

# **NORTHWEST ARCTIC SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Northwest Arctic Heritage Center  
Kotzebue, Alaska  
March 27 – 28, 2025

### **Invocation:**

Member Cleveland provided an invocation.

### **Call to Order, Roll Call, and Quorum Establishment:**

The meeting was called to order Thursday, March 27, 2025, at 9:01 am by Council Chair Baker. Chair Baker and Council members Karmen Monigold, Tristen Pattee, Wilbur Howarth, Sr., Clyde Ramoth, Sr., Elmer Armstrong, Jr., Verne Cleveland, Sr., Enoch Shiedt, Sr., and Michael Kramer were present. Council member Raymond Woods resigned right before the meeting. With eight of nine seated Council members present, the quorum was established.

### **Attendees:**

- **Tribal and Nonprofit Organizations:** Robbie Kirk, Senior Lands Director, NANA Regional Corporation
- **Public:** Ruth Iten, resident of Saqauginn Creek near Kotzebue; John Rae, resident of Kotzebue
- **Wildlife Conservation Society:** Kevin Fraley, Fisheries Biologist
- **University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF):** Dr. Todd Brinkman, faculty at UAF; Caitlin Ruby, master's student at UAF
- **United States Geological Survey (USGS):** Dr. Michael Carey, Research Fisheries Biologist
- **Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G):** Alex Hansen, Caribou Biologist, Olivia Magni, Wildlife Biologist, Luke Henslee, Fisheries Biologist, Brendan Scanlon, Fisheries Biologist, Joe Spencer, Research Biologist, and Helen Cold, Subsistence
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):** Jill Klein, Regional Subsistence Coordinator, Wil Wiese, Selawik National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Manager, and Brittany Sweeny, Assistant Refuge Manager, Selawik NWR
- **Bureau of Indian Affairs:** Dr. Glenn Chen, Subsistence Branch Chief
- **National Park Service (NPS):** Siikauraq Whiting, Superintendent, Western Arctic National Parklands (WEAR), Annie Carlson, Resources Program Manager, WEAR, Emily Creek, Subsistence Coordinator and Anthropologist, WEAR, Dr. Raime Fronstine, Wildlife Biologist, WEAR, Kyle Jolly, Caribou Biologist, Eva Patton, Regional Subsistence Program Manager, Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, and Dr. Kim Jochum, Regional Subsistence Program
- **Office of Subsistence Management (OSM):** Tom Plank, Wildlife Biologist, Dr. Brent Vickers, Anthropology Division Supervisor, Dr. Hannah Voorhees, Anthropologist, Dr. Jason Roberts, Anthropologist, and Lisa Hutchinson, Council Coordinator

## **Review and Adopt Agenda:**

Motion by Member Ramoth, seconded by Member Cleveland, to approve the agenda as presented.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

## **Election of Officer:**

Mr. Thomas Baker was elected the Council's Chair

Mr. Michael Kramer was elected Vice Chair

Ms. Karmen Monigold was elected Secretary

## **Review and Approve Previous Meeting Minutes:**

Motion by Member Ramoth, seconded by Member Kramer, to approve the November 8, 2024, meeting minutes as presented.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

## **Council Member and Chair Reports:**

*Elmer Armstrong, Jr. of Noorvik* reported that salmon fishing had been very slow, with only about five or six nets out during the run. In October, after the ice had frozen to about three to four inches, he had set his net under the ice along with approximately seven others. On the first day, he had caught a large number of sheefish, which he gifted to the community. The following day, he had caught whitefish with eggs and one salmon. On the third day, due to an unexpected warm spell and safety concerns, he had removed his net but managed to catch one burbot (*tittaaliq*) in his whitefish net.

Member Armstrong also observed that water levels had been unusually high in September, which had allowed him to travel by boat to Ambler and up the Squirrel River without encountering sandbars. Despite scouting for caribou and moose, he had seen very little game and had no hunting success. Reports from other hunters, including those from Selawik who had traveled to the Noatak area, indicated similarly poor results and increased sightings of wolves and bears. In late February, caribou had begun moving through the Noorvik area, staying near the outskirts of town for about 30 days. Member Armstrong speculated that this might have been due to available food or pressure from wolves. He also shared that hunters upriver had caught wolves and that there had been multiple reports of wolverine sightings toward Selawik.

*Clyde Ramoth, Sr. of Selawik* reported that, unlike in previous years, he had not been able to set his net under the ice, which he noted was rare. He emphasized the unusually wet summer and fall, which contributed to unpredictable seasonal conditions. Member Ramoth referenced shifting environmental patterns and the need to consider regulatory changes due to increasingly rapid and erratic temperature shifts. He acknowledged that while fuel prices, supported by NANA, were relatively low at \$5 per gallon, there were still very low caribou numbers and high wolf activity, with fewer community members engaging in hunting and trapping.

He noted Selawik's deep connection to fishing, sharing that the village name means "place of sheefish". However, the fishing season had also been unpredictable. Caribou sightings in the village were minimal, and many young people had traveled to other communities such as Noorvik, Buckland, and toward Ambler in search of game. Moose populations were reported to be low as well. Member Ramoth expressed gratitude that many residents had preserved fish, berries, and plants in the fall, as the high price of store-bought, processed food remained a concern.

He also highlighted a local school program teaching students about beaver trapping, noting its potential both for subsistence and income through hide tanning. He observed that brown bears are not commonly hunted, and there had been no reports of black bear harvests in the past year or two. Member Ramoth concluded by reiterating the importance of natural foods and expressing hope for a good fishing season.

*Vern Cleveland of Noorvik* reported that the summer season had brought high water levels, which made fishing difficult and moose hunting unsuccessful. There were no sightings of caribou (*tuttu*), and travel for hunting, particularly from Noorvik to nearby areas, required large amounts of fuel, resulting in high expenses with little return. He emphasized that the weather had changed drastically, noting unusually warm conditions extending into January and February, with little to no snow until very recently.

He shared that there had been an abundance of caribou near Noorvik, with some herds staying as close as a quarter mile from his home. However, he raised concerns about the health of the animals, particularly the bulls, which appeared very skinny and emitted a strong odor, suggesting the males were in rut in January or February or possible spoilage or illness. He encouraged anyone listening via radio or connected to him on Facebook to report similar findings and mentioned that some hunters had already submitted samples to biologists in Kotzebue for evaluation. Member Cleveland stressed the importance of documenting these issues as evidence of shifting environmental and climate conditions, describing the weather as unusually warm all year with temperatures reaching 40–50°F. He concluded by noting that hunters in Shungnak, Kobuk, and Ambler had been successful in harvesting wolves, including a rare, blue-colored wolf, which he speculated might be an alpha.

*Karmen Monigold of Kotzebue* introduced herself as a new member of the Council and shared her family lineage. She reported that Kotzebue experienced very high-water levels this past fall and into the winter, resulting in widespread flooding. Many residents had to be rescued in a coordinated effort, with some homes, particularly along the shore and on 8th Street, sustaining damage.

Member Monigold shared that she harvested a healthy muskox this year and noted that others in the community were able to harvest caribou, which were also in good condition with plenty of fat. Although the caribou arrived late, she remarked that this had become the norm. In November, she traveled to Washington, D.C., to advocate for the protection of subsistence rights. She met with 15 individuals, including Senators, Representatives, and staff members, and opened each conversation by asking whether they had a culture or ancestral practice they still carried on. None of the individuals in D.C. responded affirmatively, which she used as an opportunity to emphasize the importance of preserving Native culture. She stated proudly that she was fighting for a vibrant culture that continues to be passed down to younger generations.

She also highlighted her involvement in local cultural education, sharing that she helped schoolchildren during Iñupiaq Day with processing caribou. The students were enthusiastic and even skipped their Valentine's party to participate. More recently, she visited Juneau, where she met with 14 individuals and received more encouraging responses to her question about cultural heritage, as many were Alaskans. She urged them to remember the ancestors who fought to preserve that culture.

Member Monigold concluded by affirming that while Indigenous people are a small population, they are still Americans who count and matter. She emphasized that despite the ongoing challenges, from environmental disruptions to cultural erosion, Native people continue to fight to protect their way of life.

*Enoch Shiedt of Kotzebue* reported that the summer season had been drastically different, emphasizing that shifting environmental conditions were having a profound impact on Native communities and their

subsistence way of life. He stressed the need for regulatory changes to adapt to shifting environmental conditions. Ice persisted until mid-July, affecting fish harvests in areas like Sisualik and along the coast to Kivalina. There were few trout and whitefish, and many fish were found to be less fatty than usual. Due to ice and high-water conditions, many fish and animals had moved to the warmer side of the bay.

He noted an unusual abundance of bears around Kotzebue. Salmon were scarce and came in late. Despite advising his son against setting a net due to poor conditions, his son proceeded anyway and had minimal success. Water temperatures were inconsistent, with upriver areas being colder than the bay in July. Member Shiedt and his wife harvested fewer plants than in the past due to their age and environmental changes.

Caribou were present in the Noatak area, but increased pressure from transporters and outfitters had altered their migration patterns. He expressed concern that early hunting activity above Hower's camp had been diverting caribou and echoed the concerns of two Noatak elders. He explained that high food costs were motivating younger hunters to pursue traditional foods like caribou. While he observed over 20 bulls, he chose not to harvest any. He highlighted the abundance of brown bears, particularly at Aggie, where he counted over 40. He suggested encouraging Native transporters to guide outside hunters for bear hunts. He also observed muskoxen with bears and a large number of wolves, including a pack with seven pups. Wolf howls were frequently heard in the area.

Whitefish harvesting had also become unpredictable. Traditional cues, like the timing of falling leaves, no longer aligned with fish behavior, making harvest timing difficult. Some traditional foods, such as salmon eggs, had to be discarded because they spoiled due to warmer temperatures. He described subsistence as increasingly becoming a guessing game.

Member Shiedt urged the federal government to pay closer attention to coastal erosion, particularly near Kivalina, and noted the faster current compared to his youth. He recommended that the Council convene to discuss village-specific challenges and present unified recommendations to the Federal Subsistence Board. He advocated for aligning federal and state regulations, emphasizing that local knowledge should guide season openings and closures. He concluded by reiterating that accelerating environmental changes remained the central challenge affecting all aspects of subsistence life.

*Tristen Pattee of Ambler* reported that caribou have been arriving later each year. Despite the late arrival, many Ambler residents were able to harvest caribou, though many ended up targeting cows, raising conservation concerns. Member Pattee urged hunters to take only what they need to minimize waste. Reports indicated that some harvested caribou above the Kobuk and Shungnak areas, and spring saw the highest caribou numbers in years, which was encouraging. He noted the high cost of fuel in Ambler (\$18/gallon), requiring strategic planning for subsistence hunting and reliance on community alerts. Social media posts showed instances of overharvesting, which was concerning. Member Pattee emphasized the importance of self-regulation and education around responsible harvest limits.

Regarding fishing, high water levels last summer limited salmon harvests, although sheefish were more plentiful once water levels dropped. He observed a significant number of barges reaching as far as Kobuk and Shungnak, which was uncommon. He also observed many wolves during hunts and reported that wolves were often mistaken for caribou due to their size. An ice fish trap was built in Ambler as a community effort to teach younger generations. Member Pattee expressed hope for a caribou population census this year, as community members are eager for updated data. He reported increased state trooper activity and citations in the region, particularly related to visible fur counts, which upset some residents. Moose sightings were fewer than in past years, but some, including Member Pattee's family, were successful in harvesting one moose. Berry harvests were excellent, with even elders able to collect significant amounts easily.

From Shungnak, Member Pattee relayed reports of ongoing caribou harvesting and observations of many carcasses due to wolf predation. Over 30 wolves were taken by local hunters during the winter. Community members showed strong support for a wolf control program and expressed willingness to participate. He reiterated concerns about low salmon numbers, which also appeared to affect bear health as harvested bears were unusually thin. In Noatak, there were numerous bear incidents, including cabin break-ins. The community supported having guides present to help manage bear interactions. Member Pattee noted a large population of ptarmigan and suggested they could supplement diets during times of caribou scarcity. Finally, he expressed concern about unusual winter rains that freeze over the tundra, making it harder for wildlife, like caribou, to access food and potentially affecting their survival.

*Michael Kramer of Kotzebue* expressed numerous concerns raised throughout the year, particularly regarding subsistence resources. He reported that caribou did not arrive until mid-winter, with many harvested as they passed through Kotzebue. Community members made efforts to comply with regulations by limiting harvests to one cow per person. However, he noted that non-compliance resulted in legal consequences. The caribou were reportedly healthy and fat, but concerns remained about changes in migration patterns and increased pressure from non-resident hunters.

He raised cultural concerns about shifting hunting practices and emphasized the importance of allowing the first wave of migrating caribou to pass. He also mentioned development impacts, such as Red Dog Road expansion and potential Ambler Road construction, warning that these projects could severely affect the caribou herd, which is critical for regional subsistence.

Regarding moose, he noted a few successful hunts, though sightings had been sparse during the hunting season. Salmon runs were described as very poor, raising alarm for both commercial and subsistence use. He advocated for collaboration between state and federal agencies to install sonar on the Kobuk and Noatak rivers to monitor returns and sustain subsistence harvests.

Member Kramer criticized federal fisheries for wasteful practices, contrasting them with strict subsistence regulations locals face. He warned that increasing national food insecurity would intensify dependence on subsistence, urging proactive conservation of caribou and moose.

He reported that sheefish harvests were generally good, with healthy catches and ongoing sharing with families in Anchorage. He highlighted the global significance of the local sheefish population and supported a proposal to halt commercial sheefish fishing to protect future stocks.

Lastly, he mentioned a productive berry season due to a wet summer with high water levels. He concluded with concerns about future salmon runs, referencing a major die-off in past years and emphasizing the urgency of addressing subsistence resource challenges.

*Wilbur Howarth of Noorvik* reported that caribou near Noorvik were healthy and fat. His sons harvested several bulls close to town, as he had advised them to avoid shooting females. He noted the quality and tenderness of the meat and expressed appreciation for the animals' proximity to the village.

He highlighted an increase in wolf activity, with his sons' harvesting wolves near Noorvik and along the trail to Selawik. He emphasized the growing presence of predators and suggested the Council hold a dedicated meeting to address management of wolves and bears, given ongoing sightings and concerns from community members.

Member Howarth stated that moose appeared healthy and were observed frequently during the summer and fall. He also noted consistently high-water levels across the region. He referenced geological

explanations shared in meetings with geologists, specifically land movement under the ocean floor contributing to rising water in the area and expressed concern that high water events might become more common.

Regarding fishing, Member Howarth shared that he did not participate in set netting this year due to work commitments during spring, summer, and fall. He expressed plans to participate more actively in spring hunting in the upcoming season. He closed by encouraging Council members to consider a focused discussion on predator issues.

*Thomas Baker of Kotzebue* reported that several subsistence concerns had been addressed over the past year by members from Kotzebue. A major issue highlighted was the high water and severe flooding in late October, which pushed early formed ice onto the runway. This caused delays in air travel and disrupted the closing phase of the fall subsistence season.

There was a significant presence of caribou around Kotzebue this winter, with many residents reporting successful hunts. Anecdotal observations included wolf tracks moving between Little Noatak and Kotzebue, wolverine sightings in nearby hills (considered unusual), and numerous reports of bears and wolves. Chair Baker suggested that during the proposal discussion, the Council should consider predator control measures.

Regarding salmon, he reported that salmon numbers were significantly down. The Kotzebue Sound Commercial Fishery, which typically yields millions of pounds of fish in an average year, produced only 30,000–50,000 pounds last year. While some subsistence fishing occurred, it fell far short of typical levels. He attributed this decline to high water, warm temperatures, and other possible factors.

### **Public and Tribal Testimony:**

Clyde Ramoth, representing Selawik Tribal Council, thanked the USFWS for their partnership on sheefish studies, which benefited the Selawik community. He highlighted the cultural importance of sharing, noting that low caribou numbers in Selawik led to food exchanges with other villages. He reported bear activity at camps, with locked camps seeing more damage than unlocked ones. He encouraged proper licensing for hide sales and noted the need to align regulations with actual wildlife patterns.

Ruth Iten, resident of Saqauginn Creek near Kotzebue, provided public testimony emphasizing the importance of federally protected Bureau of Land Management lands withdrawn under ANILCA 17(d)(1) for local subsistence activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, harvesting, and dog sled training. She stressed that these lands support essential resources like caribou, salmon, and sheefish habitats, which are critical to the traditional way of life for residents in the area. Ms. Eaton noted widespread support for the continued protection of these lands from local and regional organizations, including Maniilaq, NANA, the Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, and several tribal and regional advisory councils. Ms. Eaton requested that the Council formally support the retention of ANCSA D1 lands and document this support in a letter to the Board to express concerns about the potential loss of vital habitat and subsistence resources.

John Rae of Kotzebue expressed frustration over regulatory barriers that hinder local commercial fishing efforts. He highlighted issues with exclusion from programs like the Community Development Quota and disproportionate regulations, such as the three-mile offshore fishing restriction unique to his region, which limits opportunities for commercial crabbing. He questioned why Kotzebue receives only a 10,000-pound crab quota compared to Nome's 600,000, despite his ability to meet that limit in a few weeks. Mr. Ray also criticized salmon fishing restrictions based on what he believes to be inaccurate

data, noting his personal records showed strong catches despite official claims of low returns. He called for regulatory changes, clarification, and fairer treatment for Kotzebue's fishing industry.

### **Council Training:**

Tom Plank, OSM Wildlife Biologist, provided the Council training on proposing changes to Federal subsistence hunting and trapping regulations.

### **State and Federal Wildlife Reports:**

- *Western Arctic Caribou Herd (WACH) Update*, presented by Alex Hansen, Wildlife Biologist, Division of Wildlife, ADF&G.
- *Selawik NWR update*, presented by Wil Wiese, Refuge Manager.
- *Wildlife update*, presented by Dr. Raime Fronstin, Wildlife Biologist, WEAR.
- *Wildlife update*, presented by Marcy Okada, Subsistence Coordinator, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve.

### **Action Items:**

#### **Wildlife Closure Reviews**

Mr. Plank and Dr. Hannah Voorhees, OSM Anthropologist, provided an overview of the wildlife closure reviews (WCR) to the Council.

#### **WCR26-18 – Unit 23, sheep harvest closure to non-federally qualified users in the Baird Mountains**

The Council discussed supporting the continued closure of the Baird and DeLong areas to hunting until new data confirms the health and survival of the sheep population. The Council further discussed past closures due to low counts, the impact of wolves, deep snow, and winter icing events on sheep survival, and emphasized the need for continued conservation until updated population data becomes available.

#### **WCR26-45 – Unit 23, caribou hunting closure to non-federally qualified users around Noatak**

The Council discussed enforcement and potential amendments to the Noatak River closure. There was general consensus to keep the closure unchanged to preserve its intent of minimizing user conflict and protecting subsistence hunting practices.

#### **Deferred Wildlife Proposal WP24-01**

Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Howarth, to support as modified by OSM deferred Wildlife Proposal WP24-01.

The Council expressed support for allowing hunters to utilize and sell more parts of the brown bear. The proposal gives hunters the option to sell the bear hide with or without claws, helping them sustain their subsistence lifestyle by providing additional income for essentials like fuel, food, and hunting activities.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

### **Call for Federal Wildlife Proposals**

Mr. Plank informed the Council that the Board is accepting proposals to change Federal regulations for the subsistence harvest of wildlife on Federal public lands and waters for the 2026–2028 regulatory years.

### **Development of Regulatory Wildlife Proposals**

#### **Modify Unit 23 ptarmigan season and harvest limit**

Motion by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Kramer, to increase the harvest limit and extend the season to match the State regulations for ptarmigan in Unit 23. The Council discussed that due to the loss of caribou and salmon, users have needed to depend on other species in order to meet their subsistence needs. Aligning the Federal ptarmigan hunt to match the State hunt will help reduce confusion and increase opportunity. The Council noted that hunters have indicated an increased ptarmigan population in Unit 23.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

#### **Modify Unit 23 wolf hunting season and harvest limit**

Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Cleveland, to increase the harvest limit and extend the season to match the State regulations for wolf hunting in Unit 23. The Council discussed that aligning the Federal wolf hunting regulations to match the State hunt will help reduce confusion and increase opportunity. The Council noted that hunters have indicated an increased wolf population in Unit 23.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

#### **Modify Unit 23 muskrat trapping season**

Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Kramer, to extend the trapping season to match the State regulations for muskrats in Unit 23. The Council discussed that aligning the Federal muskrat season to match the State season will help reduce confusion and increase opportunity. The Council noted that trappers have indicated an increased muskrat population in Unit 23.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

#### **Modify Unit 23 mink and weasel trapping season**

Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Kramer, to extend the trapping season to match the State regulations for mink and weasel in Unit 23. The Council discussed that aligning the Federal season to match the State season will help reduce confusion and increase opportunity. Trappers have indicated increased mink and weasel populations in Unit 23.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.



### **Establish a muskoxen hunt around Selawik in Unit 23, remainder**

Motion made by Member Ramoth, seconded by Member Pattee, to establish a muskoxen hunt around Selawik in Unit 23, remainder. The Council discussed that with the loss of caribou and salmon along with the high cost of food in the region, users have needed to depend on other species to meet their subsistence needs. Residents of Selawik have noticed an increase of muskoxen near their community and do not have an opportunity to hunt near the community. There are open muskoxen seasons north and south of Selawik, but users are limited from utilizing those hunts due to their distance and cost of fuel. Establishing a muskoxen hunt in Unit 23, remainder increases subsistence opportunity.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

### **Council Charter Review**

Lisa Hutchinson, Council Coordinator, provided an overview of the Council charter for review and renewal.

Motion by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Ramoth, to adopt the Charter with no modifications.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

### **Call for Alaska Board of Fisheries Proposals**

Ms. Hutchinson notified the Council for the call for Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) proposals for the Statewide Finfish and Supplemental Issues meeting open through March 2, 2026. The Council did not take action to submit any proposals.

### **Review and Approve FY2024 Annual Report**

Motion made by Member Ramoth, seconded by Member Pattee, to accept the FY2024 Annual Report with no modifications.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

The Council confirmed their Fall 2025 meeting date and location: October 27 – 28, 2025, in Kotzebue. The Council selected their Winter 2026 meeting date and location: March 24 – 25, 2026, in Kotzebue. The Council selected their Fall 2026 meeting date and location: September 24 – 25, 2026, in Kotzebue.

### **Agency and Organization Reports:**

- *Arctic Beaver Observation Network Study Overview* by Helen Cold, ADF&G, Subsistence Resource Specialist
- *Kotzebue Sound Commercial and 2024 Subsistence Season Summary and 2025 Outlook*, by Luke Henslee, ADF&G, Fisheries Biologist

Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Kramer, to send a letter to the Commissioner of ADF&G in support of efforts to monitor Chum Salmon escapement,

citing concerns over low fish numbers due to high water conditions and encouraging the exploration of alternative methods for counting fish.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

- *Sheefish Coastal Movement Study, in Northwest Alaska* by Kevin Fraley, Wildlife Conservation Society, Fisheries Ecologist
- *Thawing Tundra, Rusting Rivers, and Effects on Aquatic Ecosystems* by Dr. Michael Carey, USGS, Research Fisheries Biologist

Motion made by Member Armstrong, seconded by Member Ramoth, to send a letter to Chris Zimmerman, USGS Alaska Science Center Director, in support of future research on aquatic ecosystems, including those related to rust-colored river discharges and their impacts on fish populations.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

- *Selawik NWR Report* by Wil Wiese, Refuge Manager, and Brittany Sweeney, Assistant Refuge Manager

Motion made by Member Armstrong, seconded by Member Ramoth, to send a letter to the Regional Director of USFWS in support of the research programs being undertaken by the Refuge, and to request the inclusion of water collections studies to document environmental changes resulting from increased summer rainfall.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

- *Western Arctic National Parklands and Subsistence Resource Commission (SRC) Update* by Annie Carlson, Resources Program Manager, and Emily Creek, Cultural Anthropologist and Subsistence Coordinator

Motion made by Member Armstrong, seconded by Member Ramoth, to send a letter to the Regional Director of NPS in support of the Arctic Travelers Kids program, the restoration of the ranger stations within the park, and the continued exploration and preservation of yet-to-be discovered sites.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

- *Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and SRC Update* by Marcy Okada, Outreach Coordinator
- *Master's Research Study: Availability of Western Arctic Caribou in Northwest Alaska as a Food Source and Changes Over Time* by Catlin Luby, UAF Master of Science student

Motion made by Member Armstrong, seconded by Member Kramer, to send a letter to Dr. Todd Brinkman, UAF, in support of the ongoing research on historic and current caribou harvest.

The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.

- *Northwest Arctic Dolly Varden Population Study* by ADF&G's Joe Spencer, Fisheries Biologist, and Brendan Scanlon, Northwest and North Slope Area Biologist
- *OSM Update* by Dr. Brent Vickers, OSM, Anthropology Division Supervisor

## Other Business:

The Council received briefings on the following topics:

- Council Correspondence
  - a. Motion by Member Armstrong, seconded by Member Monigold, to send a letter to the Board requesting them to elevate the need to protect ANCSA D-1 lands for subsistence to the Secretary of the Interior. The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.
  - b. Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Ramoth, to send a letter to the BOF in support of eliminating the local marine commercial fishing quotas. The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.
  - c. Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Ramoth, to send a letter to OSM, Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program Coordinator, in support of funding a Kobuk Sheefish sonar project and harvest survey of the winter Sheefish fishery in the Kotzebue Sound. The motion **passed** on a unanimous vote.
  - d. Motion made by Member Pattee, seconded by Member Cleveland, to send a letter to the BOF and the Commissioner of ADF&G in support of removing the three-mile crab fishing corridor. The motion **passed** with five votes in favor to one vote against.
  
- Non-Voting Youth Leader Seat

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m. on March 28, 2025.

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Nissa Pilcher, Designated Federal Officer  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Subsistence Management

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Thomas Baker, Chair  
Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

These minutes will be formally considered by the Northwest Arctic Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its Fall 2025 meeting in Kotzebue, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes at that meeting.

A more detailed report of this meeting, copies of the transcripts, and meeting handouts are available upon request. Call Nissa Pilcher at 1-800-478-1456 or email [nissa\\_pilcher@ios.doi.gov](mailto:nissa_pilcher@ios.doi.gov)