 And then a year or two later, the Board of Game didn't  
9 make any more adjustments to it, and it reverted to its  
10 original state, which is two miles on either side of the  
11 river.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's not  
14 reflecting that in the game -- in the book here.

15

16 MR. UBELAKER: Federal side, that is the  
17 controlled use area on the Federal side. If you look  
18 in.....

19

20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This is the old,  
21 controlled use area.

22

23 MR. UBELAKER: No, that's the current  
24 Federal control use area.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I mean, the current  
27 Board of Game controlled use area is much smaller than  
28 this one.

29

30 MR. UBELAKER: Yeah, and if Nissa can get  
31 the map up, we -- oh, there we go.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah.

34

35 MR. UBELAKER: You can see it. The blue  
36 outline is the current Fish and Game, the current State  
37 controlled use area and the reddish-brown hashed area  
38 is the Federal controlled use area.

39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we can submit  
41 the proposal -- this proposal, the idea of this and then  
42 we can discuss it further at our fall meeting after it's  
43 been analyzed with our -- we need to get comments from  
44 people around McGrath and so forth. And so, I would  
45 prefer to get this in as a proposal basically for  
46 discussion. So, I would -- is it okay for the Council  
47 to submit this proposal if -- to eliminate the old,  
48 controlled use area size back down to what is currently  
49 reflected in blue as the States so that we can discuss  
50 it at our fall meeting. Yes.

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MR.HONEA: Mr. Chair, thank you. Is this -- could you tell me who submitted this and the purpose of it? I mean, is it within our books here?

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We would be submitting this proposal because currently in the Federal Regulation Book that we have right now, this is basically outdated. We were -- the State Federal Subsistence Board was staying with what the State -- it's on the screen there, what the State actually had at times. But when it was this last -- was it the March Board cycle that they -- of 24, were they reduced that controlled use area which what Board meeting reduced it?

MR. UBELAKER: Like 2008. It was a long time ago.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, a long, long time ago.

MR. UBELAKER: Long, long time. Like I say it, they -- for whatever reason and I couldn't find the -- and I didn't listen to the transcripts, but they kept expanding and expanding it, and I guess it didn't do what they wanted it to do and then they stopped caring and it reverted back to what you see there.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: A lot of it had to do with, they had a predator control project going on there, and it was -- that was part of the -- what are they -- it had an acronym that they used for that area. That had a lot to do with that. So, we can submit a proposal to revert back to, you know, basically eliminate the old control use area boundaries, which then it goes into it's all State land, at that point. It's not really doing anything, but I do wanna [sic] get comments from the local people. We'll submit the proposal, and if Kevin Whitworth or somebody down there in McGrath goes, no, we want to do this, well, we'll go along with the local. But we need to get it out as a placeholder. We need to get it into the -- go ahead.

MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. I guess that's why I was asking the question. If it was submitted a while back, was it from somebody in McGrath? And so, we are just supporting this? I mean, if you -- so this is gonna [sic] be coming up in the fall meeting, then.

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: If we make a  
2 proposal, if we get a motion and a proposal to submit  
3 this as a proposal, then it will come up in our fall  
4 meeting. Nissa, you don't wanna [sic] answer the  
5 question?  
6

7 MS. PILCHER: I can give it a shot. So,  
8 this is Nissa, for the record. So, right now the Federal  
9 regulations are more restrictive than the State  
10 regulations and they also don't match which creates user  
11 not conflict, but confusion. So, right now you guys are  
12 talking about if you want to submit a federal proposal  
13 to reduce the size of the Federal controlled use area  
14 down to match what the State has and Jack did lodge the  
15 concern that you, there's no Kuskokwim members on the  
16 Council. So, what I can make sure that I do is if you  
17 guys do choose to submit this, I can relay it to the  
18 contacts I have on the Kuskokwim and let them know you  
19 submitted it. But you're fully aware that you did it  
20 without input. Because there's no Council members from  
21 that area and if they have concerns to please let me or  
22 anyone on the Council know so we can get them logged for  
23 the fall meeting and go from there. So, if you want to  
24 go forward with the proposal, like Jack said, you'd need  
25 a motion and a second to align the State and the Federal  
26 regulations cause currently the Federal regulations are  
27 more restrictive than State.  
28

29 MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, and to add on  
30 to Nissa's Statement, one major important fact that I  
31 forgot to mention is that having the controlled use area  
32 on the balance that it exists right now only applies to  
33 federally qualified Subsistence users. It does not apply  
34 to State users as they have to go with the blue area.  
35 So, everything that's over in the Federal regulations  
36 doesn't restrict anybody from using it. If that makes  
37 sense.  
38

39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. So, like  
40 this type of a proposal is what I would refer to as  
41 housekeeping cause [sic] it aligns with State. So,  
42 there's less confusion. I don't see where there's a  
43 conflict. I don't think that it's gonna [sic] be a big  
44 issue. But I do wanna [sic] get the proposal on clean  
45 up these regulations. So, there's not a lot of confusion  
46 and what I want to get the comments. So, when the  
47 proposal comes out in the summer or whenever it comes  
48 out, then the -- then McGrath and people can talk about  
49 it and then we know where we're gonna [sic] proceed from  
50 then. But this is the way to get the issue on the table.

00087

1 So, the Chair will entertain a motion to submit this  
2 proposal, to realign with State current control use  
3 Upper Kuskokwim control use area in the blue as referred  
4 to on the mapping on the screen there. And so, we need  
5 a motion. Do we have a motion?

6  
7 MR. HONEA: I move.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Motion by Don. We  
10 have a second?

11  
12 MR. KRISKA: Second.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Tommy.  
15 Further discussion.

16  
17 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yes. Go ahead, Don.

20  
21 MR. HONEA: Yeah, okay. Under discussion  
22 I really don't understand this. I mean, okay so, do we  
23 know when it was submitted, who it was submitted by the  
24 purpose of it? I mean, I love reinforcing this, but are  
25 -- do they still want it? I mean, are we going past our  
26 or, we're just supporting them?

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Brian, did you have  
29 an answer to that?

30  
31 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. Member  
32 Honea. This idea -- nothing has been submitted  
33 officially yet. This idea came from my supervisor, who  
34 keeps track of changes this Board of Game makes and  
35 notices differences in State and Federal regulations.  
36 And she just put a list together -- she keeps a running  
37 list throughout the year, and this is just one that she  
38 noticed where Federal and State regulations do not  
39 match. We're trying to bring them into alignment so that  
40 there's no confusion -- less confusion for users in the  
41 field.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Nissa.

44  
45 MS. PILCHER: And I do believe that a lot  
46 of those questions will be answered if you guys do choose  
47 to submit this, in the analysis. Because Brian sitting  
48 right, there is gonna [sic] have to do a lot of work on  
49 the who's and the what's like you've been asking, so.

50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, this will go  
2 through an analysis where that'll get presented in our  
3 fall meeting. We'll get comments, we'll call up Kevin  
4 or somebody in McGrath or -- and we'll get comments  
5 about this particular proposal, they will probably go  
6 whatever, we don't care, or they'll have problems with  
7 it, and then we will vote accordingly. But we need to  
8 address this issue. We have to have it in a proposal  
9 form. So, I have a motion and a second on the floor. Do  
10 we have any further discussion. Question is called.  
11 Those in favor of submitting that proposal to the Federal  
12 Subsistence Board process signify by saying aye.

13  
14                   IN UNISON: Aye.

15  
16                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed, same  
17 sign. So, there's one other, is it -- go ahead, Brian  
18 or Nissa, do you have the ideas before you there?

19  
20                   MR. UBELAKER: I've got an email pulled  
21 up. So, the second one that I have that was on the list  
22 is in Units 24D and 21D of opening a Federal muskox  
23 season, which the State has on the books for a year or  
24 two now. So, once again Federal and State regulations  
25 do not align. Federal regulations are more restrictive  
26 than State, currently.

27  
28                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, that --  
29 aligning with that would be beneficial to Subsistence  
30 users to align with the State current -- is it coming  
31 up on the screen now? So, it would be to open Federal  
32 muskox season in concurrence with State -- current State  
33 Game regulations as of established in 2021. And so, they  
34 voted against an ANS. But there's apparently a  
35 harvestable surplus of Muskox and the Board of Game has  
36 that season, and we should have that also under Federal  
37 regulations. So, that's in the near area there, dead  
38 center in your area there Tommy. So, I feel that we  
39 should submit this proposal to make it legal under  
40 Federal Subsistence regulations, also. Would you like  
41 to make that motion?

42  
43                   MR. KRISKA: So, moved.

44  
45                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved by Tommy. Do  
46 we have a second?

47  
48                   MS. PELKOLA: Second.

49  
50



1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.  
2 So, that basically aligns State and Federal regulations  
3 on Federal public lands. Further discussion? We'll be  
4 also discussing this at our fall meeting. It'll be a  
5 proposal. Questions called. Those in favor of that  
6 motion signify by saying aye.

7  
8 IN UNISON: Aye.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed, same  
11 sign. So, I.....

12  
13 MS. GREDIAGIN: Mr. Chair.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Go ahead,  
16 Lisa.

17  
18 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, Lisa Grediagin, for  
19 the record. I just wanted to clarify that those muskox  
20 hunts under State regulations in Unit 21 and 24 are draw  
21 permit hunts. So, could you clarify whether your intent  
22 is for the Federal hunts to also be by draw, permit or,  
23 you know, any sort of permit or just open?

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: My intention was to  
26 align with the State regulations so that there's not  
27 confusion. There's not a lot of muskox in those Units.  
28 So, it can't be a full-on season. You know, everybody  
29 go get one muskox that would be too much, especially  
30 cows. And so, I would, at this time, I would become more  
31 comfortable with staying with the State draw permit.  
32 That's what I would be more comfortable with.

33  
34 MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay. I mean, yeah, we -  
35 - I guess we can work it out in the analysis cause  
36 Federal users can't, you know, use a state draw permit.  
37 We've -- they've used State registration permits for  
38 Federal hunts, but I don't think there's ever been a  
39 case of a -- you know, we've had separate, you know,  
40 draw permits. So, I guess yeah, you could either clarify  
41 now or we'll work it out as a modification in the  
42 analysis.

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, I understand  
45 that you cannot use State draw permits, but you can  
46 issue Federal registration permits, right?

47  
48 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, we have Federal  
49 registration permits, or we also have Federal draw  
50 permit hunts as well.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I would be more comfortable with a federal draw if that's the case, cause.

MS. GREDIAGIN: Okay, yep.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: If they cannot use the State draw permit, then they could have a federal draw permit. I'm not sure how that would play out in the analysis about, you know, how that's gonna [sic] work as far as how many of those draw permits there's going to be. So, I would be -- and I appreciate you bringing that to light and I didn't realize that you could not use a state draw permit, but you can use a registration permit and if there's Federal registration permits. So, I would -- that should be part of the proposal that it's for an open season concurrent with whatever the State has, but also with the Federal limited draw permit. Which there's areas in Alaska where there's Federal muskox lottery draw permits. So, thanks for clarifying that and so, that -- actually we need to vote. Okay. Yeah, we can vote. Those in favor of submitting that proposals.

MS. PILCHER: So, there was a vote, but.....

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, we need to amend -- we need to retract. What we need to do is retract that vote and amend the motion and then revote it. That's what we were supposed to do. So, with that coming to light and that additional language being needed to be put there. The Chair will entertain a motion to retract that last vote and make a motion to retract that last vote. So that we can add additional language to that proposal.

MR. KRISKA: I make a motion to retract that.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And Jenny was the second. Do you concur, Jenny?

MS. PELKOLA: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, retraction now adding the language. To have the -- it's a draw permit a Federal draw permit for muskox in Unit 24D and 21D, and with a concurrent season to the State season. So, that's clear for the record. So, further discussion

00091

1 to that, the motion is still up, still on the floor.  
2 Completely new. Okay, you're right, right, right. So,  
3 the motion is retracted. So, at this point, Tommy can  
4 make a motion to adopt.....

5  
6 MR. GERVAIS: (Indiscernible)

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Say that again. Is  
9 that you, Tim?

10  
11 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah. We never voted on the  
12 retraction. Just got a second.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. I'm getting  
15 way off. I need more coffee. So, okay, we're gonna [sic]  
16 vote on the retraction of the motion. Motion by Tommy,  
17 seconded by Jenny. Those in favor of retraction signify  
18 by saying aye.

19  
20 IN UNISON: Aye.

21  
22 Opposed same sign. So, new motion on the  
23 table. So, the motion -- you can resubmit a new motion,  
24 Tommy, to align the State and Federal hunts on Unit 24D  
25 and 21D on Federal public lands with a lottery draw  
26 permit. Federal -- with a federal lottery draw permit  
27 for muskox. So, that's your -- that -- you can make that  
28 motion.

29  
30 MR. KRISKA: So, moved.

31  
32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Moved by Tommy.

33  
34 MS. PELKOLA: Second.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded by Jenny.  
37 So, now we're back where we're supposed to be with the  
38 additional language, with the clarification for the  
39 lottery draw permit. So, any further discussion?  
40 Questions called, those in favor of the new motion  
41 signify by saying aye.

42  
43 IN UNISON: Aye.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed? Tim's an  
46 affirmative on that one.

47  
48 UNIDENTIFIED: (Indiscernible).

49  
50

1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. You're  
2 exactly right, my mistake. So now, does anyone in this  
3 Council have other issues that should be submitted a  
4 Federal Subsistence proposal at this time for wildlife  
5 within our region. So, I don't have any proposals myself.

6  
7                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead. You  
8 got another one there.

9  
10                  MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair, I've got two  
11 more.

12  
13                  CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, you got two  
14 more.

15  
16                  MR. UBELAKER: I really wanna [sic] get  
17 down to it. Number three on the list is the 24A, 26B  
18 sheep closure. The special action that was codified in  
19 the last regulatory cycle is due to sunset at the end  
20 of 2025.

21  
22                  CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I will discuss  
23 that. And so, we -- we've had the closure. The closure  
24 will go through 2026. So, we -- the closure was to  
25 restrain the public from killing off the last remaining  
26 rams and to get the population to develop a healthy pop  
27 [sic] -- more healthy breeding, retain the breeding  
28 population. So, now we're -- our sheep population is  
29 responding to the closures. We're starting to -- the  
30 last survey information that I've -- that was -- I was  
31 given by Brad Wendling and the National Park Services,  
32 that we had 40 lambs per 100 ewes to the east of the  
33 road, and we had 41 lambs per 100 ewes to the -- ewe  
34 likes to the west of the road. So, our sheep management  
35 strategy has been working, our sheep closure has been  
36 working. And one more fall and then I think we can open  
37 back up with normal Federal Subsistence regulations for  
38 harvest again. Which we had in 21A and 21B was one ram,  
39 one ram in 24A and one ram, seven eights, I think in  
40 26B. The State will then revert to their normal harvest  
41 of full curl. We have a proposal before the State Board  
42 of Game to eliminate eight-year count. And so, the State  
43 Board of Game will be visiting that, the proposal to  
44 eliminate eight-year-old count at their March meeting.  
45 So, hopefully they adopt that because that's been a big  
46 problem. Hunters cannot identify eight years old at a  
47 distance, and they can't even hardly identify them in  
48 their hand. And so, the State Board of Game needs to  
49 address that issue. But right now, the population is  
50 coming back around to where I feel that we can open up

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1 for subsistence harvest and the State regulations and  
2 in 2000 -- after 2026, so 2026 is the end of the closure  
3 period. So, I don't feel that we need to submit a  
4 proposal for an extension of the -- and we'll let it  
5 sunset. Is that okay with the Council, my line of thought  
6 on that?

7

8 MR. WALKER: Yeah, I'm good with closing.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: No, we don't want  
11 to close it anymore. It's already under, it's under  
12 closure right now and that closure will go through 2026,  
13 next year.

14

15 MR. WALKER: It'll go through next year?

16

17 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go through next  
18 year.

19

20 MR. WALKER: Because I thought it was --  
21 we're bringing it up.

22

23 MR. PILCHER: Mic.

24

25 MR. WALKER: Sorry. I misunderstood what  
26 Brian was saying to me. It was like we're bringing it  
27 up now so we can have that for 2026. And that's why I  
28 made that motion, to have it continue closed.

29

30 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the current  
31 sheep closure was adopted by the Federal Subsistence  
32 Board in July of 2022. We had two years of closure. Then  
33 we had another proposal last April before the Federal  
34 Subsistence Board. The Federal Subsistence Board adopted  
35 the -- an additional two-year closure, and that was by  
36 the Western Interior Council's Proposal. But at this  
37 point, with the sheep population responding to our  
38 management restrictions, we've -- I feel that there will  
39 be enough resources for subsistence and non-subsistence  
40 harvest. If -- especially if the State eliminates the  
41 eight-year-old count. But at this time, I don't feel  
42 that the Council should try to submit another extension  
43 to the closure. That -- I don't feel that it's necessary.  
44 Yeah.

45

46 MR. WALKER: Just like I said, I wasn't  
47 here in 22, so this was.....

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So right now, we  
50 don't -- the question was, do we want to extend the

1 closure beyond 2026? And my response is I don't think  
2 we do need to, and we do not need to submit a proposal.  
3 So, that's my response. I live in Unit 24A, and we have  
4 C&T in 26B. So, I'm watching the sheep population. We've  
5 gotten some older rams back. I've seen rams breeding  
6 ewes. So, where everything's getting a lot better, and  
7 the closure was very instrumental and the kind of  
8 recoveries that we're having. So, another issue we had  
9 four, Brian. Oh, Tom, you have a comment?

10  
11 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, Mr. Chair. So,  
12 actually, essentially what we're doing is, we're  
13 reversing that or lifting that ban. Is that all we're  
14 doing?

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're letting it  
17 sunset. It would basically be in place for four years  
18 straight, and then we're just gonna [sic] let it fall  
19 out. So, we'll just let it sunset. So, number four. Go  
20 ahead, Brian.

21  
22 MR. UBELAKER: Number four. Before I dig  
23 in, member Walker, I apologize. I did say the closure  
24 went through 2025; Chairman Reakoff was correct. It goes  
25 through 2026. I was doing some mental math, and it came  
26 out wrong. Okay, then last, number four proposal. So,  
27 this one, I hope it's not too confusing. This one is  
28 gonna [sic] hinge on Board of Game action at their  
29 upcoming Statewide meeting in March. There's a proposal  
30 to change the boundary between 21D and 21E. It's a Board  
31 of Game Proposal 119. If the Board of Game adopts that,  
32 it's gonna [sic] misalign Federal and State regulations.  
33 So, we're thinking that we can -- you can submit a -- I  
34 don't know what, preliminary proposal that if the Board  
35 of Game does adopt this boundary change, your proposal  
36 will be analyzed, and then State and Federal regulations  
37 will remain aligned. If they don't adopt it, you know,  
38 you can have the motion, or the proposal withdrawn.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. You got a  
41 comment there, Robert.

42  
43 MR. WALKER: Brian, do you have a map of  
44 this, bigger so we can take a look at it, where the  
45 changes are gonna [sic] be? Cause I'm familiar with 21E  
46 and 21D.

47  
48 MR. UBELAKER: Through the Chair. Nissa  
49 is on that. That's why we keep Nissa around.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: One of the many  
2 reasons we keep Nissa around. Nissa is pulling up a map  
3 there for that change. And so, I -- did the GASH Advisory  
4 discusses this issue, do you know? And so, I would like  
5 to know what the Advisory Committees have been talking  
6 about on this one. Go ahead, Nissa.

7  
8 MS. PILCHER: I do know that the GASH AC  
9 did try to meet, and they were weathered out, and I  
10 don't believe it happened. But they could've met before.  
11 If I find the map, I'll see if I can find if they were  
12 able to meet.

13  
14 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: But I do think that  
15 Brian's right, that we could submit a proposal to align  
16 the boundary change, if the Board of Game does choose  
17 to change the boundary and it will be in place. And if  
18 GASH AC is fine with it, everybody's cool with it, then  
19 we won't have confusion about different Unit boundaries  
20 of 21D and 21E but, we need to have a placeholder for  
21 it. So, you have a comment there, Don?

22  
23 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, to  
24 make it kinda clear here, I mean, we -- this is just a  
25 preliminary hearing on this. And actually, when -- at  
26 our fall meetings, we'll go ahead and I mean, I -- it's  
27 good to know what, that we're going through them. So,  
28 on our own time we could find out, study them, etcetera.  
29 Thank you.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, Don it'll --  
32 if we submit a proposal to concurrent proposal for the  
33 same boundaries, the Board of Game, the Board of Game  
34 adopts it, if they adopt it. Then we have the opportunity  
35 to discuss that with our constituency at our fall  
36 meeting. We would know what the GASH Advisory Committee  
37 is -- actually wants. And so, then we can change it but  
38 if we don't do anything, then we're gonna [sic] have a  
39 complete misalignment of the State and Federal  
40 regulation boundary and that's gonna [sic] be really a  
41 challenge for people.

42  
43 MR. HONEA: So, I guess what I'm saying  
44 right now is -- I guess what I'm saying right now is  
45 this is action items that we are taking a stance on.

46  
47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, it's an issue  
48 that Brian's bringing up that there's gonna [sic] be a  
49 misalignment if the Board passes the regulation. So, we  
50 need to, instead of waiting for one whole Board cycle,

1 Federal cycle, two more years, we should have that in  
2 the hopper. Then we can talk about it at -- the State  
3 Board is gonna [sic] meet on that in March. By October  
4 of this next year, whenever we have our next meeting,  
5 then we'll know what they did, and we can move forward  
6 with that. But it's just what referred to as a  
7 placeholder proposal is what that's referred to. Oh,  
8 Nissa has got it up now. So, you got a comment there,  
9 Tommy? Go ahead.

10  
11 MR. KRISKA: Yes, this is -- Mr. Chair,  
12 this is Tom. Anyway, this proposal is with our ACs in  
13 Middle Yukon Advisory, we oppose this because the -- due  
14 to the fact that the people at Kaltag and a lot of  
15 people, they do own what -- allotments down there, in  
16 that area. And you're going over -- you're gonna [sic]  
17 put the boundary line above those allotments, which is  
18 -- they're already allotments meant for the people of  
19 Kaltag that live there. The grayling moved to the Yukon  
20 from the Holikachuk in 1959. And so, it's just a new  
21 thing and the people in the past from Kaltag and those  
22 places were living around that area. So, we opposed it  
23 because the people -- I don't know how it will work with  
24 people already owning land in that district. So, the  
25 Middle Yukon Advisory opposed that, and I will oppose  
26 it, too. Thank you.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Well, that's  
29 super important because we didn't have that information.  
30 That's why we're discussing these things before we even  
31 make these proposals. So, that's why I want to know what  
32 the Advisory Committees are doing, and what was the  
33 original reason why the Board of Games even entertaining  
34 this, change.....

35  
36 MR. KRISKA: I have another comment. So,  
37 I think on behalf of some people from down there, it was  
38 this personal use in a way that maybe they have a license  
39 and stuff. They would be better off getting a license  
40 to do what they want this area for. Sorry to say, but,  
41 anyway, I'm just wanted say that. Thank you.

42  
43 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And you have  
44 a comment there, Nissa, go ahead.

45  
46 MS. PILCHER: Yeah, my comment -- is  
47 Nissa Pilcher, for the record. So, it was the GASH AC  
48 that did submit it. Fish and Game is opposed to it, I  
49 didn't read exactly why Middle Yukon is opposed to it.  
50 The few times that I did deal with boundary issues when



1 I did work for the Board of Game, they like the ACs to  
2 come to an agreement if a boundary is going to be  
3 changed. So, take that as you will.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, oh, go ahead  
6 there, Robert.

7

8 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 Talking with the Tribal Council from Grayling, I haven't  
10 met with the president or chief there, and they appeal  
11 -- opposed it also. But they weren't too sure on why  
12 they wanted to add to it. Nobody did really give them  
13 information on why, I mean, just like this upper, the  
14 26D here where Kaltag, Nulato and Koyukuk are too. You  
15 know, it just kind of like we're gonna [sic] do this and  
16 that's it. And when I asked, as a -- I said, as a RAC  
17 member and I asked as a chief to the AC Board in 21E, I  
18 didn't get -- nobody never gave me an answer. It was  
19 just like, we're doing this and bye, so I'm just kind  
20 of like sitting in the middle with everybody else. But  
21 I would have to say no too, because, if they say I have  
22 to support the other people, and I have to support the  
23 Grayling Chief and their tribal Council. Thank you, Mr.  
24 Chair.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, this -- because  
27 the Council's under Title Eight 805 are to look to the  
28 advisory committees, that's part of our process. And so,  
29 when we have two divided advisory committees within our  
30 region, Middle Yukon and GASH is doing something else,  
31 I don't really want to get in the middle of that. So,  
32 at this point I'm getting more inclined to just not  
33 submit a proposal like we're endorsing one side or the  
34 other. And this let the cards fall how they may. And if  
35 they really do, if the Board of Game really does pass  
36 this change, then we might have to realign that further.  
37 But at this point, after this, it was important to have  
38 this discussion. I don't think it's a good idea for us  
39 to submit a proposal at all, until it's -- the Board of  
40 Game has actually sorted it. So, I'm opposed to the --  
41 to submitting a proposal now, after your discussion. I  
42 did -- that's what I wanted to know, I wanted to know  
43 what GASH did and I didn't know that -- I didn't realize  
44 you had had a meeting about it. So, go ahead, Tommy.

45

46 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, it -- that was one of  
47 the bigger points that I hope Doug was still here. One  
48 of the bigger things that came up with the Middle Yukon  
49 Advisory for the -- I don't know, it -- someone has a  
50 cabin up there, and it was sort of like a personal gain.

1 I shouldn't say that, but just to be truthful, to make  
2 sure that you know that this land was owned by the folks  
3 that rightfully use it, and I just want to back that up.  
4 I don't think I want to move into Huslia area or Galena  
5 area or any area like that and say, I want this and just  
6 cause [sic] I need to make some money or whatever, I  
7 kinda [sic] -- I have to say these things because of  
8 (distortion) the people I'm representing, and I want to  
9 make it straight there. Thank you.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Tommy.  
12 I appreciate your comments, you know, that's what I was  
13 asking about. I wanted to know what the Advisory  
14 committees were -- I asked, where did this boundary come  
15 from? That's -- I had you know, there's really no  
16 description, who submitted it. How did they draw this  
17 boundary? That was -- those are questions that were  
18 coming into my mind.

19  
20 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, this came up last year  
21 and it was a big, almost upriver against down river for  
22 no reason, just for one personal gain. It got stomped  
23 all over in the Kaltag and Nulato, Koyukuk meetings, so.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, we'll  
26 hold off on that one. So, we're not gonna [sic] go  
27 anywhere with that. So, Nissa.

28  
29 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa, for the  
30 record. I would also like to point out that further on  
31 down your agenda, under action items, there is Alaska  
32 Board of Game Statewide proposals that you guys can  
33 choose to take up. If you do want to comment on any of  
34 the proposals, including this one that is going before  
35 the Board of Game at their March meeting. Not saying you  
36 have to, just saying you can.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. Well, we did  
39 submit a Statewide proposal for eliminating age count  
40 on dall sheep. We should at least endorse our proposal,  
41 if, at the least if the adoption of the proposal. I  
42 think it's proposal 95. It should be for -- with at  
43 least a five-year sunset, because we're trying to  
44 recover these dall sheep population. And if the Board  
45 of Game and the State doesn't understand, there are very  
46 few sheep that don't reach full curl and a lot of the  
47 sublegal sheep are getting killed, that's in the data.  
48 And the Arctic Refuge urban back there is -- and the  
49 Arctic refuge they had from 1986 to 2012, they have a  
50 in-depth composition survey of rams in the Atigun

1 Valley. And it shows when they hit three quarter curl,  
2 they start disappearing, that is only human harvest.  
3 Those sheep are bulletproof against predation, at that  
4 age class. So, it's that if the State doesn't want to  
5 read the numbers and they don't do comp work, they don't  
6 do age composite, they don't do composition of the ram  
7 component, which tells you your age classes. The public  
8 -- I'm on Facebook and there's a sheep page, and those  
9 hunters can have a sheep laying in front of them and  
10 still can't count the ages of them. They get -- I would  
11 say between 50% to 80% of hunters advocate people that  
12 are sheep hunting advocates or hunting crazy. Guys, they  
13 can't age the sheep laying in front of the camera for  
14 me to Tommy, let alone 150 yards over there through the  
15 rifle scope. There's no way they can do that. So,  
16 (indiscernible) I think I see eight rings, it's three-  
17 quarter curl, boom. They shoot it. What happens? Oh,  
18 walk away. They don't show up in their -- there are  
19 ethical hunters that shoot sublegal sheep, and they turn  
20 them in, but they're not the majority of those kills.  
21 So, I feel that we should submit a comment to our State  
22 Proposal 95 that says, they should at least adopt a  
23 five-year elimination of counting rings until the sheep  
24 population is recovered to carrying capacity. That's  
25 what the comment should say. So, they should have at  
26 least a five-year moratorium on allowing the public to  
27 count rings in sheep for five years and in five more  
28 years, the sheep that might have gotten -- never gotten  
29 to a full curl who can get shot in five years. Which  
30 that's gonna [sic] be a while. Sheep don't drop dead at  
31 eight years of age. Sheep routinely get -- in ordinary  
32 winter conditions, most rams get between 10 to 12 years  
33 of age, and I've seen sheep as old as 15. So, they don't  
34 drop dead at eight years of age. It's not like we are  
35 gonna [sic] lose them or anything. So, we should comment  
36 on that State Proposal 95, which is the Western Interior  
37 Council's proposal. And I also submitted an additional  
38 one just for good measure to get the Advisory committees  
39 in Alaska to discuss that issue. So, I do feel that they  
40 -- we should submit a comment endorsing the Proposal 95  
41 and whatever the other proposal is, my proposal. And so,  
42 they -- that they at least consider taking a five-year  
43 moratorium on elimination of eight-year-old count that  
44 would allow the sheep population to recover to breeding  
45 population and then we would get on the road to getting  
46 back to carrying capacity again. Robert.

47  
48 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like  
49 I said earlier, I didn't hear about this. You know, I  
50 just got back on the RAC Board, but all of a sudden, I

1 got bombarded like 20 phone calls. What is going on down  
2 there? What are you doing? Why are you taking our land?  
3 Why? It was like whoa, hold on a second here, guys, let  
4 me find out what's going on. So, I did find out and I  
5 was -- took a stance on I said, I am not on the AC Board,  
6 I'm on Federal RAC Board, Western Interior. The only  
7 thing we could do is we could say yes or no and that's  
8 it. We can't say we support it or we don't support it.  
9 That's what I would say, I would say I wouldn't support  
10 it anyway because I don't think -- because if we're  
11 gonna [sic] start taking boundary lines and changing  
12 them, what's gonna [sic] happen after this? Everybody's  
13 gonna [sic] just get in the line here and start changing  
14 their boundary lines. So, once it starts, it's a domino  
15 effect. I think we got to take a stand here and just say  
16 no, period.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You would like the  
19 Council to oppose the Unit 21E, 21B boundary? Now which  
20 proposal is that? No, no not 95.

21  
22 MS. PILCHER: 119.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 118? 119? You can  
25 make a motion to oppose if you want to do that. You're  
26 closest to it and so is Tommy. So, we can -- you can  
27 make a motion to -- we're talking about State proposals.  
28 If you want to oppose Proposal 118, say you make a motion  
29 to adopt Proposal 118, and we'll vote it down.

30  
31 MR. WALKER: What?

32  
33 (Simultaneous speech)

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's because  
36 when you -- yep, if you submit a recommendation that you  
37 oppose, that you support -- oppose the proposal. You got  
38 to make it in the positive.

39  
40 MR. WALKER: Right. Okay, I remember now,  
41 that's just my thought. That's just my thought that, you  
42 know.....

43  
44 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, you make a  
45 motion to adopt 118 and we'll vote it down.

46  
47 MR. WALKER: Okay. I make a motion to  
48 adopt 118.

49  
50

000101

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And that's State  
2 Proposal 118.....

3  
4 MR. WALKER: State Proposal.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And that's for  
7 their whatever -- what meeting is that Nissa?

8  
9 MS. PILCHER: It's the Statewide Board  
10 of Game. It's proposal 119 on their March 2025 Statewide  
11 Board of Gaming.

12  
13 MR. WALKER: Okay.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 119.

16  
17 MR. WALKER: 119 I (indiscernible). So,  
18 yes, I do. I make a motion to support...

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: To adopt, proposal  
21 119.

22  
23 MR. WALKER: Adopt proposal 119 for the  
24 boundary change of 21D and 21E.

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. We have a  
27 second?

28  
29 MR. KRISKA: Second.

30  
31 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded. We've  
32 discussed this proposal extensively and I'm personally  
33 I actually proposed to it. So, I intend to oppose the  
34 proposal. So, when we come to vote, I'm gonna [sic]  
35 oppose the proposal, the motion to adopt. So, any further  
36 discussion? (Indiscernible) Oh, Jenny.

37  
38 MS. PELKOLA: Question.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, questions  
41 called. Those in favor of adopting State Proposal,  
42 Statewide Proposal 119, signify by saying aye. Those  
43 opposed same sign.

44  
45 IN UNISON: Aye.

46  
47 So, unanimous, opposition to Proposal  
48 119, with the discussion that we had here. So, regarding  
49 Statewide Proposal, I think it's 95, and I don't know  
50 what the other one is. They're both the same. They should

1 be in the same.....

2

3 MS. PILCHER: Yeah. The proposal you  
4 submitted individually was 95. And the proposal that the  
5 Western Interior submitted is 96.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: 95 and 96. So we -  
8 - I feel that we should support those proposals, 95 and  
9 96, which say exactly the same thing and that -- then  
10 our discussion that the Board should seriously consider  
11 if they have consternation about it or they're reluctant  
12 to do it, that they should at least adopt it for a five  
13 year -- with a time frame to eliminate counting rings  
14 for eight-year-old sheep as a criteria. Criteria C for  
15 five years with a sunset. Then it would reopen to people,  
16 and our population should be healthy enough by then to  
17 do that. If it's not, somebody else might submit a  
18 proposal to maintain that. So, I feel that a five-year  
19 moratorium is reasonable with the condition that the  
20 sheep populations are in the state of Alaska, Statewide.  
21 So, the Chair will entertain a motion to support  
22 Proposals 95 and 96 with the comments to the State Board  
23 of Game that they should -- if they're concerned about  
24 a permanent elimination of criteria C, counting rings  
25 on annuli in dall sheep that they should at least  
26 contemplate a five-year elimination and -- for five  
27 years with a sunset. So, that would be the comment to  
28 the State Board of Game.

29

30 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

33

34 MR. HONEA: Thank you. Before we -- this  
35 is kinda confusing enough. I think to make it easier,  
36 you know, and this is not just today. It's been the  
37 whole process, every meeting when we come up with these  
38 proposals. To me, the confusing part is we're not  
39 mentioned, hey the wording on this, what it intends to  
40 do and stuff like that. So, it would -- I don't know if  
41 it would make it easier for Nissa or somebody to explain  
42 what we're doing. Does that make sense? I mean, I don't  
43 know if it's the other Board members or it's just myself,  
44 but it makes it really hard to try to explain, you know,  
45 if you would say Proposal 96, the intent here and this  
46 is the wording.

47

48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can you.....

49

50 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

1

2

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Can you put up  
Proposal 96 on the screen?

4

5

MS. PILCHER: Yeah, I sure can. And  
just.....

7

8

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, we discussed  
this, submitting this proposal back in, it was at our  
spring meeting. Last year is when we.....

11

12

MR. HONEA: Okay, I.....

13

14

15

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, she's gonna  
[sic] put it up again. You prob [sic] -- you may have  
missed it when we were doing it. I thought, you know.....

17

18

19

MR. HONEA: Yeah, well, I guess you got  
to realize I wasn't on the Board at the time, so.

20

21

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

22

23

MR. HONEA: Yeah, thank you.

24

25

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's good to put  
it on the screen. So, Nissa is putting it up onto the  
screen. There's the -- it's the -- repeal the age  
criteria or definition of full curl for -- oh, excuse  
me, I got too far back. To repeal the age criteria for  
definition of full curl ram as follows, and which it  
gives the three criteria. One is full curl; one is both  
horns broken, and the other is counting rings, and you  
got to scroll up to number three there, Nissa so we can  
see that. So, there it is there. So, number three is at  
least eight years of age determined by horn growth  
annuli. That's the problem, most hunters on Facebook  
cannot count rings on sheep. They don't know what they're  
looking at. And they're killing some -- killing sheep  
that are not actually full curl. They're not actually  
the age class that the department desires. They're  
actually killing the sublegal recruiting sheep. So,  
that's what the proposal does. So, there's the proposal  
right there and what I'm saying is, I would like to  
entertain a motion to adopt this proposal, 95 and 96.  
But we also -- I would like the Council to comment that  
they should at least, if they're not going to oppose it  
permanently, they should at least think about it, to  
eliminating age count for at least five years, with a  
sunset. Does that make clear?

1 MR. HONEA: That makes perfect sense. Mr.  
2 Chair, I guess I myself, I lean on you to you know, if  
3 what your stance is on that because I don't know  
4 anything. It's all Greek to me. I mean, if we were  
5 talking about moose in 21B or D or C or whatever you  
6 know, I would -- so, I think even as a Council member,  
7 I just sit here and we -- I myself rely on you know,  
8 your support. I mean, what is your view on this, and I  
9 appreciate putting that up there because, and explaining  
10 it a bit because, I'm not -- you know, I just don't like  
11 sitting here and not understanding what the proposal is  
12 about. If it's not read or put up there and making a  
13 decision on it.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. You're  
16 exactly right.

17  
18 MR. HONEA: Thank you.

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I -- my fault. I  
21 should have had Nissa draw that up and put it on the  
22 screen. So, let the record reflect that the proposal  
23 submitted by the Western Interior Regional Council is  
24 on the screen. So, 95 and 96 are exactly the same  
25 proposal and so -- but I do feel that in the comments  
26 that we should have the -- if the Board is -- doesn't  
27 want to go for permanent elimination of criteria three  
28 that they -- determining by age class that they go for  
29 at least a five-year closure until the sheep come --  
30 return to carrying capacity. They're not -- they're  
31 nowhere close to carrying capacity. And so, we need to  
32 have -- we still need to have healthy harvest of sheep  
33 and eliminate the opportunity of hunters killing younger  
34 rams. That's what's happening a lot that's happening,  
35 not a little and there's hunting guides that are taking,  
36 having to turn in sheep that are sublegal because their  
37 -- even assistant guides cannot determine -- they're  
38 trying to count rings, and they screw up. So, that's a  
39 comment I feel that if we're gonna [sic] comment on  
40 Statewide proposals 95 and 96, so. Jenny.

41  
42 MS. PELKOLA: Thank you, member Don, for  
43 that -- whatever you just said. But I too -- I don't  
44 really know about sheep and all that stuff up that way  
45 or wherever they are, and that's why we like to have  
46 members from different area on our Board so, that they  
47 can speak up for their area or, you know -- and let us  
48 we learn from that. Thank you.

49  
50



1                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: It's happened just  
2 sitting here in the last hour. Tommy told us all about  
3 what his deliberation in the Middle Yukon on that  
4 boundary change for 21A and 21E, if we have to have  
5 membership. But I live in the northern part of this  
6 region. I live in the sheep hills. I'm underneath sheep  
7 when I'm trapping wolves, I know where the sheep are at.  
8 I know where the wolves are going, I know, I live with  
9 them all the time, year-round. There's hunters, oh I  
10 know all about sheep. Yeah, you go up in the fall time.  
11 You don't know anything about sheep. You don't know where  
12 they're going, you haven't the slightest idea what  
13 they're doing. I watched -- what drove this, my  
14 opposition to that counting rings and when I watch  
15 hunters climbing a mountain before the closure, going  
16 after three quarter and seven eights' rams, two sheep,  
17 two hunters, both with bows, gonna [sic] go kill those  
18 sheep. It's like, those were five- and six-year-old  
19 rams. That's what showed me that they hadn't the  
20 slightest idea what they were looking at and I watched  
21 him two days in a row, and they tried to kill -- both  
22 days they tried to kill those sheep, but the sheep got  
23 away from them. But their intention was to kill them.  
24 That's why I -- and the data shows in the Arctic Refuge  
25 from 2000 -- or correction 1986 to 2012, there was a  
26 sub, three quarter curl ram started disappearing beyond  
27 that age class. That's a problem, it's a management  
28 problem. So, we should at least comment that they should  
29 think about a five-year closure as a final comment on  
30 our proposals. So, the Chair will entertain a motion to  
31 submit those comments on proposals 95 and 96 to the  
32 State Board of Game, Statewide meeting, which is in  
33 March. Coming up.

34  
35                   MR. HONEA: I make that motion.

36  
37                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Motion by Don. Do  
38 we have a second?

39  
40                   MR. KRISKA: Second.

41  
42                   CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Second by Tommy.  
43 Any further discussion? We have a question. Questions  
44 called. Those in favor of the proposal, submitting those  
45 comments to the Statewide Board of Game meeting on  
46 proposals 95 and 96 signify by saying aye.

47  
48                   IN UNISON: Aye.

49  
50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Opposed, same  
2 sign. And that's an affirmative for Tim. Opposed, same  
3 sign. Motion adopted with those comments, and you  
4 register the comments, Nissa and you'll submit those  
5 soon. Because I think the comment time is very soon. So,  
6 that would be the -- any other proposals, Statewide  
7 proposals we -- I don't see any that we should -- Do you  
8 have any Brian, do you have any Statewide proposals that  
9 we should address? So, I think we're good. So, let's see  
10 here. Nissa, comment?

11  
12 MS. PILCHER: Nissa Pilcher, for the  
13 record. I just did want to note you guys did jump ahead  
14 an agenda item if people are keeping track on the agenda.  
15 So, we ended up just talking about agenda item 12E. So,  
16 we did that, but we were under 12A, which I believe you  
17 guys also finalized when you kind of shifted into talking  
18 about E. So, one thing to note, it is 3:37 you do have  
19 a time certain at 4:00 with the Tanana Chiefs Conference  
20 Tribal Resource Stewardship Department and the Kuskokwim  
21 River Inter Tribal Fish Commission. So, I don't know if  
22 you guys want to take a break before that happens or if  
23 you want to launch into WP24-01. I'm not gonna [sic] say  
24 that that one would be quick. It could be quick, it  
25 could not. So, it's up to you guys.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I said -- excuse  
28 me. That'll put us too close to our next thing to even  
29 cover this. I think we can -- I think Liz can go over  
30 this. I think we can deal with this one fairly quickly.  
31 This has been before us before, and this is the Statewide  
32 sale of Brown bear hides deferred by the Federal  
33 Subsistence Board and so, Liz has a handout. We're gonna  
34 [sic] look that over and then she's gonna [sic] give us  
35 a presentation on that. This is just a review of a  
36 proposal that the State, or correction, the Federal  
37 Subsistence Board wanted us to review again. And so, go  
38 ahead, Liz.

39  
40 MS. WILLIAMS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair  
41 and members of the Council. You have seen this proposal  
42 before and it's in your book. It's WP24-01.

43  
44 MS. PILCHER: It's in the manila folder.

45  
46 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, that's right. So,  
47 while you get to looking at it, I'm gonna [sic] start  
48 telling you it's been to the Board twice now. And the  
49 first time it went to the Board, they deferred it because  
50 the State could not provide the permit needed for Units

1 with bears that had a one bear limit. So, the -- there  
2 is a -- sorry, there is a permit that you need to harvest  
3 these bears, and the Fish and Wildlife Service has  
4 authorized the state of Alaska to issue these permits.  
5 And the state of Alaska can only issue this permit if  
6 it's in a Unit that allows a two-bear harvest. Because  
7 if there's a one bear harvest, they may or may not have  
8 conservation concerns or just lack of knowledge on the  
9 bear population. So, this permit is called the  
10 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species  
11 and we in the government call it CITES. So, this is  
12 about the sale of brown bear hides and what we did --  
13 or actually what the Board asked the staff to do is to  
14 go back and see how can they make this work and so, what  
15 the analysts did and it's not me, it's Pippa Kenner. But  
16 they found out that maybe instead of getting a CITES  
17 permit or a permit that allows you to sell it  
18 internationally, OSM makes its own permit just to sell  
19 it for personal use only within the United States. And  
20 because it's not going to an international sale, you  
21 could sell a brown bear hide harvested under Federal  
22 Subsistence regulations only, which means you take the  
23 meat. And so, this is a way for especially the proponent  
24 who was from McCarthy, who lives in a one bear harvest  
25 Unit area, to harvest a brown bear for subsistence and  
26 sell the hide and instead of having to get a permit from  
27 the State for the Convention on International Trade in  
28 Endangered Species, you would just get a permit from OSM  
29 saying you're doing customary trade. Now, the other  
30 aspect of it is, you still have to get the bear sealed  
31 by the State, because that's how the State keeps track  
32 of bear harvests and bears aren't tracked the way other  
33 species are but with fish, moose, caribou declining,  
34 many more people are relying on bears and so, the Board  
35 said, this sounds like a good idea, but because the  
36 Councils haven't heard it before, we want to take this  
37 back to the Councils to make it clear that under Federal  
38 Subsistence regulations, rural Alaskans, federally  
39 qualified subsistence users, can harvest the brown bear  
40 and sell the hide. And the reason the proponents  
41 suggested this is just to offset some of the cost of  
42 subsistence harvesting, cause it's expensive to buy gas  
43 and ammo and go out and harvest a bear. Now in Alaska,  
44 brown bears are not endangered, but the populations are  
45 very small and low in a lot of the lower 48 States. So,  
46 I saw some hands go up in confusion. I've seen some  
47 nodding heads. So, we may just want to switch to  
48 questions, but this is what the OSM staff has come up  
49 with, showed it to the Board, they said okay, but we  
50 have to make sure the Councils are okay with it. So,

1 like the Chair said, you have looked at this before and  
2 you may not remember. But anyway, I'll stop there and  
3 see if there's any questions.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Council  
6 members this clean this proposal up. I think this was  
7 the best direction that the OSM. Most people are not  
8 gonna [sic] -- you know, most of the people that are  
9 gonna harvest bears under Federal Subsistence  
10 regulations are gonna [sic] get the meat, they could  
11 sell the skin. They'd have to get the State to seal the  
12 skin, the State likes to seal bears. They got to get  
13 certain data, you know, count them and all that. I think  
14 that it would address the State's concern about the  
15 harvest levels and so forth. They would be able to track  
16 the bear harvest. They're not opposed to harvest at all  
17 about bears. They would be able to track the harvest.  
18 So, I think this is a win-win proposal. So, I'm  
19 supportive of this WP24-01 with the OSM language to use  
20 the permitting system of Federal Subsistence permitting  
21 system and the sealing by the State. I think that  
22 addresses all of the issues. Any comments? Am I  
23 misunderstanding anything here, Brian? Go ahead.

24  
25 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, thank you, Mr. Chair.  
26 The permit has not been created yet, and so, you wouldn't  
27 be able to do this until it's actually codified in  
28 regulation. So, the OSM staff with the regulation  
29 specialist within OSM will come up with a permit. So,  
30 that hasn't been decided yet of what the customary permit  
31 -- customary trade permit would say or look like.

32  
33 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, that clarifies  
34 that. Go ahead, Robert.

35  
36 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Liz,  
37 you know, I think it was 20 some years ago that we put  
38 a proposal into the State about customary use of brown  
39 bears hide that where the tribes could take them and I  
40 think it was -- we asked for two, but I think the State  
41 shot us down on that, if I remember right. They said  
42 that we cannot because it's considered not a fur bearing  
43 animal or something like that, not to be to be sold. And  
44 now they come back 20 years later and say, we can do  
45 this. And my other question it was, when I -- we did  
46 talk to them, there was four of us, myself, James Walker,  
47 Carter Morgan and Ron Sam, were the ones that put that  
48 in. But the biologist for the State says, well, you're  
49 gonna [sic] have to be careful now, because north of the  
50 Yukon, it's grizzly bears and south of the Yukon is

1 brown bears. Okay, grizzly bears swim across the river.  
2 Okay, now he's a brown bear. That's true, yes, or no?

3  
4 MS. WILLIAMS: Now they consider them all  
5 the same species.

6  
7 MR. Walker: Well, that's what we were  
8 told.

9  
10 MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, well.....

11  
12 MR. WALKER: I think sometimes, you know,  
13 having two species - you know, I always tell that as a  
14 joke because it's the Fish and Game State. And I always  
15 come here and these guys could never could quite  
16 understand that. That's just like me being an Indian  
17 going down the Anchorage, now I'm a white guy and that  
18 don't work, you know, because I am still who I am. But  
19 to have something like this, I mean, maybe you could  
20 clarify it or try to. Thank you, Liz.

21  
22 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. Thank you, Council  
23 member Walker, through the Chair. Both I believe I could  
24 be wrong, but the State and the Federal Government now  
25 consider black and brown bears as fur bearers. No? Okay,  
26 we'll fix it then. But the other thing is, some of these  
27 regulations have changed since you spoke to those people  
28 20 years ago.

29  
30 MR. WALKER: Well, yes. I mean, I  
31 understand, but you have to be specific when we do say  
32 this, because a brown bear is a different character from  
33 a grizzly bear. So, I mean, I would put both species in  
34 there if I was gonna [sic] be making this proposal  
35 because we could look at both, because they're both very  
36 carnivorous. They're just an eating machine, that's all  
37 they are. And one of these years, you know, we have our  
38 own feelings with our tribe. Just to be specific with  
39 what I'm going to say is that, now we have them roaming  
40 through our villages at night. And if somebody is gonna  
41 [sic] go visit somebody, somebody is gonna [sic] get  
42 eaten one of these days and whose responsibility is gonna  
43 [sic] be? It's not gonna [sic] be the tribal, it's not  
44 gonna [sic] be the city because the State wildlife  
45 trooper came to us and told us they belong to us. Okay,  
46 who bears the responsibility? That would be my other  
47 question for you. I mean, I'm not running this hard on  
48 you, but I wanna [sic] have answers to when I go home  
49 and talk to the tribes that I'm going to emphasize the  
50 point what is brought here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

1

2

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Under the Federal Subsistence Regulations, they don't have brown and grizzly bears. They just have brown bear; they're now recognized as brown bears. You know, they're -- they used to call grizzly bears. A lot of people still say grizzly bears, but they're brown bears. *Ursus arctos*, they're the same animal. And so, the -- I'm looking for the State regulations here. They say brown grizzly bears, so maybe the Federal Subsistence Board or OSM should put brown/grizzly bears so that the public knows what they're actually talking about. So, that's a suggestion in the reg book part. That's what Robert's talking about. It's just the same animal. So, it's just -- it's a -- it's just the description.

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MR. WALKER: It's not the same animal, Jack. Have you ever seen a characteristic of them side by side. You can tell a difference there between a brown bear and a grizzly bear, we could.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah, there, you know, there are certain morphological differences. But as far as they can breed together, you could have them breeding together. They would produce fertile offspring. They're pretty much the same thing. Their, you know, habitat has a lot of bearing on how much fish they eat and stuff like that. But I feel that this proposal WP24-01 is worth supporting by the Council because it addressed the issues. We were supportive of this proposal, and this is what the Federal Subsistence Board does because it's a one bear area the State doesn't go along with. The State only has sale on two bear -- brown bear areas. So, we -- I'm supportive of what OSMs solution to this problem is and I feel that, you know, if somebody takes a bear and you gonna [sic] skin this bear out, you're gonna [sic] take it home and eat it. You should at least be able to sell the skin because the State is -- has very liberal bear harvests for brown grizzly bears. So, there's -- it's not like that we have a huge problem with bears and brown bear grizzly bears in Alaska. So, my feeling about this proposal that it's a worthwhile proposals [sic] and I would like to vote in favor of the proposal with the amended language for this -- for the permitting system. So, any.....

MR. WALKER: I mean. Mr. Chair, I am not going against this, but I just -- you know, I want to have -- or I'd like to see that these are two different species. Because I think if you're gonna [sic] sell a

1 grizzly bear and sell a brown bear, they're -- the brown  
2 bear is a lot bigger than grizzly bear when you stretch  
3 it out. It's something like maybe six foot five for a  
4 grizzly, and you can get like an 8.5 for a brown bear,  
5 nine footers.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I mean but  
8 they're gonna [sic] reg it [sic] -- they're gonna [sic]  
9 manage them. The State is managing under brown/grizzly  
10 bear. They have the same brown/grizzly bear in Unit 24,  
11 that they have in Kodiak Island. So, they're -- it's --  
12 there's -- they're not differentiating. And so, for  
13 this.....

14  
15 MR. WALKER: Tim, are you still online?  
16 Could you tell us the difference between a Kodiak bear  
17 and brown bear?

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: Brown bear from what area?

20  
21 MR. WALKER: From the Yukon.

22  
23 MR. GERVAIS: My take on it, it's all the  
24 same species. It's a naming convention based on the  
25 geographic location of where the bear lives.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Boone and  
28 Crockett Trophy Club delineates brown bears as within  
29 75 miles of the coast and interior of that are referred  
30 to as grizzly bears. It's just for discussion. But as  
31 far as the Board of Game or the Federal Subsistence  
32 Board, they're gonna [sic] manage in the Unit, they're  
33 gonna [sic] manage that general kind of an animal all  
34 the same way. They're not gonna [sic] differentiate  
35 between grizzlies and brown bears inside of the Unit.  
36 So, this proposal is for the sale of brown bears hides  
37 or grizzly bear hides under Federal Subsistence  
38 regulations in bears where there's -- in Units where  
39 there's only one brown bear. So, you had a comment there,  
40 Nissa?

41  
42 MS. PILCHER: I did, I just wanted to  
43 read something real quick from the analysis. And in the  
44 analysis, it does say we and I'm assuming by we, we mean  
45 OSM, classifies all Alaskan brown/grizzly bears as the  
46 same species, *Ursus arctos*, but refer to them  
47 differently depending on where they are found and their  
48 diet. So, in general.....

49  
50 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Page 8.

1

2

MS. PILCHER: The common name brown bear refers to those *Ursus arctos* found in the coastal regions, and the common name grizzly bear refers to those brown bears found in the interior. So, commonly they are referred to differently. It's just OSM and I believe Fish and Game, even though I hate to speak for them, do classify them as just one species, even though it is recognized that there's -- they have different characteristics.

10

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12

MR. UBELAKER: Mr. Chair.

13

14

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Brian.

15

16

MR. UBELAKER: Just hopefully a clarifying point, definitions of the State Regulations Guide. Grizzly bear is defined as, the terms brown bear and grizzly bear are synonymous. Fur bearers, under State regulations, are black bears, they're not grizzly bears or brown bears. Federal regulations -- fur -- definition of fur bearers under Federal regulations, does not cover any species of bear and then the only definition of bear in the Federal regulations is black, brown or grizzly.

25

26

27

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the -- Glen Stout might be able to answer the question for this discussion. How is the State categorizing brown bear, grizzly bears when they're sold? They're not furbearers or they're like just there -- that's part of the management of the brown grizzly bear. Since black bears are fur animals and grizzlies aren't, that seems to be a sticking point here. So, that Glenn's the guy. All right. Go ahead, Glenn.

35

36

37

MR. STOUT: Well, I don't know if I'm the guy. But no, I think you pretty much have it. The grizzly bear, brown bear in regulations, they're more or less synonymous. They're locally referred to brown bears, typically along the coast. Boone and Crockett, I think the 62nd parallel north, everything north of that is actually considered a grizzly. Those are common names, but it's the same species, and the regulations don't differentiate the two.

45

46

47

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This whole thing about black bears under State regulations are furbearers, grizzly bears are not, but they're still sold. So, they're just -- it's the sale of brown grizzly

50



1 bear parts, is part of the management of grizzlies under  
2 State regulation. It's not that they're fur bearers,  
3 it's just part of the hunting regulations.

4

5 MR. STOUT: That's exactly right, they're  
6 not a fur bearer. They're a big game animal.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right. So, that  
9 clarifies the record. That's what the point of  
10 discussion is about. Thanks, Glenn, appreciate that. So,  
11 Don.

12

13 MR. HONEA: Oh, yeah. Mr. Chair, I'm  
14 really kinda confused about this. Can we actually pass  
15 this with modifications, or is that an option? I mean,  
16 I think the confusing part to me is the brown bear hides,  
17 as opposed to grizzly or black or whatever. I -- you  
18 know, and I mean -- actually, you know, I do support  
19 this because what are you gonna [sic] do with it? I  
20 mean, if you could eat it, I mean -- if you take it, I  
21 mean, what's the sense of taking it? I mean, if there  
22 was value to doing that, then so be it. It'd be better  
23 for -- to take her.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Don, go ahead.

26

27 MR. HONEA: You guys talking about brown  
28 bears and grizzly bears. And from what I'm hearing is  
29 in these Units. So, why don't you just voted for any  
30 bear, any brown bear or grizzly bear or whatever they  
31 may be, inside the Units that they're talking about. And  
32 whatever is in that unit, just leave it as is, as that  
33 at that end. Problem solved.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right.

36

37 MR. HONEA: Brown bear or grizzly.  
38 They're both, they're there and that's what you're  
39 looking at. That's what's going to be sold anyway. So,  
40 thank you.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And those Units  
43 would be either two brown bears or subunits would be two  
44 brown bears or one brown bear limit. This would allow  
45 it in the one brown bear Unit. So, we can adopt the  
46 amended proposal. This is the amended proposal by OSM.  
47 We're gonna [sic] adopt this amended proposal. If you're  
48 really stuck on this brown grizzly bear, we could go  
49 brown -- grizzly/brown bear in the title there and we  
50 could discuss, put that in there. That would be the

1 modification is to change brown grizzly bear and then  
2 adopt the amended language and then we're good. And it  
3 would be strictly for Units that are one brown bear  
4 units. That's what the sticking point is two versus one.  
5 And Robert.

6  
7 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
8 support it too. But you know, if a buyer comes, say,  
9 hey, this is grizzly bear. I'm not gonna [sic] give you  
10 much for this as I would for a brown bear. That was my  
11 question. So, but if we're gonna [sic] declare it like  
12 we say we're gonna [sic] do, that's fine with me. But I  
13 still know the difference, you know? And I'll tell them,  
14 you know, this is the same price. Whatever it is we're  
15 gonna [sic] sell it'll cost you \$10,000, even though  
16 it's a grizzly bear, so.

17  
18 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right.

19  
20 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the Chair will  
23 enter -- oh, Tommy.

24  
25 MR. KRISKA: Oh, yeah. I have a lot of  
26 pictures of the bears that we shot, and I could tell  
27 some of them are brown bears and way in the interior and  
28 some are grizzlies that are in the interior. Maybe 50%  
29 of them are brown bears, there's some big bears. And so,  
30 it's like I said, it's -- go ahead with the Unit,  
31 whatever is that in the unit is go with that. Because  
32 you're never gonna [sic] tell -- they're never gonna  
33 [sic] give you a chance to figure if they're grizzly or  
34 brown bear. They're gone in a minute.

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the proposal is  
37 about Units. It's about bear -- Game management units  
38 that only have one brown bear limit. That's what the  
39 proposal revolves around. And so -- and just a general  
40 sale on Federal Subsistence regulations.

41  
42 MR. KRISKA: I guess it was just two  
43 bears in whatever those Units were, right? It's only  
44 allowed in where there's two bears?

45  
46 MS. WILLIAMS: So, every Unit -- this is  
47 Liz Williams, OSM. Every Unit has a limit in the Federal  
48 Subsistence regulations and the State regulations. And  
49 the State could not issue the proper permits for a one-  
50 bear Unit. But under Federal Subsistence regulations,

1 you can harvest it in a one-bear Unit. And so, different  
2 Units have different amounts as their limit depending  
3 on the population maybe. And so, there are -- I think  
4 there's a few Units with even more than two, maybe not.  
5 But anyway, you can't get the Federal -- the  
6 International Sale Permit for a one-bear Unit through  
7 the State. So, OSM wanted to make it accessible to one  
8 bear Units as well as the two bear Units, and both brown  
9 and grizzly are included.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Tommy.

12

13 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, that's kind of a touchy  
14 deal, that when you allow bear hides and bear all this  
15 stuff to be sold, and you're gonna [sic] have to watch  
16 it, because they may be a lot of bears out there, but  
17 there's a lot of ambitious people that want money. And  
18 it's going to end quick. So, we've got to be prepared  
19 to put a stop to it in some way. I'm not sure, but I'm  
20 [sic] kinda.....

21

22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: They were -- I want  
23 to clarify that they're gonna [sic] have to get them  
24 sealed before they can sell them. So, they would -- the  
25 State would be tracking the number of harvests. And Glenn  
26 has a specific number of bears that can be harvested by  
27 Game. Right, Glenn? You got a -- pretty much each Game  
28 management Unit has a specific amount of bears that's  
29 harvestable surplus for that Unit. If that starts to get  
30 out of control, then their proposals could eliminate  
31 that. But right now, nobody's shooting bears. There's  
32 hardly -- the bear population keeps getting bigger,  
33 which shows the harvest is not restraining the bear  
34 population. And Subsistence -- this is a Subsistence  
35 proposal. The number of Subsistence eligibility is  
36 actually way smaller than the general population. So, I  
37 don't see where that's gonna [sic] be a big problem. I  
38 -- but if it does, it can -- they do have to be sealed  
39 to be able to sell them. You have to bring it to Glenn  
40 to get it sealed. He goes like, well, gee whiz, you guys  
41 are getting 25 bears out of your subunit here. We're  
42 gonna [sic] shut -- we're gonna [sic] have to throttle  
43 this down. So, that's -- but I would be surprised.

44

45 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Don.

48

49 MR. HONEA: Is there a motion on the  
50 floor?

000116

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Not yet. I'm trying  
3 to get one.  
4  
5 MR. HONEA: Okay. I make that motion to  
6 support.  
7  
8 (Simultaneous speech)  
9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: With the amended  
11 language?  
12  
13 MR. HONEA: With the amended language.  
14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, with  
16 the.....  
17  
18 MR. HONEA: Thank you.  
19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: With the caveat  
21 that these are brown grizzly bear. So, we got a second  
22 for that?  
23  
24 MS. PILCHER: Can I offer  
25 clarification.....  
26  
27 (Simultaneous speech)  
28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Sorry, correction.  
30 Go ahead, Nissa.  
31  
32 MS. PILCHER: I just wanted to -- in the  
33 - so, you moved to support the revised OSM conclusion  
34 in the addendum, which would be that new -- that  
35 information that you guys were just talking about. So,  
36 I just want to make sure that that is clear and on the  
37 record.  
38  
39 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Right.  
40  
41 MS. PILCHER: Don, is that what you  
42 wanted? So, that's what we were just talking about, the  
43 new permit.  
44  
45 MR. HONEA: Exactly.  
46  
47 MS. PILCHER: Okay, there we go. So, we  
48 just need a second. Thanks, Don.  
49  
50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the motion  
2 should read for WP24-01 February 25, OSM addendum with  
3 all of the supporting language, support with  
4 modification language. That's what we're talking about.  
5 Do we have a second, Tommy, was that you?

6  
7 MR. KRISKA: Second.

8  
9 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Seconded. Further  
10 discussion on WP24-01 with addendum Modification  
11 Language. Questions called. Those in favor of the  
12 proposal as modified, signified by saying aye.

13  
14 IN UNISON: Aye.

15  
16 Opposed, same sign. Motion is adopted.  
17 So, now we're gonna [sic] go to break. Oh, go -- you got  
18 to find.....

19  
20 MR. WALKER: Mr. Chair, thank you. Could  
21 we have the people -- could they get this permit online  
22 rather than have to go to find an office out in rural  
23 Alaska?

24  
25 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you, member Walker.  
26 Through the Chair, this is Liz at OSM. I don't know. We  
27 hope so, but that hasn't been determined yet. The Board  
28 is waiting to find out the Council's wishes related to  
29 this, and I -- as I understand it, the permit will be  
30 created after.

31  
32 MR. VICKERS: I'll just add Liz is very  
33 correct in everything she says. I'll just add that --  
34 this is Brent Vickers, OSM, for the record. That we are  
35 working on an online database. That is something that  
36 OSM is working on. I'm hoping it goes live at some point  
37 soon but still working through a lot of the kinks and  
38 it's quite possible that if this particular proposal is  
39 adopted, it might take a little while for that permit  
40 goes into effect. Because, of just government stuff and  
41 trying to get a new permit started and everything. So,  
42 we'll have to -- once this gets adopted, we'll have to  
43 get back to you on how soon we can start the permit and  
44 how - what the status of the online database is at that  
45 time.

46  
47 MR. WALKER: Yes, that sounds like a  
48 perfect plan. You know, that's another thing with our  
49 government-to-government consultation with the tribe.  
50 So, if you can keep this up with the tribes and out in

1 rural Alaska. Just send them flyers or whatever. This  
2 would be so grateful. That way we wouldn't have to ask  
3 questions or call people up, which a lot of times people  
4 don't get to happen because it's the same question over  
5 and over and over. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

6  
7 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're gonna [sic]  
8 have to go to a timeout for ten minutes, and then we  
9 have time certain Tanana Chiefs Conference Tribal  
10 Resource Stewardship Department and Kuskokwim Inter-  
11 Tribal Fish Commission joint presentation on the chum  
12 bycatch. And so, I'm sorry we got bottled up here with  
13 -- we're running a hair behind schedule, but we need a  
14 ten-minute break. Ten. We're gonna [sic] be back at  
15 quarter after four.

16  
17 MS. PILCHER: We say five, but we know  
18 it'll be ten anyway

19  
20 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Let's say five.

21  
22 (Off record)

23  
24 (On record)

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're gonna  
27 [sic] be coming back to order. We're past our ten  
28 minutes, always -- five minutes or so over. So, Tommy,  
29 let's see who else we need here. Where's Robert? Robert  
30 and Don. Where'd they go?

31  
32 MS. PILCHER: They might be outside. I  
33 can go look for them. I just want to.....

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So.....

36  
37 MS. PILCHER: I can go look for him out  
38 in the hallway. But just so everybody knows, Krystal  
39 just helped me by passing out a green folder. The green  
40 folder is intended for this presentation and then also  
41 information regarding the session this evening. I didn't  
42 want to get them mixed up together. So, her PowerPoint  
43 is in there. I will be putting it on the screen, but I'm  
44 gonna [sic] go pop out in the hallway.

45  
46 (Pause)

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You can introduce  
49 yourself if you'd like. Turn the mic on.

50

1 MS. LAPP: Good afternoon. I didn't know  
2 if we were still waiting for people to get seated. But  
3 I'm happy to introduce myself. I'm Krystal Lapp, I'm  
4 with Tanana Chiefs Conference in their Tribal Resource  
5 Stewardship Department. I am the natural resource policy  
6 analyst. So, I'll be providing a quick presentation  
7 today that kind of preludes into the special engagement  
8 session with the North Pacific tonight. And through the  
9 Chair, just let me know when you would like me to get  
10 started on the presentation.

11  
12 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Council members in  
13 the room. So, Robert, Don, we're getting the  
14 presentation here. So, go ahead and proceed.

15  
16 MS. LAPP: Thank you, Chair and members  
17 of the RAC. Let me just make sure it's up. We're still  
18 working on getting the presentation put on the  
19 projector. However, you guys did receive a handout of  
20 the hard copy presentation, so. And there are print outs  
21 available for members of the public over there on the  
22 resource table. All right, so since I already introduced  
23 myself and I'm going to go through my little spiel here.  
24 So, good afternoon, everyone. Today I'll be discussing  
25 the ongoing environmental impact statement process for  
26 the chum salmon bycatch management in the Bering Sea.  
27 My presentation will be highlighting the role of tribal  
28 cooperating agencies through this process. The tribal  
29 cooperating agencies include Tanana Chiefs Conference,  
30 and the Kuskokwim River Inter Tribal Fish Commission.  
31 I'm the only one up here today. My co-author with the  
32 Kusko Fish Commission is on vacation, which I fully  
33 endorse.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Who is your co-  
36 author?

37  
38 MS. LAPP: Her name is Teresa Vicenti  
39

40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.  
41

42 MS. LAPP: And on the very last slide,  
43 it does include both of our contact information. Which  
44 is why I'm going off of the script here, cause they're  
45 not here to answer questions. But again, this  
46 presentation is intended as an overview of the  
47 contributions made by the cooperating agencies and a  
48 high-level overview of the revised five alternatives,  
49 TCC and KRITFC to the chum salmon bycatch process. It  
50 is not meant to provide detailed technical explanations

1 or advocate for specific policies on alternatives.  
2 However, the opportunity to ask those types of questions  
3 will be available this evening during the special RAC  
4 North Pacific Council engagement at 6:30. And so, as we  
5 go on to slide two, page two, this is a brief overview  
6 on what a cooperating role means. I do want to highlight  
7 that the cooperating agency agreements that we've  
8 entered into with NOAA NMFS is pretty unprecedented, and  
9 we've both been navigating this environmental impact  
10 statement process going forth. So basically, what  
11 cooperating agency means is that we were identified as  
12 having specific expertise and our specific expertise as  
13 cooperating agencies, our role is basically to ensure  
14 that traditional knowledge and scientific data and lived  
15 experiences of our communities are accurately  
16 represented within the Chum Bycatch Environmental Impact  
17 Statement process. While we will highlight the impacts  
18 of salmon declines in key areas of concern, the final  
19 policy decisions will be made through the formal  
20 regulatory process, with input from multiple  
21 stakeholders.

22  
23 As cooperating agencies within the EIS,  
24 TCC and KRITFC have provided again traditional  
25 knowledge, scientific data and lived experiences to  
26 ensure the voices of our communities are heard in Federal  
27 decision making. We've contributed to key sections of  
28 the draft EIS focusing on the environmental, cultural,  
29 economic impacts of the salmon declines specific to chum  
30 salmon. I want to highlight that this EIS process  
31 formally began in July 2023 and is currently ongoing.  
32 The average time of this process is anywhere from one  
33 to three years, and potentially more, depending on the  
34 complexity [sic]. As far as, when we became  
35 cooperating agencies, KRITFC became a cooperating agency  
36 in October 2023 and in April of 2024 Tanana Chiefs  
37 Conference became a cooperating agency. The other  
38 cooperating agency is the Alaska Department of Fish and  
39 Game, and currently the National Marine Fisheries  
40 Service, or NOAA fisheries, is lead agency in the EIS  
41 process. And just to expand a little bit on the specific  
42 special expertise that we were identified as in our MOU.  
43 It's regarding the life cycles, including freshwater and  
44 marine stages of chum salmon management and Subsistence  
45 use in the Kuskokwim Yukon River, environmental,  
46 economic and social importance to the Kuskokwim and  
47 Yukon River regions. Our expertise also includes  
48 traditional knowledge, local knowledge, Western  
49 scientific data and experience as salmon management  
50 agencies within the Kuskokwim and Yukon areas. KRITFC



1 was also identified as a special expertise to include  
2 traditional knowledge, local knowledge and Western  
3 science expertise in the Bering Sea ecosystem, including  
4 impacts of salmon bycatch on the Kuskokwim River  
5 ecosystem, community and economies. So, if you go to  
6 page three. This is just a general highlight of direct  
7 contributions that TCC and KRITFC provided to the body  
8 of the EIS. We also have some appendices, which is on  
9 page four. But I want to highlight that our focus has  
10 been on incorporating traditional knowledge historical  
11 data and scientific analysis to ensure that the lived  
12 experiences of our people along the Kuskokwim and the  
13 Yukon rivers and its tributaries are reflected in the  
14 decision-making process. Our contributions cover  
15 critical areas such as the cultural, economic and health  
16 implications of chum salmon declines. The role of chum  
17 salmon and subsistence economies, and the cumulative  
18 effects of environmental changes as well as bycatch  
19 policies. If you go to page four, you'll see that within  
20 the body of the EIS as cooperating agencies, we've  
21 contributed to over 18 sections in the main document,  
22 as well as provided seven appendices. Those appendices  
23 serve as additional and supplemental information to the  
24 co-authored sections within the chum bycatch, EIS, and  
25 or points that we wanted to make sure were put forth for  
26 decision making that were not in the main document. And  
27 I just want to put a note out there, if you would like  
28 me to send any of our appendices or the specific sections  
29 within the EIS that we've co-authored, I can get that  
30 to your coordinator, and she can distribute those and  
31 then also at Tanana Chiefs, we are happy to provide  
32 printed materials as well, if that would work better.  
33 And so, we go on to page five. And this is just a basic  
34 overview of the February 2025 North Pacific Fishery  
35 Management Council. They held a special meeting on this  
36 is EIS in February. So, just a few weeks ago. That was  
37 because the second preliminary draft was published  
38 December 20th of 2024. And so, what happened there is  
39 we had tribal members, we had tribes, we had tribal non-  
40 profits, tribal consortiums, as well as allied  
41 organizations attend this meeting to help guide the  
42 regulatory process as we move forward in finalizing this  
43 draft and getting it ready for publication. I do want  
44 to highlight that TCC and KRITFC provided presentations  
45 to the Advisory Panel as well as the Council, and then  
46 we were available for questions with the Scientific and  
47 Statistical Committee. Overall, our presentations were  
48 well received. We received a lot of great questions from  
49 all of the committees and Council members. And then  
50 ultimately some decisions were made based off of

1 testimonies. And just for reference, we had over 80  
2 people testify to the Advisory Panel and over 180 people  
3 testify. And this is in person to the Council. I do want  
4 to highlight again that we had testimony from tribal  
5 members along the Yukon-Kuskokwim, Bristol Bay, Norton  
6 Sound, and Southeast Alaska. They all sent tribal  
7 representatives and there was a big amount of unity  
8 amongst all of the tribes that were there, even those  
9 who were not experiencing the chum salmon declines that  
10 we are on the Yukon. (Pause) Oh sorry, and I just want  
11 to note that again, based on the feedback, the Council  
12 has now revised some of the alternatives for the chum  
13 salmon bycatch management. And I'll go into that a little  
14 bit further as we go into a few other -- well, the last  
15 page, trying to make it short and sweet for everybody  
16 here. So, the next page contains and it's the last page,  
17 it contains a lot of information. And again, we know  
18 that you guys got a lot of paperwork, so we wanted to  
19 keep it pretty short and sweet and to the point. The  
20 first section goes over the summary of alternatives to  
21 be analyzed. As we move forward, there are still five  
22 alternatives. There have been slight revisions to a  
23 couple of those. We did our best to summarize those but  
24 again, this evening in the special engagement, more of  
25 those technical kinda [sic] nitty gritty information  
26 will be provided. As the process continues, there's  
27 still several critical steps that lie ahead. The North  
28 Pacific Fishery Management Council, National Marine  
29 Fisheries Service and the cooperating agencies will  
30 continue refining the analysis of the draft  
31 Environmental Impact Statement, which is set to be  
32 published with the Federal Register sometime in August,  
33 is the anticipated date. Once released, there's gonna  
34 [sic] be opportunities for public comment and we  
35 strongly encourage tribal representatives, tribal  
36 members, community members and members of Boards and  
37 commissions such as this RAC to remain actively engaged  
38 and participate. Additionally, NMFS remains open to  
39 requests for tribal consultation. This is to ensure that  
40 Indigenous perspectives are fully covered or considered  
41 in the final decision-making process. On the bottom  
42 portion of this presentation, it does not provide dates.  
43 I did not have that at the time that we drafted this  
44 presentation. However, I do have that now. So, the next  
45 phase or phases involves finalizing the draft EIS, which  
46 again, once published, a public comment period will open  
47 for that. This process helps refine the proposed  
48 alternatives as we go through the finalization process  
49 and ensuring that the final policies align with  
50 community priorities while promoting sustainable

1 fisheries management. That is the goal of the  
2 cooperating agencies. We also urge everyone to continue  
3 to stay informed, participate in discussions and  
4 contribute to shaping the final EIS through public  
5 comment. Or you can always reach out to myself or Teresa  
6 Vicenti if you have specific questions or you would like  
7 additional tribal input put into this final draft. So,  
8 going forward, August 2025 is when we anticipate NMFS  
9 will be publishing the final draft to the Federal  
10 Register. There will be a 60-day public comment period  
11 on that. December 2025 is the anticipated final action  
12 of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. Which  
13 basically just means that they're going to hopefully  
14 choose a preferred alternative or a combination of  
15 alternatives and approve the draft EIS as final. As we  
16 go into the next year, we're gonna [sic] be looking at  
17 November 2026 of the issuance of the final EIS. The next  
18 month, in December, the issuance of record of decision  
19 in roughly six months, depending on the complexity of  
20 what's chosen, regulations would be implemented on that  
21 record of decision. Please keep in mind that this  
22 timeline is per the NEPA process and doesn't necessarily  
23 reflect the urgency or the motivation of the North  
24 Pacific Council to actually get this record of decision  
25 going. So, we are hoping that we can fast track this a  
26 little bit because we do want to ensure that our salmon  
27 populations are being protected in some way in the Bering  
28 Sea. But again, I want to just thank you guys for your  
29 time and allowing me to come up here. I have a lot of  
30 information that I could be up here for a whole day. So,  
31 I apologize if there's holes in this presentation. But  
32 I do, again, encourage questions and I encourage you  
33 guys to reach out one on one.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, does any  
36 Council members have questions on Krystal's  
37 presentation? Okay. I have Don. Go right ahead.

38  
39 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Krystal  
40 I -- oh there's a lot of questions, actually, but so,  
41 the alternatives like alternatives one through five. Is  
42 that the timeline on there or this will be done or  
43 something like that. I mean I see you got bycatch, I see  
44 you got numbers in there. So, how does that work with -  
45 - where are you on the alternatives? Is that a  
46 appropriate question? I mean, I'm just wondering, you  
47 know, how does that work? How does your alternatives  
48 work? If you could explain that. Thank you.

49  
50

1 MS. LAPP: Through the Chair. Thank you,  
2 Don, for that question. It is quite a confusing process.  
3 And as someone who came into this process a few years  
4 ago as an advocate and delegate and now the policy  
5 analyst, I will let you know that I'm still always  
6 continuing learning this process. So, with that said,  
7 the alternatives were not picked by the cooperating  
8 agencies they were formed by this Environmental Impact  
9 Statement. And so, these five alternatives came about  
10 from public comment, from analysis and from the data.  
11 So, the reason why we listed those out is because we  
12 wanted you to be aware of a very vague or a very short  
13 summary of those alternatives. As far as where we're at  
14 in the timeline of those that's not something as a  
15 cooperating agency, we would be able to pick a preferred  
16 alternative and be able to have the North Pacific  
17 implement that in. That's where that public comment  
18 comes in. In your guy's packet over here, we do have  
19 Chief Elias Saylor's position statement on the preferred  
20 alternatives that TCC has put in. What we're looking at  
21 as far as when an alternative or combination of  
22 alternatives would be chosen that would be anticipated  
23 in that December 2025 meeting. And so, that's where that  
24 would be chosen, Don. I hope that answered your question.  
25 Sorry, it's a pretty loaded question. I'm trying to keep  
26 it real short and sweet.

27  
28 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair. Yeah, thank you,  
29 Krystal. I realize it's a loaded question. If it wasn't  
30 your alternatives then, you know, I don't know how you'd  
31 answer that, but this whole thing is -- I've actually  
32 haven't been with the what is it, the Inter-Tribal Fish  
33 Commission. I've actually missed a few of their meetings  
34 this winter. And so, I'm kind of behind on, you know,  
35 where we are, the projected chum, kings, whatever. So,  
36 I'm just coming in kind of blind here, but I thank you  
37 for that.

38  
39 MS. LAPP: Oh, sorry. Through the Chair.  
40 Just some additional information, as we move forward  
41 into the finalization process of this EIS, both the  
42 cooperating agencies, as well as other tribal agencies  
43 throughout Alaska will be providing webinars, handouts,  
44 and we have a list of policy people that you can reach  
45 out to, one on one to get clarification on this process  
46 and to get caught up. We also have some resources listed  
47 on the Kuskokwim Fish Commission website and TCC's  
48 website as well.

49  
50

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Any other Council  
2 questions for Krystal? You're still there, Tim Gervais.

3  
4 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, I am. Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chair. Krystal, this is Tim Gervais. Can you explain  
6 briefly why there isn't EIS being developed for this  
7 management plan, and how often these management plans  
8 are developed?

9  
10 MS. LAPP: Through the Chair. That is an  
11 excellent question. I'm actually going to defer that to  
12 the special engagement tonight. Just because we as a  
13 cooperating agency, we do have the history on how this  
14 came about. But I think some of those questions will be  
15 answered as well in their presentation. I do have a  
16 timeline slide of kinda [sic] how we got here. And I can  
17 definitely pull that up and send that over to Nissa to  
18 make sure you guys get it as well. It's highly detailed,  
19 there's a lot of information in there. And again, just  
20 to be courteous of time, I could probably spend hours  
21 talking about that timeline as to how we got here. This  
22 has been a few, quite a few years in the making, and we  
23 still have quite a few years to go before we get this  
24 record of decision. So, if that's agreeable through the  
25 Chair and through the members, I will be happy to send  
26 that off right now.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
29 Did that answer your question, Tim?

30  
31 MR. GERVAIS: (Indiscernible) question,  
32 Mr. Chair?

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, go ahead, Tim.

35  
36 MR. GERVAIS: Krystal, I'm looking on,  
37 let me see what page this is, page 18 of 104. I don't  
38 think it's your presentation. It's the actual draft EIS  
39 and you have a pie chart showing that about three  
40 quarters of the bycatch is from either Northeast or  
41 Southeast Asia. And I'm wondering, based on your  
42 interaction with North Pacific Management Council, what  
43 -- how does the Council and how do these Asian countries  
44 -- what's their response to that level of bycatch from  
45 their homeward fish?

46  
47 MS. LAPP: Just clarifying question  
48 through the Chair, for Tim. You're asking, you are  
49 looking at the EIS, and I do understand that. I believe  
50 you're looking at an analysis that was not part of the

1 cooperating agency analysis regarding the percentage  
2 amount of chum bycatch that are coming from foreign  
3 countries and what the North Pacific feels or thinks  
4 about that? I just want to clarify.

5  
6 MR. GERVAIS: Yeah, I'm wondering if they  
7 regard, like obviously they're -- they get feedback from  
8 Alaskan groups that are concerned with chum salmon  
9 bycatch. But what does -- what are the concerned parties  
10 such as North Pacific Management Council and the two  
11 cooperating agencies, TCC and Kuskokwim Inter-Tribal  
12 Fish Commission, what degree of concern is there  
13 regarding these non-Alaskan bycatch components, which  
14 are extremely large.

15  
16 MS. LAPP: Through the Chair. Yes, thank  
17 you for clarifying that. So, I definitely can't speak  
18 on behalf of the North Pacific Fishery Management  
19 Council. Or NOAA NMFS. I do want to note that on our,  
20 let's see, that'd be page three of our little  
21 presentation. In one of those bubbles it talks about,  
22 like the cumulative effects as well as, like the  
23 ecosystem and things like that. Kusko Fish Commission  
24 and TCC are highly concerned with the amount of non-  
25 Native chum salmon to our area and how much that is  
26 making up the bycatch. So, we did address some of that  
27 briefly in our appendices as well as in the body of the  
28 EIS. It is a concern but I would definitely say, hold  
29 that question as well for the North Pacific this evening.  
30 I think that they would be better able to state their  
31 position on their side. But in a nutshell, yes, it is  
32 concerning how many fish are coming from those areas.

33  
34 MR. GERVAIS: Okay. Thank you for your  
35 presentation and thank you and the Kuskokwim  
36 International Travel Fish Commission for getting  
37 involved with this important matter. That's all I have,  
38 Mr. Chair.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Tim.  
41 Any other questions?

42  
43 (No response)

44  
45 I appreciate your presentation,  
46 Krystal. It's -- I see your discussions here from TCC  
47 about the various options alternatives. And for years  
48 I've -- I felt that they -- there should be area closures  
49 and time, and the setting bycatch limits in this. When  
50 we got these kind of stock returns like, there's not a

1 lot of data about the -- I took genetic samples on the  
2 Koyukuk River for chum salmon. We got a big data set,  
3 but we're not actually taking it at Area M we're not  
4 actually looking at what the genetic makeup is moving  
5 into the Bering Sea. And so, they're basically going to  
6 track across the Bering Sea, and they need to move the  
7 fleet out of that -- out of the direction of that travel.  
8 There's certain time frames, the trigger could be when  
9 Area M begins to harvest and when they start catching  
10 significant bycatch of chum salmon. That's your starting  
11 point when you're going to have fish intercepted in the  
12 Bering Sea with the trawl fleet. The -- you know, when  
13 you take the big pie of all the bycatch throughout the  
14 entire year. And so, the fleets fishing on some hatchery  
15 fish from over from Asia. And that's mixing apples and  
16 oranges. We're trying to get our fish back to the  
17 spawning grounds and whether the -- their travel time  
18 is in the summer. So, area time of enclosure is a big  
19 deal. And I see that you know, that's more supported by  
20 TCC.

21  
22 But your -- as your State it's -- we're  
23 still a long ways out on their development of, you know,  
24 they -- they're gonna [sic] want to keep bumping these  
25 caps up. And I'm not real excited about seeing really  
26 high ceilings on those caps when we have such abysmal  
27 returns. I mean, some of these -- there's discrete  
28 stocks, you know, you're talking about discrete stocks.  
29 There's discrete stocks that can be completely  
30 obliterated with -- if harvest occurs at heavy times of  
31 the year. So, this is -- these are some of the questions  
32 I have. I have questions about the pink and chum salmon  
33 release in the North Pacific, and the competition for  
34 our stocks in general. There's these other issues that  
35 the North Pacific is gonna [sic] have -- Pacific  
36 Fisheries Management Council is gonna [sic] have to take  
37 a more holistic outlook on what this problem is. It  
38 would actually behoove them to actually analyze, they  
39 have the staff to analyze. NOAA takes trophic level  
40 inventories on the Pacific Ocean. They could correlate  
41 that to marine bird die offs and other declines in  
42 populations. And they could set, they could have  
43 suggestions of hatchery release in the North Pacific,  
44 Bering and North Gulf of Alaska there has to be a bigger  
45 outlook on this. And so, I feel that you're looking at  
46 all of these various issues and the, you know, the in-  
47 season warm water effects with the size reduction. There  
48 -- this has gotta [sic] -- this puzzle's been busted  
49 open, and it's got a lot of little pieces that all fit  
50 together. And so, but some of the big glaring pieces

1 that are just sitting there in plain view, you can see  
2 the picture is too many stock fish, hatchery fish moving  
3 on to the -- out into the marine system, when we have  
4 marine declines like this. And so, North Pacific, it  
5 behooves them to actually -- they have a lot of political  
6 power to leverage for reductions in hatchery to get more  
7 fish back. So, they don't come under spotlight, killing  
8 the last returning fish. That's what I'm gonna [sic] be  
9 talking to the North Pacific about myself personally.  
10 So, I really appreciate all the work. And you have a lot  
11 of stuff rolling around in your head, and I can see  
12 that, and you would just, would love to just talk to us  
13 for hours. But I'm pretty short on time here because  
14 we're gonna [sic] have to go to dinner break pretty  
15 soon. And because we gotta [sic] be back here at 6:30  
16 prompt. We gotta [sic] get this council at this table  
17 at 6:30 p.m. cause we got two hours to talk to the North  
18 Pacific Fisheries Management Council and make some.....

19  
20 UNIDENTIFIED: (Indiscernible)

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I don't have any  
23 money. And the OSMs broke, they took their cards away  
24 from yesterday. So, I do appreciate your discussion. You  
25 have any final comments?

26  
27 MS. ERICKSON: No, I just want to say,  
28 some of the points that you had brought up when it comes  
29 to time, area closures and caps. During the last two  
30 North Pacific meetings where we had strong testifiers  
31 come in there, the revisions made, or new alternatives  
32 added was a direct result of that interaction amongst  
33 our people and our allies. So, my biggest thing is, you  
34 know, keep engaging as RAC. I do appreciate all of the  
35 letters that both the Eastern and Western Interior RACs  
36 have submitted to the North Pacific. And then  
37 individually, make sure that you go home and tell your  
38 people that this is an important thing. The things that  
39 do happen in -- when our juvenile salmon are out there,  
40 you know, living it up in the world. They need to be  
41 able to go live it up, but they need to make it sure  
42 they get back home. So yeah, we do know that this is a  
43 multifaceted issue. I want to just make that loud and  
44 clear. We know that it's typically, like most other  
45 things that fall, it isn't just one thing that makes it  
46 fall. It's a cumulative effect of many different things.  
47 But as humans and as people who are stewards of our  
48 land, and our fish, and our wildlife and our waters both  
49 in the interior and those who make the regulatory  
50 decisions out in the ocean. They're stewards too,



1 whether they want to believe it or not, because they  
2 make those decisions for the people. So, my biggest thing  
3 is, while there's many different things that we can't  
4 control as humans, we need to look at the things we can  
5 control. And where can we change those? And so,  
6 throughout this whole EIS process that I've been  
7 through, that's really what we're focusing on. And when  
8 we look at our traditional knowledge and we look at our  
9 knowledge holders and our elders, that is a big thing  
10 that they hone in to me, every single time, is we can't  
11 control everything. We can only control what we do. So,  
12 I want to definitely say, Chief Green from Galena Loudon  
13 over there, when we were down at the North Pacific, he  
14 asked the question of when you leave today, did you do  
15 everything that you possibly could? Whether that leads  
16 to something that you want or not. But did you do  
17 everything you possibly could? And if you say yes, then  
18 you did. But if you say no, then you didn't. So, I just  
19 wanted to leave that there cause [sic] that definitely  
20 stuck in my brain, on those days where I feel like I'm  
21 not doing enough. And yes, you're right I definitely  
22 have tons of stuff bouncing around my head, and I could  
23 take a whole week if I would like to go over everything,  
24 but unfortunately, I can't. And that's why, again, feel  
25 free to reach out and if I don't have the answer, I'll  
26 find someone that does have the answer. So, senii.

27  
28 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thank you.  
29 Don.

30  
31 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 Krystal, I'm a little confused here. So, you -- there's  
33 nobody in the audience here that is representing Yukon  
34 River Intertribal Fish Commission. Is that Eva Dawn? I  
35 mean so, I mean, it's kinda interesting that you know,  
36 the -- you guys' position or something I'm trying to  
37 figure it out. Is that hunting and fishing and stuff and  
38 -- because it you know, it changes so often, the Boards  
39 or the seats change so often. So, if we - so, it seems  
40 like you guys got a pretty good handle on the chum and  
41 stuff like that. But isn't that the job of the Yukon  
42 Intertribal Fish Commission? I mean, is that even on am  
43 I mixing it up here, because I -- last I know, it was  
44 the gal from Eagle. What's her name? Karma. Yeah. And  
45 so, I've been out of the loop since then, but I was just  
46 --it's kinda confusing, under what umbrella everybody -  
47 - and I don't wanna [sic] take too much time on this,  
48 but I just thought if I had the fish questions like  
49 this. Do I go to Yukon Inter Tribal or you guys? Thank  
50 you.

1

2 MS. ERICKSON: Yeah, I could just give a  
3 quick update. So, Karma, chief Karma Ulvi of Eagle was  
4 the Chair up until about end of November for the Fish  
5 Commission, and she was also the Acting ED. She stepped  
6 down from that role and they had an executive Council  
7 meeting, and they appointed Charlie Wright as the Chair  
8 of the Fish Commission. He's now the Acting ED also. And  
9 they're in the process of becoming their own 501C3  
10 standalone entity. And they had a meeting early January  
11 and I believe they have another meeting date set for end  
12 of April. We did have representatives, Eva, and they  
13 hired Jazmyn Vent as their outreach coordinator, but I  
14 think they stepped away. But we could talk more after,  
15 too, about touching base with them more.

16

17 MR. HONEA: Okay, just one quick question  
18 here. So yeah. So, even though Charlie and Eva and them,  
19 they're still in there, you guys support them,  
20 supplement them with help in the fisheries?

21

22 MS. ERICKSON: Yeah. So, the Fish  
23 Commission and TCC will remain like sister orgs, similar  
24 to how we work with Denakkanaaga and F&A and Doyon as  
25 sister orgs working towards similar goals. Yeah, and so,  
26 we will continue to work on fisheries issues at TCC. Our  
27 chiefs won't let us not work on fish so, we'll always  
28 remain in that arena also.

29

30 MS. LAPP: I just wanted to add that per  
31 our MOU that we signed, the Yukon River Intertribal Fish  
32 Commission is listed as a sister organization and has  
33 contributed to the EIS in the appendices. So, we do work  
34 closely with them on this process.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Final  
37 comment Tommy?

38

39 MR. KRISKA: Yeah, thank you. Thank you,  
40 guys, for all you do. And I've been there for a lot of  
41 years with you guys, and I really appreciate everything  
42 that you're doing. I'm sorry I missed the last few  
43 meetings. I'm like Don a little bit, kind of bouncing  
44 around and you get into a lot of other things and then  
45 -- but never give up. And just you guys are doing a  
46 great job from what I can see and thank you for that.  
47 And I know something will happen. Thank you.

48

49 MS. ERICKSON: Thank you, Tommy.

50

000131

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Tommy.  
2 Thank you.

3  
4 MS. LAPP: Thank you.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're gonna  
7 [sic] go to break, dinner break. And we're gonna [sic]  
8 be back here at 6:30 p.m. sharp. We can leave these and  
9 we're gonna [sic] come back here. We're gonna [sic] have  
10 a.....

11  
12 (Off record)

13  
14 (On record)

15  
16 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, what time is  
17 it? Oh, we're two minutes late. Are you there, Tim? Tim  
18 Gervais?

19  
20 MR. GERVAIS: Yes, Jack. I'm here.

21  
22 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And just  
23 maybe get a little close to your mic. So, we're gonna  
24 [sic] to bring this meeting to order, cause [sic] I got  
25 to by talking about different issues and lose track of  
26 time. So, I got 6:34 on my watch here. And so, I would  
27 like to go around the room and for the record, and  
28 introduce our various North Pacific Fisheries Management  
29 Council and, through our Council to introduce ourselves  
30 and then down to the your staff, down on the other end.  
31 How would that be? So, we'll start over here on the left  
32 corner. I can't read your name.

33  
34 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: Hi, I'm Anne  
35 Vanderhoeven. I'm a North Pacific Council member from  
36 Washington State.

37  
38 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, cool.

39  
40 MS. BAKER: Hello, I'm Rachel Baker and  
41 I work for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. I'm  
42 based in Juneau, and I serve as commissioner Doug  
43 Vincent-lang, designee on the North Pacific Fishery  
44 Management Council

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you and then  
47 yeah, just continue to introduce yourself. Don, where  
48 are you from?

49  
50

1 MR. HONEA: Check. Don Honea, Jr. Village  
2 of Ruby, Western Interior.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert.

5  
6 MR. WALKER: Good after -- good evening,  
7 Robert Walker. I'm also a tribal chief here, and I work  
8 with the Western Interior and welcome.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, I'm Jack  
11 Reakoff, Chair of the Western Interior Council. I've  
12 been on this Council since 1993, when they insemiate,  
13 the inception of these Councils. And I live in the  
14 Central Brooks Range in Wiseman, Alaska. I've lived in  
15 the Brooks Range since I was three years old, I was born  
16 in the Territory of Alaska in 1957. Got the seal of the  
17 territory on my birth certificate. Like a lot of other  
18 people in this room here, and so I have a lot of  
19 interests, and I've worked on fish and wildlife issues  
20 as Chairman of the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee. I  
21 am also on the Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource  
22 Commission. I can talk Fish and Game with various  
23 biologists. So, that's me. And here is.

24  
25 MS. PELKOLA: I'm Jenny Pelkola from  
26 Galena and I'm on the WIRAC.

27  
28 MR. SIMON: Pollock Simon Sr. is my name.  
29 I live in Allakaket, Upper Koyukuk River. And I'm a  
30 fisherman, hunter, trapper, and dishwasher, subsistence  
31 and Allakaket. In the last several years there hasn't  
32 been any salmon (indiscernible) but, we were restricted  
33 from taking salmon, and chinook salmon chum salmon. But  
34 we have whitefish and sheefish that we depend on. But  
35 life is kind of different with no salmon, like up and  
36 down river to chinook salmon is the main fish diet for  
37 our peoples. We have whitefish, which is good too but  
38 not quite as good as chinook salmon, so. We've been out  
39 trying, working together, the different agencies,  
40 peoples up and down river has been listening to Fish and  
41 Games and Wildlife, the rules and regulations. We abide  
42 by these rules even though we (indiscernible) that  
43 chinook salmon swim upriver. But when you're sitting on  
44 it cause we want to reach. (indiscernible) built up  
45 again. He will get fish from reaching the(indiscernible)  
46 they don't have chinook fish. But it's not the same as  
47 the ones we pulled from the river.....

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Pollock,  
50 they're gonna [sic] give us a report on the Bering Sea.

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MR. SIMON: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: And so, they're gonna [sic] be talking about that.

MR. SIMON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. So, appreciate those comments, Pollock. Pollock is a long standing. He was also on the Western Interior Council in the inception. And so, Pollock has got a lot of, you know, compassion about -- and we have to hear about the compassion, about this issue. So, thank you very much, Pollock appreciate that. Tommy?

MR. KRISKA: Tom Kriska, originally from Koyukuk, live in Nulato. And I'm in Middle Yukon Advisory Committee. The WIRAC, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association and Fish Commission, so.

MR. MOLLER: Yeah, thank you for having me. John Moller, originally from Unalaska. I'm a Council member on North Pacific, Alaska one of the Alaska Council members. I was appointed this last summer and recently completed my third meeting as a Council member so, I'm happy to be here. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Welcome. Steve.

MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, good evening. Thank you for having me. My name is Steve Williams, I'm the Oregon representative to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.

MS. HAAPALA: Hi, everyone. My name is Kate Haapala, and I work on Council staff as an analyst, and I'm one of the staffers who work on the Bering Sea Chum Salmon Bycatch Actions. So, thanks for having us and glad to be here.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you.

MS. MARRINAN: Hi. My name is Sarah Marrinan. I'm also Council staff and with Kate worked on this EIS, and I'm happy to be here. I'm based out of Anchorage, and I've worked with Council staff for little over ten years now. So, appreciate you having us.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. I really  
3 appreciate the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
4 Council and staff attending this meeting. It's a very  
5 important issue to us. And so, I'm very appreciative  
6 that you've taken the time to come here to speak to our  
7 Council about your various options on chum bycatch. I  
8 also have Tim Gervais on the phone. You want to introduce  
9 yourself, Tim.

10  
11 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This  
12 is Tim Gervais from Ruby. I've been on the WIRAC for, I  
13 don't know for sure around 15 years. I hold a commercial  
14 user's seat. I have not been able to commercial fish on  
15 the Yukon since 1998. I have not subsistence fished on  
16 the Yukon since 2017. I would like to get our chum and  
17 king salmon runs returned, and our escapement goals met  
18 on an annual basis. Thank you for showing up to discuss  
19 the chum salmon plan with us.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. Thanks, Tim.  
22 So, I'll turn this over to your able staff here. That's  
23 gonna [sic] give us a presentation and you have  
24 PowerPoint that accompanies this?

25  
26 MS. MARRINAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes,  
27 there's a PowerPoint. I passed out some paper copies to  
28 RAC members and North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
29 members, and I believe there's a pile of them for people  
30 in the public too, if you want a paper copy. I'm gonna  
31 [sic] be providing a presentation here and I also wanted  
32 to note within the paper copies, there's a lot of extra  
33 slides and content as well that I can reference and if  
34 you have questions, I can move to some of those slides  
35 as well. But thank you again for having us. One thing I  
36 wanted to note before I walk through this presentation  
37 is that on the outreach trips that we're doing, including  
38 this one, we don't have a quorum of our Council members  
39 here. So, it's not a formal meeting of the Council that  
40 these members represent. I just wanted to make sure to  
41 highlight that. In terms of what RAC members and the  
42 public can expect, staff and Council members are gonna  
43 [sic] keep track of key themes and reoccurring questions  
44 and topics that come up during these sessions and we're  
45 gonna [sic] provide a written report to the full Council  
46 on all of the RAC outreach at a future Council meeting.  
47 So, that will be forthcoming. And Nissa, should I just  
48 tell you when I -- next slide. Okay. So, next slide. So,  
49 to just quickly walk through the plan, the presentation  
50 here. I'm gonna [sic] start with an overview of NPFMC

1 and the decision-making process. The main content for  
2 this presentation is focused on (distortion) the current  
3 chum salmon bycatch action and the proposed alternatives  
4 that are being considered at the Council. Should the  
5 RACs wish to continue to provide input to the Council  
6 on this issue. I'll also cover some of the more  
7 substantial changes made to the alternatives in  
8 February. Krystal alluded to some of those earlier, and  
9 if you have more questions or you want to talk in more  
10 depth of those, we can certainly speak to that. And in  
11 the final part, we'll walk through the next phases of  
12 the action timeline, what you can expect and how to be  
13 involved. So, next slide. The North Pacific Fishery  
14 Management Council and National Marine Fisheries  
15 Service, or NMFS, jointly manage U.S. fisheries in  
16 Federal waters off of Alaska. Those waters are 3 to 200  
17 nautical miles from shore. In terms of process and  
18 relationship, the Council is not a Federal agency. The  
19 Council makes management recommendations to NMFS and the  
20 U.S. Secretary of Commerce. And its NMFS responsibility  
21 to write, approve and, implement and enforce  
22 regulations. Lastly, the Council does coordinate and at  
23 times jointly manage fisheries with the state of Alaska.  
24 Next slide, please. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery  
25 Conservation and Management Act is the primary law  
26 governing Federal fisheries management. This established  
27 eight regional fishery management Councils, including  
28 the North Pacific Council. It established the nation's  
29 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone, as well as  
30 the national standards.

31  
32 The national standards are principles  
33 that must be followed in any management -- fishery  
34 management plan to ensure sustainable and responsible  
35 management. There are ten of them and the Council must  
36 consider all of them. Next slide, please. The Council's  
37 jurisdiction covers four regions the Arctic, Bering Sea,  
38 Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska. There's no  
39 Federal commercial fisheries in U.S. waters in the  
40 Arctic. The Council primarily manages groundfish, so  
41 that's, pacific cod, pollock, flatfish, sablefish,  
42 rockfish, for example. Also, shellfish and halibut,  
43 allocations and it includes a management of bycatch in  
44 the groundfish fisheries. Next slide. In terms of  
45 composition, the Council has 15 members, 11 of them have  
46 voting rights. Of those 11 seats, seven are appointed  
47 by the governors of either Alaska or Washington. The  
48 other four voting seats are held by various agency  
49 officials, and there are four non-voting seats that are  
50 held by different agency representatives, as well as the

1 U.S. Coast Guard. Next slide. The Council has five  
2 meetings each year that typically run eight days in  
3 length. Three meetings are held in Anchorage and one in  
4 an Alaska community. Then there's one meeting that's  
5 either held in Portland or Seattle each year. At all the  
6 Council meetings, the -- and Council Advisory body  
7 meetings, they're all open to the public. Written  
8 comments can be provided in advance of each meeting, and  
9 the Council meetings are hybrid. Testimony can be  
10 provided in person or virtually on agenda items of  
11 interest, and staff also stream the meetings over  
12 YouTube for a low bandwidth option. Next slide, please.  
13 So, the Council is currently considering management  
14 (distortion). Our actions are focused on the Pollock  
15 fishery because this fishery encounters the majority of  
16 salmon caught as bycatch in Federal groundfish  
17 fisheries. In one of those slides in the background  
18 speaks to that point. So, the purpose of this action is  
19 to reduce chum salmon bycatch to the extent practicable,  
20 particularly Western Alaska chum salmon bycatch. And  
21 this action is being considered in light of recent and  
22 ongoing declines in Western Alaska chum salmon  
23 abundance. Next slide. So, this is a little hard to read  
24 on the screen. You may be able to see it in the printed-  
25 out version, but the timeline provides milestones of  
26 current action -- the current action aiming to minimize  
27 chum salmon bycatch, and the impetus for this action  
28 really came from tribal representatives and subsistence  
29 fishers. In October 2021, the Council received public  
30 testimony on chum and chinook run crashes in that year.  
31 For which chum salmon coincided with a high bycatch year  
32 as well. So, following that meeting in June 2022, the  
33 Council received -- requested information and bycatch  
34 reports. At that point, the Council requested the  
35 industry take immediate action for the upcoming B season  
36 to reduce bycatch. And it also initiated the Salmon  
37 Bycatch Committee. So, there was a question that spoke  
38 to this. I think Tim mentioned this earlier when he was  
39 speaking with Krystal, that Salmon Bycatch Committee  
40 made recommendations to the Council on the Purpose and  
41 Need Statement. That was a consensus recommendation  
42 which the Council adopted and made recommendations for  
43 a set of alternatives. So, that Salmon Bycatch Committee  
44 was composed of tribal representatives and  
45 representatives from the pollock fishery, and they  
46 brought together concepts that were forwarded on to the  
47 Council. The idea of the overall bycatch cap and came  
48 from the tribal representatives and the alternatives  
49 four concept that I'm gonna [sic] speak more to came  
50 from the pollock side of that. Since then, the Councils



1 received three different iterations of the analysis,  
2 most recently, earlier this month. Next slide, please.  
3 So, as I mentioned before, the Council makes  
4 recommendations to the National Marine Fisheries Service  
5 and NMFS is the lead agency for this chum salmon bycatch  
6 action. There are three cooperating agencies providing  
7 special expertise to the analysis, ADF&G, Kuskokwim  
8 River Inter Tribal Fish Commission and the Tanana Chiefs  
9 Conference. Next slide. This slide depicts the range of  
10 alternatives being considered. The Council is required  
11 by law to consider a no action alternative, which is  
12 alternative one, and it would retain the existing chum  
13 salmon bycatch regulations for the Bering Sea pollock  
14 fishery. The Council is considering four action  
15 alternatives, which are different ways to modify bycatch  
16 regulations. So, broadly, these changes include bycatch  
17 caps that would close part or all of the Bering Sea  
18 pollock fishery if the limit is met. All regulations  
19 would only apply to the B season or summer fishery of  
20 the pollock fishery, because that is when they encounter  
21 the majority over 99% of the chum bycatch, which is  
22 during this season.

23  
24 Next slide. Alternative one retains the  
25 existing bycatch regulations. So, this includes a  
26 rolling hotspot program and a chum salmon savings area.  
27 The hotspot program identifies areas on the pollock  
28 fishing grounds where chum salmon encounters are high.  
29 These areas are closed for three to seven days.  
30 Typically, the vessels are required to move elsewhere.  
31 The program is managed by a third-party entity. So, the  
32 figure on the top here shows all the hotspot closures  
33 from 2017 to 2023 under that program. The chum salmon  
34 savings area is on the bottom, that's shown in pink.  
35 This is a time area closure that's triggered by a bycatch  
36 cap. This area continues to exist in regulations, but  
37 it's really serves as a backstop measures if vessels  
38 choose not to participate in the rolling hotspot  
39 program, but that's never happened. So, the vessels  
40 participate in the top panel and the lower chum salmon  
41 savings area then doesn't apply to them. Next slide. As  
42 I mentioned, the impetus for considering regulatory  
43 action is due to declines in chum salmon abundance that  
44 are being seen throughout Western Interior Alaska and  
45 the critical significance of this species. I'm not gonna  
46 [sic] go into detail here because I know you are all  
47 intimately aware of this context, but just to inform  
48 you, the analysis captures data and information on stock  
49 status from Kotzebue Sound down to Bristol Bay on  
50 subsistence and commercial chum salmon harvest trends

1 on the importance of chum salmon across many dimensions  
2 of human salmon ecosystem existence. And there -- these  
3 are sections that had substantial contributions from the  
4 cooperating agencies, Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish  
5 Commission, TCC and ADF&G. And also, I'm highlighting  
6 here their appendices that Krystal spoke to earlier,  
7 appendix seven to the paper from KRITFC in appendix eight  
8 from TCC. So, this information provides context for  
9 current conditions and a dynamic baseline under which  
10 action is being considered. Next slide. So, focusing on  
11 the action alternatives here, alternative two would  
12 modify existing bycatch regulations by including an  
13 overall hard cap during the B season summer fishery. If  
14 the cap is met, fishing must immediately stop and all  
15 bycatch all bycaught chum salmon count towards the  
16 limit. The range of the cap amounts being considered is  
17 100,000 to 550,000. There are four options being  
18 considered to divide this cap among the four sectors  
19 that fish pollock. The approach, the approaches are  
20 based on bycatch history or the sector's pollock  
21 allocation. Next slide. Alternative three is similar to  
22 alternative two in that it includes a hard cap, but the  
23 hard cap is associated with abundance indices. The hard  
24 cap under alternatives three can turn on and off based  
25 on returns in an area. Here, the policy choice for the  
26 Council is really whether the cap would be in effect at  
27 times of higher abundance or not. There are two options  
28 for indices being considered, but only one would  
29 ultimately be selected for use. So, the first option is  
30 a three-area index, and the second option is Yukon area  
31 index. Next slide. Alternative four that's being  
32 considered would add six provisions to the existing  
33 regulations for salmon bycatch Incentive Plan Agreements  
34 or IPAs. The incentive plans are civil legal contracts  
35 among certain members of the Pollock industry. Federal  
36 regulations hold specific goals for salmon bycatch  
37 avoidance that the contracts must design measures to  
38 respond to, so to meet those regulations. The incentive  
39 plans are approved by NMFS and the Council receives  
40 annual reports on performance as accountability  
41 measures. The proposed changes would require the  
42 incentive plans to use historical genetic data to more  
43 rigorously evaluate catch and bycatch data, to inform  
44 closures more frequently, and ensure encounters are not  
45 increasing without vessels responding by moving and  
46 closing larger areas when encounters are high. The  
47 incentive plans have been voluntarily amended in recent  
48 years to include measures that largely respond to the  
49 six provisions that would be added here.  
50

1                   This slide speaks to alternative five  
2 as it was written and analyzed prior to this February  
3 Council meeting that happened earlier this month. This  
4 alternative includes three different in-season corridor  
5 or time area closures. The corridor would close when a  
6 bycatch cap was met. The cap ranges are unique to each  
7 corridor, and they're shown in the figure here. The  
8 location and timing of the closure windows are based off  
9 of historical genetic information indicating Western  
10 Alaska chum make up a higher percentage of the total  
11 bycatch closer to the Alaska Peninsula and from June to  
12 mid-August. So, this slide reflects some of the changes  
13 that the Council made to alternatives five. This  
14 corridor cap option in February. It still includes the  
15 concepts of the in-season corridors, the three different  
16 options being considered. There are three different  
17 options here that are being considered. So, the table  
18 on the left shows the closure window, the cap range that  
19 triggers a closure, and a description of how that closure  
20 could work, and the managing entity for each option. The  
21 main thing to call attention to today are that, compared  
22 to what was considered previously prior to the February  
23 Council meeting. The corridor area is larger, and the  
24 cap range is correspondingly increased as well.  
25 Depending on the option the actual area that would close  
26 varies. So, the option in the -- on the left, in the  
27 middle of the slide is shown in orange. If the corridor  
28 cap is met, the entire area closes from that day until  
29 September 1st. An option one one which is shown on the  
30 right in blue and grey. Here, NMFS would be managing the  
31 corridor closure still, but rather than closing the  
32 entire area, it would close 75% of that corridor. The  
33 grey squares would represent areas that could remain  
34 open to fishing. So, these changes reflect the impact  
35 analysis that was presented in February that showed for  
36 some areas -- that showed that there could be a risk of  
37 the fleet moving into areas with higher chum in Western  
38 Alaska, chum bycatch with the smaller corridor closures.  
39 So, this approach also allows for some areas to remain  
40 open, and it's intended to provide flexibility for  
41 smaller vessels based on safety considerations.

42  
43                   Next slide. So, those are the  
44 alternatives. I have three slides here that capture some  
45 high-level points within the analysis. And I wanted to  
46 bring these forward to the RAC because some -- they may  
47 have some kind of counterintuitive results, and it may  
48 inform the RAC consideration of the proposed  
49 alternatives. So, this slide highlights that not all  
50 chum salmon that are being caught as bycatch in the

1 pollock fishery originate from Western Alaska. They  
2 originate from countries all across the North Pacific  
3 Rim, Asia, Russia, other parts of Alaska and the Pacific  
4 Northwest. They include hatchery chum from some of those  
5 locations, and we also have some of the extra slides,  
6 point to more of this information. But so, the black  
7 bars in this figure demonstrate the total chum salmon  
8 bycatch in the pollock fishery from all sources and the  
9 blue bars are chum salmon caught as bycatch that were  
10 estimated to be of Western Alaska origin. So, from  
11 Kotzebue Sound down to Bristol Bay and on the Middle and  
12 Upper Yukon. So, a hard cap on the total chum salmon  
13 places, a cap on the upper limit of the number of chum  
14 that can be caught as bycatch. So, it either motivates  
15 the fleet to lower that black bar, or it would be a  
16 ceiling for it. When they reach that cap, they would be  
17 required to stop fishing. What's less clear is what  
18 happens to the blue bar with a cap on all chum. So, the  
19 analysis needs to consider what would fishermen do  
20 before a cap is met? So, the incentive structure created  
21 by the hard cap for fishermen could be to go to areas  
22 with the lowest rates, lowest encounters of all chum  
23 salmon, not necessarily where the lowest historical  
24 Western Alaska chum salmon have been. So, these  
25 incentives to fish differently, as well as the cap  
26 amounts, among other factors, could affect the scope of  
27 potential reductions when we're focused on Western  
28 Alaska chum salmon. If the reductions in Western Alaska  
29 chum salmon bycatch occur, and they result -- as a result  
30 of any of the action alternatives that are being  
31 considered, and those changes increase the number of  
32 Western Alaska chum salmon returning to their natal  
33 systems, there could be much broader benefits. And this  
34 is another area where we worked with the tribal  
35 cooperating agencies to characterize some of these types  
36 of benefits that could manifest. The analysis also  
37 captured some of the other intervening variables that  
38 add another layer of uncertainty and complexity in  
39 whether these benefits would be realized.

40  
41 Another consideration raised in the  
42 analysis is the timing of chum and Western Alaska chum  
43 encounters on the fishing grounds during the B season,  
44 and how they're different from encounters with chinook.  
45 Chum, in Western Alaska chum are more prevalent on the  
46 fishing grounds from June to mid-August. But chinook  
47 encounters increase in September and October. So, this  
48 dynamic can create challenges if the fleet is responding  
49 to increased chum salmon bycatch avoidance by delaying  
50 the start of their B season if they're moving more

1 frequently or taking more stand downs, and it ends up  
2 pushing them further later into the fall. There's a  
3 possibility of increased chinook salmon bycatch rates.  
4 The Council is also legally required to balance costs  
5 and benefits of a proposed action that would implement  
6 regulatory changes. The analysis uses different methods  
7 to evaluate the potential adverse impacts of costs on  
8 the pollock industry and communities, and some of that  
9 scope is captured in this slide.

10  
11 This slide provides an overview of other  
12 changes the Council made to the proposed alternatives  
13 in February. I wasn't planning to walk through these  
14 bullets in detail, but the full motion is available on  
15 the E-agenda, there's a link here. I think Nissa has  
16 some copies and we're happy to speak more to it and I'm  
17 sure Council members can answer questions from the most  
18 recent motion as well. Next slide, please. So, wrapping  
19 up, this is the tentative timeline moving forward. The  
20 Council recommended that analysts revise the document  
21 based on changes in input in February and for NMFS to  
22 publish the revised document as a draft EIS. Right now,  
23 that document is tentatively being planned for  
24 publication in August. Then there would be a 60-day  
25 public comment period, and this would be the next first  
26 opportunity for written input. The August publication  
27 date reflects the time needed to accommodate a final  
28 recommendation being made by the Council in December  
29 2025. Pending the Council's action at that time, we'd  
30 expect the agency, National Marine Fisheries Service,  
31 to begin the rulemaking or reg writing process. Next  
32 slide. So, here are other ways to get connected if you  
33 want to learn more about the issue. You can always reach  
34 out to Kate or myself. We have our email addresses that  
35 were listed at the beginning of the slide deck and as I  
36 mentioned, there's quite a few extra slides in the  
37 packet. Happy to talk more or speak to any of those and  
38 also happy to answer questions.

39  
40 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, Council  
41 members have questions of the presentation? Oh, Tommy.

42  
43 MR. KRISKA: I am just following along  
44 here and seems like you guys have a lot of information  
45 about your bycatch, your numbers, the salmon that caught  
46 and everything like that. I was just writing a little  
47 bit so, so much info and seems like you guys know your  
48 numbers and are -- and that are used to write up your  
49 presentation here, and -- but still, we don't even have  
50 salmon at all for the last seven years, and I don't know

1 if it's too late or you keep on waiting till 2025 to  
2 redo some of your recommendations or whatever you try.  
3 I'm just kinda lost, maybe baffled a little bit about  
4 this whole thing. I sure like to have salmon. Thank you.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you. Any  
7 other questions or comments? Questions or comments, Tim?

8  
9 MR. GERVAIS: Not at this time, Jack.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, my  
12 questions go back to -- under, you know, alternatives  
13 one. It shows a chum salmon savings area, small pink  
14 area. This correlates to the highest incidence of take  
15 in north of the peninsula in the B season. So, it's very  
16 apparent I -- that that's a critical area that should --  
17 -- and alternatives. The various alternatives show that  
18 there could be some inshore areas in gray that could be  
19 fished in option 1.1 here. But the reality is, the  
20 (distortion) returning from the North Pacific are moving  
21 through the South Alaska Peninsula. The caps should be  
22 revolved around the corridor that the (distortion) I feel  
23 that these options one and one-one that's for  
24 alternative five, is a very important aspect of trying  
25 to get this passage through without -- the -- my main  
26 questions revolve around -- I don't know if your staff  
27 actually has the answers to them are, if the -- if in  
28 the B season option one is implemented, there's complete  
29 closure during that time, when the option is -- when the  
30 fishery is released in August, the Pollock are still  
31 there aren't they? And so, you just harvest the fish  
32 that would've been caught earlier in the season. You're  
33 just displacing the harvest timing. But the fleet will  
34 amass on that once that's open again. So, I don't see  
35 where that's gonna [sic] be a hardship to have option  
36 of alternatives five option one as the corridor that's  
37 closed when we have chinook or coho moving through there.  
38 And so, then when they're re -- continue the season that  
39 it's wide open that the fishery can be fishing the  
40 western portion of their area outside the option one  
41 alternatives five and then they move on to that and they  
42 still harvest the fish. We were trying to get every last  
43 fish on the spawning ground. We're hardly getting any  
44 escapements into the spawning grounds. So, that's our  
45 problem. So, there's -- that's not that the fleet is  
46 completely precluded from fishing. They can fish the  
47 western portion of their shelf area that they're fishing  
48 on. When that -- when the fish have stopped moving  
49 through, they just move on to that sector, and they'll  
50 amass on that, and they'll take that. Take a large

1 portion of the harvest, will be after the critical period  
2 of passage of -- it's not just the chum that's also the  
3 cohos2 are passing through there also. And so, you know,  
4 we're getting passage of chinook that are coming through  
5 or they're a little earlier in the season, but still  
6 they're still (distortion) chinook that come in shore,  
7 seven in the late July, early August. So, I don't -- I  
8 feel that you have developed some corridor of remedies  
9 here. I think that there's times when you can - but the  
10 caps you know the -- I -- another one of my questions  
11 is, your -- the caps of 100 to 300,000 or whatever it  
12 was, whatever it's those caps levels, those -- that's  
13 for the whole sector? The -- that's the entire of bycatch  
14 or is it just strictly the problem area? Is the cap?

15  
16 MS. HAAPALA: Mr. Chair, I can answer  
17 that last question first. So, there are different caps  
18 that are being considered under different alternatives.  
19 So, under alternatives two, that's an overall cap across  
20 the entire Bering Sea for all sectors. So, those numbers  
21 would be -- that are being looked at are 100,000 to 550  
22 and -- 550,000 and those numbers would be divided among  
23 the four sectors. If a sector met its cap, it would be  
24 closed for the rest of the season. So, that's the overall  
25 cap option. Alternative three is similar, if it's in  
26 place triggered by abundance, and then alternative five,  
27 including the new version of it, is a cap for a specific  
28 corridor. The chum that accrue to that cap are chum that  
29 are caught in that area, and it would close that area  
30 until September 1st. So, the fleet could continue to  
31 fish outside of it during that period. Or they could  
32 wait and fish after September 1st in that area.

33  
34 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, I feel -  
35 - personally I feel that that's the viable option. But  
36 I've seen the various alternatives with all different  
37 kinds of programs. And so, then they start mixing and  
38 matching things. And so, I feel that the corridor is the  
39 fish in question. Those are AYK stocks that are trying  
40 to get into either Bristol Bay or all the way up into  
41 the -- into Norton Sound. So, that's the corridor of  
42 passage. So, we should be -- the Council should be  
43 focusing on that particular area. Yeah, there's not  
44 enough genetic work and so, I think that the Council  
45 should talk to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
46 about instituting additional chum salmon genetic passage  
47 through the South Alaska Peninsula, Shumagin Island  
48 fisheries so that we know what stocks specifically. They  
49 were doing a little bit of that work, but that's not  
50 happened recently. Am I still correct on that one, Tim

1 Gervais? There's not a lot of genetic stocks being --  
2 genetic work being done in that where the destination  
3 of these fish. I took samples from chum salmon on the  
4 Koyukuk River. I know we have a DNA profile for the  
5 Yukon River stock -- systems. So, we got -- and so, we  
6 have these genetic profiles. We need to know, to help  
7 you analyze which stocks are being primarily targeted.  
8 We need better genetic stock -- genetic analysis the --  
9 in the South Alaska Peninsula is here -- is your sample.  
10 That's where you're gonna [sic] get your samples from,  
11 cause sic] they have this bycatch of chum in the South  
12 Alaska sockeye salmon fishery. So, I do feel that there's  
13 some data lacking there. Also, there's some huge  
14 questions about where these chums go in the North  
15 Pacific? Where are they all going out there? Are they -  
16 - where are they actually all feeding? There's a huge  
17 difference between a fall chum salmon and a summer chum  
18 salmon. A fall chum salmon doesn't really even hardly  
19 look like a summer chum, now you cut salmon -- plenty  
20 of salmon to ask these people right here, they cut them  
21 all the time. Summer chums are either yellow or pale  
22 colored meat, whereas fall chums got pink -- real nice,  
23 pink to red, as red as a sockeye. So, they're feeding  
24 in, they're feeding higher and they're getting more  
25 keratin somewheres [sic]. Where are these various  
26 stocks? We have two different stocks. It's not just  
27 overall, you know, chums are chums. There's fall chums  
28 and summer chums, and summer chums came in a little  
29 stronger this year than the fall chums. Fall chums were  
30 almost non-existent this year on the Yukon River. So,  
31 there's a real need for information about what -- where  
32 these chum salmon are going in the North Pacific. And  
33 the Council, the North Pacific Fisheries Management  
34 Council needs to really get involved with addressing  
35 this overutilization, this over pasturing of hatchery  
36 fish on the Pacific Ocean, it's affecting the wild  
37 stocks. And so, when the stocks are in suppressed state,  
38 people start screaming because we can't fish. Yet we  
39 know little about what this hatchery release is doing  
40 and it's apparent there's some studies around. I agree,  
41 I'm reading different ones right now. I've had to go to  
42 this meeting, but there's rhymes and reasons. There's  
43 scientific basis of how the alternating cycles of pink  
44 salmon naturally affect the wild stock fish. They have  
45 odd years. The high numbers of pink salmon highly affect  
46 the coho salmon and suppress the coho salmon and on the  
47 low pink salmon cycle that allows the cohos to survive  
48 at a higher rate. So, that's why you get an alternating  
49 cycle on coho. And so, then we get -- you get into this  
50 whole hatchery -- static hatchery release of the Alaskan



1 hatcheries. Washington State is releasing on an  
2 alternate year. They have a 200 million release one year  
3 on the high year. And they have a blank year, but we're  
4 not doing that in Alaska. We're just statically  
5 releasing across the board millions, hundreds of  
6 millions, 750 million pink salmon, which is on a static  
7 release, is having a giant effect and it's having a  
8 delirious [sic] effect on the wild pink salmon, also.  
9 And so, you need to know more about you know, that  
10 somebody else's jurisdiction. No, you need to know more  
11 about these fish so that we, as in your realm, the  
12 pollock fleet is getting beat up because of bycatch. But  
13 that's because the low returns. If we had more healthier  
14 returns, you wouldn't hear nearly that. You'd modulate  
15 the problem; you'd turn the squelch down. So, those are  
16 my comments. There is lots of data lacks [sic], you have  
17 a ton of data lacks [sic]. You don't know where these  
18 chum salmon are really over rearing at. We know that  
19 they pass through the Bering Sea eating jellyfish and  
20 stuff as smoke. But then they go off and where do they  
21 go? And we got two different stocks, we got summer chum  
22 and fall chums. So, you got to differentiate between  
23 that. Some have higher years, and some have not so good  
24 years and some -- so there's a bunch of data lacks [sic].  
25 I wanted to put all those data lacks [sic] on the record  
26 for the Councils to direct your staff on NOAA or NMFS  
27 or whoever it may be. You know, there's trophic. I know  
28 that NOAA does those trophic inventories of the North  
29 Pacific. They basically know how much plankton is in the  
30 water and can calculate the trophic level. When you got  
31 marine birds washing up on the beach, that means that's  
32 the canary in the mine. That means that the ocean is in  
33 decline. That's when we should've -- as Alaskans, I will  
34 say we should've cut our hatchery release in half when  
35 we had marine birds washing up on the beach, period. It  
36 stressed the entire -- all stocks, even the hatchery  
37 fish are coming back really small. They're all stressed.  
38 They don't have the fat reserves. They're flying sockeye  
39 salmon out of Bristol Bay and out to these villages and  
40 people are saying, I don't like these fish, they're  
41 really skinny. Yeah, have you ever -- have you gotten  
42 any of the sockeye from this year? 3.8-pound sockeye on  
43 Bristol Bay. They have hardly any fat reserves. I don't  
44 even know if they've made destination up for spawning.  
45 Those things are nothing. I fished in Bristol Bay for  
46 years; two ocean fish are typically five two to five six  
47 and three ocean fish are generally five eight to six  
48 eight. That's what -- and they got large -- especially  
49 adult males got large fat reserves. People here are  
50 getting these little, teeny skinny fish that are,

1 they're over competing among themselves, and they're  
2 also over competing with a lot of hatchery pinks. So,  
3 there's a lot of data lack [sic] and so, I think that  
4 the Council should start investigating. I am fully in  
5 support of option five, and I'm fully in support of  
6 option one on the amount of time and I think the cap  
7 should be geared strictly to the area of passage, the  
8 area that the chums are gonna [sic] go through. That's  
9 just me. I felt that I had to speak to this Council  
10 while we had them sitting at the table, cause [sic] I  
11 don't have the time to travel. I live in the Brooks  
12 Range. It's hard for me to leave, to get out and talk.  
13 So, you're not taking testimony, you're not under  
14 quorum. But I think that you should think there -- you  
15 should mold these things over in your head. You got  
16 real, really involved fishery people, I'm really happy  
17 to see the make-up of the Council, and I'm really happy  
18 to see that we have fishery people that understand fish.  
19 Not a lot of people understand fish. But there's some  
20 real issues going on here. I'm concerned that we'll go  
21 to endangered species status, and somebody's gonna [sic]  
22 close down the entire corridor forever or whatever. And  
23 so, I don't want to see that. I don't want to see it;  
24 we're already in crisis. We're not getting enough  
25 spawning escapement right now. And then we don't have  
26 enough trophic in the in system. We're not getting enough  
27 feed of nutrients in the in system to support chinook  
28 and the stocks that stay in the river for two years,  
29 one- and two-years chinook and coho, they stay in the  
30 river. If you don't have a lot of chums coming back,  
31 we're not -- our Upper Yukon is going to go flat cause  
32 we can't -- we don't -- we're not actually going to be  
33 able to raise smolt anymore if we don't have enough  
34 nutrient flow into the freshwater system. So, there's a  
35 lot of problems here. I can really empathize with what  
36 you got to wrestle with, but I think you're on the right  
37 track for these closure areas with alternative five. Any  
38 other input to the Council? Robert.

39  
40 MR. WALKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I did  
41 testify when I was down in Anchorage here at the North  
42 Pacific fisheries. And I kind of brought up today in our  
43 meeting that we're looking at some of our side streams  
44 on the Yukon. There's no more chinook salmon there, where  
45 there would be like 1,500, maybe 2,000 that we could go  
46 and spawn. They're gone, they're not there anymore and  
47 being a food base for what I talk about, that's all I  
48 deal with, is food for our tribal people. I don't deal  
49 with money, any -- that's somebody else's job to do, and  
50 I spoke for the animals, so. When we do talk something

1 like this, I brought it up saying that maybe our tribe  
2 is looking at something where we would have to put a  
3 resolution or something into the North Pacific fishery  
4 and also the Eastern Interior and Western Interior. I'm  
5 saying that we're gonna [sic] have to take a hard look  
6 at saying the chum salmon and the chinook salmon are  
7 gonna [sic] be extinct and this is where we're going  
8 now. Everything we got here for last ten years has went  
9 downhill. Our food source now, not only for Anvik but,  
10 the other communities too. You're looking at dry streams  
11 now, no more fish. We have a fishing lodge up above  
12 Anvik. Every year they bring in 100 to 200 fishermen and  
13 they have jet boats with 200 to 300 horsepower, engines  
14 that would tear up all this gravel and people have  
15 brought to our attention that we have passed on, that  
16 they're digging up all the salmon, eggs, the roe. You  
17 go to the ripples, it's just red light, unbelievable.  
18 So, I heard -- this is a hard thing for tribal people  
19 too because we have a right to eat. That's our way of  
20 life. We don't have Fred Meyer's cars right down in our  
21 street here. We don't have anything a lot, just a lot  
22 of basic food, with the store with basic material for  
23 the people. Coffee is \$22 a pound, a gallon of gas is  
24 between \$7, \$7.50 and \$9 a gallon, depending what kind  
25 of octane you want to get. So, where do we go from here?  
26 Look at the animals, they're the ones that are suffering,  
27 too. We had to shoot over 30 bears in two years. For  
28 what reason? There's no more food for them and this is  
29 true. We don't want to shoot them, for 10,000 years  
30 there was a mutual agreement with tribal people. We don't  
31 bother you; they don't bother us and it was just a  
32 natural thing but now it's not natural, an upset a  
33 balance has been done to our side streams. And even when  
34 the chum salmon has died, spawned out, and they float  
35 along the shore. You'll go see ducks, mother ducks with  
36 their baby ducks that go up that salmon, open it up and  
37 they sluice that juice out. And they teach their young  
38 ones how to do that. That's nutrition for them, that's  
39 food, even in death, they're still giving life. So, I  
40 mean, you know, we have a way of looking at things. This  
41 is how we are, the bottom line, and if you can't help  
42 us by doing a seven-year moratorium on the Bering Sea,  
43 I'm not threatening you. This is pretty hard, so.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Robert, I would  
46 like to ask you a question. You're talking of these --  
47 I want this Council to review these options, and I want  
48 -- I would like to ask to write a letter to your North  
49 Pacific Fisheries Management Council with our  
50 discussions that we're having here. But I would like -

1 I -- we're not gonna [sic] write the letter until we get  
2 more public comment tomorrow. So, we gotta [sic] get  
3 more wider [sic], we gotta [sic] you know, we're gonna  
4 [sic] [sic] hear all sides of this issue, and then we're  
5 gonna [sic] -- would like to write a letter to your  
6 Council in regards to this thing. So, this Council is  
7 supposed to be focusing tonight on these options here.

8

9 MR. WALKER: Okay, just one more thing.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Go ahead, Robert.

12

13 MR. WALKER: You know the Fish  
14 Commissioner, Doug Lang. I know you guys know him. He's  
15 the one that came to us and said, we're doing a seven-  
16 year moratorium on Yukon River, without even consulting  
17 the tribes or anybody. It was just, here we are, this  
18 is what it is and this is what's gonna [sic] happen, so.  
19 And that really put the knife where it really hurts. So,  
20 that's just something, like what I said down in -- and  
21 I testified. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, members  
22 of your Council.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Robert.  
25 So, you'll withhold your opinion about these options  
26 until later on in our meeting to where we -- I would  
27 like this Council to write a letter of recommendation  
28 to your North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.  
29 That's what I would like this Council to do. And so, Don  
30 you're willing to look at this a little further tomorrow,  
31 and we're gonna [sic] write a letter about these options.  
32 Are you.....

33

34 MR. HONEA: Mr. Chair, certainly, I mean,  
35 well, earlier, I guess maybe Krystal mentioned it in  
36 bringing this whole thing, the options, the overview of  
37 those things and options. And so, I guess it didn't  
38 actually come from TCC. It actually came from North  
39 Pacific. Okay. So, I'm a little confused about this and  
40 so, I was asking about what the -- is there timelines  
41 on this thing, or are you posing to us to choose one of  
42 the options or what? How does that actually work? I  
43 mean, it's kinda confusing to me. I mean, because I  
44 didn't realize that you had four distinct areas in the  
45 State, right? Exactly, I mean, the Beaufort Sea on down  
46 or something like that. So yeah, I would like a little  
47 more clarification on that. And certainly, I'm willing  
48 to, you know I might put in my own opinion too, but  
49 maybe it, maybe that's not what we're after here. But I  
50 would like to know that and you know, just as a thought

1 here, you know, heck we were right. Met 10, 15 years  
2 ago, and we gave up and I guess the whole river gave up  
3 the kings. But we always, always you know, had that fall  
4 chum 500, 700,000 down to 200, whatever. So, any kind  
5 of option that we -- if somebody could explain to me,  
6 Mr. Chair, what are we doing? Are we taking one of the  
7 alternatives, or is this time sensitive? You know what  
8 I mean? Thank you.

9  
10 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Staff. Sarah or  
11 Katie?

12  
13 MS. HAAPALA: Yeah, sure. Through the  
14 Chair. So, Kate, with Council staff I think I can take  
15 this on, and I'm happy to have Sarah jump in, and Council  
16 members can, too. But the gist of what we're trying to  
17 do here is to talk about the Council's process and how  
18 it makes decisions and then also this existing action  
19 for chum salmon bycatch management in the Bering Sea  
20 pollock fishery. And so, yes, the Council has before it  
21 five different alternatives or basically four different  
22 ways to change the existing bycatch regulations. So,  
23 alternatives one that Sarah walked through is what  
24 exists in regulation now and then. The four other  
25 alternatives are ways that the Council is considering  
26 changing those alternatives. Sarah and I, our job is to  
27 analyze the impacts of those different regulatory  
28 changes. So, on environmental components, economic  
29 components, social and cultural components and what that  
30 looks like. So, at the outreach meeting and what we're  
31 doing today, I don't think we, the Council or staff are  
32 asking for the RAC to pick an option or an alternatives.  
33 That's your prerogative. You can write a letter to the  
34 Council and weigh in on that and that's part of why we  
35 have slides at the back of this presentation that Sarah  
36 provided that indicate different ways that you can be  
37 involved and how to do that and what the timeline of the  
38 action is. But it's also a time for the RAC to have  
39 dialogue and discourse with North Pacific Fishery  
40 Management Council members as well as staff. So, if you  
41 have technical questions about the analysis or timeline  
42 and process, we can answer those things. Other questions  
43 might be appropriate for Council members, but I'm not  
44 sure if that helps us or helps you.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: My question is, are  
47 -- what is -- we want to write a letter and what is our  
48 timeline to get that letter in?  
49  
50

1 MS. HAAPALA: So, if the RAC would like  
2 to write a letter to the North Pacific Fishery Management  
3 Council, the next opportunity for that letter to be  
4 received would be at the Council meeting during either  
5 final action, or if you were to submit your letter on  
6 the agency's publication of the draft EIS. So, at this  
7 point in time, the draft EIS would be published in mid-  
8 August. That's the tentative for the goal timeline. So,  
9 then would begin a 60-day public comment period window  
10 and you could provide a letter through the -- to the  
11 agency at that time. In addition, another letter may be  
12 provided to the Council at final action, which at this  
13 point is scheduled for December 2025. So, right now,  
14 after the February action, Sarah and I, our job is to  
15 analyze the new alternatives, option 1, 1.1 that we were  
16 talking about earlier, and then publish that and bring  
17 it back.

18  
19 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I see why you have  
20 1.1, but, if the large fleet is fished in the B season  
21 outside of the savings area, let's just call it option  
22 one savings area. Then you can prioritize the in-shore  
23 fleet to have more exclusive use of the in-shore in the  
24 squares there when it opens later on. And so, I feel  
25 that the in-shore fleet, you know you got these -- but  
26 that's right where the travel is. I mean, that's actually  
27 where the travel is. You know, in option 1.1. So, the  
28 economic impact to them would be lessened if you  
29 allocated them to a higher use during the opening after  
30 September 1st. Go ahead, Steve.

31  
32 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you. I -- Mr. Honea,  
33 your question was a good one. You had a similar reaction  
34 to what I did when I first saw this as an individual  
35 Council member and saw the analysis in the packet was  
36 given to us. I have gotten to the point where you view  
37 this as a -- it's a broad range of alternatives. You'll  
38 notice each of those alternatives have got -- the cap  
39 ones have broad ranges of numbers, and the areas are  
40 broad. What we're trying to do here is provide that  
41 range of options that then, in some cases they can be  
42 mixed matched, some cases they can't. But look at it as  
43 the ingredient -- I know this may not be the best  
44 example, but it's an ingredient to a pie that you're  
45 trying to put together and there are parts and pieces.  
46 Some will make it work; some will make it so that you'd  
47 like it, and some of it maybe not so much. But I mean,  
48 that's -- it's a range to try and give you and us as  
49 individual members of the Council an opportunity to look  
50 and in the end hopefully arrive at something that works.

1 You made one comment, Mr. Chair, about genetics, and you  
2 were mentioning at our February meeting, we had a fairly  
3 extensive report on some of the genetic work that was  
4 being done with the fleet and out in the Bering Sea. And  
5 it was encouraging, there's some very interesting things  
6 coming. I don't think we're quite there yet, in my  
7 personal opinion. The silver bullet isn't quite there  
8 yet, but the improvements in our ability to understand  
9 genetics and hopefully someday get it down where it will  
10 be able to do it real time or not, I don't know. But get  
11 it down so that we can use it to make some decisions  
12 about some of these things. It's coming, I don't think  
13 it's there yet, but it's coming.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Alright.

16  
17 MR. WILLIAMS: Yeah, thank you.

18  
19 MR. GERVAIS: Mr. Chair, may I comment?

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Let's let Tim talk  
22 for a second. Tim.

23  
24 MR. GERVAIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This  
25 is Tim Gervais. In recent discussions we've had with Dr.  
26 Stram, within the last two years, she was indicating  
27 that to get the genetic information on salmon bycatch  
28 can take upwards of two to three months. And at the  
29 time, she was saying that it was already been established  
30 that with like, to test fisheries, genetic test  
31 fisheries that's going on in Bristol Bay. They're doing  
32 the genetic testing on the catcher vessel. They know  
33 within 16 to 24 hours with the -- what the genetic stock  
34 is of the sample. So, that was distressing to hear that,  
35 you know, a fishery that's supposed to be guided by best  
36 available science. Your genetics is, I don't know if  
37 it's purposefully delayed or what, but really, to say  
38 that it takes over a month or over two months to get  
39 genetic feedback on what you're catching when the other  
40 genetic work on salmon in the State is occurring within  
41 24 hours is unacceptable. And we -- all these like --  
42 this Council represents Western Interior of Alaska so,  
43 Koyukuk River, Yukon River, Kuskokwim River. All the  
44 residents and users in this region are -- had a really  
45 bad experience with the Council's, North Pacific  
46 Management Council's response to king salmon. I'm sorry,  
47 but when the local term in Western Alaska for chinook  
48 is king salmon. So, the purpose of this discussion would  
49 be interchangeable. We basically went from a viable king  
50 salmon fishery where subsistence's were met. There were

1 some commercial fishing going on, and now we have  
2 moratorium, and it doesn't even look like within the  
3 lifetime of anybody sitting on the Western Interior  
4 Council that chum salmon stock or excuse me, king salmon  
5 stock would be able to return so that is -- as this  
6 Council has written in previous letters to the North  
7 Pacific Management Council, direct violations of  
8 National standard eight communities and National  
9 Standard nine on bycatch. And it feels like to these  
10 villages and subsistence users that the main attempt of  
11 the actions taken with salmon conservation for the North  
12 Pacific Fisheries Management Council is to delay action  
13 or take very little action. Try to allow the trawl fleet  
14 to continue business as usual, as much as possible and  
15 the meantime, our stocks are getting destroyed. The chum  
16 salmon stock was always a backup fishery. The most  
17 significant part of our subsistence economy in Western  
18 Alaska was king salmon fishery and that's gone, that's  
19 off the table. Our older age classes, seven-year-old,  
20 eight-year-old age classes, the kings are biologically  
21 extinct, okay. We as a country, as a State, have  
22 completely failed in maintaining the viability of that  
23 salmon stock. And now, as our backup source of salmon  
24 now we're getting closures with this and I'm not seeing  
25 a sense of urgency from North Pacific Management  
26 Council. Like, there's -- I've heard other Council  
27 members such as like Mr. Tweet or Tweit -- I'm sorry, I  
28 don't -- I can't remember the correct pronunciation on  
29 his name. Talking for the State of Washington and saying  
30 that the amount of money that's invested in the  
31 harvesting sector and the processing sector is so much  
32 that we can't afford to slow that back. But from our  
33 perspective, for the economy for the people that live  
34 on these communities along the rivers, we basically lost  
35 40% of our subsistence economy, with these depletion of  
36 salmon stocks. So, I think I would like all the Council  
37 members and the Council staff to understand that there's  
38 way more involved with communities and economies that  
39 just how many million dollars your boat is, or how many  
40 billion dollars of surimi or whatever they call that  
41 McDonald's fish sandwich. That's in my opinion, in the  
42 opinion of people who live on the river. That's -- those  
43 economic impacts are not as great as the economic  
44 distress that these communities have felt. I mean, it's  
45 more than just calories, it's the quality of calories.  
46 These king salmon stocks, chum salmon stocks, they're -  
47 - they represent where we can get high quality lipids  
48 in the diet. The alternatives foods available that are  
49 in these community stores or come into the tribal  
50 Councils in these villages through the USDA food



1 program. Those are not acceptable replacements for food  
2 that's low calorie, ultra-high processed, highly refined  
3 foods that create a lot of sickness and mental health  
4 problems for the residents of our area. I also --  
5 throughout the years -- I mean, we've been for decades,  
6 we've been trying to get North Pacific Management  
7 Council to be more aware of and more reactive to salmon  
8 conservation and we just, we seem -- when we've talked  
9 previous meetings where North Pacific Management Council  
10 comes to meet our RAC or other RACs along the river that  
11 -- excuse me, I just, okay. They've just not been willing  
12 to understand the extent of our -- of the depletion of  
13 -- the extent of the cultural and economic impact of  
14 having our main subsistence resources taken away from  
15 us. So, we've heard a lot in previous years where Council  
16 members or North Pacific Management Council members are  
17 saying, well, we're not responsible for what happens in  
18 the river environments like the three, inside three  
19 miles and in the rivers. Like, literally when Dr. Stram  
20 was presenting salmon information to the Council in 2009  
21 over Amendment 91, they -- she said there was absolutely  
22 no analysis of in-river salmon stocks. And I would  
23 really like the -- some kind of memorandum of  
24 understanding or some kind of agreement made where,  
25 instead of what we've had up to this time, where National  
26 Marine Fisheries Service, North Pacific Management  
27 Council saying that's when the salmon hit net fresh  
28 water, they're out of our jurisdiction. And then from  
29 our side, the Western Interior Regional Advisory  
30 Council. When we talked to the Federal Subsistence Board  
31 or have correspondence with Secretary of Interior or  
32 through our -- shoot, I lost the -- our legal counsel.  
33 I can't remember what -- Mr. Chair, what's the official  
34 name for our legal adviser?

35  
36 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: You mean for the  
37 Office of Subsistence Management? That would've been Ken  
38 Lord.

39  
40 MR. GERVAIS: No, but what's the position  
41 called? Solicitor. The solicitor saying that anything,  
42 any actions that are available for us to take they don't  
43 -- like based on ANILCA, they don't apply to what happens  
44 in the EEZ. And what really needs to happen is the chum  
45 salmon stock and the king salmon stocks, they need to,  
46 they need full life cycle protection and need to get out  
47 of this mode of whether it falls under jurisdiction of  
48 Department of Interior, Department of Commerce, that  
49 switching jurisdictions is creating a lapse in the  
50 protection and conservation that's necessary to maintain

1 these stocks correctly. I don't mean to offend any of  
2 you folks. With me being critical of what's happened on  
3 the North Pacific Management Council side. But we're in  
4 a really desperate situation with our salmon stocks  
5 because I think there's been too much emphasis on trying  
6 to maximize the fishing time and the economic benefit  
7 of the fishing, pollock fishing and pollock harvesting  
8 sectors. And it's -- and the actual economic damage and  
9 cultural damage to the individuals and communities along  
10 these rivers has been ignored. And not appropriate to  
11 have the Subsistence users along these rivers sitting  
12 down and not fishing while a commercial fishery that  
13 every day that they're out there, they're catching chum  
14 salmon or king salmon are out fishing. I don't know why,  
15 out of these five alternatives, why there's not an  
16 alternative that says when fishermen along these,  
17 Kuskokwim, Upper Yukon, Koyukuk rivers are not fishing,  
18 that the BSAI trawl fleet is not fishing like that's --  
19 to me, that would be an equitable thing. If we're not  
20 able to fish, if we can't meet escapement goals, why is  
21 salmon allowed to be harvested in the course of a  
22 commercial fishery? That's about all I have for right  
23 now, Mr. Chair.

24  
25 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: All right. My  
26 question in this, on this meeting is, which of the  
27 alternatives and the options are you leaning towards?  
28 That's what I would like, as -- with Council members  
29 here, that's what I wanna talk about. I wanna talk about  
30 your options. So, which of the options are you leaning  
31 towards? We're gonna [sic] for -- I would like to  
32 formulate a letter that's going to be transmitted by  
33 August 15th immediately to get it in the hopper. And so,  
34 but I want, I would like to -- we're talking about this  
35 issue right now. I'm encouraged that North Pacific  
36 Fisheries Management Council even has these kinds of  
37 options before us. And so, I'm encouraged by that. I do  
38 feel -- I feel strongly that there should be complete  
39 closure. But you should prioritize the small vessel  
40 fleet as to have an opportunity to harvest at a higher  
41 rate in the -- in this closure area, in these -- in the  
42 saving -- this savings area. But I do feel that this is  
43 on the right track. I do feel that we need to talk about  
44 this on the record. So, what do you think about the  
45 various options, Tim? That's the question before us  
46 tonight. I'm sure the Council is aware of the impacts  
47 of the lack of fish. They probably heard that a lot. So,  
48 I -- do you have a opinion about alternatives before us?  
49 Then you have the have the document online, you're  
50 looking at it. You're still there, Tim?

1  
2 MR. GERVAIS: This is Tim, I was trying  
3 to unmute.

4  
5 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. So, I want  
6 you to kind of like basically which op[sic] -- which of  
7 the alternatives are you leaning towards and what are  
8 the options. And what I don't see here is I see on page  
9 18, slide 18, I would guess you would call it, it shows  
10 option one, option 1.1 and option 2. But I don't see a  
11 diagram for option two. What -- why is that?  
12

13 MR. HAAPALA: The reason that there is  
14 no diagram for option two is because that's a -- it's a  
15 very different management structure. So, the way that  
16 option two would be set up is that it would be managed  
17 under the incentive plan agreements. And so, the options  
18 -- if I'm remembering rightly, are to have 50% or 75%  
19 of the corridor area closed and the stat areas or the  
20 small gray boxes that you see within the figure that  
21 would close would be determined by the Incentive Plan  
22 Agreements submitted to NMFS for review and approval  
23 prior to the season. They could not be changed within  
24 season, but they could change over time. And the reason  
25 for that is because the chum salmon savings area and the  
26 chinook salmon savings area. We've only spoken to the  
27 chum salmon savings area today, but that exists as a  
28 backstop measure, and the rolling hotspot program was  
29 developed because it -- environmental conditions and  
30 fishing conditions on the grounds changed. So, encounter  
31 rates were higher hire outside of the chum salmon savings  
32 area as opposed to within it. So, the Council's rationale  
33 and sorry Council members, you can -- I'm used to having  
34 to answer questions, but the rationale for that is to  
35 try and provide some flexibility as conditions may  
36 change in the future. So, we don't have a diagram that  
37 we can provide you because those areas would be selected  
38 by the IPAs. And I think that's -- yeah, I think  
39 that.....  
40

41 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That answers my  
42 question. But the -- but that still begs the question  
43 if the encounter rate is higher outside the savings area,  
44 wouldn't that be the Western Asian stocks that -- those  
45 are 75% of the hard take. But, what we -- what we're  
46 trying to protect in the savings area is the stocks  
47 moving through this you know, B season and you know, we  
48 want to protect those stocks, that's the objective. So,  
49 rolling it around or having any kind of harvest inside  
50 of there is counterproductive (indiscernible) it's my

1 impression and my opinion that pollock do not move off  
2 of their grounds. They're gonna [sic] be there when it  
3 opens on September 1, you could fish it through November  
4 the rest of the B season. You're fishing before then  
5 when the chums aren't there. The reality is, we want  
6 protection of the returning stocks cause [sic] we have  
7 limited returns. So, we're trying to save everyone. The  
8 fishery, the fleet will still be able to harvest the  
9 fish, they'll amass on the savings area after it opens,  
10 you know, they will, I would. Those fish when they'll  
11 open that closed area, I'll be on top of it. So, the  
12 reality is - yes, go ahead, Anne.

13  
14 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: Thank you. Pollock do  
15 actually move quite a bit over the course of the year,  
16 over the course of the season and over the course of  
17 their size and age. And so, that's why the fleet moves  
18 as much as it does, in or annually and even within the  
19 season. Part of the problem with -- all of these  
20 alternatives have benefits and disadvantages, right? And  
21 one of the issues with the corridor concept, yes, you  
22 could close down that cluster area for the time period.  
23 Even with allowing for some near shore opportunities for  
24 smaller vessels that operationally can't get out beyond  
25 the cluster area. You can't get all of the fish in in  
26 time when that cluster closure releases on September 1.  
27 At that point fish have scattered, we rely on pollock  
28 being schooled up to be able to harvest them efficiently.  
29 When we harvest efficiently, we have less bycatch.  
30 There's not enough time in the season, the season closes  
31 November 1 so, if you push off half the season to later  
32 in the year, you're not necessarily gonna [sic] be able  
33 to get it all in. And when you fish later in the season  
34 in September and October, you're likely to encounter  
35 more chinook and more herring in the bycatch. And that's  
36 something that we're also trying to avoid. So, those are  
37 some of the tradeoffs that we're trying to evaluate when  
38 we look at alternative five. Each of the action  
39 alternatives have different tradeoffs that we have to  
40 evaluate and that's where our amazing staff does a great  
41 job helping us understand those impacts through their  
42 analysis. But each of them have their tradeoffs that we  
43 have to evaluate.

44  
45 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, the B season  
46 would be the fleet's premier time to fish, and especially  
47 during that time frame, that's when the main cluster is.  
48 In the warm water, they cluster in the summer season  
49 more. Is the -- is there a food resource flowing through  
50 there, why the pollock would be more concentrated in

1 these savings areas at that time?

2

3 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: It's not necessarily  
4 that they're concentrated there. For example, the  
5 offshore fleets, the mothership fleet and the catcher  
6 processor fleet can't even legally fish in a lot of that  
7 area during the B season. They're closed out because  
8 it's set aside for the smaller inshore catcher vessels  
9 to be able to harvest. You don't always know when you're  
10 gonna [sic] find fish, you know, 6 hours outside of town  
11 or 36 hours outside of town. And so, with the rolling  
12 hotspot system and the communication on the grounds  
13 within the fleet, because it's a rationalized fishery,  
14 it's not a race for fish anymore, there's more  
15 communication on the grounds. We've used the rolling  
16 hotspot system to reduce how much salmon we're getting.  
17 We're also balancing, you know, herring is another  
18 limiting factor, cod can be a limiting factor, sablefish  
19 can be a limiting factor. As well as, you know, can you  
20 find the right size fish for what product form you need  
21 to be making? So, all of these vessels have a lot of  
22 different competing objectives. The inshore fleets all  
23 need to have their fish back to shore within a certain  
24 amount of time for fish quality issues. So, it's all  
25 really complicated and that's why we rely on the analysis  
26 that we get and that's part of why it takes so long in  
27 our process.

28

29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Well, I'm happy to  
30 see that you have at least some saving areas and you're  
31 considering the chum bycatch. I'm happy about that. That  
32 that's part of the analysis, not just herring, not just  
33 the size of the pollock. It's a major problem and as  
34 you're well aware. So, I -- we will still make -- I --  
35 you know, maybe it's depth. Maybe it's, you know, the  
36 chums and the salmon are closer to the surface. They're  
37 not -- it might be depth, it might be, you know, there's  
38 a bunch of various things that are going on, but we're  
39 -- you can just tell we're super frustrated. And so, we  
40 -- we're -- I'm happy to see these options here and so,  
41 your expertise will probably play out in the end and  
42 with your able staff and so forth. But the -- you know  
43 there's -- when does the B season open? June 10? June  
44 10th?

45

46 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: The B season is June  
47 10 to October 30 -- 31.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, yeah, that's  
50 just as the salmon start to return through the -- they're

1 starting to move towards destination at that time. Go  
2 ahead, John.

3  
4 MR. MOLLER: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.  
5 Chairman. I just want to back up a little bit here to a  
6 comment you made cause [sic] I completely agree that  
7 more genetics would be a helpful tool all the way around.  
8 And just to elaborate a little bit more on my colleague  
9 Mr. Williams here on the program that we were made aware  
10 of here more recently in terms of getting better and  
11 quicker genetic results. If I remember correctly, maybe  
12 my fellow colleagues can remind me on the time frame  
13 here. But it seemed like they were down to within a  
14 five-to-seven-day turnaround time for the genetics. And  
15 they're hoping to get it down to like two days in the  
16 near term but last year, I believe was the first year  
17 of the program. But I think there's a lot of us that are  
18 hopeful that, you know, we can have some closer real  
19 time data relative to the genetics because it plays right  
20 into the action that the Council has in front of it  
21 right now in terms of addressing the problem statement  
22 of avoiding Western Alaska chum salmon. So, if we can  
23 identify that on a more real time basis, it will be a  
24 useful tool. Just wanted to add that.

25  
26 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I appreciate that,  
27 you know, the Department of Fish and Game on the Yukon  
28 River, they're getting -- they're making genetic  
29 analysis of which stocks are which, even summer chum  
30 stocks. They're making almost getting close to like  
31 within I think it's close to 24 hours. They know what's  
32 actually coming in. Bristol Bay is doing the same thing.  
33 Like as Dr. Stram was saying several years ago that they  
34 were sending samples out. And all this rigmarole, it's  
35 like, well, times have changed. There can be some -- I  
36 think there's some methodology, maybe that's red tape.  
37 How do I know what it is. Anne.

38  
39 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: Thank you. So, this  
40 was the first year that BBSRI did a pilot project in  
41 Dutch Harbor for the shoreside fleet, and they were.....

42  
43 UNIDENTIFIED: Can you say what BBSRI is?

44  
45 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: Oh, Bristol Bay Salmon  
46 Research Institute. They do the Port Moller test  
47 fishery, also.

48  
49 CHAIRPERSON RAKOFF: Yeah.

50

1 MS. VANDERHOEVEN: So, they did a pilot  
2 project this year. They had some pretty good successes.  
3 It's only applicable to the inshore fleet. The offshore  
4 fleet fishes too far away, and the genetic composition  
5 of their bycatch over the years is consistently very  
6 different from what the inshore fleet gets. There is a  
7 lot of promise with the BBSRI project. They are seeking  
8 additional funding. That is an ongoing issue, as it is  
9 for everybody with everything and with it being a pilot  
10 project, we don't know and because this was such a low  
11 bycatch year for chum, we don't know if the results can  
12 be replicated in years that are -- where there's a lot  
13 more bycatch coming in.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Yeah. But I do  
16 think that genetic composition work, you know, when NOAA  
17 is doing offshore work and, you know, they incidentally  
18 catch pink and chum in their offshore trophic  
19 inventories which they have -- we need to know what  
20 markers those are, what -- are these AYK stocks in the  
21 North Pacific. And where they're at, where they're  
22 actually catching them, we need to get a little more  
23 fine-tuned on when we're -- you know, they do these  
24 various inventories, even the smolt out biodegrading,  
25 you know, Alaska Department of Fish and Games don't work  
26 with that. They need to be a little more fine-tuned to  
27 this genetic work. And so, that's -- as time goes on, I  
28 mean, this is almost getting real time. I mean, we're  
29 getting -- so, you can tell your genetic pedigree to  
30 where you came from in the world almost these days for  
31 humans. And so, I think that there's -- this is a  
32 critical factor of how this is gonna [sic] be, you know,  
33 how you're gonna [sic] prosecute this fishery with this  
34 genetic work, with whether you got a lot of AYK stocks  
35 there. You might have a whole bunch of chums, but maybe  
36 there's a hatchery fish from over in Siberia. How do we  
37 know where the -- you know, those Asian stocks. We're  
38 concerned about the AYK stocks. Yes, go ahead, Rachel.

39  
40 MS. BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This  
41 is Rachel and I, just to sort of complement that point,  
42 I think you're absolutely right about the promise of the  
43 more real time genetics. But I just wanted to add that  
44 the genetic information we do have for, in particular  
45 chum salmon bycatch and chinook (distortion)bycatch in  
46 the pollock fishery, we've had -- we've been collecting  
47 that information since 2011. And so, we're getting a  
48 time series, even though it's not real time and just  
49 pointing out if -- I think you -- many of you in the  
50 presentation are looking at the figure of alternatives

1 five, which has the option 1 and the option 1.1. Those  
2 areas are based on the genetic information that shows  
3 about 85% of the Western Alaska chum salmon bycatch in  
4 the pollock fishery comes from these areas. So, we're  
5 basing this action on that genetic information that we  
6 have in terms of the corridors that you're talking about.

7  
8 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: I'm extremely  
9 happy about that. It's just, it's intuitive that this  
10 where they're at. And so, I'm -- but I super appreciate  
11 your presence here to have discussions. I fully  
12 empathize with the complexities of the various types of  
13 fish that you're trying to avoid. But I do feel that  
14 you're on the right track. So, has any other Council  
15 members. Jenny, do you have anything to say about this?  
16 Jenny, go ahead.

17  
18 MS. PELKOLA: I'm in a daze. But anyway,  
19 I testified in Anchorage, also. But when I was sitting  
20 there and looking at all the members, I sort of lost my  
21 train of thought. But anyway, I just want to thank you  
22 all for being here and this is something that we have  
23 to work out together. When I heard people testifying,  
24 there were people for number one, number two, number  
25 five, they were just, you know, they wanted this one and  
26 they wanted that one. But for myself, I don't know that  
27 much about it than -- I just want to thank Krystal for  
28 the little training that I had on this, that I think, I  
29 feel I don't want to be pressured into choosing something  
30 that I might be sorry for later. For our area, I don't  
31 know how much the counselors know about this. It's  
32 something that I just recently heard, but maybe it's  
33 been around for a while. And I don't know if the  
34 Councils, the tribal Councils really know, you know. So,  
35 I would encourage the Councils to try to get someone to  
36 at least help them understand some of these options.  
37 It's -- I feel sorry for your Council because, you know,  
38 you've heard so many different options, people want this  
39 one and people want that one. So, I don't want to be in  
40 your shoes. But anyway, thank you for being here with  
41 us and I think we have to work together because one of  
42 these days there will be no fish for anyone. That's the  
43 way I feel and that's the way it looks like it's going.  
44 So, thank you again and that's just my cents.

45  
46 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Jenny.  
47 Pollock.

48  
49 MR. SIMON: Thank you, Chair. Pollock  
50 Simon Sr. I live in Allakaket. I just want to take this



1 time to share some thoughts and memories with you. Well,  
2 everybody working together tried to bring the fish back.  
3 The salmon might come back, but not in great numbers,  
4 not like it used to be. King salmon is something that  
5 maybe that we enjoyed in the past. There was a time when  
6 years ago, where we were in a log cabin, hot water on  
7 the wood stove for hot tea, was forty below out there  
8 and we would go out to the fish camps and bring dried  
9 fish in and have to chew on dry fish and hot tea. These  
10 days are gone now. They're beyond the good memories, but  
11 I was glad to see all of you people come here to talk  
12 about the salmon with us. It's good, everybody working  
13 together and thank you, Mr. Chair.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you,  
16 Pollock. Appreciate those comments.

17  
18 MR. SIMON: Yeah, I have to go. I got  
19 things to do.

20  
21 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay. And Tommy,  
22 you got a comment?

23  
24 MR. KRISKA: Well, I always have things  
25 to say, I guess. Fish was once upon a time where my --  
26 our main diet for our families. We had a lot going back  
27 in the days and teaching our kids everything. I was  
28 taught a lot about fish. Never taught about how to argue  
29 about fish, but. I try to figure out how to keep our  
30 fish. Like, I really have a heavy heart for myself, my  
31 family, for all the people in interior Alaska, all over  
32 in Alaska. It's sad to be sitting here, even with the  
33 best of fish managers, I guess. And can't they -- they  
34 gave us options and everything like that and then it's  
35 like a guessing poll, guess number one or number two or  
36 whatever, you might get the right one. I'm not sure,  
37 it's very frustrating to be a Alaska Native and in the  
38 God and the Lord's land, it's a beautiful country. But  
39 you know, without the salmon and all the things that we  
40 live upon and enjoy and enjoyed, it's not there anymore.  
41 And I thought, oh well, maybe that's okay. At first it  
42 started with the kings and then the chum, summer chum  
43 then it went to the fall chum and we're down to  
44 whitefish. It's really bad and then for you - I like I  
45 said earlier, no offense, but for you to be sitting here  
46 and giving me, telling me take a choice or what  
47 alternatives you want? The only alternatives I have is  
48 I -- we need some fish for the future for our kids. It's  
49 --I mean, you know, if -- what if it was your kids? You  
50 guys have you know, your way of fishing and everything

1 you're on that side of the line. The border line of the  
2 beaches of Southeast Alaska, you're on the other side  
3 of it. You have all the fish in the world, we don't have  
4 that. We're on this side of it, where the fish can't  
5 come through there because the too much fishing  
6 commercially. I have a lot to say, and I don't really  
7 want to get into you know, being the bad guy here, I'm  
8 already -- I don't know how the heck I wound up the bad  
9 guy at the first place. You know, the Lord, he provided  
10 us with a lot of good stuff, the berries, the bears, the  
11 moose, the fish, everything. We had everything. Once  
12 upon a time, I used to say, you know, a lot of people  
13 keep coming into college and they were -- forgot about  
14 there -- that's probably possibly what happened. They  
15 forgot to turn around in their country and everything  
16 was there, the berries, the moose, the fish, everything.  
17 All you had to do was turn around and live the lifestyle  
18 that the Lord put you there for. But they all turned  
19 away and went toward development and you know, the  
20 industry, the money. And this is what it costs, money  
21 and on that side of the line is what you're gonna [sic]  
22 continue doing. You have no control over what you're  
23 doing and what you're being paid for to do, to provide  
24 fish for everyone else and in -- and if we had money to  
25 buy fish, we'd probably be okay. But we don't have that  
26 kind of choice around here. I can go on and on. I'm  
27 kinda very upset that we were put in this situation and  
28 you're asking us to make a decision. Why can't you guys  
29 make a decision and help us? You have all the tools. You  
30 have the tools, we don't. It's frustrating to be sitting  
31 here and listen to -- I mean, I listened to the Board  
32 of Fish, Board of Game, everybody. I don't know where  
33 this -- the, you know, we talked to Board of Fish, Board  
34 of Game in a lot of meetings we talked to here, right.  
35 And it's supposed to be getting to Washington, D.C. that  
36 stuff never gets to Washington, D.C. it runs into the  
37 industry, who's making all these plans and from what I  
38 see our word never gets to where it's supposed to be  
39 going. So, a lot of our chiefs and everything fly  
40 directly to DC, and they're asking them about the  
41 questions that they were asking here. They said, what  
42 questions? We never heard about this stuff. So,  
43 technically it is all run into this Board and that Board  
44 and slowly dwindle it, throw it in the trash or whatever.  
45 I don't know where it goes, but this is -- the situation  
46 that we're in and I guess -- you guys have power to do  
47 things, and I really wish you would use it and do it.  
48 Because.....

49

50 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Tom.

1  
2 MR. KRISKA: I don't know, I -- like I  
3 said, I just, I'm kind of frustrated about it, but I'm  
4 hoping there is a way you can help us.

5  
6 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Tom.  
7 Again, people have -- you can feel the deep pain that  
8 people have here about this whole fishery thing going  
9 over a cliff. This is like thousands of years of use of  
10 this resource and it's going away. They're working on  
11 it, this document here shows they're working on it. They  
12 were -- there was no cap, there was really no savings  
13 of chum in the pollock fishery. So, I feel that this is  
14 a real big step forward. I'm really happy to see that  
15 the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is  
16 weighing these various options, these various things. I  
17 would like, you know, the genetic analysis of the stocks  
18 that are coming into the bycatch in the B season. I  
19 would like to know the -- whether they're in condition  
20 of maturation, are they actually spawning stock -- are  
21 they spawning fish moving back to the spawning grounds.  
22 That should be a consideration of you know what is this  
23 bycatch, is it feeders, is it this small little, little  
24 smolt or you know, small fish that are moving out? It's  
25 -- there needs to be an enumeration of the maturation  
26 of the fish that are moving through the savings area so  
27 that your catch -- your by -- your caps are revolving  
28 around the genetic analysis for AYK stocks and the  
29 maturation. Those are the fish that we're looking to get  
30 back on the spawning grounds. Those are some key data  
31 that's gonna [sic] -- needs to be used during this whole  
32 process of bycatch avoidance for spawning stocks, that's  
33 what we're after. And so, that we need to look, your  
34 analysis needs to be looking at that fairly closely. So,  
35 I think we've covered our Council, our Councils talked  
36 and Nissa you got a comment there.

37  
38 MS. PILCHER: I -- this is Nissa, for the  
39 record. I might have a question. It may be helpful for  
40 the Council to consider the comment submitted via the  
41 Federal Register versus at the meeting where they're  
42 gonna [sic] be taking action. Does one hold more weight  
43 or is it the same weight?

44  
45 MR. VANDERHOEVEN: I don't think one  
46 holds more weight than the other. They're just different  
47 forms.

48  
49 MS. PILCHER: And then as a -- sorry, as  
50 a quick reminder that as they stated earlier, that draft

1 DAS is gonna [sic] come out mid-August for the 60 days,  
2 60-day comment period, which is a ways away. Granted,  
3 you guys wouldn't be meeting before then. But then  
4 there's an additional option. They're gonna [sic] be  
5 taking that final action in December of 2025. So, there  
6 is a little bit of time. We're kind of rushed because  
7 of this meeting. But we're only rushed because of our  
8 time constraints. The tribes and individuals and whatnot  
9 have time to look at this and consider this.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: This Council has to  
12 make some kind of -- write this letter of, to you at  
13 this meeting so that it's loaded in the barrel for  
14 August. Because I think sooner is better, sooner is  
15 better. So that you think about it sooner than later. I  
16 would prefer you to think about it, our comments on the  
17 EIS in August, time frame, then later right before  
18 decision. Cause [sic] it gets too far down the road. So,  
19 there's -- we've made some points for you to consider,  
20 the data lacks [sic] that's needed, the ocean  
21 competition and working across jurisdictional about  
22 trying to get that under control with hatchery release.  
23 We've laid out a whole bunch of issues that we feel are  
24 instrumental in getting this to turn around and how  
25 that's gonna [sic] work with the North Pacific Fisheries  
26 Management Council to accomplish that. Cause 85% of the  
27 fish swim through that area, that's an important thing,  
28 that's a very important thing. And I feel that this --  
29 you're on the right track. There's some -- you got all  
30 the professionals and staff the bio mutations to  
31 actually figure it all out. But let's -- I think you're  
32 on the right track. But there's a little more data that  
33 needs to get plugged into this thing. So, I think there's  
34 a little bit more work to do with some of the science  
35 behind this, where the fish go in the North Pacific, how  
36 many of those fish are actually of this bycatch? I would  
37 estimate, I would think that most of that is -- has  
38 reared in the North Pacific. That's why they're there,  
39 that's why they're crossing that, so. They're not --  
40 they don't just go over there just for kicks. They're  
41 off course, if they are. If they're of Asians [sic]  
42 origin, they're gonna [sic] come right straight across  
43 to the -- they're gonna [sic] be north of that. So, I  
44 think we've covered everything. I don't want to belabor  
45 anything. I don't want to continue on and make you -- I  
46 don't want to get upset or anything anymore. You can --  
47 you feel the pain of losing a fishery on the Yukon River  
48 that we were -- relied on. When I lived on the Yukon,  
49 we were eating fresh king salmon, there's nothing better  
50 than a fresh king salmon on the Yukon River. That was

1 the longest run fish in Alaska, they're super fat, even  
2 at Galena. They're that fat, that thick on them. I mean,  
3 they just ask these people the oil that pours off he's  
4 got to put buckets under them because they have so much  
5 fat. That's what we're not seeing, we're not seeing fat  
6 fish anymore. We got a real problem, that means they're  
7 don't have enough food. Doesn't take a rocket scientist  
8 to figure that one out and this hatchery stuff has got  
9 to be the key to the marine decline and combination with  
10 too much competition on the ocean, that's what the  
11 problem is. So, I really appreciate you coming to  
12 interact with our Council. And so, we will be writing a  
13 letter to -- for your review. Tomorrow we're gonna [sic]  
14 have public comments with people, we're gonna [sic] have  
15 -- formulate other ideas. And so, we're gonna [sic] --  
16 I want to write a letter that's going to be of assistance  
17 to your deliberation in this chum bycatch issue. That's  
18 what I would like to do with this Council. So, thank you  
19 very much. So, any.....

20  
21 MS. PILCHER: (Indiscernible) I  
22 interrupted Rachel.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Did I interrupt  
25 Rachel?

26  
27 MS. PILCHER: No, I interrupted Rachel.

28  
29 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Oh, you  
30 interrupted, okay. So, okay. I think we're -- have any  
31 final comments, Sarah?

32  
33 MS. MARRINAN: Mr. Chair, I just wanted  
34 to highlight the dates that we provided for when public  
35 comment opportunities are open. That's our current  
36 working timeline. There's a lot of dynamics that could  
37 be changing and if those change will commit to  
38 communicate those changes and timeline with your  
39 coordinators so that you know when public comment  
40 opportunities are available. And I also just wanted to  
41 highlight to Tommy's point, it's your prerogative what  
42 you'd like to include in a letter. So, if you want to  
43 comment on the alternatives the Council can do that. You  
44 can also highlight other points of information or  
45 recommendations that you want the North Pacific  
46 Management Council to understand. So, you can really  
47 include whatever you'd like to in that letter, you don't  
48 just have to focus on the alternatives. You can talk  
49 about that tomorrow if you want. But all of that  
50 information, anything you want to communicate to the

1 Council could be received in that letter. It's really  
2 your choice what you'd like to include there.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, well, that  
5 was my intention. It has -- it's beyond the alternatives.  
6 Is some of the data that's necessary to reiterate not  
7 that I've basically been speaking onto the record here.  
8 Go ahead, Don.

9  
10 MR. HONEA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sarah,  
11 I really didn't know if you guys answered my question  
12 or not. Okay, there's five alternatives here. This is  
13 time sensitive and so, I mean, are we -- is this an  
14 action item where we meet, I mean, are we choosing one  
15 of the alternatives? I'm not getting this. Thank.....

16  
17 MS. MARRINAN: Yes, I will try to clarify  
18 and you can let me know if I -- if you're still confused  
19 here. The alternatives that the Council is currently  
20 considering, four of them are action alternatives, would  
21 change Federal regulations. And also, I don't think I  
22 mentioned this, but they're not mutually exclusive. Two  
23 of them are but you can make recommendations for multiple  
24 options that are being considered. So, you can look at  
25 the alternatives that the Council is considering and  
26 make any statements about them that you'd want, about  
27 what you'd like to recommend. There's different, like  
28 if you're thinking about an overall hard cap, there's  
29 different values being considered. You can make  
30 recommendations on those if you want to, or you can just  
31 say, you know, we're interested in overall hard cap. You  
32 can say we're interested in a corridor cap, anything  
33 you'd like to speak to, or you feel like you want to say  
34 in a letter, you can. In terms of timing of this we are  
35 in this long Federal process that is still in the Council  
36 arena, and they haven't made their final recommendations  
37 to National Marine Fisheries Service yet. So, I mean,  
38 in terms of urgency, it's a slow process. And like we  
39 said, probably the next public comment opportunity is  
40 August. So, you do have time but I think, as the Chair  
41 mentioned, it might be helpful to think about these  
42 things while they're fresh in your mind. So, if you have  
43 comments coming out of this meeting, it might be helpful  
44 since you might have momentum now to put those on paper.  
45 You could also consider when the next version of the  
46 analysis comes out. We haven't analyzed that new  
47 corridor option yet, and when we do, I imagine we'll  
48 look at things like how much pollock comes out of those  
49 stat areas, how much chum salmon comes out of those stat  
50 areas. So, you could think about it at that time as

1 well. So yeah, in terms of urgency, I mean, we definitely  
2 hear concerns -- in river concerns about the urgency and  
3 the seriousness of this issue. It is still just the way  
4 this regulatory process works. Is it -- it's a slow  
5 process and we pass it over to National Marine Fisheries  
6 Service, and then they go through rulemaking. So, there  
7 are still multiple stages left. But we're at a point  
8 where public comment opportunity will be coming up soon.  
9 Does that clarify? Okay.

10  
11 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That was good.  
12 Thank you, Sarah. And Robert.

13  
14 MR. WALKER: Sarah. Robert Walker. I  
15 would have to talk to the rest of our tribes in our  
16 area. The poor villages will -- I'll present it to them,  
17 and I'll tell them which option they would like to work  
18 with. I know sometimes they can be very frustrated, too,  
19 but I think this is part of -- this is not a deal, but  
20 it's something to do. And, Mr. Chairman I would like to  
21 introduce Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association  
22 Serena Fitka and the Chairman of the Board, Bill Fitka.  
23 So, I'm just glad you guys could make it to our meeting  
24 here. And so, you could see firsthand how much that what  
25 goes on here? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26  
27 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: We're gonna [sic]  
28 have public comments on this tomorrow. So, that's why I  
29 want -- I will -- you will have plenty of opportunity  
30 to speak to our Council tomorrow. But this was a Council,  
31 Regional Council interaction with the North Pacific  
32 Fisheries Management Council. And we're -- I didn't want  
33 to get public comment going and -- cause [sic] we have --  
34 -- we're gonna [sic] be out of time here in about five  
35 minutes anyways. So, tomorrow I would really like to get  
36 the public comments before this Council. And so, the --  
37 when would that be, Nissa that's around, that's in the  
38 morning right away?

39  
40 MS. PILCHER: For the record, this is  
41 Nissa. It would be right away. So, my thought process  
42 was, is this is still an agenda item. So, what we could  
43 do is not close this agenda item out and then start  
44 first thing in the morning on this. Take testimony on  
45 this subject and then after that move to testimony on  
46 non-agenda topics.

47  
48 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay.

49  
50 MS. PILCHER: That was my thought.

1 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: That's what we're  
2 gonna [sic] do tomorrow. So, we're not closing you off.  
3 We're just gonna [sic] do -- we're -- it's on hold right  
4 now. Tim Gervais, did you -- I heard you speaking. Did  
5 you want a final comment, Tim?

6  
7 MR. GERVAIS: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
8 This is Tim Gervais. Yeah, I would recommend to the  
9 Council that they get the genetic analysis technology  
10 up to speed with the -- with what BBSRI is doing and  
11 incorporate that 24-hour genetic information into some  
12 kinda AI or machine learning algorithm and help further  
13 define what the spatial distribution of the different  
14 stocks is. And then the second comment I had in closing  
15 was I feel that the fleet, BSAI fleet should try to even  
16 avoid this foreign bycatch because, these countries are  
17 putting out, and Southeast Alaska's putting out a lot  
18 of chum stamp, chum salmon hatchery stock. And if a  
19 portion of it or a significant portion of it is getting  
20 caught and wasted in a trawl fishery, that just means  
21 they have to put out more smolts to meet their hatchery  
22 goals. So, it has a detrimental effect where there's  
23 salmon that's out there eating groceries in the ocean  
24 with all the other wild salmon, and they're not being  
25 utilized in any kind of meaningful harvesting. And so,  
26 all the food that the Asian salmon are eating is getting  
27 wasted or just destroyed in a - caught in on a trawl  
28 net. So, I want, just suggesting that just because it's  
29 foreign fish, or Washington in fish or Oregon fish, that,  
30 that doesn't mean that the trawl, BSAI trawl fleet needs  
31 to ignore that that's an impact. Thank you for coming  
32 up. Appreciate your engagement with us on this important  
33 topic. Have a nice trip.

34  
35 CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, thank you, Tim.  
36 Bringing up that bycatch, you know, there's SeaShare of  
37 retention to share these. You know, if you're gonna [sic]  
38 do a maturation analysis and you're -- those should be  
39 flash frozen and return to river of origin. Where did  
40 SeaShare come from? From a Western Interior Regional  
41 Council meeting where we had two North Pacific Fisheries  
42 Management Councils there and we were already -- this  
43 is in like 2005. We were already starting to suppress  
44 stocks and we're talking about bycatch. I stated on the  
45 record then, when I wasn't even the Chair then that  
46 those should be -- the salmon that are caught and you  
47 know, bycatch mature salmon should be returned to the  
48 river of origin. And so, the first one of the North  
49 Pacific Council members says, well, that will cost a lot  
50 of money. I says [sic] that disincentivizes catching



1 bycatch. But we have chum salmon, we have chinook salmon  
2 lax and Bristol Bay micro sockeye are not satiating  
3 people's appetite for fish. Jenny likes fat fish. People  
4 are used to -- I'm telling you, these, even these summer  
5 chums or these fall chums, they're really fat and that  
6 -- people are used to eating -- and people say all the  
7 time, that's my comfort food. That's my co[sic] -- why  
8 do they say that? Because salmon fat is really high in  
9 vitamin D, and vitamin D directly affects your  
10 serotonin. Of course, it's their comfort food. So, I  
11 would encourage the North Pacific -- I was off topic,  
12 but I would encourage the North Pacific Fisheries  
13 Management Council to retain adult salmon and return  
14 those to river of origin. It's doing no one in the  
15 affected communities any good at all. And the AYK if  
16 they go to Seattle to the food bank, that's not helping  
17 us. It's not helping us out. I would seriously comment  
18 that, that should be a consideration of the North Pacific  
19 Fisheries Management Council, that retention of adult  
20 salmon should be returned into the AYK's systems that  
21 are, especially the Yukon. We've had virtually no  
22 fishery. Kuskokwim has had some fishing but, the Yukon  
23 has had no fishing, we have nothing. If people are giving  
24 us jars of fish from the Copper River or something. I  
25 mean, it's like, it's bleak. So, I think that's a  
26 consideration for your SeaShare program. Thank you. So,  
27 we're gonna [sic] close out this meeting now. One more  
28 thing there, Nissa.

29  
30 MS. PILCHER: This is Nissa. This will  
31 be really, really quick. One, there are some letters in  
32 the green folder you guys were handed. It includes a  
33 letter from -- they're all involving the alternatives  
34 and what other people or other organizations think about  
35 them. If you wanted to review them tonight or tomorrow  
36 morning, I realize we're all probably pretty fried. One  
37 is from Chief Brian Ridley that was given to us by TCC.  
38 One is, which I will hand out is by the Eastern Interior  
39 Regional Advisory Council at their last meeting. There's  
40 one from the Fish and Wildlife Service and I do have two  
41 that Krystal just shared with me, one from Healy Lake  
42 village and one's more, looks more like that, like a  
43 ch[sic] -- not a chain, but a stock letter where you  
44 could adopt some things or not adopt others, that I will  
45 get printed, hopefully tomorrow morning. I'll email them  
46 out to those of us that have emails. But if you wanted  
47 to take a look and see what other people have done or  
48 said in relation to these alternatives you can -- maybe  
49 that'll help you guys figure out kind of what you guys  
50 (distortion) want to recommend. That is all, thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: So, we're right at 8:32 p.m. We're two minutes short. Oh, go ahead, Steve. I don't wanna cut anybody off.

MR. WILLIAMS: No, no. That's all right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to say thank you for having us. I think that you know, number on the table identified this is a complex issue. It's obvious to me, at least from my perspective, that you yourself have a pretty good picture of kinda how these things fit together. I think building off of that, you can use that to help us get an idea of, you know, the thoughts that this Council may have. But I do appreciate you having us. It's been very good to listen to these comments and hear kinda how they all fit together. So, thank you very much, I appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you, Steve. Thanks, John, for hopefully, you know, all your work to get the Council to come to the Regional Council meetings. So, I appreciate that and I do appreciate, you know, Rachel and Anne coming here just listening -- I can tell you're intensely listening and I understand your consternation with the complexity of this issue. But there is an overriding objective here of, I think we can harvest these or protect these salmon, and we can still harvest the pollock. I still think -- I'm pretty sure you can still do it. You know, the biomass is going to be there. It'll show up in the A season. There's a way to catch that fish. So, I'm concerned, you know we have all these concerns. So, we need to close this meeting out and -- oh, John.

MR. MOLLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make a closing remark here that, you know, I don't think any one of us think that this is a one and done opportunity. And that, you know, part of the purpose for being here is, one, you know, help the Council to meet and greet folks from the region here relative to affected stakeholders here. I think it's imperative upon us to create that opportunity for relationships to build in the narrative and the discussion to continue. And as Jenny mentioned, you -- we're not gonna [sic] get through this together alone, it's gonna [sic] -- we're gonna [sic] to have to do it together. But I just wanna offer that up. I think most -- everybody has my cell phone. And feel free if you got questions and I'll be -- do my darndest to try to answer them or if I can't, I have the numbers of the staff. So, thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Thank you very much. Final comments, Rachel or Anne?

MS. BAKER: Mr. Chair, this is Rachel. I would just echo my appreciation for having us here this evening. And thanks again and I -- the one thing I did want to stress is speaking to the frustration around your members here with the process and how long it takes. One thing that was really clear at the North Pacific Council February meeting is, when this comes back to the North Pacific Council the next time this action -- there is full intention to take a final action to recommend to the National Marine Fisheries Service as Sarah highlighted for us. And that I just wanted to point that out, I'm not sure that we talked about that tonight.

MS. MARRINAN: And I also would like to thank you all for having us. It's -- I think every time we're able to meet with people outside of our normal circle of the fisheries that we deal in, it helps us get a better, broader understanding and in this forum, I think we've all learned a lot from that as well. I think one thing that you hit on a couple of times yourself, Mr. Chair, was additional information that you think would be helpful for the analysis. And I know that the Council and staff would be appreciative if you have information or know where that information might be available, that it could be included. That they would be happy to look, to see if that could be incorporated on the timeline that we're operating under. So, I would encourage if you have that information to help share it.

CHAIRPERSON REAKOFF: Okay, thank you. So, I think it was a great discussion. It was gonna [sic] be highlighted this meeting, the -- this winter meeting for this regional Council. And so, I'm appreciative of the work that you're doing and that your intention is for final action for protection of chum salmon on the Bering Sea. I appreciate that. So, any -- at this time, we're going to go into recess till [sic] tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. And so, that's when we're gonna [sic] go pick this issue back up again and we're gonna [sic] get public comments on that one, at that time. So, this will be adjournment for this evening. Thank you.

(Off record)

(END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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 171 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the WESTERN INTERIOR FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I recorded on the 25th day of February;

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 April 2025.

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Rafael Morel  
Chief Project Manager