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NORTHWEST ARTIC SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

NORTHEAST ARTIC HERITAGE CENTER
Kotzebue, Alaska
March 27, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Thomas Baker, Chair
Karmen Monigold
Tristen Pattee
Enoch Schiedt
Wilbur Howarth
Clyde Ramoth
Elmer Armstrong
Verne Cleveland
Michael Kramer

Regional Council Coordinator, Lisa Hutchinson

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Kotzebue, Alaska - 3/27/25)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. Good morning, everyone. This is Chair Thomas Baker. It is now 9 am. I'm going to convene the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council winter meeting. We are here in person in the Northwest Arctic Heritage Center in Kotzebue and live on air on KOTZ Radio. I'd like to start with an invocation. Would anyone like to volunteer?

MR. CLEVELAND: Good morning. (Indiscernible) word of prayer. Thank you, Lord, for this day for us to gather here from different areas to -- different ideas from other people. Give the -- the sick that are sick to help them, Lord. Help each and everyone that are hurting from illness and anything else that are hurting from, Lord. And watch over our family that we left behind. And watch over our kids, our moms and dads. Lord, thank you for this day, for getting us here and bring us safely back home. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Amen. Thank you for that, Verne. We'll move on to item number two, which is the call to order. It is 9:01. So, again, Chair Thomas Baker, I will call this meeting to order. Lisa, can we please get a roll call to establish quorum?

MS. HUTCHINSON: Good morning, Council, Mr. Chair, and everybody in -- online and in present. We were going to do a roll call, and for the record, my name is Lisa Hutchinson Scarborough. I'm the Council Coordinator for this Council. Karmen Monigold.

MS. MONIGOLD: Present.

MS. HUTCHINGSON: Tristen Pattee.

MR. PATTEE: Here.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Enoch Schiedt.

(No response)

Wilbur Howarth.

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MR. HOWARTH: Here.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Good morning, Wilbur.

MR. HOWARTH: Morning.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Clyde Ramoth.

MR. RAMOTH: Present.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Elmer Armstrong.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Present.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Verne Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Here. Here.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Michael Kramer.

MR. KRAMER: Here.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Raymond Woods. I believe Raymond is not going to be able to attend. He informed me, but he might call in later. Thank you. Thomas Baker.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Here.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. We have -- there's ten sitting members. There's eight present. So, we do have a quorum, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that, Lisa. Do we have any meeting announcements?

MS. HUTCHINSON: Yes. Okay. Anyway, I just wanted to again welcome everybody to the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council. And I wanted to again welcome the Council members and everybody here in person. They're also listening online and also listening by radio, and thank you for KOTZ for broadcasting this to the region. This is the winter meeting for the Council. And I also wanted -- were meeting here at the Northwest Arctic Heritage Center. It's a wonderful center, and wanted to thank the Park Service for allowing us to meet at this venue. Anyway, the announcements. I just want to do some announcements and a quick ethics review statement. But first of all, I'd like to welcome our newest appointed Council member,

1 Karmen Monigold. Welcome to the Council. We're happy to
2 have you.

3

4 MS. MONIGOLD: Thank you.

5

6 MS. HUTCHINSON: And Karmen is here
7 representing subsistence users for mostly the Kotzebue
8 region, but other areas -- part of this area too. Also
9 wanted to congratulate Verne Cleveland of Noorvik and
10 Raymond Woods of Shungnak for both your reappointments
11 to the Council. And thank you for both of your continuing
12 commitments and interests, and being on the Council, and
13 for your representation of subsistence users in your
14 community and throughout the whole Northwest Arctic
15 region. So, welcome back, you two. Anyway, for those
16 attending our meeting in person, please make sure that
17 you sign in at the front table over there and -- it just
18 helps us keep track of who is here and everything. If -
19 - also, if you would like to address the Council during
20 the meeting also -- for folks that are in the room,
21 please fill out one of the blue testifier forms that you
22 will find on the front table over there where you signed
23 in, and you can hand it to any of the staff members or
24 to me, and I will alert the Chair that you would like
25 to be addressed. For the -- all participants on the
26 phone, please remember to meet your -- mute your phones
27 when you're not speaking, and if you would like to
28 address the Council, you can press star five to raise
29 your hand on your phone, And we will then try to call
30 on you by announcing the last digits of your phone number
31 which shows up on my computer, and if -- then we - you'll
32 have an opportunity to speak. If you are joining us by
33 the Teams platform and you'd like to speak, you also may
34 raise your hand on that upper right part of the screen
35 with the little hand, and we can see that you want to
36 speak, and we'll address you when it's time. Also, for
37 those of you that are online or listening on the radio,
38 you can find the meeting materials on the Council's
39 website at www.doi.gov/subsistence/regions/nwa --
40 Northwest Arctic, nwa_materials. I know that's a lot,
41 but anyway, you can also just google search for Northwest
42 Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, and it'll
43 pull it up. That's easier. That's what I do. Okay, the
44 Chair will announce the time for tribal and public
45 comments on the non-agenda items each morning, and that
46 will be an opportunity for those present, as well as
47 those participating on the phones, or in Teams, to speak
48 on non-agenda items. If anybody would like to submit a
49 comment by email, you can also do so by sending that to
50 subsistence at -- the @ symbol -- ios.doi.gov, g o v.

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Our meetings are conducted by the Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure, which helps us provide structure and maintain order throughout the meeting. All participants are expected to be courteous and respectful in all interactions as a matter of meeting etiquette. It is understood that the nature of some of the issues discussed at these meetings can be difficult and controversial. Although some comments shared throughout this meeting may be passionate, no insults or foul language will be tolerated in this meeting. Thank you for allowing me this time to share this information, Mr. Chair and members of the Council, back to you. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that, Lisa. We'll move into welcome introductions. I'm going to go agency by agency. We'll start with folks in the room, and we will start with anyone from the Office of Subsistence Management. And then, just so you know, after that, it'll be Fish and Wildlife, then the Park Service, then BLM. So, get lined up.

DR. VICKERS: Good morning, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council, everyone else that's here in attendance. My name is Brent Vickers. I am the anthropology division supervisor at the Office of Subsistence Management. I'll be also representing the OSM leadership team today. Thank you all. It's a beautiful day. Thank you.

DR. VOORHEES: Good morning. My name is Hannah Voorhees. I am an anthropologist with the Office of Subsistence Management or OSM.

MR. PLANK: Good morning. Tom Plank, wildlife biologist Office Subsistence Management.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Anyone from OSM on the phone?

DR. ROBERTS: Good morning. This is Jason Roberts, Anthropologist at OSM.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And we'll go back to in the room. Anyone from the Fish and Wildlife Service?

MR. WIESE: Good morning. Wil Wiese, Selawik National Wildlife Refuge Manager.

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1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And anyone from the
2 Fish and Wildlife Service on the phone?

3
4 MS. SWEENEY: Morning. This is Brittany
5 Sweeney, Assistant Refuge Manager at Selawik Refuge.
6 Thank you.

7
8 MS. KLEIN: Hi. Good morning. This is
9 Jill Klein. I'm the Regional Subsistence Coordinator
10 with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm based in
11 Anchorage, so I'll be joining you online for the meeting.
12 Good morning.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And we'll go back to
15 the room. National Park Service.

16
17 MS. WHITING: (In Native) Whiting,
18 National Park Service superintendent for WEAR.

19
20 MS. CARLSON: Good morning. Annie
21 Carlson, Resources Program Manager with Western Arctic.
22 Thanks.

23
24 MS. CREEK: Morning. This is Emily Creek,
25 Subsistence Coordinator and Anthropologist for Western
26 Arctic here in Kotzebue. Good morning.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And anyone with the
29 National Park Service on the phone.

30
31 MR. FRONSTIN: Morning. This is Raime
32 Fronstin, Wildlife Biologist with Western Arctic. Sorry,
33 I can't be there. I wish I could see you all. Thank you.

34
35 (Simultaneous speech)

36
37 MS. PATTON: Good morning, this is...

38
39 MR. JOLY: Good morning, everyone... go
40 ahead Eva.

41 MS. PATTON: You first, Kyle.

42
43 MR. JOLY: All right. Thanks, Eva. This
44 is Kyle Joly. I'm a caribou biologist for the National
45 Park Service.

46
47 MS. PATTON: Good morning. This is Eva
48 Patton, Subsistence Program Manager with the National
49 Park Service in Anchorage. Good to hear your voices.

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1 MS. OKADA: Good morning. This is Marcy
2 Okada, Subsistence Coordinator for Gates of the Arctic
3 National Park and Preserve, based out of Fairbanks.

4
5 MS. JOCHUM: Good morning. This is Kim
6 Jochum. I work also at the Regional Office Subsistence
7 Program with Eva Patton, and also I'm an Interagency
8 Staff Committee Member. I also wish I would be there in
9 person as originally planned, like Raimi.

10
11 (Pause)

12
13 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Anyone from the
14 Bureau of Land Management?

15
16 (No response)

17
18 Whoever's moving around, if you could
19 mute yourself. Hearing no one from BLM at this time,
20 we'll move on to Alaska Department of Fish and Game.
21 Anyone in the room?

22
23 MR. HANSEN: Good morning, all. This is
24 Alex Hansen, Alaska Department Fish and Game here in
25 Kotzebue, caribou biologist.

26
27 UNIDENTIFIED: Hi, my name is Olivia. I'm
28 going to be observing today. I just landed in Kotzebue
29 last night, and I have to say thank you for allowing me
30 to attend this meeting. And I saw some folks building
31 snow castles yesterday. I thought that was endearing.
32 Your home is beautiful. Thank you for having me.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And anyone from the
35 Department of Fish and Game over the phone?

36
37 MR. HENSLEE: Hey. Good morning. This is
38 Luke Henslee. I'm the Assistant Area Management
39 Biologist for Norton Sound in Kotzebue. I'm based in
40 Nome.

41
42 MR. SCANLON: Good morning. This is
43 Brendan Scanlon, Northwest North Slope Fishery Biologist
44 based out of Fairbanks.

45
46 MR. SPENCER: Good morning. This is Joe
47 Spencer, Research Biologist in.....

48
49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: In blank.

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1 UNIDENTIFIED: He's in Fairbanks.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.

4 Anyone else with Fish and Game?

5

6 (No response)

7

8 Hearing none. Any other federal agencies
9 in the room? Over the phone?

10

11 (No response)

12

13 Any other state agencies in the room or
14 over the phone?

15

16 (No response)

17

18 Do we have anyone representing.....

19

20 (Simultaneous speech)

21

22 MR. CHEN: Morning, Mr. Chair and Council
23 members. Yes. Good morning again, Mr. Chair, Council
24 members. My name is Glenn Chen. I'm with the Bureau of
25 Indian Affairs. I'm the Subsistence Branch Chief. Thank
26 you very much.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do we have anyone
29 from any tribes or Native corporations?

30

31 MR. KIRK: Good morning. This is Robbie
32 Kirk with NANA. I'm the Senior Lands Director,
33 representing the Lands Department at NANA.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And do we have anyone
36 else in the room or over the phone?

37

38 MS. RUBY: Good morning. My name is
39 Caitlin Ruby and I'm a master's student at the University
40 of Alaska Fairbanks.

41

42 MR. BRINKMAN: Good morning, everybody.
43 My name is Todd Brinkman. I'm a faculty at University
44 of Alaska Fairbanks.

45

46 MS. COLD: Yes. Good morning. Apologies.
47 I was having some speaker issues, but this is Helen Cold
48 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division
49 of Subsistence in Fairbanks.

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1 MR. FRALEY: And Kevin Fraley here, Fish
2 Biologist based in Fairbanks for the Wildlife
3 Conservation Society.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right, if that's
6 everyone, welcome to the winter meeting for the
7 Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council.
8 We will now move on to item number six, the election of
9 officers, and I will turn it over to Lisa.

10
11 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. This is again Lisa
12 Hutchinson, for the record. Council Coordinator and --
13 for the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Council. And in
14 accordance with the Council Charter. Council members
15 elect a Chair, a Vice Chair and Secretary for one year
16 term. The election usually occurs at the meeting closest
17 to the beginning of a calendar year, which is this
18 meeting. I would like to open the floor now for
19 nominations of the Council's Chair. The nominations do
20 not need to be seconded. So, do we have any nominations?
21 Thank you.

22
23 MR. ARMSTRONG: Good morning. This is
24 Elmer Armstrong. I nominate Mike Kramer.

25
26 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. We have a
27 nomination from Elmer Armstrong for Michael Kramer.
28 Michael, do you accept that nomination?

29
30 MR. KRAMER: I accept.

31
32 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Do we have any
33 other nominations?

34
35 MR. PATTEE: This is Tristen Pattee. I'll
36 nominate Thomas Baker.

37
38 UNIDENTIFIED: I'll second that.

39
40 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Tristen Pattee
41 nominated Thomas Baker and Mr. Baker, do you accept that
42 nomination?

43
44 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

45
46 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Do we have any
47 other nominations?

48
49 MR. RAMOTH: I'll make a motion to close
50 the nominations.

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UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay, so we have two nominations from Micheal Baker -- Mr. Baker and Michael Kramer. So, what I'm going to do is do a paper ballot thing and have you write down who you vote for. So, we're not going to speak it out loud. And for Wilbur, I'm going to have you, just if you can -- I can call you or you can text me what you'd like to vote for. Does that seem fair? Okay, we're going to just take a few minutes to pass out the ballots. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: For those listening, we are counting ballots for the Chair position.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Wilbur, if you can hear me, would you like to -- we're having trouble reaching you privately. Would you mind -- do you care about saying out loud who you would like to vote for Chair, or would you like to hang up and call me? Okay.

(Pause)

I'm sorry. Everybody that's online, we're waiting to get in touch with one of our Council members on voting for Chairs. So, we're just going to be on hold for a few minutes, so thank you.

(Pause)

Okay, we're back. Thank you. We did get the vote from Mr. Howarth. And so, we had five for Mr. Baker and three for Mr. Kramer. And so, Mr. Baker, you're passed as Chair again, thank you. To get a quorum we have nine members -- we have ten members present, but - or ten members on the seat, but nine are present. So, we need to have six for a quorum. Anyway, he got the majority of five over three. I'm not saying that very articulately, but congratulations. And so now we can move on to the Vice Chair. And Mr. Chair, you can do this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you. Lisa, do we have any nominations for Vice Chair?

MR. RAMOTH: Good morning. This is Mr. Clyde Ramoth. I'll nominate Mike Kramer for Vice Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike, do you accept?

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MR. KRAMER: Yeah, I accept.

UNIDENTIFIED: I will ask for a unanimous consent on the nomination. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Are there any other nominations?

MR. RAMOTH: I'll make a motion to close the nominations and ask for unanimous consent.

MR. KRAMER: Second.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, Clyde moved to close nominations, seconded by Mike. All those in favor, please recognize by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, with that, Mike, congratulations, you are Vice Chair again. We'll move on to Secretary. Do we have any nominations?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is Elmer Armstrong. I nominate Karmen Monigold.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do you accept that nomination for Secretary?

UNIDENTIFIED: Second the nomination

MS. MARIGOLD: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do we have any other nominations for Secretary?

MR. RAMOTH: This is Clyde, I'll make a motion to close the nominations for Secretary.

MR. PATTEE: I'll second that motion, this is Tristen Pattee.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye for closing nominations for Secretary.

IN UNISON: Aye.

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, with that,
2 congratulations, Karmen, you are now our secretary. We
3 will move on to review and adoption of the agenda. Is
4 there any additions, anything that we'd like to at least
5 point out for time specific things? Lisa.

6
7 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yes, Mr. Chair and
8 Council members. So, the agenda that you have in front
9 of you is, which -- the date of March 25th is the current
10 agenda. The ones that are in your book are a little bit
11 dated, so try to use this one here, or the one in your
12 supplemental materials is pretty accurate too. It's just
13 the one in front of you has the most recent information.
14 And anybody online, you can also find the agenda and
15 under the meeting materials, under the -- as I announced
16 earlier, under the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional
17 Advisory Council under meeting materials, you can find
18 the agenda. And also, most of the meeting materials are
19 available there too. So, we do have two certain -- time
20 certain -- well, really three reports scheduled. Two of
21 them are scheduled for Friday morning; ones at 10:40
22 a.m. It's just Kevin Fraley with the Wildlife
23 Conservation Society. He's going to provide an update
24 on the FRMP Sheefish Project. It's listed under the
25 reports under item j.ii on the agenda, and also at 11
26 a.m. on Friday, Helen Cold with the Alaska Department
27 of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, will provide
28 an overview of the Arctic Beaver Observation Network
29 study, and her report is listed under reports under item
30 14C on the agenda. Also, a couple other Fish and Game
31 reports. So, Alex Hansen is going to be giving a wildlife
32 report this morning. He's available up until noon, so
33 we need to accommodate his time today, and see anything
34 else that has changed. Let's see, we have -- I think
35 that might be it.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do we have any
38 questions?

39
40 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yes. Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Would anyone liked to
43 make a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

44
45 MR. RAMOTH: I so move, Mr. Chair.

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47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: That was a motion
48 made by Clyde Ramoth, do we have a second?

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50 MR. CLEVELAND: Second.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Verne Cleveland. All those in favor, please say aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And those opposed, same sign.

(No response)

So, with that, we have adopted agenda. I would like to state for the record, it is 9:32. Welcome Enoch Schiedt. Good morning, Attamuk. He has joined us. So, we'll reflect that in the record that Attamuk has joined the Council. We'll move on to item number 8, which is review and approval of previous meeting minutes. That will be on page 7. Have any questions about previous meeting minutes?

(Pause)

MR. RAMOTH: Mr. Chair. I took the time to read all the meeting minutes of November 8th, 2024, so I'll make a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. And thank you whoever typed it up.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Clyde Ramoth. Do we have a second to approve the previous meeting minutes?

MR. KRAMER: Second. Kramer.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Mike Kramer. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And those opposed, same sign.

(No response)

With that, we have approved the previous meeting minutes of November 8th, 2024. We'll move into Council member reports, item number 9. I will start with Elmer. If you'd like to give a report from your community, and just for those listening, this is the opportunity in the agenda for the members of the Council

1 to talk about their personal experiences in subsistence,
2 and whatnot, over the last few months since we've met
3 last, as well as to report on their community. So, with
4 that, Elmer.

5
6 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 Elmer Armstrong from Noorvik. I know when I put my net
8 out for salmon, it was really slow. I know, I think
9 there was [sic] like 5 or 6 nets out, but the runs were
10 really slow. Let's see. When we got into October, after
11 it froze up about three inches, four inches, I put my
12 net out and there was probably, altogether, maybe seven
13 nets under the ice. That first day I caught a lot of
14 sheefish, which I gifted to the community. The second
15 day, more whitefish with eggs, and also one salmon. The
16 third day, we had real warm weather that came in and,
17 due to safety, I pulled my net out. But I did catch one
18 burbot, tittaaliq, in my whitefish net.

19
20 I know we had real high water, too, in
21 -- I think it was September. I was able to go up to
22 Ambler, and the water was really high. I mean, you could
23 take a barge up there and probably not hit any sandbars.
24 While the water was high too, I went up the Squirrel
25 River because I had excess gas, and didn't see too much
26 game, as we were looking for caribou and moose. But the
27 water was really high. I didn't have any success in
28 caribou or moose, beginning of the hunting season. I
29 know through social media, even some hunters went from
30 Selawik and went up the Noatak, looked like they weren't
31 successful either. I noticed they were talking about
32 seeing a lot of wolves up there, and bears. I think the
33 end of February we started to see a caribou come through,
34 right through Noorvik, and for about 30 days or so they
35 were hanging around Noorvik on the outskirts of the city.
36 I'm not too sure if it was just because of the food
37 available or if there was wolves. I know, I heard through
38 other hunters that they caught some wolves upriver,
39 maybe ten miles or so. They've been seeing -- people
40 been seeing on their travels too -- towards Selawik,
41 wolverines. Yeah, that's all I have. Thank you.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
44 Elmer. Clyde.

45
46 MR. RAMOTH: (In Native) Good morning,
47 this is Clyde Ramoth from Selawik. A lot of times, like
48 Elmer stated, that I follow social media, but the catch
49 is -- that I wasn't able to set my net under the ice,
50 which was rare. It's called (In Native). But just like

1 all the communities, we had such a wet summer and fall,
2 relatively -- like I mentioned yesterday, that in every
3 meeting about our climate change, how we're going to be
4 thinking about regulation changes because of our
5 temperature changes just so rapidly, quickly,
6 unpredictable nowadays. But thanks to NANA, our price
7 of fuel is like \$5 a gallon right now at our tribal
8 store. People are able to hunt, but very low numbers of
9 caribou. High predator with the wolves. Less people are
10 hunting and trapping them. I know we love our fish. You
11 know, Selawik means -- Selawik means a place of sea
12 fish. And we have five different species and maybe even
13 a sixth one. Something Wil will let us know about
14 someday. But yeah. Our season was very unpredictable.
15 Like I said, a lot of rain, and you can see it in this
16 data. Thank you to that young lady over there. But, the
17 caribou, we saw one that went to the village. But
18 majority of our young people, young men and women, went
19 to Noorvik or Buckland area. And right now, toward
20 Ambler, Tristen's country. But the numbers have been
21 very low. The moose density is -- been low. So, thank
22 God there's been a lot of folks fishing and storing
23 whatever they caught during the fall prior to our last
24 meeting, you know, with the fish and berries and plants
25 and -- because we -- it was mentioned yesterday about
26 how the high price of store-bought food, and they're all
27 processed anyway. But we love our natural foods, and I
28 think we're hoping and praying that we'll have a good
29 fishing season out at the Selawik Lake. I know one of
30 my nephews from Noorvik bought or delivered a whitefish
31 from here, from Kotzebue, and they're a lot fatter and
32 sweeter than ours at home, because by the time they get
33 to the lake and the village they work hard. But the
34 subsisting part was, like I said, very different, very
35 unpredictable. We didn't really fill up our freezers
36 with caribou and moose and whatever, but our school --
37 I served on a school Council, but our school has a
38 program where they're going to teach the kids, and I
39 think they've done it already, about beaver trapping. I
40 know that's something we're going to observe more and
41 teach your kids about sustaining, and could live -- could
42 eat beaver, if they choose to. But it's also, you could
43 tan to hide and make money, like the bear. I mentioned
44 yesterday, we don't really hunt the brown bear, but I
45 had never heard of anybody that caught any black bear
46 this last year or two. Good coffee. I think that's it.
47 Thank you.

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49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
50 Clyde. We'll move on to Verne.

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MR. CLEVELAND: (In Native) Our season was -- well, at summertime, we had a lot of water. Hardly got any fish. Moose was hard to get because of high water. No, tuttu. Travel from Noorvik up to (In Native). Bring a lot of gas, spend a lot of money on gas and not doing nothing [sic]. So, our weather has changed so drastically, everybody noticed that it was warm till February or January, and we had no snow. I mean, no snow until (indiscernible) come around. They brought the snow up for us. And that was a few months ago, or a few weeks ago. And we had abundance of caribou right by Noorvik. I mean, right quarter mile from my house, at least, and they just hanging out, eating whatever they were, but I would like to say that we get some caribou in the (In Native). It seems like they rotted; January-February. If anybody out there on radio that hear this to report that the -- them bulls -- they didn't smell right. And the -- anybody out there that's listening on radio, please report that they are -- stink. Them bulls, and they are very, very skinny. I'd like to elaborate. I'd like to hear more. If you're on my Facebook, let me know. Because I know there's a lot of complaints about it, and some hunters out there that got some stink caribou would sent them to the biologist here in Kotz. So, we can at least make a -- make testify that they are, and to put it on the database that we are in a different weather situation. It's been pretty warm all year. T-shirt weather, 50, 40 above. Man, it was nice, but till now -- and now it's cold and it's alappaa. You know, everybody's used to that warm weather. But in other words, abundance of them guys up in Shungnak, and Kobuk, Ambler have been getting wolves. I don't know what the count is, but I saw that one of them got a blue wolf, and I think that might be the alpha wolf. So, other than that, stay safe and be -- keep warm and keep moving on. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that, Verne. We'll move on to Karmen.

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MS. MONIGOLD: Taiku (In Native). My name is Karmen Monigold. I want to introduce myself since I'm new to the Board. My parents are the late Fannie Williams and the late Gilbert Shaffer. My grandparents are the late John and Annie Shaffer Sr. and the late Russell Williams Sr., and the late Mae Watson. Since I knew I wasn't quite ready for this so, I'll just go with what I've been up to. We had really high water this fall and heading into winter, where we had flooding all over

1 Kotzebue. A lot of people had to be rescued. It was a
2 really great effort to get people to safety. There was
3 some damage to houses, especially on the shore, but there
4 was a lot of flooding on the back side of Kotzebue on
5 8th Street.

6
7 I was able to harvest a muskox this
8 year. It was in great health and, a wonderful
9 opportunity. I heard people got caribou when they were
10 passing through, and they were in healthy condition and
11 had a lot of fat on them, so that was good to hear that
12 people were able to harvest caribou around town. They
13 were late, but that seems to be the norm now. In November
14 -- and then in November, I went to D.C., where I spoke
15 on protecting subsistence rights, which is one of my
16 main passions. And the first question I would ask the
17 Senators or Representatives or their staff, whoever we
18 met with, we met with 15 people. And the first question
19 I would ask is, do you have a culture? Do you have
20 something from your ancestral homeland that you still
21 do today? And think of all the people that fought for
22 it, and in D.C., not one person could say yes. And I
23 told him, I am here fighting for our culture. We still
24 have a vibrant culture, and we need to fight for it. We
25 have younger generations coming up that are so willing
26 to learn. I helped at the school during Inupiaq Day cut
27 up caribou and the kids were so excited to get their
28 hands in there. They skipped their Valentine's party so
29 they could participate in cutting a caribou.

30
31 Last week I went to Juneau and met with,
32 I think, 14 people and I asked them the same question.
33 I had a lot more people say yes, they had a culture
34 because, you know, they're from Alaska. And I said, think
35 of all your ancestors that fought to make sure you still
36 have that culture. And we may be a small indigenous
37 population, but we're still Americans. We still count
38 and we still matter. Our culture and our people are
39 still here fighting for our subsistence rights, against
40 climate change, against all these things coming at us
41 and, you know, every generation we lose a little bit,
42 but we're still here fighting for it. So, I just want
43 to thank you for letting me have an opportunity to speak.
44 Taiku.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Karmen.
47 We'll move on to Attamuk.

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1 MR. SHIEDT: Attamuk Schiedt, Kotzebue.
2 Born and raised in Noatak. We had big effect -- yes,
3 Clyde.

4
5 MR. RAMOTH: (In Native).
6

7 MR. SHIEDT: Better? We had a completely
8 different summer. Global warming is affecting us, and
9 we Natives, got to change with it. Our regulators got
10 to change in place. I'll start. We had ice till mid-
11 July. We're plentiful in (In Native) some were -- quite
12 a few were less fat than the others, but hardly any
13 trout at Sisaulik. Not so much whitefish, because there
14 was ice all the way to Kivalina on the beach, and it was
15 on Sisaulik side, and it was clear on this side. When
16 that do happen, I'm trying to tell the young ones, but
17 they know better than me that the animals are on this
18 side. To the -- would you play the colder water, then
19 you know, when it's warmer on this side. And we had so
20 much high water it was pitiful. And not only that, there
21 was lots of bears, but Kotzebue bearing spot so rough
22 at Akuluraq, I got lucky and made it across. I mean,
23 there were a lot of bears, plenty (In Native) people say
24 how you make it across with your little boat, I said. I
25 have no secret. Trouble is, I'm not working. I could
26 leave middle of the night. I don't have to leave after
27 five, and I left when it was calm. But I mean, it was
28 still rough, and we had a lot of (In Native) and
29 everything. And there's also -- there's nothing in the
30 spot over here next to Kotzebue across the bay. But
31 little Noatak had some. And hardly any salmon. And I
32 tell my boy, as commercial fisherman, I said, don't even
33 bother sitting. But he did anyhow. He love to listen to
34 me, and so he hardly get any. He was the top few, but I
35 had to tell him where to go. But they were mostly --
36 they come in late due to the water. Here was colder than
37 up-river when I went up in July. At the Noatak River,
38 pass hatchery, the water was colder up there than the
39 bay here.

40
41 And a few other plants also. But we
42 never pick as much as we used to. We're getting old in
43 our age, my wife and I. But there's caribou in Noatak.
44 But the problem is, transporters and outfitters are
45 heading up to the headwaters of Kugururok, and I was
46 there. I went up there with my little boat. I went up,
47 way up and I was told that boats can't make it that far.
48 I went five head waters; five rapids this summer, which
49 is quite a ways up there. Flipped my boat on the way
50 back. It was so shallow. I mean, it was -- it wasn't

1 funny, but it sure hurt me. But the problem I see is
2 that, as much as I hate to say it, Noatak, you guys are
3 going above a Hower's camp too early, diverting the
4 caribou. I see it, not only that, two elders, when I
5 went to Noatak told me that also. I say our problem is
6 our youngsters, but I don't blame the youngsters, they
7 want meat. That's in our culture to have meat. Do you
8 ever try to buy a nice steak? You know, for 34 bucks and
9 you can get it Anchorage for \$6? Look at it. The
10 difference in that, and that then -- and they prefer
11 caribou. Caribou is in our system. It's our body.
12

13 I was great till I had my heart
14 problems, but after that, when the salmon were coming
15 in, they come in late and we set one net, and I had to
16 set it not even 20 minutes. And I got my 30 something
17 and I could've get [sic] more. But I won't say where I
18 set it because I'll see 50 people next to me next year.
19 But, and that -- and there were so much high water that
20 the river changed at Noatak from one way, from the other,
21 because I always blamed the ice when it's coming out
22 just below (indiscernible). When it blocked the main
23 river on this side, the river will change to the left
24 side going down and, which it did, and it completely
25 changed and it's not the same. And boy, it was hard for
26 the people, also from Noatak due to the high cost of
27 fuels. Not all get caribou, the one that post on Facebook
28 are the one that get caribou. Not everybody, but they
29 share. I didn't get any because of what I saw. I saw
30 over 20 bulls. I just watched it. I mean, they were real
31 big bulls. But I tell you, there's bears. I think it's
32 what we need to do. Like I always say, we need to stress
33 to have Natives transport hunters from outside just to
34 hunt our bears, especially at Aggie. I went up to Aggie
35 with my little boat, my 14-footer. I quit counting at
36 over 40 brown bears, and they had muskox with them, a
37 couple of them. And there's so much, so much bears. Not
38 only that. Up, up at (In Native) and (In Native). I
39 mean, those were -- I count seven pups. When I went to
40 the bathroom, they were running around seven pups of
41 wolves. And there was more, and there was more behind
42 us. There were more downriver, but you could hear wolves
43 howling in the evening. There was all over around us,
44 upriver, miles -- we could barely hear them. And people
45 from young boys that -- well, they know me, and they go
46 talk to me, and see what I see and what I -- what's the
47 chances? Are your chances just as good as mine. If you
48 see 'em [sic] get up. And that's my story to them.
49

1 But we have to change the global due --
2 to global warming. Much as we hate to. I can't even go
3 get whitefish. I used to go get whitefish when the leaves
4 start falling, that's when the eggs are getting close
5 to being (indiscernible). It's not like that anymore.
6 The leaves fall later, but the eggs are different. This
7 is just a -- whitefish closely, especially the whitefish
8 with lots of eggs. And same thing when you see the
9 country -- that's when you put whitefish away for a
10 frozen fish. They age better because they got thicker
11 skin, not as light a trout. Trout you get later, and
12 right after that you get what we call (In Native),
13 salmon, salmon eggs, we hang them, we put them away. But
14 we put them away, but few had to throw them because of
15 global warming. They get too stink [sic], so they had
16 to throw them. And it's really a guessing game nowadays,
17 what we have to play. And I wish the federal would watch
18 the coastal erosion. When you go down the way, all the
19 way toward Kivalina, there's a big erosion, problems we
20 having and I see it. And I went there last summer, and
21 our current is so swift compared to years ago when we
22 were younger. Unless it probably say I just noticed more
23 because I slowed down a little bit compared to my younger
24 days. But I tell you one thing, we as the Board need to
25 get together, meet without our Coordinator, and see what
26 we have in each village. See what's going on, and address
27 the Federal Board, and we need to comply our regulations
28 with the state. Instead of having two state and federal
29 regulations, we need to make them one. Most likely the
30 state will not give to us, but if they're close within
31 our region before we agree certain dates, we as the
32 Board have to agree, not the federal or the state telling
33 us whether it should be those days. Those days should
34 be -- we should be the one that should recommend what
35 dates to open and close. I'll tell you one thing, like
36 fish even when we have nothing to do with it, they come
37 in later due to warm water out there. And same thing
38 with Noatak River when the trout come in late, it affects
39 the people in Noatak, and their share with their other
40 people. And it's different, and we have to live in worry
41 about -- our main thing is the global warming. Thank
42 you. Page two tomorrow.

43
44 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for your
45 report, Attamuk. We'll go to Tristen.

46
47 MR. PATTEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. (In
48 Native) Tristen Pattee from Ambler. So, the caribou have
49 been coming later and later. But there were quite a bit
50 of community members in Ambler that were able to harvest

1 caribou. Unfortunately, they did come late, and so
2 they're -- more being target [sic] for cows, you know,
3 and it's unfortunate because we're doing our best to
4 conserve the herd. But I understand that, you know,
5 everybody wants their meat. But just try to keep in
6 consideration that -- take what you need. Just try not
7 to take more than what you need. You know, you don't --
8 you want to have as little waste as possible. They're
9 able to take caribou above the Kobuk and Shungnak area.
10 There were comments that last spring was the most caribou
11 they've seen in quite a while, which was -- it was good
12 to hear from them about that. A lot of people in the
13 community, they have to strategically plan on how they
14 hunt nowadays because in Ambler, you know, a gallon of
15 gasoline is \$18. And so, it's not easy to go and collect
16 your food. You know, you have to kind of listen to the
17 people around you, you know, and once they announce
18 there's caribou or moose, or if the fish is good, then
19 that's when they go out. And so, we really rely on our
20 community members in order to be able to collect our
21 subsistence food. So, it's really good when there are
22 announcements. But there, you know, there is, you know,
23 posts on Facebook that people are taking, you know, a
24 lot more than what they should, or even past the limit,
25 which is unfortunate. And I'm hoping that, you know,
26 people will educate themselves and just consider, you
27 know, like I just mentioned, the -- just take what you
28 need, it's -- and then when you need more, you go out
29 again.

30
31 For fish, of course, like other people
32 mentioned on here, the water was very high. You know, I
33 was up and down the river quite a bit last summer, and
34 I've never seen it as high as it was. I've never seen
35 the amount of barges that made it up the river. There
36 was quite a bit even to Kobuk, which is great, and
37 Shungnak, because it's very difficult for them to get
38 barges. During the hunts, I've noticed quite a bit of
39 wolves. I mean, there was [sic] times I mistake it for
40 caribou because they were just -- they're huge. One of
41 the things that was done in Ambler, which I thought was
42 very neat, and showing the younger generation, was to
43 create a fish trap through the ice. You know, they got
44 quite a bit of the community together, and they collected
45 all these, you know, all the logs, and they cut a hole
46 in the ice, and they created a fish trap, which I thought
47 was amazing. They weren't able to catch anything, but
48 they think they put it in the wrong spot. They thought
49 it was their first try in a while. So, I'm hoping to see
50 that continue going forward. There were comments. They

1 are interested in the population of the caribou. I know
2 that we weren't able to collect a consensus last year.
3 But they're really hoping that we can get one this year
4 because people are very interested in knowing what our
5 count is.

6
7 There was harvesting of sheefish, a lot
8 more than there was salmon when the water dropped. So,
9 people were pretty concerned when the water was high
10 because there wasn't very much salmon. Every time, you
11 know, someone would set net in Ambler, they would
12 announce on the VHF that there's salmon, and people would
13 rush down pretty quickly to collect what they could from
14 the locals that are setting net in front of Ambler.
15 There's reports of the state troopers giving you know,
16 going through the communities and giving citations. A
17 lot of them were based off of the numbers of furs in
18 their yards. So, they were very upset. So, I understand
19 it is the law. But, you know, just -- they wanted me to
20 make sure I mentioned that.

21
22 There was some moose that people saw not
23 as much as years past, but they definitely saw some. My
24 family caught a moose which was -- I'm very, very happy
25 about that. The berries were amazing last year. It was
26 really awesome to see. Like my aana, she's hard of
27 walking, and for her to be able to collect gallons just
28 by sitting in one spot and -- or rolling over a little
29 ways and, you know, keep on picking. It was so amazing
30 to see her so happy to be collecting all those berries.
31 And yeah, she would go out and I'd -- by herself, and
32 I'd be so worried about her. I was like, where is she?
33 You know, because she's out there by herself just picking
34 away. So, that was pretty amazing.

35
36 I reached out to Shungnak. Some -- so,
37 part of this is from Shungnak people mentioned it to me.
38 So, there are still people collecting -- taking caribou
39 right now, which is good. They're kind of hanging out
40 nearby. But what they are finding is that they're finding
41 a lot of dead caribou and wolf -- moose kills by wolves.
42 So, that's what they're noticing when they're out there.
43 They just mentioned to me yesterday that the local
44 hunters have taken over 30 wolves so far, just this
45 winter. And so -- and they're still going. So, there's
46 quite a bit out there. It was commented that if there
47 was a program to control the wolves, that most people
48 are going to be supportive of that control, and they
49 want to be part of it. So, I think if there's any way
50 that that happens or if there's some program that's

1 moving forward, please reach out to the to the community
2 because they're definitely supportive. Most people are
3 supporting the -- that -- controlling of the wolves.
4 They mentioned that there wasn't very much salmon, of
5 course, due to high water as well. The bears that were
6 harvested, they were very skinny. You know, I'm assuming
7 it's because of the low salmon numbers. They did harvest
8 quite a bit of sheefish in the fall, when the water
9 level dropped, and that was the end of the Shungnak.

10
11 And just comments that I've talked to
12 with other people. And there was quite a bit of bears
13 in Noatak, like Attamuk mentioned. A lot of them breaking
14 into cabins, getting their (In Native), trying to steal
15 their meat, and so that's a pretty big concern with the
16 bears on the Noatak River. And they also mentioned the
17 same thing about the guides, you know, they were very
18 supportive of having guides on there, on the river to
19 be able to control the bears. What I've noticed is
20 there's a lot of ptarmigan, lots and lots of ptarmigan.
21 And so, you know, it's -- I know that we're having these
22 worries about the caribou decline, which is a big thing.
23 So, just keep in mind that there are ptarmigan out there
24 to collect and eat, so good with (In Native). And then
25 there was a big concern about the rain, you know, during
26 the wintertime now. And it's the rain is -- it's raining
27 and then it's freezing over the tundra. So, it's a pretty
28 big concern for the survival of our caribou, and other
29 animals that survive off the land. You know, it's very
30 concerning because it's harder for them to be able to
31 reach the -- reach that food. And that's my report.
32 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Tristen.
35 We'll move on to Mike Kramer.

36
37 MR. KRAMER: Good morning, everybody.
38 This is Mike Kramer (In Native). There's a lot of
39 concerns that were brought up to me throughout the year.
40 You know, it started out with caribou. We didn't get
41 caribou here until, like, mid-winter. They passed
42 through Kotzebue. A lot of people harvested caribou. I
43 know that a lot of people were trying to do their part
44 by only taking one cow per person, and that's good. You
45 know, it's a very critical thing that we start sticking
46 to the laws and regulations that are set forth to be
47 able to preserve this herd. We all need to do our part.
48 But when people don't do their part, then, you know,
49 they get charged for it. That's something we can't help
50 them with. A lot of people brought up that caribou were

1 very healthy animals this year. A lot of fat, good
2 harvests. But there was a lot of concerns, you know, on
3 their migration. I know that there was a post on
4 Facebook, non-resident hunters said it was awesome to
5 be able to get a caribou at the beginning of the
6 migration south. I was kind of wondering if that was
7 either in Game Management Unit 23, or you know, that
8 involved our Western Arctic Caribou Herd. You know, we
9 were always brought up and raised to allow the first
10 ones to pass, and that's always been in our culture. I
11 noticed some ways now are beginning to change for the
12 better of the harvest, but for the better of the respect
13 for the other people that hunt down south of where others
14 are hunting.

15
16 It's going to start getting pretty
17 critical here with the way our government's going. Red
18 Dog Road has expanded ten miles east. But we also have
19 D1 lands. That's a Squirrel River and such. That Ambler
20 Road, if all of that comes to play, we're going to lose
21 our caribou herd for good. And that's a very staple
22 everyday thing for everybody in the villages and region
23 wide. And also, Game Management, other Game Management
24 Unit that depend on these animals for daily sustenance.
25 Moose, people have gotten some moose. Not -- I haven't
26 seen many, but a lot of people did get moose. A lot of
27 them were pretty healthy. They're just not that many
28 around. And when you see them all summer long and then
29 come hunting season, they're gone.

30
31 Salmon, yeah. Salmon was very, very
32 poor. I know my brother had one shackle net set for
33 quite a while and didn't get very many. And that raises
34 kind of concerns for the future of our commercial and
35 subsistence salmon runs. You know, I would like to see
36 that, at least the state and maybe our -- under our
37 federal fish studies that we have here, can work together
38 to try and see if we could put sonars under the Kobuk
39 and Noatak River to see if we get a good enough return
40 to be able to sustain subsistence harvest for salmon for
41 future. I know that, you know, these trawlers take such
42 a big advantage of so many different species that they
43 kill and throw back into the ocean here; we can't even
44 waste a soft salmon and get our boat taken away, our
45 fishing and hunting privileges taken away. That's not
46 fair. You know, we're trying to put food in our freezers.
47 It's kind of ridiculous they can want and waste and we
48 can't and these are -- this is federal fisheries, and
49 we're hunting and subsisting on federal lands and
50 federal rivers. Why are they getting away with this and

1 we can't? There needs to be a balance because our future
2 runs are based on this and, you know, it's getting pretty
3 strict with, you know, the way our country is going
4 right now. Everything is going to start going up. We're
5 going to have less and less access to other meats, beef,
6 chicken and poultry and other items due to the way our
7 government is going right now. And a lot of people depend
8 on a lot of subsistence resources to fill their freezers.
9 It's going to start getting very, very critical here
10 pretty quick. And with us hammering on these two
11 declining subsistence resources of moose and caribou,
12 they're only going to go away. If we don't start taking
13 the initiative to start conserving our caribou herd and
14 our moose.

15
16 I know that sheefish -- sheefish has
17 been doing pretty good. Kind of hit and miss out here
18 in front of Kotzebue. A lot of people getting some pretty
19 healthy fish, and people sending some down to Anchorage
20 and sharing them with other families down there in
21 Anchorage that can't come up here and get sheefish.
22 There's a lot of concerns on the sheefish also, you
23 know, because we have the largest species of sheefish
24 in the world, and the most quantity of sheefish in the
25 world. We need to start protecting our subsistence
26 resources now before they're all gone. Because once the
27 caribou are gone, everybody's going to depend on moose,
28 once the moose are gone, then what? You know, there's a
29 lot of questions. What will these agencies do for us
30 when we don't have anything? What will our federal
31 government, and our state government, do for us when
32 these resources are gone? Our culture is going. Once
33 those go, we might as well sign it off. Like we're going
34 to be beef eaters. I know that at the Fish and Game
35 meeting we had here recently that they were going to
36 submit a proposal to shut down commercial fishing of
37 sheefish to ensure that we have future sheefish stocks
38 for the people in Northwest Alaska. Berries were pretty
39 good, and we had a wet summer. Very, very wet summer.
40 High waters. It'd be interesting to see, you know, what
41 the next couple of years bring with our salmon, is kind
42 of lining up with the big major die off we had about
43 six, seven years ago or more, but it's getting pretty
44 critical. Thank you.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
47 Mike. Wilbur, are you still on the line? If you are, you
48 can give your Council member report.

49
50

1 MR. HOWARTH: Yeah. Good morning. Wilbur
2 Howarth, Noorvik, (In Native). Could you guys hear me?

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes, we can.

5
6 MR. HOWARTH: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
7 And Elmer and Verne covered quite a bit of our Noorvik
8 area. And the Caribou are nice and healthy, fat. I have
9 three boys that goes [sic] out and hunt -- or young men,
10 I should say. And they brought back some nice fat bulls.
11 I tell them to shoot bulls, leave the females alone.
12 Kind of looked at me and wonder why not a female? But
13 they're nice and healthy. Tender meat. They were so close
14 to town. And yeah, there is a lot of wolves. One of my
15 young boys got wolf right outside. They got three of
16 them outside of Noorvik, and the other son got one
17 traveling into Selawik, got one right on the trail close
18 to the village. So, there is a lot of wolves.

19
20 And the bears, I'm pretty sure they'll
21 be back this spring. I know there's lots of bears. Moose
22 are healthy. I've seen a lot of them this past summer
23 and fall. And, yes, the water is high all over. And
24 meeting with geologists, or I would say, climate change
25 -- I've been invited again for another meeting with
26 climate change, and that would be again in Vegas. So,
27 anyways, the reason we're having so much high water every
28 fall now is our plate under the ocean. It broke years
29 ago, and it's Russia. The land is moving back over this
30 way. And I believe they said it's moving four to maybe
31 five inches a year, and it's going to be pushing more
32 and more of our water up this way. That's what's causing
33 a lot of high water. And it's going to be that way. It's
34 going to get higher probably every year. And due to the
35 climate change, the weather wise, we might not see winter
36 someday -- some years. But anyways, fishing was good for
37 me. I didn't really setnet it this year, I was so busy
38 all spring, or summer and fall working so, I missed out
39 net under the ice. Elmer did a good job. Otherwise, this
40 coming spring, I won't be working this year. I don't
41 think so. I might go out and hunt (In Native) for the
42 first time in a long time. Because my boy's been going
43 out. You guys all be safe, and one thing I want to point
44 out is for us Council members, we should have a meeting
45 just on the predators. The wolf, there's been so much
46 people traveling and telling me they see wolves here and
47 there; just right outside of Noorvik. All -- since the
48 caribou been around, so I would like to have a sit down
49 and we just talk about what we can do about the wolves
50 and the bears. Thank you, Mr. Chair and the rest of you

1 Council, good reports. Taiku.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. Thank you,
4 Wilbur. So, that concludes Council member reports. I
5 will move into the Chair report. It sounds like someone's
6 phone is ringing, in the room. So, no one needs to mute
7 their phone. I will move into the Chair's report. So,
8 this is for the record, Thomas Ekuk Baker, from Kotzebue,
9 Chair of the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional
10 Advisory Council. We have some members from Kotzebue
11 that have covered a lot of the subsistence concerns over
12 the last year. One of the big things that people have
13 touched on is the high water. We did have some severe
14 flooding in the end of October that led to early -- the
15 early formed ice was pushed onto the runway, and so that
16 delayed planes getting into the community, delayed
17 people being able to travel safely and affected
18 flooding. And that time of the year subsistence which
19 is kind of closing out as things are freezing up. But
20 threw a monkey wrench into everything. As has been
21 mentioned, there are a lot of caribou around the Kotzebue
22 area this winter. Folks have been pretty successful.
23 There have been some anecdotal reports of wolf tracks
24 coming down from the little Noatak to the Kotzebue side
25 hunting caribou, then going back to the Noatak side.
26 People have seen some wolverines in the hills just behind
27 Kotzebue, which I think is a little uncommon, and a lot
28 of bear and wolf sightings in general. So, I think once
29 we get into the proposal portion, we should really talk
30 about what proposals we could put forward to address --
31 taking more predators and that in general.

32

33 A lot of what I had planned to say has
34 been covered already. I will note for the record, as far
35 as salmon go, the salmon numbers are way down. Last
36 year, for example, with the Kotzebue Sound Commercial
37 Fishery, in an average year, we get fish in the millions
38 of pounds. Last year it was between 30 and 50,000 pounds.
39 So, commercially, basically nothing. Subsistence wise,
40 people were able to get some fish, but it's not like any
41 normal year that can be attributed to high water, warm
42 water, whatever other combinations of factors there are.
43 But I will leave it at that for my Chair's report, and
44 we will move on to item number ten on the agenda, which
45 is public and tribal comment on non-agenda items. This
46 item is available each morning. So, at this time if
47 there's anyone in the room who is hoping to make a public
48 or a tribal comment on a non-agenda item, now is your
49 opportunity.

50

1 MR. RAMOTH: Can I speak on behalf of our
2 tribe? No? Okay. So, I serve on the Selawik Tribal
3 Council for a lot of years and.....

4
5 (Simultaneous speech)

6
7 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Your name for the
8 record?

9
10 MR. RAMOTH: Oh, for the record, I'm
11 Clyde Ramoth, from Selawik, and we're very thankful for
12 -- and I wanted to comment with our partnership with
13 Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bill Carter, and Ray
14 Hander and others, Wil, with the sheefish studies,
15 because when we talk about our climate change and how
16 it affects our subsisting, even though the price of gas
17 is \$5 per gallon. Thanks to NANA and our tribe to keep
18 it low. They're able to share from their sheefish studies
19 with the village and others. You know, part of Iñupiaq
20 our culture is sharing. So, Attamuk you got your stink
21 fish in my hotel room. Karmen got hers yesterday, another
22 elder. I brought 4 of them for 4 elders here in town.
23 You might not make it at 9 a.m. It's going to be heavy
24 fish. But anyways sharing is part of our culture. And
25 when we talk about the -- I wanted to mention that
26 because of the numbers of caribou were low, the caribou
27 are low at Selawik, some of us got some muktuk from
28 Point Hope. Got a tote from Ambler of caribou. Fish from
29 Kotzebue. So, sharing was something we loved to do, or
30 barter, but the tribe wanted me to mention that, like,
31 I -- I'll keep commenting about changing a regulation
32 because of the climate change. We have to follow that
33 when we talk about regulations and calendars, and it
34 don't [sic] coincide with our migration or whatever.
35 Warmer temperatures, colder temperatures, that kind of
36 nature, and that was my late dad's comment every time
37 he sat on any Council.

38
39 But I wanted to finish up with saying
40 that of course, the bear -- we haven't learned to eat
41 the brown bear yet, but black bear, we love it. But
42 there's been bear that bothered camps, but I think we'll
43 get more control of that, and follow the regulations,
44 and make the sale of hide and advertise through Facebook,
45 get your license, take care of them. But there is one
46 camp that the Council wanted me to share with the couple
47 -- the young couple didn't lock their doors. They didn't
48 lock their cabin. They didn't lock their camp. They
49 didn't leave any food. Maybe they left something, but
50 the bear -- maybe bears walked in, but they just went

1 back out, like, okay, no food here. But the ones that
2 were locked, of course, like my mom's camp, twice, my
3 nephew had to go repair and replace the walls twice. And
4 other camps that were locked got broken into. So, they're
5 curious. That's something I wanted to share from the
6 tribe. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7
8 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
9 Clyde. Are there any other public or tribal comments on
10 non-agenda items?

11
12 (No response)

13
14 We will have an opportunity for this
15 again tomorrow morning. Before we move on, I'd just like
16 to ask Tom Plank about how long will the next portion
17 of the agenda last for the Council member training?

18
19 (Pause)

20
21 So, it should take about 5 to 10
22 minutes. At this time, it is 10:26. Would we like to do
23 that before the wildlife reports or take a bathroom/
24 coffee break before moving into training? All right. It
25 is 10:26, will take a ten-minute break and come back at
26 10:36.

27
28 (Off record)

29
30 (On record)

31
32 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Just give it a moment
33 for people to take their seats. So, we are moving on.
34 It's now 10:37. We're moving on to item number 11, which
35 is Council member training for proposal development with
36 Mr. Tom Plank. Mr. Plank, you have the floor.

37
38 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
39 Council. Good morning. We are currently in the Wildlife
40 Open Call for Proposals, which ends April 4th. And so,
41 for the 2025 Winter Council Training, I'm going to
42 briefly cover proposal -- proposing changes to federal
43 regulation, hunting and trapping regulations, which is
44 in page 19 of your books.

45
46 There are two main ways to change
47 federal subsistence regulations via special action
48 request or proposal. The key difference between the two
49 is special actions are for temporary short-term changes
50 and can be submitted at any time, whereas proposals

1 change codified regulations and can only be submitted
2 during the open period. And since we are currently in
3 the open period, I want to walk through the proposal
4 submittal process.

5
6 If the Council would like to submit a
7 proposal, all we need is for one of you to make a motion
8 and have a vote to submit the proposal on record, and
9 then the OSM staff will draft it up to submit it. This
10 can happen at any time during this meeting, and any
11 member of the public can also submit a proposal via mail
12 to our Office, hand it to me or any other OSM staff
13 during this meeting or submit it through the
14 regulations.gov website. When submitted by the public,
15 please make sure to include who is submitting the
16 proposal, including contact information, what
17 regulations you want changed, in which Unit, what you
18 want the regulation to say, why you want to change it,
19 and any support and information you have to help the
20 Board evaluate it. Now sometimes proposals are invalid,
21 but it will be because they pertain to things that are
22 outside the Board's jurisdiction. Examples are halibut,
23 marine mammals, migratory birds, or non-federal lands.
24 Now, for reference, the subsistence regulations that can
25 be changed through regulatory proposals are found in the
26 Code of Federal Regulations, subpart C and D, which
27 basically covers a wide variety of regulations from
28 general, such as sealing requirements and definitions,
29 to more specific regulations like harvest limits,
30 seasons, permit requirements, and customary and
31 traditional use determinations. And like I told you, I
32 decided to make this very quick for y'all. Thank you,
33 and please remember, we are currently in the open period
34 for proposals, and they need to be submitted by April
35 4th. And does anybody have any questions, or would you
36 like to see some examples of past proposals and
37 regulation changes?

38
39 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Are you able to pull
40 up an example so that we can have something visual?

41
42 MR. PLANK: Yes, Mr. Chair. Hold on just
43 one second. Here is a really good recent example. This
44 one was the closure for the caribou for Unit 23. And so,
45 this is the -- basically the statement that says what
46 needed to be closed, why and what Unit and regulations
47 that went with it. So, here's a good example of that
48 proposal that this Council actually submitted last
49 cycle.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do any Council
2 members have any questions? Attamuk.

3
4 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah. Enoch Schiedt,
5 Attamuk. When you put proposal to make a closure or
6 opening, how long does it take for it to be in effect?

7
8 MR. PLANK: Thank you, member Attamuk.
9 Through the Chair. So, basically, you'll put the
10 proposal in now and then, come fall meeting, our next
11 meeting, you'll actually review the analysis on it and
12 make the Council's recommendation on it. And then the
13 following April -- usually around April, is when the
14 Board will have their meeting. And then that will go in
15 effect for the 2026 and '28 regulation time. So, in time
16 for 2026.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, in layman's
19 terms, if approved, next year is when it would go into
20 effect, if we put a proposal forward and it was approved?

21
22 MR. SHIEDT: How -- excuse me Chairman.
23 How about under emergency cases? That's what we need in
24 case there's a decline of something drastic that's seen
25 by all the villages that's happening.

26
27 MR. PLANK: Thank you, member Attamuk.
28 Through the Chair. That would be a special action, and
29 those can be done at any time, and those can be done
30 very quickly. We usually -- about within 60 days or so,
31 but sometimes we've had to do them quickly. It all
32 depends on the situation and what needs to be done. But
33 when there's some urgency, that's where we go into
34 special actions.

35
36 MR. SHIEDT: Okay. Thank you.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

39
40 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Tom.
41 So, a great question by Attamuk, Mr. Shiedt. Clyde
42 Ramoth, for the record, Selawik. Is that the same for,
43 like predator control? Because I'm talking specifically
44 about the wolves because of less people are catching
45 them or trapping them or shooting them. But if it's
46 affecting, like the number of caribou that's being --
47 that's affecting our population, is that something that
48 could be a quick proposal to that could maybe add some
49 language? I know I had a chance to look at the current
50 regs on wolves and stuff but is that the same type of -

1 - if the Council so choose to, whether it's up in North
2 Slope or here, to make a predator control more for our
3 wellbeing?

4
5 MR. PLANK: Thank you, member Clyde.
6 Through Chair. The Federal Board does not have -- direct
7 with predator control. So, a proposal for predator
8 control, that would not be something that we could help
9 you with on that. However, the way the special actions
10 work is like, say example -- and this is just taking
11 broad numbers. Say, for example, beavers you're allowed
12 50 and you need -- your village needs more than 50. Then
13 you can, or -- yeah, I'm having trouble coming up with
14 an exact example, but with predator control,
15 unfortunately, we don't have a way to address predator
16 control itself.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: First Tristen, then
19 Verne.

20
21 MR. PATTEE: If we were to create a
22 proposal to include a subsistence activity in order to,
23 you know, have that, I wouldn't say control, but a
24 subsistence taking of that particular predator, is that
25 something else we can do? With -- if we justify that.

26
27 MR. VICKERS: This is Brent Vickers, OSM.
28 And Tom can explain this, but what the heck? I'm already
29 here. Yes. So, what we're looking for -- usually when -
30 it's you're trying to increase a bag limit, expand a
31 season, what you're looking for increased opportunities
32 as subsistence hunters. And so, if there's more wolves
33 you want and you see a reason to increase opportunities
34 for taking wolves for subsistence reasons, and that also
35 can get into special action request. Special action
36 requests are typically because of an unforeseen
37 situation. and expanding bag limits and changing seasons
38 particularly, maybe because of a situation has come up
39 where there's now an -- a reason to expand that season
40 that wasn't seen before. There's suddenly an increase
41 in wolves and maybe a decrease in other game and so,
42 hey, let's give more opportunities this season that just
43 happened, we're seeing a lot more wolves and let's give
44 people more opportunities to harvest these wolves,
45 particularly because there's lower numbers of other
46 games; that might fall into a reason for a special action
47 to apply this this very season. It's all about expanding
48 opportunities, I guess, is what I'm trying to say.

49
50

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Brent.
2 Verne, did you have something?

3
4 MR. CLEVELAND: Yes. On predator control.
5 Can we put a bounty on wolves for our hunters? Because
6 of the high cost of living in our area, and if you put
7 a bounty that -- you would help out a lot of hunters on
8 predator control. And back in the day, they had a bounty
9 for wolves, and if they would come back up, that sure
10 would help our folks out there -- to help. Thank you.

11
12 MR. PLANK: Thank you, member Cleveland.
13 Through the Chair. I am not aware of a process where I
14 can do that through the federal system. That may be a
15 question for the state. I -- unfortunately, I do not
16 have an answer for you on that, I apologize.

17
18 MR. CLEVELAND: Can we get the state to
19 answer the question?

20
21 MR. HANSEN: Is the question -- through
22 the Chair to member Cleveland. Is the question whether
23 you can do a bounty on wolves?

24
25 MR. CLEVELAND: Yes.

26
27 MR. HANSEN: So, yes, there's -- I think
28 there's a method to do that. There's a way to do that.
29 Typically, what we see under the state process is it
30 would be a proposal to the Board of Game, typically
31 generated at the AC to do something under the IM law.
32 So, IM is Intensive Management. It deals with -- when
33 we look at game populations that are not meeting
34 subsistence needs or, you know, harvest needs, right.
35 Then we can look at predators, we can look at habitat,
36 we can look at other issues that might be causing these
37 problems. And so, that would be a proposal that would
38 go through the Board of Game the next Board cycle. I
39 believe they're accepting proposals November, this
40 coming November. But I can check on that and get you the
41 exact dates. And that next meeting would be probably
42 around January of '27. So, we just had that meeting a
43 year ago. It's a three-year cycle, so it's a couple
44 years out on that. I do know that the folks over in,
45 kind of the Huslia, Nulato, kind of that region over
46 there talking to some folks over there that were at the
47 working group meeting. Perhaps you remember this, Vern.
48 They do have a bounty program on wolves, and I think
49 that is actually paid through a tribal corporation or
50 something. So, it's another potential avenue. We'd have

1 to look into the, you know, the legality of all that and
2 make sure, you know, we can make something work. But it
3 has happened, and it is currently happening on wolves,
4 you know, in that region. So, there are some options.

5

6

MR. CLEVELAND: Taiku.

7

8 MS. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Hanson, would you
9 just mind announcing your name for the record? Thank
10 you.

11

12 MR. HANSEN: Yes. Thank you. Alex Hansen
13 Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Kotzebue.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
16 Tristen, did you have something?

17

18 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
19 Pattee. Is it possible we can -- just so, we have a
20 reminder for the people in the room, and also through
21 the radio, what the season is for wolves and bears and
22 their bag limits.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: State and federal,
25 both of them.

26

27 MR. HANSEN: Yes, through the Chair.
28 Looks like Mr. Plank is pulling that up. So, he would
29 have federal, and I saw the state flash up there. I just
30 was looking at that. But hunting and trapping bag limits
31 are generally different. So, trapping bag limits for
32 wolves specifically there's no bag limit for trapping.
33 For wolf harvest hunting for -- in Unit 23 under the
34 state regulation, I believe is 20. You get to that. And
35 I believe, in Unit 23, under the federal regulation,
36 it's 15 for hunting. So, kind of back to your original
37 comments, can you make a proposal through this process
38 to change a bag limit, you know, on wolves, you know,
39 there's that potential that you could increase it. You
40 just have to think about, you know, what the effect
41 might be. Because what I'm hearing here is you want
42 predator control, which isn't necessarily related to
43 liberalized harvest or bag limits.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Go ahead, Clyde.

46

47 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr.
48 Hanson and the guy, Tom. So, when we talk about like
49 proposals and possibly do a bounty, or more introduction
50 to our predator control with the state and federal lands

1 here. You see this map that gets -- pretty has some
2 pretty colors, but so like our proposals with
3 regulation, state regulation, federal regulation, can
4 they be -- I don't know how that question -- be open to
5 both federal and state lands with our one proposal, like
6 for wolf predator control? I don't know if that's a good
7 question or -- but that's always behind my mind.

8
9 MR. HANSEN: Yeah. Through the Chair to
10 member Ramoth. That's a good question. Typically, you
11 know, federal land managers manage federal land, and I
12 can just speak to my experience working on an IM project
13 on the Mulchatna Herd. So, I've been participating in
14 that project for a couple of years. That came as a
15 proposal through the Board of Game in Region 4, and that
16 proposal was to remove bears and wolves on the calving
17 ground of the Mulchatna Herd. This caribou herd saw peak
18 population of nearly 200,000 in the mid-90s, and it
19 declined to about 12,000. So, current population is
20 around 15,000. For the last two years, the state under
21 the direction of the Board of Game, and under the IM law
22 in state statute, has been removing bears on the calving
23 grounds and wolves in the springtime. So, that is kind
24 of like the top tier of what we can do for predator
25 removal. And basically, from my experience there, we
26 were only able to operate on state lands, and that's
27 probably going to hold true here. And I'll let member -
28 - or Mr. Plank speak to that. But we would be -- let's
29 say we had a proposal to do IM subscription here, right.
30 And we removed bears and wolves. We would largely be
31 restricted to state lands, or you know, we could
32 potentially work with NANA or KIC, other landholders to
33 operate them on what we would consider private lands.
34 So, we would probably be unable to remove bears and
35 wolves from Park Service lands, Fish and Wildlife
36 Service lands, but I can't speak to that. That would be
37 up to those agency heads. There's some potential, you
38 know, in consultation that we could work on BLM lands,
39 but that would take some work to figure that out.

40
41 MR. RAMOTH: Follow up, Mr. Chair. Thank
42 you for that explanation, Mr. Hanson, but I say that
43 because some of our people that do want to do a bounty
44 and catch as much as they could for wolves, and not only
45 that, it makes -- like my parka over there got a nice
46 rug. You can make money out of it just selling the fur
47 after you get a tag. But having these jurisdiction with
48 different landowners is always a risk for that. Of
49 course, there's not a lot. I don't know how much law
50 enforcement would be out there, but in case -- because

00036

1 there's always that question for that one hunter, one
2 trapper. What if I cut it on certain state or federal
3 lands and I don't have that tick of that harvest,
4 whatever. I mean, they're concerned -- they're more
5 concerned about getting caught than doing the predator
6 control and I'm glad Verne brought it up, about bounty.
7 Thank you.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Katya Wessels, did
10 you have something you wanted to add?

11
12 MS. WESSELS: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 For the record, Katya Wessels, Council Coordination
14 Division Supervisor. I just wanted to state it on the
15 record and clarify for the Council that right now you're
16 talking about submitting the federal regulatory
17 proposals to the Federal Subsistence Board. And as for
18 the predator control, the Federal Subsistence Board only
19 has jurisdiction over subsistence uses of fish and
20 wildlife on federal public lands. And what is a
21 subsistence use of fish and wildlife? It's defined in
22 ANILCA Title VIII, and it is defined as only for direct
23 personal or family consumption, and since taking of
24 predators solely for the purposes of increasing game
25 population is not direct personal family consumption.
26 It is not within the Board's purview. Predator control
27 is conducted by the individual land managers. So, then
28 you will -- if you're concern about predators decreasing
29 the populations, you'll have to address it with the
30 individual land managers and not with the Federal
31 Subsistence Board. So, thank you.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Katya.
34 Tristen.

35
36 MR. PATTEE: So, if -- Tristen Pattee,
37 for the record. So, if we were to create maybe not a
38 proposal, maybe we write a letter to the landowners such
39 as, maybe NANA, that would recommend some sort of
40 predator control without the subsistence use. Is that
41 something that's possible?

42
43 MS. WESSELS: Yes. The Council definitely
44 can discuss on the record and vote to send a letter to
45 NANA managers. That's within the purview of the Council.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Tristen, did you have
48 a follow up?

49
50

1 MR. PATTEE: Yeah, just a follow up. And
2 so, in the same letter, can we extend that to private
3 landowners, such with the Native allotments as well?
4

5 MS. WESSELS: I believe so.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.
8

9 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. Quite a few years ago,
10 I participated in the wolverine study here, that was
11 done by the Park Service and Brad Schultz, out of
12 Fairbanks. I know that back in the day, you know, I
13 trapped in the Kobuk Valley. I hunted in the Kobuk Valley
14 National Park. I did participate in the study that they
15 had there. I sold carcasses of the wolverines that I got
16 to benefit their study. I know that we -- I believe we
17 have Park Service doing a wolf study, and I believe
18 there might be an ongoing Park Service grizzly study.
19 And if there is, you know, it would very -- it would
20 help the people to be able to get a carcass, such as a
21 wolf carcass, and these agencies would request this
22 carcass and pay by check, you know, for that data, that
23 animal for data. It also benefits, you know, the leaving
24 behind of the carcass, but to submit it for study with
25 their -- the studies that they got -- ongoing studies
26 that they have. I know that, you know, I went out many
27 times. I helped them with their study. And then when it
28 came down to me trapping, I said, I have to quit
29 participate [soc], it's time for me to go start trapping.
30 I did get knocks at my door several times saying, hey,
31 you know, we got one of our test subjects in your (In
32 Native). Not realizing I didn't bother to check to see
33 if it had a belly implant or not, but I know that there,
34 most likely, is currently a grizzly bear and a wolf
35 study that's going on. I'm not too sure at the moment.
36

37 And I think that it would be good to be
38 able to allow people to make some money by submitting
39 carcasses. But for, like grizzly bear, would there be
40 any certain organs that they would request, or to kind
41 of help, you know, the study along. And not only that,
42 it would be helping, you know, take a few predators out
43 of the loop. Bears and wolves have become a severe
44 nuisance in our region. Last summer I heard more and
45 more complaints from either locals or non-residents that
46 they were just absolutely harassed by grizzly bears day
47 and night, and wolves, day and night. You know, this
48 year we could only hope that the lack of salmon may have
49 impacted some of the grizzly bears from waking up next
50 month due to starvation because of no salmon. So, we're

1 looking at possibly of that, you know, kind of to help
2 knock down the bear population. I'm not really too -- I
3 know that I get a state trapping license, and I wanted
4 to make sure that, you know, because you guys are talking
5 about predator control and park services, you know, park
6 service lands, monuments, you know, me harvesting an
7 animal for a study, you know, I hope that's not like a,
8 you know, violation. That's all I have. Thank you.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Mike. Any
11 other questions, comments on the proposal process?
12 Tristen.
13

14 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
15 Pattee here. And so just moving forward with the
16 proposal. So, at some point, I don't know if it's now
17 or later. It looks like there is opportunity for a
18 proposal for the season, and not only season, the bag
19 limit, because it looks like the bag limit for federal
20 land is 15 wolves, the state has 20. So, I'm definitely
21 thinking that there is an opportunity to create a
22 proposal of subsistence, of course, to align some of
23 these, or even extend our dates further than the state.
24

25 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, we can do it at
26 any time during this meeting. If someone would like to
27 make a motion, we do have it on the agenda a little
28 later under the action items for the proposals. So, if
29 you want, we can revisit that in a little bit. Any other
30 questions? Elmer.
31

32 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes. Thank you, Mr.
33 Chair. Elmer Armstrong, Noorvik. I know that -- can we
34 send a proposal to the state agencies using subsistence
35 protection to close Unit 23 public state lands?
36

37 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, through the Chair to
38 Mr. - sorry, member Armstrong. Your question is closing
39 state lands to protect subsistence users. What specific
40 -- are we -- we're not talking about predators anymore?
41

42 MR. ARMSTRONG: Well, that's a different
43 proposal, but I just had that question. I understand
44 that state law doesn't recognize subsistence in their
45 language, but federal does.
46

47 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, we have different
48 definitions of subsistence users, and you know, we can
49 get into that later. But, basically, what my
50 recommendation would be is Karmen, your Chairman, Mr.

1 Baker, and member Kramer all sit on the Kotzebue Sound
2 AC. I'm assuming you're still on there, but yeah. So,
3 we have members in the room who sit on that Kotzebue
4 Sound AC and that's generally the best method to create
5 these proposals through the state proposal process. So,
6 we just went through a meeting the other day and we --
7 it was a fish cycle. So, we talked about fisheries
8 primarily. But when we prepare for the upcoming call for
9 proposals on the state side, that would be an appropriate
10 time to do that. Not to say that this body couldn't make
11 recommendations, that's totally appropriate. But it
12 would go through that process and those -- that call for
13 proposals, as I mentioned, I think is November 1st, this
14 coming fall. So, yeah.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, I think what we
17 may be able to do for state side proposals is, we as --
18 this Council could send a letter to the Kotzebue Sound
19 Fish and Game Advisory Council and make a recommendation
20 for a proposal relating to closing Unit 23 to protect
21 the caribou herd, or whatever the proposals might be.
22 But that would be an avenue to get it to that body that
23 can take care of it on the state side, and I was
24 traveling, so I missed this last meeting. I don't know
25 if anything came up from the two people that Alex pointed
26 out. But either way, that would be one option. If we
27 wanted to do that under action items, we could send
28 letters to other agencies, other councils. Karmen, did
29 you want to add anything?

30
31 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. Thank
32 you. On the last cycle for the state side, we did try
33 to close non-resident users for caribou because our
34 numbers were getting so low, and they denied that. They
35 put a cap of 300 caribou harvested, and in reality,
36 that's what they normally get. So, they really didn't
37 lose anything while we put in proposals to lower our
38 usability -- I mean, our harvest ability because we want
39 to protect our herd. So, we did our part and when -- one
40 thing I want to mention is, when you open up a proposal
41 whether it's caribou or bears, you know, whatever is --
42 if you put in, let's say you want to get one bear a
43 year, they could go in and say, nope, no more bears.
44 They could go the opposite of what you even said or what
45 you proposed. So, we have to be very careful when we do
46 our -- what proposals we open up on the state side
47 because they can go the opposite of what we even wanted.
48 And having a letter from this group for the next round
49 would make our case a lot stronger. They fly up people
50 to protect their side and voice their opposition to that

1 proposal, and I was the only one at the time that voiced
2 my opposition. I mean, my pro closure for the non-
3 residents at the time, because of our numbers, and
4 without current numbers, it gets harder and harder to
5 try to justify it. But we are getting into that critical
6 management. So, definitely having a letter from this
7 group would make our case stronger, and I believe there's
8 other state committees in our Unit 23. Thank you.

9
10 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, if I may, through the
11 Chair. Yeah. There are five ACs in Unit 23, which, you
12 know, include basically the NANA region. So, we have
13 opportunities to write proposals from all of those. But
14 let me just be clear that, you know, even, you know, as
15 Mr. Baker pointed out, you could write a letter. This
16 body could also write a proposal. Any individual,
17 private party could write a proposal to the Board of
18 Game. So, it just, you know, strength in numbers and,
19 you know, movement behind it, right. So, you know,
20 anybody personally could write a proposal if they wanted
21 to, and those proposals come through our office. You
22 know, we look at them, we take into account the biology,
23 and all the data that we have, and we make
24 recommendations. And then that goes to the Board and the
25 Board. As Karmen pointed out, they make the decision,
26 you know, it's -- we provide recommendation, and then
27 they do what they want with that. So, thank you.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

30
31 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
32 like, if there's support letters from like our Lower
33 Kobuk Advisory Council, and to state and other
34 stakeholders that, if we have like traditional
35 ecological knowledge or any type of backup from our
36 village people, or studies that's being done by federal
37 or state -- I mean, we're talking about state, right.
38 So, those probably help a lot, right. For proposal
39 changes or emergency changes. Is that something that
40 could strengthen or speed up or -- probably won't speed
41 up the cycle, but at least do our homework, is probably
42 what I'm trying to lead to.

43
44 MR. HANSEN: Yes, through the Chair,
45 member Ramoth. Karmen spoke to this a little bit, and
46 she talked about how she was one of the only persons,
47 you know, at the meeting that we had -- at the Board of
48 Game meeting here in January last year. And just kind
49 of sharing this to share the strength of this argument
50 that Karmen pointed out, is there were a lot of folks

1 that came from the North Slope and they stood up for,
2 you know, the proposals that they had requested or put
3 in and, you know, there was a lot of strength in that.
4 You know, people being united on their proposals and,
5 you know, trying to bring that forward. So, at that
6 meeting, you know, every member of the public has an
7 opportunity to speak to the Board of Game, to speak to
8 the audience, I believe five-minute limit. And then
9 members of ACs, the Advisory Councils, would have an
10 additional ten minutes, I believe. So, a lot of
11 opportunity to share your thoughts and your concerns and
12 voice your proposals and push them forward. It's a public
13 process. It's not a perfect process. But, you know, we
14 seek public involvement. We know there's a lot of
15 feelings and, you know, concerns and frustrations that
16 can take place in these meetings. And it's -- you know,
17 bring it to the table, and the Board can decide what to
18 do with it.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any final questions
21 or comments for proposals at this time? And we will come
22 back to the actual call for proposals once we get to the
23 action items on the agenda. If not, thank you, gentlemen.
24 We do have one request at this time for addressing the
25 Council. Ruth Eaton, would you like to come up to the
26 table? State your name for the record. So, again, if
27 anyone would like to address the Council, there are these
28 blue sheets at the table when you first walk in, to fill
29 it out, give it to a staff member. So, again, Ruth, if
30 you wouldn't mind putting your name on record, and your
31 proposal project/issue -- you would like to discuss is
32 the D1 lands request and you have the floor and hit the
33 button.

34
35 MS. EATON: Thank you. Yes. My name is
36 Ruth Eaton, and I live on Saqauginn Creek, 25 miles
37 outside of Kotzebue, and good morning, everyone. I
38 apologize for being a little late for public testimony
39 so, I'm glad that you allowed me to speak this morning.
40 I'm here today to talk about the lands in our region,
41 which are federally protected BLM lands under ANILCA
42 17(d)(1) withdraws. We use these lands locally for
43 hunting, traveling, trapping, fishing, harvesting
44 berries, plants and wood, and training sled dogs. I am
45 among the people living at camp who depend on these
46 resources our land supply for our subsistence way of
47 life. I did bring some handouts. I don't know if it's
48 respectful to pass them out before or after I speak.
49 There are two here. So, one is the picture of the lands
50 that I'm speaking about, and another one is just a basic

1 handout. There's two that go to people, please. Yeah.
2 Thank you.

3
4 As you can see, caribou habitat, as well
5 as our salmon and sheefish fishing grounds are within
6 these lands. The groups who have spoken out in favor of
7 keeping these lands protected are Maniilaq, NANA, the
8 Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, and the Kobuk
9 Valley Subsistence Resource Commission. Our local groups
10 have joined with five other State RACs, as well as the
11 Association of Village Council Presidents, Kawerac, TCC,
12 Ahtna Tribal Consortium, seven village corps and other
13 tribal consortia, communities and commissions. They have
14 all joined to support the retention of D1 lands. We did
15 have a BLM hearing here in Kotzebue last year, and we
16 had 19 people speak about the retention of the lands. I
17 am asking our Northwest Arctic Regional Advisory Council
18 to, first, support the retention of D1 lands and, second,
19 to document the support with a letter to the Office of
20 Subsistence Management expressing concern over a loss
21 of protections which would impact caribou, salmon, and
22 sheefish habitat along with our subsistence resources
23 and lifestyle.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Ruth. Any
26 questions, comments from the Council? I know that we --
27 I don't remember which meeting it was, but this Council
28 has been briefed somewhat on D1 lands previously under
29 the Biden -- when the Biden administration was still in
30 effect. I don't know if we have anyone that could speak
31 to the D1 lands from the federal side in the room, or
32 on the phone. What was that, Clyde?

33
34 MR. RAMOTH: I got a question, Mr. Chair,
35 for Ruth.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes, please.

38
39 MR. RAMOTH: Or anybody else that could
40 answer this. But thank you, Ruth. Being new to this I'm
41 looking at your map -- this map here, and the Selawik
42 River is 156 miles long, and at this boundary over here
43 it shows ANCSA withdrawals from EIS, the environmental
44 impact statement for 7(d)(1) [sic], is that the
45 headwaters of the -- of Hot Springs as part of the
46 boundary? Wil? Yeah. Okay. Thank you. I say that because
47 it's really a concern for our fish habitat.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike, did you want
50 to add something?

1

2

3 MR. KRAMER: Yes. Thank you. I know last
4 year I did a short video with Morgan Urquia; I believe
5 her name is. I'm not too sure, but I know that, you
6 know, D1 lands is the Squirrel River. You know, if those
7 open up to commercial services and all that other stuff
8 -- and mining, that'll be very devastating for the people
9 of Kiana and Noorvik, Kotzebue because that -- the
10 Squirrel River is a major corridor for caribou
11 migration, and it has for centuries or decades. But, you
12 know, it's very important that we push to protect these
13 lands. If BLM doesn't want to protect these lands, then
14 my suggestion back then, last year was that BLM transfer
15 these lands to tribal organizations within the Game
16 Management Unit 23 of Northwest Alaska, for them to
17 manage under a trust, and with a trust that it would be
18 protected from any other commercial services such as
19 mining, guiding, transporting, minerals, anything, you
20 know, anything that has to do with commercial.

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I know that in the past, the Squirrel
River had had a lot of problems with transporters in
there. A lot of their clients left trash everywhere, in
a lot of these landing sites where these airplanes landed
to harvest caribou. But since that it's closed on federal
lands to non-resident hunters for caribou, my suggestion
was -- back last year, was that BLM turned these lands
over to the tribes of Northwest Alaska for us to protect
under a trust. And with that trust, our lands would be
protected by the people and monitored by the people.
Because if BLM doesn't want to protect these lands, they
might as well just turn it over to the tribes, because
those lands are very vital to our subsistence lifestyle,
our culture and so on, our future, our kids future. So,
protecting these lands right now is an absolute must.
It has to happen. Because if they don't, there goes our,
you know, our culture. We might as well flush -- we
might as well help them flush the toilet because it's
gone. You know, with our caribou population in declining
[sic], moose declining, salmon declining, you know,
sheep are gone. What's next? If we lose caribou and
moose, we're done. There's no major meat, you know, other
than muskox. And those are very limited. Right now, we
need to try to push to protect these lands, and we need
to push for BLM to turn these lands over to the tribes
in the form of a trust, to which NANA, all the IRAs,
tribal organizations in the villages can monitor and own
these lands under a trust. That way it's protected for
future use. Thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
2 Mike. Did we have anyone online that could speak to this
3 DIs issue?

4
5 MS. EATON: I do have a sample letter
6 that I can provide that could be written, and that has
7 been used for other RACs, and that's the one that would
8 be submitted to the -- where is it? It's the -- I
9 requested that this letter be submitted to the Office
10 of Subsistence Management. And so that now that we do
11 have a new Secretary of the Interior, that office would
12 be the one that would be advising our new Secretary of
13 the Interior. So, I do have that letter. I have it
14 sitting over where I was sitting. I just didn't bring
15 it up with me, but I could submit that as well.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
18 Ruth, and the reason I ask if there's anyone that can
19 speak to this from BLM or whoever, is I personally am a
20 little hesitant to take any action on this, at this time
21 until the Council has more information, which this is
22 how I have been with other issues. The Council can make
23 a decision, if anyone would like to discuss this further.
24 I, personally, am not sure that submitting a letter at
25 this time would be appropriate, but I'd like to hear
26 from the rest of the Council. Karmen?

27
28 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. Thank
29 you. When BLM came around, was it last year? We had a
30 room full of people that spoke up against this. I mean,
31 you look at on this map, it shows Buckland is almost
32 surrounded. Right behind my camp, all through -- it's
33 where the D1 lands are. Kivalina, you have upriver,
34 Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk. Like Clyde said, you have the
35 headwaters of their river right behind Kotzebue, heading
36 towards Buckland, that's caribou grounds, you know. This
37 is all where we harvest our animals, where we want to
38 keep our lands pristine, with clean water for our fish
39 and clean water for ourselves. I mean, look at Kotzebue,
40 right now. We're drinking brown water and getting handed
41 out water filters to take away the manganese. And you
42 know, if they take away these D1 lands, that might be
43 what we put our villages through, and I don't think it's
44 a good idea, and I would support writing a letter. Thank
45 you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Karmen.
48 Clyde, did you have something?

49
50

1 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, I
2 take it these ANCSA, these lands that withdraw from EIS,
3 is that the color-coded are probably mineral or
4 something has to do with -- because in the 70s, I
5 remember as a young kid, attending a NANA meeting when
6 they were being first formed, and our locals in every
7 community would ask where do we want NANA lands, where
8 do we want federal and state lands? But the NANA lands
9 were selected because that's where we subsist. That's
10 where we sustain ourselves. That's where we want to help
11 protect forever. So, are these consulted with the tribes
12 and, the second is, what's the difference between trust
13 and like, co-management? Thank you.

14
15 MS. EATON: Good question. Is that for
16 me? Yeah. No, I can't address those issues. I do have a
17 timeline here that I can read, of what's gone on with
18 the lands. Right now, January 2021, the Trump
19 administration tried to rescind the D1 land protection
20 status. December 2023, the Biden administration released
21 a Draft Environmental Impact statement to consider the
22 effects of opening the 26 million acres. It's not just
23 our region. It's 26 million acres in Alaska. So, trying
24 to release them from the D1 status. So, it did go --
25 undergo an Environmental Impact Statement. August 2024,
26 the Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, recorded the
27 record of decision to take no action. Which meant --
28 means to keep the D1 lands in protected status. And the
29 reason why we are right now saying, let's write a letter,
30 is because January 2025, the Trump administration called
31 on the Secretary of the Interior to lift the D1
32 protections.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

35
36 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. Oh, sorry. Yeah, I
37 spoke to Lisa, and I showed her the email that I got
38 from Oregon. And there was a proposed letter in there
39 for a draft letter for Northwest Arctic to submit. There
40 was other RACs that also submitted letters in support
41 of protecting the D1 lands. We don't have a copy of
42 that. I'm not sure if Lisa printed it out for us or if
43 it's in our books, but there is a draft letter in there
44 from Morgan Urquia. Thank you.

45
46 MS. EATON: Thank you. Yes, I do have a
47 copy of that letter as well.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde, did you want
50 to say something?

1

2 MR. RAMOTH: Yeah. Just a follow up
3 question. Where can I find, or any of us find, which 18
4 communities were -- where BLM held hearings at? Is that
5 something we could find on the website?

6

7 MS. EATON: That's an interesting
8 question. I don't know if anyone from BLM is present.

9

10

11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: There is not, and I
12 think that's part of the issue, is we don't have anyone
13 officially from BLM that can speak to this topic.

13

14

15 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. I know
16 that when the BLM process is open, you can go in and,
17 you know, when you're submitting your comments go
18 through and see what it's all about. I'm not sure if you
19 can do it while it is still closed, or if it's open
20 again under a new tab. So, you might be able to search.
21 And if it's coming around again, they might have created
22 a new process. I'm not sure if it's a SEIS process, or
23 SSCSIS. I don't know what their process would be now
24 though, so thank you. And my name is Karmen Monigold,
25 for the record.

25

26

(Simultaneous speech)

27

28

29 UNIDENTIFIED: Oh, there you go. Clyde
30 found it.

30

31

32 MR. RAMOTH: I'm sorry. How many people
33 were able to testify and get comments? I'm just curious
34 because we have people that are concerned, regionally.

34

35

36 UNIDENTIFIED: I do know that in Kotzebue
37 there were 19 people. I was at the testimony as well.

37

38

39 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other thoughts,
40 comments from the Council? Tristen.

40

41

42 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
43 Pattee. I do -- I sit on the Kobuk Valley SRC, and we
44 did vote to retain these lands, and a letter was
45 submitted to this this RAC, correct? To support it. So,
46 and I am comfortable if -- with your knowledge, if you
47 could explain what would happen if these were
48 withdrawal. Is that something you could do?

48

49

50 MS. EATON: Well, right now they have
protections.

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MR. PATTEE: Yes.

MS. EATON: So, if it was withdrawn, the protections would be lifted. So, I would assume -- I'm just assuming, no, I cannot tell you what would happen.

MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair. Okay. So, yeah, we did get some information about this. And that's why we voted to withdraw on these lands. Maybe a suggestion would be to table this for later in the meeting and get -- see if we can get some information for everyone on the Council and then vote for this letter.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Would you like to make that motion? Unless there's more discussion. Karmen.

MS. MONIGOLD: I know that when -- if they open these lands, they would be open to mining, they would be open to development, and that is why we're trying to protect them. So, that would be -- what would be at jeopardy is that, you could end up with a mine in your back door, or drilling or, you know, you basically open it up to industry. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Karmen. Anything else? Clyde.

MR. RAMOTH: Looks like under 14, we got BLM to report -- on number 14, right? Is that later today or tomorrow? On 14D, BLM.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Chair, I'll take that. It is -- they are on the agenda, but I haven't confirmed any reports with them. But we can see if we can get them to report tomorrow. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, I just want to say, for the interest of time, Alex has to do his presentation before noon. I don't know how long it will take, but we usually have a lot of questions for Alex. So, what would the Council like to do at this time on this issue? Would anyone like to make a motion to table until we can get a report? Tristen.

MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair. I mean, Tristen Pattee, I'm comfortable in voting now to decide on if we're going to write a letter with our -- with the

1 mentioned template. If it's up to everybody else to vote
2 on that.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Since we haven't seen
5 the letter. It hasn't been disseminated. Can I make the
6 suggestion that we -- hear me out, read it over during
7 lunch, and then we can vote on it after to make sure
8 that it's verbiage that we're comfortable with as a
9 Council? Yay? Nay? Thomas isn't speaking English? What
10 is the wish of the Council?

11
12 MS. EATON: I do have a copy of the
13 letter.

14
15 (Simultaneous speech)

16
17 MR. HOWARTH: Mr. Chair.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Wilbur, go ahead.

20
21 MR. HOWARTH: Yeah. Mr. Chair, I'll be
22 away from the meeting all day tomorrow due to my aunt's
23 funeral. So, any action items, I'm in support of this
24 for Eaton -- to protect our lands and stuff. So, yeah,
25 after lunch would be fine. But right now, I guess we
26 should go ahead and vote on this, for the letter. Thank
27 you.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
30 Wilbur, and just as a note, I'm going to try to get
31 through all the action items this afternoon because
32 there are several people that will have to be out
33 tomorrow. Tristen.

34
35 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
36 Pattee. I make a motion to table this vote until after
37 we read the template letter, and then after that, make
38 the final vote for -- to write the letter.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, a motion to
41 table. Is there a second?

42
43 MR. RAMOTH: I'll second the motion.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Clyde.
46 All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

47
48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49
50

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And those opposed,
2 same sign.

3
4 (No response)

5
6 Hearing none. Thank you, Ruth. We will
7 be picking this up this afternoon. I'm not sure when,
8 but it will be this afternoon while we have people in a
9 quorum.....

10
11 MS. EATON: That's fine.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON BAKER:to take action.

14
15 MS. EATON: That's wonderful. I do have
16 enough copies of the letter, could I submit them to Lisa
17 right now?

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yeah. If you'd like
20 to hand them to Wil, then we can disseminate.

21
22 MS. EATON: Okay, for Wil. Great. Thank
23 you very much, everyone, for -- thanks for listening.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
26 We will move on to wildlife reports and, Alex, are you
27 prepared to take the floor?

28
29 MR. HANSEN: Thank you. Members of the
30 Council and Mr. Chair, this is Alex Hansen, for the
31 record. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Western
32 Arctic Caribou Herd biologist. So, we're going to walk
33 through a basic update. We'll probably breeze through
34 it pretty quick. Not a whole lot has changed. I'm just
35 adding additional numbers as we collect surveys on an
36 annual basis. Apparently, this is the right direction.
37 Okay. So this is our population over time. As long as
38 we've collected a population -- or a population estimate
39 or census for the Western Artic Herd, as you can see,
40 you know, the low of the lows was in the mid-70s. We got
41 down to 75,000. Then we climbed very rapidly over a
42 number of years until 2003, when the population peaked
43 at nearly half a million 490,000; and then for the next
44 20 years, mostly, we've been declining. We saw a little
45 bit of a blip there in 2017-time frame. But 2017, 2018
46 or 19, I should say, and then we've been continuing to
47 decline again. So, the last count that we had to the far
48 right, 2023, was 152,000 caribou. So, basically, we have
49 been declining at a steady rate for about 20 years.

50

1 One of the surveys that we do is
2 parturition or calving. So, this is a look at how many
3 adult collared cows have a calf at hill, or had calved,
4 on the calving ground. And this is a parturition rate
5 of 71%, is our latest, and that was last spring. This
6 is something we do every spring or summer. You know,
7 June time frame. We usually start June 5th through the
8 10th, approximately. And our long-term average is 70%.
9 So, we haven't seen any major scares or concerns on
10 calving rates for a long time. It's maintained, you know,
11 at or above average.

12

13 MR. RAMOTH: I got a question.

14

15 MR. HANSEN: Yeah.

16

17 MR. RAMOTH: For the record, Clyde
18 Ramoth, Selawik. Are you comfortable with those numbers,
19 Alex?

20

21 MR. HANSEN: I am, yes. Thank you. And
22 just to quantify it to member Ramoth's question. What
23 we're looking at is an estimate based on the collared
24 sample. So, to our best ability, you know, it represents
25 the herd. Obviously, there's going to be some variation
26 as we look at 100 animals. It can't 100% accurately
27 represent 150,000 animals. But it's the best tool that
28 we have at our disposal. And then this is another
29 recruitment survey. This is basically an estimate of the
30 calves that make it through their first year of life.
31 So, we're out on the landscape. We'll be doing this the
32 end of April, and we'll be looking at the number of
33 calves in the population based on the number of adults.
34 So, this is a larger sample. We had generally targeted
35 up to 10,000 animals in the sample. Sometimes we go
36 above that. Most recently, as the population has been
37 going down, we've looked at fewer animals just to
38 maintain that representation. So, we don't oversample
39 specific areas. So, what we really want to do is get
40 good geographic representation. So, if there's, you
41 know, caribou across several different areas within the
42 range of the herd, then we try to represent all of those
43 groups so that we have a good representation of the
44 whole.

45

46 And we do the same with our fall
47 composition surveys. So, the bull-to-cow ratio is
48 something that we pay very close attention to. This is
49 kind of an estimate of how many bulls there are in the
50 population. So, this number 44, to the right there, is

1 44 bulls to 100 cows. So, that kind of puts that into
2 perspective for you. So, we would start getting
3 concerned based on our management plan through the
4 Western Artic Herd Working Group, if we were to dip
5 below 30, that is the objective through that plan.
6 Biologically, the population, you know, would be
7 sustaining itself at a much lower rate. You know, if we
8 look at other examples of caribou -- Rangifer without,
9 you know, throughout the world, you know, you can sustain
10 a population at a lower rate, but we might start running
11 into some concerns if we got lower. And this has been
12 above that historical -- our historical numbers have
13 been above that line of 30 for a very long time. As long
14 as we've been doing the surveys. So, our biggest
15 concern.....

16
17 (Simultaneous speech)

18
19 MR. ARMSTRONG: Question.

20
21 MR. HANSEN: Yes.

22
23 MR. ARMSTRONG: So, since these are just
24 estimates, is there a threshold somewhere to where the
25 Board uses it as a guide to base their decisions on
26 closing?

27
28 MR. HANSEN: So, a good question. Through
29 the Chair to member Armstrong. When you say estimate,
30 let me just kind of clarify what we're looking at here.
31 This is our best determination, and as I mentioned with
32 the short yearling surveys or spring neonates -- or
33 sorry, survival studies, what we're looking at is a
34 representation geographically of the population. So,
35 this survey specifically, if the conditions are not
36 ideal, I don't even do it because we could get a bad
37 number. If there's a population up by Point Hope, if
38 there's population by Ambler, if there's a population
39 on the Seward Peninsula, and anywhere in between, I have
40 to have a good representation of all of those groups,
41 or I won't do the survey because I'm not interested in
42 bad data. You know, I don't want to skew anything and
43 this sample we get close to 10,000 animals as well. So,
44 if we look at this statistically, it is a very robust
45 sample of the population. So, it's pretty darn accurate,
46 and partly because of the checks and balances that we
47 put into that survey, that if it doesn't look like it's
48 going to work, I'm not going to waste the time and the
49 money to do it because it's junk, right. And so, I don't
50 go after bad data. But to your point, really, this is

1 the number that's given to them. And so, we have that
2 meeting at the working group. Member Cleveland here is
3 part of that group, Chairs that group. But when we make
4 that discussion and that recommendation, and I'll get
5 to that table here in a moment, all of this data comes
6 into it and, you know, it's not me making a decision, I
7 make a recommendation, I in the table two, which I'll
8 show you in a moment. But that's just kind of how that
9 comes about. So, it's just a collective decision of the
10 working group to decide how they want to set that
11 management strategy. Does that make sense?

12
13 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes. Thank you, and also,
14 another question. Has there been a threshold set since
15 you're using this as a tool to make your decisions?

16
17 MR. HANSEN: Yeah. So, this is one tool.
18 The threshold would be then if it goes below 30, then
19 there's some other prescriptions in the management plan
20 and it looks like, you know, if you open up that, you
21 can see that table, but I'll get to it in a minute, and
22 we can talk about some of the things that really go into
23 that recommendation. And the main things are adult
24 survival, which is my next slide here. So, this adult
25 cow survival is the biggest driver in that
26 recommendation, and then.....

27
28 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you.

29
30 MR. HANSEN:we also talk about
31 recruitment. And so, those are kind of the biggest
32 components to that recommendation. We've never been in
33 a situation where we've had to make a recommendation
34 based on bull to cow ratios, but we're prepared for that
35 because we have, you know, that number in plan that,
36 that help? Okay.

37
38 So, as I mentioned, this is our biggest
39 concern, adult cow survival. We've talked about this
40 lots and lots for the past several years. Many of you
41 members, Mr. Pattee and Mr. Kramer, talked about cow
42 harvest, and member Monigold, and this has been a major
43 concern here locally. We know that our population has
44 been declining. We know that cows produce calves, and
45 if we have fewer calves or cows, then we have fewer
46 calves, hence we have fewer animals, right. There's a
47 lot of things that are behind that that we, you know,
48 we're trying to understand, but we don't understand
49 drivers of all that. But we realize that if we lose too
50 many cows, we're not going to be able to regrow this

1 population. As I opened this discussion, you know, with
2 our population graph, you saw that growth from the 70s
3 into the early 2000s, that was, you know, drastic growth.
4 It was growing very fast, and this population has the
5 potential to do that again. But we need to set the stage
6 to the point where they're at a certain level where they
7 can grow fast, right. They could grow fast at 75,000
8 again, but it's going to be slower. So, if we're still
9 in the 150,000 range, or whatever, and the, you know,
10 the stars align, and the conditions exist for rapid
11 growth, and we can regain this population rapidly. So,
12 there again, we've been below the long-term average in
13 six out of the last -- or five out of the last six years
14 there. Well, let's say six out of the last seven.
15 However, you want to look at that. But for the last
16 decade-ish, almost, we've been below our long-term
17 average survival, which is a concern.

18
19 So, back to my comments about this. This
20 is table two from the working group plan and addressing
21 here member Armstrong comments. But that decision, as
22 you can see up in the box here, is based on adult cow
23 survival at 80% or above and -- or sorry, this shows
24 declining at below 80%. So, what we really expect to
25 see, a stable population in this 80 to 88%. And then if
26 we get above this, you know, 88% and up our, you know,
27 information that we have, the data suggests that we
28 should see a growing population. And we've seen that
29 certainly, 90 and above, and that's what we would like
30 to see. So, the recommendation then talks about harvest
31 rates. So, the harvest rate at a population of 265 and
32 declining would be 14,000 plus, but, you know, now we're
33 down into this population level. So, between 130 and 100
34 -- or 200,000, that harvest is approximately 6 to 10,000.

35
36 So, in my next slide I'll talk about
37 that a little bit more. But what we have seen over time
38 is harvest rates, these are estimated harvest rates
39 throughout the years -- or sorry, the historical harvest
40 rate is this red line, about 12,000, but this is the
41 population of available harvest to the public -- or
42 harvestable surplus is what we call it. So, now we're
43 in a position where the harvestable surplus has dipped
44 below our long-term average harvest, and this is a
45 guesstimate, and we've talked about this before, but we
46 don't have a really good grasp on harvest. And that's
47 something that we struggle with. And that's why we talk
48 so much about getting the RC 907 permit and reporting
49 your harvest. And what that does is it helps us
50 understand how close to this line we can manage, because

1 now the line is right here, based on our latest
2 recommendations. So, as you can see up here, our latest
3 harvestable surplus was calculated at about 7,300. And
4 that was based off our count of 152,000, likely in the
5 last year, we've gone down a little bit more. We don't
6 have any data suggesting it's gone up. So, of that, you
7 know we can -- with that, we can understand that long-
8 term average harvest exceeds our current available
9 harvest, or harvestable surplus. So, we're in a position
10 where we have to be very careful, and I put in there as
11 well that, you know, the biggest concern is cows, right.
12 So, my recommendation for the last few years has been a
13 harvest of cows of 1% or fewer, which is basically zero
14 cows, not to exceed 750. Now these are kind of squishy
15 numbers, right. But it's where we recommend we stay.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

18

19 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you. Through the
20 Chair. So, your RC 907, how -- because like for my moose
21 permit. I get phone calls, I get emails, I had to report.
22 But do you guys have aggressive ways to get these reports
23 from our people at harvest caribou annually. Maybe I
24 could ask the caribou chief over here if he's addressed
25 that. But those numbers are important to us, right?

26

27 MR. HANSEN: Yes.

28

29 MR. RAMOTH: And seeing these up and
30 down, up and down, may -- how aggressive is your guys'
31 harvest reports enforced through their license or
32 whatever they get?

33

34 MR. HANSEN: Yeah, that's a good
35 question. And that -- it's as aggressive as we can be.
36 One of the things when we started this permit, it came
37 out through a Board process in 2017, that it was
38 mandatory to have this harvest permit. We got to
39 understand that, you know, many, many, many decades, you
40 know, there was no mandatory reporting. So, the state
41 recognized the need to move forward cautiously and
42 informatively and provide education. So, we didn't want
43 to just send the troopers to start harassing people. You
44 know, the trooper is starting to step up that
45 enforcement, I'm sure you've all heard, because we feel
46 like it's important that we get reporting. So, we're
47 aggressive in the fact that we work to our best ability
48 to get to the communities, to share meetings. We had one
49 in Selawik, Noorvik, and Buckland last year, at least.
50 And then we try to get to as many communities as we can.

1 We share that through all the media outlets, the
2 Facebook, and everything else. So, we're working on it.
3 It's a long uphill battle. We're working also with
4 Subsistence Division to put together proposals where we
5 can work on doing outreach, specifically to get more
6 folks on board with this. And you know, Helen Cold is
7 working on that proposal as well. She may speak to that
8 later, but we're working on it. It's an uphill battle.
9 We appreciate any help we get from the communities and,
10 you know, encouragement, you know, through your
11 communication channels for folks to get permits and --
12 is always helpful.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Elmer, then Verne.

15

16 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Through the
17 Chair. Elmer Armstrong, Noorvik. I know we've been
18 talking about the decline through the numbers. Have you
19 looked at different herds to see if there was [sic]
20 increases. Because we're trying to find out what
21 happened to 36,000 caribou. What I'm meaning is, other
22 herds like the Teshekpuk and different herds, have they
23 increased in numbers to say that some of them might have
24 jumped into their herd?

25

26 MR. HANSEN: Yeah. Thank you. Through the
27 Chair. Member Armstrong. That's a good question and one
28 we get occasionally. One thing that would help us --
29 help you understand this is oftentimes we do the
30 Teshekpuk census simultaneous with the Western Arctic
31 census, not every year, but we try to do that. The
32 Western Arctic is a fairly well-behaved herd. We're
33 generally successful in getting a census. Unfortunately,
34 we weren't last year, but we can shoot them, like the
35 last time we did the Teshekpuk census was the day after
36 we shot the Western Arctic census. So, we spent, you
37 know, a few weeks on the slope working on that project,
38 and we're able to get those numbers directly, one behind
39 the other. So, we could say that there was no loss from
40 the Western Arctic Herd to the Teshekpuk. And we know
41 also from our caller locations in that data stream that,
42 you know, those populations are geographically
43 segregated at that time period.

44

45 So, when we're taking a census what
46 we're looking for is a group of animals that is --
47 they've come together in giant groups sometimes. You
48 know, maybe between 5 and 20 different groups that we
49 photograph. But I remember 2019, I believe it was, we
50 shot a group of 105,000 caribou, all smashed together

1 in one spot, about two miles by seven miles long. So,
2 they are very geographically separated at that point in
3 time. So, we would detect any, you know, movement away
4 during that time frame and the porcupine, you know, we
5 could question about that occasionally, but that
6 population is, you know, generally in Canada, or close
7 to Canada, when we're shooting the census for the Western
8 Arctic. So, yeah, it's a good question and I feel like
9 there's no concerns from us that we see loss in that
10 direction. There's always some mixing. Typically, what
11 we see is -- when there's mixing, it's in the wintertime,
12 and the bigger populations generally soak up animals
13 from the smaller populations. So, we'll see some, you
14 know, Teshekpuk animals join the Western Arctic
15 occasionally, and looks like they're going to go calve
16 with them, and then they peel off and calving time frame
17 and go back to Teshekpuk Lake area for calving. Thank
18 you.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne, did you have
21 some?

22
23 MR. CLEVELAND: Verne Cleveland. On
24 Clyde's question on harvesting. That's the hardest part
25 of getting harvest reports. Maybe we should bring it up
26 to your villages, or they're listening on radio, to at
27 least bring your harvest report to the tribe or the NANA
28 offices. Know that we got NANA offices in our region,
29 or the city, and we really do need the harvest reports.
30 It's not coming to us, but to every hunter, we need to
31 know. We need to know that -- how many caribou you get,
32 that to each hunter. I'm going to say no name. Just
33 don't -- just say -- just do your harvest report of how
34 many caribou you get and that's simple as that. We might
35 -- I don't know what we're going to report it to. Maybe
36 the tribe or whoever's out there, and we're working on
37 that. And we do need the harvest report, please. Thank
38 you.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Attamuk, then Mike.

41
42 MR. SCHIEDT: Attamuk here. I think what
43 you could do is -- Maniilaq, buy fuel for harvesters.
44 You pitch in and say I'll give you ten gallons for every
45 person that apply for fuel for Maniilaq. And you say,
46 okay, then the state will give that hunter ten gallons
47 extra if you report how many animals you get. Because I
48 know Maniilaq supply a lot of fuel for all the villages.
49 And the state could do their part to try to get the
50 report. It's just much needed. And I do have a question.

00057

1 Maybe I'll ask this one later, but I think that's how
2 (indiscernible) you take.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

5

6 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. One question. I forgot
7 to ask you this during our AC meeting. What is the actual
8 count of the cows collared right now? And then what is
9 the maintaining amount of collars you guys try to do per
10 year? And then, the other thing, are you guys going to
11 continue the calf collaring study?

12

13 MR. HANSEN: Yes, through the Chair.
14 Member Kramer, we -- our goal is to maintain a collar
15 sample of 100 individuals going into the census. So,
16 right now, I'd have to look. We've been seeing some
17 mortality. It was fairly common this time of year. We're
18 probably in the mid-90s. We're planning on starting
19 collaring as early as tomorrow. That's why I'm not
20 available. So, we -- I try to stay above that. So, this
21 time of year, I'd like to have 120, 130 collars going
22 in. And then to your other question about the calf
23 collaring project, that was a special project that we
24 did 2017 through 2019. That was really part of an effort
25 to get ahead of the curve and answer some questions as
26 we started to get into, IM area, right. Because our
27 population dipped below that, IM objective, and we don't
28 have current plans to get back into that. We got, you
29 know, some good information from that study. And I feel
30 like that if we replicated that study, we would probably
31 get the same information again. Unless, if we have reason
32 to believe that there would be a change, we probably
33 wouldn't continue with that calving study. You know,
34 those are very expensive projects, and we feel like our
35 money is better spent elsewhere. We feel like we've
36 answered that question to date.

37

38 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. One other thing I had
39 was -- I would like to be able to get some information,
40 either at our next meeting, mainly on, you know, the
41 Teshekpuk and Northwest Arctic from September 1st. Where
42 are they? September 5. Where are the collars? What I
43 want to try and do is I want to try and find out that
44 if the caribou are migrating through unhindered, the
45 first ones, in both Teshekpuk and Northwest Arctic, to
46 ensure that non-residents and Game Management Unit 26,
47 I believe, is allowing the first ones to pass. Same with
48 on the Noatak. You know, I know that there's kind of a
49 big old loop there. Some people, you know, the first
50 group of people hunting, they're on the south side of

1 the river, and then further up, they're all on the north
2 side because some of these caribou are looping back.
3 That was one of the questions I had. What else was there?
4 But that's what I would like to find out is their, you
5 know, their slow migration starting from December 1st
6 to September 30th, to find out if they're passing through
7 unhindered. You know, to ensure that the first ones do
8 pass, regardless of whether it's us, the subsistence
9 hunters or the commercial services to ensure that, you
10 know, the first one do go through before non-residents
11 even touch them.

12
13 MR. HANSEN: Yes, through the Chair. You
14 know, we discussed that in our AC meeting for -- so for
15 the benefit of anyone who wasn't there. I'm willing to
16 put together a presentation where we can kind of just
17 pull back the curtain and look at those movements. If
18 you would like to submit any dates or anything, I can
19 build, you know, a map, or a moving map to look at that.
20 But it's an interesting question and, you know, to your
21 earlier comments of hunting at the head of the migration,
22 from my perspective, the migration proper, at least in
23 the last decade or so, hasn't really taken place until,
24 you know, later in the fall; November time frame. And
25 that's when we really start to see those animals moving
26 south, or perhaps, you know, with these warmer falls
27 that we've had, they're just in the mountains, and they
28 stay there and either the snow pushes them out and they
29 take off, or they're just stuck there at that point. So,
30 we've definitely seen some big changes, but it is, to
31 some extent, kind of a loop. You know, one day they
32 might be going south and then 200 miles across the range
33 of where they're at. They might be going north the next
34 day, and it's fascinating to watch and I think it would
35 be beneficial to all in this room to walk down that path
36 with me. And we can talk about that story and look at,
37 you know, the use on the landscape from the non-resident
38 hunters and others who might be there. Because, from my
39 observations this last fall, specifically, when we
40 looked at the reduction primarily due to the closure in
41 Unit 23, we probably saw maybe -- I think the harvest --
42 -- I'd have to look, is probably close to 100 animals,
43 and they were restricted to Unit 26A. So, most of that
44 harvest took place, you know, north of the range,
45 obviously, in 26A and those individuals throughout the
46 course of their two-month season might have interacted,
47 you know, collectively with 10% of the population, let's
48 say. So, that leaves the rest of the 90% of this
49 population completely untouched, unseen, unimpacted.
50 Based on my observations through the data of those non-

1 resident hunters. So, the take is small, from my
2 perspective. The potential impact they can have on them
3 is very small, but I would like to just kind of, if you
4 will, pull back the curtains and we can just walk down
5 that path, open the map and we'll just have a discussion
6 about it.

7
8 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yeah, I think that
9 would be really good, Alex. For the record, Chair Thomas
10 Baker. Before Verne goes, I think having a good view of
11 the whole thing from like July 1st to October 1st. Just
12 taking in the factors of the caribou season for non-
13 residents on 26A's July 15th, or whatever the date is,
14 it's earlier than ours is for non-residents. But I'd
15 really appreciate that. I think we can go ahead and just
16 recommend that the Council would like to see that at our
17 next meeting, or whenever it might be available. I know
18 at the working group meeting a couple of years ago, Kyle
19 Joly had showed his graphic of where they are moving
20 throughout the whole month to month and shows the actual
21 migration. So, I appreciate that. Verne.

22
23 MR. CLEVELAND: Yes, and if you do, out
24 there, get a collared animal, please turn it in. Don't
25 leave it out there hanging in the tree, because some
26 guys will detect it and just keep going in circles in
27 one area. Please, if you get a collared animal, please
28 turn the collar in. Thank you.

29
30 MR. HANSEN: Thank you, Verne, and for
31 moose as well, because we've got, you know, a number of
32 moose collared in the Kobuk Delta. So, it keeps us from
33 flying around your village in circles in the airplane
34 and being annoying. So, if you just get one, call us,
35 I'll fly out and pick it up, whatever. But -- or you can
36 send it on Bering. We'll pay the bill.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

39
40 MR. HANSEN: We appreciate that. Thank
41 you, Verne.

42
43 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you, Mr. Hansen. So,
44 do we still have Robbie Kirk from NANA on the line?

45
46 (No response)

47
48 So, anyways, if not, I got a comment or
49 question. So, Attamuk brought up a good point about
50 Maniilaq and how they help our harvesters, hunters for

1 subsistence and of course, the caribou numbers are
2 always going to be a topic for the whole state, I think.
3 But I know at, like for NANA they help reduce the gas
4 prices for all the communities, right. And right now,
5 like Selawik is \$5 a gallon, and -- but part of like
6 some type of reporting, I think we could get Maniilaq's
7 help, like Attamuk was saying, and even NANA to have
8 better reporting, harvest reports submitted like that
9 RC 907.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: 907, yep.

12

13 MR. HANSEN: Thank you.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: You just -- for time
16 Alex, I don't know if you had a hard stop at noon. It
17 is 12:02.

18

19 MR. HANSEN: No, I just need to -- I've
20 got to go find caribou to catch tomorrow at some point
21 today. Oftentimes I work till dark, but we try to avoid
22 that, if I can. So, yeah, we'll continue along as long
23 as you have time. We can get through this presentation,
24 and then I'll take my leave and catch a flight out of
25 here for a minute. All right. So, we'll talk a little
26 bit about the proposals that we saw. We talked about
27 proposals earlier this morning. So, these are the latest
28 proposals. This is kind of just a collection of all the
29 proposals kind of distilled into some that were
30 representative. But these were specific proposals that
31 came from the working group, and a lot of those
32 proposals, you know, originated from the Kotzebue Sound
33 AC and from your RAC here. So, anyways, a collection
34 there.

35

36 So, these were the proposals that came
37 through. As you're well aware, there were federal
38 proposals, state proposals, all very similar and the
39 results of some of these were -- the original proposal
40 being, you know, a restriction to 4 caribou per year.
41 During that Board of Game process, we kind of did some
42 sidebar talking with the North Slope Wildlife Department
43 folks in Wainwright, Point Lay, who were very concerned
44 about reducing it that far. And so, we settled on 15
45 caribou per year. We feel like that was a number that
46 people could live with. It was also a reduction that was
47 significant enough, and it maintained that one cow,
48 which was the most important piece of this proposal. And
49 our concern there is, you know, we do see quite a bit
50 of harvest from the Western Artic Herd, from Wainwright

1 and Point Lay. There's a lot of animals up there right
2 now, and they have very good access to them. So, that
3 was one of the things that took place last year in
4 regulation and then the Federal Subsistence Board
5 followed suit as well with the 15 and 1.

6
7 So, our other changes, Karmen talked
8 about this, the non-resident caribou proposal that came
9 from the working group, and from this body, to close to
10 non-residents was drafted into a -- by an amendment to
11 include up to 300 permits issued. That up to language
12 was -- it allowed me to manage annually so we could
13 start at 300, but we could go as low as zero if we want.
14 And so, that was put into place. Basically the actions
15 that were taken by the FSB last spring circumvented that.
16 So, this permit is essentially null and void at this
17 point, we had 225-ish people apply for it, get the
18 permit. We still have some available, but there's
19 essentially no real estate for them to use this permit
20 on -- in Unit 23. So, it's kind of a moot point. And
21 then there was a move from the North Slope Folks to
22 expand the Anaktuvuk Pass seaway or controlled use area.
23 So, that grew a little bit from the concerns of the
24 North Slope folks.

25
26 And then we've talked a lot about
27 predators. Another thing that was pushed was a rear --
28 a year-round brown bear harvest in 23. That was not
29 something we had. We had a summer closure in the past
30 and, you know, similar to concerns that you've expressed
31 about, you know, cabin break-ins and fish racks and the
32 like, that was a proposal that came, and we pushed
33 forward, so you can now harvest two brown bears per year
34 every year. And then the non-resident limit was
35 increased from one bear to two years -- or two bears per
36 year. So, that was an increase on the predator side, for
37 opportunity at least. and then on the Federal
38 Subsistence side basically, as I mentioned, it tracked
39 what we did on the non-resident for the most part or,
40 sorry, the residents for the most part. And then, as
41 you're aware, the closure in Unit 23 from August 1st to
42 October 31st for non-residents, until this population
43 exceeds 200,000. So, that's current regulation.

44
45 So, we've talked about this a bit, but
46 you know how can you help? And I really appreciate the
47 comments that have come from you folks in the room.
48 Member Ramoth, and others and Verne, you know, talking
49 about the importance of reporting. And we appreciate
50 that. The only way that we can get 100% reporting is if

1 we get everybody who harvests to report and it's, you
2 know, it's not that hard. You know, it's just personal
3 accountability to report that. And if we move, you know,
4 deeper into this decline and we start to see situations
5 where we have to move into like a Tier II scenario, for
6 instance, like we see on muskox, establishing that
7 pattern of harvest within your community is valuable.
8 You know, you can establish that, you know, Selawik, for
9 instance, you know, needs 250 or 400 or whatever caribou
10 per year. But if we have zero harvest data, then it
11 makes it harder for us to go before the Board of Game
12 and argue for that use.

13

14 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

15

16 MR. RAMOTH: Yep, and I'm glad Verne
17 mentioned that, too, and thank you, Alex. And every time
18 we have a meeting and when we have listening audience,
19 because not everybody has the resources to go out
20 hunting, and maybe that individual or two hunters can
21 get a lot of caribou, but that means that's for widows
22 and elders and multiple families. So, like you say, it
23 could be anonymous. But the numbers are important,
24 correct?

25

26 MR. HANSEN: Numbers are important. We
27 obviously want it to go through the permit system, but
28 we'll take data in any form we can get it because that's
29 the most important thing, right. And to your point about,
30 you know, harvesting for others, which we recognize is
31 a very valuable component to the, you know, the
32 livelihood of people around here and to the culture,
33 there's a process for that. It's easier through the
34 federal side. But, you know, the state does allow that
35 as well. So, you know, for instance, if you're an elder
36 harvesting for an elder, we have a process to make it
37 so you can do that. Part of the reason we stuck with
38 this bag limit of 15 is, generally, people don't go
39 above that. There's, you know, instances, of course,
40 where people harvest 25 and above per year, but most
41 people don't. You know that harvest is quite a bit lower,
42 so we can deal with those, you know, small number of
43 individuals who are high harvesters, and help them
44 through the process of providing for those that cannot.
45 All right. There again, save the cows is my pitch and
46 report harvest and, you know, happy to discuss anything
47 else you want to talk about. I also have some information
48 for moose, muskox, other stuff that we've got going on
49 in the region, so.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Attamuk. Then Verne.

2
3 MR. SHIEDT: Yeah, I got a question. Have
4 to do with survival of calves. 45 years ago, I tried to
5 tell Fish and Game, that wasn't you, it was somebody
6 else, that there was a lot of Teshekpuk Herd here. And
7 Natives in Noatak always say when the Teshekpuk Herd is
8 here, our caribou will start declining. And not only
9 that, three other elders out of Noatak called me and
10 saying there's a lot of Teshekpuk Herd in Kotzebue and
11 nobody's believing them that Teshekpuk Herd is a lot
12 different than Western Arctic caribou. I could tell the
13 difference. I like them better than our caribou, they're
14 smaller, and they're more tender. Even the bulls.
15 There's a big difference and when we tried to tell them
16 nobody out of Fish and Game believe what we were trying
17 to say. And now that elder, he passed few years ago, he
18 said, see, I told you that they were going to start
19 declining once the Teshekpuk Herd -- he said they were
20 here to adopt our caribou, said it happened before. He
21 said he seen it twice when he was younger, and that's
22 what I'm talking about. And he passed on. And I always
23 say that there's a difference. That's why some areas --
24 maybe you guys, you see what's in the north slope of the
25 count of different caribou.

26
27 MR. CLEVELAND: Now that we can get two
28 bears per year and we're allowed to sell the hide, but
29 you got to have a permit or a tag from the Fish and Game
30 to sell the hide, right?

31
32 MR. HANSEN: That's correct, and I
33 believe that's on your agenda to discuss if you want to
34 put that into federal regulation. But through the state,
35 yes, you can harvest two bears per year. You can sell
36 the hides and skulls. Just come to our office and we'll
37 provide the permit. It's free; easy process.

38
39 MR. CLEVELAND: So, with that brings
40 another question. If you're allowed to sell the hide
41 and, what about the gallbladder? Are we allowed to sell
42 that, too? I mean, if you sell.....

43
44 MR. HANSEN: That's a hard no.

45
46 MR. CLEVELAND:the skin. I mean,
47 you know.

48
49 MR. HANSEN: No, please don't do that.

50

1 MR. KRAMER: Just a question.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

4

5 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. One thing I'd like to
6 see is I'd like to see the word passed on to colleges
7 throughout the U.S. to invite them into coming up here
8 and doing studies on caribou. And I think that would be
9 something that would be pretty neat, is -- if colleges
10 within the state and out of state, come up and start
11 doing studies. Because I could remember a few years ago
12 National Geographic came up and they were out on the
13 summer calving grounds. And they were with several
14 individuals and these several individuals are from here.
15 And they noticed that a bunch of the caribou took off
16 in a rampage because of bugs or whatever it was, or some
17 kind of a threat to the area. They crossed a lake. They
18 came up on the other side. A bunch of cows were left
19 behind for hours. A few of them were picked on by or
20 picked off by bears, wolves. But these cows didn't come
21 back for 6 or 7, maybe 8 hours later. They'd never
22 witnessed anything like that of cows. Usually, they --
23 the cow will about-face and go back and go look for its
24 baby, like, right now. You know, the word I got from
25 several of these people that our caribou -- Western
26 Arctic Caribou Herd, you know, consist of a bunch of bad
27 mamas out there. I kind of wish that we would get you
28 know, Alaska -- UAA and UAF, to see if they can come up
29 and do some -- help do some studies statewide on caribou.
30 You know, they're from the state. You know, you think
31 that they would push for some studies to come up in
32 their biology classes and courses would come up and do
33 some -- invite them up here to do some studies where
34 they're out there on the ground and on foot and
35 monitoring the caribou.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mr. Brinkman, you can
38 make a note of that. Any other questions or comments for
39 Alex?

40

41 MR. PATTEE: Just one. Is there any -- I
42 was looking at the map, you know, with the fluctuation
43 of the herd numbers. Is there -- one of those -- is
44 there a study, or a something going on that are tracking
45 the number of predators that you'd be able to kind of
46 have the same graph, but just kind of side by side. If
47 the pressures, go higher or lower at around the same
48 time.

49

50

1 MR. HANSEN: Yeah. Through the Chair.
2 Member Pattee. No, there's -- well, later in the meeting,
3 I -- Park Service can speak to what they're doing with
4 wolves and bears. We have had some participation in those
5 surveys in the past, but currently we don't have data
6 like the studies that were done you know, hardcore
7 studies that were done on predator populations were done
8 decades ago. And so, we don't have anything that would
9 corroborate with that population time frame. I will say
10 that, you know, monitoring predator populations is very
11 different than caribou specifically. From the
12 perspective of a biologist who's worked with several
13 different species, counting caribou is one of the
14 easiest, you know, populations to count. They present
15 themselves in open country. They stand there for
16 photographs, generally, and then we count them one by
17 one, and that's just not something we can do with
18 predators. We see abundant surveys around the state that
19 just don't work for them. It's very hard. So,
20 unfortunately, the answer is no. Anecdotally, we hear
21 that there are more, you know, you folks are our eyes
22 and ears in the communities as well. So, and on the
23 landscape.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne.

26
27 MR. CLEVELAND: That one reindeer herder
28 said -- Johnson Stalker, that's his worst enemy was the
29 raven. That was the only thing he said. His worst enemy
30 was the raven as a reindeer herder.

31
32 MR. HANSEN: Caribou are delicious.
33 Everything wants to eat him, right. Ourselves included.
34

35 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: You know, just
36 thinking about a different predator-prey relationship.
37 For example, in Kotzebue everyone knows that you've got
38 a lot of rabbits in town. Pretty soon you're going to
39 have a lot of foxes, and then, as the years go by there
40 on whatever it is, seven-year cycle of a lot of foxes
41 come around, they eat the rabbits and then they take off
42 and then more rabbits come back around. I think it would
43 be interesting to see if there's opportunities for
44 predator studies that could see if there's some
45 correlation. Be a little hard because as you say, there
46 haven't -- it's hard to track predators in general. But
47 if there are any agencies that could speak more to
48 predator tracking, predator numbers, I think those would
49 be good starting points for further discussion. Any
50 other questions, comments for Alex?

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(No response)

Going once, going twice. People look hungry. So, thank you for that, Alex. I'm sure there's going to be questions throughout the day that we'll make sure to relay back to you. So, with that, I'm going to say it is 12:17. How do we feel about coming back at 1:30?

MR. CLEVELAND: That's good.

UNIDENTIFIED: Good caribou time.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, with that, it is 12:17. We're going to take a lunch break, and we'll come back on the air at 1:30.

(Off record)

(On record)

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. It is now 1:41 p.m. We're going to get back on the record. We're going to deviate a little bit from the approved agenda since Siikauraq, and several others, will not be here tomorrow due to a funeral. Siikauraq, if you'd like to come up and put yourself on record, the floor is yours.

MS. WHITING: (In Native) Siikauraq (In Native) Dora Wilson (In Native) Claude Wilson Sr. (In Native). My grandparents are York Wilson and Abigail and Alta Wilson. They're all passed away. My family comes from Kikiktagruk, Sisaulik, Yuraq, Selawik, Noatak and Kotzebue. So, I just wanted to introduce myself as your Superintendent for Western Arctic Parklands. I was one of thousands of people that were fired on February 14th, and it was so kind of chaotic. But today, honestly, is my first day back to being reinstated, and I could not have asked for a better group of people and/or meetings to attend because you guys are fighting for our rights and for our people and our subsistence way of life. I'm happy to hear all your stories that I heard of this morning. One of my priorities, my entire life, has been our land, our strength. Our land identifies who we are as Iñupiaq people, and you all know it. And (In Native) has always been a guideline of my life and my work, and I am really humbled and honored to take that (In Native) guideline and bring it to the federal lands as we manage our federal lands together, because we all need each

1 other. All of our federal agencies, all of our local
2 tribes, city governments, we all need each other. We all
3 have strengths that we have to offer each other, so we
4 need to work together. There's a lot of issues that we
5 deal with, with subsistence, and we fight for our rights
6 and it's really a challenging time, this time in our
7 political arena with the federal government and where
8 we sit today. I'm not even certain about where my job
9 is going to be. I'm not certain about where our federal
10 agencies are going to be. But the one thing that I always
11 looked forward to, and that I know for a fact, is my
12 parents, the late Claude and Dora Wilson, my ahnaas and
13 tataa York Wilson, Abigail, Charlie Jones, Martha Harris
14 Jones, they made it. No matter what kind of issue came
15 in front of them, they made it. Our ahnaas and tataas,
16 no matter how much struggle we have, they always made
17 it. So that's what keeps me going is, no matter what the
18 struggle is we have, whether it's a personal, federal,
19 jobs, we're going to make it because we are resilient,
20 and our ahnaas and tataas made it, therefore, we are
21 going to make it too. And I took an oath. Maya is not
22 here, but she was the first local Iñupiaq superintendent
23 for Western Arctic Parklands, and she really opened the
24 door for us because for many decades we always talked
25 about having Iñupiaq, or local people, manage our lands
26 and when I first got the call that I got the job, I felt
27 like our Iñupiaq People got the win. I did not get the
28 win. Siikauraq did not get the win. But our Iñupiaq
29 people got the win because now we have a voice at the
30 federal level to manage our lands and when I took that
31 oath, it -- I had to, like, uphold the federal law,
32 which was part of my interview to be able to uphold that
33 federal law and one of the laws that we have is a law
34 of 10,000 years of experience. Our people were not there
35 when the United States government made these federal
36 laws for us, and how we manage our lands and resources.
37 But our people, we have a 10,000 year law in how we
38 manage our resources, how we give things in gratitude.
39 For example, when we go seal hunting, you get your fresh
40 water in your mouth, and you say (In Native) to that
41 seal or oogruk, and then it's going to give back to us.
42 When we cut our caribou, you cut the back of the neck,
43 and you let the spirit go, and these are ways that our
44 people have done -- conservation techniques for
45 thousands of years. So, it's a really honor for me to
46 come and be a local Iñupiaq Land Manager, and just coming
47 from coming from Kotzebue, I had some experience working
48 with Fish and Wildlife. My first job out of college was
49 working at Denali National Park. Guess who I named my
50 daughter after when we had that experience at the Denali

1 National Park, and my first job out of college, was
2 coming to work here for Western Arctic Parklands and at
3 that time, things were just not right. I was a local
4 Native girl. Nobody took me seriously that I even had a
5 college degree in Natural Resource Land Management. And
6 so, when I got a job offer to work at NANA, the
7 superintendent at the time, he said, you Native people,
8 all you want to do is make a quick buck and leave. And
9 if any of you know about the salaries for the federal
10 government, people are not rich. People are -- people
11 want to do this job because we are passionate about the
12 work that we do, and I really wanted to acknowledge our
13 team at Western Arctic Parklands. I walked into a great
14 and amazing team that I'm really honored and really
15 blessed to be a part of. But -- I guess in closing, I
16 just want to say that, I'm really happy that I could be
17 here with you guys, and listening to your stories really
18 reinforced to me the importance of our way of Iñupiaq
19 life, and how we manage our lands and resources, and how
20 very important and critical it is that we all work
21 together; we listen to each other's sides. And then for
22 us, for me, my foundation is Iñupiat (In Native). That's
23 the foundation of all our work. I think it never goes
24 astray. It never goes astray if we stick by our
25 foundation, and I'm just really honored to sit here
26 today, and it's going to be a challenge. It has been a
27 challenge. When I started working in January, I worked
28 for one month and then I got fired, for no reason, just
29 because I was a probationary worker, and Division -- or
30 DEI, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, that was a big
31 thing too, for not having Native people working, not
32 having women in the workforce. So, I just want to -- in
33 closing, I just want to say that we will rise. We will.
34 Our people, all of us. We will come together. We will
35 make it because our ancestors always did. Therefore,
36 it's up to us to make it together. And I just want to
37 thank you all for your work and helping keep our Iñupiaq
38 way of life alive and thriving. And we have a good mix
39 of elders and young people here, and I just want to say
40 (In Native) quyana, and quyana. Thank you.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you,
43 Siikauraq, we really appreciate you taking the time to
44 introduce yourself and to recognize Parklands and your
45 staff. So, with that, we'll move on to the Selawik
46 National Wildlife Refuge report. Wil, you have the
47 floor.

48
49 MR. WIESE: Thank you. Good afternoon
50 again. I'm Wil Wiese. I'm the refuge manager for Wildlife

1 Refuge based here in Kotzebue. So, we're not going to
2 go over the full refuge report now. We'll do that
3 tomorrow. This section of time, we -- I think, set aside
4 on the agenda to talk about wildlife issues since it's
5 a wildlife cycle for Federal Subsistence Board and so,
6 I'll touch on a couple of wildlife related things so
7 that you kind of have that information going into the
8 period of time during your meeting when you typically
9 put in proposals or take other actions. But also try and
10 close the loop on a couple of things have been discussed
11 today. So, first of all, on caribou and harvest
12 reporting, we heard from Alex about how important it is
13 to report harvest through the RC907 harvest reporting
14 permit mechanism. You know, we heard from Verne about
15 going to your community and doing that. We also know
16 ADF&G Subsistence does harvest surveys as well. Clyde,
17 you brought up a great point about NANA and Maniilaq and
18 other entities that might be able to help. From our part
19 at Fish and Wildlife, we've been trying to explore other
20 avenues other than the RC 907 to get that important data
21 for making management decisions. We work closely with
22 NANA on a proposal. Because NANA is really interested.
23 I mean, I can't speak for NANA, maybe Robbie is back on
24 the phone, but we worked really hard on a proposal to
25 fund NANA to do some -- to start a data collection
26 program. There's a lot going on in government right now
27 that's kind of in limbo and held up, but I'm hopeful
28 that that formal agreement will go through, and we'll
29 be able to fund that and even if we can't, we'll support
30 it in any way we can as an agency. I know NANA is also
31 planning on another tuttu workshop, I think, in May to
32 kind of continue their efforts in getting more involved.

33
34 A second part of that proposal that we
35 worked on with NANA was to look at predators. As Alex
36 said, it's really hard to get a good count of the number
37 of wolves or the number of bears. It's a difficult,
38 expensive thing to do. Especially here in other parts
39 of the state. It is easier. But we're willing to try and
40 NANA is going to take the lead on a study to start
41 getting at some of those questions. Will they be able
42 to -- or will we even collectively be able to come back
43 next year and say there are X number of wolves? No. It's
44 just not feasible to do that right now. But we're going
45 to try and take steps to get something better than what
46 we have.

47
48 I'll move on to commercial uses of the
49 Refuge and Wildlife. So, I want to highlight this just
50 because it's usually a hot topic about outside hunters

1 coming into the area. On Selawik Refuge, we have one
2 guide permit that we issue for big game guiding for
3 hunting. That permit has not been issued for the last
4 couple of years. In fact, no hunters have been guided
5 on the refuge since 2017 and that's largely because the
6 caribou aren't showing up on Selawik refuge. The moose
7 season is now closed to non-resident hunters. So, no
8 guides are operating. The permit window for applying to
9 be a guide on Selawik Refuge is currently open. I think
10 it's open until -- I think it's open another week. Last
11 I checked, nobody had applied. It's just not very
12 appealing right now to get a guide license for Selawik
13 Refuge because you can't fly in people to go moose
14 hunting and -- from out of state, and the bear densities
15 just aren't that high and there's no caribou. We also
16 permit air operators to fly in hunters on Selawik Refuge.
17 Last year we issued two permits. They flew out total
18 four hunters, one group, and they shot two moose on
19 Selawik Refuge. So, that's people who are state
20 residents from outside of this region who took those
21 couple of moose. That's not necessarily every moose that
22 was harvested by somebody from outside this area. There
23 could be people with a private airplane that flew up and
24 landed on the Refuge. There could be people who flew
25 into Kotzebue and boated out. But generally, we don't
26 see many out-of-area hunters on Selawik Refuge.

27
28 Okay, next I'm going to move on to areas
29 of regulations where federal and state regulations
30 differ. We talked about this a little bit earlier, and
31 I handed out a sheet and I bring this up -- I brought
32 this up because in conversations leading up to this
33 meeting with Council members, but also the public, we
34 realized how important it is to try and have regulations
35 that are easy to follow. And it is a goal of ours in the
36 federal government, I think, and also at the state level,
37 to try and match our regulations where possible to make
38 it easier for people. And so, I handed out a sheet and
39 it highlights some of the differences in the hunting
40 regulations between federal and state, and I'll just
41 kind of run through those really quickly. And I know
42 there's a couple other items on the agenda before you're
43 formally getting to your proposal part, but I'll just
44 run through these quick. And if there's questions about
45 them, you can answer them now or I can come back up
46 whenever.

47

48 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Elmer.

49

50 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Elmer

1 Armstrong from Noorvik. Do you collect data on those
2 non-residents that come into the Refuge?

3
4 MR. WIESE: Through the Chair. Thank you
5 for the question. The only information on those non-
6 residents we collect is if they pay somebody to get out
7 to the Refuge, then we collect information. So, if a
8 non-local person, say from Anchorage wants to go out on
9 the Refuge and they figure out a way to get there without
10 paying an airplane to get there, we don't collect any
11 information. If they pay an air transporter to fly them
12 out there and land them, that transporter is required
13 to tell us how many people, where they went, how many
14 days they were out there, if they shot any moose or
15 anything like that. We collect that data. So, we get
16 some of it, but we don't capture necessarily everyone
17 from outside the area.

18
19 MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you.

20
21 MR. WIESE: Okay. So, as far as areas
22 we've identified were Federal Subsistence regulations
23 don't line up with the state regulations and the state
24 regulations allow for more opportunity, i.e. a higher
25 harvest limit or a longer season. I listed on this piece
26 of paper, says revised on the top because I typed this
27 up this morning and realized I made a mistake and so, I
28 handed you a second copy over lunch. The first one is
29 ptarmigan. The ptarmigan season, under federal
30 regulations, is shorter than under the state
31 regulations, and the bag limit is lower. Note that the
32 Kobuk Valley SRC put in a proposal to change the season
33 length. They didn't include a change in the bag limit,
34 but there is one proposal going in about that. The second
35 one is on wolves. The wolf season for the federal season
36 starts October 1 under the state. It starts August 1st
37 under the federal season, limits is 15, under the state
38 it's 20. So, that's another one where the season under
39 the federal is shorter and the bag limit is lower under
40 federal. The third.....

41
42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne.

43
44 MR. CLEVELAND: I got a question on your
45 wolf hunting. I know that we go for the fur like it
46 says, state season August 1. But it's -- right now, our
47 weather. It's a lot warmer than 20 years ago. So, the
48 hair is short right now. And back in the day, the hair
49 started getting long because it gets cooler. But in
50 August, it's like 60 to 70 above and in the season --

1 the wolf will be worthless August 1, I mean, they're not
2 worth taking for anything. Unless you just put them to
3 sleep for good. I mean, just it's not worth getting or
4 anything. So, maybe it all changed over the time. Because
5 back -- my dad used to tell me that when there's wolf
6 August 1, you get wolf hairs are long, but when they're
7 short, you should just leave it alone. It's not worth
8 taking. So, might change if this keeps up. Thank you.

9
10 MR. WIESE: Thank you, member Cleveland.
11 And yeah, I think that's the kind of conversation, if
12 you start looking at potentially taking action to change
13 something that you'd want to have, certainly with
14 furbearers for subsistence uses, you want to make sure
15 if you're harvesting them for subsistence that they're
16 usable for subsistence, you know, I can -- I do -- my
17 understanding is the reason that state season starts as
18 early as it does, was that there was a understanding
19 that there might be an opportunity for people who fly
20 in to go caribou hunting starting in August to then
21 harvest a wolf on their trip. And so, I think that season
22 used to be shorter for under the state, and they made
23 it longer, in part to allow for more of that fly-in
24 outside hunting.

25
26 MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
27 None unless you put a bounty on them wolves, and we'll
28 get them for you and another thing.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike, then Clyde.

31
32 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I know that I used to
33 work as an assistant guide for many years, and, you
34 know, that's one of the best gigs out there because
35 you're one on one with your hunter, or, you know, he
36 can't tell. He can't throw meat aside that he doesn't
37 want to take. It's up to my discretion what he takes. I
38 know that back then, we were allowed to, you know, the
39 guide -- the hunters were allowed to get wolves. But,
40 man, we're looking, you know, we're just, like, right
41 at the borderline of North Slope and Northwest Arctic
42 up there on Trail Creek. A lot of times when you're up
43 in the high country, the wolves hides are a little better
44 than they are down in the low country. The other thing
45 was is -- when was the last time you guys did a moose
46 census in Tag, Selawik Valley? That's my curiosity.

47
48 MR. WIESE: Yeah. Thank you, Council
49 member Kramer. I think in the next report, Dr. Raime
50 Fronstin with Park Service will get into the moose

1 numbers, and I won't steal too much of his kind of time.
2 But basically, the survey bounces from one area to the
3 next, year after year. So, about every five years we do
4 the Selawik, Tag, and it's been a couple of years, but
5 he'll explain what's most recently been done.

6

7

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

8

9

10 MR. RAMOTH: I got a curious question.
11 Since we got federal and state people here, I could see
12 the ptarmigan, the wolf, the muskrat trapping, mink and
13 weasel trapping. Looks like the federal season is more
14 conservative as far as bag limits, harvest limits,
15 season versus the state. How did that come about? Is it
16 just something through, like traditional ecological
17 knowledge and a combination of other studies that give
18 these numbers? Is there an answer somewhere, maybe? I
19 don't know.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike, did you have
your hand up?

MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I think we need to
come up with some kind of a verbiage regarding that. I
mean, you know what, if I'm on federal lands and I have
a state trapping license, or -- I mean, it's -- I know
it's equal to both, but there needs to be some kind of
verbiage in there that says, hey you go with whatever's
higher if they're not aligned. You know, I mean, if
you're in federal land, then you follow the federal. But
if state is more liberal with -- how do you say it? The
harvest limits. Then you would go with that one. But you

1 know, it's kind of a hard thing to say, but we've always
2 tried to align everything. I know that there's a bunch
3 of Fish and Game proposals that were up at our last
4 meeting at Advisory Council for Kotzebue Sound and we
5 there was a lot of them in there regarding trapping and
6 I know we supported some. We declined some. I sure hope
7 those get brought up at this one to see if we support
8 them or not support them. But I think that they need to
9 make it to where they -- differences like those get
10 aligned. Either they get aligned or you go with whatever
11 has more liberal limits. That's my thought.

12
13 MR. WIESE: Thank you, member Kramer. I
14 think -- I'm glad you bring that up and it's important
15 to realize that the state regulations do apply on most
16 federal lands. So, you can go hunting using your state
17 hunting license and hunt under the state regulations.
18 Say, for example, for wolves out on Selawik Refuge, so
19 you already can do that and have the harvest limit of
20 20 and the longer season date. The nuance is that if for
21 some reason you wanted to hunt under federal subsistence
22 regulation that would be different. The other important
23 thing is some places you can't hunt under state
24 regulation and in our area the important ones to think
25 about are Krusenstern National Monument and Kobuk Valley
26 National Park. So, that -- those are important places
27 to think about when thinking about federal regulations,
28 because you're going to be hunting under federal
29 regulations in those areas. But you're absolutely right
30 and that's why I'm here bringing this up is it stemmed
31 from conversations about wanting to align things as best
32 as possible. Wanting to make it more easy for local
33 people who are going out on the landscape, to know that
34 they can legally do what they're doing, and there's not
35 a different bag limit depending on what side of an
36 imaginary line you're on.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne, did you have
39 something?

40
41 MR. CLEVELAND: Yeah, I just go, I didn't
42 know, that way. No, that's all them kids they know. If
43 you don't know, you don't know, you know. You don't know
44 the federal and state land. That's all they're going to
45 say. You know, that's all they're going to say. Thank
46 you.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Did you have your
49 hand back up, Mike?

50

1 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I think that if they
2 ever tried to just, you know, decide to limit mink or
3 you know, weasels or muskrats and different areas, they
4 need to have a study that backs it up why they want it
5 to be lowered. You know, not just by eye or by view,
6 but, you know, if any agency is going to limit a
7 resource, especially when they're trapping or hunting,
8 subsistence any of those things, they need to make sure
9 they got a study before they even look at limiting those
10 species.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

13
14 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. Would
15 this be an appropriate time to make a motion to write a
16 proposal to change the federal -- to request to change
17 the federal dates and bag limits to match the state? Do
18 I read off each one?

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: We can do that. But
21 I would ask if Wil has any more of his report?

22
23 MR. MONIGOLD: Oh, okay.

24
25 MR. WIESE: That was -- this was the last
26 of my report Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: If someone would like
29 to make a motion, I would just ask OSM is it better to
30 do all of them on this sheet, or do individually a
31 ptarmigan proposal, a wolf proposal? I'm seeing nods.
32 So, if someone would like to make a motion for each of
33 these and revising them to match them up to where the
34 state is more liberal on bag limit and dates, I'd
35 entertain that at this time.

36
37 (Pause)

38
39 MR. KRAMER: I would like to see them
40 align, that way there's less confusion. You know,
41 without any kind of studies to back up these limits on
42 these ptarmigan or whatever it may be. You know, they
43 need to have scientific data before we even lower
44 anything. But most of all, we should mimic and align.
45 That way there's no confusion. Somebody has to look
46 around to see if they're on Parklands or state lands.
47 But I think they should be aligned.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, would anyone like
50 to make a motion to do that?

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MR. CLEVELAND: Not me. But I got one more question for Wil. But that's not with this. What is the Hot Springs? I heard you're making a duplex building in an airport at Hot Springs. Between in the - - between Shungnak and Huslia. Is that the word or what is it?

MR. WIESE: Thank you, member Cleveland. I wouldn't say a duplex. I think I'll address -- maybe it might be best if I address more of that tomorrow in my full report on the conversation we've been having about the Hot Springs and the facilities there. Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Tristen, did you have your hand up?

MR. PATTEE: Yes. Mr. Chair. Through Chair, Tristen Pattee here. First Motion. I move to aligning the state and federal seasons to align with the state season and bag limits for ptarmigan.

MR. KRAMER: Second.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, a motion made by Tristen, seconded by Mike. For the record, we do have the paper here, and that's what we'll be going off of. I'll read it into the record. Making the federal season end bag limit -- for ptarmigan? Line up with the state season and bag limit, which would be August 10th to June 15th, and the bag limit being 50 per day/100 in possession. So, again, motion made by Tristen. Seconded by Mike. Would this be an all those in favor, or would this be a roll call vote?

MS. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Chair, that would be up to you if, since most everybody else is, except for Wilbur is here, we could just do it all in favor. Wilbur, are you on?

MR. HOWARTH: Yes. Yes. I'm here.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

And those opposed, same sign.

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(No response)

Hearing none. We will do that proposal, that is passed. Would anyone like to just keep going down the list? Tristen.

MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen Pattee. I moved to aligning the state and federal seasons for wolf to align with the state season and harvest limit.

MR. CLEVELAND: Second.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, motion made by Tristen on the wolf proposal. Seconded by Verne. Did you have some discussion, Clyde?

MR. RAMOTH: Yes, sir. Mr. Pattee. Clyde Ramoth, Selawik. I heard your motion, Tristen. But the state season and like Verne was saying August 1 wouldn't be sufficient. So, would you recommend October 1 being the open -- the beginning?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I would recommend that we go with the state season because it depends on where you're going. Like Mike said, if you're going up into hilly high country where it might be colder at that time of year. They may have longer hair and worth taking up, but the motion was to line things up just so that there's no confusion. And if we move it just to September 1st, or to sometime a little earlier, but not back to August 1st, we're still in the same boat of not lining up.

MR. KRMAER: Yeah. What was the -- it doesn't say the harvest limits for wolf hunting.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: You should have a revised one that has the word revised up at the top that Wil passed out. But, currently the federal is 15 and the state is 20.

MR. KRAMER: Okay. I was looking at the old one.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, a motion made by Tristen and seconded by Verne. Any further discussion?

MR. CLEVELAND: Call for question.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Question has been called for all those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

And those opposed, same sign.

(No response)

Hearing no opposition, that proposal will be drafted.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Question.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Lisa.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Yeah. Just for clarification. So, we're voting to align it with the state?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

MS. HITCHINSON: And was that also true of the ptarmigan?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Thank you for clarity.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mr. Pattee. You're on a roll. So, would you like to do muskrat?

MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair. Tristen Pattee. Before we making [sic] this motion can we have a discussion on the muskrat?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

MR. PATTEE: Okay. So, I'm all for the state's -- the no-closed season, but is that -- do I hear any other discussion on why we should align it with the federal?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any muskrat professionals in the room?

1 MR. WIESE: Mr. Chair, I'm not a muskrat
2 professional. This is Wil Wiese, for the record. But I
3 just will point out that that this is a muskrat trapping
4 regulation. There's also a federal muskrat hunting
5 season. Under the federal subsistence muskrat hunting
6 regulations you can hunt year-round. So, this would be
7 changing the trapping for muskrats to match the state
8 trapping season, which is year-round.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Attamuk.

11
12 MR. SCHIEDT: Yeah. When I used to trap
13 muskrats, I used to start in May, but there were years
14 when the season was completely different and I was a
15 little bit earlier, but I don't think nobody do it
16 anymore because at the time when I was younger, the fur
17 cost more than when you shoot it versus trapping and
18 that's why we -- I used to start in May and we used to
19 get options of muskrat, not only just here at Noatak.
20 Same thing with Kiana and Selawik and Noorvik. I catch
21 those numbers them days.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

24
25 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you Attamuk, for
26 sharing that because I heard that growing up too. But I
27 wanted to mention our school at Selawik with our new
28 principal and shop teacher, I should say, because I sit
29 on the School Council as its Chair. But we've been
30 talking about getting our kids out for beaver trapping
31 and muskrat trapping just to teach them and like you
32 pointed out, they cost more, but they're more valued.
33 Like, if we want to teach them how to make parkas or
34 gloves or hats of that nature. But I wanted to comment
35 something about muskrat trapping. I mean, it's still
36 going to be a possibility for maybe our kids because
37 that's something we want to teach our culture. Because
38 they can't be shooting, right. But they could trap. We
39 want to teach them to get their trapping license and
40 hunting license. But that was my comment on muskrat
41 trapping anyway.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Clyde. Any
44 other discussion on this one?

45
46 MR. PATTEE: I'll go ahead and make a
47 motion, if that's okay.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: By all means.
50

00080

1 MR. PATTEE: For the record, Tristen
2 Pattee. I moved to aligning the state and federal
3 seasons, and I don't see bag limit on here, so the season
4 to align with the state.

5
6 MR. KRAMER: Second. And is that for
7 muskrats?

8
9 MR. PATTEE: Yes.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, motion made by
12 Tristen, seconded by Mike. For the record, that is moving
13 it to no-closed season for muskrat trapping on federal
14 lands.

15
16 MS. HUTCHINSON: Would be helpful if you
17 could provide a justification for the record on all these
18 of what would be -- why we're doing this. Thank you.

19
20 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, the
21 justification is to have alignment with state and
22 federal regulations and just to avoid any confusion as
23 the hunters and trappers are out doing their thing.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: As well as to prevent
26 any user conflict of -- someone doesn't realize they're
27 different seasons on this specific animal. All those in
28 favor, please signify by saying aye.

29
30 IN UNISON: Aye.

31
32 And those opposed, same sign.

33
34 MR. HOWARTH: Aye

35
36 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Wilbur was an aye for
37 yes. So, hearing that the muskrat proposal will pass,
38 and we'll move on to mink and weasel trapping.

39
40 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
41 Pattee. I moved to aligning the season, and if there's
42 a bag limit to match with the state for mink and weasel
43 trapping.

44
45 MR. KRAMER: Second.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Motion made by
48 Tristen, seconded by Mike for lining up the mink and
49 weasel trapping season on federal lands to be from

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1 November 1st to April 15th to follow the state season.
2 Would you like to give a justification for the record.

3
4 MR. PATTEE: And the justification will
5 be the same as before. Is that okay, or do I need to say
6 it? Okay. It's to just align everything, to not have any
7 confusion and not -- and just not have anybody be doing
8 this activity out of a season if they if they don't know
9 it.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All those in favor,
12 please signify by saying aye.

13
14 IN UNISON: Aye.

15
16 And those opposed, same sign.

17
18 (No response)

19
20 Hearing none, the mink and weasel
21 trapping proposal was passed. Any final comments?
22 Anything you'd like to say Wil, or you, you were complete
23 with your report, correct?

24
25 MR. WIESE: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
26 Complete with my report. We'll talk about duplexes
27 tomorrow.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Perfect. So, at this
30 time, we'll move on to item C under wildlife reports.
31 And that will be the Western Arctic National Parklands.
32 Dr. Fronstin, are you on the line?

33
34 DR. FRONSTIN: Hello, I'm here. Can you
35 hear me?

36
37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: We can hear you just
38 fine. The floor is yours and Emily is distributing a
39 handout.

40
41 DR. FRONSTIN: Excellent, thank you.
42 Thank you, Emily. So, Emily is distributing our Wildlife
43 Report for you to follow along with me. Some of this is
44 repetitive because, you know, Alex covered the caribou
45 pretty thoroughly. There is caribou information and data
46 in this handout on the first page, and you can see some
47 of the herd data from 2020 through 2024 on this first
48 page. The second page, which is -- I'll talk about more,
49 is moose data and the State and Park Service conduct
50 rotating moose surveys in six areas in Game Unit 23 and

1 in table two, you can see the data since 2010. Last
2 season we surveyed the upper Kobuk area. Unfortunately,
3 the weather was not conducive to aerial surveying and
4 while waiting for the weather, the snow melted, and snow
5 is needed in order to see the moose from the air. So,
6 that survey was -- you know, we weren't able to obtain
7 our normal abundance estimate unfortunately, but we did
8 obtain a minimum count of 280 moose with 17 calves to
9 100 adults. And because these methods were different,
10 we can't really compare the numbers between years to
11 determine whether this population has increased,
12 decreased, or remained stable since our last upper Kobuk
13 survey in 2019. However, the calf adult ratios are
14 optimistic.

15
16 Currently our moose populations in the
17 entire area are low density, which is pretty normal
18 because we're at their north -- you know, their northern
19 -- the northern extent of their range. But they are
20 stable with the upper Noatak area, which has
21 historically been the lowest density in the surveyed
22 areas is increasing though between 2010 to 2023, it more
23 than doubled. So, we won't be doing a survey on moose
24 this year because our efforts are being directed towards
25 the expanded muskox survey, which I'll talk about in a
26 few minutes. However, myself and several colleagues,
27 including Kyle Joly, are working on analyzing over a
28 decade worth of moose data to see how environmental
29 factors are associated with moose density and impacts
30 of a warming climate and development. To address Member
31 Kramer question, our last survey and Selawik was in 2021.
32 You can see on table two, the abundance was 1,036, which
33 suggested that the population abundance remained stable
34 between the prior survey and the 2021 survey. I'm
35 assuming Selawik should be an upcoming survey in our
36 rotation, I -- we really depend on the State for these
37 surveys. We couldn't do it without them. So, I kind of
38 we take lead from them, so we'll see. But I believe
39 it'll be upcoming in the next year or two. Feel free to
40 jump in with questions at any time. Any questions about
41 moose before I move?

42
43 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: With that, Dr.
44 Fronstin. Clyde, do you have a question?

45
46 MR. RAMOTH: Yeah. Clyde Ramoth, Selawik.
47 For your moose count. I know that's always going to be
48 a question now with the numbers, because of the low
49 numbers of caribou we have. So, what time of the year
50 are the counts done? With the trees, you know, density.

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1 I mean, counting aerial moose. I would imagine could be
2 sometime difficult to catch them all or a high number.
3 So, I'm just curious about the time of the year that you
4 do any aerial surveys for moose? Thank you.

5
6 DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah, sure. Yeah. I mean,
7 a lot of our surveys, you know, in the Arctic have to
8 be done around the same time and the same window, which
9 is -- which makes it difficult because we're all kind
10 of competing for the same resources. These are done in
11 the spring, and they're done -- we try to do them, you
12 know, with -- while there's still snow on the ground.
13 Because, you know, obviously from the air, seeing brown
14 moose on brown terrain is not easy and so, yeah. And in
15 the trees, we can -- well, you know, with the snow, we
16 can see their prints, their tracks and so, we'll
17 generally try to track them in the trees if we see tracks
18 going into the trees, we'll circle and circle around to
19 -- until we can find them. But, you know, you're right.
20 It is difficult and we are pushing to -- especially with
21 climate change, we're pushing to expand our methods, you
22 know, our -- with new technology, like potentially using
23 thermal cameras. That way we wouldn't need to do these
24 surveys with snow, and we'd be able to see through the
25 trees. So, we are looking into those things. Thank you.
26 Any other?

27
28 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other questions
31 at this time?

32
33 (No response)

34
35 Seeing none, you can keep going.

36
37 DR. FRONSITN: Okay. So, next up is dall
38 sheep on page three and these again are mostly
39 collaborative surveys that we complete with the State.
40 We attempt to do them annually. But we did have a gap
41 in surveying between 2019 and 2023. We were able to
42 complete a short survey in the Western Bairds last year.
43 And the results suggest population abundance is still
44 extremely low, but stable. We'll be completing another
45 survey this season in July, and there are several other
46 studies being completed by Alaska Fish and Game and the
47 Park to look at causes of mortality. To look at
48 increasing survey efficiency on such small populations.
49 And we're also working on a -- on publishing a recent
50 study when completed, on factors that affect group size

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1 and I can present those results or one of my colleagues
2 at another time if interested. Any questions on that
3 before I move on?

4
5 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Vern.

6
7 MR. CLEVELAND: What is open season for
8 dall sheep and where?

9
10 DR. FRONSTIN: Okay. And so, yeah, there
11 are no -- there's not an open season currently in our
12 parks. Did you say in in where like in Western Arctic
13 or in -- or is there an open season anywhere? Is it --
14 to clarify?

15
16 MR. CLEVELAND: By Dall Creek area,
17 there's some sheep in to Lower Kobuk like from bellow
18 Ambler is not allowed to hunt. And why is that?

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: To clarify Raime, he
21 meant where, w h e r e.

22
23 DR. FRONSTIN: Okay. Thank you. So, yeah.
24 Sheep in our Unit is closed and that's because of the
25 really low populations, I believe that there are areas
26 in Gates of the Arctic where it's open. And I, you know,
27 there are other areas in the state I'm not familiar
28 with, however.

29
30 MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

31
32 DR. FRONSTIN: You're welcome.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

35
36 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. The headwaters of the
37 Kobuk -- the Ambler, Shungnak and Kobuk, those are Gates
38 of the Arctic and that's Marcy Okada and their crew
39 there that takes care of that one. That was the last
40 area that was open within Game Management Unit 23, I
41 believe several years ago. I've been -- every year I try
42 to ask Marcy what their update is, if they got any new
43 counts done or are they healthy? Are the animals doing
44 well? Is there any kind of predatory problems? Because,
45 you know, we as a whole, you know, these sheep mean a
46 lot to our culture and then, man, they're some of the
47 best meat eating -- eating meat around. It makes beef
48 look like ravens. Yeah. Is there still, like, sheep out
49 there with collars? I mean, you know, that's my question
50 is, I know that in the past they had some that had

1 collars, you know, are they are they going to try and
2 do another study sometime? I know that dall sheep
3 statewide is like data taking a major nosedive into
4 declining from Wrangell to, you know, all over the place.
5 I know that at one time, Attamuk was on the sheep --
6 dall sheep working group, and I believe I was his
7 alternate back in the day. I haven't heard anything from
8 them in quite a while.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Marcy Okada, I see
11 you have a hand raised so, feel free to jump in.

12
13 DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah. Before Marcy, I'll
14 just answer your question there. So, Fish and Game is
15 doing a collaring study. And I believe they have been
16 waiting to do it for a few years. They've been weathered
17 out, but I believe they are trying again this year. So,
18 they're going to be collaring and looking at mortality,
19 reasons for mortality. And that'll be this summer,
20 hopefully and then Marcy can answer questions about her
21 area.

22
23 MS. OKADA: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
24 Council members. For the record, this is Marcy Okada
25 Subsistence Coordinator for Gates of the Arctic National
26 Park and Preserve. And in regards to the portion of
27 Gates of the Arctic that falls within Game Management
28 Unit 23, which is the Schwatka Mountains area, upper
29 Noatak, the headwaters of the Noatak River, and the
30 headwaters of the Kobuk River. That portion within Gates
31 of the Arctic is open to the resident zoned communities
32 of Ambler, Shungnak and Kobuk, and the last time this
33 portion of Unit 2023 within Gates of the Arctic has been
34 surveyed was in 2015. So, we have not done any recent
35 surveys to assess the sheep populations. And then also
36 in regards to Verne's question about the Dall Creek area
37 north of the upper Kobuk River communities. That would
38 be state and -- a mix of state and corporation lands.
39 We have been hearing from folks in Kobuk Village that
40 that they have been seeing sheep north of their
41 community. So, that would be state lands.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

44
45 MS. OKADA: Thank you.

46
47
48 MR. KRAMER: Hi, Marcy. It's me, Mike
49 Kramer. You said that that area there in Gates of the
50 Arctic is open to Ambler, Shungnak and Kobuk or is it

1 closed? And when do they -- if it is closed, then they
2 should try to do a census pretty quick.

3
4 MS. OKADA: Hi, Mr. Kramer, and Council
5 members. So, the park portion, Gates of the Arctic
6 National Park portion, which be the headwaters of the
7 Noatak River, is currently open for sheep hunting, but
8 it's solely for the resident zoned communities of
9 Ambler, Shungnak, and Kobuk. Because that's the
10 customary and traditional use area that folks from the
11 upper Kobuk used to go look for sheep and go hunting and
12 that area is still currently open.

13
14 MR. KRAMER: Okay. Thank you. Yeah. I
15 think they should try to get another census done in that
16 area. But put that area like, on a pause until we can
17 get some scientific data to support the -- keeping that
18 area open. Thank you.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
21 Marcy. Raime, did you want to continue on with your
22 report?

23
24 DR. FRONSTIN: Yes. Thank you. Thanks,
25 Marcy. So, muskox are next on page four and again, as
26 in the other surveys, we collaborate with the state on
27 muskox surveys on the Cape Krusenstern, Cape Thompson
28 area or population. Data from both the expanded and core
29 survey since 2011 can be found in figures four and five
30 on that page. There was no survey on this kicker
31 population in 2024 because the Seward Peninsula
32 population was being surveyed at the time. So, the last
33 survey on the Cape Krusenstern core area was completed
34 in 2023, and the population estimate then was 186, which
35 was the lowest estimate in recent history. However, the
36 -- we didn't observe any large die offs, and the snow
37 was deep that year. So, we believe that the lower
38 estimates likely due to movement east and not mortality.
39 Further the yearling and mature bull composition
40 suggested population stability, and we'll know more
41 after the data from this year's surveys analyzed. So,
42 every 4 to 5 years, we do an expanded survey, which
43 includes the core area that's shown in figure three and
44 it extends into Noatak National Preserve and parts of
45 Kobuk National Park. And this expanded survey was just
46 completed this month. So, they'll be analyzing the data
47 currently and we'll share those results at the next
48 meeting. Any questions about that or muskoxen or muskox
49 permits or...?

50

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde, go ahead.

2
3 MR. RAMOTH: Yeah. This is Clyde Ramoth
4 from Selawik. So, we know that muskox eat the same
5 vegetation like the caribou, the lichen and the lichen
6 can takes 20 years -- up to 20 years to regrow and I'm
7 sure I'm not familiar with muskox, but I love to eat. I
8 don't know what raven tastes like, Mike, but or dall
9 sheep for that matter. But muskox is a delicious meat
10 to eat and is it still through Tier III permit? Because
11 they're more visible at Selawik now and I post that
12 question because some of our residents did ask. And is
13 it -- they're more seen up the Selawik River but I
14 remember we had three muskox just a few short years ago,
15 maybe 20 years ago. Jeez, I must be getting old. But
16 anyways they hung around town. There was four of them.
17 One was injured, and they just couldn't move. They
18 browsed around town, and they were just, like, maybe a
19 mile away from town, maybe two. But they hung around
20 till the -- that one got healed. But a lot of our
21 residents, including myself, I'm curious if it's - I
22 have my check, I could check the regulations, but is
23 this still through, like a Tier III permit to hunt muskox
24 in Unit 23? Thank you.

25
26 DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah, I agree. Muskox are
27 delicious and I think it's likely because they are
28 closely related to sheep. So, but the Alaska -- on the
29 state side, it is a Tier II permit. I think the Selawik
30 population is more of the Nome population, or is that
31 population more part of the Nome population? And Bering
32 Land Bridge runs that hunt for the federal side. And
33 they do give permits out as well. So, there's the federal
34 side and the state side. I'm not exactly sure -- I think
35 they may do the same thing that we do, which is a random
36 drawing. And so, for the Cape Krusenstern, Cape Thompson
37 population, we split permits with the state and we decide
38 based on the population abundance surveys how many
39 permits will be giving out. So, this year we gave out
40 three permits and the state also gave out -- well, the
41 state in Kotzebue gave out three permits. And then I
42 believe they opened another hunt on the North Slope for
43 the same population, and they gave out -- I'm not sure
44 how many permits they gave out. But we -- we've noted -
45 - the expanded population has increased and so, we have
46 been discussing increasing the number of permits to give
47 out for this population. And we plan to discuss it more
48 after we get the results from this expanded survey. Does
49 that answer your question?
50

1 MR. RAMOTH: Yeah. Thank you, Doctor for
2 the answer and the numbers of you said they're kind of
3 high, but I don't know what's high and low, but I could
4 see where even just the Selawik residence alone if --
5 because the number of caribou are low, or they don't
6 migrate in our area certain times. Do they migrate --
7 do they have a high-density migration route or is it
8 low? I'm just new to muskox. I'm asking questions for
9 our people at home. Thank you.

10
11 DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah. So, Emily pointed
12 out to me that I -- Selawik is part of the Cape
13 Krusenstern hunt, but the muskox around Selawik I don't
14 think are they part of the same population, Emily, as
15 the Cape Krusenstern I didn't.....?

16
17 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: She shrugged her
18 shoulders for the record.

19
20 (Simultaneous speech)

21
22 DR. FROSNTIN: I think they were.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: We have a.....

25
26 DR. FROSNTIN: I don't think.....

27
28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: We have a couple
29 hands up.

30
31 DR. FRONSTIN: Is there anyone?

32
33 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne.

34
35 DR. FRONSTIN: Okay. See if.....

36
37 MR. CLEVELAND: Yes. Vern Cleveland. How
38 would you tell a male and a female in a Muskox? How
39 would you tell?

40
41 DR. FRONSTIN: So, the -- it's not that
42 easy to tell to be honest, the young, they both have
43 horns, and the younger males can sometimes look like
44 females, but the older males have what's called a boss.
45 And I think I would have to show you pictures, but --
46 and I could sometime or email them to you, but the adult
47 mature males have this large boss, which is this big
48 horny area on the top of their head. Their horns are
49 extremely wide and cover almost the whole top of their
50 head and that's because they compete by ramming their

1 heads together. So, that helps protect their heads. The
2 females generally don't have -- they don't have that
3 really wide base of horns on their head. So, there --
4 and their or their horns are much more narrow than the
5 males. So, that's the biggest way we tell them apart.
6 And, and we have some brochures and documentation that
7 we can hand out to show you more how to tell them apart
8 with pictures.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
11 Raime. Mike, did you have something?

12
13 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I know last year we
14 spoke about two permits that were given to somebody. And
15 you know, they said they've gone to that area, and they
16 never see any muskox over there. And I said, well, that's
17 kind of a, you know, waste to hand out two permits when
18 there is no muskox in the area. I remember it was
19 Brittany Sweeny that I spoke to you about regarding those
20 two permits. I think those two permits in that area
21 where there is no muskox, those should be moved to an
22 area where there is muskox, including that area. It
23 should be broader. The area to harvest these muskox
24 should be wider. I can't recall, but I know I brought
25 it up and some guy said, what do you mean, a waste of
26 permits? I'm like, well, there's no muskox there. Why
27 are they giving you a ticket -- harvest ticket when
28 there's no muskox, why don't they give you -- why don't
29 they broaden the area and allow you to be able to hunt
30 these two permits somewhere else? Maybe Brittany is on
31 the line. I'm not too sure where exactly that was.

32
33 MS. SWEENEY: Mr. Kramer, this is
34 Brittany. I am on the line, but I can't say I recall
35 that conversation. My apologies. I did put a link in the
36 chat here on Teams to a muskoxen guide from the State.
37 If anybody is able to share that file to Member
38 Cleveland. Thank you.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
41 Brittany. We'll have that emailed out to the Council.
42 Any other Muskox questions? And unless we -- go for it.

43
44 MR. RAMOTH: Okay. My last question on
45 Muskoxen. So, this Federal Subsistence harvest
46 regulations for Unit 23 shows remainder has no federal
47 open season. But I see there's harvest limits for Unit
48 23. Talking about Kotzebue Sound and Buckland River
49 Drainages through federal drawing permit and a Unit 23
50 Cape Krusenstern National Monument one bull by federal

1 drawing permit and another one by the Kobuk River
2 drainage. So, for Selawik Unit 23 remainder, we have no
3 federal open season and we most sit on federally lands.
4 So, where do our people.....

5
6 DR. FRONSTIN: I believe Selawik -- wait,
7 let me just -- Selawik is part of the -- wait let me --
8 I'm sorry. I'm looking for my -- the -- let me just make
9 sure. Yeah. You -- Selawik is eligible for the FX 23-03
10 Cape Krusenstern hunt. So, you can -- when the drawing
11 opens, which is in July, you can put your name in with
12 our office and your family's names, and we will include
13 them in the drawing when we do the drawing at the end
14 of the month and yeah. So, you are eligible for that
15 permit. I think for both of them, actually.

16
17 MR. RAMOTH: Okay. Thank you.

18
19 DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Annie, did you need
22 the floor?

23
24 MS. CARLSON: Annie Carlson with the
25 National Park Service. Not sure if this answers the
26 question or if it's just repetitive, but residents of
27 Selawik do qualify for the 23-03 permit. But you'd have
28 to travel to Cape Krusenstern National Monument. You
29 also qualify for the 23-12, and that's sort of like the
30 Noatak or federal lands that are just northwest of Kobuk
31 Valley. So, there's no hunting of muskox on the Refuge
32 around Selawik, but the residents of Selawik village do
33 qualify for permits, so you would have to travel a
34 distance for that.

35
36 MR. RAMOTH: But how about even for self-
37 defense? Because they do get aggressive, especially if
38 they have one that's injured or pregnant or whatever of
39 that nature.

40
41 MS. CARLSON: There is a.....

42
43 MR. RAMOTH: We can't afford to go
44 traveling hundreds of miles for a Muskoxen. But if
45 they're in town, I'm having a little hard time with
46 that.

47
48 MR. CARLSON: Sure. And that's a separate
49 issue that we would say is defense of life and property
50 and the state is the best to speak to that. But that's

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1 sort of a different regulation if you're a life or
2 property are threatened by a muskox.

3

4 MS. HUTCHINSON: I think I have a
5 question for the staff, but a proposal could be submitted
6 to establish a subsistence center on Selawik. Correct?
7 I guess that's a yes. Yes, so.

8

9 MR. RAMOTH: In like through, like school
10 potlucks. Is that eligible if we cut them near our
11 village? I'm trying to find ways to hunt them.

12

13 DR. FRONSTIN: I think the best -- who's
14 -- I heard someone else talking. Maybe they know more.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Please go for it,
17 Raime.

18

19 DR. FRONSTIN: I'm wondering -- so Bering
20 Land Bridge is the federal agency that manages that
21 population there. That's the population in Sel -- or by
22 Selawik is a different population than the population
23 that we manage, Western Arctic manages. And so, we could
24 you get that information from the biologist at Bering
25 Land Bridge. Lisa has her hand up, maybe she knows.

26

27 MS. GREDIAGIN: All right. Thank you, Mr.
28 Chair, this is Lisa Grediagin, the wildlife division
29 supervisor with OSM for the record. And yeah, right now
30 there is no open federal hunt around Selawik. So, if the
31 Council wanted to submit a proposal to establish a
32 federal hunt around Selawik. So, I mean, namely Selawik
33 National Wildlife Refuge, and really, I mean, there's a
34 gap between the Buckland River drainage. There's a hunt
35 for that, they're part of the Seward Peninsula
36 population. And then north and west of the Kobuk River
37 drainage, that's part of the population that Raime
38 manages. So, between the Kobuk River drainage all the
39 way to the north or the -- yeah, the north side of the
40 Buckland drainage that includes all of Selawik Refuge,
41 there's no muskox hunt. And obviously these muskox have
42 been expanding their range. New hunts have been opened,
43 you know, in 26A under state regs. So, if the Council
44 wants to submit a proposal you could certainly do that.
45 And also, cultural permits or funerary potlatch harvests
46 are also an option.

47

48 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: An option as
49 something existing or an option to submit a proposal
50 regarding?

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MS. GREDIAGIN: Well, it's a little different process for those permits. It's cultural -- I think probably what the Council member is talking about is more the potlatch funerary sorts of harvests. And those aren't -- wouldn't be a proposal. It just would be an option for harvest. But I have to look, I think.....

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Just wanted to clarify, because you're talking about proposals and then immediately mention that. So, thank you for that, Lisa. Brent, did you have something to add?

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DR. VICKERS: This is Brent Vickers, OSM, and I'm kind of going off the cuff here because this is just something got brought up with -- for funerary potlatch or potlatches, typically, you can submit a organization or community can submit a proposal at any point, and then it goes through a fairly regular proposal process. And if it's approved by the Board, it usually goes to the manager and then the community works out with the manager for when that can occur on a seasonal-annual basis. So, the -- yeah. Okay. Thank you. See, I told you I was going off the cuff. Hanna is here. Better informed.

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DR. VOORHEES: Okay. So, what Brent just brought up, that would pertain more to the, what we call the cultural and educational permit. But for the potlatch, that's just any wildlife that are taken outside of a season or harvest limit for food and or -- sorry, outside of the harvest limit and it's done for -- I'm going to start over again. Okay. So, potlatch and religion -- is called traditional religious ceremony in our wildlife regulations. And so, it doesn't need to -- that harvest does not need to adhere to the regulations, so long the federal manager would just approve it and as long as it doesn't violate any, you know, conservation principles, then you can go ahead and do the harvest. And then you must use the methods and means and the regulations and yeah, you don't need a permit or harvest ticket, but you do often need to keep track of that harvest. So, sorry.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, in the interest of time, if there's more specific muskox things, I'd ask that we take those offline. We do have a bunch of action items to take care of after Raime's report. Anything else on muskox before Raime continues?

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MR. HOWARTH: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes, Wilbur.

MR. HOWARTH: Yeah. Please, just one real quick one on the muskox. When I fill out for a permit. So, any adult in my family or in the household are eligible to fill out a permit too?

DR. FRONSTIN: Any adult in your household. Anyone capable of -- I mean, even, like, a 15-year-old can submit their name. So, anyone who you know, would be capable of hunting without, you know, too much help, essentially.

MR. HOWARTH: Okay, thank you.

DR. FRONSTIN: And you can also -- sure, and you can also have designated hunters as well, so.

MR. HOWARTH: Oh, thanks. Thanks a lot.

DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah.

MR. HOWARTH: That's all.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Wilbur. Raimi, the floor is yours.

DR. FRONSTIN: Okay, great. Thanks. So, page five. Next page is brown bear data and the Park Service Arctic Inventory management team, along with the parks. We're doing rotating brown bear surveys in our Parklands. The data can be found in table three. A survey of the Lower Noatak was attempted in May of last year. However, weather was really bad last year, and weather and other factors prevented us from getting good enough data to get an accurate abundance estimate. These surveys, these brown bear surveys are upwards of \$200,000 or more and currently, you know, both our funding and aviation capacity is decreasing. So, at the moment we don't feel like we'll be able to continue these brown bear surveys using the current methods. We know this is very important data for the communities. And we are committed to finding other means to obtain brown bear population information. Such as, like, you know, trying to use thermal imaging or something. So, for now, this is put on hold until we can find more efficient methods. Any questions about brown bears

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1 before we move on to wolves?

2

3 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: No questions it looks
4 like. So, you may continue.

5

6 DR. FRONSTIN: Okay, so last page. The
7 wolf data. So, I'll remind you, in 2020, the Park began
8 a pilot study to evaluate the feasibility of using DNA
9 sampling to obtain wolf population demographics in
10 Northwest Alaska. The results of this study suggested
11 that genetic and observational methods to obtain
12 baseline population information in this landscape is
13 doable. And using this information, we were able to
14 obtain -- secure -- or we were able to secure funding
15 to do a large scale study and Noatak National Preserve
16 during 2026 through 2028. Further, the Wildlife
17 Conservation Society has decided to collaborate with us
18 to expand this survey so that we can include dietary
19 analysis and gain insight into the diets of the different
20 wolf groups in the area. Finally, and most importantly,
21 we'll be including locals in the study, and we plan to
22 request your help with collecting both scat from your
23 hunting grounds and tissue samples from harvested
24 wolves. And we're looking into how we can compensate you
25 for those, whether it be cash or fuel, and we're excited
26 about this and being able to finally get you some
27 baseline data, some current baseline data on the wolf
28 population. Any questions about wolves?

29

30 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seeing none.
31 Anything else you'd like to touch on Raime?

32

33 DR. FRONSTIN: I have a little
34 information from our law enforcement program on big game
35 guides in WEAR -- and that's Noatak -- the preserve is
36 the only WEAR Parklands in which big game guiding is
37 approved. We have the -- Noatak has three big game
38 guiding concessionaires allowed, and those three are
39 currently filled and they're on ten-year contracts. Not
40 all of them guide for bears. They can also guide for
41 moose and caribou when it's open, sheep when it's open,
42 and wolves, etc. For 2024, 15 bears were taken in Noatak
43 by clients of the guides and that's all I have.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Questions, comments?
46 Mike.

47

48 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, sorry about that. But
49 back to the bears. You know, I -- the bears were out
50 pretty late until late December and early January due

1 to probably no salmon. I heard a lot of the grizzly
2 bears that were spotted out in the country that were
3 still awake during end of December and into early January
4 were pretty thin. So, it will be kind of interesting to
5 see you know, a newer census -- newer census data coming
6 up for different areas as to what kind of an impact the
7 lack of salmon has on the bear population. And as for
8 the wolves, are you guys just studying specific areas
9 or -- I know that the Noatak flats has a lot of pingos,
10 and a lot of those pingos usually hold a wolf dinner to
11 -- there's quite a few packs out there. I'd like to see
12 more studies done on the widespread amount of packs in
13 certain areas, you know, within Unit 23. Thank you.
14

15 DR. FROSTIN: Thank you. So, for the
16 wolves, I'll answer real quick. We are right now focusing
17 on Noatak National Preserve which is, you know, our
18 biggest Parklands. And we do hope to expand it
19 eventually. But we -- this is our first try at it. So,
20 and then for the bears I -- so, Alaska has -- our bears
21 hibernate the longest and that's because obviously it's,
22 you know, colder here. We have longer winters. I do --
23 I am sure that will change with climate change. I'm sure
24 they'll be waking up earlier, going -- you know, napping
25 later. And like you said, there are likely effects of --
26 -- there, you know, will likely be effects of the lower
27 salmon for those bears who exploit salmon resources.
28 They do have what's called delayed implantation. So,
29 females require a certain amount of food in order to
30 have their cubs. So, if they don't get that amount of
31 food, they won't have cubs. So, that will likely affect
32 them. Did I cover it all?
33

34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: He gave me a thumbs
35 up, so yes.
36

37 MR. KRAMER: Yes, that was good. Thank
38 you.
39

40 DR. FRONSTIN: Alright. Great, thanks.
41

42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other questions,
43 comments for Raime at this time? Tristen.
44

45 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
46 Pattee. Do you think, you know, after this is done this
47 area, do you think there'll be a potential to collaborate
48 with different landowners with State and you know,
49 private like NANA?
50

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1 DR. FRONSTIN: Are you speaking for the
2 wolf.....

3
4 (Simultaneous speech)

5
6 MR. PATTEE: Oh, yes.

7
8 DR. FRONSTIN:surveys?

9
10 MR. PATTEE: Yes, for the wolf population
11 surveys.

12
13 DR. FRONSTIN: Yeah, no, we would love
14 to collaborate with either of those entities and you
15 know, we will be looking to expand these surveys. Red
16 Dog is interested in also expanding -- helping and
17 expanding the surveys up to the Kivalina area and around
18 the Red Dog Mine and Haul Road area. So, we're trying
19 to work with them on that. And so, yeah, the more parties
20 that are interested, the better we can cover more ground.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Awesome. Any final
23 questions, comments at this time? Anything else from
24 you, Raime?

25
26 DR. FRONSTIN: That's all, you are
27 all, you know, feel free to contact me anytime with
28 questions.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. Thank you,
31 Dr. Fronstin. We will at this time take a break. It's
32 3:00 and we'll come back at 3:15.

33
34 (Off record)

35
36 (On record)

37
38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. It is now
39 3:16. We will get back on the record. We are now on item
40 13, action items. First, we have wildlife closure
41 reviews and Mr. Tom Plank, you have the floor.

42
43 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair, members
44 of the Council and for the record, my name is Tom Plank,
45 wildlife biologist with the Office of Subsistence
46 Management. And before I get into this closure review
47 analysis, I just want to remind you of the process for
48 these reviews. When you officially act on these before
49 -- sorry. When you officially act on these closure
50 reviews in the fall, the regulatory actions will be

1 limited to retaining and rescinding or modifying the
2 closures. Actions such as changing seasons and harvest
3 limits or delegating authority to in-season managers are
4 outside the scope of closure reviews. So, therefore
5 closure review analysis are being presented to you in
6 this meeting in case there are proposals the Council
7 would like to make during the wildlife call. Now to get
8 into the first closure review, which is WCR 26-18. This
9 closure review is for the Unit 23 sheep in the Baird
10 Mountains, and that can be found on page 33 of your
11 meeting books. And since this is not an action item and
12 only informing the Council of a closure that you will
13 be reviewing in the fall, I'll try to keep this as brief
14 as I can.

15
16 There have been many changes to the
17 sheep hunt over the years. However, the original closure
18 that we are reviewing this cycle will was placed in 1999
19 and no sheep harvest has occurred in the Baird Mountains
20 under federal or state regulations since 2014, when the
21 seasons were closed due to conservation concerns. Now,
22 at the time of preparing the analysis that is in your
23 book, there was not an official update to the population
24 numbers since the 2019 survey. And as you just heard
25 from Dr. Fronstin, the Park Service did a sheep survey
26 last year, but I was not able to get the official numbers
27 before the due date for printing of your books. But the
28 preliminary numbers indicate that the that population
29 showed a slight increase from the 2019 survey, which
30 Raime showed you on page three of that handout that the
31 Park Service gave you. And those official survey results
32 will be in the analysis when we take action on this in
33 the fall.

34
35 So, for reference, the sheep population
36 in DeLong and Schwatka Mountains are similarly low, but
37 there are no federal land closures because the state
38 hunts are closed and WEAR superintendent has authority
39 to close federal lands to non-federally qualified users,
40 if necessary, in all of these hunt areas. And while the
41 Baird mountain sheep population is still very low and
42 cannot withstand any harvest, the state sheep hunt in
43 Unit 23 has been closed since 2014. But if a harvestable
44 surplus does become available and a season is announced
45 the WEAR superintendent has authority to close federal
46 lands to non-federally qualified users if necessary, so
47 that federally qualified subsistence users will be
48 assured a limited but meaningful hunt opportunity and
49 subsistence priority. Therefore, the current preliminary
50 conclusion is to rescind the closure because rescinding

1 the closure would have no impact on the sheep populations
2 or subsistence users but would reduce the regulatory and
3 administrative burdens associated with this closure
4 because the WEAR superintendent has a delegation of
5 authority in this area as well. So, it's kind of double
6 stacked up and that's the end of my thing on this. I'm
7 happy to answer any questions you all may have. Thank
8 you, Mr. Chair, members of the Council.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Plank.
11 Any questions comments on this closure review? Mike.
12

13 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, I think it should go
14 ahead and remain closed until we get -- I'm not sure
15 what your guys limit on -- you know, we're -- what the
16 limits are for the harvestable amounts. I know that back
17 then, I mentioned it for probably 4 or 5 years, I think
18 if Attamuk can recall for them to shut it down and then
19 finally they went out there and did a count and they did
20 an immediate shutdown on it. But I think it should be -
21 - remain closed until we can see the scientific data and
22 approve to reopen this area, Bairds and DeLong. Because
23 it's cheap, get hit hard by wolves and they'd get hit
24 hard by wolves in deep snow. Plus, icing is a major
25 factor into their survival. A lot of those green leaves,
26 I can't remember what's the name of them but, that they
27 eat are pretty hardy for them to get due to icing. So,
28 I think conserving what we have should be continued until
29 we, as a Council can have some new scientific data that
30 provides us with a better update on population's overall
31 health, survival, lamb survival in both areas, the De
32 Long and the Bairds. That's all I have for now. Thank
33 you.
34

35 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Mike. Any
36 other questions, comments? And since this is not an
37 action item, we don't need to vote on this or anything.
38 So, with that, if you'd like to move on to the next one.
39

40 (Pause)
41

42 DR. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, this is Hannah
43 Voorhees. I'm an Anthropologist with OSM and I'll be
44 presenting the next closure review, but we just need a
45 moment to get some slides set up for you. Thank you.
46

47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: For reference, Dr.
48 Voorhees, what page in our book should people be looking
49 for?
50

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1 DR. VOORHEES: This starts on page 49 of
2 your meeting materials, unless you have a slightly
3 different version. That's what I have, is page 49.

4
5 MS. HUTCHINSON: On page 51.

6
7 DR. VORHEES: Alright, thanks.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen. Did you have
10 something?

11
12 MS. MONIGOLD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
13 While we're waiting do you think we could talk about the
14 D1 lands and bring that up to vote? Since we have someone
15 in the audience waiting, and she's an elder.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Did everyone get a
18 chance to review the letter template?

19
20 MS. MONIGOLD: In my opinion, I think
21 that this, you know, this would protect subsistence
22 lands and that's what we're here for, is to protect our
23 subsistence lands. And, you know, our voice, along with
24 a lot of these other voices that have signed on to this
25 being against the D1 lands being opened will make a
26 difference. Thank you.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other discussion
29 on bringing this up at this time? Mike.

30
31 MR. KRAMER: I make a motion to approve
32 the draft letter for the D1 lands to be submitted.

33
34 MS. MONIGOLD: I second, Karmen Monigold.

35
36 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, motion made by
37 Mike to approve the draft letter, which has not been
38 reviewed by any legal or anybody in our organization and
39 seconded by Karmen. Is there any discussion on this?

40
41 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yes, Mr. Chair, for the
42 record, this is Lisa Scarbrough Hutchinson, the Council
43 Coordinator. I just wanted to just recommend to the
44 Council that it's really important to put on the record
45 your words and your language if you want to write a
46 letter. And it's good to have this letter as a guide,
47 but it's better to use your own words, exactly what's
48 important to you. Because any kind of letter that's
49 submitted that's sort of the same, that every region
50 that was written by somebody else is not probably the

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1 best advice I would give, but it's good to get on the
2 record what it is you want. And then we can go through,
3 if you want to write a letter and submit it, we would
4 recommend it going, you know, to the Federal Subsistence
5 Board that would then be forwarded to the Office of
6 Secretary. But -- and once you get -- we have a
7 discussion here, then I can write up a letter based on
8 your discussion, not so much based on the form letter.
9 And then I can review that with the Chair, and then he
10 can review it with -- and then we can get it submitted,
11 if that's your wishes, Mr. Chair.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other discussion
14 since we do have a motion.

15

16 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen
17 Pattee. Yeah. I mean, I really think that everybody on
18 this Council needs to understand if we're going to vote
19 on this, you know, it's -- I think it's very important.
20 Of course it is going to be a vote, but I just want to
21 make that comment, make sure you understand this fully
22 going forward. That's all.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other
25 discussion? Mike.

26

27 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, it's up to you guys.
28 I mean, I read it, I read the other letters that were
29 submitted by the other RACs. You know, we are here to
30 protect our land, and our culture and our subsistence
31 resources. And this letter that was drafted, you know,
32 covers all of those. D1 lands are so important to us.
33 We let those go, our region is gone, you know, Kobuk --
34 the Squirrel River, yeah, that leads right into my
35 hometown of Kiana. You guys want to see mining up there?
36 You guys want to see commercial services? Yeah. If we
37 don't support this -- the closure or the protection. We
38 need to continue to protect these D1 lands or else.
39 Yeah, our lands going to go to crap in a handbasket. You
40 know, we -- it's come to the point in this century where
41 minerals and money mean more than subsistence resources,
42 and it's getting ridiculous. I can't believe it, you
43 know what's going on now. You know, they approved that
44 extra ten miles of Red Dog Road, probably without the
45 shareholders' knowledge. I know I didn't know about it
46 until I heard about it, and I mentioned it. Where's
47 there EIS for that? You know, they never contacted us
48 to approve or look over the -- that, you know, they did
49 it without the shareholders knowing. It's all about
50 being transparent, protecting what you got. Because if

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1 you don't, it's gone. This is the century where we're
2 going to lose everything. This is the century where we're
3 going to lose everything because money and minerals more
4 -- means more than Subsistence resources. So, it's time
5 for us to start opening up our eyes and start protecting
6 what we got. Because if we lose it, yeah, it's going to
7 fall upon everybody.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other
10 discussion? Clyde.

11
12 MR. REMOTH: Yeah. Clyde. For the record,
13 thank you, Mr. Chair. Selawik. I didn't get a chance to
14 read this letter but, you know, we're charged to protect
15 our land. Food security is always important for us,
16 making regulation changes and stuff. But as mentioned
17 by Lisa, I think the language, I don't know who's the
18 expert here is, but I would be in support of the -- what
19 was discussed with Karmen and Tristen and Mike. Food
20 security, protecting our lands and its natural resources
21 because our environment is very sensitive. And when we
22 talk about what we have left with caribou, that's scary.
23 But I just wanted to voice I don't know the language
24 fully, but that's my comment. Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Final discussion?
27 Attamuk.

28
29 MR. SCHIEDT: Yeah, whoever had that
30 letter should read the highlights on this one here,
31 because this is the first time I have seen it due to
32 I've been away from these meetings. I would like to have
33 someone read the letter, because this is new to me,
34 because I've been away from the meetings due to my health
35 and it's concerning. Look like we have to vote in favor
36 of it, but I want to hear the highlights of it on a
37 letter. Anyone that have it could read it.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

40
41 MS. MONIGOLD: Okay. Thank you. Through
42 the Chair. There is a massive wave of support for
43 retention of D1 lands protections. Alaska's BLM D1 lands
44 encompass productive landscapes supporting some of the
45 largest migratory wildlife, birds and fish populations
46 on the planet and the people who rely on them. Alaskans
47 testified unanimously in favor of retaining D1 lands.
48 BLM held hearings in 18 communities in early 2024.
49 Supported protections. Over half of Alaskans 229
50 federally recognized tribes supported it, four regional

1 Alaska Native corporations and seven village
2 corporations, three of the largest tribal consortia in
3 the state, four subsistence Regional Advisory Councils,
4 145,000 Americans, 125 Alaskan businesses, and over 300
5 nationally. D1 lands sustain a way of life. More than
6 100 Alaskan communities directly depend on access to D1
7 lands for food security. For Alaskan communities off the
8 road system, over 80% of food consumption comes from
9 comes directly from the surrounding lands and waters.
10 28 million acres, large, connected landscapes across
11 Alaska play a key role in helping subsistence resources
12 to adapt to environmental changes and what this is saying
13 Attamuk, is if they open the D1 lands, they'll open it
14 up to mining and oil and drilling and industry basically.
15 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16
17 MR. SCHIEDT: Thanks.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any other
20 discussion? Tristen.

21
22 MR. PATTEE: I think we were supposed to
23 read the actual letter that we're -- that is the
24 template, right? That's what our -- this Council's name
25 would be on. And I do agree, I mean, I -- it's great
26 that a template is here, but I really do think it should
27 be gone through because I mean, already Northwest Arctic
28 Regional Advisory Council, there should be Subsistence
29 in there. So, I mean, there should be at least a quick
30 review, you know, before. But that's -- I mean, I -- you
31 know, like I mentioned, the Kobuk Valley approved it,
32 but with their own template, I think. And just having a
33 review before we vote would be something I would support.
34 But I do agree with everything that was said, you know,
35 it's -- we definitely want to protect our lands, but the
36 language, it just needs to be reviewed and finalized.
37 And just so we know for sure that it's going to be
38 something that we're going to all support together.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, there is a motion
41 on the floor to approve this draft template. I believe
42 that our options are we either vote on it and it goes
43 up or down, or if the motion is rescinded, we could come
44 back to this at the end of the action items so that we
45 have an actual discussion that can build our own opinion
46 and have the time, because we do have people that are
47 waiting to present. Mike.

48
49 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. How about we just put
50 it on the table. Not rescind it but put it up for

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1 modification to where it meets somebody's expectations.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Following Robert's
4 Rules of Order, because there's a motion live on the
5 floor, you would have to rescind your motion, and then
6 we could say motion to table.

7

8 MR. KRAMER: Okay. I rescind my motion.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And whoever seconded
11 has to rescind their second.

12

13 MS. MONIGOLD: I rescind my second.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, Mike rescinded
16 his motion. Karmen rescinded her second. Is there a
17 motion to table this until the end of the action items?

18

19 MR. PATTEE: Mr. Chair, Tristen Pattee,
20 I make a motion to table these action items to the end.

21

22 MR. SCHIEDT: I'll second.

23

24 MR. RAMOTH: I'll second.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Motion made by
27 Tristen, seconded by Attamuk, to table this specific
28 discussion and letter to the end of the action items,
29 so it would follow a future meeting dates -- select fall
30 2026 meeting date and location. All those in favor?
31 Attamuk.

32

33 MR. SCHIEDT: Yeah, I just got a quick
34 question because I first time I seen this. What the
35 latest could we go about to have this approved by this
36 Board?

37

38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I think we're allowed
39 to stay as long as we want to work. It just depends on
40 what the Council would like to do. Verne.

41

42 MR. CLEVELAND: I call for question.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, the question has
45 been called for, motion made to table. Seconded till the
46 end of the action items. Motion has been made. Seconded.
47 All those in favor of tabling, please say aye.

48

49 IN UNISON: Aye.

50

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Those opposed, same
2 sign.

3
4 (No response)

5
6 So, with that, we will pick this
7 discussion up at the end of the action items. Thank you
8 for your patience and it looks like we have everything
9 set up on the screen. Dr. Voorhees, the floor is yours.
10 And again, we should be on page 51 of our main meeting
11 book.

12
13 DR. VOORHEES: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair
14 and members of the Council. This is Hannah Voorhees. I'm
15 your Anthropologist with Office of Subsistence
16 Management. And I'll be presenting a wildlife closure
17 review pertaining to caribou in this area. But before I
18 start, I just want to remind you that there are two
19 different closures in place right now for caribou and I
20 just want to make sure we don't mix them up because they
21 do overlap in some ways. But this is a very small closure
22 that's been in place since about 2017 and it's year-
23 round. And it's -- this is different than the Unit wide
24 -- the Unit 23 wide closure to caribou hunting by non-
25 federally qualified users which is only from August 1st
26 to October 31st. So, just want to say that and I'll
27 repeat that. Also, Tom was very brief in his wildlife
28 closure review. I'll try not to be too lengthy, but I -
29 - just because I know the caribou issue is very important
30 to this region, I'm just going to -- and because there
31 were some questions at our pre meeting, that kind of
32 thing, I'll just spend a little bit more time. So, this
33 is Wildlife Closure Review, WCR 26-45 again on page 51.
34 And just to remind you, you don't have to make a
35 recommendation on this closure review right now. This
36 is just for informational purposes. If it makes you think
37 of some proposals you'd like to submit related to the
38 closure then we can talk more about that.

39
40 Oh, okay. So, this is a standard review
41 of a Federal Subsistence Wildlife Closure to the harvest
42 of caribou by non-federally qualified users on federal
43 public lands within a small portion of Unit 23 remainder
44 and you can see a map here on this slide of the closure
45 area in those hash marks around the Noatak corridor and
46 this is a year-round closure. The closure if you want
47 the exact language for where it's located, it's along
48 the Noatak River from the western boundary of Noatak
49 National Preserve, upstream to the confluence with the
50 Cutler River. within the northern and southern

1 boundaries of the Eli and Agashashok River drainages,
2 respectively, and within the Squirrel River drainage.
3 I'd like to pause and ask if I'm pronouncing Agashashok
4 correctly. I have a feeling I'm not. Could someone give
5 me the correct pronunciation? (In Native). Just call it
6 (In Native). Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you. All
7 right. That makes it much easier. In the rest of my
8 presentation, I'll refer to this area as the Unit 23
9 Noatak corridor. Again, this is just a small year-round
10 closure. We are not reviewing the bigger seasonal
11 closure, which went into place in 2024.
12

13 This closure -- the smaller Noatak
14 corridor closure was put into place in 2017, first as a
15 special action which was submitted by this Council.
16 Prior to that, there was a wider unit wide closure for
17 a year, I believe. So, this was -- this smaller closure
18 first went into place as a compromise in 2017, and then
19 it was put into codified regulation. Which means it's
20 not just a special action anymore, it's on the books in
21 2018, and it was last reviewed in 2022 when it was
22 maintained. At that time, the Board stated that the
23 closure was originally enacted for the continuation of
24 subsistence uses of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, and
25 that the underlying factor leading to the closure, which
26 is user conflict, was still a concern. I won't give you
27 any biological info because you've had a very recent
28 update on the biology of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd.
29 So, I won't repeat that here.
30

31 According to Subsistence surveys
32 conducted since 1988 by ADF&G Division of Subsistence,
33 there are about four communities with a recent
34 documented history of harvesting caribou in this closure
35 area. And those are, of course, Noatak and then also
36 Kotzebue, Kiana and Noorvik. This Council has given
37 quite a bit of testimony on the record about the impacts
38 of non-federally qualified users and aircraft on caribou
39 and local hunters ability to subsist, your ability to
40 hunt in traditional use areas. But I would say that it's
41 really -- here's a couple quotes that this Council has
42 given this this is now several years back. And I would
43 say that although we don't have a Council member living
44 -- who lives in Noatak right now, it's still really
45 important to kind of build this record and let us know
46 how the closures are working overtime.
47

48 During the last review of this closure
49 in 2022, of course, this Council voted to maintain the
50 closure and your justification was to reduce previously

1 significant user conflict in the area and because the
2 targeted closures allow people to put food on the table.
3 All right. So, the OSM preliminary conclusion is to
4 retain the status quo, and I'll read you some
5 justification. The current closure is still necessary
6 to continue subsistence uses of the Western Arctic
7 Caribou Herd for federally qualified Subsistence users.
8 Since the closure has been enacted, user conflicts
9 within the closure area have been reduced, and the hunt
10 experiences and harvest success of federally qualified
11 subsistence users have improved. While a different unit
12 wide closure to caribou hunting by non-federally
13 qualified users from August 1st to October 31st was
14 implemented in 2024, this does not provide a reason to
15 remove the smaller Noatak corridor closure, and that's
16 because, you know, the Noatak corridor closure reviewed
17 here is year-round, whereas the Unit wide closure is
18 limited to the fall. And also, while the Unit wide
19 closure contains a stipulation that it will not be in
20 effect if the herd exceeds 200,000, the Noatak corridor
21 closure does not have this condition attached. So, in
22 conclusion, if the Noatak corridor closure were to be
23 rescinded and then the herd in turn exceeds 200,000, the
24 unit wide seasonal closure would also be removed, and
25 federal public lands throughout Unit 23 would then be
26 open to non-federally qualified users, and this would
27 most likely result in more user conflicts and interfere
28 with caribou harvest by federally qualified subsistence
29 users. Thank you for your patience and that's all I
30 have.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Questions, comments
33 on this closure review? Clyde.

34
35 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just
36 a quick comment and thank you for your explanation. I
37 remember -- Attamuk when we applied to Bethel that one
38 year to go -- anyway, a handful of us went to Bethel to
39 go testify on the no-fly zone area for the Noatak
40 drainage area. And seeing this now I know - oh, Clyde
41 Ramoth for the record, Selawik. I'm finding out more of
42 what the caribou eat but is it mainly because of the
43 numbers are low and it's good to see that for non-
44 residents, but how long is that Noatak River and is it
45 pretty well enforced by law, arial?

46
47 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, member Ramoth.
48 Okay. Could you clarify your question? Just one -- for
49 me one more time. Are you asking about the, like, the
50 controlled use area or the delayed entry area, or more

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1 about the closure itself, I guess?

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MR. RAMOTH: The closure itself, I guess after just commenting, my question is, is it going to be fully enforced and like patrolled by different agencies to make sure there's no illegal hunting by non-locals?

DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair, member Ramoth. So, this closure has been in place for quite a while. So, I you know, it's well established, and I mean, I can't speak for the Park Service but, you know, I assume there's enforcement activity and if Park Service wants to say anything else about that they're welcome to. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Elmer.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Elmer Armstrong, Noorvik. Would we be able to amend this to include the 200,000 animal count to this? Similar to the Unit 23 closure.

DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair, member Armstrong. Thanks for that question. Of course, this Council can do that. However, this particular closure is -- it really was put in place because of user conflict and continuation of subsistence uses, which don't really have a lot of bases in what the actual population of the herd is at any time. It's more about the way sport hunters are interacting, non-federally qualified users are interacting with federally qualified subsistence users, local hunters. And so, I think the rationale for including that limit might be a little weaker than you know, it would be with the Unit wide seasonal closure, which is more closely tied, at least in the justification that's been discussed for that bigger closure. You know that one's been more closely tied to the conservation need, so.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that. For the record, this is Thomas Baker, and I feel like this closure may benefit from not having the numbers tied to it just because this is from before the herd started really declining. And then if we attach a number to it and the herd does hit 201,000, then the whole closure just goes away. And all of the prevention of user conflicts that we're trying to do, or we're trying to keep people from hunting in the same areas where people that need to put food on the table are, that just

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1 goes away, and we have to start a whole new battle. So,
2 we have the power to amend it, but I feel like it would
3 be best to leave it as is. Verne, did you have something?
4

5 MR. CLEVELAND: Yes. Can you explain
6 federally non-qualified users?
7

8 DR. VOORHEES: Yes. It is a mouthful,
9 isn't it? So, functionally it means local residents. It
10 would mean whoever's has a customary and traditional use
11 determination for caribou in Unit 23. You know, we can
12 go to the handy dandy and see that it -- I'm looking at
13 -- so, this -- when I say handy dandy, I mean the Federal
14 Subsistence Regulation Booklet that should be available
15 in most federal land management offices. So, if you look
16 on -- just a minute. So, the C&T for caribou, it reads
17 residents of Units 21D Koyukuk and Yukon River -- or
18 sorry West of the Koyukuk and Yukon rivers. Galena 22
19 23, 24, including residents of Wiseman, but not other
20 residents of the Dalton Highway Corridor Management area
21 and 26A. So, this is -- so all those people are federally
22 qualified to hunt caribou under federal regulations on
23 federal public lands in Unit 23. Just looking at the
24 C&T, or the customary and traditional use determination
25 is a good way to figure that out.
26

27 MR. CLEVELAND: So, my kids live in
28 Anchorage, and they can't hunt up here? Is that what
29 you're saying?
30

31 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. When
32 there's a closure, they cannot hunt on federal public
33 lands. So, yes. So, where these closures -- where and
34 when these two closures that I've mentioned apply,
35 relatives who are not from this area cannot hunt for
36 caribou with you on those federal public lands under
37 federal regulations. Now, oftentimes there's not a
38 closure to federal public lands, and then they would be
39 able to hunt with you. They'd just be hunting, you know,
40 under state regulations. Yeah.
41

42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any more questions,
43 comments. Anything else Dr. Voorhees, before you move
44 on to your next item?
45

46 DR. VOORHEES: That's all. Thank you.
47

48 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. With that,
49 we will move on to item B Deferred Wildlife Proposal,

1 WP 24-01 statewide sale of brown bear hides. Dr.
2 Voorhees, you have the floor again.

3
4 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair and
5 members of the Council. Again, for the record, this is
6 Hannah Voorhees and I'm an Anthropologist for the office
7 of Subsistence management, or OSM. If you'll give me
8 just a second, I believe Tom is pulling up the slides
9 and getting those on Teams for everyone who's not in the
10 room.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And this will be page
13 87.

14
15 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yeah. Page 87 - starting
16 -- right. Thank you -- of your main book.

17
18 DR. VOORHEES: Okay, thanks. All right.
19 I'm presenting on Deferred Wildlife Proposal, WP 24-01
20 and this is on page 87. This analysis was originally
21 proposed -- or originally submitted -- I'm sorry. This
22 proposal was originally submitted in 2023 by a resident
23 of McCarthy, and he requested that the Federal
24 Subsistence Board allow the sale of brown bear hides
25 under federal subsistence regulations. We talked about
26 this a little bit last night, just orienting you to the
27 fact that this proposal was coming up. It's a statewide
28 proposal. But we're really -- we're only asking this
29 Council to make a recommendation that reflects your
30 cultural practices for this region. That's what the
31 Board is hoping to hear, because this is essentially a
32 customary trade proposal and we're bringing it back to
33 you because there's some new information for you to
34 consider.

35
36 Just a moment, please. Technical issue.
37 All right. So, first let me give you some background on
38 how we got here. This proposal was first presented to
39 the Council in October 2023, and originally OSM
40 supported the proposal, and they had a modification that
41 would have limited sales to hides from brown bears taken
42 in areas with a two brown bear limit under federal
43 subsistence regulations, and at that time this Council
44 supported the proposal as written by the resident of
45 McCarthy, which was just that you should be able to sell
46 the hides from brown bears harvested under federal
47 regulations, with no caveats. And this Council said the
48 proposal would increase the capacities of subsistence
49 users to sell brown bears from their regions.

50

1 So, going forward, after you made your
2 recommendation, the Board deferred the proposal at its
3 April 2024 meeting. The Board did this to allow OSM time
4 to find a way for federally qualified subsistence users
5 to sell hides from brown bears, even if they were taken
6 in a Unit with a one brown bear limit, so a lower brown
7 bear limit. The Board also wanted to make sure that the
8 solution would not conflict with the Convention on
9 International Trade in Endangered Species or CITES. So,
10 after the Board's first deferral, OSM went back to the
11 drawing Board and there is an addendum now for your
12 consideration. There's now a completely new OSM
13 conclusion with a different modification for you to
14 consider. The addendum was presented to the Board at
15 their meeting in February of this year, and the Board
16 again deferred this proposal because they wanted to make
17 sure that each Council had time to weigh in on it. So,
18 this is why it's in front of you again.

19
20 The revised OSM conclusion is to support
21 proposal WP 24-01, with modifications so that the hides
22 of brown bears, with or without claws attached, may be
23 purchased within the United States for personal use and
24 not to be resold. The hunter must request an OSM
25 customary trade permit and must return the permit.
26 Additionally, the modified regulation will align federal
27 sealing regulations with State of Alaska sealing
28 regulations. So, we can unpack this a little bit. But
29 first, I just want to -- as Brent has mentioned
30 previously, I just wanted to mention that, you might be
31 asking, what does this proposal mean for us and for this
32 region? And the biggest implication is that, you know,
33 currently -- so on -- you can sell brown bear hides
34 harvested under state regulations where there's a two
35 brown bear limit. So, in many areas in the State, you
36 can already sell brown bear hides when they're harvested
37 under state regulations and that's the case for this
38 region. There's a two brown bear limit under state
39 regulations, but the state regulations don't apply on
40 national park and monument lands. So, by adopting this
41 proposal, what would happen for this region is that you
42 would be able to sell the hides of brown bears harvested
43 in national parks and monuments, so that is the main
44 implication. But you know, this is a statewide proposal.
45 So, I'm going to go through and let you know everything.

46
47 So, some of the most pertinent language
48 from the modified regulation is listed on this slide.
49 The modification would now allow the sale of a brown --
50 of a hide from a brown bear harvested under federal

1 regulations regardless of the harvest limit in the Unit
2 it's taken so long as there's some federal opportunity.
3 So, as long as the limit is at least one. And compared
4 to the previous OSM conclusion, there's no stipulation
5 that there has to be a two brown bear limit. The OSM
6 modification would allow only domestic purchases, and
7 this is to avoid conflicting with CITES and by using a
8 customary trade permit that OSM administers, it's kind
9 of an alternative pathway than going through the state
10 system, which, you know, then you can eventually export
11 hides internationally through CITES. So, in this you
12 would not use the state's permit to sell, you just use
13 the OSM customary trade permit.

14
15 If one were to sell a brown bear hide
16 harvested under federal regulations, you would first
17 need to have the hide sealed and the seal has to remain
18 on the hide when it's sold. Currently in this Unit, you
19 don't have to seal the hide or the skull of a brown bear
20 in -- taken under federal regulations in Unit 23 unless
21 you remove it from the area or unless you send it for
22 commercial tanning. So, now you know, if you sold it,
23 you would also need to get it tanned. And the OSM
24 modification would allow a hide to be sold with or
25 without claws attached, which would allow federally
26 qualified subsistence users who remove a claw to
27 incorporate it into a handicraft to sell the hide.
28 However, this has come up in discussion. I just want to
29 note that currently, the way the federal regulations are
30 written is actually not permitted to allow the sale of
31 handicrafts incorporating claws from brown bears
32 harvested in Unit 23. Specifically, you can for some
33 other Units. So, if you wanted to change that, this
34 Council could always submit a proposal to allow the sale
35 of handicrafts incorporating claws. You are already
36 allowed to sell handicrafts incorporating the hides of
37 brown bears harvested in Unit 23 under federal
38 subsistence regulations. So, I'm almost, almost done
39 here.

40
41 Finally, the OSM modification removes
42 from Federal regulations the requirement in some areas
43 of Alaska, including Unit 23, that at the time of
44 sealing, the official must remove and retain the skin
45 of the head, and the front claws of the bear hide, and
46 this is just about aligning state and federal
47 regulations. So, in conclusion, the OSM modification
48 complies with CITES and it allows domestic sales of brown
49 bear hides. The ability to sell these hides is not
50 expected to result in overharvest. Simply because you

1 already have to salvage the meat of a brown bear that's
2 harvested under federal subsistence regulations. And a
3 question we've been getting a lot is, you know, whether
4 you'd be able to sell the hides of brown bears that were
5 harvested before this proposal made -- is adopted -- if
6 it's adopted and whether it would apply to bears taken
7 for defense of life and property. And the answer is that
8 no, you could not sell hides from bears taken under
9 either of those scenarios. So, again, the parks and
10 monuments issue is significant for this region and the
11 implications of this proposal, and we are just looking
12 for what this Council thinks of this proposal for your
13 region. Thanks for your attention and I'm happy to take
14 questions. And I believe Pippa Kenner, who's the author
15 is online to answer questions as well. Thank you.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
18 Questions, comments from the Council?

19
20 DR. VOORHEES: I think I put you all to
21 sleep.

22
23 MR. RAMOTH: I'm awake. Thank you, Mr.
24 Chair. Clyde Ramoth, Selawik, for the record. So, for
25 our area, I mean, I don't know what's the brown bear
26 population, but I heard they're -- they taste good now,
27 so I'm curious. But traditionally, you know, we don't
28 even talk about the bear or anything. It's spiritual for
29 me anyway. Maybe for some of you to here locally. But
30 the sale of it -- McCarthy is way down south, right near
31 Juneau and I don't know what's the going rate or anything
32 of that nature, but a lot of times we use our brown bear
33 hides just for subsistence blankets or something to keep
34 warm. I don't know of anybody that makes handicrafts out
35 of them, but it's just a sensitive subject for me, that's
36 why. Because it's part of your question was, what do we
37 traditionally do and stuff like that. But I'm curious
38 to hunt one someday Verne.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne.

41
42 MR. CLEVELAND: That would bring selling
43 of the hides. I don't do stuff like that. I mean, I'm,
44 you know, I'm a subsistence hunter. I don't sell what I
45 get or hunt or anything. But if it comes to that and
46 say, hey, I could sell the hide, what about the organs,
47 and the legs and the arms? It's going to happen. I
48 guarantee you, it will happen and somebody is going to
49 get busted on that. If you can sell the hide, the other
50 pieces, like the organs and the feet, the legs, there's

1 a lot of money in it. I know for a fact. I've seen it
2 happen, and I know it was illegal. But with this selling
3 of the hide, it'll be good for the subsistence hunter,
4 for the gas he pays for and he just can't leave the meat
5 out there. Just, you know, can't just take the hide.
6 That's -- I think that should be totally wrong. I mean
7 it would be good for the hunter but, you know, you just
8 can't just make the waste. That's the wasting of food
9 to my thing, you know. That's wanton waste and it is
10 about wanton up there, you know. And we'll see what
11 happens in the future if anyone sells bear hides. You
12 might get into a - what you might call it? Storm. Let's
13 hunt bears, going to sell the hides, leave the meat,
14 take the skin and leave the meat. Is that what you want
15 to hear? I mean, is that what you want? I don't see it.
16 Thank you.

17

18 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Tristen.

19

20 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair. Tristen
21 Pattee. You did mention all the meat under federal
22 regulation has to be salvaged, correct? And so that's
23 the thing, what kind of deters people from only going
24 toward just the hide, you must salvage that meat and so
25 with that, if they don't salvage the meat, they're
26 breaking the law. So, if you see somebody going out and
27 getting multiple hides and selling them, you know,
28 there's something going on here. And so, you know, if
29 they're absolutely going out there for subsistence use
30 and salvaging all the meat and then, okay, they got this
31 hide. Absolutely. Just like you said, it'll help them
32 with their gas or whatever else and you know, it's not
33 going away. Somebody wants it, you know. And so, I think
34 that's a -- that would be a good thing.

35

36 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne.

37

38 MR. CLEVELAND: So, with that said -- oh,
39 what about the moose, can we sell the hide too?

40

41 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Different proposal.

42

43 DR. VOORHEES: I -- I'm not immediately
44 familiar with those regulations. I'm sorry.

45

46 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, that would be a
47 separate discussion. We're going to stay on the bears.
48 But Mike.

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50 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, selling thing on.....

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MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

MR. KRAMER:commercial basis other than, I mean, under a subsistence basis. You know, it's pretty risky unless you plan on making crafts out of it. And that was one of the reasons why you know you were able to harvest the bear, harvest the meat. I believe it's three bears a year, we're allowed on federal lands for subsistence?

DR. VOORHEES: Two bears.

MR. KRAMER: Huh?

DR. VOORHEES: Two.

MR. KRAMER: Two? I thought there was more than that, but yeah, the one question I have is like, if I wanted to get a grizzly bear and I ran into one on the Kobuk Valley National Park, and I shoot him, and I wanted to claim him under a state permit. Can I or do I have to take everything?

DR. VOORHEES: Where did you say you'd harvest it?

MR. KRAMER: Kobuk Valley National Park.

DR. VOORHEES: That would be illegal because you can only harvest under federal regulations in the park.

MR. RAMOTH: Under -- through the Chair. So, under federal regulations, it's three for black bear and two for brown bear?

DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. I'm just checking on black bear quickly for you. Yes, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Questions, further discussion? Would we say we support this? Would anyone like to make a motion to move forward on this proposal? There is a process that we need to follow and it's on the back of our.....

(Simultaneous speech)

1 MR. PATTEE: Well, first the -- before
2 we make a motion is there any discussion on if we want
3 to add the claws to have someone make art out of it? Do
4 we want to -- do you want to add that? You mentioned
5 that earlier, right. We could add that to it. The making
6 art of the claws for subsistence users?

7
8 MR. RAMOTH: Through the Chair, Clyde
9 Ramoth, Selawik I -- good question Tristen, because this
10 stated with or without claws, right?

11
12 DR. VOORHEES: So, this modification from
13 OSM -- I'm just going to go back a couple slides --
14 would allow you to sell the hide with or without the
15 claws attached. I believe under state regulations the
16 claws must be attached. So, yes, the -- you can sell the
17 hide without the claws, but in Unit 23 currently you
18 cannot sell handicrafts with claws incorporated. So, if
19 the Council would like to make a proposal to that effect
20 for Unit 23, this meeting would be a good time to do
21 that, if it's appropriate for this region.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And that would be
24 separate to this deferred proposal. Correct?

25
26 DR. VOORHEES: I would recommend keeping
27 that separate, yes.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. So, again
30 there is a process for these proposals. So, does that
31 complete your introduction and presentation of the
32 analysis, Dr. Voorhees?

33
34 DR. VOORHEES: Yes, Mr. Chair.

35
36 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
37 We'll move on to report on Board consultation. Is there
38 anything to report from tribes or ANCSA Corporation
39 consultation?

40
41 (No response)

42
43 DR. VOORHEES: Could you repeat that one
44 more time?

45
46 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Were there any
47 consultation with tribes or ANCSA corporations or any
48 feedback?

49
50

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1 DR. VOORHEES: I'm not sure if Orville
2 Lind is online or if Pippa Kenner might know. I don't
3 believe so.

4
5 (Pause)

6
7 I guess.....

8
9 (Simultaneous speech)

10
11 MS. GREDIAGIN: Mr. Chair, this is Lisa
12 Grediagin. And no, there were no -- I mean, deferred
13 proposals are complicated, but there are no written
14 public comments or tribal consultations on the deferred
15 proposal.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Understood. Thank
18 you, Lisa. Any agency comments from Fish and Game? Any
19 of the federal agencies?

20
21 (No response)

22
23 Are you a federal agency, Mike?

24
25 MR. KRAMER: Well, one thing I wanted to
26 bring up, you know, since it's going to be for
27 subsistence use and people will be using the hide and
28 everything, but the claws and the, you know, the skull
29 has to be removed. You know, what's the purpose of
30 customary and traditional use without those items? Those
31 items should be included on that hide for customary and
32 traditional use. Our ancestors use claws, our ancestors
33 used bear teeth for spear tips. Our ancestors used four
34 leg bones from bears, for spears. Removing those items
35 from a subsistence bear is just not right. They are for
36 customary and traditional use. So, removing those items
37 to me is a crime. It's against our customary and
38 traditional use of grizzly bears, because we use a lot
39 of the pieces of the animals for customary and
40 traditional use.

41
42 MR. PATTEE: Justc -- through the Chair,
43 Tristen Pattee. Well, the claws would be removed by the
44 subsistence hunter that would be selling this hide.
45 Correct?

46
47 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. I
48 believe they would -- so, they could be removed either
49 by the hunter or by the person who bought the hide if
50 the claws were still attached at that time. I don't know

1 if I mentioned this, but the hide itself, as you can see
2 in these regulations here, the intent is that the hide
3 be sold for personal use, and it would not be allowed
4 to be resold supplement -- or subsequently.

5
6 MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair and just
7 -- Tristen Pattee. And so pretty much what you just
8 mentioned, the hunter, they would still be able to use
9 those items for whatever they want for their customary
10 stuff is what I'm saying. So, they wouldn't be selling
11 it just -- they have the option of removing them, to use
12 them for whatever they want before selling that hide.
13 So, they could still be used for what you mentioned.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

16
17 MR. KRAMER: Because you know, the --
18 what I've learned over the years is that any trophy
19 portion of a bear was to be removed by a governing
20 agency. In other words, Park Service would remove the
21 claws, the skull, the head and take those, and you would
22 just be ending up with a square hide. You know, if you
23 go back into the past of us, we always use the forelegs
24 for spearheads because they're solid bone, pretty much
25 very little marrow. The claws we use those for decoration
26 and traditional headdresses, necklaces and so on. The
27 skull and the teeth, you know, the teeth were used for
28 spearheads back in the day and also for traditional
29 decoration of outerwear that they had. So, the removal
30 of these items from any bear taken by subsistence use,
31 you know, it shouldn't be allowed by any agency. They
32 should be able to be used in a traditional way by the
33 hunter and his family. So, you know, if someone wanted
34 to sell the bear hide, yeah, they can go ahead and go
35 about doing it. But if it's going to non-local, non-
36 Native person, you know, remove the claws, the head,
37 everything else. If they're just buying a square hide,
38 raw hide. Thank you.

39
40 MR. RAMOTH: Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes, Clyde.

43
44 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you. Somebody can
45 correct me. Maybe you, Doctor what Mr. Kramer was talking
46 about the five -- I don't know what these acronyms AAC
47 92.031 permits for selling skins, skulls and trophies.
48 That part G, can you explain that? As opposed to like,
49 for Natives selling 'em [sic], and opposed to this
50 proposal, if, you know, if it makes sense.

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DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair, I can try. Could you give me a page number that that is on?

MR. RAMOTH: 93.

DR. VORHEES: Okay. Just a moment, please.

(Pause)

Okay. And which part of this are you asking about?

MR. RAMOTH: 92.031. It's almost a discussion, what Mike Kramer was talking about.

DR. VOORHEES: So, these are state regulations and I just -- unfortunately I really don't want to speak for the state on their practices and their regulations right now. I don't know if anyone is online who would want to address this. If so, please go ahead. And if not, member Ramoth, I can, you know, make sure that you get an answer offline.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, with.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MS. KENNER: This is Pippa Kenner for the record, what was the question?

MR. RAMOTH: With the existing state.....

MS. KENNER: I mean.....

MR. RAMOTH:state -- existing state regulations that permit for selling skins, skulls and trophies as opposed to customary trade sale of arts and crafts. Maybe I'm just confused about that, but it sounds like the gentleman in McCarthy -- I don't know how many Mr. Rowland's we have down there, but if -- I'm reading in here that the bear population is healthy statewide, but abusing the catch could be another story for parts of Alaska. That's my only concern.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, I'm going to bring us back to the procedure. Were there any agency comments that we would like to discuss at the - this

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1 time from Department of Fish and Game, any federal
2 agencies or tribal agencies? Siikauraq.

3

4 MS. WHITING: Just -- it's Siikauraq.
5 Superintendent National Park Service. What I would want
6 to do, which I understand we have not done, is to get
7 tribal consultation first before the National Park
8 Service has any input or guidance on this, which at this
9 point, we haven't done yet. Thank you.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I would just ask
12 maybe Dr. Voorhees was there tribal and ANCSA
13 consultations on the original proposal but just not for
14 this deferred version, is that accurate?

15

16 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
17 there certainly was an opportunity for tribal
18 consultation. We -- you know, OSM opens a period for
19 tribal consultation for all proposals that are on the
20 Board's docket. And.....

21

22 (Simultaneous speech)

23

24 MS. KENNER: Mr. Chair.

25

26 DR. VOORHEES: Go ahead, Pippa.

27

28 MS. KENNER: Hi. Yeah, this is Pippa
29 Kenner, for the record. Sorry I couldn't be there. Nice
30 to hear from all of you. So, the next scheduled
31 consultation might go on before the Board meeting where
32 this is brought up, which will probably happen in July.
33 I mean, it would occur during the Board that this is
34 going to be brought up, and that is in July.

35

36 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Pippa and is
37 it accurate to say that there was at least one chance
38 for tribal consultation, and we didn't have any takers
39 at that time?

40

41 MS. KENNER: That's true, Hannah.

42

43 DR. VOORHEES: Okay. Okay. But it would
44 -- yeah, it'd be, you know, obviously always great to
45 have some tribal input going forward. Thank you.

46

47

48 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
49 Any other agency comments on this proposal? Lisa
50 Grediagin.

1
2 MS. GREDIAGIN: Oh, I'm sorry, I was just
3 -- Lisa Grediagin for the record, Pippa and Hannah
4 covered it. I just wanted to clarify that there was
5 opportunity provided for tribal consultation on the
6 original proposal, but since it was deferred, there has
7 not been any additional tribal consultations. And to my
8 recollection, the tribal consultations we had on the
9 initial proposal, we did not receive any substantial
10 comments.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that
13 clarification, Lisa. We'll move on to advisory group
14 comments. Were there any comments from other Regional
15 Councils?

16
17 DR. VOORHEES: Yes, through the Chair.
18 This is Hannah Voorhees for the record, the Southeast
19 Alaska, Bristol Bay, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Eastern
20 Interior Alaska, Western Interior Alaska, Southcentral
21 Alaska, and North Slope Councils, that's seven of them
22 have met and supported the OSM conclusion in the
23 addendum. One Council, the Kodiak/Aleutians Council
24 opposed the proposal because they felt it wasn't
25 appropriate for their region, and it didn't line up with
26 their traditional rules around the use of brown bear
27 parts.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Were there any
30 comments from Fish and Game Advisory Committees?

31
32 DR. VOORHEES: Not that I'm aware of.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Subsistence Resource
35 Commissions?

36
37 DR. VOORHEES: None.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Is there a summary
40 of written public comments?

41
42 DR. VOORHEES: There were no written
43 public comments.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: At this time, we can
46 hold some public testimony. Is there any members of the
47 public in the room or on the phone who would like to
48 give public testimony at this time?

49
50 (No response)

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No one's jumping up in the room. Anyone on the phone? Going once, going twice. So, with that, there's no public testimony. At this point in time, I would entertain a motion for a Regional Council recommendation. It has been stated that we can do a separate proposal on the using claws for handicrafts and whatnot. For this seferred proposal WP 24-01, statewide sale of brown bear hides. Would anyone like to make a motion to support?

MR. PATTEE: Through the Chair, Tristen Pattee. I moved to support this motion.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Is there a second?

MR. HOWARTH: Second, Mr. Chair. Wilbur Howarth.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, a motion to support made by Tristen, seconded by Wilbur. At this point, we would have discussion and justification. Would you like to give your justification for supporting Tristen?

MR. PATTEE: Yes, through the Chair. So, you know, like I mentioned before you know, all the meat has to be salvaged, like we, you know, we're not going to go out and waste any of the meat. And so, what I understand this does, it gives the hunter the opportunity to sell something of that -- of the bear, you know with or without the claws. Just like how when you go get a walrus you have the option to take those tusks and make art out of it. And you -- you're able to sell it by art in order to sustain your fuel, your food, you know, your hunting activities. You know, there's -- and so it's pretty much the same thing, you know, now you're able to sell the brown bear hide and with or without the claws so that hunter has the option to take them off or leave them on. It's up to the hunter and so, I think it would help sustain their hunt going forward.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Tristen. Any other discussion, justification for this proposal? So, hearing none I -- yes, Dr. Vorhees.

DR. VOORHEES: Mr. Chair, thank you for letting me jump in. I just wanted to make sure that the motion is clear on the record and that it was to support this proposal with the updated and revised OSM

1 conclusion and modification.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Is that accurate per
4 your motion, Mr. Pattee?

5

6 MR. PATTEE: We -- and we are able to
7 make the motion to do it without the -- with or without
8 the claws, right? After this, because this one says with
9 the claws attached.

10

11 DR. VOORHEES: That is the -- through the
12 Chair. That is probably the previous OSM modification
13 that you're looking at. Yeah, so, if you want to just
14 quickly look at what -- I think you're voting on, if you
15 look on page 88, you'll see the OSM conclusion February
16 2025 and that is the most recent, the updated modified
17 conclusion.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne.

20

21 MR. PATTEE: Yes. So, it is clear. So,
22 my motion is clear to me. Yeah.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Verne, did you have
25 something to add?

26

27 MR. CLEVELAND: Yeah. I mean, who would
28 want to buy a claw with a bearskin? I mean, are you
29 gonna sell it to a taxidermy? They would -- of course
30 they all want the claws on the skin, right? I mean,
31 you're not going to sell no skin to a taxidermist without
32 the claws. I mean, that's a showcase right there. The
33 claws and the skull. So, it's got to go along with the
34 skin, the claws and the skull. Probably the feet too.
35 Thank you.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike, did you have
38 your hand up?

39

40 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I remember a lot of
41 the conditions for hunting grizzly bear and under
42 subsistence rules and regulations that, you know, stated
43 that once you do harvest a grizzly bear under the
44 subsistence rules, that the trophy portion of it had to
45 be removed. The head, the skull, the claws, you know,
46 the head, the skull, the claws fall under traditional
47 use. I think that in this, our subsistence books, it
48 should be considered -- it should replace the wording
49 of trophy portion of the animal and revert to traditional
50 use parts or traditional parts of use for bear, are

1 skull, claws, forelegs. No gallbladder. But those items
2 can be kept by the hunter, I should say because if the
3 hide is going to get sold, then I would rather, you
4 know, I would rather just sell the hide and be able to
5 use those pieces for art that I want to create. But, I
6 mean, it's up to you guys, if you guys wanted to add the
7 claws in there, but I know that nobody's going to want
8 to buy it if they don't have no claws, if they don't
9 have no skull. But yeah, it's a very touchy subject when
10 it comes down to subsistence harvest of bears and the
11 sale of hides. Because I've always known that we're to
12 bring the animal into either the Park Service or wherever
13 it may be to get it sealed and stuff under subsistence.
14 And we had to prove, provide proof that we harvested the
15 meat. You know, it should be for -- a lot of those items
16 should be considered under traditional use items. Claws,
17 skulls, teeth, forelegs. That was all I have right now.
18 I'm kind of confused. I'll get back.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Dr. Voorhees.

21

22 DR. VOORHEES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Lisa
23 just asked me to read the OSM conclusion on the record
24 for you again, and it would be to support proposal WP
25 24-01. And remember, that proposal is simply to be
26 allowed to sell the hides of brown bears harvested under
27 federal subsistence regulations. So, this conclusion is
28 saying that OSM supports this proposal with
29 modification, so that the hides of brown bears, with or
30 without claws attached, may be purchased within the
31 United States for personal use and not to be resold. The
32 hunter must request an OSM customary trade permit and
33 must return the permit to OSM. Additionally, the
34 modified regulation will align federal sealing
35 regulations with ADF&G sealing regulations.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
38 Any discussion we'd like to have on record?

39

40 (No response)

41

42 At this time, would we like to move
43 forward as the person who made the motion?

44

45 MR. PATTEE: Yes.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. Can I
48 please get a roll call vote? It was seconded.

49

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1 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Roll call vote.
2 We will start with Karmen Monigold.

3
4 (Pause)

5
6 MS. MONIGOLD: No.

7
8 MS. HUTCHINSON: Attamuk Shiedt.

9
10 MR. SCHIEDT: Like Monigold. I'm still
11 thinking which way to go, but at the time when we put
12 this together, we wanted not to have them sell the claws.
13 I'll say no.

14
15 (Pause)

16
17 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Attamuk voted no
18 for the record. Tristen Pattee.

19
20 MR. PATTEE: Yes.

21
22 MS. HUTCHINSON: Wilbur Howarth.

23
24 MR. HOWARTH: Yes. Can I comment on this
25 same -- at the same time?

26
27 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Briefly.

28
29 MR. HOWARTH: I guess. Okay. This might
30 have been 2 or 3 years ago when this was brought up or
31 put in place. We were having so much problems with bears,
32 and I guess this is why it's on the table now. But --
33 yes, it's a yes for me. Thank you.

34
35 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Thank you, Wilbur.
36 Clyde Ramoth.

37
38 MR. RAMOTH: No.

39
40 MS. HUTCHINSON: Elmer Armstrong.

41
42 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes.

43
44 MS. HUTCHINSON: Verne Cleveland.

45
46 (Pause)

47
48 MR. CLEVELAND: Yes.

49
50

1 MS. HUTCHINSON: So, Raymond Woods is not
2 on. Micheal Kramer.

3
4 MR. KRAMER: Undetermined at the moment.

5
6 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. So you're going
7 to abstain or just thinking?

8
9 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. I'm undetermined. I'm
10 not too sure which way I should vote on it.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: You can pass, and we
13 can come back to you, Mike.

14
15 MR. KRAMER: Okay. Yeah, we'll pass for
16 now.

17
18 MS. HUTCHINSON: And Thomas Baker.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

21
22 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. We have five for
23 and three against and one abstain. So, the motion passed.
24 Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: You got to go back
27 to him.

28
29 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Micheal now you
30 get a chance to vote.

31
32 MR. KRAMER: The reason why I'm
33 undetermined is, let's see, I harvest a grizzly bear,
34 and I wanted to sell the hides and skull and the claws.
35 And I didn't want to -- I think what it should say is
36 that anyone out of the United States -- out of Alaska,
37 all the traditional use portions of the animal should
38 be removed. Within the State of Alaska, a lot of cultures
39 use bear parts, but if you're selling them to someone
40 else within the State of Alaska that those traditional
41 use items can remain on the bear. That's why I'm
42 undetermined. I'd like to see it like that. But anything
43 going out of the State of Alaska, those be removed.
44 Those should remain in the State of Alaska. That's my
45 thought on it. Can that be submitted as a modification
46 to the proposal.

47
48 MS. HUTCHINSON: Hannah, do you mind
49 answering that.

50

1 MR. KRAMER: Or with the possibility of
2 modification?

3
4 DR. VOORHEES: Pippa, do you want to
5 weigh in on this one? Since you've done the most work
6 on this analysis and looked at the issue of, you know,
7 importation rules, and.....

8
9 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: we're not.....

10
11 MS. KENNER: Well, it's.....

12
13 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: No, excuse me. You're
14 not -- hold on. This is the Chair speaking. We're voting
15 on it now. There could be a separate discussion about
16 modifying it, but we're on the votes at this time. You
17 would have to vote for it, against. It would be -- it
18 would just have to be a separate thing because we've
19 already gone through the whole process.

20
21 MR. KRAMER: I'll go ahead and vote yes
22 as is.

23
24 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. We had six that
25 voted for it and three against, so the motion passed.
26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you. So, with
29 that, I'm going to ask that we take a 13-minute break
30 and come back at 4:50. When we do, we are going to come
31 back to the call for wildlife proposals.

32
33 (Off record)

34
35 (On record)

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37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right. It is now
38 4:50 p.m. We're going to move on to item C, which will
39 be Call for Federal Wildlife Proposals. Mr. Tom Plank,
40 you have the floor.

41
42 MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members
43 of the Council. And again, for the record, my name is
44 Tom Plank, wildlife biologist with the Office of
45 Subsistence management. And I am accompanied by my
46 colleague Hannah Voorhees, who is a anthropologist with
47 OSM. And now is the time y'all been waiting for. It's
48 the Call for the Wildlife Proposal and the Councils
49 opportunity to submit proposals to change Federal
50 Subsistence Wildlife harvest regulations. An information

1 flyer on how to submit a proposal to change federal
2 subsistence regulations can be found on page 31 in your
3 books. And for those in the crowd, there's a flyers back
4 here on the table. And as was mentioned during the
5 training, Councils may -- must make a motion and vote
6 to submit proposals. And also, the opportunity for
7 Council to submit proposals is available during the
8 entirety of this meeting. And if a Council member thinks
9 of a proposal later or in response to another agenda
10 item, they are welcome to suggest submitting a proposal
11 then. And of course, anyone can submit a proposal as an
12 individual before the submission window closes, which a
13 reminder is April 4th, which is not tomorrow, but the
14 next Friday. So, eight days away. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
15 Members of Council. I'd be happy to answer any questions
16 about proposal process, and we'll stand by while the
17 Council discuss possible proposals to submit.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Plank.
20 Any questions or comments before we get into the meat
21 of the discussion on proposals?

22
23 (No response)

24
25 Do we have any proposals anyone would
26 like to put in? Tristen.

27
28 MR. PATTEE: Just discussion. Tristen
29 Pattee here. Earlier in our meeting, there was
30 discussions about muskox and about potentially putting
31 a proposal in for that -- the Selawik, I think area. I
32 can't remember exactly what it was, but I know there was
33 discussion about potentially putting that in so they
34 could -- we could potentially open it because right now
35 it's closed in those areas. So, I don't know what you
36 guys think.

37
38 MR. RAMOTH: So, Mr. Chair. Thank you,
39 Tristen. After the discussions we had about muskox and
40 being new to proposal, but I'd like to make a motion to
41 that our RAC make a proposal to submit, and the language
42 could come later. But to include Selawik area, Selawik
43 residents to be able to hunt and harvest muskox without
44 any discussions about the numbers. But those could come
45 later. That's my motion.

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47 MR. PATTEE: I'll second that motion.

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49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, motion made by
50 Clyde, seconded by Tristen. Discussion?

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MR. RAMOTH: Part of the discussion, we'll leave it up to the state and federal to come up with a wording and possible harvest limits. That's part of my motion.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mr. Plank, I see your finger come up.

MR. PLANK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Basically, what we could use -- if you could give us more information on why you want that hunt to be open for the Selawik, how it would benefit the users in your area? Basically, any information you can give to help us put together the language for it, but also to give more support to let the Board know why it's important for that to open for you to kind of help push your case on that. That'd be appreciated.

MR. RAMOTH: Okay. Thank you, Tom. Part of it would be because the fact that already, you know, for maybe defensive purposes individuals might have already shot some muskox because they have no fear of anybody, they're bulls, right? So, but with the lower number of caribou and the way that small migration is moving around Selawik area to see -- it stating, no I don't know what's the exact word for it, but we're not allowed to hunt, but they do in the Buckland area and the Buckland River drainage and other areas of Unit 23, but none at Selawik. And the -- like I said, the people already got introduced to it, the people that enjoy eating it. But it would be part of subsistence because we keep talking about the high price of beef and it could help sustain our diet with the low numbers of caribou and they're already around. They won't get away from your camp or anything. Maybe loud gun noise, but the individual that would want to utilize their bullets would rather put it down and harvest the meat and probably even sell the hair, if need be, to that company at Anchorage, what they call it that -- yeah. Is that good enough, or do you need me to add on?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Is there any other comments? Verne.

MR. CLEVELAND: Probably around high cost of living.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: If anyone would like to add to that?

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MR. PATTEE: Sure. Yeah. I mean, just like you said, it's muskox, from what I heard, it's very delicious. And it's a good alternative to other edible meats that we have, and they're already around. And just by giving them a chance to, you know, hunt this food, I think it would be a good opportunity for subsistence food in the area.

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(Pause)

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

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MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. I'm just wondering, can they do it without an aerial count of numbers, or would that come later?

15

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, Dr. Fronstin touched on it a little bit. There are some numbers already. It's just that there's not a hunt established for this area. What did he say? That this -- the animals that are roaming near Selawik would be part of the Bering Land Bridge family of muskox, which they would be counted there. There is information. It's just that at this time, there's no hunt in place saying you can take 15 of them. It's not going to affect the herd or realistically it would be 1 or 2, but there are numbers, it would just be up to staff to put it all together.

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MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair, I would like to give my support on this. I think that muskox meat is so healthy and rich in fats that we need. It has a lot of vitamin C in it, and if they have a population that can even sustain one hunter being able to harvest, I don't see why they shouldn't be able to have that option, considering that's why we brought the muskox back. Thank you.

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MR. CLEVELAND: Verne and how many permits are you allowing to the residence for Unit 23 as a whole?

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Are you asking for currently how many federal permits are there.....

(Simultaneous speech)

MR. CLEVELAND: I mean, how many are.....

CHAIRPERSON BAKER:for this?

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MR. CLEVELAND:are they allowed to get to like, residents of Unit -- what was I saying?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: How many permits.

MR. CLEVELAND: How many permits are allowed to Unit 23? How many are you willing to give out to hunters to get muskox? How many permits for Unit 23, or Selawik in general?

MR. PLANK: Okay. Thank you, member Cleveland through the Chair. So, with this being a proposal, I don't have those numbers. That's what I'll put -- basically, I'll take this proposal, it'll get validated, and then I'll run an analysis on it, and then I'll bring that analysis that I'll have all those numbers and everything that we can find on it to you for the fall meeting. And then that's when the Council will make their decision on it. So, at this moment, sitting here, I don't know those numbers, but that will be what we, you know, this being March, I will spend the next nine months, six months digging into that.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, to clarify, just for all of the proposals that we discuss in the next 20 minutes or whatever. This isn't going before the Board of -- it's not going before the Federal Subsistence Board. The -- everything will be drafted, the numbers will be run. If it looks like it'll work, then it gets brought back to us as a Council and all of the other Councils at the fall cycle and that's when we can say we support this version or we want to edit it, whatever it may be. So, this is the time just to get it on record, we want this proposal. We want to move this forward to start the process. So, by November, October at our next meeting, that's when we would be able to say, okay, we're able to do three permits or two for Selawik or one or whatever it might be.

MR. RAMOTH: Mr. Chair, so that was part of my -- when I made that motion to leave the numbers. Because in Unit 23, right now for the Kotzebue Sound West of -- including Buckland River drainage with the open seasons of August 1st to March 15th. One bull by federal drawing permit or state permit. And it's the same with Cape Krusenstern National Monument one bull by federal drawing permit and the other one Kobuk River drainage, one bull by state permit or federal drawing permit. But for the rest of us, like Selawik is no

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1 federal open season. That was my reasoning, and I can't
2 see high numbers of people hunting them. It's just a few
3 of us that would love to share the whole village and
4 have a good potluck of muskox.

5

6

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Elmer.

7

8 MR. ARMSTRONG: So, I know in our recent
9 discussions -- Elmer Armstrong, Noorvik -- on the school
10 potluck, was that school and potluck/potluck or...?

11

12 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. This
13 is Hannah Voorhees. Are you saying school? Sorry. I just
14 want to make sure I understand your question.

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MR. ARMSTRONG: Yeah. School.

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DR. VOORHEES: Okay.

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MR. ARMSTRONG: And potluck.

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MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes, thank you. Elmer
Armstrong from Noorvik. I think that would go back to
Clyde. Would you like that to be added?

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Well, those are
2 separate. You wouldn't add those into.....

3
4 MR. RAMOTH: But. Okay. Thank you, Elmer,
5 for that thought because -- Clyde Ramoth Selawik, for
6 the record. Tom, another avenue we'd love to have the
7 muskox, at least if we do catch one or if there's one
8 that's injured, which we've seen in more than one case
9 because they're in new country now in Selawik area. So,
10 we have this annual culture camp, and it's an educational
11 thing for our whole village in September. Annually,
12 we've invited people like Siikuarag when she worked for
13 different agencies, but a whole muskox is a different
14 story for our 200 something kids that would get
15 introduced and our residents for that matter. But that's
16 another thing that we would definitely use that for,
17 like a, like a potluck, but also for educational at the
18 school. Thank you, Elmer.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike, did you have
21 something?

22
23 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. Are all the permits
24 within Game Management Unit 23, are those Tier II or
25 tier whatever for subsistence purposes? That's my
26 question or is that just under the state? The reason why
27 I'm saying that is because I've always wanted to hunt
28 the muskox. I'll never qualify under a Tier II or tier
29 whatever that bunch of baloney is. I think that we should
30 be able to spread the subsistence resources throughout
31 the region. So, what I'm trying to say is, you know,
32 each -- at least two communities a year and rotate. Say,
33 hey, Mr. Clyde Ramoth and I'm in Selawik and harvest two
34 muskox within Game Management Unit 23 for subsistence
35 purposes. Tristen Pattee living in Ambler and him and
36 with one other person in Ambler wants to get a muskox
37 within their area that these animals can be harvested,
38 you know, within Game Management Unit 23. Just as long
39 as they're not hammering one specific group of muskox.
40 Because I know that a lot of areas especially, Buckland
41 and Deering, you know, they're the only ones that are
42 allowed to hunt those ones down there. That's not fair.
43 I want to try hunt. I want to get a muskox, I never had.
44 I see them out there in the country, but I've never
45 eaten one before. I think I've tried jerky out one time,
46 but you know, that way it makes it fair across the Board
47 and you just alternate villages on a yearly basis. You
48 know, I think this Tier II thing needs to get drifted
49 away and diminished, you know, somewhere else, and then
50 start making it fair and equal to all other subsistence

1 users within Game Management Unit 23. Just as long as
2 they are not targeting one specific group of muskox in
3 an area. That way they can move within Game Management
4 Unit 23, and harvest muskox from different areas. That
5 way it's fair and equal and you get to allow other people
6 from other villages with the opportunity to harvest the
7 muskox.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Annie, did you want
10 to jump in on that?

11
12 MS. CARLSON: Through the Chair. Thank
13 you. Annie Carlson with the National Park Service, just
14 to respond to your question about whether or not it's
15 all Tier II in Game Management Unit 23, the state has a
16 tier two hunt that is that sort of ranked process in the
17 federal. The federal hunt is somewhat different. It's
18 like, we the Park Service here in Kotzebue issue permits
19 for Cape Krusenstern in the area north and west of Kobuk
20 Valley. And that's through a pure lottery where we'll
21 open up a lottery and people in the region, in the NANA
22 region, call in to put in their names. People from
23 Buckland and Deering don't qualify because they have
24 their other permit, but everybody else calls in and we
25 get typically more than 100 people in the past couple
26 of years, we've only had three permits available. So,
27 it's a competitive lottery, but there's no ranking. It's
28 just we do a random drawing.

29
30 MR. KRAMER: Because I know a lot of them
31 people down there in Deering are always screaming, can
32 somebody please get these muskox off of our airport or
33 community or away from their graves? I mean, me and
34 Clyde would like to go Deering and go get one, Buckland.
35 It's not fair, they get to have them all. It's time to
36 start sharing. Our moose and caribou are leaving. It's
37 time to start sharing, region wide.

38
39 MR. CLEVELAND: Do them permits go to the
40 subsistence hunters or does it go to anybody that hunts?

41
42 MS. CARLSON: Again, Annie Carlson with
43 the National Park Service. It's for subsistence. The
44 Tier II state permit and the federal permit will
45 typically be subsistence with different definitions of
46 what a subsistence user is but for subsistence hunting.
47 There's no -- the federal system doesn't have like a
48 non-federally qualified hunt.

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50 MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Further discussion on Clyde's proposal?

(No response)

Further discussion on Clyde's proposal? Justification for adding this potentially?

MS. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Chair. I was just wondering for clarity, but for the area that you're really considering, like how far out of Selawik would that be, or is it just do you want to put a definition for that? And then would it just be for Selawik residents?

MR. RAMOTH: That's a good question, because I'm sure people at Noorvik or Kiana, we call ourselves a Lower Kobuk Advisory Committee. But Selawik has a the 156-mile river. We got the (In Native) River, we got (In Native) and other rivers where we thought we could find them -- every spring, summer, fall, there's at least a few muskox seen while boating, and sometimes they come into town. I don't know if they're running away from predators. Maybe the bear or I don't think they fear the bear, but I don't know. So, it just has a lot of country. But we -- I would consider, like, inviting Verne to go boating and Karmen. Oh, there's exemptions, but invite anybody to go hunting in our area for -- No? For our village. Yeah. For our area. Yeah. So, it's a big, big area. So, with the low numbers of caribou and moose, yeah. I think it would be for the Selawik area. I just wanted to mention the length of the rivers and stuff.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Thank you for that clarification. Mr. Chair

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that. Any other discussion? Karmen.

MS. MONIGOLD: Maybe just a suggestion. Once the numbers get back from the feds on the Nome side where they've seen the muskox in that area, maybe that could determine how far and wide? Just a suggestion. If it doesn't overlap with someone else's hunting district. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, that'll play into the analysis that Mr. Plank will do. But he'll make a

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1 note and include that specifically. Anyone like to call
2 the question?

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4 MR. CLEVELAND: Call for question.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Question has been
7 called for. I don't recall who seconded. Was it Tristen?
8 So, the motion made by Clyde, seconded by Tristen for
9 this proposal. All those in favor, please signify by
10 saying aye.

11

12 IN UNISON: Aye.

13

14 And those opposed, same sign.

15

16 (No response)

17

18 Hearing no opposition. That proposal has
19 been approved to move forward into the analysis and
20 validation stage. Do we have any other proposals anyone
21 would like to make?

22

23 (No response)

24

25 Any other proposals? Did anyone want to
26 do the handicraft claw thing?

27

28 MR. KRAMER: I want to make one on
29 muskox.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Mike.

32

33 MR. KRAMER: I make a motion to make a
34 proposal for muskox to eliminate Tier II permits. I would
35 encourage a lottery status from rotating villages
36 throughout the region. Just as long as these animals are
37 harvested within Game Management Unit 23 for subsistence
38 purposes to which they are allowed to keep the horns for
39 traditional use. That way it would give an equal
40 opportunity to users in every village to be able to get
41 the ability to harvest a muskox for their community or
42 for their families. It gives a different opportunity for
43 some to harvest a different animal other than caribou
44 and moose. And like Clyde said, it would be a good thing
45 for students and to participate in the harvest -- the
46 processing the animal for whether it be community use
47 or family use. That would be my proposal. But it would
48 make it to where that individuals cannot hunt these
49 muskox in one certain area. There need to be, you know,
50 you need to be looking at different areas so that one

1 specific group of muskox aren't targeted, but you have
2 other areas that have muskox that can be taken, that way
3 you're not taking a bunch of these animals in one certain
4 group.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
7 Mike. Before we -- before I ask for a second, since Tier
8 II is only a state of Alaska Department of Fish and Game
9 thing. Would we be able to make that proposal, or would
10 it be we send a recommendation to an AC to do basically
11 what you are asking?

12
13 MR. KRAMER: I mean, what I'm trying to
14 say is to eliminate either -- if we do have the Tier II
15 process in federal or subsistence muskox harvesting. But
16 if you guys say that it's under a lottery, what I'd like
17 to see is it be offered to different communities within
18 the region to offer a different subsistence resource for
19 these -- the people in these communities to enjoy and
20 try. You know, subsistence means everybody. Traditional
21 use, it means everybody. So, I think it should be --
22 make it -- made equal across the Board and make it up
23 to the Regional Advisory Council on a yearly basis to
24 decide which communities gets to harvest -- two
25 communities get to harvest next year's muskox and
26 there'd be -- I'm not too sure how many permits you guys
27 want to have or what would be a advisable amount of
28 animals harvested.

29
30 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. This
31 is Hannah Voorhees, anthropologist, for the record. I
32 just -- yeah so, member Kramer, the tier two system is
33 specific to the state. As you mentioned we have a drawing
34 permit or lottery for the federal regulations for the
35 federal hunt. I guess I'm seeking to understand what
36 you'd hope to see better because with a drawing permit,
37 you know, anyone can apply for that. And I think, you
38 know, part of the benefit of a drawing permit is that
39 people from all different communities could be selected
40 year to year. You know, it's random, as far as I know.
41 So, are you saying that -- I mean, I know there is an
42 argument that say a larger community would have more
43 permits awarded because they have, like Kotzebue might,
44 you know, end up with most of the permits because it's
45 a larger community and smaller communities maybe will
46 lose out. Are you trying to say that the lottery system,
47 the drawing system itself should be modified some way
48 so that communities are actually selected first, and
49 then someone from each community, you know, am I
50 understanding maybe what you're trying to get to or...?

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MR. KRAMER: Yes. What I'm trying to get at is it makes it equal across the Board. I guess on the federal side, we do not use Tier II, but we use the drawing or lottery process. I think it would be good to offer it to different communities every year. Let's just say I wanted to enter my name into Kiana under the drawing. Kiana's picked that one year. Maybe Noorvik picked that year. Well, they get to a bunch of these people, get to call in and say, hey, I'd like to nominate my name for a muskox permit. Okay. Well, and then they send them a confirmation email saying that you've been entered into a drawing for 2026 muskox for subsistence federal -- under the federal subsistence rules and regulations for harvesting muskox. That way Kiana and Noorvik would be able to -- I'm not too sure how many -- it would be up to the Council to decide how many permits should be available. I know Kotzebue, there's a lot of people I know that I could probably apply for the Tier II permit in the state, and probably not even qualify for it until I'm 90 years old. You know that whole system needs to be kiboshed [sic] gotten rid of because it's all unfair. Same people every year get to harvest them but us. So, this broadens and opens up a new avenue for other villages to be able to harvest these animals. We know that they're on the rise, but this way you are not harvesting one specific group of animals. Because I know that, you know, Deering and Buckland, they're allowed to only harvest their own, but we can't. But they could come up here and go harvest some of our muskox up in Cape Krusenstern. There needs to be something that makes it equal across the Board and including Deering and Buckland. But if they want to keep their own muskox then, you know, they're subject to their own area. But this way, it makes it fair and equal to other subsistence users within the region and we as a Council can select two communities per year, but it would be decided on OSM as to how many permits would be released. Let's just say they offer ten permits, and all of a sudden, bam! You all of a sudden get ten hunts, a successful hunts while the season is closed for those two communities and you got next year the other communities get to qualify. That way you're spreading the subsistence resource around the region and not just specific ones. That way it's fair and equal.

46

47

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that, Mike. Raime Fronstin, did you want to add something to the conversation?

49

50

1 DR. FRONSTIN: Yes. Thank you. I -- I'm
2 not sure if, Mike, if you're understanding, we do that
3 already. We -- all of our -- so, you are all -- actually
4 all of the communities except for Deering and Buckland
5 are eligible right now to get a permit through the
6 federal system for the Cape Krusenstern area and the
7 Noatak area and those permits are randomly selected. So,
8 we put everybody's name in whoever asks for it. From
9 around all of the villages, and we basically draw, you
10 know, names essentially from a hat. Not exactly. We do
11 it using the computer, but so it is completely you know
12 -- you have completely -- an equal chance as everybody
13 else. And we also do not allow the same household to get
14 a muskox two years in a row, because we do want to spread
15 the wealth. So, are you -- talk -- and we are also
16 talking about increasing permits right now, the federal
17 side only (distortion). But like you said, our
18 populations are increasing. So, we share those permits
19 with the state Tier II system. But we do ours
20 differently. So, we are talking about increasing the
21 hunts. Is that what you're talking about?

22
23 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. Just to make it equal
24 across the Board, you know different people from
25 different villages get to harvest other you know, muskox
26 that other villages can't give their location. I know
27 that, you know, Deering and Buckland, we haven't been
28 able to go over there and harvest muskox when they've
29 been having problems with them tearing down their graves
30 and rampaging on their runway and running over their
31 runway lights. It would be nice to have someone go over
32 there and maybe harvest one extra muskox to help thin
33 down the population, but that way you're having an equal
34 amount of animals throughout the region being taken, not
35 just in one specific place.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Okay.

38
39 DR. FRONSTIN: I see I think that would
40 be -- would that be a proposal to allow other communities
41 to harvest from the Buckland -- wherever Buckland and
42 Deering harvest from, I guess. I don't know, but I think
43 it's customary and traditional use. So, I'm not a
44 subsistence expert, so I'm going to stop speaking.

45
46 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. There
47 are C&T determinations that bound where certain
48 communities are qualified to hunt or not. But I just
49 want to emphasize that, yeah, the drawing permit system
50 is really different than the Tier II -- federal

000139

1 regulations do not follow tier two and as Raime
2 mentioned, it is a random drawing. If you were to like
3 prioritize certain communities, you know, then if you
4 lived in Kotzebue, you'd be less likely to get a permit
5 with that system. So, there'd be tradeoffs either way.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, Clyde had a
8 question. Before you go, Clyde, Thomas Baker, to
9 clarify, Dr. Fronstin, at current the way that the
10 lottery system works for the federal permits, if I live
11 in Kobuk, I can apply for putting my name in the lottery,
12 or if I lived in Selawik, any of the villages outside
13 of Deering and Buckland, is that correct?
14

15 DR. FRONSTIN: That's correct. Let me
16 just pull -- I tried to attach a map or our last poster
17 to the chat, but I wasn't able to. I may be able to send
18 it, and you could share it, but yes, that's correct. All
19 communities except for -- Point Hope is not included in
20 the Cape Krusenstern. But Point Hope is included in the
21 Noatak population. But the Kivalina and Noatak Kotzebue,
22 Noorvik, Kiana, Selawik, Ambler, Kobuk, Shungnak are all
23 able to put their names in for the two federal hunts.
24

25 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: The issue being, if
26 you're in Selawik, you're further away from Cape
27 Krusenstern than someone in Kotzebue. Correct?
28

29 DR. FRONSTIN: Yes. There -- I think the
30 no -- I don't -- the no. Well, I think the Noatak is
31 probably just as far the Noatak area, but. Yeah.
32

33 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that,
34 Dr. Fronstin. Clyde, did you have something?
35

36 DR. FRONSTIN: Thank you.
37

38 MR. RAMOTH: Yep and it's related to your
39 question, Thomas. Thank you. Clyde Ramoth, for the
40 record from Selawik. So, with our high population of 900
41 and something, people at Selawik and the qualified
42 hunters that do have their hunting license, is it --
43 does that mean the more residents that fill up for these
44 permits or whatever it is the better, higher chances we
45 get -- we have to obtain that?
46

47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: For the community as
48 a whole?
49
50

1 MR. RAMOTH: As a whole, yeah. Because
2 we -- I know we talk about the educational stuff and the
3 traditional potlucks and stuff, but for the residents,
4 and that's something I wanted to clarify. That way I
5 could bring it up in our meetings or just in general at
6 home. Thank you.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

9

10 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. And
11 also, you can you know, put anybody that is old enough
12 to hunt and able or even maybe not able, like if your
13 mom or -- because you can proxy hunt under these hunts
14 and right now Unit 23 shows three federal permits and
15 that's it. So, I mean, our populations aren't that big
16 so, you know, just FYI. But within the federal side, you
17 know, only a hundred people put in to the lottery, and
18 we have a lot more than 100 people in our region. So,
19 the word just needs to get out more and so more people
20 have a chance. Thank you.

21

22 DR. VOORHEES: Through the Chair. Just
23 to clarify that on the federal side, we call it the
24 designated hunter permit. And there is one for muskox
25 Unit 23 where one federally qualified subsistence user
26 could hunt muskox for another. And in terms of the number
27 of permits, I think -- so we're looking at hunts here.
28 In the regulations there's -- yeah, there's three
29 different hunts, but the number of permits, as Tom
30 mentioned that are distributed in total, we don't know,
31 off the top of our heads at this time. But, you know,
32 it depends on how many people are allowed to participate.
33 So, they each person would have one would be able to
34 harvest one muskox.

35

36 MS. MONIGOLD: Yeah, that's what I mean.

37

38 DR. VOORHEES: Okay.

39

40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, going back to
41 your motion for a proposal, Mike, what would you like
42 to do just because the lottery system is in place, we
43 can't really do anything about Tier II and the proposal
44 process. Are you wanting to remain of the position to
45 do a proposal to make it so only like two villages a
46 year, rather than all nine villages can put names in?

47

48 MR. KRAMER: I can't answer at the
49 moment, but -- I mean, what I would like to know is do
50 the villages -- surrounding villages get informed of

1 this lottery process in Kiana, Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk?
2 Is there people out there that, hey, you guys could put
3 in for this, or is it just my buddy system?
4

5 MS. CARLSON: Through the Chair Annie
6 Carlson with the National Park Service, we do try to get
7 the word out as best we can. We will announce on social
8 media, we'll update our website, we'll put it on the
9 radio, and we'll put up flyers in town. And I'm going
10 to look at Emily, do we mail flyers to the villages?
11 Yes. We mail the flyers to Village Councils to post in
12 their towns as well. So, we do try. But the best way is
13 for you all to share the information to on your own
14 Facebook pages and the more people who can get into the
15 lottery, the better. We want people to participate.
16

17 MR. KRAMER: And with this lottery
18 system, I mean, are they only able to harvest these
19 animals in specific locations or is it Game Management
20 Unit 23 wide other than Deering and Buckland?
21

22 MS. CARLSON: For the two different hunts
23 that the Park Service out of Kotzebue manages, one of
24 the hunts is for Cape Krusenstern National monument. In
25 recent years we've issued two permits for Cape
26 Krusenstern. The other hunt that we manage, which is
27 sort of the Noatak area -- excuse me. We have issued one
28 of those permits, those numbers of the -- the number of
29 permits that we issue per hunt that we manage can
30 fluctuate. So, that's what Dr. Fronstin was referring
31 to, is that with the state, we look at the population
32 and make a determination on how many bulls we think
33 between the state and the federal hunts combined, that
34 the population can manage.
35

36 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, just to clarify
37 with that, between the two hunts, it's hundreds and
38 hundreds of square miles between each of the hunts that
39 it's not just one localized area like you have to go to
40 this one spot by sealing point. It's that whole section
41 of the coast. So, it is not just one localized area.
42

43 MS. CARLSON: Sure, if you were to get
44 the Cape Krusenstern permit, you could search the whole
45 monument other than private lands. It'd have to be on
46 the public.....
47

48 (Simultaneous speech)
49
50

1 DR. FRONSTIN: And through the Chair --
2 and through the Chair. The Noatak permit is the entire
3 Noatak Preserve so, and down. Yeah. I was trying to send
4 a map. It will not go through. Is there someone -- can
5 I send a map to someone in there and someone can print
6 it out?

7
8 MS. HUTCHINSON: It did attach in the
9 chat but I'm not sure you can open it, so let me see.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: It's in the
12 regulation book so we're able to see it here.

13
14 DR. FRONSTIN: Okay, great. Great.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, Tom is going to
17 pull it up on the big screen.

18
19 MS. MONIGOLD: But there is a map.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: There is a map. We're
22 going to see it here in a minute. Would you like to
23 maintain your motion, change your motion?

24
25 MR. KRAMER: I could just go ahead and
26 rescind it since the process is already there. But I
27 would like to see it there, across the Board, through
28 all the communities. But, you know, my concern is you
29 know, I mean, what is the overall population and the
30 density within different areas and different communities
31 that will be able to allow these people to be able to
32 harvest these muskox? Let's just say there's probably a
33 dozen of them near Kiana. I want to go get one and I
34 live in Kiana. I could go over there and go get one. But
35 do I basically -- if there is none there by Kiana do I
36 got to go all the way up to Cape Krusenstern and harvest
37 one?

38
39 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes. You would have
40 to go to Cape Krusenstern National Monument or to the
41 Noatak Preserve depending on what you applied for and
42 what you win in the lottery.

43
44 MR. KRAMER: Because the reason is, you
45 know, federal lands are federal lands and it should be
46 open. If there is a sustainable amount of muskox within
47 that area to be able to harvest.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: The map's up on the
50 screen for those that are interested. So, just to

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1 confirm, you want to rescind motion, Mike?

2

3 MR. KRAMER: Yeah. If the process is
4 already in place, then I'll go ahead and rescind it.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: All right, for the
7 record, Mike has rescinded his motion for a proposal.
8 Are there any other proposals anyone would like to put
9 forward?

10

11 (No response)

12

13 And if someone doesn't have one today,
14 we could potentially do one tomorrow if we have a quorum,
15 which we may or may not, depending on folks going to the
16 funeral. So, does anybody have a proposal they'd like
17 to put forward?

18

19 (No response)

20

21 Hearing none. Thank you, Mr. Plank. We
22 will go ahead and move on to the next item, which is
23 item D, the Council Charter Review, and I will turn it
24 over to Lisa.

25

26 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
27 Chair and members of the Council. So, your Council's
28 2024 Charter is in your meeting book, the one with the
29 caribou on front, on page 127. So, all of the ten
30 Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils were chartered
31 under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Under the act,
32 each Council Charter needs to be renewed every two years.
33 So, approximately a year before it is renewed, each
34 Council can have a discussion to see if there's anything
35 you want to change. The primary changes made in your
36 Charter from the previous year includes item six, which
37 was support -- in 2024 the office of Subsistence
38 management that provides support to your Council, was
39 moved out of the support of the Fish and Wildlife Service
40 and to the Office of the Assistant Secretary, Policy and
41 Environmental Management. So, this change was made. In
42 addition, just to remind the Council that in 2024 it was
43 added that in addition to -- up to ten representative
44 members on your Council, one non-voting young leader
45 member may be added. Excuse me. This non-voting member
46 must be between the ages of 18 and 25, participate in
47 subsistence activities in your region. The Office of
48 Subsistence management will provide an update about the
49 status of the non-voting members later in this meeting.
50 If the Council is satisfied with all the Charter

1 provisions and it and as it is and requests no changes,
2 then the Council may just simply vote to forward the
3 Charter to the Board. The Charter carries over and is
4 formally approved every other year. So, you may review,
5 edit and you can make recommendations if you desire, but
6 if not then it just continues as is. So, Mr. Chair, does
7 this Council wish to make a recommendation changes to
8 the Charter or if not, the Council will just need to
9 approve it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Any discussion,
12 questions? Would we like to just approve it, move it
13 forward and soldier on?

14
15 MR. PATTEE: Mr. Chair, this is Tristen
16 Pattee. I moved to approve the Charter.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do we have a second?

19
20 MR. RAMOTH: Second.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Motion made by
23 Tristen to approve the Charter as presented. Seconded
24 by Clyde. All those in favor, please signify by saying
25 aye.

26
27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And those opposed,
30 same sign.

31
32 (No response)

33
34 Hearing no opposition. We have approved
35 the Council Charter. Thank you, Lisa. We'll move on to
36 item E, review and approve FY 2024 Annual Report.

37
38 MS. HUTCHINSON: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
39 Chair. Thank you, guys, for hanging out there. It's
40 really important. These are action items, and we just
41 want to make sure we have a quorum in case we don't have
42 tomorrow. So, your Councils -- in the supplemental
43 meeting book, which is the one with the white cover, on
44 under tab 1, you will see an explanation of what our
45 annual reports are about. So, the annual reports, just
46 to remind mostly for Karmen's benefit, since you are
47 new, it's a way for the Regional Advisory Councils to
48 bring the regional subsistence uses and needs to the
49 Secretaries attention by communicating them in the
50 letter form to the Federal Subsistence Board. So, your

1 Councils Fiscal Year 24 Annual Report -- so, you guys
2 came up with these in -- at the last meeting. These
3 topics is found under tab 2 of your meeting book.
4 Supplemental meeting book, I'm sorry tab 2. As a
5 reminder, the Annual Report provides the Councils an
6 opportunity to address the directors of each of the four
7 Departments of Interior Agencies. These are within the
8 Federal Subsistence Board and the Department of
9 Agriculture, the Forest Service, and for public members
10 in their capacity as members of the Federal Subsistence
11 Board. So, the Board is required to discuss and reply
12 to each issue in every annual report, and then to act
13 when -- within the Board's authority. So, if you'd like
14 me, I can just give a little brief overview of what your
15 five points were. Would you like that? Okay. So, you can
16 just see them, you can read along if you like, or I'll
17 just read them. But they were identified at your last
18 meeting in November 8th, 2024.

19
20 These items included, one addressing the
21 impacts of Caribou migration displacement by non-local
22 and non-resident hunters on federal and state lands in
23 Unit 23. Number two, you wanted the support of the
24 expansion of statewide qualitative and quantitative
25 research on salmon returns and climate change factors.
26 Number three, you want to support the expansion of
27 research studies that included local observations and
28 traditional knowledge of climate change impacts to
29 subsistence resources and subsistence opportunities.
30 Number four, addressing the impact of non-resident
31 hunting in Unit 23 caribou populations. And number five,
32 concerns about migratory waterfowl and water quality.
33 There's more descriptions under each of those, but this
34 is an action item, and the Council should finalize this
35 report by either adding, subtracting, or otherwise
36 editing topics at this meeting, and then vote to submit
37 the annual report with any suggested edits. But because
38 of the time required for review and the submission to
39 the Board, we are unable to add any additional topics.
40 But I am happy to jot down any that you might have, and
41 we can add that to -- keep it in mind for your upcoming
42 FY 2025 report that you will take up this fall. So,
43 thank you, Mr. Chair, Council members, if you have any
44 questions. Thank you.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Clyde.

47
48 MR. RAMOTH: Mr. Chair, I'll make a
49 motion to approve the FY 2024 Annual Report as presented.
50

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1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Motion made by Clyde.
2 Do we have a second?

3
4 MR. PATTEE: I second that motion.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Tristen.
7 Any discussion?

8
9 (No response)

10
11 Hearing none. Excuse me. All those in
12 favor, please signify by saying aye.

13
14 IN UNISON: Aye.

15
16 All those opposed same sign.

17
18 (No response)

19
20 Hearing none, we have approved and
21 reviewed our FY 2024 Annual Report. We will move on to
22 item F, the Alaska Board of Fisheries, including
23 statewide finfish, March 7th through 20, 2026. Call for
24 proposals. Lisa.

25
26 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yes, and this isn't
27 exactly an action item unless the Council wishes to do
28 so. But I just wanted to remind that the Council does
29 have an opportunity if they would like, if they have any
30 Board of Fisheries proposals for the State Board of
31 Fisheries for their meeting, that will be taken up. And
32 I believe that the call for proposals is due April 10th,
33 so that if you do want to put together a proposal, this
34 would be the time to do that. And there's just a little
35 bit of information on page 132 of your book on the call.
36 So, if you have any questions, thank you.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Questions,
39 discussion from members of the Council?

40
41 (No response)

42
43 Hearing none. This doesn't need to be
44 voted on since we haven't moved anything forward. Elmer.

45
46 MR. ARMSTRONG: Yeah, I just had a
47 question. Was there any proposals to close trawlers in
48 federal waters?

49
50

1 MS. HUTCHINSON: Well, this is -- right
2 this is a call for proposals. So, they're not they
3 haven't been identified yet, so it's just there will be
4 coming out. The proposals are due in April 10th, so we
5 won't know what the proposals were until the proposals
6 are all in and that would be through Fish and Game,
7 would be able to provide that. But that's the proposal
8 of something that you wanted to consider. That Council
9 could consider submitting. Also, the trawlers, the state
10 doesn't manage. Is that correct? The state doesn't
11 manage the outer areas of fishing that's done by federal,
12 NOAA. Yes. Yeah.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: And to confirm this
15 is Alaska Board of Fisheries, which means state waters
16 and management so that trawlers is out of this. Any
17 discussion?

18
19 (No response)

20
21 Hearing none. We will move on down. Item
22 G future meeting dates confirm fall 2025 meeting date
23 and location, which is tab #3 in our supplemental book.
24 We are meeting October 27th, 28th of this year. We picked
25 that date to skip over AFN and not have any conflicting
26 meetings and then we will select the Winter 2026 meeting
27 date and location. Does anybody have any
28 recommendations? There can only be two RACs meeting per
29 week. So, if you look at the calendar and there are two
30 RAC meeting in the same week, we can't take that one.
31 So, our options look to be the week of Presidents Day
32 in mid-February, the first week of March, or the last
33 week of March.

34
35 MS. MONIGOLD: Any idea (distortion).
36 Sorry this Karmen, any idea when school is on break?
37 Because we definitely don't want to do it when -- isn't
38 March when school goes on school break?

39
40 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I think they just had
41 spring break, like last week or the week before. But I
42 don't -- but I'm not sure if anyone has the dates for
43 next year's school calendar unless someone has that in
44 their pocket in the audience.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Brent is looking it
47 up.

48
49 MS. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Chair, just to
50 remind -- for each of the calendars that the Council

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1 does need to vote to like, even if you've already
2 confirmed it, just to reconfirm those previous dates.
3 So, we could do them all at once or once we get through
4 them. So, thank you.

5
6 MR. RAMOTH: Mr. Chair. Just a general
7 comment before we make the decision and motion for a
8 meeting calendar in front of us here. Keep in mind about
9 the weather, because we've had some severe weather
10 storms during the dates where we proposed meeting dates
11 and people like meeting in person, right.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: If we want, we can
14 plan to meet a year from now during that week of the
15 23rd through the 27th, probably in Kotzebue.

16
17 MR. RAMOTH: So, October 27, 28 would be
18 my motion to approve. And I would like to hear how has
19 that been for the record, as far as weather wise here
20 in Kotzebue. Is the climate changing, Karmen?

21
22 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I'm pretty sure
23 that's the day the worst flood ever happened last year.

24
25 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. I would
26 like to look at my phone, please to let you know what
27 my pictures show.

28
29 MS. HUTCHINSON: It looks like the spring
30 break is March 16th. Is that correct, Brent?

31
32 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: March 16th through
33 20th of 2026. Spring break for our school district. In
34 the past, we've tried to not do our fall meeting too
35 early just because people are still trying to get out
36 and hunt at the end of September, middle of September.
37 We can move it up just because October is when the
38 weather starts getting bad. So, we can either approve
39 27, 28 or we can make it earlier. What is the wish of
40 the Council?

41
42 MR. PATTEE: I move to approve the
43 October 27, 28 dates for the fall 2025 meeting.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, motion made by
46 Tristen. Is there a second?

47
48 MS. MONIGOLD: I second, it.

49
50

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1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Karmen.
2 All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

3
4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5
6 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Those opposed, same
7 sign.

8
9 (No response)

10
11 Hearing none will confirm. October 27,
12 28, 2025 for our fall meeting. Do we have any
13 recommendations for Winter 2026? It does look like there
14 are two RAC meetings during the week of the 16th of
15 spring break.

16
17 MS. MONIGOLD: Mr. Chair.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

20
21 MS. MONIGOLD: I make a motion to have
22 our winter meeting on March 26 and 27, 2026.

23
24 MS. HUTCHINSON: Thursday, Friday.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I said a year from
27 now. So, it would be that week. But we can do that of
28 26, 27. That's a Thursday, Friday. It doesn't matter. I
29 mean, it just up to the Council.

30
31 MS. HUTCHINSON: And at the Winter -- at
32 your next meeting, you'd have a chance to change the
33 date if you really need to but it's good to get it.....

34
35 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair. May I
36 change those dates to March 24th and 25th of 2026,
37 please.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Sure, motion made by
40 Karmen. Do we have a second for March 24th, 25th, 2026,
41 which is a Tuesday, Wednesday?

42
43 MR. PATTEE: I second that.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Tristen.
46 All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

47
48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49
50 All those opposed, same sign.

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(No response)

Hearing none will go ahead and pencil in March 24, 25, 2026 for our Winter meeting in Kotzebue. And then for the fall 2026 meeting, do we have any recommendations for dates?

(No response)

Would we like to do that second to last week of September, say 24th, 25th? And even if we do vote on this now, we've got plenty of time to change it.

MR. PATTEE: Mr. Chair, Tristen Pattee, I'll make the motion for September 24th and 25th. Fall 2026 meeting.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: In Kotzebue.

MR. PATTEE: In Kotzebue.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Do we have a second?

MR. CLEVELAND: Second.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Motion made by Tristen, seconded by Verne for September 24th and 25th of 2026 for our fall meeting. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

All those opposed, same sign.

(No response)

Hearing no opposition, we'll go ahead and mark down September 24th, 25th, 2026 for our fall 2026 meeting, which can be changed at a later date. With that, we will move to the last item that we said we would take under action items, and it will go back to the D1 lands request. Is Mike in the room?

(Pause)

We're just going to hold off till member Kramer is back in the room.

(Pause)

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All right. Member Mike Kramer is back in the room. So, our last action item is the D1 lands request. My personal opinion is I don't feel comfortable sending in a letter approving or opposing anything at this time on the D1 lands request until we had an in-depth presentation and more information from BLM of what the consequences of this would be. What is the wish of the Council? Is their comments, discussion?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Through the Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Elmer.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Would staff be able to draft a letter?

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Staff would be able to draft a letter. That's what I think Mr. Plank said earlier. It's just that we would need to have an in-depth conversation of what it is that we support about it. And that's part of why I'm hesitant to have this discussion, just because I don't feel that the entire Council has enough in-depth information. So, we can have the discussion now and then staff can use that as the basis for a letter.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

MS. MONIGOLD: Thank you. My understanding is that the D1 lands people have been here before with presentations and talked to you guys, and they have discussed what's at stake.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: They have, but one of the problems is there are different people on the Council now. It's newer members that weren't available -- weren't here when that presentation happened. It was also, I believe, a year and a half, two years ago. So it's -- Lisa.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Just -- there was -- yes, I believe it was two years ago. It was right when the Environmental Impact Statement came out. It was just before the Environmental Impact Statement came out and we had BLM and also Morgan provided an overview to the Council about it. The public comment period had not opened at that point. So, the Council had a good discussion, but they voted not to write a letter because they hadn't had a chance to review the Environmental

1 Impact Statement and it was before the comment period.
2 So -- but the Council did hear about it, but it was two
3 years ago. So, thank you. And yeah and as we talked
4 about the -- that eventually the Biden administration,
5 I think just didn't open it up. But then with the new
6 administration, it's now open. So, that's the only new
7 information I believe that I understand. So, if anybody
8 else has any other comments. I don't think there's
9 another Environmental Impact Statement right now I guess
10 is what I was trying to say. Thank you.

11

12 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

13

14 MS. MONIGOLD: Yeah, I know that it went
15 through the SCIS process, and they went and talked to a
16 bunch of communities and had, you know, unanimous
17 support to not have it open, which is the no-action
18 alternative, and -- because of the subsistence use and
19 the damage that it could do to the villages all along,
20 the whole -- I mean, it's because it's all along Alaska.
21 And so, they chose the no-action alternative because it
22 would impact too many rural communities and people. So,
23 it has been through the SCIS process already, and I
24 don't know how many meetings you've had since then, but
25 I'm just wondering why it hasn't been brought up, if
26 that's what you were waiting for. Thank you.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: I can't speak as to
29 why it hasn't been brought up. I just know that it hasn't
30 been brought up. We can request for it to be brought up
31 at our next meeting. But the problem with that is we
32 would have to wait till fall time to do it. Any more
33 discussion? Comments, questions? Clyde.

34

35 MR. RAMOTH: Yep. Mr. Chair, Clyde
36 Ramoth, Selawik. Karmen or anybody in the room know who
37 the four Subsistence Regional Advisory Council that
38 support these protections from this flyer here?

39

40 MS. MONIGOLD: This is Karmen. I do not,
41 but I'm sure I can look it up real quick.

42

43 (Pause)

44

45 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: While people are
46 looking for that information, anymore comments,
47 questions? Wil.

48

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1 MR. WIESE: I just noticed that's listed
2 on the bottom of that draft letter that was provided
3 earlier.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, for the record,
6 at the bottom of the draft letter that was provided, it
7 states that the Eastern Interior, Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta,
8 Bristol Bay, and Western Interior Council Federal
9 Subsistence Resource Advisory Council sent in letters
10 supporting D1 land protections. Emily.

11
12 MS. CREEK: Hi, this is Emily Creek.
13 Subsistence Coordinator for Western Arctic National
14 Parklands. I did just want to note, at last year's All
15 RAC there was a letter to this body from the Kobuk Valley
16 Subsistence Resource Commission asking this body to join
17 them in a letter. So, that Commission also submitted a
18 letter.

19
20 MR. PATTEE: To the Chair. And that's --
21 That is what I mentioned earlier. You know, we
22 understand. I'm the Chairman of that that SRC and yes,
23 we did submit the letter and I understand it. I just
24 want to make sure everybody else does before going
25 through with this because I, you know, I will support
26 this.

27
28 MR. HOWARTH: And Mr. Chair.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes, Wilbur.

31
32 MR. HOWARTH: Yeah. Wilbur Howarth
33 Noorvik. And I believe I second the guy on this one. So,
34 yeah, we -- I think our letter, we need to get it out
35 there for support.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Wilbur.

38
39 MR. HOWARTH: Thank you.

40
41 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Just to clarify,
42 there wasn't a motion made, but your support is on the
43 record.

44
45 MR. HOWARTH: Yeah. Ten, four.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Did we -- I'm trying
48 to find the minutes from our last meeting or last year's
49 meeting, or did we take action on the letter that was
50 sent from the SRC?

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MS. HUTCHINSON: Yeah, that was in the meeting book, but I have to check if you took action on it. Did we? It was just there, I think, for information. But let me look here.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Through the Chair. This is Elmer. I think when we had our last meeting it was telephonic, and bunch of agencies weren't available.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Right. So, the Council didn't take action at our last winter meeting last year. So, what is what is the wish of the Council? How would we like to move forward?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Through the Chair, Elmer Armstrong, I would suggest that we have administration write a letter.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that, Elmer. Karmen.

MS. MONIGOLD: I second it.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Was that -- did you make a motion or just a suggestion?

MR. ARMSTRONG: All right. Through the Chair Elmer Armstrong Noorvik. I make a motion for administration to write a letter.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Write a letter supporting?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Yes, supporting.

MS. HUTCHINSON: Yeah. Could you maybe just clarify a little bit better, just like if -- because if we're going to write a letter, we really need to know -- it'd be OSM writing the letter for you which would review. But let -- Brent is going to answer this. Thank you. Oh, you're not - yeah, just -- yeah, just -- we just need to know exactly what it is you want us to write a letter about, supporting what. You know, just be on the record. Let's say that, and then the justification of why. Thank you.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Supporting a protection of D1 land.

1 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, motion made to
2 support -- write a letter supporting protection of D1
3 lands made by Elmer. Is there a second?

4
5 MS. MONIGOLD: This is Karmen. I Second.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Seconded by Karmen.
8 discussion for justification. Clyde
9

10 MR. RAMOTH: For the record Clyde Ramoth,
11 Selawik. So, about that letter and we did we even discuss
12 about -- did we make decision on the upper Kobuk RAC or
13 your guy's committee for the letter of support? I don't
14 know if we went that far yet, but that's my first
15 question. Second is, is there a timeline for this letter?
16

17 MR. PATTEE: I don't think we -- I was
18 part of any discussion about this, but what I can tell
19 you is what this -- the -- what this is, is retaining
20 the protections that are currently in place for the
21 shaded area that's on the map. It's basically -- what
22 we would be doing, would be following a lot of other
23 people, other agencies that are supporting this and in
24 the pink shaded areas, they're already protected as is
25 as of right now. But because of a previous -- the
26 administration, they looked at this certain lens, and
27 then they put in a EIS to remove those protections away
28 and then they're open for business, basically. And so,
29 if you look at the pink shaded areas, we're basically
30 supporting status quo, which means as we -- as is right
31 now, as it's been for a long time, which is protecting
32 these shaded areas in pink.
33

34 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Could you say the
35 second part of your question again?
36

37 MR. RAMOTH: Okay. So, the second part
38 of my question is for this letter to be drafted and
39 written by our administration, is there a timeline to
40 get it submitted, or do we have to wait till a certain
41 date to take action on it, or just sign it and send it?
42

43 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Lisa, then Elmer.
44

45 MS. HUTCHINSON: Well, since there's not
46 a -- right now, there's not another supplemental
47 environmental -- information -- Environmental Impact
48 Statement or anything where they're asking for public
49 comment. So, there's not a deadline. But I would be
50 suggesting, I guess we get it written as soon as possible

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1 and have it reviewed and submitted and if you want to
2 submit it, the best route is to the Federal Subsistence
3 Board -- to the Federal Subsistence Board and ask them
4 to forward that to the Secretaries of Interior for their
5 information. I guess that would be my suggestion. Thank
6 you. Brent's agreeing. So, thank you.

7

8 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Lisa.
9 Elmer.

10

11 MR. ARMSTRONG: Through the Chair.
12 Because if we don't do nothing right now, it won't come
13 up till our next meeting, right?

14

15 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: So, the letter can
16 be drafted and then the way that it works is staff
17 provides me as the Chair a copy. And we just make sure
18 that the intent of the Council is there. And then if
19 everything's good, we sign it, and it can just be sent.
20 That -- by giving the direction today in a motion and
21 everything to do a letter, it starts the process and it
22 -- this doesn't have to wait for our next official
23 meeting.

24

25 MR. RAMOTH: Thank you.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Karmen.

28

29 MS. MONIGOLD: And can I state that for
30 reasons that I stated in previous times that we discussed
31 this today, those are my comments of why I would like
32 this letter written, under my comments. Thank you.

33

34 MS. HUTCHINSON: Yeah, that would be
35 acceptable because we're recording this, and they'll be
36 in the transcript so we can go back. But if you'd like
37 to repeat anything now that would be the time. Thank
38 you.

39

40 MS. MONIGOLD: Through the Chair.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes.

43

44 MS. MONIGOLD: Okay. This is Karmen. You
45 know, we have fought long and hard for what subsistence
46 rights that we have. Not only us but, you know, our
47 uncles, our aunties, our dads, our moms, all of our
48 people before us. And these are one of those pivotal
49 moments that it's our turn. You know, I feel like this
50 is a -- you know, like Mike said, this is a make or

1 break moment for our culture, and we're already losing
2 so much of our culture that we can't afford to just give
3 it away to others. We need to protect our subsistence
4 as much as we can. The prices of everything is going up
5 and it's a lot worse in the villages, you know. I can't
6 imagine paying \$18 a gallon of gas in Ambler, and we
7 need our subsistence a lot more now than we probably
8 ever have. We don't know what's going to be in store in
9 the next month, much less the next year. So, you know,
10 we need to protect our subsistence resources for as long
11 as we can, because you give them an inch and they'll
12 take a mile. Thank you.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Karmen.
15 any further discussion? Clyde.

16
17 MR. RAMOTH: Oh, my mic is on. Clyde
18 Ramoth, Selawik. I know I've thought about this a long
19 time and had a lot of discussions, but when we didn't
20 had certain consultations at our village and about the
21 pros and cons and stuff like that. I was brought up,
22 we're all brought up to protect our lands and natural
23 resources, the food security. It's always in the top
24 five priorities for all organizations in our region, I
25 think. And food security is something -- because our
26 environment is very sensitive and if we if we continue
27 abusing it, you know, and not protect it that Mother
28 Earth gave us it could be hardships later in life because
29 I'm a firm believer of that. My late dad taught me that
30 years ago, my uncles, my aanas, my grandmothers, my
31 grandfathers, they taught me those things like, you
32 know, don't catch what you don't need. Not too many.
33 They'll be spilling oil on the river. Don't throw your
34 trash out in the environment because it's so sensitive.
35 I just wanted to throw in that comment. There's a
36 (indiscernible) individual.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you for that.
39 Clyde. Any more discussion justification? Elmer.

40
41 MR. ARMSTRONG: Through the Chair Elmer
42 Armstrong Noorvik. For my justification is food
43 security, because we're doing this for our kids, their
44 kids, grandkids. If we don't do it now, we're going to
45 be hurting. When we were taught to live through the
46 seasons and live off the land. Thank you.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Elmer.

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50 MR. HOWARTH: Mr. Chair.

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CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Yes, Wilbur.

MR. HOWARTH: Yeah. That area, they're talking about trying to open it up and we're saying no, because most of those areas are the spawning ground for fish, and it's almost all the fish that comes through this Kobuk River. So, I feel strongly that we support and have this in place as soon as possible. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Wilbur. Any final comments, discussion?

(No response)

Hearing none. The motion was made by Elmer, seconded by Karmen. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye.

IN UNISON: Aye.

All those opposed, same sign.

(No response)

Hearing no opposition. Staff hopefully has the direction needed from discussion and justification to draft that letter. It is now 6:13. Tomorrow morning we will reconvene at 9 am. We will start with reports and go from there. Thank you everyone. We'll -- same place tomorrow morning.

MS. MONIGOLD: Mr. Chair, I will need to be excused for a funeral tomorrow. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you. We will make note of that tomorrow morning.

MR. HOWARTH: And Myself, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you, Wilbur we'll make a note of that.

MR. HOWARTH: Taiku. You guys all be safe. Have a good evening.

CHAIRPERSON BAKER: Thank you. Have a good evening, Wilbur.

(Off record)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

THAT the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 158 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the NORTHWEST ARTIC SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I recorded on the 27th day of March;

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 5th day of May 2025.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager