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SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME I

HARRIGAN CENTENNIAL HALL
Sitka, Alaska
March 18, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donald C. Hernandez, Chair
Frank G. Wright, Jr.
Calvin H. Casipit
Michael A. Douville
Theodore F. Sandhofer
Patricia A. Phillips
Harvey Kitka
John Smith III
Lewis M. Hiatt

Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(Sitka, Alaska - 3/18/25)

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Good morning, everybody. 9:00 and looks like most everybody's here, that needs to be here. So, I think I can call this winter meeting of the Southeast Regional Advisory Committee to order. And we'll start out with a roll call. So, Frank Wright, if you could do that, please.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay.
Larry Bemis.

(No response)

Me? I think I'm here. Cal Casipit

MR. CASIPIT: Here.

MR. WRIGHT: Michael Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Here.

MR. WRIGHT: Jim Slater. Jim Slater.

(No response)

Ted Sandhofer. Ted?

MR. SANDHOFER: Here.

MR. WRIGHT: Albert Howard.

(No response)

Patricia Phillips.

(No response)

Louie Wagner.

(No response)

Harvey.

MR. KITKA: Here.

MR. WRIGHT: John Smith.

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1 MR. SMITH: Here.

2
3 MR. WRIGHT: Lewis Hiatt.

4
5 MR. HIATT: Here.

6
7 MR. WRIGHT: Don Hernandez.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Here.

10
11 MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chair, we have a quorum.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
14 Frank. I didn't hear any Council members on the
15 telephone. Just check one more time. Make sure there's
16 anybody on the phone that's absent.

17
18 (No response)

19
20 Nope. I don't hear anybody. So, we do
21 have a few members absent, and they have all been --
22 have excused absences. So, we do have a quorum, however,
23 so the first order of business for this meeting is --
24 it's time to have election of officers. And initially I
25 will turn that over to our Coordinator.

26
27 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the
28 record, my name is DeAnna Perry. I'm the Council
29 Coordinator for the Southeast Subsistence Regional
30 Advisory Council. In accordance with the Council's
31 Charter. Council members annually elect a Chair, Vice
32 Chair and a Secretary for a one-year term. I would like
33 to open up the floor for nominations for the Council's
34 Chair. Now, these nominations need not be seconded. So,
35 would anyone like to make a nomination for the Chair
36 position? Mr. Douville.

37
38 MR. DOUVILLE: Madam Chair, I nominate
39 Don Hernandez for Chair.

40
41 MS. PERRY: Thank you, member Douville.
42 Do we have any further nominations? Member Douville.

43
44 MR. DOUVILLE: Madam Chair, I move that
45 nominations cease and cast ballot for Don Hernandez.

46
47 MS. PERRY: Thank you, member Douville.
48 We have a nomination of Don Hernandez for the Chair
49 position of the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory
50 Council. I'll ask for unanimous consent for Don being

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1 elected as the Chair of this Council. Is there anyone
2 opposed?

3

4 (No response)

5

6 Seeing no opposition. Mr. Chair, you get
7 to use your gavel for another year. Congratulations.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
10 Council members. Yeah. I'm still happy to serve as a
11 Chair, so thank you for that. So, now it's up to me to
12 ask for nominations for Vice Chair. And we did have our
13 previous Vice Chair retire so, we we'll be looking for
14 a new Vice Chair. So, nominations, please. Ted.

15

16 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
17 I nominate Cal Casipit as Vice Chair.

18

19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ted.
20 Are there any other nominations for Vice Chair? John.

21

22 MR. SMITH: I would encourage you to
23 close the nominations and unanimous decision for Cal to
24 be.....

25

26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
27 We have a suggestion of no new nominations and ask for
28 unanimous consent. Is there anybody opposed for Cal
29 Casipit as Vice Chair? Say no.

30

31 (No response)

32

33 Nobody opposed. Cal, I assume you're
34 willing to accept.

35

36 MR. CASIPIT: I'll be honored. I know I
37 have some huge shoes to fill because that position has
38 been filled by some really, really talented people, and
39 I hope I can live up to their examples. Thanks.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
42 Cal. So, now nominations for Secretary. Mike.

43

44 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, I nominate
45 Frank Wright for Secretary.

46

47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
48 Are there any other nominations for Secretary? Mike.

49

50

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1 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, I move that
2 nominations cease and cast now a ballot for Frank Wright.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
5 Mike. Is there anybody on the Council opposed to having
6 Frank Wright as Secretary? So, say no.

7
8 (No response)

9
10 Nobody opposed. Frank, you're willing to
11 accept his Secretary, I hope?

12
13 MR. WRIGHT: I'll try again, Mr. Chair.
14 Thank you.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
17 Frank. Okay. We have our officers in place so we can
18 move on and maybe a few meeting announcements from our
19 Coordinator.

20
21 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again,
22 for the record, my name is Deanna Perry, Council
23 Coordinator. For those attending our meeting in person,
24 please make sure you sign-in at the table just inside
25 the door as you enter the door, it's just to the left
26 there. If you'll sign in each and every day, it's for
27 an administrative record. And it helps us keep track of
28 who all attends our meetings and helps us also provide
29 correct spelling of everyone's names in the transcript.
30 For those joining us on phone or by Microsoft Teams, you
31 can find the agenda and meeting materials online at the
32 Federal Subsistence Program website. Again, the internet
33 address for that is www.doi.gov/subsistence and again
34 you'll pick Southeast advisory -- Southeast Regional
35 Advisory Council. And then click on Meeting Materials.
36 If you would like to address the Council during the
37 meeting, for folks in the room, please fill out a blue
38 testifier form. You will find those right by the sign-
39 in sheet at the intake table. Give it to myself or any
40 of the staff and we will call on you at the appropriate
41 time. There's a spot on there to also indicate what
42 agenda item you'd like to speak to, or if it's a non-
43 agenda item, if you'll just put down a quick description
44 that that again would help us.

45
46 The Chair will announce the time for
47 tribal and public comment on non-agenda items each
48 morning, and that will be an opportunity for those
49 present, as well as those participating on the phone or
50 Teams to speak on non-agenda items. We would ask you to

1 hold any comments on agenda items until such time as we
2 get to those on our agenda that way the Council can hear
3 all the pertinent information at the time they're
4 working on that item. If anyone would like to submit a
5 comment by email, you can do so by sending that to
6 subsistence@ios.doi.gov. As a reminder, our meetings are
7 conducted by Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.
8 It helps us provide structure and maintain order
9 throughout the meeting. All participants are expected
10 to be courteous and respectful in all interactions. As
11 a meeting -- as a matter of meeting etiquette. The
12 Council has another busy agenda this go around lots of
13 potential action items, so I'll ask everyone to be
14 respectful of the Council's responsibility for managing
15 their time to cover all of those actions. The action
16 items are marked on the agenda with an asterisk, and the
17 Council should strive to maintain focus on those agenda
18 items, prioritizing them throughout the meeting. When
19 we get to the Action Items Council members, if at any
20 time you feel there's a conflict of interest on the
21 matter. Please just indicate this on the record and you
22 can abstain from voting on that issue. But absent a
23 conflict of interest, Council members are expected to
24 vote on all action items.

25
26 The more technology we bring into our
27 meeting, the longer my announcements get so, bear with
28 me. A few technology basics for those listening and
29 participating virtually. For those on the phone who
30 would like to speak during public comment opportunities,
31 you'll need to press star five on your phone. That
32 indicates on our end that you would like to speak. Then
33 please wait until you're recognized by the Chair before
34 speaking. If you've joined us on Microsoft Teams, you'll
35 use the Raise Hand feature. For all participants on the
36 phone, your lines are currently muted, when you are
37 called on to speak, you'll need to press star six to
38 unmute your phone, or you may find that you need to use
39 your phone's mute button to toggle off and on. For those
40 on Microsoft Teams, you can unmute yourself by clicking
41 on the little microphone icon. And just make sure that
42 the slash over the microphone disappears, that will
43 indicate that your line is open. We appreciate
44 everyone's attention to the mute feature as we go through
45 the meeting, so that we can mitigate distractions and
46 be able to get a clear record.

47
48 For everyone speaking at our meeting,
49 please remember to identify yourself each time you
50 speak. I know in years past we've had a court reporter

1 taking our meetings, and she knew everybody by sight and
2 also by voice. We actually hand off this recording to
3 someone who transcribes that doesn't know anyone here
4 in in our meeting, and they won't be able to use name
5 tags to take care of that transcription. So, if you
6 could remember each time that you use the mic to please
7 remember to say your name. So, before we begin, for
8 those in the room, I would ask you to just take a moment
9 to look at your cell phones and silent any ringers. And
10 I think that takes care of the housekeeping items, Mr.
11 Chair. Thank you.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
14 Deanna. So, we do have an opportunity here to maybe let
15 the Sitka district ranger introduce himself and might
16 have a few words by way of a welcome for us here to
17 Sitka. So, if you want to come up.

18
19 MR. GARNER: Good morning, everyone. My
20 name is Eric Garner, and I am the Sitka district ranger
21 here. I'm also currently serving in a acting forest
22 supervisory role as well for the Tongass. Just honored
23 to have everybody here. Subsistence is a very important
24 part of everyone's lives. It was a very important part
25 of my life. We just called it living back in the day.
26 And so just glad to be here. Glad to support you guys
27 and glad to be working here with my colleagues. So,
28 honored, Council and Chair. Thanks for being in Sitka,
29 glad to be a part of this.

30
31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
32 Eric. We're always glad to be in Sitka. It's a great
33 place to -- for us to meet. And any, any Council members
34 have a question for Mr. Garner while he's up there?
35 Harvey, go ahead.

36
37 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank
38 you for coming. I'm very concerned about the stream
39 restoration projects that have been going on and whether
40 the funding has bothered it at any point, are we going
41 to lose the people that are working on it? And because
42 the -- this is a very important part of our subsistence.
43 Thank you.

44
45 MR. GARNER: Yeah, there's -- it's an
46 interesting time. You know, and to be honest, it's
47 unprecedented time in our history of our agency. So,
48 we're adapting the best that we can. We are monitoring
49 and tracking those funds. We are asking those questions.
50 We are coordinating the best that we can. And so, we

1 know that each week that passes, we are starting to see
2 some of those things unfreeze, right. We're starting to
3 see some of that money flowing, different funding
4 starting to open up. I think is more of this new
5 administration learns some of the processes and the
6 importance of how we're intertwined in these
7 communities. I think there are -- things are starting
8 to unfold. So, our restoration projects are a priority.
9 They're a priority work for us and our team. And so,
10 we're committed to making it happen and asking those
11 questions and providing those answers when we have them
12 to our partners, and our colleagues and to our community.
13 So, we'll keep you posted as soon as we learn something.
14 Sometimes the way things work, we get it the same time
15 you guys do, but we're starting to see it go through the
16 chain a little bit better, a little bit somewhat more
17 normal than it has been the last few weeks.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
20 Frank, do you have a question?

21
22 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In
23 Hoonah, the Forest Service has worked with the tribe on
24 the restoration. So, is the Forest Service here doing
25 the same with working with the tribe?

26
27 MR. GARNER: Most certainly. Yeah. STA
28 is a valued partner. We do a ton of work together. And
29 so, it's a very important part of how we operate in the
30 stewardship role of our resources. So, we couldn't do a
31 lot of our projects without that coordination with Sitka
32 Tribe of Alaska. So, we're very lucky and blessed to
33 have such a great partner.

34
35 MR. WRIGHT: Just a comment. You know,
36 it's so rewarding when you have two governments working
37 together and seeing what they can do for the environment.
38 And I appreciate the Forest Service working with the
39 tribe and Hoonah. And I see what you're doing here.
40 Gunalchéesh.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
43 Frank. That was Frank Wright. Any other questions?

44
45 (No response)

46
47 Okay. Thank you, Eric, for coming here
48 and telling us about the Forest Service projects and
49 answering our questions. So, appreciate it.

50

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1 MR. GARNER: Gunalchéesh. My pleasure.
2 And I look forward to learning from you guys. Thanks.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.
5 Okay. I just got a little note passing me here that
6 apparently Patti Phillips or one of our Council members
7 is with us on the phone. Patti, are you there?

8
9 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, I am, Mr. Chair.
10 Thank you.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Very good.
13 Thank you, Patti. We can make mark Patti as absent then,
14 Frank, or as a here, excuse me. Patti is not absent.
15 Okay. Now we can move on to the introductions around the
16 room and the table. And we will start with our Council
17 members. And I'll remind Council members that this is
18 just an opportunity just to tell us who you are, where
19 you're from, you know, any other organizations you're
20 affiliated with, things like that. Anything you want to
21 add about yourself. Your Council member reports, about
22 what's happening in your communities, they come later.
23 And I do want to make note that we have one new Council
24 member for this session. The only new member to the
25 Council, that would be Lewis Hiatt, and Lewis, maybe
26 I'll give you the opportunity as a newcomer to introduce
27 yourself. And we would like to welcome you to the
28 Council. So, go ahead.

29
30 MR. HIATT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name
31 is Lewis Hiatt. I live in Hollis. I'm a 45-year resident
32 of Prince of Wales. I grew up in Anchorage. As you said,
33 I'm the new guy. It took me several years to get here,
34 but I'm very, very pleased to be part of this. This
35 process is very important to me. Thank you.

36
37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
38 Lewis. And then maybe we'll start over next to you with
39 John Smith, and then we'll go around the table from from
40 John.

41
42 MR. SMITH: Wáa sá iyatée. How are you?
43 Yak'úi ixwasateení. It's good to see your face today.
44 Gunalchéesh (In Native). Thank you for being here.
45 Tlingit (In Native). My English name is John Smith III,
46 by golly. It's really good to see your face. I'm from -
47 - I represent Juneau of Alaska, but I'm originally from
48 Hoonah and many other villages that I grew up traveling
49 around harvesting food off the land for my family and
50 for the community, but also being a sports fisherman,

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1 subsistence provider and also did a lot of commercial
2 fishing. So, I understand the system and really great
3 being here. And welcome, Lewis. And, and it's good to
4 see all of our team here and all the representation, and
5 even the Forest Service. I know that their partnerships
6 are all around the whole State of Alaska. And I really,
7 just like others said that it's really encouraged, even
8 at the point to where even talking with Harvey and the
9 tribe, that it would be cool and it would be a great
10 honor to see a totem pole that represents the Forest
11 Service that's sitting out front somewhere of your
12 building, of your house, your hit, you know, with your
13 symbols on it. It would be a great, great thing to see.
14 It's good to see you guys today. Thank you.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
17 Mike.

18

19 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mike
20 Douville, a lifelong resident of Prince of Wales Island
21 and a commercial fisherman still. I do sport fishing,
22 subsistence, I do it all. And also, a Council member of
23 the Craig Tribal Association.

24

25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
26 Ted.

27

28 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ted
29 Sandhofer from Petersburg. I was born and raised in
30 Anchorage, like Lewis there. Been in Southeast Alaska
31 since the late 80s, and Petersburg since about 1990. I
32 worked for the Forest Service for about 34 years, just
33 retired two years ago happy to represent the rural
34 communities in Southeast Alaska. It's very important to
35 me the subsistence, cultural lifestyle that we live here
36 and like to see it maintained and become stronger.
37 Thanks.

38

39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ted.
40 Frank.

41

42 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
43 name is Frank Wright. I'm from Hoonah. I'm also the
44 President of the Hoonah Indian Association, and I'm also
45 with Hoonah Fisheries Council. And I'm also with
46 Tlingit-Haida. And I'm also with the enrollment of
47 Tlingit-Haida. And I live in Hoonah. Gunalchéesh.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
50 Frank. Patti, your seat at the table is next in line

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1 there. You want to introduce yourself?

2

3 MS. PHILLIPS: Hello, I'm Patricia
4 Phillips. I live in Pelican, Alaska. I also am the mayor
5 for the City of Pelican. I serve on our local Fish and
6 Fame Advisory Committee, and lived in Southeast Alaska
7 my whole life. So, in Pelican about 50 years. All right.
8 Thank you. I'm out.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
11 Patti. Harvey.

12

13 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name
14 is Harvey Kitka. I live here in Sitka, Alaska, and I'm
15 retired from just about everything. Thank you.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
18 Harvey. Cal.

19

20 MR. CASIPIT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My
21 name is Calvin Casipit. I live in Gustavus. I've been
22 there -- living there permanently now for ten years.
23 Before that, folks may recognize me as one of the staff
24 people for this Council for many years. I came to the
25 subsistence program in the Forest Service when the Katie
26 John Rule was implemented. I started a year before that,
27 in fact. So, yeah, I've been around the subsistence
28 issues for a while and just continuing to do that. I --
29 I've been mayor of my community, been on the City Council
30 for my community. Like many people that sit on this
31 Council, we wear many hats in our communities. But
32 anyway, that's all I had. That's a little bit about me.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
35 And as for myself, I'm Don Hernandez, the Chair of the
36 Council, and I live in Point Baker on Prince of Wales
37 Island. Very small, isolated community. Only about 20
38 people live there now, and I've lived there for about
39 40 years. I -- most of that time I was a commercial
40 fisherman. I just recently retired from the gillnet
41 portion of that. I still do a little halibut fishing and
42 got a hand troll permit. But I do a lot of subsistence
43 harvesting of all kinds of species. And yeah, that about
44 covers it for me.

45

46 So, next we want to go around the room
47 and kind of have staff introduce themselves. And we'll
48 start with the -- probably start with the Forest Service
49 staff. But before we do, I would just like to say that
50 speaking for the Council, I know they would agree with

1 me when I say that we really appreciate the work that
2 the staff does for us. I don't know if we say that often
3 enough, but you know, they really take their job
4 seriously. And in my time that I've been on this Council
5 and working with all the different staff coming through
6 here, my experience has been that they not only, you
7 know, do their jobs very well, but they care about the
8 people that they work for. And they, you know, they care
9 about us. You can see it just in the way they go about
10 their work. And you know, we really appreciate that. And
11 that goes for our federal staff and I don't know if
12 there's state people in the room, but it goes for the
13 state people as well. You know, we don't always agree
14 on things, but we know that they are working hard to,
15 you know, just do the right thing. And we appreciate it.
16 So, thank you for that. And now maybe we'll start at
17 that end of the table and you can kind of tell us who
18 you are.

19
20 MS. GREDIAGIN: Good morning, Mr. Chair.
21 Council members, my name is Lisa Grediagin. I'm the
22 wildlife division supervisor with the Office of
23 Subsistence Management, and I'll be serving as the
24 leadership team or LT lead for this meeting. Thank you.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Lisa.
27

28 MR. CROSS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name
29 is Rob Cross. I'm the subsistence program manager for
30 the Tongass.

31
32 MR MUSSLEWHITE: Yeah. Good morning, Mr.
33 Chair. Jake Musselwhite, I'm the North Zone subsistence
34 biologist for the Tongass.

35
36 MS. BOLWERK: Good morning, Mr. Chair and
37 Council members. Ashley Bolwerk. I'm the South Zone
38 subsistence biologist for the Tongass.

39
40 MS. RAMOS: Good morning, everyone. I'm
41 Kim Ramos and I am the admin assistant for the Natural
42 Resources Division and DeAnna's assistant. So, nice to
43 see you all.

44
45 DR. ROBERTS: Good morning, Mr. Chair,
46 and members of the Council. I'm Jason Roberts. I'm an
47 anthropologist at the Office of Subsistence Management.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you
50 staff. And we had Eric Garner, the district ranger,

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1 introduce himself as well. He's in the room. Also, well,
2 maybe as a federal staff, DeAnna, do you want to
3 introduce yourself now?

4

5 MS. PERRY: Good morning, everyone.
6 DeAnna Perry Council Coordinator for the Southeast
7 Regional Advisory Council. Thank you for your kind
8 words, Mr. Chair. I've been supporting this Council for
9 eight years, and it has been truly a pleasure.

10

11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
12 DeAnna. We also like to go around the room. There might
13 be some people representing organizations or maybe just
14 public in general. And if you're here and want to
15 introduce yourself and say who you represent, you can
16 maybe quickly come forward and tell them that.

17

18 MS. DOLL: Good morning. My name is Emily
19 Doll. I work for the Department of Fish and Game Division
20 of Subsistence. I'm the lead researcher for Southeast.

21

22 MS. BROWN: Good morning, everyone. My
23 name is Molly Brown. I also work for the Division of
24 Subsistence, and I'm also a researcher for Southeast.

25

26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you
27 both. Glad you're here. Anybody else in the public or
28 an organization, tribal members, anything like that?

29

30 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My name
31 is Thomas Smith. I'll just be representing myself today.
32 I would just like to thank the Tlingit people of Sitka
33 for their stewardship of this land and make it known
34 that I will also be shadowing DeAnna throughout this
35 process. So, I will see you guys a lot more often. Thank
36 you.

37

38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Great. Thank
39 You, Thomas. Anybody else?

40

41 MR. CALVIN: I'm Devon Calvin and I'm on
42 the -- I have the subsistence seat on the Sitka AC.
43 Thank you.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
46 being here. Anybody else?

47

48 MR. NIX: Good morning. My name is George
49 Nix. I'm here representing the Organized Village of
50 Kasaan. I'm also Tribal Council member with that

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1 organization and food security specialist for the tribe.
2 So, I really just want to thank you guys for the
3 opportunity.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
6 George. Anybody else?

7

8 MS. BAUSCHER: Good morning. Thank you,
9 Mr. Chair, and members of the Council. Hello. My name
10 is Heather Bauscher. I'm the fisheries community
11 engagement specialist for the Sitka Conservation Society
12 and SalmonState, and also an adjunct professor for the
13 University of Alaska Southeast. We have two students
14 with us through this meeting that are interns now with
15 the Sitka Conservation Society. Naomi Jones and Thomas
16 Smith. Naomi will be working on some policy things, and
17 Thomas is shadowing DeAnna because he said he might want
18 to be a Council Coordinator someday. Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: That's great.
21 Great to hear. Okay. So, thank you all in the room. And
22 there might be some folks on the telephone as well. So,
23 let's go through this, maybe in a in an organized
24 fashion. And is there anybody from the Office of
25 Subsistence Management who's on the phone?

26

27 MR. LIND: Good morning, Mr. Chair, Board
28 members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the Office of
29 Substance Management. Sorry, I couldn't be there to see
30 you guys in person. Looking forward to a wonderful
31 meeting. Good morning, everyone.

32

33 MS. LEONETTI: Good morning. This is
34 Crystal Leonetti. I'm the director for Office of
35 Subsistence Management and honored to be listening in
36 as the permanently hired director. Finally, last time I
37 was calling in just as an acting director. But I am
38 fully onboard now. My Yup'ik name is Ciisquq. You can
39 call me Ciisquq or Crystal. I am Yup'ik tribal citizen
40 of the Choggiung Tribe in -- out of Dillingham, Alaska.
41 Born and raised here in Alaska and a long-time federal
42 conservation employee. So, happy to be with you today
43 and listen in on your proceedings.

44

45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay.

46

47 MS. LEONATTI: Quyana.

48

49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank Crystal
50 and Orville. Let's see, is Brent Vickers there as well?

00015

1

2 DR. VICKERS: Yes. Good morning, Mr.
3 Chair. And members of the Council. This is Brent Vickers
4 anthropology division supervisor. Happy to be listening.
5 Wish I could be there. Thank you.

6

7

8 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
9 Brent. How about Robbin La Vine, are you there?

10

11

12 MS. LA VINE: Yep, good morning,
13 everyone. This is Robbin La Vine, subsistence policy
14 coordinator for OSM. It's wonderful to listen in.
15 Thanks.

16

17

18 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you both.
19 Is there anybody else from OSM?

20

21

22 MR. MCKEE: Good morning, members of the
23 Council. My name is Chris McKee, and I am the Acting
24 Deputy Director for OSM, thank you.

25

26

27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
28 Chris. Anybody else?

29

30

31 MS. MORROW: Good morning, this is
32 Kristen Morrow, Anthropology Pathways Intern with OSM.

33

34

35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Morning. Anybody
36 else?

37

38

(No response)

39

40

41 Okay, perhaps not. How about anybody
42 from the Forest Service on the phones?

43

44

(No response)

45

46

How about National Park Service?

47

48

49 MR. RISDAHL: Sorry, sorry, Don. This is
50 Greg Risdahl. I'm sitting in here listening from
Anchorage. I couldn't get the phone off mute quick
enough, but I'm happy to be here today. Thank you.

51

52

53 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
54 Greg. So, Greg is with the Forest Service, is there
55 anybody else with the Forest Service in Anchorage or
elsewhere?

56

57

(No response)

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Okay, how about now for the National Park Service?

MS. COHEN: Hi, good morning. This is Amber Cohen, cultural anthropologist at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, calling in from Copper Center, Alaska. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Anybody else from National Park Service?

MS. PATTON: Good morning. This is Eva Patton subsistence program manager for the regional National Park Service office in Anchorage and wonderful to hear all your voices this morning. And great that you're able to meet in Sitka there. Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Good morning, thanks for calling in. Anybody else from Park Service?

(No response)

Probably not. How about BLM, is anybody from the Bureau of Land Management with us this morning?

(No response)

Not. How about Fish and Wildlife Service?

MS. KLEIN: Good morning, my name is Jill Klein. I'm the regional subsistence coordinator based in Anchorage, and I'll be listening in to the Council's meeting. Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you for calling in. Anybody else with Fish and Wildlife Service?

(No response)

Okay, is there anybody else from the Department of Fish and Game this morning?

(No response)

Any other agencies on the phone with us?

00017

1 MR. CHEN: Good morning, Mr. Chair and
2 Council members. This is Glenn Chen; I'm the subsistence
3 branch chief for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Ah, great.
6 Sorry, Glenn, I didn't have Bureau of Indian Affairs
7 listed on my list here, but I'm glad you're there. Thanks
8 for calling in. Anybody else?

9
10 (No response)

11
12 Any tribal representatives on the phone
13 this morning?

14
15 MS. HASSELL: Morning, everybody. This is
16 Karli Tyance Hassell, I'm a senior policy coordinator
17 with Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes
18 of Alaska.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Oh okay. Thank
21 you, Karli, you saying?

22
23 MS. HASSELL Yes, it's Karli.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Karli.
26 Thank you. Any other tribal representatives or members
27 of the public?

28
29 (No response)

30
31 Okay, I think that covers it. You know,
32 I also -- I do want to, you know, welcome the Department
33 of Fish and Game staff that is here with us for this
34 meeting. We're glad you're here and if there's -- you
35 know, at any point in the meeting where you want to, you
36 know, add something to our discussion, you are welcome
37 to do so. We welcome that, so we're glad you're here.
38 Thank you for being here. And I think we've covered
39 everybody that's attending and listening in, for the
40 record. That all goes on the record, so it's important
41 that we do that. And now it's time for the Council to
42 review and adopt the agenda. And I'll ask Council members
43 to maybe take a look at the agendas that they have in
44 front of them, because since they were initially
45 published, there's been a few additions. So, as you're
46 doing that, we do need to have a motion to put it on the
47 floor to review and adopt the agenda. So, do we have a
48 motion? Harvey, go ahead.

49
50

00018

1 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move
2 to adopt the agenda as a guide.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
5 Harvey. Is there a second?

6
7 MR. SANDHOFER: Mr. Chair, second.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Second by Ted.
10 Thank you. So, it's been moved and seconded to adopt the
11 agenda as a guide. So, now, if we wanna make any changes
12 to the agenda or note some of the changes, we can do
13 that. And I see that in action items, number 12, there's
14 something to add there. And this would be part B under
15 A, and that would be to insert -- we're gonna get a
16 summary of the Federal Subsistence Board's actions from
17 Jason Roberts. He'll have that for us, so put that as
18 item -- action item 12 number or letter B. And also, we
19 have -- is it here. Okay, it's also item number 12. I
20 want to add a letter E, and that will be an action item
21 or update on the statewide sale of brown bear hides. The
22 Office of Subsistence Management would like a
23 recommendation from the Council on this proposal. It's
24 Wildlife Proposal 24-01, and it deals with the statewide
25 sale of brown bear hides and there is a write up on that
26 in your supplemental materials.

27
28 Also, couple of report items added under
29 reports as item number 13 and we're gonna add a sub-part
30 four. We're going to get a presentation on food from the
31 forest by Dr. Ryan Bellmore and Marie Gutgesell. And
32 they have some information they wanna present to the
33 Council. And we'll also under that same section part
34 five, we'll get a -- an updated southeast fisheries
35 report from our staff, Jake Musslewhite. So, that's
36 under reports. So, that's all I have been given to me.
37 I don't know if Council members want to add any other
38 items to the agenda before we approve it. This would be
39 the time to do so.

40
41 (Pause)

42
43 Okay, that would be the way. Discussion,
44 is there any other questions or discussion on the items
45 that I mentioned that will be added to the published
46 agenda? Mike.

47
48 MR. DOUVILLE: I don't know if this is
49 an agenda item or not, Mr. Chair. But special actions
50 given the situation, rural -- Ketchikan rural status in

1 Unit 2 deer.....

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Are you
4 suggesting that we may have to request a special action?

5

6 MR. DOUVILLE: Seems like it's -- thank
7 you, Mr. Chair. It's kind of a ground we haven't been
8 on before. And we have interesting situation with -- as
9 I said, I don't know if that would be appropriate to
10 discuss that or put it on the agenda at this time. It's,
11 I guess more of a question.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well, I
14 think it probably is a topic that needs to be discussed
15 and kinda getting indications here that, that could be
16 part of our proposal discussion. I mean, we're gonna be
17 developing wildlife proposals. And the way I understand
18 it, a request for a special action could be put forward
19 as a proposal. So, that would be discussed under that
20 topic. Is that a kinda correct understanding? That it's
21 all part of the proposal process to request a special
22 action, we'll get a clarification from staff on that.

23

24 MS. GREDIAGIN: Lisa Grediagin, for the
25 record. And yeah, I mean, you can submit -- I think it
26 would make the most sense to discuss the submittal of a
27 special action during the call for proposals agenda
28 item.

29

30 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
31 Lisa. Yeah, so, I guess we just need to be prepared to
32 do that. Might keep that in mind that it will be part
33 of our discussion on proposals. So, anybody else with a
34 suggestion for the agenda?

35

36 (No response)

37

38 Okay, are we ready for the question on
39 approval of the agenda? Okay.

40

41 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, call for the
42 question.

43

44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
45 Mike. All in favor of approving the agenda as a guide,
46 as amended, say aye.

47

48 IN UNISON: Aye.

49

50

00020

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Is there anybody
2 opposed, say no.

3
4 (Pause)

5
6 Thank you, agenda has been approved. And
7 Council members, I think you have been distributed a
8 copy of this revised agenda. We didn't add anything else
9 so what you have in front of you should be the agenda
10 that we'll be working from here. Next up is to review
11 and approve the minutes from our previous meeting, and
12 that requires a motion.

13
14 MR. SANDHOFER: Mr. Chair, I make a
15 motion to approve the minutes from the prior meeting.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
18 Moved by Ted Sandhofer to approve the minutes. Do we
19 have a second?

20
21 MR. SMITH: Second.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Second, John.
24 Okay, opportunity for Council members to look over the
25 minutes and make sure that they're satisfied that
26 everything there is well represented. So, I'll give the
27 Council a minute or so to look through and make sure
28 they haven't jotted down any notes of anything they want.
29 Patty, great thank you.

30
31 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Patty, you had
34 something, go ahead.

35
36 MS. PHILLIPS: Yeah. So, on -- under my
37 -- all that community report just need a spelling
38 correction. That should be troll, t-r-o-l-l and, Mr.
39 Chair, how would you like me to handle my voting, do you
40 just want me to unmute and say yes or no?

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes, unless we
43 have a roll call vote. But if we're just doing a voice
44 vote, sure, just go ahead and unmute and chime in and
45 we'll hear you. Thank you, Patty.

46
47 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

48
49
50

00021

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Your
2 correction, I think, is getting noted. Any other Council
3 members?

4
5 (No response)

6
7 Okay, any other Council members with any
8 corrections to the minutes from the previous meeting?

9
10 (No response)

11
12 Okay. Somebody let you -- let me know
13 when they think we're ready for the question. Is anybody
14 still reading? Take your time.

15
16 (Pause)

17
18 Mike.

19
20 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, call for the
21 question.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Question has
24 been called for. Are we ready for a vote? Think so. All
25 in favor of approving the minutes, say aye.

26
27 IN UNISON: Aye.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Does anybody --
30 anybody opposed, say no.

31
32 (No response)

33
34 Okay, minutes have been approved. So,
35 now it's time for the Council member reports. That's
36 where we go around the table for the Council to give
37 their reports of things that are happening or happened
38 around their communities since we last met, items of
39 interest. And then after that we'll go to public and
40 tribal comments on non-agenda items, that's where we
41 open up the room and the telephone for folks to give us
42 comments, testimony on any matter related to subsistence
43 that they wanna bring to our attention. So, Council
44 members reports first, and then we go to the public. So,
45 let's start over on my right, this time with Cal. And
46 also, Cal, do you wanna at this time maybe give us a
47 rundown on your report from the Board of Fish meetings,
48 or I guess we could do that separate, maybe after we're
49 done. How about we let you just do your committee report,
50 and then we'll come back to you for a Board of Fish

1 report, how's that?

2

3 MR. CASIPIT: I'll do it any way you
4 wish.....

5

6 (Simultaneous speech)

7

8 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Let's just hear
9 your community report.

10

11 MR. CASIPIT: Okay, I'll just do my
12 community for now. Okay, like I said, my name is Calvin
13 Casipit, I'm from Gustavus. Probably, like everyone else
14 in southeast, we had a pretty wet winter. I called it
15 the winter of spring breakup. Had puddles in my yard,
16 the lakes, in my yard for most of the summer or most of
17 the winter. We also had a bunch of wind that normally
18 don't really get, and that made it difficult for some
19 of our deer hunters to get out cause we have to go across
20 icy straits to get to where the deer are since the wolves
21 wiped them out on Pleasant Island. And that's still an
22 issue around Gustavus is the lack of deer on Pleasant
23 Island and the wolves that are on it, and how they
24 basically have switched over to otters now because there
25 are no more deer.

26

27 And then I found out something
28 interesting when I was on my -- one of the meetings I
29 had regarding the (indiscernible) deer work that Ian
30 over in Hoonah is doing. They -- apparently, -- maybe
31 federal staff can help me with this, this is something
32 to think about. But apparently Pleasant Island was moved
33 out of Unit 4 and into Unit 1C and -- by the Board of
34 Game. I don't -- maybe a couple cycles ago, but there
35 was a first -- kinda, I've kinda of heard about it. And
36 the reason it came up is because we were discussing the
37 change in the way the department is doing deer population
38 estimates. They're going from the pellet group transects
39 to these camera traps, game camera traps. And we were
40 talking -- the Unit 4 biologists with Fish and Game was
41 talking about this work they're doing with camera traps.
42 And I asked a question, well are you doing it on Pleasant
43 Island? And he didn't have an answer, he didn't think
44 there were any camera traps on Pleasant Island. And he
45 said, that's all under the biologists, for 1C and I
46 never did get an answer about the possibility of putting
47 out these camera traps to get a -- to see what's
48 happening with the deer population on Pleasant Islands.
49 But anyway, that kind of threw me for a loop, because I
50 thought that, you know, where we are -- and I was looking

1 at the Game Units here and Pleasant Island is in Unit 4
2 under federal regs apparently. So, I'm just -- I'm maybe
3 on -- for Pleasant Island, I -- maybe that's a couple
4 different questions there but I'm more curious now about
5 Pleasant Island and what's going on there and why there
6 seems to be this change in management of Pleasant Island.
7 Anyway, that's about all I have, I'll go -- I'll pass
8 on that. Maybe staff can help me understand more about
9 the Pleasant Island issue.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
12 Harvey Kitka. Go ahead, Harvey.

13
14 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sitka
15 is very concerned about a lot of things and basically
16 the population of bear and being the mild winter we had,
17 we had I don't think the bear even went to sleep this
18 year. They've been running around a lot of places, and
19 population has increased to a point where it's getting
20 really scary for young people cause they're -- it's hard
21 for them to walk in some of the places now that the bear
22 population is. Just no telling what they'll attack and
23 eat. Aside from that, we have the sockeye streams that
24 are really suffering in then -- and we -- I still would
25 like to know what -- why the population in Redoubt Lake
26 has exploded basically to a point where there -- I think
27 they told us there was about 300,000 sockeyes showed
28 back up to Redoubt Lake last year. We have some questions
29 on -- basically to the State Fish and Game on how they
30 could make a mistake of 50% on the -- on the herring
31 population and how much they spawn. We realized that we
32 kinda know what they're doing, but we -- they haven't
33 really listened to us on that point.

34
35 As I said earlier, the concern is the
36 money situation for the Forest Service and then the
37 people that are redoing the -- rejuvenating the streams
38 in different parts of Southeast. We know this would help
39 bring back the population the salmon within some of these
40 streams. Over the century before contact, our people
41 took ownership of some of these streams and took care
42 of them and made sure the streams didn't change direction
43 so the spawning ground stayed really good, and one of
44 the reasons that some of these streams produce so much
45 fish. And it's so important that -- to see that the
46 Forest Service was doing -- rejuvenating some of these
47 streams and redoing them so that they stayed fairly
48 steady. Pretty much that's the concerns I have right
49 now, thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
2 Harvey. Patti, you're next up at the table there. Are
3 you ready for your community report?
4

5 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay, I'm here. It takes
6 me a minute to figure out how to get to my mic. Yeah,
7 this is Patti Phillips from Pelican. My community report
8 is you know, as we've heard, we had a warmer fall and a
9 warmer winter. In the fall, there was a lack of snow
10 pushing the deer down from the alpine. That made it
11 harder to get deer down at you know, at the lower levels.
12 There was a severe, unpredictable storms with whirlwinds
13 and the severity of the winds made it so, you know,
14 boats, you know, the small skiff hunters weren't getting
15 out as much. And you know, those whirlwinds will blow
16 around your scent. So, that'll alert deer early, and
17 they won't see -- we won't see them. I put a lot of
18 effort into deer hunting, and we got what we need. Just,
19 you know, it just took a long time to get it.
20

21 King salmon in the inlet is in low
22 abundance. The local winter troller season has a poor
23 catch rate. We're seeing a lot less migratory birds
24 moving through, and in some cases, some of the birds
25 have seemed sick, they look visibly sick, they act
26 visibly sick, and then they move on. So, I don't know
27 the condition of them when they move on. There's a lot
28 less ravens. I'm just wondering, you know, if it's this
29 bird flu that's impacting our migratory birds. There's,
30 you know, we got the unguided effort that's continuing
31 to be of concern to our local community. There are a lot
32 of non-resident fishermen and with the Cross Sound
33 through the Corridor, Indian Islands and those areas now
34 closed to the king salmon for sport fisher. Then we're
35 gonna see -- I think we'll see more effort in Lisianski
36 Inlet from the unguided and so, that'll impact the food
37 security of our community. So, yeah, we've had a lot of
38 storms move through right now, it's a snowstorm. We're
39 kinda in between, but with the weather between Pelican
40 and Juneau, I don't know if I'm gonna get to Sitka, but
41 we'll see. So, that's my report. Mr. Chairman, thank
42 you.
43

44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
45 Patti. We hope you can get out of there today and make
46 it to the meeting. But thank you for spending the time
47 on the phone while you're waiting for a plane, so I
48 appreciate that. Frank Wright, go ahead.
49
50

1 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
2 year the ships are going to be 240 ships this year were
3 tourist ships. And it's -- you know, I live on Front
4 Street, so I have a parade every day. One thing I'm
5 concerned about is that my wife and Sally are starting
6 to get retired, retire pretty soon. And every spring,
7 they -- what they do is that they collect metals, and
8 then they ship them down and the Alaska marine line pays
9 for the containers to go down for free. And then they
10 make money off of the containers and then -- all the
11 metals in the containers and then they -- every spring
12 they have some certificates that are given to the young
13 children and stuff like that, that are cleaning up the
14 area. So, I had to embarrass the corporation and tell
15 them, hey, the reason why the town is clean because of
16 the young kids and volunteers clean up the place. So,
17 they finally start sending people up to help clean up
18 the area, clean up Hoonah. So, when you get volunteers
19 that do stuff to clean up the environment, and you got
20 the corporation that just worried about their pocketbook
21 finally start coming in to help. So, what's gonna happen
22 when the two ladies that collect medals and everything
23 that are gone? No one's gonna clean up.

24
25 This year crabbing was very sad. One
26 thing I'm really concerned about is no females, there
27 was times when I had to sort through crab to find a
28 legal-size crab. Had to sort through, because there were
29 so many females that they would be covering up the males.
30 This year was so bad with no females. I had to -- I put
31 it in my report when I was -- my ticket, no females.
32 Even the guy that did really well in Hoonah even he said
33 not as much crabs this year. And you know there's gotta
34 be something going on. Why is it? Even at Pleasant Island
35 they used to be hundreds, and you'd get 100 crab per
36 pot. Now you pull up zeros, and that's -- I don't know,
37 its the sea otters? I don't know what it is but why are
38 there no females? Females are so small, they're just --
39 and what value is it that produce a sea otter? I don't
40 know. You know the sea otters in the bay are -- you
41 know, last year there was a Dungee opening in the bay,
42 and those guys were leaving real quick. Usually, they
43 used to stay up there, that's where Dungee crabs -- when
44 I was fishing with tanners. But, you know, it's getting
45 pretty hard to get even Dungees. So, I wonder, do we
46 have to start hunting those sea otters to get them out
47 of the bay? You know, and then what do you do with the
48 furs? You just don't kill the things that kill things.
49
50

1 The tribe, you know, is working with the
2 Park Service and the Forest Service. And this year we
3 had built a greenhouse, and our tribal administrator
4 says, well, we should be able to provide vegetables for
5 the community and even enough vegetables to even ship
6 out to different communities for the stores. And I asked
7 him, how is that, plants only grow once a year? He said,
8 well, this is a hydroponic, which I haven't [sic] the
9 faintest idea what that is. He says that they -- you can
10 produce about four poor crops a year. I have no idea
11 what that is, that's gotta be something to just stand
12 there and watch them grow. And we also had -- we
13 purchased a boat that is a rescue boat for the community
14 and presented it to the city. That rescue boat is a
15 first of years. I've gone on four times to help find
16 people and then using my boat, is a 58-foot boat to go
17 look for people and that's -- this is the first time
18 that the city has gotten a safety boat to go out and
19 look for people, and that's on the city. And then -- and
20 we've also in the community, the tribe has put a building
21 together to -- for a daycare center. So, we're gonna
22 have a daycare center. And we got plenty of other things
23 that are going on in the community.

24
25 When I was a kid, we used to be able to
26 go sledding, we didn't have TV, we didn't have phones,
27 we didn't have cell phones or anything. And we had fun
28 on the hill. Second Street, Second Street was a fast
29 hill, Hill Street was faster. My dad told my brother
30 Paul, he said, don't go to Hill Street, oh, no, my
31 brother wouldn't listen, he went to Hill Street, ran
32 into a fire hydrant, broke his shoulder. My dad just
33 said, told you not to go to Hill Street. But the snow
34 doesn't hang around anymore, I don't even think we had
35 a foot of snow this year. Not even a foot of snow doesn't
36 hang in there anymore. So, it's kind of -- if anyone
37 says that the weather is not changing, they're full of
38 hooey. So, you know, you've got to be pretty dense to
39 think that the weather is not changing, you know. It was
40 fun and Hoonah when there was sliding down the hill, you
41 know, kind of -- we had fun.

42
43 The deer are getting harder and harder
44 to find. So -- but the thing is, my wife is concerned
45 about was that there was a deer that came in, start
46 eating her plants already. So, right now she's worried
47 about her tulips. So, I told her, okay, we'll figure out
48 something, so to keep them -- keep the deer off those
49 tulips. So, when I get back, I gotta figure it out. You
50 know that this last summer I was wondering why people

1 were looking behind my house, since I live on Front
2 Street, and I was looking out there and I said, wonder
3 what's going inside, looked in the back, there was two
4 deer back there checking out our raspberry bushes,
5 sprouts, and I had to tryna [sic] chase them away. I was
6 stomping on the porch and everything and they wouldn't
7 move, so I said, Ruby, Ruby is my yellow lab -- I said,
8 come here. She looked out there bang (dog noises). So,
9 all of a sudden, the deer took off. So, I had to use my
10 yellow lab to chase those deer away, it's amazing. I saw
11 where they ran through the bushes, I went and looked,
12 what the heck. I know a deer went through here, but
13 didn't even see where they -- couldn't even see the
14 hole. When people walk through things, they just make
15 big patch patches, you know, and a big path. It was
16 amazing, those two deer ran through the bushes and didn't
17 even leave any evidence, sure something.

18
19 My niece, my sister and her daughter --
20 her daughter wanted to work with Hoonah for restoration.
21 My niece wanted to work again, she worked there last
22 year, but this year sounds like -- I was just talking
23 to my sister day before yesterday, and she said, well,
24 she didn't get hired back. They didn't think they had
25 the funding for restoration of rivers. You know, the --
26 it's unfortunate cause young people like doing that
27 work. I know a young lady that had a chance to work out
28 on ISP to make more money, but her mother said, go out
29 in the forest, go do that and the young lady, after
30 working in the forest she was so much more satisfied
31 working on the forest than working on a ISP. Didn't make
32 as much money, but she was happier, you know that --
33 another thing is that it's kind of unfortunate that you
34 know, when you got a community that [sic] expanding. I
35 know, two rivers in Hoonah, there was a coho river out
36 by the airport that used to be even just a few years
37 ago, used to have cohos going up there, but no, this
38 town, the town is expanding. So, they cut the trees
39 down, so there's no -- nothing to hold the water so that
40 the streams can keep going. And so, that coho river is
41 dead, you know so, and I always talk about Gunsightini,
42 which is Spud Creek. I talk about that river when -- we
43 used to have it -- when we were kids, we used to get
44 steelheads out of there, but no more. That dries up and
45 it rains hard one day, river is running just great, then
46 the next day it's all dried up because there's nothing
47 to hold the water to -- drainage that there's a stream.
48 That's all I got, Mr. Chair.

49
50

1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
2 Frank. Ted, go ahead.

3
4 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ted
5 Sandhofer from Petersburg. You know, the first item that
6 I have here is that there was overwhelming surprise from
7 the community by the decision of the Federal Subsistence
8 Board to designate Ketchikan as a rural community. You
9 know, and I'm sure we'll talk about that some more, but
10 it was -- I don't think it was shocking, but it was a
11 surprise when this Board kinda overwhelmingly went one
12 way and the Board went the other so, it was a surprise.
13 Like everybody said, a warm, wet winter. I think that's
14 done well for the moose and deer populations in central
15 Southeast. The populations in central Southeast are
16 fairly strong. You know, I hear some different things
17 from different regions, but we have a pretty good
18 population right now, and it has been down in the past.
19 You know, that lack of snow is good for those animals.
20 But I'm a little worried about the fish populations, you
21 know, their health this next summer is in question. And
22 you know, I hate to wish for a wet summer, but we just
23 might need one this next year, without the snowmelt.

24
25 The turmoil associated with the
26 uncertainty of the Forest Service jobs, you know not
27 only do those Forest Service families bring economic
28 growth and prosperity to the communities, but they're -
29 - they volunteer, they have kids in school. They're a
30 huge part of the communities, especially the small
31 communities. It's hard for them to absorb those loss of
32 good paying, year-round jobs. So, I know, Eric, you know
33 all these things, but you know, it's kind of --
34 communities troubled right now. They're wondering what's
35 gonna happen and hopefully, you know, we know that the
36 political winds flow back and forth but this is, like
37 you said, unprecedented, it's weird and hopefully it
38 levels off some.

39
40 You know, I think -- I really look
41 forward to having a youth voice on the Council. I think
42 that's a good thing, I'm looking around here, and I'm
43 not saying that we're all old, but none of us is young.
44 So, it'll be good to have that perspective on the
45 Council, you know, looking forward to that. Wanna give
46 a shout out to the subsistence dashboard. I know people
47 in Petersburg are using it, and I think that we can grow
48 that more. I'd like to see some more questions and
49 answers things on there and some other, you know, ideas.
50 So, I really appreciate that. This is my third meeting,

1 you know, the first one was in Anchorage, and it was
2 kind of a different meeting, you know, with the All-
3 Council meeting. So, we really didn't get into our
4 regular Regional Council meeting. Last one in October
5 in Ketchikan was probably one of the most emotionally
6 draining meetings I've been to, even in my Forest Service
7 career, it was a tough one. So, I'm kinda hoping that
8 this one, although we have a lot to discuss, a lot of
9 good issues and important things, but it kinda flows
10 more like, hey, is this how this work. You know, because
11 I'm looking forward to just being able to talk amongst
12 ourselves some, maybe networking and things like that.
13 You know, it's just -- it was a interesting meeting last
14 week, but I think -- our last time -- I think that's all
15 I have. Thanks, Donald.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ted.
18 Mike, go ahead.

19
20 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
21 concerns from Craig or Craig tribe on Ketchikan rural
22 status. We have what looks like a 50% deer -- decline
23 in deer population since 2016. We have a more than
24 healthy wolf population, which is the main contributor
25 in my opinion, for that decline. And it's still going
26 down. (Pause) I'm not sure how we are going to deal with
27 that. It is not only the deer population I'm a little
28 concerned about, but also the fish population and in
29 federal water; steelhead, trout, which will be also --
30 has a potential to be overexploited by adding (pause) a
31 much larger population that is able to hunt and fish
32 those resources. So, deer, wolf, sea otter is always a
33 concern, timber. So, with the forest revision, I mean,
34 that's something that the tribe wants to be on top of.
35 I am authorized by the tribe to represent them fully in
36 matters of timber, deer, wolf and sea otter. But the
37 rural status, deer and wolf populations are the most
38 concerned at this time and hopefully we can deal with
39 that, so we don't decimate particularly the deer, which
40 the door is wide open to do that. Those are the main
41 concerns other than looking forward to a fishing season.
42 Thank you.

43
44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
45 Lewis, go ahead.

46
47 MR. HIATT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To sort
48 of echo Mike, recently I attended the East Prince of
49 Wales AC and our Hollis Community Council meeting. And
50 there I wanted to remind them that I would be here this

1 week and their biggest concerns was, again, the
2 Ketchikan rural status, the impact it will have the
3 declining Unit 2 deer population and another one that
4 surprised me over there but is getting more popular was
5 the unguided non-resident sport fishermen. Thank you.

6

7 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
8 Lewis. John, go ahead.

9

10 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
11 represent -- I'm John Smith III. I represent Juneau of
12 Alaska. I live there, so a lot of my testimony would
13 come from my own visions, too. But I do work for the
14 community, I'm a auto diesel technician and work a lot
15 on the fishing boats. I work for the 302 Union, also.
16 So, I travel up to Prudhoe Bay and those type of places
17 and get to see a lot of the wildlife and the birds. And
18 I'd like to share that, you know, from all the fishermen
19 that I work on their boats, I'm always questioning, you
20 know, how their season is going. And of course, I wanna
21 echo from my last report about the numbers were, you
22 know, very quality and didn't change but the size of the
23 salmon. I noticed this year I've -- I eaten more
24 steelhead this year than ever because I noticed that the
25 numbers of the steelhead have gone up a little bit. It
26 seems like more are catching them. Lots of the charter
27 and the sports fishermen seem to be doing very good from
28 that. You see them pretty busy taking their people out.
29 You know, just make note to that I'm in Juneau, there's
30 not much subsistence there in Juneau, so I'm talking
31 more of a sports fishing and that system.

32

33 I hear a lot about struggles of catching
34 halibut or even rockfish, even codfish. A lot of times
35 when you -- when you're fishing for halibut, you'll catch
36 a lot of cod, but even those numbers seem to be, you
37 know, from what folks are saying, they're not even
38 catching many cod. And I know that, you know, looking
39 around in Juneau and just like, echoing what everybody
40 else was saying about the weather that we're having,
41 even looking in Juneau and looking at all the glaciers
42 that are in that area that, you know, there's ground
43 that's never seen the sky ever, you know, where I've
44 never seen dirt on that area. And now even, you know, a
45 lot of them are receding and they're -- so, water's a
46 big issue for fish, you know and having that runoff is
47 important.

48

49 Even the birds, the migrating birds, you
50 know, I don't see the swans a whole bunch like we used

1 to. Of course, in Prudhoe Bay -- I've been in Prudhoe
2 Bay, so I'm not talking from that point of view, but
3 noticing a different amount of birds there that normally
4 you see, it's usually just many thousands and thousands
5 of different migrating birds that are in that area. And
6 you know, this last year that I was there, it didn't
7 seem as big as a number, and this is just my perspective.

8
9 The deer, of course, you know, because
10 of the snow and the rain, you know, people are catching
11 -- getting deer, but they're working really hard for
12 them because they're staying high up in the mountains.
13 So, they -- a lot of folks that are older and you know,
14 have issues of getting up there and getting their deer
15 count for the year. As far as the bears, you know, in
16 Juneau, of course, you don't have that many brown bears,
17 but you do get sightings of them every once in a while,
18 further out the road. I think they stay away from each
19 other. But you look at the brown bears, we're seeing a
20 lot more of them. Even to where they're coming into the
21 -- to the you know, people's homes more often than none.
22 You're seeing bears in the spring where you -- they have
23 instead of one or two cubs, they have three. Some I even
24 seen four. You know, so I really believe the population
25 is jumping up and you're seeing a more often. And of
26 course, I really appreciate them opening up the season
27 for -- I truly believe they should just keep it open
28 24/7 for bears, brown bears. And you know, that's just
29 my perspective because of the numbers, you know, they -
30 - they're just going up and up and up. As far as wolves,
31 I hear a lot from many people that travel around and go
32 in many areas, and there's been a lot of sightings of
33 the wolves. As far as goats, I -- every spring I like
34 to go up in -- to certain areas and watch because the -
35 - you'll see the brown bears on the bottom of the
36 mountain where the goats are all up there, you know, and
37 seen quite a few this year, even some younger ones. And
38 the eagles are up above there. And, you know, the bears
39 are waiting for the eagles to attach on and, you know,
40 help each other to harvest food for each other.

41
42 And you know, one thing I do notice is
43 even the herring, you know, the herring, believe it or
44 not places that I harvest that have never seen herring,
45 where I've actually seen eggs on the beach, on the kelp.
46 So, that was a good, positive thing. And I don't see the
47 killer whales coming in as often as they normally do in
48 the spring when the herring start to move around in
49 Juneau. The crab numbers are -- have seem to drop from
50 my own perspective too but I've talked to others and

1 noticed that usually your pots are full, and you know,
2 this year it's been a struggle of moving around to
3 actually find a nice location to actually benefit from
4 their -- you know, when I was a young man, I did a lot
5 of commercial fishing on the Donna Ann and Western Queen.
6 And my captains used to talk about halibut. We have a
7 bad halibut year, we'll have a good crab year. We have
8 a bad crab year, we're gonna have a good halibut year.
9 And the perspective getting that they harvest each
10 other. And so, on the other perspective, I think that's
11 the bottom of my report and I wanna share about Frank
12 and the words that he was sharing. I'm really supportive
13 and, you know, I grew up in that area, raised all my
14 kids in Hoonah. And I really believe in sustainability
15 and the greenhouse that the community has put up there,
16 it's a pretty big greenhouse. It's almost 100ft,
17 probably 60ft wide and it's run by a wood boiler that's
18 giving the heat, what it's -- the floor is heated
19 hydroponic, I mean, not hydroponic, but with water. So,
20 it's like a boiler. So -- and when he's talking about
21 hydroponics is instead of using dirt, they're using
22 water, which that you're feeding it with a -- in that
23 water is nutrients that will help it grow. Many people
24 in Juneau -- I work with the University of Fairbanks,
25 donate my time to teach, I have my own garden, I have
26 my own greenhouse, and I have things growing in the
27 wintertime in my greenhouse and many others in Juneau.
28 So, it's a very positive way, and I hope that things
29 work out with the community there and that it's very
30 productive because I grew up there and getting fresh
31 vegetables was really struggle. And things are very
32 expensive in the villages today. Even in Juneau prices
33 are going up. So, being sustainable and growing your own
34 food and recycling, and making your own compost is very
35 productive. You know, taking the waste from inside your
36 home to produce good food for your plants that turn
37 around and produce food for your family. So, I'm a true
38 believer of sustainability.

39
40 That's pretty much my report for right
41 now. And also clams and cockles both -- I noticed through
42 the years that it's a real heavy struggle to even collect
43 that because, you know, people -- a lot of people go out
44 and through the years that I've been living in Juneau
45 since 2006, when I moved over there -- that now it's
46 really hard to even get a -- even a bottom bucket of
47 cockles. And, you know, I really -- even clams myself,
48 I don't eat clams, haven't eaten clams for many years
49 because of the PSPs and the levels that they have.
50 Cockles I actually, believe it or not, because their

1 system, I would actually -- can eat those all year round
2 and I've never had any worries about PSPs. But clams I
3 don't, I follow the culture rules, the way of our life.
4 You know that subsistence is a word, you know, it's a
5 way of our life. So, I really encourage the -- you know,
6 off topic kind of is that my perspective being here is
7 to really to support subsistence. The local people that
8 live here 24/7 to getting them more of the plate, more
9 of the food that that's available. We need to focus more
10 on strengthening up their -- able to put food on the
11 table for their families here in Alaska because of the
12 prices. And we have people that come up from the Lower
13 48 that, you know, their prices down there are different
14 than what we have up here. And, you know, they're coming
15 up and they're indulging in the food that we have here
16 and taking it back. It would be real positive that, you
17 know, the sports fishermen and the charter fishermen,
18 you know, no offense to anybody, but they're getting
19 more of the attention when, you know, we have laws and
20 rules and regulations that we should be following to
21 take care of the Alaska people. And I'm not, you know,
22 just to let you know, I'm Alaska Native, my mother is
23 three quarters Tlingit, my father's African American,
24 my grandpa, he's an Irishman, and I'm also Italian. So,
25 you know, making myself that you know, we need to take
26 care of each other and take care of the people that are
27 around us in the home that we live in. Appreciate your
28 time, thank you.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
31 I'll go ahead and give my community report, and then
32 maybe I'll give a report from the Federal Subsistence
33 Board, which I attended telephonically. I didn't make
34 it to the actual meeting. And then Cal, after I'm done,
35 maybe I'll call on you to give us a report from your
36 participation in the Board of Fish meeting. So, for my
37 local report coming from the north end of Prince of
38 Wales, we did not have a very successful deer hunting
39 season, it was -- it's just been pretty obvious for a
40 number of years now that people are just having -- are
41 just seeing a lot fewer deer on the north end of the
42 island. It's been kind of an ongoing situation. I have
43 a temporary kind of part-time job with the Department
44 of Fish and Game, I run a string of hair boards
45 collecting wolf hair up there for their DNA analysis.
46 And I was doing that again this fall, and I was seeing
47 -- I'd have to characterize it as a fair amount of wolf
48 activity up there. We did have one snowfall and stretched
49 cold weather that happened there before I finish my hair
50 boards for the year and it kinda closed down the road

1 right at the tail end of the hunting season with the
2 snow. So, I was kind of out there all by myself, you
3 know, there's nobody else coming up from the south end
4 of the island and the locals had pretty much got done
5 with their hunting, and snow was on the road, and I saw
6 a lot of wolf tracks on the road. Those ones were -- and
7 the people were gone. I noticed a definite lessening of
8 activity when there's a lot of hunters out and about but
9 when the hunters were gone and the snow was down and --
10 the wolves use those roads, they were traveling on the
11 road. They were hitting my hair board sites, pretty
12 regular there for a couple of weeks. I got a lot of
13 samples, but yeah, really gave me an opportunity to see
14 how much activity there is. Especially, you know, around
15 the roads, it just becomes pretty obvious that they're
16 traveling those roads, and they're covering a lot of
17 territory and yeah, I was seeing that.

18
19 Other main concern from our local
20 residents continues to be the continued growth of the
21 unguided sport fishing group. It just -- we have a big
22 operation in our community, the number of people that
23 are there on every given day in the summer is basically
24 about three times the population of the community. And
25 they expanded a little bit more this year, you know,
26 more beds, more boats. That's all they gotta do is find
27 more space for boats and beds, and it's an unlimited
28 growth potential. And it makes them a lot of money and
29 it doesn't do a damn thing for the community except, you
30 know, deplete our local resources, so yeah, people are
31 not too happy about that. You know, there's nothing we
32 can do about it locally, we're an unincorporated
33 community with no -- you know, zoning restrictions or
34 ordinances or anything, you can basically do anything
35 you want when you get out to some of these rural
36 communities. So, that's the situation.

37
38 The other thing I've heard a little bit
39 about this year is some of my neighbors are starting to
40 see what they -- fairly sure are some of the outfitters
41 getting into providing opportunities for deer hunters
42 in the fall and that's just something we don't wanna to
43 see. You know, they started to see going into, you know,
44 spot that locals like to go to and there's a -- you
45 know, a boatload of people unloading there. They kind
46 of suspect they're, you know, out of State hunters just
47 kinda has that look to them. And if that gets going that
48 could just mean on any given time, you know, you go to
49 your favorite hunting spot, there just might be a
50 boatload of hunters unloading there, you know, being

1 where you wanna be. And yeah, we don't wanna see that
2 happen. And I don't know what the mechanisms are to slow
3 that operation down. It's just, I mean, it just seems
4 like it's a natural extension of the unguided sport
5 fishing is to just extend their seasons a little longer.
6 They're doing bear hunts in the spring, that's gotten
7 to be a big thing. Locals don't get too upset about that
8 cause we're typically not bear hunters, but yeah, when
9 they start getting into the deer season, that's a whole,
10 whole other issue. It may be something that maybe need
11 to address through land management with the Forest
12 Service. I don't know if they need to issue permits for
13 those kind of activities, but they might have to engage
14 with the local communities and, you know, identify areas
15 that they just don't really wanna see a lot of activity
16 in. So, yeah, I think that covers the main concerns from
17 my community.

18
19 The Federal Subsistence Board meeting
20 back in, first week in February. I was very disappointed
21 that I did not make it to that meeting in person. Our
22 Coordinator did her best efforts to give me lots of
23 leeway to get up there, I think I had a four-day window
24 of opportunity with the charter site -- charter flights
25 available, but you know, that one blast of winter we had
26 this year came in right before that meeting. And my only
27 option for getting out of Point Baker was float planes
28 and they were just not flying, and I couldn't make it.
29 So, that was really disappointing, I really wanted to
30 be there in person, you know, representing the Council.
31 So, I was there on the phone, but I just never think
32 that's as effective. And as everybody knows, you know,
33 the Board overrode our Council recommendation on the
34 rural determination for Ketchikan. And I beat myself up
35 a little bit, you know, thinking that I don't know if
36 it would've made a difference if I had been there and
37 maybe had gotten to bend some ears, you know, maybe a
38 little differently than I was able to over the phone.
39 But in retrospect, I don't think it would've made a
40 difference. I think the big difference there was that
41 Ketchikan Indian Community, they showed up in force in
42 Anchorage, they had a lot of people there testifying.
43 And you know, we had a split decision here in our Council
44 opposing, and they had a split decision in favor. And
45 that's just kinda the way it was gonna go, I guess. And
46 I think the lesson to take back from that whole process
47 was, I think we really have to you know, congratulate
48 the Ketchikan Indian community. They really worked hard
49 to get that determination. I mean, you know, they kept
50 making the point that it was to benefit their tribal

1 citizens, and our Council and other people really
2 supported Ketchikan tribal citizens in getting the
3 subsistence priority. But you know, our Council felt
4 that Ketchikan as a whole just was not rural in our
5 viewpoint. The Board felt otherwise, and -- but the
6 lesson to be learned there, I think, is when people show
7 up and make their voices heard, they can make a
8 difference. And that's what happened in Anchorage. So,
9 yeah, I congratulate them for that. They worked hard at
10 it. So, -- and now, as everybody knows, this Council is
11 gonna be dealing with the consequences. So, -- and as
12 we said at our meetings, I think we'll figure out how
13 to do that because that's what we're good at, so we'll
14 be working at that.

15
16 Other proposals up at the Board of --
17 Subsistence Board was we had the Makhnati closure for
18 the herring fishery, for the Makhnati area here in Sitka
19 Sound that was on the consensus agenda as being approved.
20 So, they didn't have to discuss that. We had two other
21 proposals and -- what was it -- a closure review on the
22 Unuk River for hooligans and they decide to take no
23 action on that, probably mainly due to the fact that
24 with Ketchikan now being rural, that changes the whole
25 dynamic for that closure up there. So, they took no
26 action, deferred that. And then our proposal for a
27 subsistence fishery in the Taku River that got deferred
28 as well as we're still working through the process with
29 the Transboundary River Commission on that fishery and
30 hasn't really been concluded yet is my understanding.
31 So, they decide not to take any action on that at this
32 time. So, and on the agenda, we'll have probably a better
33 report on Federal Subsistence Board, its actions from
34 the staff, Jason is prepared to do that later in the
35 meeting, but yeah, that was my takeaway from the
36 Subsistence Board meeting. So, Cal, you attended the
37 Alaska Board of Fish meeting going on at the same time,
38 which I listened in a little bit of that when I could,
39 but please kinda tell us about your participation there.

40
41 MR. CASIPIT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
42 Calvin Casipit, representing Gustavus. So, yeah, it was
43 a very interesting meeting. Just to start off on a
44 interesting note, I -- we were dealing with the same
45 storm that you were, but I had the luxury of having a
46 IFR equipped Pilatus jet come to get me. So, I actually
47 got out of Gustavus on IFR. It was -- we flew in the
48 clouds the whole way to Juneau. Anyway, that's here and
49 there, but I did make it to the meeting on time, as
50 scheduled, which was great. Was able to provide my --

1 our testimony on our -- on -- as we had discussed at our
2 last meeting. Just some overall impressions about the
3 Board of Fish meeting, this is the first meeting I've
4 been to -- it's gotta be 25 years at least. So, a lot
5 has changed between then when I attended Board of Fish
6 meeting and now. One major difference is the way they
7 don't break up into subcommittees anymore to discuss
8 groups of proposals. They do this committee of the whole
9 process, which is kinda weird. The whole Council -- the
10 whole Board gets together as a committee and so they can
11 -- they don't have the constraints that they normally
12 have during regular public testimony, but there's still
13 a line of 25 people that wanna talk to the Board. And
14 they kinda try to limit people -- they -- the rules are
15 -- is that if you're in line to give public -- to give
16 testimony at a -- at this committee of the whole, you
17 can't repeat anything that was given in public
18 testimony. You can't repeat anything that was in written
19 either RCs or public comments, you can't repeat anything
20 that somebody said ahead of you. So, it turns into a --
21 it was -- to me it was really disorganized. And I don't
22 see how that process contributed any to decision making.
23 It was obvious to me that the decision making was done
24 at another time, at another place, in a different
25 location, because you -- I mean, in the past, when you
26 give public testimony, you're limited, you know, I was
27 limited to ten minutes. Usually, the Board members will
28 ask questions after that, to try to give you more time
29 to explain things or try to expand things out. I got no
30 questions, no Board of Fish members ask me any questions
31 about the ten minutes of public testimony that I gave,
32 none.

33
34 So, you're all aware of what our
35 proposal was, was to create a subsistence fishery for
36 king salmon, that was 104. They -- yeah, they weren't
37 interested in that. It failed zero to seven on the vote.
38 Basically, because -- their reasoning was because,
39 number one, there was no mechanism in place to finance
40 a sampling strategy that would need to be put in place
41 for that fishery. I didn't quite understand that, but
42 that was all Fish and Games deal and what they were
43 talking about. They didn't have money to do the sampling
44 necessary for that fishery. And number two, that they
45 needed to negotiate with the Canadians first. I don't -
46 - whatever -- I'm not a expert on the Pacific Salmon
47 Treaty but if -- seems to me if the treaty process gives
48 an overall quota of king salmon to be harvested, that
49 it's pretty much the State's decision on how that gets
50 split up -- whatever. And as you all know, there was a

1 period of time last fall where resident sport fishing
2 for king salmon was closed at the -- towards the end of
3 the season. That had a lot of people upset, a lot of
4 resident people upset. But most of the public testimony
5 regarding king salmon had to do with maintaining the
6 80/20 split, which is, there is a bunch of fish taken
7 off the top for net fisheries and that sort of thing.
8 That's where we were proposing our subsistence
9 allocation come from. But after all those things get
10 taken off the top, what's left is split 80% for the
11 commercial troll fishery, 20% for the sport fishery. And
12 within the sport fishery, 20% is the guides, the guided
13 sport fishing, the charter boats. Well, in the past five
14 years for every two salmon caught in the charter boat
15 section, there's only one fish caught in the residence
16 sportfish section. So, already -- it's already 66%
17 charter boat harvest and one third of the harvest is
18 resident. That was -- has -- there was a lot of testimony
19 about that. The Board decided that their ultimate
20 decision on the whole king salmon management plan was
21 to shift 3% from commercial troll to sport, with the
22 expectation that the commissioner was going to use in-
23 season authority to ensure that there was uninterrupted
24 fishing for king salmon by residents maintaining a two
25 fish daily bag limit.

26
27 So, that's the expectation that the
28 Board now has from the Commissioner as far as
29 implementing the king salmon management plan, that at
30 least for residents, there will be no more closed seasons
31 and they will maintain a two fish daily limit. And they
32 basically shifted the 3% from the trollers to sport fish
33 allocation for that to happen. And when you consider of
34 that 3%, 2% is -- if nothing changes, 2% of that is
35 still going to the guided sport of the charters. So, I'm
36 not sure that that's really gonna provide a resident
37 priority for king salmon under this management plan that
38 they just approved. Anyway, that's kinda how that all
39 turned out. So, basically, the way I felt what happened
40 there is that they shifted 3% from our resident trollers
41 to basically nonresident guided sport and blamed it on
42 subsistence or blamed the need on doing that by providing
43 a resident priority, which -- I was beside myself. I
44 didn't know what to say after that.

45
46 One of the other things I found out
47 about at this meeting was that apparently there's a bunch
48 of king -- there's a bunch of guided charter fishing
49 around Ketchikan, that's [sic] happens early in the
50 season that for all of -- the rest of us, for residents,

1 you know, we don't really fish early in the season
2 anymore because there's all those closures on the inside
3 waters to protect transboundary river stocks and local
4 stocks of concern, of management concern. So, there's
5 conservation concerns for all these inside stocks.
6 There's non-retention of king salmon during that time.
7 Well apparently, around Ketchikan there's a bunch of
8 sport charter people that are going out and marketing
9 to cruise ships to go out and catch and release king
10 salmon around Ketchikan. And this is a fishery directed
11 at stocks of concern, stocks of management concern. We
12 have conservation issues with these stocks. And they're
13 conducting a catch and release sport fishery on these
14 same stocks in the Ketchikan area. And the catch and
15 release mortality that Fish and Game -- this was in
16 their testimony, 20% mortality on a hook -- on hook and
17 release king salmon. We're tolerating a 20% mortality
18 on -- on stocks that we have conservation concerns with,
19 and we're letting people play with them? I was beside
20 myself and they were talking about, there was a proposal
21 to require that the fish be released in the water, not
22 be taken out of the water, take a picture of it, right.
23 Take a picture of it, throw it back. They wanted to be
24 released in the water, that failed. And the reason they
25 said it was failed was because it was too hard for people
26 to -- you know, because varying depths of the gunnel and
27 all this stuff around the boats makes it hard for people
28 to release fish in the water. And I said, are you kidding
29 me? Go up there and cut the line. That's why -- I went
30 up there during that committee of the whole and they
31 were all arguing about them, and I just said, just go
32 up there and cut the line. What's the matter with you
33 people? I -- that -- and that whole thing failed. The
34 whole thing about releasing the fish in the water failed,
35 and I just -- I thought that was for a stock -- for
36 stock is a concern that you would allow -- that we --
37 that the Board would allow that kind of mortality. I --
38 as a biologist, I was flabbergasted.

39
40 Let me go on to the sockeye proposals
41 real-quick before I end with the trout proposal that
42 they talked -- trout proposals they talked about. So,
43 for sockeye, we -- there was two proposals that were
44 submitted for Basket Bay sockeye, raising the limits
45 there. We had -- the Council, we had submitted a proposal
46 that was 20 daily, 40 annually. Hoonah Indian
47 Association submitted a proposal that was just 30
48 annually. And the Board of Fish went with Hoonah Indian
49 Association proposal of 30 fish annually, which kinda
50 makes sense. People can go there and decide to take all

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1 their fish at once or split it up however they want,
2 seems reasonable. The Redoubt Lake proposal that we
3 submitted to allow same gear in that outer area on --
4 for the read out management plan that was supported,
5 they added the use of a gillnet in that same area based
6 on comments from the Sitka AC so, that one was supported
7 by the Board.

8
9 I just wanted to talk -- before -- there
10 was a lot of -- even though there was no proposal on the
11 -- you know, on the table for talking about unguided
12 anglers. There was a lot of discussion about unguided
13 anglers at the meeting, even though there was no proposal
14 about it. In fact, a former Board member, Board of Fish,
15 member from Petersburg got up and in his public testimony
16 said, yeah, I'm one of those guys who rent out boats and
17 I probably rent out more boats than anybody else in
18 town. And he says he's replaced a lot of lower end units
19 and he got a big laugh from the Board of Fish. And that
20 was another thing that changed about the Board of Fish,
21 there's a -- there's now a line that the -- that
22 separates the public from the Board and staff, and you
23 can't cross that line, the public can't cross that line.
24 But I think they have a really different definition of
25 the public, because apparently if you're a member of the
26 public but you're a former Board member, Board of Fish
27 member, you walk across back that line all the time. You
28 do whatever you want, which was -- I kinda shook my head
29 at that. If that line is for the public and you're not
30 a Board of Fish member, and you're not a staff member,
31 you're not supposed to be past that line. But if you're
32 a former Board of Fish member, I guess you can. I was
33 blown away by that. Anyway, that's -- yeah probably going
34 off subject, but.

35
36 Trout proposals, there was a ton of
37 trout proposals. And, you know, we gave a -- our Council
38 gave a standard comment about well, you know federally
39 qualified users can harvest six trout -- any
40 combination, you know, any size, whatever. You know, and
41 there was all this stuff about -- there was some
42 proposals about liberalizing that on the state regs. It
43 was kinda interesting. There was -- like I said, there
44 was about, I don't know, eight or nine of them from very
45 broad geographic down to really specific. And the Board
46 kinda rejected all the broad ones, but they did go with
47 the specific ones because apparently the Division of
48 Sport Fish is doing a bunch of work on these cutthroat
49 trout lakes to see if they can allow more use in these
50 systems. And so, they've been doing these studies in

1 these trout lakes to try to increase use beyond what is
2 under the general regulations. And there was a -- so
3 wherever they had specific information about the
4 populations, they approved them because there was lots
5 of cutthroats and lots of fish. They approved the ones
6 that were specific to certain waters. And the one that
7 stuck out in my mind and it's something that I -- 25
8 years I've been talking about this. They were talking
9 about Eagle Lake. Apparently, it's near Petersburg
10 somewhere, and it's on the list of trophy cutthroat trout
11 lakes. So, the minimum size limit there is 25 inches for
12 a cutthroat trout to keep it. And they changed it, they
13 went to whatever the proposal was. But the reason they
14 did that is because they did this -- the survey in the
15 lake. The Sport Fish Division spent all this time
16 surveying the cutthroat trout in this lake. They caught
17 over 1,600 cutthroat trout from this lake. There wasn't
18 one over 25 inches, not one. Out of that sample of 1,600
19 did they find one cutthroat above 25 inches, which is
20 the minimum size limit if you wanna keep a fish in that
21 lake. So, essentially, there were no fish for harvest
22 in that lake with that, with that 25-inch minimum size
23 limit that they apply to all these trophy cutthroat trout
24 lakes around Southeast. Which I thought -- when they did
25 that, I thought was -- they did that years and years and
26 years ago that cutthroat the trophy lake thing. Start
27 looking, you start answering some questions, and you --
28 all of a sudden, maybe your regulations that you put in
29 place over 25 years ago don't make much sense. That's
30 about -- I think that's all I have, and I have some
31 other observations that are kinda interesting, but I'll
32 -- yeah, they're not part of our time.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well,
35 thank you very much, Cal. Thanks for representing us
36 there. Sounds like it might've been a little
37 frustrating, but yeah.

38
39 MR. CASIPIT: I think we should resubmit
40 that king salmon proposal next round, I really think we
41 should. We gotta keep the pressure up on this, cause
42 this is the only way that we can get king salmon for
43 subsistence. Is the sport fishery, and if the sport
44 fishery is not serving our needs and not meeting our
45 needs in our communities, then we need to change things
46 and we need to keep pushing this and -- because -- I
47 don't know, you really think the Department is gonna
48 find some money to do a sampling program for us and
49 negotiate with the Canadians for us without more
50 pressure? I don't think so.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: No, you're right. Yeah, we'll have an opportunity to do that. So, yeah, that concludes our reports. So, this is the point in the meeting where we go to the public and ask if there's.....

MR. WRIGHT: Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Frank, you have a question or comment?

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think Cal's proposal should be put on the record as a sort of a motion so that the squeaky wheel get the grease. You know, if we just let it ride then what are we here for? So, I think that we need to push it. Otherwise, like I said, what are we here for? We're here for resources. Gunalchéesh.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you, Frank. John.

MR. SMITH: Just for the record, I just -- you know, a lot of really good points that you brought up, Cal. And I echo what I said earlier about, you know we're taking out of the fridge of the people from the local families here. And I think we need to lean on ANCSA, you know, that doesn't just mean the Alaska Native people, it means the people that live here, that we should be on the top of the list of receiving the salmon, the deer, the elk, the moose, all the resources that are here cause we live here. And I find it very disrespectful to the salmon people when we're playing with them, we don't play with their food. It's very disrespectful, it hurts my heart just to hear that. And this line you're talking about, it's like -- this Board works for the people, and they should be able to come across the line, they -- that's our job, is to listen and hear their woes and their concerns. So, I find that very disrespectful that, you know -- and I might be out of line, but (in Native), you know. How do we get them to understand this and that the charter boats and the sports fishermen that are from all over the world get more attention than the local people. Gunalchéesh, ho ho.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John. Thank you, Frank. Yeah, unfortunately, I mean, we don't get another shot at this for another three years. I guess it's a three-year cycle for the Board of Fish. So,

1 yeah, we have to just kinda hold our fire for a while,
2 but I -- you're right, I mean, we need to keep
3 reintroducing that proposal and come at it every time
4 we get an opportunity and hope for maybe some changes
5 of the Board of Fish and how they operate, I guess.
6

7 MR. CASIPIT: I did forget to mention one
8 thing, but I know before this all started, before the
9 AC started meeting and all, there was questions that I
10 heard back behind the grapevine about, well, you know,
11 king salmon was never a subsistence species to begin
12 with, so why are we gonna -- and thank you, DeAnna, for
13 sending me this. I knew it was around, I knew it's
14 available, but I never kept a copy for myself after I
15 retired. And thank you for sending me to this -- sending
16 me this because there is a code in here that's just
17 awesome. As far as the subsistence use of king salmon,
18 by people. And it's amazing, if you ever get a chance -
19 - anybody, you get a chance to just peruse this document.
20 It's a great piece of work, it's from, you know, a long
21 time ago. Well, I guess.....
22

23 (Simultaneous speech)

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25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Could you read us
26 the title, Cal?
27

28 MR. CASIPIT: Haa Atxaayí Haa Kusteeyíx
29 Sitee: Our food is our Tlingit way of life. I know I
30 butchered the heck out of that, the Tlingit there, but
31 it's our food is our Tlingit way of life. It's by Richard
32 Newton and Madonna Moss. And if you know, a history
33 buff, if you're kinda into Forest Service history, is
34 really cool cause there's letters from three regional
35 foresters about this work, it's cool. And the Board of
36 Fish did recognize this, they -- there was no question
37 about the Subsistence use of king salmon that, you know,
38 they -- when they did their little thing at the end,
39 when they talk about subsistence use, they acknowledged
40 king salmon -- you know, the use of king salmon for
41 subsistence, they acknowledged that. And I think that
42 this had a lot to do with it and the work of Emily and
43 her group in getting the Board to recognize the use of
44 king salmon in Southeast, so I appreciate. I know you
45 guys did some work on that cause I wanted to walk in
46 there and had no questions about that if it wasn't for
47 your guys' work, so I appreciate that.
48

49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
50 John, did you have something to add?

1

2 MR. SMITH: Yeah, just a comment, Mr.
3 Chair. John Smith. Is like that book there, I wanna
4 thank the Forest Service and the people who put that
5 together. I've been an educator for 25 years, and I'm
6 retired, and that book was key. They don't make that
7 book anymore. So, the one you have there -- but you can
8 go online, and you can find that and Google it and have
9 the whole resource right in front of you. These are the
10 folks that raised me and taught me and trained me, all
11 the elders in that book. So, I really appreciate you,
12 Calvin, for bringing that out. And that's what I was
13 saying earlier, it's a way of our life. We don't use the
14 word subsistence, but I thank you for trying with the
15 language and I don't take offense at all. Just you in
16 general, just saying that with your heart, you have a
17 good heart. And I appreciate how you're -- you battle
18 for all, thank you.

19

20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
21 Patti Phillips, being told that you have your hand raised
22 on the computer there.

23

24 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
25 think that we should form a subcommittee to talk about
26 this king salmon as subsistence. It'll probably take us
27 -- we only meet twice a year. So, that's four meetings
28 until it's proposal time but there's some -- you know,
29 we really need to have a -- with Cal's experience before
30 the Board. And then we just need further justifications,
31 and we need to have that instead of scrambling to hurry
32 up and put a proposal in at the last minute, that's my
33 suggestion. And the plane is on the way, so I gotta head
34 out the door. So, thank you.

35

36 (Simultaneous speech)

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38 MR. WILSON: I second that motion, Mr.
39 Chair.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
42 Patti. Yeah. No, yeah, it may take some work to get this
43 through, so it probably should be a priority as well.
44 We'll have to prioritize that for our next Board of Fish
45 cycle. So, let's make sure that we get a head start on
46 that like Patti said, that's [sic] good idea. So, we'll
47 be working on federal fish proposals next round. So,
48 maybe we should start working on state proposals at the
49 same time. I think they -- they're a year behind us, but
50 it might be a good time to get started. And we're talking

1 about fish proposals. Good suggestions. Okay, anybody
2 else any questions or comments on Board of Fish or Board
3 of Game issues or excuse me, Federal Board issues,
4 Subsistence Board? We are now going to the public, yes.
5 Is time for public comments, that's up next. And yeah,
6 at least one person here in the room, and then I'll
7 check with the phones as well. If there's anybody
8 standing by on the phones, we'll get to you after we
9 have somebody here from the room. So, go ahead, tell us
10 who you are and you got the floor.

11
12 MR. NIX: Once again, thank you for this
13 opportunity. My name is George Nix. I was at the fishing
14 Board's meeting for the very beginning of it, and I
15 thought it was very interesting the way that the -- it
16 seemed like there was some tactics being played. But the
17 very first thing that they talked about was customary
18 and traditional, like customary and traditional harvest
19 areas. And they talked about it for probably about 5 to
20 10 minutes and then kinda pushed it underneath and quit
21 talking about it and I felt like that was a very
22 interesting -- it was the very, very first thing that
23 was talked about. There was nobody in the room and I
24 feel like that was a way to kind of keep the eyes away
25 from taking that as an avenue, cause, I mean, being a
26 federally recognized individual and being limited on the
27 access to certain areas to practice subsistence, I feel
28 as if we -- we're the stewards of this land originally,
29 and being given the opportunity to show that we are
30 tribal and federally recognized, we should be able to
31 have access to these areas that are specific to our
32 people like sacred surveyed areas and stuff like that.
33 They had a couple of marked areas on the map that they
34 were showing. But like I said, it was a very brief touch
35 subject. So, I don't know if there's a way that we could
36 dive a little more into that. But figuring out, you
37 know, traditional harvest and customary areas that we -
38 - our tribes have used for, you know, thousands of years
39 would be something I'd be interested in trying to help
40 and dissect into.

41
42 With that line that we were talking
43 about, they didn't even have coffee in the back, that
44 was -- that killed me. I need the coffee. But that was
45 all, I just wanted to echo on, you know, having people
46 testifying and, you know, spilling their hearts and
47 their lives out and just to have it be turned around
48 like it didn't matter was pretty impressive. But thank
49 you for your guys' time. I appreciate the hard work and
50 one thing that our tribal president from Kasaan likes

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1 to say is if you're not at the table, you're on the
2 menu. So, the -- being there is important. Gunalchéesh.

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4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
5 George. Any questions for George?

6

7

(No response)

8

9 Guess not. Thank you, George. Is there
10 anybody else in the room who would like to give questions
11 or testimony to the Council on any issue related to
12 subsistence? So, come forward, thanks.

13

14 MR. CALVIN: Hi, my name is Devon Calvin
15 and like I said, I'm on the Sitka AC. I just recently
16 joined this last year, and I have the substance seat. I
17 also attended the Board of Fish meeting, and I just
18 wanted to share some of the takeaways from the herring
19 portion of the Board of Fish meeting. There were quite
20 a few proposals that were submitted by the herring
21 protectors and regarding the sac roe fishery. And
22 ultimately, no one besides the department came away with
23 any success on their proposals. The major concern from
24 our AC was the -- kind of the concern that the herring
25 would be used for something besides -- something like a
26 reduction product or fish meal product. There's a lot
27 happening at the State level in Kodiak and that is
28 concerning to people in Sitka that there will be more
29 opportunity for commercial seiners to harvest sac roe
30 herring in different months. And our body's feeling is
31 that we don't want to see more -- any more pressure on
32 the herring especially the -- yeah, herring that produce
33 herring eggs. Anyways, that's all I had. Thanks.

34

35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I have a
36 question for you, Devon but anybody else first? Yeah,
37 Harvey.

38

39 MR. KITKA: I want to thank you for
40 attending the Board of Fish meeting. I -- this was one
41 of the years I was supposed to go down there, but I had
42 a relative that was very sick at the time. But I know
43 from my point of view, and I know there was an awful lot
44 to about this, and that is -- the other uses that the
45 different fisheries are proposing. We know it's coming
46 down the line, but I know from our Sitka Tribes Natural
47 Resource Commission, which I'm part of, and we're very
48 concerned that -- on the -- changing the fishery into a
49 fish meal or something else, and that fertilizers and
50 all sorts of stuff. One of our main concerns is if they

1 do that, not to allow to have a sac roe fishery.
2 Basically, this is kind of a breeding ground for the
3 herring, as it grows, it'll spread clear across the
4 island, if they allow it to do that. Right now, they
5 still don't understand the spawning processes, whereas
6 Sitka Sound used to be one continuous spawn clear across.
7 Over the last probably 20 years, it has become very
8 patchwork spawn, and they take their surveys on the
9 thickest part of the pond. But if they went over 20
10 feet, they'd find there be no spawn. So, they're -- I
11 don't know how they can even consider their miles of
12 spawn cause it is set patchwork and it -- but thank you
13 for attending. I really appreciate it. Thank you.

14

15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John.

16

17 MR. SMITH: I echo to the thanks for you
18 stepping up and sharing and being there for us. I just
19 wanna echo a perspective of the cycle of our life, but
20 a cycle of -- you know, harvesting we have these (In
21 Native) you know, human beings that are harvesting the
22 food. But we're not thinking about the cycle of life and
23 our other *kwáan* that are out there like the salmon, the
24 seal, the sea lion, the whales, the halibut, the crab,
25 the cod, the codfish, and others. Using and giving
26 opportunity for the humans to make compost, or to make
27 food, or dog food or whatever they're making. I find
28 them not thinking about the -- how many different *kwáan*,
29 different people. When I say *kwáan*, I'm not just talking
30 about humans, I'm talking about all the animals of the
31 sea that are very -- the herring are very important.
32 Yeah, thank you very much.

33

34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.

35 Cal.

36

37 MR. CASIPIT: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
38 Calvin Casipit, Gustavus. Yeah again, thank you for
39 attending. And I saw you there and we talked a little
40 bit. Unfortunately, I missed -- I left before the herring
41 stuff -- the herring deliberations. I know in our comment
42 letter to the Board we really supported that proposal
43 to have co-management for that -- for the herring
44 fisheries there. And I was wondering, maybe you could
45 share -- since I missed the deliberations, maybe you
46 could share with me any discussions that the Board might
47 have had about that. I -- they probably -- I could
48 probably tell you they probably didn't approve that, but
49 -- and was there any discussion on the part of the Board.
50 Was there any positive things said about co-management

1 by the Board or any member of the Board? Cause I know
2 they got our co-management letter. We had a list, CC
3 list about this long, of all the people that got copies
4 of our co-management letter. And I thought that was a
5 very good letter describing the benefits of co-
6 management, but I -- just any of your thoughts on co-
7 management.

8
9 MR. CALVIN: Yeah, I could -- I'd be
10 happy to share what I learned about that proposal. We
11 too, as an AC and -- we felt pretty strong about that
12 proposal coming in, and we felt really hopeful. But as
13 the meeting progressed towards the end we -- the Sitka
14 Tribe of Alaska submitted a RC to provide the Board with
15 I guess a an option that was slightly more palatable for
16 them, which was a return to the 2005 MOA, creating a co-
17 management framework that that had worked in the past
18 but was then discontinued by Fish and Game. And so, they
19 considered that, but they did not really talk about it
20 or adopt it. They -- you know, they had the proposals
21 that was before them, which was the co-management
22 proposal. And they said that they could not take it up
23 because it was beyond their authority. It was up to the
24 Commissioner's authority and either the legislature's
25 authority to implement or allow another entity to manage
26 alongside Fish and Game.

27
28 As far as -- there was a lot of support
29 for the concept and people really felt like they wanted
30 to -- they supported the idea of it, but they didn't see
31 a route forward that -- where it would actually work in
32 practice with Fish and Game's authority of the resource
33 as it is. Unfortunately, the Commissioner was not there
34 to really talk about it. He had his -- one of his staff
35 kind of submit his written comments. So, I felt like
36 there was a lot lacking in the actual, like, a really
37 hard look of the -- or a hard conversation about it. It
38 was just -- it was sort of light, and it was sort of
39 like, sorry, we just can't do anything for you to the -
40 - yeah.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
43 Devon.

44
45 MR. CASIPIT: Thanks, Devon. I appreciate
46 your comments. I -- and I'll just sum it up, you know,
47 gotta start somewhere, just do it. I mean, just do it.
48 I mean, to me, you know, I don't -- to me an answer
49 like, oh, you know, we don't really have the authority.
50 No, just do it. Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I think -- one more quick question. I'm trying to wrap my head around this new herring fishery. Is it due to the situation that it sounds like the roe market is kind of collapsing so, are they looking for other fisheries to kinda replace this roe fishery and gets the same herring and sell it in a different market. Is that what's going on?

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MR. CALVIN: I can't exactly speak to what is the main driver besides the general consensus that there is underutilization of the herring resource in areas beyond Sitka Sound and a sharp decline in the sac roe market. I don't know what the prime driver is exactly.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well, that gives me a better idea, so thanks. Yeah. So, thank you for answering our questions and participating. Oh, one more, John.

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MR. SMITH: There's something I've been thinking about and just wanna echo it out so that everybody hears. And maybe you have a direction that, you know, I was on the phone and actually probably spoke during that herring adventure. And one thing that I realized was that their nets are, what, 200 fathoms and they can close a whole bay off. And then you got two buddies that are working together, you know, it's amazing. And you know, single person, double person -- single person is like, well we do seining with a half of the net comes up into a bag and now you're double purchasing, so the whole net is coming under. The -- through the years, the length wasn't 200 fathoms, their depth, they changed their depth where they only had a certain amount and the herring started to figure out that, hey, if we dive, we can get away. So, they started diving so that the fishermen became -- they got [sic] put more mesh on there so they can get deeper. So, I'm just throwing this out there because I was a fisherman and I loved seining and understanding that is like, that's where we need to go. I truly believe is changing the regulations, giving the herring people a better chance of survival. And on the other hand too, like Canada, you look at Canada, the traditional people of Canada, they take their own ownership to their own country because it's traditional and closed it off to everybody and they manage their own Kaagwaantaan and Kiks.ádi, or the people of this country and you know, the Sitka Tribe and closing this whole area off and

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1 taking your own management. I'm just echoing these
2 feelings and I don't know if this is something we do as
3 members, but I'm Tlingit, Kaagwaantaan Ch'áak'dei Hít,
4 if Kaagwaantann, our house it's still standing here in
5 Sitka, right in front of the street of the landing that's
6 over here. So, we had some status here and we had some
7 -- so, I echo just these thoughts in my head that maybe
8 it might bring more ideas on the table. Thank you.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
11 Anybody else?

12
13 (No response)

14
15 Thank you, Devon. Anybody else in the
16 room want to give any public comments or testimony on
17 any issues related to subsistence?

18
19 (No response)

20
21 Okay. Is there anybody on the telephone
22 who would like to give a comment in order to -- for us
23 to see you, you have to push star five on your phone,
24 and you'll -- and it'll indicate that there's somebody
25 waiting to talk. Wait a minute here and see if anybody's
26 there. Anybody?

27
28 MS. PERRY: Mr. Chair, we do have someone
29 with their hand up. The last four numbers of the phone
30 number is 2925. If that caller would now press star six,
31 that should unmute your line. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32
33 MS. MORENO: Good afternoon. Can you hear
34 me?

35
36 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon.
37 We hear you, go ahead. State your name and go ahead.

38
39 MS. MORENO: Thank you, good afternoon.
40 My name is Tláalulaté. I'm at my mother's clan, the
41 L'eeneidí in the Village of Aak'w Kwáan. I'm a child of
42 the Kaagwaantaan. My nation is a Tlingit nation, and I
43 reside on the traditional territory of the Chilkoot
44 Kwáan. So, thank you to the Board for your presence and
45 your visitation to the traditional homeland of the
46 people who have taken care of and steward not only the
47 herring, but the beings of the sea and the land in the
48 area of which you are releasing these words. My English
49 name is Paulette Moreno, and I am speaking today in
50 regards to process. Fair and equal process is something

1 that has a place in any society, and it definitely has
2 a place in our societies today. Traditional law and the
3 traditional way of being has always had a very high
4 place for balance and you respect. So, I'd like to
5 comment on the process of the Board of Fish. I believe
6 that their people in general have good intentions.
7 People come forward and they take positions of
8 leadership to share those intentions. However, there are
9 times that people take positions of leadership for a
10 particular interest, political move, or way of which
11 they'd like to receive (distortion). Thank you, I'd like
12 to address that a little bit today. I've been a
13 commercial -- I've been a traditional and customary
14 harvester of yáaw or herring eggs for over 15 years,
15 along with Jimmy Olsen and Andrew Roberts here in Sitka.
16 We've had the opportunity as people to come forward and
17 to learn from our elders and to have the blessing of the
18 people from there to provide for our families. In this
19 process, in getting off the boat, the one that we were
20 on and then a little bit bigger boat and coming into a
21 western area of meetings is somewhat difficult sometimes
22 because we have the passion of what we say. And in these
23 three-year meetings, six to seven people, sometimes
24 more, decide what we will be doing for the next thousand
25 days at sea. For time in memorial our people have managed
26 the waterways and the lands and the beings thereof, and
27 being good stewards of that land, we have come forward
28 so that not only six or seven people or under a dozen
29 people have the authority or the thoughts alone to make
30 good decisions. Traditional knowledge and our elders,
31 and so many for decades have come forward and have said,
32 we are present in this room to guide you on how to make
33 a good decision. When I see our men and women come
34 forward, we're not coming forward just as data,
35 scientific knowledge, but with instinctual advice on the
36 conservation of something such as herring in this case.

37
38 What I noticed in the Board of Fish
39 process is an attempt on surface to hear our voices and
40 to implement them in the final decision-making process.
41 What I have seen by action is, it seems to just be a
42 passing courtesy at times, because the things that we
43 bring forward are solid in our view. Perhaps they're not
44 written in a western way or through a western process,
45 but they are brought forward to you because we have this
46 knowledge and this responsibility. So, what I've seen
47 has been the opportunity to speak, the opportunity to
48 present. However, it hasn't been given the balance by
49 having the Board members ask good, solid questions. I
50 would rather have a question from a Board member so that

1 it's a teaching opportunity than no question at all.
2 Sometimes I feel as decisions are made in side rooms,
3 lunch meetings, dinner halls, other times, and that when
4 we have our own expenses, or send our elders forward to
5 speak, they're not always listened to and that is so
6 hurtful. We would never invite our elders into a home
7 and not give them the best seat, the best food, and the
8 best place at our table. And I'd like to see the Board
9 of Fish process change in the way that when a decision
10 is being made, there's not only a department person
11 sitting at the table answering those final questions
12 before a deliberation is made, but that there is a tribal
13 representative or elders present to influence or add to
14 the outcome of that decision, just such as the department
15 has their people forward.

16
17 The other thing I wanna say in
18 particular is in regards to the herring, I'm up here in
19 Anchorage with my significant other who's going through
20 radiation treatment, and last week I just happened to
21 be looking online, and I noticed an article and it had
22 the Board of Fish people gathered, and it said they were
23 considering a proposal or an RC. And what it would do
24 is open up new herring markets in the Kodiak area. I was
25 very surprised to see this because in Ketchikan this was
26 a no-action item. So, up in Anchorage I hopped on a bus
27 and I went down to the meeting, and I gave public
28 testimony against proposal 316, RC37, RC38 and then that
29 morning submitted RC71. What this does is it opens the
30 potential for new markets in the Kodiak area. New markets
31 to use herring in ways that would potentially devastate
32 a stock, because the stock is more abundant in one area
33 because it hasn't been fished to the extent, doesn't
34 mean that that's the one that you go directly after. I
35 also mentioned that I felt as though it set a precedence
36 or could set a precedence for other areas in the State.
37 We are saying very loud and clear that the herring need
38 to be protected. They are forage fish, even if that's
39 identified or not by the federal or state waters, they
40 are a forage fish that -- we should be doing everything
41 we can and we hope that the state of Alaska, the Federal
42 Subsistence Board, and everybody joins together in this
43 move forward. So, what happens is -- had to speak, I was
44 the only one to speak against that particular proposal.
45 I said I didn't feel like process was being followed,
46 that they brought it up and they were hearing it up here
47 in Anchorage and there were many herring fishermen from
48 the Kodiak area, of course, that spoke for it as a
49 resource. They called themselves, in an article,
50 stranded fishermen, fishermen without the herring to go

1 after in that area because of the market. I brought up
2 that right now is not the time to go forward, because
3 there are so many tariffs that may be put on the
4 waterways and seas, that a 25% increase in those expenses
5 will add to the overall price of things. But I also
6 brought up some other points and I felt very alone, you
7 couldn't hear a pin drop. There were over 200 people in
8 that room but it's those moments in time -- I had asked
9 if the tribe from the local area had been consulted, if
10 the Native people had been consulted, there was no
11 comment. So, what I'm saying is that these things happen,
12 and it is not fair, and it is not equal. In a traditional
13 society or a modern society or the combination of both,
14 a person's voice, experience and wisdom needs to be taken
15 to account in all areas. I believe that many of our
16 Native people also have permits, their commercial --
17 their seiners and their longliners, and they're involved
18 in different industries, up to 30% in some of the
19 villages. So, we understand that subsistence is a word
20 that means to maintain the minimum. We don't want to
21 maintain the minimum, we wanna thrive. There is no day
22 that should ever be lived that our people go hungry.
23 That day is here, and it is not acceptable.

24
25 So, in conclusion, how we go forward is
26 true transparency. Decisions not being made on the side
27 and then we coming forward just to be listened to out
28 of a curiosity or courtesy, but that our voice is [sic]
29 really have weight and the way to do that is to have us
30 at the table side by side. And I really think the
31 decision making is gonna become between the tribe,
32 tribal citizens, the people in Alaska who go out and
33 have their livelihood and take care of their families.
34 We've got the answers, not a Board, not somebody who may
35 have interest that they're -- that are not transparent
36 at all times. So, I would encourage the Board in the
37 next -- in this next three year cycle to take a pause
38 and understand what is truly fair and to have our voices
39 heard, especially on our own land, and to respect our
40 people as the people who have the wisdom of what it is
41 to take care of the herring, the salmon, the fish, the
42 deer, all living things of what we have done for tens
43 of thousands of years. Come to us, ask our opinion, but
44 follow our advice. We are here to insert our guidance.
45 So, I say this respectfully and humbly that there is
46 thievery going on, that there is dishonesty going on,
47 that there is decisions being made that should not be
48 made until the last person is heard. And I would
49 encourage the State of Alaska, the Federal Subsistence
50 Board to continue those members who are doing the good

1 work and who are making good decisions, and to weed out
2 the members that may have another calling in life and
3 to find those people that will really step forward. But
4 let's really think about this the next three years, let's
5 really do. There's no reason that that co-management or
6 that memorandum of understanding should not have went
7 through this last year. We are here, we are ready, and
8 we have the answers. We just like to share them with
9 you. Gunalchéesh, thank you.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
12 your comments. And we might have a question or comment
13 from the Council here. I see John has his hand up, go
14 ahead.

15
16 MR. SMITH: Gunalchéesh, (In Native). My
17 relative. It's good to hear your words, Paulette. And I
18 just want you to know that we hear you. From what I
19 hear, I just want to share a perspective and
20 encouragement that -- my encouragement is to Thomas
21 Smith out here. That's -- he's encouraged to represent
22 and he's an Alaska Native. Heather, you know, you're out
23 there and you're training, you're encouraging a lot of
24 the Alaska Native students to sit up at the table up
25 here. And I encourage all the Alaska Native people and
26 the people that are worried, even Paulette, that you
27 step up and you get up on one of the ACs and maybe you
28 are already so I'm -- I don't know that. But as many as
29 (In Native) -- what I've noticed in all the meetings
30 that I have, that on these ACs are herring fishermen,
31 on these ACs are commercial fishermen, on these ACs are
32 charter fishermen, sports fishermen, people that are
33 making money off of the traditions and the foods that
34 we're having. So, I think as many people that are
35 thinking of subsistence, the way of our life is very
36 important to step up to the table. And I really think
37 it's in educating our children to even getting into the
38 forest -- the Fish and Game being a Fish and Game
39 officer. I was thinking of Bob -- that's way off subject,
40 but I just encourage to educate our children to get up
41 here. Get our children to be on OSM, to get up on the
42 table. And then we're gonna have a better chance, we're
43 gonna have that vote, we're going to have that voice
44 appreciated. And more petitions, I think that
45 petitioning is a big thing is -- that's how we're gonna
46 get more done on the table is getting 100,000 signatures
47 in support of what we're -- what our objectives are.
48 Gunalchéesh ho ho.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
2 Any other Council members, comments?

3
4 (No response)

5
6 Guess not. Thank you, Paulette, for your
7 testimony. Very, very important subject.

8
9 MS. MORENO: You're welcome.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
12 I'm being told that we don't see anybody else with the
13 hand raised on the computer screen, but I'll check. Is
14 there anybody on the telephone who would like to give a
15 comment or testimony here to the Council at this time?

16
17 (No response)

18
19 Okay, apparently not. Did we get
20 everybody who's in the room? Anybody show up after the
21 last call there, who wanna make a comment?

22
23 (No response)

24
25 No? Okay, so I think that concludes our
26 public testimony and Council reports for the morning.
27 Always very informative and interesting. So, we have
28 one, what will be a lengthy item coming up next? I don't
29 think I wanna get into that. I don't know if this Council
30 Training.

31
32 MS. PERRY: Yeah.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: That take very
35 long? Short. Okay, if we can maybe do the next item on
36 the agenda, which is a Council Training session. I don't
37 think it take very long. Jason Roberts is gonna give
38 that to us and this is kind of a primer to developing
39 proposals. This is a little brief training on how the
40 Council goes about that, is what I understand. So, Jason
41 Roberts, go ahead. And then while you're getting ready,
42 we'll break for lunch after Jason's presentation, and
43 then when we come back, we get into the forest plan
44 revision discussion, and DeAnna, hopefully we'll have
45 those folks available after lunch?

46
47 MS. PERRY: Yes.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yes. Okay, very
50 good. Okay, go ahead, Jason.

1

2

DR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Members of the Council, this is Jason Roberts, anthropologist at OSM. And so, this is kind of follow - that title slide, it cracks me up -- I'm sorry. But so, this is part of our effort not to bombard you at All Council meetings with tons of trainings back and forth to do this a little bit as we go throughout your various meetings. But this is a very short training, that hopefully will be particularly helpful to newer members of the Council, but also a good review for kind of more seasoned members of the Council as well. Since we're currently in the call for -- the open call for wildlife proposals which will close April 4th, we thought we'd go through just some general points about how to propose changes to Federal subsistence hunting and trapping regulations.

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So, for public submissions, we have some information that we'd really like you to include, if you're submitting this as an individual member of the public, please make sure to include your name and contact information. This is useful in cases where we have to call or email with folks to figure out the intent of their proposal, if it's not quite clear from what was submitted, what regulations you want changed, in which unit or units these regulations should apply, what you

1 want the regulations to say in your proposed changes,
2 why you want to change the regulations, and then any
3 supporting information you think would be helpful for
4 the Board and the Councils in evaluating the proposed
5 changes.

6
7 So, submitted proposals are reviewed at
8 OSM first when they come in just to check and make sure
9 they're valid. And so, the only time that a proposal
10 will be marked invalid is if it's considered to request
11 a change that falls outside the jurisdiction of the
12 Federal Subsistence Board. And so, examples of
13 potentially invalid proposals would be ones requesting
14 changes for species like halibut, marine mammals,
15 migratory birds. So, species that are managed through
16 other agencies, or proposals requesting regulatory
17 changes on non-federal lands. And so, for reference --
18 and I can get you all a link to this online --
19 subsistence regulations that can be changed through our
20 regulatory proposals are found in the online code of
21 federal regulations, super interesting read, subpart C
22 and D and I will share that link with DeAnna so she can
23 send it out to all of you later, it's pretty long. And
24 so, subparts C and D cover a wide variety of regulations
25 from general regulations such as sealing requirements
26 and definitions to more specific regulations like
27 harvest limits, seasons, permit requirements, and
28 customary and traditional use determinations. And so,
29 these are all things that can be changed through our
30 regulatory process. And then -- so that wraps up this
31 very brief presentation, and I'll be happy to answer any
32 questions you might have or provide examples if you need
33 them. And just remember that the open period for wildlife
34 proposals ends April 4th this year.

35
36 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
37 Jason. You might have some questions. Frank, you have a
38 question?

39
40 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the
41 public wants to put in proposal [sic], you know, I wrote
42 down is there a special form to do something like this?

43
44 DR. ROBERTS: I don't believe there's any
45 special form. You just have to make sure it gets to us
46 with that requested information.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, follow
49 up, Frank.

50

1 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
2 Another thing is you know, if a person is trying to set
3 up a proposal and then it says, must include, how does
4 the person find out how -- what is supposed to be
5 included in the proposal? Cause I don't have any idea,
6 you know, so there's -- you're probably gonna tell me,
7 well, go online, but I don't even know how to turn on a
8 computer. So, some people are -- wanna do proposal, but
9 they don't know how to start or where to go, to do
10 something like that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11
12 DR. ROBERTS: Yes, through the Chair. So,
13 you're right. We do have a lot of information about how
14 to submit proposals online, but you know, the best way
15 if you're just really at a loss, but you really want to
16 submit the proposal is to contact OSM staff to try to
17 get some insight on how to go about doing that. So, you
18 can contact us through the phone, or email and our
19 information is on our web page, unfortunately. So, it
20 is kind of a rock and a hard place about not using a
21 computer, but yeah.

22
23 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24 Perfect example, contact the OSM staff. So, some kid --
25 some person walking on the street, contact who? You know,
26 so, OSM staff, how do they find out that you are the
27 ones that we need to contact? You know, a lot of people
28 that are -- talk to me on the street say well how do we
29 do it and then, OSM some staff, who's OSM you know
30 acronyms are -- so many acronyms out there that they
31 don't know where to go. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: This is Don
34 Hernandez just kind of a follow-up question there to
35 what Frank is asking. Can people get help at you know,
36 local Forest Service offices or any -- you know, ranger
37 districts have this kind of information for the public.

38
39 MS. GREDIAGIN: Lisa Grediagin, for the
40 record. And yeah, certainly, you know, any federal
41 office in Alaska should have contact information for
42 Office of Subsistence Management staff or other staff
43 that could help with submitting a proposal. And just to
44 Frank's question about people that don't know how to use
45 a computer or don't have access to a computer. I'm
46 assuming, Frank, like if they wanna change federal
47 subsistence regulations, they have this booklet. I mean,
48 cause otherwise I don't know how they'd even know what
49 the regulations are. I mean, so contact information is
50 in our regulations booklet, and so, they can look up in

1 this booklet, phone numbers to call for Council
2 Coordinators or for our general office, I mean, outside
3 of a phone or a computer, I mean going physically to a
4 Forest Service office if you're, you know, in a Southeast
5 community, those are kinda the options to get
6 information.

7

8

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Frank.

9

10 MR. WRIGHT: Another perfect example. I
11 know some people in Hoonah that would like to do that,
12 but they don't even know that book exists. You know so,
13 it's -- I hope you know where I'm coming from cause I'm
14 -- you know or even know where that book is at or what
15 it is. I'm -- thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm done.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I see Mike
Douville has his hand up, and then Harvey. Go ahead,
Mike.

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MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
remember seeing a template for proposals in our book
somewhere. I don't know which one or what, but we don't
see that anymore. So, what happened, we don't use paper
anymore, you have to use the internet? But clearly, I
remember seeing the template many times on how to make
or proposal form. So, where did that go?

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah. DeAnna,
you wanna answer that?

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MS. PERRY: Yeah. Through the Chair.
Member Douville, that template that I think you've seen
has been something that our work groups use, and we can
provide that to anyone. It helps people think about what
they need to capture for a proposal. We can certainly
start including that in our meeting books again, if you'd
like. But there are a lot of Forest Service staff at the
local district level that have the regulation books
which has the contact information, as Lisa said. And we
can also make sure that they get connected to someone
on our subsistence staff to help them write those
proposals. But yeah, if you'd like to start seeing that
in the actual meeting book again, we can certainly do
that. I have some ready for you guys if you wanna do a
work group later on the wildlife proposals. But yeah,
if that's beneficial to the entire public, we could
certainly do that.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
2 DeAnna. Harvey, you have a question?

3
4 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have
5 a question, but I just wanted to lead into it a little
6 bit. My question is, how do we let the people know that
7 -- on the changing of the regulations that they need to
8 put in place, realizing that some of the people that are
9 asking, especially the Board, who may never have hunted
10 or fished or even know anything about it, how do they
11 explain what they want done to these people that don't
12 know anything about it?

13
14 MR. CROSS: Hi, this is Rob Cross. I'm
15 the Subsistence Program manager for the Tongass. So, to
16 answer a couple of these questions, first of all, Ashley
17 Bolwerk and Heather Bauscher with the Sitka Conservation
18 Society have been going around to all the remote
19 subsistence communities and addressing this exact thing.
20 So, they're trying to train the public on how do you
21 engage with this process, because, you know, if you have
22 a priority but you don't know what it is or how to use
23 it, then it's useless to you, right. So, they've been
24 going around to all the communities talking about how
25 to address regulatory changes that folks would like to
26 see. I believe they even do an exercise where they --
27 everybody drafts up a regulatory proposal. But I think
28 to the general question of how folks would submit a
29 proposal, most often they'll generally call someone at
30 the Forest Service, or they'll call myself. And it's
31 really as simple as this is your name and this is what
32 you would like to see changed and then we can walk
33 through that process with them like, okay, so here's the
34 regulation that you would like to address, here's how I
35 would draft it, or this seems like this is what you
36 would like to see drafted and we can go back and forth.
37 So, it's not -- the proposal submitted initially does
38 not need to be this, like perfectly crafted proposal.
39 It's just really what is the effect that you would like
40 to see and then we can walk through, here's the
41 regulations that you would need to change and that's
42 valid or invalid.

43
44 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Harvey, go
45 ahead.

46
47 MR. KITKA: So, my question was
48 basically, how do we get these people to understand what
49 we're talking about? So, what you're telling me is that
50 we go back to you and you guys explain it to them.

1

2 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Yes, I
3 mean, between that and the workshops we're continuing
4 to go around all the communities, this is our second
5 round now. We just did one in Sitka last night. And,
6 yeah, just trying to engage with the public to help them
7 understand, these are the set of regulations that apply
8 to you because you're a rural resident and you have the
9 ability to influence changes to those -- or proposed
10 changes to those regulations. So, yeah, I guess the
11 simplest answer, just give them my work cell phone number
12 and then we can work through it, or they can go to any
13 Forest Service office and just walk in and get help that
14 way as well.

15

16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, John.

17

18 MR. SMITH: I'd say mainly this is what
19 I wanna share is a perspective and give direction. You
20 know, our responsibility is sitting at the table in this
21 community, in this group here, the Southeast RAC is to
22 be supporting the community. So, I truly believe that
23 when somebody comes to us with an issue of wanting to
24 write a proposal and has that, it's like it would be our
25 responsibility to support that, like Calvin is from
26 Gustavus, we have Sitka, we got Pelican, we got Hoonah,
27 Point Baker, Petersburg, you know, every -- there's
28 everybody that represents those. And of course, I just
29 want to echo the love and the care that Ross and Jake
30 and the team that's over there. You guys -- there was
31 many times -- this is my second term, so, I've been like
32 five years. And I know there's times even like Patricia
33 was like, hey, we need to get a committee together,
34 we've done that, where we've stayed up all night really
35 late. And you guys have been with us to the sit down and
36 get a proposal done and put on the table as soon as
37 possible, because it takes three to four years for
38 something in that field. So, I really like what I see,
39 that you shared with us up here. And I really appreciate
40 that you're sharing that with DeAnna so that she can
41 share with us. I mean, not even -- even me representing
42 and you -- our new team member right here where he shared
43 that just before he got here, everybody was giving him
44 these lists of things. That is our responsibility at the
45 table, is to listen to the people and then bring those
46 resources here, but also supporting them in developing
47 the -- I'm an educator, so I'm probably going off in the
48 wrong direction, but I'm just trying to help my brother
49 or my relative over here understand, the direction is
50 getting a hold of you folks. Thank you.

1

2

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
3 Is there anybody else, questions? Probably all the
4 questions we have at this time, but I got a feeling
5 there will be more as we get into the writing of
6 proposals this round. So, glad you guys are here to
7 help. Okay, we'll break for lunch and when we come back
8 looks like we'll be able to get into our first discussion
9 on the revision of the Tongass Forest Plan. We've got
10 people to lead us through that process. And we'll be
11 doing that after lunch and a few other items, possibly
12 after that this afternoon and maybe we'll get into the
13 initial discussions on what we wanna do with the wildlife
14 proposals this year. Hopefully by the end of the day,
15 if not, it'll be first thing tomorrow. So, okay, let's
16 try being back at one o'clock. See how that works, I
17 don't know what lunch options are available here. We'll
18 see if we can get it done in an hour here. So, one
19 o'clock, we resume.

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(Off record)

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(On record)

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: All right, we can
resume our meeting here. We've got all but I think one
Council member back, and I'm sure he's on his way. So,
next up on the agenda is our opportunity for the Council
to hear more about the Tongass Forest Plan Revision. And
we may want to take some actions as a Council to make
comments on this portion of the revision. So, we'll find
out all about it here and see what the Council may want
to do. So, we have some Forest Service folks ready to
lead us through a discussion. And apparently an activity
involving the blue dots, John so, stand by.

MR. GARNER: Honorable Council Chair.
Thanks again for the opportunity. So, glad to be here.
Yeah, it is a very important time for us as an agency,
is where we do our force plan revision. And our force
plan helps us understand the sideboards of how we can
best manage these ecosystems and serve our communities.
And it's been -- since the original one 20, what, 25
plus years. So, one of the big driving factors we have
when we change or we update a forest plan is the need
for change. And we all know one of the consistent things
in the universe is change, right and so, you know,
there's been a few things changed since those first
sideboards were put out there. I think one of the biggies
for a lot of us is how do we really -- we talk about

1 change, but how do we incorporate a lot of the knowledge,
2 the traditional knowledge, a lot of the stuff we're here
3 today talking about, how do we incorporate that in going
4 forward into stewarding these ecosystems? We rely so
5 much more on our partnerships now than we did back then.
6 How do we make sure that we've got the sideboards to
7 effectively work together with our partners and our
8 communities to help steward these ecosystems for
9 generations to come? And so, you guys get to be a part
10 of that today, helping us see what needs to change and
11 how we do that, how we can serve you guys better and
12 work better together to take care of these ecosystems.
13 So, that's the premise. But I'm gonna let Ashley talk
14 to you about how it's gonna go.

15
16 MS. BOLWERK: Thanks, Eric. For the
17 record, my name is Ashley Bolwerk, subsistence biologist
18 for the Tongass. So, I'm gonna start with a little
19 presentation about what the forest plan revision process
20 looks like and the forest plan itself and feel free to
21 ask questions as we go through that. And then we do have
22 a few activities like Don mentioned. So, without further
23 ado, what is a forest plan? So, a forest plan also goes
24 by land management plan. It's this giant book that if
25 you ever walk in a Forest Service office, we have them
26 everywhere, but the public probably never sees them. But
27 it really is a comprehensive framework that guides the
28 Forest Service and constrains the management. And these
29 -- nowadays are seen to be sort of documents that will
30 live for 15 years or so. So, it is really an important
31 opportunity because this will guide what happens on the
32 Tongass for many years to come. Again, this directs the
33 Forest Service and how we operate and less so the public.
34 It's not really meant to guide what the public does, but
35 more what the Forest Service does. You know, we're often
36 familiar with like, projects that happen more on a
37 district level, you all live on different Forest Service
38 districts. This document guides the whole Tongass
39 overall and so, it's kind of an overarching document
40 that covers everything that we do. It's like a zoning
41 ordinance and tells sort of what is appropriate and where
42 those things are appropriate, okay. So, we have an
43 existing one but really, as we start this revision
44 process, it's an opportunity to rethink what that looks
45 like. And that's why we're really interested in your
46 help as we go through this process.

47
48 So, the new forest plan will help direct
49 future projects and efforts, and all of those things
50 will then have to be consistent with this new forest

1 plan. So, one way to think of it is like a giant umbrella
2 and all of the different things that the Forest Service
3 does, including issuing and managing outfitter and guide
4 permits, cultural wood harvest, other timber harvest,
5 habitat improvement projects, land exchange, you name
6 it, anything the Forest Service does sort of falls under
7 this umbrella of the forest plan, okay. So, it's pretty
8 all-encompassing as far as what we do. It also sort of
9 is this high-level look at what are the desired
10 conditions for the Tongass National Forest. And again,
11 it involves multiple activities across the forest. So,
12 I'm sure you all are familiar with at least a few of the
13 things Forest Service does. This is beyond just the
14 subsistence program as well.

15
16 All right, so what's in a forest plan?
17 There's a few different components, the desired
18 conditions is something I've mentioned already, this,
19 again, is supposed to be kind of this look to the future
20 of where would we like to be? How would we like the
21 Forest Service to be managing the Tongass? It describes
22 the specific social, economic and/or ecological
23 characteristics that are desired for the whole Tongass,
24 and those things get incorporated into this plan. It's
25 important to describe them in enough detail to measure
26 the progress towards those achievements, which is sort
27 of our objectives when we get to the like, how fast will
28 we do these things? What will it look like when we've
29 gotten there? Those are the objectives to making it all
30 the way to our desired conditions. So, that's another
31 component of what this looks like. We also have standards
32 and guidelines which sort of help us have sideboards for
33 how we get to those eventual goals. It's really -- those
34 help in the design and implementation of new projects
35 and activities to make sure we're staying kind of within
36 the realm of what we're supposed to look for. There are
37 also suitability of lands and designated areas,
38 components of this. We're gonna focus less on that piece
39 of it today but I did just wanna let you know that that's
40 another piece of it. So, this is like wilderness areas
41 and things like that that are written into other laws
42 also are written into a forest plan. And so, wild and
43 scenic rivers, things like that are kind of under that
44 category but we're not gonna spend much time talking
45 about that today.

46
47 A really great analogy that I was given
48 to use to describe sort of these different components
49 are if you look at the boardwalk and the picture here,
50 the desired conditions is sort of the end of the

1 boardwalk, right? Where are we going? Where do we wanna
2 be with the Tongass? And those railings along the side
3 are sort of the standards and guidelines that make sure
4 that we stay within the realm of the direction we need
5 to head to. So, there is some wiggle room in between on
6 a Boardwalk. Of course, you can go a little bit left and
7 right, but it really is meant to help us move in the
8 direction we need to be moving to hit those desired
9 conditions.

10
11 All right so, let's also take a little
12 bit of time to talk about what isn't in a forest plan.
13 This isn't an action plan, so, it doesn't sort of set
14 up those specific steps that we're gonna take to get
15 there. It doesn't expressly authorize or compel any use
16 or activity. So, what that means is it'll set up where
17 we wanna go. And, you know, maybe it'll say what can and
18 can't happen, but it also doesn't exclude the need for
19 permitting and things like that that would actually
20 implement those types of projects and things like that.
21 Along those lines, it also is not a budget document. So,
22 although the forest plan has a desired direction and
23 some sideboards and objectives about how we get there,
24 it does not include any funding to get us there. And so,
25 that's another thing that sort of needs to be taken into
26 account is, you know, you can't always shoot for the
27 moon knowing that you're not gonna get funding to do all
28 of those things. So, it doesn't have any budgetary things
29 tied to it. And as I already kind of alluded to, this
30 doesn't plan or implement future projects, right? The
31 Forest Service will sort of take this as a guide and
32 figure out what projects we need to line up in order to
33 get to those places. But the forest plan itself doesn't
34 outline any projects. It just sort of gives overarching
35 goals and direction for what we'd like to see, and then
36 the Forest Service will take that and figure out how to
37 implement it into new projects to get there. A couple
38 new pieces that I wanted to point out here, the intention
39 of this force plan is not just to repeat what's in ANILCA
40 or any other laws. It's supposed to be in addition to
41 those, sort of breaking it down further into more
42 guidance on the Tongass specifically. This also doesn't
43 supersede State jurisdiction for Fish and Wildlife
44 management and things like that. You know, we can't just
45 say we don't want the State to manage wildlife anymore,
46 that's not within the realm of what this is. This is
47 sort of how should the Forest Service operate on the
48 ground as it's doing projects.

1 Okay. All right, where are we at in this
2 forest plan process? So, you guys have been hearing about
3 this for a little while already, but I really wanted to
4 make sure and outline where we're at and future
5 opportunities that you all might have to weigh in here.
6 We're still pretty early in this process. So, we're
7 nearing the end of what we call the assessment phase.
8 So, DeAnna emailed you all a couple of the assessment
9 components, the Subsistence section and also, I forget
10 what it was called, the indigenous -- yeah, thank you,
11 the indigenous places component for you to look at. There
12 are lots of other components of the assessment and all
13 of your input and input that's still coming in right now
14 are gonna be included in a final assessment that's due
15 to roll out at the beginning of the summer here. I'm
16 gonna get to what an assessment is right after this but
17 just wanted to point out that after this assessment
18 phase, we actually start developing this new plan and
19 start incorporating that and there will be lots more
20 public comment opportunity that will occur. There's
21 hopes to go to communities and have workshops and allow
22 avenues for public comment throughout this process. Once
23 that initial plan is developed, they're hoping sometime
24 in 2025, 2026 we sort of start the National Environmental
25 Policy Act process, NEPA. Many of you have probably heard
26 of that. And so, there will be an Environmental Impact
27 Statement, that's what EIS stands for up there. There'll
28 be a draft one that comes out and that comes with more
29 opportunity for comments and input. And then what we
30 hear from the public will then be incorporated into a
31 final version of a plan and EIS that will go out. And
32 we're hoping that this whole process sort of wraps up
33 in 2027 or 2028. So, we do have a ways to go here, and
34 there will continue to be opportunities for the public
35 to provide input. Of course, this is public land and so
36 it's really important that the public weighs-in on these
37 different processes. And so, that will continue to be
38 an opportunity.

39
40 All right, the assessment that I just
41 mentioned, you all got to review some of the draft
42 assessments. This final assessment that will be coming
43 out this summer, its real purpose is to sort of outline
44 what are the current conditions we're seeing on the
45 Tongass, right. Like what's all the current information
46 we have about what's happening with various different
47 resources? And it also strives to identify challenges
48 on the forest and how those relate to the current
49 management that's occurring. A big piece of that that
50 we're going to work on today is the need for change. So,

1 this then takes a look at where are we, and what would
2 we like to see different? And so, we're gonna be asking
3 you all to really heavily weigh on that today, what
4 would you like to see different on how the Forest Service
5 is managing the Tongass? The assessment portion of this
6 process is not the only source of information that's
7 gonna go into the draft plan and EIS that's gonna be
8 created. All of the public input is gonna go in there
9 and various other sources of information. Again, there's
10 gonna be lots of comment opportunities throughout this
11 revision process. And the group that's sort of working
12 most heavily on this is really interested in engaging
13 effectively with you all. And that's where we have some
14 of the activities, we're gonna go through today are
15 specifically designed to make this easier for the public
16 to engage. I did wanna flag that the 21 focused sections
17 and sort of a compiled, what I think of as like a summary
18 assessment document are all gonna come out in early
19 summer. I say there's 21 assessments; the subsistence
20 piece is one example of that. So, we're gonna really
21 focus-in on the subsistence piece today. But I just
22 wanted to flag for you all that there are other
23 components of the assessment that live out there, if
24 you'd like to go provide comments on those outside of
25 today's practice. All right.

26
27 So, on to our task for today. We really
28 value the RACs input in the subsistence component of
29 this assessment. Our current plan, the subsistence
30 section, essentially just references ANILCA with very
31 little explicit direction beyond that. So, we're
32 effectively writing this section of the forest plan for
33 the very first time, and we really need your input in
34 order to do this justice. So, as you all know, Federal
35 Subsistence Management, of course, just applies to the
36 lands and fresh waters within the exterior boundary of
37 the Tongass, with the exception of a couple of submerged
38 saltwater areas. So, those are kind of the focuses that
39 we're gonna need to be thinking about throughout this
40 process. You all know that, but we just wanted to bring
41 that up as we start to trudge forward. And the revised
42 plan, again, is gonna incorporate the RACs input today
43 into this sort of next step and future steps as we go.

44
45 I just wanted to thank all of you who
46 already reviewed the subsistence assessment and the
47 other components that you've looked at and sent in those
48 remarks to DeAnna. Those are gonna be incorporated in
49 this final assessment component. So, thank you all who
50 took the time to do that, we really appreciate it. All

1 right so, some of our discussion objectives for today
2 are gonna include touching on things like what needs to
3 change or be added to the current forest plan. Again,
4 the assessment sort of outlined what's in the current
5 forest plan and what's currently going on. And so, we're
6 trying to now take that to the next step and say, well,
7 what needs to change beyond that? Another one we'd like
8 to look at is what should the desired conditions be in
9 order to meet ANILCA? So, many of you are very familiar
10 with ANILCA, and we need to think now about how does
11 that apply to what the Forest Service does to manage the
12 Tongass. The third piece is what criteria should be used
13 to identify community use areas. So, this is sort of a
14 new terminology that the Forest Service is looking at
15 for this next version of the plan, as far as like marking
16 -- demarcating places on a map that are sort of community
17 use areas and what that might mean.

18
19 We're gonna go through a couple
20 different activities today. The very first one that
21 we're going to do is feedback frames, which sort of
22 allows everybody to vote on a couple of different prompts
23 to just get a sense of how the RAC feels about a variety
24 of different topics, and we'll have more time for
25 discussion of those afterwards. Then we're gonna have a
26 more detailed discussion about a variety of different
27 topics. And I know DeAnna sent you guys some questions
28 to look at before you got here, that's the time where
29 we'll be able to dive into those deeper, what we're
30 calling the fishbowl conversation is kinda that piece
31 of it. And then we are anticipating that we'll need a
32 work session time so, I just wanted to outline that for
33 you all if you are interested in diving deeper, we only
34 have a couple hours set aside at the meeting today, but
35 the staff and I are happy to sit down with you all at a
36 work session to really flush out some of these things
37 later on. And with that, I'm happy to take questions you
38 all have on generally what the forest plan is or where
39 we're at in the process, or anything along those lines
40 before we dive into our activities.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
43 Ashley. We'll start with Ted.

44
45 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I just had a
46 question. I know before when we were talking about that,
47 is -- are we still getting rid of LUDs, land use
48 designations? Because those standard and guidelines in
49 the past forest land -- standard guidelines associate
50 with the different LUDs You can do some things in the

1 old LUDs, and you couldn't do it in other LUDs. Are we
2 getting rid of the land use designations now or, you
3 know what's going on? Thanks.

4
5 MR. GARNER: We don't have to do away
6 with LUDs, but I think it's what's changed? What are
7 those opportunities that are there? There's different -
8 - you know, working for this agency is you got a lot of
9 family, it's a close-knit family across the country. And
10 so, they're doing different things across the country,
11 some people are using geographic areas you know, to help
12 identify those. But I would say it's hard for people to
13 get away from what they know. And we know one thing, we
14 wanna try to make sure we capture this what makes the
15 most sense to people. But it's an opportunity to maybe
16 look at things a little bit differently, right. And so,
17 that's kind of what we wanna -- the information we're
18 looking to gather, is there different way to look at
19 those areas but doesn't necessarily mean they're off the
20 table. It doesn't necessarily mean it's the only thing
21 that we have to do. How was that?

22
23 MS. BOLWERK: Thanks, Eric. This is
24 Ashley again. I just wanted to clarify, LUDs stands for
25 land use determination so, it's designation, thank you.
26 I'm like, I'm gonna get this wrong. So, it's a way in
27 the past, the Forest Service has sort of drawn different
28 areas on the map to determine what activities are allowed
29 or not allowed in those spaces, and some of the ones we
30 have have to stay. So, there's a couple like
31 congressionally designated wilderness and some things
32 like that, those have to stay, and we're not able to fix
33 those through this or change those through this process.
34 But many of the other ones are open at this point to
35 getting rid of them altogether, keeping them, changing
36 them, redrawing the shapes on the map. All of those will
37 be part of this process as we move forward. And so, at
38 this point in the process, we're really just looking for
39 thoughts on like, would you like them to go away? Would
40 you like them to stay? What would you like them to be
41 called? You know, what would those designations be? So,
42 we're not gonna do any mapping at the meeting today, but
43 that is a future step in this process is like redrawing
44 those spaces, if we -- if folks are telling us that
45 they'd like those to go away or change in some way. So,
46 we're so early in the process that that's sort of the
47 question is like, do you want them to go away, or do you
48 want them to stay and -- or some new version of what
49 that might look like?

50

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you.
2 Follow up Ted.....

3
4 (Simultaneous speech)

5
6 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah can, I do a follow
7 up, thank you.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Sure.

10
11 MR. SANDHOFER: Thank you, Chair. This
12 is Ted Sandhofer. So, my understanding -- you know, it's
13 been three years since I've been out of the game a little
14 bit, but there was kind of a -- another forest plan in
15 another region that you were kinda looking at that worked
16 there. Is there anywhere that we could go to look at,
17 hey, this is really working here, this -- the forest
18 plan, we're gonna kinda model ours, kinda like this or
19 something. I mean, cause that would give -- it's kinda
20 hard to know where I'm going or the road to travel if I
21 don't know where I'm going. So, I'm just kinda wondering
22 or, I mean, if this is just open to everything, I think
23 we need to narrow it down so we can -- I'm not sure if
24 you get kinda where I'm going, but it's hard for me to
25 get my mind around something that doesn't have a
26 target.....

27
28 MR. GARNER: Right. You have to track
29 down all those books across the country. That's it, put
30 them in your backpack, go -- no, a lot of stuff is online
31 now. So, that's how I cheat, right. Googling going to
32 that forest -- most forests all have access to their
33 forest plan. And so -- but it's worth -- it's -- I think
34 that's a great idea, Ted, is to kinda look at those
35 different options or see if that is something that makes
36 sense. And it is changed, some people have changed what
37 their plan was a few years ago. So, we're definitely
38 like, oh, that's interesting, but not all about us, we
39 need the input from you guys. So, hope that helps.

40
41 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any other
42 questions at this point? Okay. Okay, what's next?

43
44 MS. BOLWERK: All right, we are gonna
45 start with an activity that's called feedback frames.
46 So, some of you have noticed the little blue coins that
47 I put on your desk, you should have 12. If you've lost
48 them, please let me know. I apologize I didn't tell you
49 before you all start playing with them. So, in the
50 feedback frames, what we're gonna do is, we're gonna set

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1 up little frames like the ones you see in the picture
2 there. We're gonna actually commandeer the front of all
3 of your desks here, there's 12 of them, and they sort
4 of have a prompt on them and everybody has a coin for
5 each one. So, you sort of vote how much you agree or
6 disagree with the prompt. And it's just a way for us to
7 collect information about how well the RAC agrees or
8 disagrees and then we'll have some follow-up
9 conversation about those things afterwards. But it's
10 just a way to start the conversation and really hone in
11 on what you all are passionate about regarding some of
12 these different components. Let's see, we are going to
13 report all of the results at the end. They're sort of
14 hidden when you do it, so please don't peek and see how
15 everybody else voted, that's part of it, is to provide
16 unbiased input. But we will get time to talk about it
17 and why folks voted or didn't. The other thing that
18 you'll see at each spot is a sheet of paper in front of
19 the feedback frame. There's a spot on the right for you
20 to just write your name or sorry, write ideas for
21 improvement that you have for the -- like along that
22 prompt. And then on the left, there's also a spot for
23 you to write down what you think is going well, right.
24 So, things you might wanna keep regarding that and things
25 that you'd like to change. And again, we're gonna take
26 all of this input to a work session if you all decide
27 you want one and we'll really dive deep into a lot of
28 this, but just trying to start generating ideas because
29 we realize this is a really big topic. Any questions
30 about the activity?

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, I guess we
33 may have questions as we get into it, but not at this
34 time. So, yeah, you got to take a few minutes to set
35 that up or -- yeah, we'll take a short break. Okay,
36 short break, while he set up the prompter.

37
38 (Off record)

39
40 (On Record)

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, we'll be
43 ready to get started here again. If Council members are
44 close by.

45
46 (Pause)

47
48 Okay, Frank and Cal, we're ready here
49 when you guys are.

50

1 (Pause)

2

3 Okay, whenever you're ready, Ashley, I
4 think we are.

5

6 MS. BOLWERK: All right, thank you, Mr.
7 Chair. So, we have all of the feedback frames set up,
8 you'll see they're sort of facing in. So, you all are
9 gonna have to get up with your 12 little coins, chips.
10 And as you walk around, the prompt is on the paper on
11 the desk and there's some pens spread around, and you're
12 gonna read the prompt and then there's sort of, strongly
13 agree all the way to strongly disagree and on the far
14 right, it's I'm not sure. And so, each one of these
15 feedback frames, you're gonna use just one blue coin.
16 And they sort of -- we always call it Plinko. They kind
17 of look like Plinko. You, like, put them in the little
18 slot and they fall down, but you can't watch as they go
19 down, unfortunately, like Plinko. But you're gonna go
20 to each one and put in one of your chips. And then if
21 you have thoughts on things regarding that topic, that
22 you like how things are going or you want things change,
23 that's your opportunity to start writing some things
24 down there that we can use later as we're developing
25 what you all would like.

26

27 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So, each Council
28 member visits each Board.

29

30 MS. BOLWERK: Exactly.

31

32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Let me just
33 mill around at our -- yes, convenience. Okay, I guess
34 we're ready to go then.

35

36 (Simultaneous speech)

37

38 MS. BOLWERK: Yeah, I think the key is,
39 you know, spend the time you need to write down your
40 comments and things. But if you finish early, then we
41 have more time for discussion, too. So, pros and cons.

42

43 (Pause)

44

45 MS. PERRY: And for those folks who are
46 on the phone just to remind you that the Council has
47 taken about a 20-minute break, will be rejoining you in
48 just a moment after an activity to continue discussion
49 on the Forest Service plan revision, thank you.

50

1 (Off record)

2

3 (On record)

4

5 MS. PERRY: And for folks joining us on
6 the telephone and you're not seeing the chats that we
7 have in Teams. We are in the process of tallying up the
8 Council's input on the Forest Service plan activity. And
9 we will be resuming with the presentation shortly.

10

11 (Pause)

12

13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, everybody
14 you wanna come back to your seats. I think they have the
15 tabulations ready for us, and we'll see what we discover
16 here.

17

18 (Pause)

19

20 Okay, Ashley and Rob, whenever you're
21 ready.

22

23 MR. CROSS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this
24 time, we'll discuss the feedback frame results one at a
25 time, providing an opportunity for further discussion
26 on each topic. And this effort will hopefully be followed
27 by a working group comprised from the Council. And the
28 working group will be provided the consolidated feedback
29 frames and any comments from this discussion. Again, the
30 hope of the working group is to provide direction --
31 further direction to the subsistence staff as we work
32 through the need for change process. So, we'll read the
33 feedback frame into the record and then summarize the
34 votes and after the summary of the feedback frame is
35 read into the record, there'll be time for the Council
36 to provide further comments on the merits of the
37 statement or changes they feel should be made in terms
38 of this topic. And so, we would appreciate, just due to
39 time restrictions, if the comments could be limited to
40 roughly one minute per Council member or one minute per
41 comment. And then if we have time remaining at the end,
42 we can open it up to further discussion that can go
43 beyond what the feedback frame topics were.

44

45 MS. BOLWERK: Okay. Mr. Chair, this is
46 Ashley Bolwerk. I'll read the first prompt and then the
47 results. And then if folks wanna provide their thoughts,
48 that'd be wonderful. So, the first one was the revised
49 plan should look at how to increase integrated fish and
50 wildlife projects that benefit subsistence resources,

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1 habitat improvement and monitoring. The results for this
2 prompt were six votes for strongly agree and three votes
3 for agree.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Sounds
6 like what we would expect to see on that topic. It
7 doesn't surprise me. So, go ahead. I don't know, any
8 Council members wanna add anything or...?

9
10 (No response)

11
12 Rob.

13
14 MR. CROSS: Yeah. So, Mr. Chair, I guess
15 to give a little bit more background. As Ashley said,
16 the current forest plan for subsistence, essentially
17 says, see ANILCA. And so, what we're looking for with
18 this is that you know, we went through each one of the
19 sections of Title VIII of ANILCA or Section VII of ANILCA
20 that were pertinent to subsistence and tried to write
21 sort of some desired conditions or standards that we
22 felt would be appropriate to add into the forest plan.
23 So, some of these might just be, you know, like this one
24 seems like it's kind of a no brainer and that's fine,
25 we could just move on. We're just trying to kinda give
26 some sideboards or some primers to discuss so that when
27 we go through as staff and start working on a need for
28 change document, and then the actual draft forest plan,
29 we have a really good understanding of what the RAC
30 would like to see incorporated into the new forest plan.
31 So, yeah, I just wanted to add that, it's fine to just
32 move on to the next one if there's no comments or to
33 really dig into some of them.

34
35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Frank, go ahead.

36
37 MR. WRIGHT: I think that if you can put
38 it up on a screen, we can all look at it and when you're
39 reading it, we don't quite -- and we see it and take a
40 look at it a bit better. Just a comment, Mr. Chair.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
43 Frank. I don't know if that's easy to do or...? Yeah,
44 great, okay. And, Rob, while you're just getting started
45 there, I just wanted to say that I thought the assessment
46 that you and your team wrote up was very excellently
47 done. I thought it was good piece of work, so yeah.

48
49 MR. CROSS: Yeah, thank you very much,
50 Mr. Chair. Yeah, and I think just as we go forward

1 there's no real sideboards on what -- necessarily what
2 can be in the subsistence section of a plan. I mean,
3 Ashley outlined you know roughly what we're looking for
4 and what a forest plan can and can't do. But, you know,
5 for instance Section 811 of ANILCA says the Secretary
6 shall provide adequate access for subsistence. So, as
7 staff, when we are analyzing projects, adequate access
8 is really sort of a nebulous term. And so, you know, we
9 can make guesses as to what we think the people would
10 like more roads for accessing different subsistence
11 resources, but it really depends on the community and
12 the resource. And so, if we can get more direction on
13 those types of things which will come up in one of these
14 feedback frames, then that would be super helpful.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Right,
17 understood. John, question.

18
19 MR. SMITH: Just more of a comment to
20 share, that I grew up in Hoonah and I actually as a
21 young man, I worked with the Forest Service cleaning
22 trails and stuff, but later on I worked with the -- as
23 a maintenance. But I just wanna share growing up and
24 knowing that the Forest Service was around all the cabins
25 that you guys put up, all the trails that you guys
26 maintained were places that I take my family, my kids,
27 my children, and excuse me, that I just want to say that
28 what you guys do and how you do it, you guys make it
29 very sustainable. But also, you try not to overwhelm,
30 you just -- making a trail, you're getting people to
31 where they can access it, and you're making it even
32 easier for the elders to get out there with us to those
33 locations. Like even back home, the cabin that you guys
34 put out at Freshwater Bay, it's beautiful the second I
35 know that, all my grandkids, all my family go out there
36 and use that and we go up the hill, we go harvest our
37 deer. So, just echoing a lot of the process that you
38 guys are using already is awesome, amazing. Thank you.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
41 Next topic, maybe.

42
43 MR. CROSS: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair.
44 The next one is the revised plan, should address how
45 consultation with tribes and the Southeast Subsistence
46 Regional Advisory Council will be used to determine if
47 projects will impact subsistence resources. And the
48 results are four in strong agreement and three in
49 agreement. And I think, to maybe focus a little of this
50 discussion. You know, ANILCA does address NEPA projects

1 and says when there are anticipated negative impacts or
2 anticipated impacts to subsistence there will be public
3 hearings. But I think more what we're looking for is how
4 do we effectively communicate projects and get feedback,
5 and what we do with that feedback from the tribes and
6 the southeast RAC as far as projects moving forward.

7
8 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Harvey, I
9 think you had maybe a question on the previous topic I
10 missed there. So, go ahead.

11
12 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
13 realize that what you're saying about access for
14 subsistence users making some of these projects
15 accessible, realizing that in past practices, the boles
16 of the trees and the chips of the trees were just left
17 there. And so, some of the subsistence places -- we
18 really unable [sic] to go through anymore. In future
19 practices, I'd like to see those kinda places kinda kept
20 clean, whether they have to hire somebody to go and make
21 mulch out of all that stuff. It'd be something that'd
22 be more accessible for our young hunters that are
23 hunting. Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
26 Harvey. Any other Council members with comments on
27 either of these topics? Cal, go ahead.

28
29 MR. CASIPIT: Well, I was gonna maybe
30 just talk to folks, you know, in the audience about
31 this, but access to me is it's gonna be different for
32 different communities. And for instance, my community -
33 - an access issue for me would be -- place -- the place
34 where we have to hunt deer now is far away from our
35 community, it's across icy straits. It'd be nice to have
36 some mooring buoys. I know there's a shelter over there
37 in Pinta Cove, but it's a three-sided shelter and then
38 in December, a three-sided shelter isn't gonna help you
39 if you get stuck overnight. You know, a real cabin would
40 be nice. So, those are the kind of things that I'm kinda
41 interested in, as far as the access issue goes, is ways
42 to make it a little bit safer for folks to go out and
43 hunt deer, especially in my area. You know, it's gonna
44 happen later in the season when the snow comes to force
45 them down so that you're not -- we're not hiking three
46 miles up the side of the mountain before having to do a
47 45-minute boat ride back home through wind and nasty
48 weather. Anyway, that's kind of what I'm -- when I think
49 about access, that's what I think about is how to make
50 it a little bit safer for some of our hunters.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
Anybody else? Okay, Mike.

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MR. DOUVILLE: Access to wood is a subsistence need in my mind. (Indiscernible) Can you hear me now? Access to wood is important. And a lot of the -- I think they were past Forest Service clear-cuts where the roads were almost immediately closed off. So, you had no access to the resources left on the ground and to me, that's important for wood access. And it's also pretty handy for a lot of people to hunt deer in those places up to -- for about 15 to 20 years. And then after that, you can close the road because it's virtually dead. But, you know, that's -- should be given some consideration and not just for those resources.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
Anybody else? John.

MR. SMITH: Yeah, just to add to that, that I know even maybe Frank might share about this. My boy was sharing that they started opening up the old logging roads in certain areas where, you know, when we got -- I worked for Whitestone for 28 years. So, when we get done with the road, we actually -- when we leave there, we would pull out the road so nobody can get to the other side. And I'm really glad that they are opening those up. And I liked what he was saying. A point of view of when -- I know -- I don't know, there's logging that's going on over in Hoonah, but I know the Forest Service does their logging. Is a look at a different perspective like he's saying is just drop the tree, don't bucket there, take everything to the landing cause if you leave all the limbs and the branches and all that, there's all the methane, the pellets, the firewood, the things like that that the community can use and develop that's right alongside the road. And then you're not over carbonating the garden that you want to have the trees growing. So, when you leave all the branches and the tops of the trees that aren't productive and the rock that's left there, it becomes a carbon issue. And then that area, the trees aren't gonna grow as quickly, but if you remove them, that -- they're gonna have a better chance and there's actually a lot -- underneath all the trees are small young ones that are already growing. You won't even have to go back and then transplant because of that type of issue. Just sharing a perspective and then that way the community can drive down the road and have access to that firewood, you can

1 take the branches and make pellets, a pellet machine
2 doesn't cost that much and it's actually very simple to,
3 you know, even the community. All the alder -- or the
4 alder trees that might end up on the end because they
5 don't have no sale. They're not selling any of that and
6 people could be using that for making chips for their -
7 - smoking their fish. Just a perspective.

8

9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Ted.

10

11 MR. SANDHOFER: Thanks, Don. Ted
12 Sandhofer. You know, just some general comments on, you
13 know, these. There's hardly any of those that I disagreed
14 with. You know, I mean, most of them kinda hit like,
15 yeah, we should do that. And, you know, the word should
16 -- the old forest plan when we're working off now, you
17 know, there were shall and should. So, a lot of these
18 things is the revised plan shall look at how to increase,
19 not should, we shall do that. It's just the devil is in
20 the details, how do we do it? That's what you guys are
21 working on, that's the tough part. But I think the word
22 should, should be changed to shall because we need to
23 do that. We just got to figure out how to do it.
24 (Indiscernible).

25

26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ted.
27 Rob, comment on that.

28

29 MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair,
30 member Sandhofer. Yeah, that's exactly what we're
31 looking for. So, you know, if we don't get any comments
32 from the Regional Advisory Council on that, on how we
33 should be consulting with the tribes and the Regional
34 Advisory Council, then you're leaving it up to us to
35 decide how that's done. So, if you do have strong
36 feelings on how exactly we should be reaching out to the
37 tribes or engaging with the tribes, or how we should be
38 engaging with the RAC to accomplish this, then this is
39 definitely one of the most beneficial times to bring it
40 up.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: And John.

43

44 MR. SMITH: Just a question, because
45 you're talking to the tribes, you guys share your
46 community, your Forest Service land with everybody.
47 Everybody is invited no matter what ethnicity they are.
48 Is there tribes like, I know that Huna Totem used to
49 have a watch on their property to where, you know,
50 hunting season you couldn't go on there unless you had

1 your --- he approved that you were a Huna Totem
2 shareholder. You know, do you ever have any of that
3 situation with the tribal folks? Are they -- do they run
4 that way to where, if you're Italian or you're not an
5 Alaskan Native, that you can't be caught on their
6 property? Is that something that's on the table? And I
7 don't know this, so that's why I'm kinda asking, because
8 it -- and you can't really hold the tribe because they're
9 private land, right. You can't hold them accountable
10 for, you know, making sure they put buffers by rivers
11 or they're doing this or they're doing the respectful
12 thing. I'm just curious about respect the.....

13
14 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair, this is
15 Rob Cross, again. So, I think what you're talking about
16 is not federal public lands. So, as far as the forest
17 plan goes, it covers federal public lands owned by or
18 managed by the Forest Service and the -- yeah, there's
19 no restrictions to who can access that land.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. You're on,
22 Mike, go ahead.

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
25 think what Mr. Smith was referring to was corporation
26 land and not tribal, tribe -- the tribes that I know
27 don't own, but very small parcels of land.

28
29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody else?

30
31 (No response)

32
33 I'm ready to move on to a new topic? I
34 think we are.

35
36 MS. BOLWERK: All right, the third prompt
37 was the revised plan needs to identify how to use
38 information from public hearings on identifying desired
39 level of access in harvested areas once harvest is
40 complete. And so, for instance, like maintain or close
41 temporary roads.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, what was
44 the outcome on that one?

45
46 MS. BOLWERK: Sorry about that, thank
47 you. The outcome -- the results were four votes for
48 strong agreement, three agreement, one neutral and one
49 not sure.

50

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Are you getting
2 written comments on those as well? That might -- kinda
3 be helpful to start a discussion.....

4
5 (Simultaneous speech)

6
7 MS. BOLWERK: Sure. I can read those if
8 you would like me to, yeah.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I don't know or
11 is that something you just want to use in a work group
12 or is -- yeah, I mean -- you know, people are writing
13 down comments. I don't know if we wanna hear those or
14 not, so.

15
16 MS. BOLWERK: I think in a case like this
17 where there's certainly some folks who were neutral or
18 were -- weren't sure, maybe there's -- if folks can
19 provide their thoughts on why they strongly agreed or
20 aren't sure that might be really beneficial to
21 generating some conversation, in particular in this one
22 where it's not as clear cut. We could really use some
23 guidance on why you voted the way you did or -- if anyone
24 wants to volunteer.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Well, I
27 took particular interest in this one cause I think it's
28 a pretty serious issue. The -- you know, access and
29 timber harvested areas does affect, you know,
30 subsistence uses quite a bit because we all know that,
31 you know, people do go to recently harvested areas to
32 harvest deer, and the access roads to those areas are
33 used for subsistence access. Actually, for a lot of
34 different activities. I guess the rub is -- I mean,
35 you're gonna -- the idea of going out to communities and
36 asking for their input is a good idea because it's gonna
37 vary, you know, from community to community. And, you
38 know, my anticipation is you're even -- within any one
39 community, you're probably gonna get a lot of different
40 opinions on this. A lot of it depends on what kinda
41 timber harvest you're doing. You know, if you envision,
42 you know, doing old growth -- much more old growth
43 harvest and putting in roads to those old growth harvest
44 areas, which from the subsistence standpoint would not
45 be a popular activity, even though it does provide new
46 access. But if you're, you know, opening up maybe old
47 roads that have been closed to previously harvested
48 areas and, you know, maybe doing some, you know,
49 restoration work in those areas thinning projects and
50 things like that. And opening up those roads could

1 provide better access, you know, the roads that've been
2 shut off for a while. I mean, that might be more popular.
3 So, it kinda depends on the activity that's taking place.
4 Yeah, that'd be my comment. Mike, you have something.

5
6 MR. DOUVILLE: Well, we have not seen old
7 growth harvest by the Forest Service for a while. It is
8 certainly not supported or encouraged by the tribe, the
9 Craig Tribe. And the other concern the tribe has is that
10 the basins are ripening up to a point where they could
11 be harvested again, but the tribe looks at it as if we
12 wanna be harvest, those places on a sustained yield basis
13 and not over-harvest. And we'll be right back in the
14 same place where we started without a forest and just
15 total moon scaping. And thinning should be done with
16 wildlife in mind, not commercial thinning and that's the
17 wishes of the tribe and their concerns.

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

21
22 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I don't wanna get
23 into the weeds too bad, but just -- you know so, if
24 you're maintaining a temporary road pass the life of the
25 project it's not a temporary road, it's a specified road.
26 It's a road that you're gonna use pass the length of
27 that project. And the problem with doing that is, you
28 know, the Forest Service has too many roads to maintain
29 as it is and not enough money to maintain those roads.
30 So, that's kind of the crux of it if -- and I don't
31 know, unless there's more money how to fix that. But
32 it's -- I'm not sure how you can get there. You know,
33 if -- not temporary road if you're keeping it open longer
34 than the life of the contract or the project.

35
36 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So, yes, there
37 are a lot of issues with road access, we know that. It
38 gets fairly complicated. And then well, this one's kinda
39 specific to timber harvested areas, so like I say, and
40 then there's, you know, other forms of access like what
41 Cal Casipit was talking about. You know, for subsistence
42 users you know, other ways just to make it more
43 accessible for people to, you know, get out and do
44 activities is also desirable. You know, there's -- I
45 know there's -- I think there's been some discussion
46 about, you know, with the older roads not leaving them
47 active as roads anymore and like, what Ted was talking
48 about, but kinda, sort of maintain them in a trail status
49 so that people want to, you know, access a bigger area
50 where they can get in by foot or something that make it

1 easier to do that as well. So, a lot of issues, you
2 know, involved with access, so. And Frank, go ahead.

3
4 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You
5 know, one of the things that -- in Hoonah is that
6 whenever there's a cut, man the blueberries are
7 beautiful. I mean, they just go crazy. My wife always
8 gets a party together, gets a bunch of ladies, and they
9 go out there and just harvest. But when the old growth
10 come -- when the growth starts coming, it's less and
11 less accessible than -- but blueberries is subsistence.
12 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13
14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
15 Frank. Anybody else? John, go ahead.

16
17 MR. SMITH: Yeah, it's almost like
18 depends on what situation. The what if kinda thing is
19 why you're opening the road up and definitely we need
20 access to you know, small trails and stuff but, like
21 some we're talking about firewood and of course, the
22 Forest Service, you know, you're able to -- now they're
23 -- they've made a pass to where you can actually mill
24 your own wood to build your own house, you know, with
25 that through the University of Fairbanks, there's an
26 education going on now. I think they passed that but,
27 you know, monitoring, you know that the people that are
28 getting firewood, that the tree is dead, you know, it's,
29 you know, the dead tree is not producing oxygen anymore,
30 it's now become a carbon issue. So, it's good to drop
31 those trees and then being cautious of not -- you know,
32 even myself, I'm gonna be really selective of what tree
33 I'm gonna drop that I'm gonna use to build my house. I
34 don't want any old growth, you know, tree. I'm gonna
35 want something 36 inches or so, maybe a little bit bigger
36 on the butt, you know, like that that's clean, you know,
37 and then use the limbed parts for my two by fours, you
38 know, I have my planks. So, then I know the Forest
39 Service opened the door for families to harvest trees
40 for lumber too or for free use. So, just make -- just
41 mainly depends on how your managing those or what you're
42 up to when you open the road. But I really encourage the
43 opening of the roads for access of activities, you know,
44 being able to move around and elders actually being able
45 to get out there in the field. Getting close to be that
46 age, so.

47
48 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah right.
49 Thank you, John. Anybody else on this topic?
50

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1 (No response)

2

3 Ready to move on to the next topic, I
4 think.

5

6 MR. CROSS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This
7 one's pretty broad. The revised plan needs to address
8 access to subsistence resources more thoroughly. I think
9 this is a great spot to discuss mooring balls, cabins,
10 things like that. And really, what the desired condition
11 would be for the forest.

12

13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: (Indiscernible)
14 Anybody with a comment on -- since the other forms of
15 access, I guess more broadly, which is kind of what you
16 talked about earlier. Cal, I don't know if there's other
17 thoughts on this? Mike, go ahead.

18

19 MR. DOUVILLE: Unrelated, but there's
20 concern about mariculture farms in our primary
21 subsistence areas like this was not addressed as a state
22 water, but also it is state water surrounding federal
23 land and those are -- a concern as well. And they would
24 hinder access and create a human presence in those areas
25 that are heavily used for subsistence in -- like on the
26 west side of Prince of Wales.

27

28 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, anybody
29 else?

30

31 (No response)

32

33 Okay, let's move on.

34

35 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So
36 next one is a subsistence fish and wildlife monitoring
37 plan should be developed to inform in-season management
38 activities and address conservation, access and
39 competition concerns. The -- sorry, the results from
40 this one were three folks strongly agreed, four agreed.

41

42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: And, Cal, you
43 have a question or comment?

44

45 MR. CASIPIT: Oh, just a comment. I --
46 guys were asking about desired future condition. Well,
47 I got a great one for you on this one. Every village,
48 every community has a stock assessment project that
49 they're working on in cooperation with the agency. And
50 it's long term. And they have one of those stock

1 assessment projects on at least one sockeye system in
2 their area. So, every village, every community has a
3 stock assessment project hopefully on one or more
4 important systems in their area. And that's my desired
5 future, at least one. That's my desired future
6 condition, I know it's not much, but it's better than
7 what we have now.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody else?
10 Lewis, go ahead.

11
12 MR. HIATT: Competition where I live, we
13 live -- Hollis sits on the Harris River. And when the
14 cohos and steelhead are in, it's damn near impossible
15 you have to take a number to get down there to fish
16 anymore. And same if you drive north through the Thorne
17 River down to Twelvemile Arm, it's the same sort of
18 deal, there's vans and vans of freshwater tourist
19 fishermen and -- which I understand they wanna be there,
20 but it pretty much edges the rest of us out. So, that's
21 something I would like you to consider.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Rob, go ahead.

24
25 MR. CROSS: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
26 I think -- I mean, both of those are fantastic
27 suggestions, or I'm really glad that you brought those
28 up. I think what I was thinking with this one is you
29 know, we hear concerns from the Council, you know, often
30 over and over again, and we don't necessarily have a
31 mechanism, or we haven't outlined a mechanism to look
32 into these issues. You know, we have the Priority
33 Information Needs for the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
34 Program, but we don't have a wildlife monitoring
35 program, and it's all funding dependent, right. But if
36 we do find pockets of money and we have a monitoring
37 plan that outlines, well, this is a access issue and
38 this is a competition issue. You know, there's steelhead
39 competition issues going down on Prince -- going on down
40 on Prince of Wales and we don't currently have anything
41 outlined to determine whether there's a population
42 concern for steelhead down on Prince of Wales Island.
43 You know, we're looking into mooring balls and Gustavus
44 or things like that. So, I think this could be a really
45 good opportunity for, I guess, for both the Regional
46 Advisory Council and our staff to get together and sort
47 of codify every two years or so, like, these are the
48 things that are really important to the Regional
49 Advisory Council, therefore important to the public and
50 the tribes. And have something written down where we can

1 go back to if we have prior year funds or some -- if we
2 ever find an excess of funds, I'm not saying that will
3 ever happen, but something that our staff can go to and
4 say, well, these are all the priorities of the Regional
5 Advisory Council. And these are some of the projects
6 that we could fund to, you know, to look into them and
7 see what the solution would be.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Rob.
10 When you say in-season management to me, that kind of
11 indicates that -- these are highly localized, you know,
12 situations that need to be addressed are not big, you
13 know, area wide programmatic type things and that. So,
14 like I say, working a better mechanism to, you know,
15 work with the local people on what's affecting them at
16 the time. You know, it changes from season to season and
17 year to year, and lots of things can affect that. So,
18 yeah, I mean, that's what I see when I see that in-
19 season management, that indicates to me a pretty
20 localized response. So, I think, yeah, that's something
21 that's needed. Yeah, it might be hard to bring about,
22 but you gotta work with local communities, more on that
23 in some way. So, Mike and then, Ted.

24
25 MR. DOUVILLE: Just to add to what Mr.
26 Hiatt said, is that the district ranger in Craig issues
27 the permits I believe for the guide services to
28 freshwater guides. And there seems to be some issues
29 that are not brand new but are coming to light that the
30 guidance services are enough of them, there's only a few
31 good places to fish, but -- and these are taken up by
32 the different lodges and they work together. You go to
33 this place today and we'll go over here and they just
34 kinda rotate around, so there's somebody there all the
35 time. So, a subsistence user goes there to fish, it's
36 taken up. So, that is a issue. So, it is a competition
37 issue that is displacing subsistence fishing. And there
38 was a meeting or two on it, and I didn't attend them,
39 but it is a problem. So, I'm not sure how to resolve it
40 other than to restrict their freshwater guide services
41 to where they don't conflict with subsistence so much.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
44 And Ted, you had comment?

45
46 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, thanks, Chair --
47 Mr. Chairman. You know, I was thinking, you know, we do
48 that a little bit on the Baranof goats, right. In
49 conjunction with the Fish and Game, where we have a plan
50 based on harvest and monitor the harvest in order to --

1 you know, so can we model some of these other monitoring
2 plans on those and do that in other areas for other
3 species, other game, you know.

4
5 MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair,
6 member Sandhofer. Yeah, absolutely, I mean, that's a
7 pretty highly intensive or intensively managed hunt on
8 Baranof but I think that's a really good example. And I
9 guess some feedback that would be helpful is, you know,
10 is this -- if we do move forward with something like
11 this and it is a standard in the forest plan in the
12 subsistence section to maintain a monitoring plan, is
13 that something that the Regional Advisory Council would
14 like I guess input on, on an annual basis to bring new
15 issues about or is it something every two years? I mean,
16 really, we're looking for -- we would like to write down
17 -- well I guess to back up. This will be an element in
18 the forest plan that says that our staff needs to do
19 this and so, if that's something that you guys agree
20 with, which it seems like it is, then sort of the
21 guidelines for that standard would be that we need to
22 present it to the Regional Advisory Council annually for
23 updating or every two years for updating. And so, I
24 guess and going back to the Priority Information Needs,
25 that's -- we kinda struggle with that list because it's
26 really inclusive, right. So, if we do end up with money,
27 we have a list that says that we should look at any and
28 all sockeye systems for any and all metrics of sockeye.
29 So, it's really -- it's kinda difficult for us to
30 prioritize funding when it comes to that sort of thing.
31 So, what we're looking for, what we're hoping for with
32 this, would be that on an annual or biannual basis, we
33 present it to the Regional Advisory Council, you bring
34 up new issues like competition with steelhead and then
35 from that or competition for steelhead, and then with
36 that, we can develop projects to look at you know,
37 competition issues or it gives us direction that we need
38 to be working with our district rangers and our
39 permitting staff to reevaluate the level of permitted
40 guide days that we have for those particular species or
41 systems. So, I guess the question in all of that is how
42 frequently or what type of involvement would the RAC
43 like to have in that?

44
45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
46 Rob. And I think I can see the value of, you know, using
47 the RAC in that way because we do have pretty broad
48 representation across the area and are pretty familiar
49 with a lot of local issues. So, that would be a good
50 resource, you know, to bring things like that to the RAC

1 on a -- at least maybe, you know, coinciding with our
2 Fish and Wildlife cycles, perhaps, you know, that would
3 be an every other year thing at a minimum. They're not
4 at a minimum, maybe a maximum, maybe it could be done
5 more often, but that could be a starting point. Bring
6 any issues like that to the Forest Service at the time
7 we're talking about proposals, because not everything
8 can be solved with proposals. You know, it takes in-
9 season management as we're gonna find out tomorrow. So,
10 yeah, that could be a good starting point. Anybody else?

11

(No response)

12

13

Okay, maybe we're ready for new topic.

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MR. CROSS: Okay, the next one is the revised plan should include coordination with timber, fish, watershed, wildlife, soils and transportation program to develop action alternatives to management activities with potential effects to subsistence. Oh, and three in strong agreement and four in agreement.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: The Council members have any comments they wanna add on this topic?

(No response)

What do you mean by other programs?
Coordination with other programs?

MR. CROSS: Yes, Mr. Chair. So, often in, let's say timber management or a timber harvest project, there will be multiple alternatives one could have, like wildlife corridors or -- yeah, that's really the one that comes to mind is wildlife corridors. So, really, this is a interdisciplinary effort to come up with alternatives and maybe what those alternatives should look like for timber management. Where the timber management still moves forward, but it has actions or alternatives that are beneficial or least adverse to subsistence resources.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Is this something that's in the existing forest plan or is this fairly new? It almost sounds familiar to me, but.

MR. CROSS: I don't have the forest plan memorized, but it's certainly not in the subsistence section, I can tell you that.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, yeah. It's
2 more of the -- you see it [sic] other places, this, yeah
3 this coordinated approach for -- but not in subsistence,
4 I get it. Okay, thank you. Harvey.

5
6 MR. KITKA: One of the things I look at
7 this is, if they're gonna build any roads across streams
8 and to make sure that they're not (indiscernible), the
9 spawning grounds so as not to change the riverbed.

10
11 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. That it,
12 Harvey?

13
14 (No response)

15
16 Cal you have you of your microphone on,
17 do you wanna say something?

18
19 MR. CASIPIT: No, no.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody else?

22
23 (No response)

24
25 Okay, next topic.

26
27 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
28 next prompt was revised plan needs to include steps for
29 coordination, that includes considering information from
30 public hearings when developing any projects that may
31 impact subsistence. There were five votes that strongly
32 agreed, two that agreed, and one that was neutral.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any comments on
35 this?

36
37 (No response)

38
39 Gathering traditional ecological
40 knowledge, the public input. Seem like a popular idea.
41 Once again, it's just up to figuring out how to go about
42 doing this, correct? Right. Any other comments? Ted, go
43 ahead.

44
45 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I would just state
46 that I don't know if there's any projects on the Tongass
47 that don't affect subsistence. So, I think it would
48 include everything.

49
50

1 MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair,
2 member Sandhofer. Yeah, you know ANILCA says that we
3 need to have public hearings when the impacts to
4 subsistence are anticipated. And so, we do, what we're
5 looking for is, if you guys have any feedback on ways
6 that we could, I guess target communities for input more
7 thoroughly or what we should be doing in addition to
8 collecting that information. Like how -- yeah, sorry,
9 I'm kind of at a loss for words, but just the best
10 practices for what to do with those hearings and what --
11 -- the information that we're getting.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Any comments
14 along those lines? John, go ahead.

15
16 MR. SMITH: Just an encouragement and a
17 perspective, like if you were to come to Juneau that you
18 would call the Juneau Federal Subsistence. You would
19 give me a call and I would help you set up and find a
20 location and I would be one of -- my positions is
21 actually getting the cultural team or community or the
22 -- you know, getting the message out to -- that that's
23 going on, which, you know, would be a lot to do with
24 connecting with DeAnna and their team to actually
25 promote that. Get on the radio, get in the newspaper and
26 get that laid out so that when we do have a door open
27 and a place to go, which could be the -- you know, using
28 the Elizabeth Peratrovich, the A.N.B Hall to actually,
29 you know, have a location to where it's cultural but
30 inviting everybody, all ethnicities cause that's the
31 objective is to hear the voices of all. And like, if you
32 were gonna go to Gustavus that you would call Calvin,
33 and Calvin would be responsible and here in Sitka, Harvey
34 would give you a backup on that and, you know, use this
35 facility, it's beautiful. Or maybe even the A.N.B Hall
36 down here too, cultural traditional location that, you
37 know, would be -- so, I'm just sharing a perspective of
38 how that can be done cause I would be all in on it to
39 support that effort. And that way that -- we're from
40 that community, we know the people. So, then we'd be
41 able to advocate that way.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John. Frank had
44 something.

45
46 MR. WRIGHT: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair.
47 The tribe in Hoonah, what we're trying to do is that
48 everything we do involves the whole community. You know,
49 when we do something, like we build steps down to the
50 school cause the children had to walk down a long street

1 and were worried about it in winter that -- but
2 everything we do -- like, my wife put in a school paper
3 that the tribe does things and everybody is involved.
4 Doesn't matter who you are, we try to make sure that the
5 whole community knows about it. You know so we got some
6 computer labs in Hoonah, and some of the people in Hoonah
7 were thinking, oh, that's the tribe. No, we wanna make
8 sure that everybody is involved. So, when you do stuff
9 that says the tribe, then some people get turned off.
10 So, we try to turn it around and say, no, everybody's
11 involved cause we can't -- you know, when we're spending
12 federal dollars, we don't say, oh, no, you can't use
13 that, or is like that boat we're getting for rescue,
14 anyone out there gonna get oh, he's not a tribal member,
15 so we can't go. We're not gonna do something like that.
16 What we need to do is, you know, the tribe says no, we
17 do it for everybody so, that's what we need to do. And
18 that's how it should be approached. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
21 Frank. Anybody else comments?

22
23 (No response)

24
25 Okay, let's move on to the next topic.

26
27 MR. CROSS: Yeah, the next one is the
28 revised plan should identify high use subsistence areas
29 for stand treatment, protection and or wildlife best
30 management practices if timber harvest occurs.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Council
33 members have questions or comments on this one?

34
35 (No response)

36
37 MR. CROSS: I was hoping you'd ask that,
38 I forgot. It's two in strong agreement and six in
39 agreement. And I will say that as part of the assessment
40 effort, we were working with our GIS shop and ADF&G, and
41 we have a internal map at this point that shows harvest
42 by wildlife analysis area. And so that's pretty helpful
43 at a coarse level at showing us you know, just -- it's
44 color coded so certain or like a range of shades of the
45 same color. So, it'll really pop and show us like, okay,
46 well, Pybus Bay is really important area just outside
47 of Petersburg. And so, you know, that should help to
48 direct management activities or timber harvest
49 activities in those areas, or you know, Thomas Bay is a
50 really good example where maybe timber management or

1 timber harvest is beneficial to the moose population
2 there, but it is also a high use subsistence area. And
3 so essentially using that and public input to map out
4 what areas are most important to subsistence. And that's
5 not to say everything else just gets thrown out the
6 window. But you know, if we are going to put particular
7 restrictions on timber management or the way that timber
8 management is done, if we can focus those restrictions
9 and those best management practices in areas that are
10 most highly used by subsistence users.

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Of course, I
13 mean, I think my comment on this one was that, you know,
14 timber harvest shouldn't be occurring in a high
15 subsistence use area, at least definitely not any more
16 old growth harvest. I mean, you're talking about going
17 into older second growth stands and prioritizing. So,
18 there may be opportunities for that. But I certainly
19 want to make the caveat that there should not be old
20 growth timber harvest and high use subsistence areas
21 anymore. We can't afford the loss of habitat that occurs
22 with that. So, anybody else? Mike.

23
24 MR. DOUVILLE: Old growth forest doesn't
25 need habitat treatment. I think we're looking at these
26 concerns would be, as Don said in the second growth
27 basins that are the primary place that harvest on second
28 growth would take place, and it needs to be done in a
29 fashion that would be beneficial to wildlife. Small
30 clear cuts in those areas would probably beneficial
31 [sic] as opposed to thousand-acre clear cuts, if you
32 will.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Ted, go ahead.

35
36 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, I think, like the
37 -- to Rob, the example you were pointing out Thomas Bay
38 I think where, you know, the second growth there that's
39 ready for harvest the young growth. Oh, I'm sorry, the
40 young growth that's ready, mature enough to harvest some
41 gaps, thickets, some thinning, that different mosaic
42 would help wildlife. So, I think that there is some
43 opportunities in some areas to enhance subsistence use
44 with some activities.

45
46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
47 Ted. Rob, response.

48
49 MR. CROSS: Yeah, through the Chair.
50 Thank you, member Sandhofer. Yeah, I think that's the

1 kinda information that's very helpful in this process.
2 You know, I think it's easy for us to say, you know, if
3 it's a high use subsistence area, there shouldn't be any
4 harvest at all and member Douville got at that as well.
5 So, I think you know if you guys do have a work group
6 during this meeting or sorry, after this meeting, I think
7 it would be really helpful to work through some of the
8 examples where best management practices or different
9 types of timber harvest could be beneficial and what
10 that would look like in different areas of the Tongass.
11 Because we certainly don't wanna write a blanket
12 statement you know, there should be no timber harvest
13 in any high use subsistence areas. And then we run into
14 issues like Thomas Bay where it could be beneficial to
15 subsistence harvesters.

16
17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, any other
18 comments? John, go ahead.

19
20 MR. SMITH: Just a comment about logging
21 trees. I really believe in selective logging of taking
22 the big trees that are just about to start to become
23 rotten inside, that you're still able to use them to get
24 the big trees out of the way so that the smaller 25-
25 inch, 30-inch trees are able to grow bigger. And then
26 at the same time where you're pulling out these trees
27 that -- you're dropping the rotten ones that are not
28 productive and that becomes compost. And then it
29 actually reduces the carbon issue because now it's on
30 the ground being compost, decaying to feed the trees
31 that are around it.

32
33 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
34 Anybody else, comments on this topic? Frank, go ahead.

35
36 MR. WRIGHT: I believe that there should
37 be some restrictions on some of these areas cause I
38 don't know if I've told this story before, but I remember
39 sitting on the dock with one of my friends and I said,
40 that whole hillside is gonna be gone. He said, nah. And
41 I said, yes, it is. That's when Huna Totem Corporation
42 went across the bay, across from Hoonah and raked the
43 whole hillside. And that was one of our deer habitats,
44 was on -- not even two miles across to go into that
45 habitat. And I was -- one time I was on a boat with
46 Floyd Peterson, and I -- we're talking to radio station
47 -- radio people, and there -- and it was a bears [sic].
48 He was just sitting on the buffer strip just looking out
49 at us, and there were some heavy equipment on the other
50 side of that buffer strip between logs. And I said, look

1 at that, look what we did, look what we did to that
2 land, that hillside. And I said that bear is just looking
3 at us and he's wondering why -- what that big machinery
4 is on the other side of him is he was just looking at
5 us and we were on a boat. I'll never forget it, I will
6 never forget it, ever. So, harvesting in subsistence
7 areas has to be very careful, like I said, that was our
8 meat locker across the bay. Then on the other side of
9 the -- on Chris Point that used to be our meat locker
10 too. Sealaska went in there and raped that land. Now
11 it's hard for us to even find any -- get a deer in that
12 area. And I just -- I know I'm not supposed to mention
13 names around here, but I'll say Huna Totem and Sealaska
14 did that to the Community of Hoonah. Now we have to go
15 miles and miles to find a deer. And when there's a tough
16 winter, there's a time when they counted over 200 dead
17 deer on the beach because there was no shelter for them,
18 because the -- everything was torn up. So, being -- be
19 careful of how you do subsistence areas, cause you have
20 to be very careful cause things like that does happen.
21 You know, I -- it still hurts me for seeing what
22 happened. No, I -- thank you, Mr. Chair.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
25 Frank. Any other comments on this topic?

26
27 (No response)

28
29 Okay, next.

30
31 MR. CROSS: Okay, Mr. Chair. The next one
32 -- the next two kinda go hand in hand. So, the next one
33 is the revised plan needs to limit or modify timber
34 management activities in high use areas to minimize
35 impacts to wildlife. And as Ms. Bolwerk is pointing out,
36 I need to say that there were five in strong agreement
37 and one in agreement, and then one in strong
38 disagreement. And so, I guess with the one in strong
39 disagreement, we should open this up for conversation,
40 but then I can go into the next one, which is related
41 to this topic.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Council members?

44
45 (No response)

46
47 Okay, well, maybe we were waiting to
48 hear the next topic there as well.

49
50

1 MR. CROSS: Okay, so the next one is the
2 revised plan should outline measures to identify areas
3 where timber management activities can benefit
4 subsistence. And there was two in strong agreement, four
5 in agreement, one neutral and that's it. And so, the
6 reason why I say these two are related is that you know,
7 they're -- I think what I'm hearing in this deliberation
8 is that, you know, if there is timber management in high
9 use areas, then it needs to be done in a very calculated,
10 very careful way. And that might just be incumbent upon
11 the staff to determine in the forest plan what the
12 standards and guidelines are that meet that need, you
13 know what the best management practices are. As far as
14 outlining ways to identify what those areas are and what
15 the beneficial management could be or what the benefits
16 to subsistence could be. I feel like that requires quite
17 a bit of input from the Regional Advisory Council, and
18 maybe that's at this point or maybe it's just a -- we
19 outline in our standards and guidelines how we
20 communicate these projects with the Regional Advisory
21 Council and get feedback per project or it can be a
22 forest plan wide directive or standard and guideline.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, anybody
25 have any comments about that?

26
27 (No response)

28
29 Yeah, this one -- I mean, this gets
30 complicated depending on what kind of activities you're
31 talking about and -- yeah, I don't know. There's Patti.
32 But, John, you have something there.

33
34 MR. SMITH: Yeah, I think it kind of
35 relates to what Frank was talking about in, you know,
36 taking the -- believe it or not, I was logging then and
37 was the one logging that area, even if you go on the
38 other side of the mountain, it's disgusting. You know,
39 it's -- I'm ashamed right now.

40
41 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. Well, I
42 guess just a general comment. So, you know, I think one
43 way that the forest plan is beneficial, this coming from
44 a program that doesn't generally reference the forest
45 plan because it just says, see ANILCA. But one way that
46 it could be helpful is that, you know, our staff don't
47 plan on going anywhere, but if we do, then it's sort of
48 that transfer of knowledge, like I lived in Petersburg,
49 so I know that Thomas Bay has moose because there was
50 timber harvest there, it replicates natural disturbance.

1 Same with Mitkof Island and so on and so forth as you
2 go west. Those things aren't always recorded. So, how
3 do we identify the areas and the ways that timber
4 management could be beneficial to subsistence? And
5 again, is that you know, is it the desire of the Regional
6 Advisory Council to record that into the forest plan and
7 that -- that's something that's actually identified in
8 the forest plan or is that standards and guidelines to
9 our staff or potentially the next staff on how we engage
10 the Regional Advisory Council to get that information?
11 So, that it's not lost with, you know, staff turnover
12 and things like that because this plan will last 10-15
13 plus years.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you
16 for that, Rob. Any thoughts on that?

17
18 (No response)

19
20 And we welcome Patti Phillips, has
21 joined us from Pelican, she has arrived, so. Yeah, well,
22 maybe we should move on to the next topic, then.

23
24 MS. BOLWERK: All right, the next one is
25 the revised plan should include designated community use
26 areas where local use is prioritized. There are five
27 folks who voted to strongly agree, one agree, and one
28 neutral. I think this is also an opportunity to outline
29 what might those look like if they were community use
30 areas.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, that's the
33 obvious question. Ted, go ahead.

34
35 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, thank you, Mr.
36 Chairman. Ted Sandhofer. You know, well, I thought when
37 I was looking at this is when you emphasize these
38 community use areas, do you de-emphasize other areas?
39 Because I think our use -- the community use changes
40 based on populations and where the deer are, where the
41 trapping is, and that changes all the time. So, if you
42 say, hey, this is a community area, this is very
43 important to us, and around the Thorne Bay, you know as
44 example. All of a sudden, you know, the deer population
45 on Staney or over in Winter Harbor increases and then
46 that's the area that's important to the community then.
47 So, do you want to de-emphasize that? I mean, so I guess
48 if we do this, we don't want to chisel it in stone, want
49 to have some flexibility where those community areas can
50 change based on the availability of the resources. So,

1 that's -- that was my only comment during that one,
2 thank you.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, that's a
5 good comment, that I have to strongly agree with, Ted
6 that yeah, the use areas changed a lot due to changing
7 conditions. And so, if you're gonna write it into the
8 plan, it has to be written in, so it has opportunity to
9 evolve along with, you know, changes. So, you wouldn't
10 want to just designate in this plan high use community
11 or community high use areas and have that be the plan.
12 It has to be able to evolve. So, that has to be worked
13 into it, but the concept I think is good. Anybody else?
14 Mike, go ahead.

15
16 MR. DOUVILLE: I agree that these areas
17 need to be -- have a certain amount of flexibility built
18 into them, because it does change depending on road
19 access, when timber harvest took place. In the case of
20 where I live, we're surrounded by private land. So, you
21 know, those -- is not really local. You know, I mean,
22 you have to go different places on the island to get
23 wood or hunt or whatever.

24
25 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Cal, go ahead.

26
27 MR. CASIPIT: Well, not only does it, not
28 only does those -- with those community use areas change
29 over time, probably change with varying species as well.
30 I mean, community use area may be different, whether
31 you're talking about blueberries or deer or moose or
32 birds or what have you. So, I agree the flexibility has
33 to be there and I -- Ted's right on about the -- about
34 it not, you know, not taking away from the other areas
35 so it's flexible. It can change over time based on what
36 we're talking about, but that may change for species as
37 well.

38
39 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: All right,
40 anybody else? Lewis, go ahead.

41
42 MR. HIATT: I think Cal hit it on the
43 head, it changes with time. We have an area next to
44 Hollis that it was clear cut a few years ago, and a lot
45 of people go there now, there's deer there, and they get
46 firewood there and there's roads. But that's gonna
47 change, you know. And then there's other areas that we
48 used to hunt, and I mean, it's dead in there now and no
49 one goes. So, I agree you have to -- it changes. Thank
50 you.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Ashley, go ahead.

MS. BOLWERK: I just wanted to provide some thought. I mean, I think you all are speaking to some things that also -- you know, I wanted to remind you to wrap your head around, like this is about forest management, right, the land management. And so, I think the other thing to think about is, you know, many of the factors you're mentioning of why you're moving to different places are the things we're saying you could define within this space to say, we want the Forest Service to focus restoration efforts in this place. We want the Forest Service to focus wildlife thinning in this place, we want them to focus on berry production in this place. So, I'm -- I wanna just really encourage you all to like re-frame your mindset on that one. It's like this is your opportunity to tell us what those things would need to be in order for them to be sustainable places to do those activities, right. Like we can't impact the snow, right and things like that. There are certain things outside of the scope of what the Forest Service can do, and everything is funding dependent, of course. But this is a long-term plan, right, and so, if in 15 years you wanna have a place that's easy to access, where, you know, if that's far from your community, near your community, like this is sort of the opportunity to define what that looks like. And that's not to say you're not gonna wanna continue to move around and do those things in different places. But I just wanted to bring this up here, because I think a lot of the things that I just heard were sort of like you're moving because we're not managing the land for those subsistence resources currently. So, just wanna encourage you to flip that over and tell us how to do that better. So, you don't have to necessarily move, not that you don't want to, but just to provide that as a suggestion to think about too.

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you for that. Any other comments, questions? John, go ahead.

MR. SMITH: It's kinda like an idea, you know, is like, take for instance, a place that's used quite often, and you're talking about a cabin, you know, making these cabins like a two piece to where you can move them if you have to and the bench is able to be able to move to a different location if you need to. And I really like the idea of what you were saying, Ashley,

1 about blueberry, salmonberry, huckleberries. Make sure
2 you put that on the list to every location. Okay, I'm
3 just kidding. Thank you.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Mike, go ahead.

6

7 MR. DOUVILLE: The plan should include
8 designated community use areas. We do have community use
9 areas. Like the outside islands from Craig, those are
10 the highest priority area we have for subsistence. And
11 all those islands are LUD too with the exception of San
12 Fernando, which the tribe was wanting to change into,
13 LUD, too as well. Right now, it doesn't have that
14 protection, but we would like to see that happen as
15 there's no real timber value on it. But it is being
16 harvested somewhat on a personal use level, which many
17 people don't approve of that a little bit as well. But
18 those islands are the highest priority, and I don't know
19 how you designated community use area, it already is.
20 You know, that's the most important real estate we have
21 that's virtually pristine. Not quite, but it's the
22 closest thing, and that's all we have left.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
25 Anybody else?

26

27 (No response)

28

29 Okay let's move on to, I think, what
30 will be the last topic here.

31

32 MR. CROSS: Yes, Mr. Chair. The last one
33 is the revised plan needs to assess manage for permitted
34 guide which would be hunting, recreation, etc., use
35 effects to subsistence, competition and access.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: We had a lot of
38 agreement to that one, right?

39

40 MR. CROSS: Yes, I forgot again. So, five
41 in strong agreement, one in agreement and one neutral.

42

43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Harvey, did you
44 have something you wanted to add to the previous
45 discussion maybe, or -- I did see your hand up.

46

47 MR. KITKA: And thank you, Mr. Chair.
48 This might incorporate both the one before and this one.
49 Guided tours that are being offered to some of the guided
50 people that bring the smaller cruise ships in and take

1 them into some of these streams where we subsist. At
2 times it's really -- causes some problems cause a lot
3 of these people will get in there and fish along with
4 us and cause some problems with us. So, it should include
5 some language in there that will protect our local
6 people.

7
8 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody else?
9 Thank you, Harvey. Yeah, well, I think that topic kinda
10 speaks for itself, that yeah, there definitely needs to
11 be -- a whole assessment is probably important component
12 and a lot more management, I don't know what the present
13 policies are, but I think a lot of people think it's not
14 really working. So, does need to have it -- be changed
15 in the new plan. So, any other comments?

16
17 (No response)

18
19 Okay, anything else you want to do on
20 this topic moving forward here with the Council?

21
22 MR. CROSS: Mr. Chair, I would say, I
23 mean, my suggestion or our staff's suggestion would be
24 to form a working group, if that's the desire of the
25 Council, because I think we can sort of take the
26 consolidated comments we got from this and dive a little
27 deeper into what the Council would like to see the
28 desired conditions be. And you know, just give us more
29 time to kinda bounce standards and guidelines off of
30 folks to attempt to achieve those desired conditions.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Right, I think I
33 see that as the logical outcome of what we just did here
34 is to, yeah, essentially flesh this out and then what
35 would you be looking for at the end of this meeting, how
36 -- what would that look like?

37
38 MR. CROSS: Well, the next steps in the
39 process is to finalize the assessment, which was sent
40 out to the Regional Advisory Council, and we got good
41 feedback on that. So, we'd be looking for any additional
42 feedback on the assessment. And then also we are working
43 on the need for change process. So, our staff is looking
44 for input from the Regional Advisory Council to help
45 guide us when we develop this need for change document.
46 And that's gonna identify you know, looking at the
47 current forest plan and what the new forest plan should
48 be and what the difference between those two needs to
49 be. And I will say again, presently the subsistence
50 section of the forest plan says, see ANILCA. So, I would

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1 say the need for change is quite large at this point.
2 So, really just getting input on thing -- essentially
3 the different components of ANILCA is how I've been
4 thinking about it. So, Section 811 says, you know, we
5 need access -- efficient access to subsistence resources
6 and what does that mean to the Regional Advisory Council.
7 And then I believe at the end of that, a RAC letter
8 would be the proper format. But for that working group
9 to bring, I guess, the consolidated information that
10 we've come up with during the work group back to the
11 Regional Advisory Council and have a vote to approve
12 that or modify it and then result in a RAC letter.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you,
15 Rob, that's what I was looking for. You think that a
16 letter from the Council would be the appropriate
17 response and to this phase, the assessment phase. So,
18 that sounds like something we can do with a working
19 group. Ashley has something to add? No, okay. Harvey,
20 question or comment?
21

22 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just
23 was curious as to whether this is only going to the RAC
24 or is it going to the communities as well
25 (indiscernible).
26

27 MS. BOLWERK: Through the Chair member
28 Kitka. Yeah, there's gonna be continued public outreach
29 going on in the communities as well for this. And I
30 think if the RAC wants to further engage as a body, that
31 would be something to mention in your letter as well, I
32 would think. But the public is gonna have opportunities
33 to do this as you all will as individuals when those
34 opportunities come to your communities.
35

36 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Harvey, go
37 ahead.
38

39 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
40 realize the public has a comment. The RAC is gonna have
41 a comment that the tribe, tribal communities need to
42 have their own input, and sometimes it's a lot different
43 than the public or the RAC. Thank you.
44

45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you. And
46 then -- so, I mean, we received the notice, I guess,
47 from the local ranger district saying that they were
48 gonna come to Point Baker and Port Protection here in
49 April, I guess, are they doing essentially what you guys
50 are doing here, coming to us and as communities and

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1 looking for this same kind of input, is that what we can
2 expect or is -- I don't know how -- I know that's
3 probably happening all throughout Southeast here in the
4 coming months, I guess, so. Happening in our local
5 communities, that's my question.

6
7 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
8 at this time, all of those public engagements that we're
9 starting to roll out have been pushed back to the fall
10 at a minimum. But yes, the goal is hopefully to go to
11 all communities and have workshops where folks can come
12 and there might be activities just like the ones we did
13 today where folks can engage with different activities
14 to provide specific input about things. As I mentioned
15 earlier, eventually there will be sort of mapping
16 components of trying to decide what those new shapes on
17 the map actually look like, whether they're the LUDs
18 that are from the previous plan or something new. Those
19 are sort of up for redrawing and things like that. So,
20 there will be lots of activities to help the public
21 engage with the process.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So, they're not
24 coming to Point Baker on April 4th or whatever they told
25 me. Okay, that's good to know. Any other questions,
26 comments? Patti.

27
28 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman. Where
29 can you find that community schedule? Cause -- this one?
30 Okay. When -- where can we find the community schedule?

31
32 MR. CROSS: We've got lots.

33
34 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay, thank you.

35
36 MS. BOLWERK: Through the Chair. Member
37 Phillips, at this point, the schedule hasn't been
38 determined because they just recently pushed them back
39 to the fall. And so, they had been developing a schedule
40 like Don had said, but they've been moved to the fall
41 at this point. And so, they haven't established that
42 schedule at this point. But if you have questions this
43 summer, feel free to call us and we're happy to set you
44 up with that if you haven't seen the info in your
45 community.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: John, go ahead.

48
49 MR. SMITH: Is there any chance that you
50 can send this to DeAnna so she can share these 12

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1 questions with us? That would be great. Thank you.

2

3 MS. BOLWERK: Yes, we can.

4

5 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody else?

6

7 (No response)

8

9 So, I think at this point, it's probably
10 time for the Council to discuss if they wanna form a
11 working group, and who might be on that working group,
12 and maybe what their -- what they will do. I think we
13 got a good idea, what we would be doing? So, comments,
14 suggestions from the Council. At some point, I guess we
15 need to have a motion to form a working group, I believe.
16 Is that correct, DeAnna? Yes. Okay, so maybe I guess, a
17 proper procedure would be somebody would need to make a
18 motion to form a work group, and then we'll discuss it
19 and either form one or not, depending on the outcome.
20 So, Ted had his hands up first, so.....

21

22 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

25

26 MR. SANDHOFER: I do make that motion to
27 have a working group work on the forest plan, and I
28 volunteer to be on it, if such a working group is
29 established.

30

31 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, motions.
32 Do we have a seco.....

33

34 MR. CASIPIT: I second and I volunteer
35 as well.

36

37 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. That
38 sounds like -- yeah, sounds like we're getting into the
39 discussion with volunteers. So, we have a motion and a
40 second to form a work group with two volunteers so far.
41 Anybody else? John.

42

43 MR. SMITH: Yeah, I'd love to volunteer,
44 and I encourage the whole team to dive in there.

45

46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Sorry, I turned
47 it off. We have three volunteers; we can't have more
48 than six with five -- six. So, I would like to volunteer
49 as well, so that's four. Anybody else? Mike,
50 volunteering, yes? Okay. Mike makes five. We could have

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1 one more if we wanna have a big work group here, that
2 would be the maximum. Harvey? Okay, that's six, that's
3 all we can have. One, two, three, four, five, six, right.
4 Any other discussion on the motion about what we're going
5 to do, or are we ready for the question then? Mike.

6

7 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair, call for the
8 question.

9

10 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, the motion
11 was to form a work group to essentially flesh out some
12 more detail on our comments on the assessment phase of
13 the Tongass Forest plan. And the working group will have
14 six people, and they will report back to the full Council
15 before the end of the meeting. And the goal will be for
16 the Council to look at what the work group has come up
17 with and hopefully be able to write a letter to the
18 Forest Service kind of stating our comments on this
19 assessment phase of the Tongass Forest Plan. So, all in
20 favor of that, say aye.

21

22 IN UNISON: Aye.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Anybody oppose,
25 say no.

26

27 (No response)

28

29 Okay, got a working group, very good.
30 Thank you, Rob and Ashley, for leading us through that,
31 I think it was pretty effective. And let's take a 15-
32 minute break and come back and regroup here.

33

34 (Off record)

35

36 (On record)

37

38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Hey, Council
39 members, wanna find your way back to your seats. Get
40 started again. Gonna switch gears here and start talking
41 about wildlife. Starting with the closure -- wildlife
42 closure reviews and some report on the status of wildlife
43 and maybe possibly before the end of the day, we might
44 -- we start introducing the topic of potential wildlife
45 proposals, but we'll see how far we get here. So, first
46 up is a presentation on the wildlife closure reviews
47 that the Council will be -- oh, sorry. Yeah, I missed
48 that, sorry. First up is an added -- one of the added
49 items to the agenda. And that is a report, kind of a
50 summary of the Federal Subsistence Board actions here,

1 this past month. And for that we have Jason Roberts,
2 that's why he's up at the table. So, Jason, go ahead.

3
4 DR. ROBERTS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair,
5 members of the Council. This is Jason Roberts,
6 anthropologist at OSM, and I'm joined by Rob Cross from
7 the Forest Service. So, I'm just gonna give you -- and
8 your Chair has already mentioned this a bit, but a little
9 bit more detail on the outcome of the recent, recent
10 February fisheries regulatory cycle and the Board
11 determinations that took place. So, the Federal
12 Subsistence Board took action on all of the fisheries
13 proposals and closure reviews at their February
14 regulatory meeting. And we expect these new regulations
15 should be published in the Federal Register hopefully
16 in late spring or early summer of this year and will be
17 providing a formal report -- a 805(c) report during your
18 fall meetings. Giving you more detail on the outcome of
19 these Board actions, a little bit later in the year. But
20 I'm gonna give you a little summary here. So, one
21 proposal is submitted from -- for the Southeast Region
22 was taken up as part of the consensus agenda, which
23 means that there was a consensus, or at least a lack of
24 clear disagreement between the recommendations of the
25 Council, the Interagency Staff Committee, and the State.
26 And so, the Board voted on this proposal in deference
27 to the Council's recommendation without taking it up for
28 full deliberation. And that was FCR25-03, the Makhnati
29 Island Herring Closure. And as you might remember, the
30 Southeast Council voted to retain the status quo, and
31 the Board concurred in deference to the Council to retain
32 the closure.

33
34 The other three proposals submitted for
35 the Southeast Region were taken up as part of the non-
36 consensus agenda. So, they went full -- through a full
37 deliberation. And so FP25-01, that was the Taku River
38 subsistence salmon fishery that the Southeast Council
39 supported. This requested establishing a federal
40 subsistence salmon fishery on the Taku River with
41 proposed regulations that included seasons, fishing
42 areas, harvest limits, gear restrictions and harvest
43 reporting requirements. So, the Board voted to defer
44 their decision on FP25-01 until the proposal goes
45 through the Transboundary River Panel review and
46 approval process. But it sounded from their discussion
47 that they were in support of this proposal once it was
48 able to go through that process.

49
50

1 FP25-02 was the Unuk River eulachon
2 closure that the Southeast Council supported, requesting
3 to close the harvest of eulachon to non-federally
4 qualified users in the federal public waters of the Unuk
5 River. The Board voted to defer their decision on this
6 proposal, because the conditions under which the
7 proposal had been submitted and deliberated on by the
8 Council had changed dramatically following the Board's
9 decision on the Ketchikan non-rural determination. And
10 then finally NDP25-01 was the Ketchikan non-rural
11 determination, which the Southeast Council opposed. This
12 requested changing the Board designation of Ketchikan
13 to a rural area. The Board voted to approve NDP25-01,
14 changing Ketchikan from a non-rural area to a rural area.
15 The next fishery cycle will begin during your winter
16 2026 meeting. At that meeting, we'll provide the
17 Councils with draft closure reviews, if there are any
18 to go over for your region. And we'll also solicit
19 proposals to change federal fish and shellfish
20 regulations. So, I'm happy to answer any questions you
21 might have about those.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you
24 Jason. Any questions from the Council on actions from
25 the Federal Subsistence Board at the previous meeting?
26 Any questions? Okay. Oh, Cal.

27
28 MR. CASIPIT: Yes.

29
30 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead.

31
32 MR. CASIPIT: This is Calvin Casipit from
33 Gustavus, and I guess I do have a question. And I'm not
34 gonna talk about the non-rural thing, it's -- my issue
35 was the Unuk River. I mean, why did the Board defer on
36 that when it's a closure to non-federal users and there
37 is a conservation issue there, why it was deferred? You
38 know, I know they realized that, you know, the local
39 manager can do it in -- do it in season, I believe he
40 has already done that. But yeah, I just -- I don't get
41 it. They didn't even follow their own standards as far
42 as I was concerned on that one. It's just a comment, I
43 don't expect an answer.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: No answer, or
46 Rob, you wanna comment on that. Go right ahead.

47
48 MR. CROSS: Yes, Mr. Chair, for the
49 record, my name is Rob Cross. And to your
50 comment/question, member Casipit. So, the main thing was

1 that the -- what the entire analysis was based off of,
2 the conditions that it was based off of fundamentally
3 changed. And so, in deferring the proposal, it sends it
4 back to the Regional Advisory Council to potentially
5 modify it. It also allows OSM and the Forest Service to
6 gather new information. That new information being
7 Ketchikan will be rural after it's published in the Code
8 of Federal Regulations. And so, yeah, I think it's
9 important for -- at some point for the Council to discuss
10 what they would like to do with that proposal, because
11 it could be the first step in an 804 analysis. There is
12 a conservation concern, but it appeared that the main
13 intent was to reduce harvest by residents of Ketchikan,
14 and it would no longer serve that purpose after the
15 decision was made by the Board to support Ketchikan rural
16 status. So, it's just kind of a way to back up and
17 reassess that proposal. And as you mentioned, we are
18 currently able to make those changes through in-season
19 management anyways, this would just codify it in
20 regulation and sort of avoid these recurring special
21 actions.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Rob.
24 I might add as a little note that, you know, when this
25 was happening the changing conditions, I spoke up, you
26 know, as a Council Chair and I don't know if I
27 overstepped my position there. But I did point out to
28 the Board that this Council has been, you know, very
29 supportive of co-management agreements. And I just told
30 the Board that I thought the Council might look pretty
31 favorably on the Forest Service entering into a co-
32 management agreement on management for the Unuk River
33 hooligans with the affected tribes, Metlakatla, Saxman
34 and Ketchikan Indian Community. Getting them involved
35 with you know, doing the population assessments, and if
36 there is gonna be a subsistence fishery, they could be,
37 you know, potentially very helpful in monitoring any
38 catches and making recommendations on, you know, what
39 the harvest might be. Who would harvest? How would they
40 go about determining who would harvest? All of those
41 questions that are now, you know, pretty much up in the
42 air. And I think they're -- I think those questions --
43 assuming there would be a harvest and there has been the
44 opportunity for harvest up 'til [sic] now with those
45 five-gallon bucket provision. I don't think Forest
46 Service has the capability to manage that fishery
47 effectively, and the regional forester, he said he would
48 agree with that. So, I think that opens up, you know, a
49 point of discussion when this topic comes back about
50 what are we gonna do with managing the Unuk River

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1 hooligan if there is a potential for harvest and how to
2 go about it. And I think we'll need to get the tribes
3 involved with their personnel and expertise on how to
4 do that. So, like I say, I just, you know, threw that
5 out there to the Board and so I'll throw it out there
6 to the Council that that might be something we may wanna
7 discuss when the time comes. So, for what it's worth.
8 Patti.

9
10 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman
11 Hernandez. What -- when might it come back to us, the
12 Unuk River?

13
14 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Rob, got an
15 answer?

16
17 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair, member
18 Phillips. So, it will be taken up again during this
19 cycle, during the wildlife cycle. So, at some point
20 during this meeting -- that we've been discussing as to
21 when the best opportunity would be, but at some point,
22 during this meeting, it would be good to get feedback
23 from the Council as to any modifications they would like
24 to see to that proposal, if any.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, we got --
27 Patti has a response and then Lisa, you might've
28 something to add to that response.

29
30 MS. GREDIAGIN: Lisa Grediagin, for the
31 record, just to clarify. So, for the timeline of this
32 proposal, so at this meeting, we're hoping to just get
33 some additional feedback from the Council based on the
34 new information at the Board meeting that could inform
35 OSM's revised analysis. The revised analysis will come
36 back to this Council at your fall meeting. So, at your
37 fall meeting, we'll be asking the Council for a revised
38 recommendation. You know, you guys will have a updated
39 analysis, you can provide another recommendation on the
40 proposal, and then the Board will take final action on
41 it at the April 2026 Wildlife Meeting.

42
43 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Didn't realize
44 that. Thank you, Lisa. Patti, go ahead.

45
46 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
47 I guess even though I briefly read what happened in --
48 at the Federal Subsistence Board, I would have to review
49 that section about the Unuk. But couldn't there be a
50 community-based harvest? Like we did with Yakutat, we

1 said there's a community-based harvest of moose. That
2 means they got ten moose for outside of the quote --
3 outside of the individual quotas for -- what is that
4 called? Community based harvest. So, could the Unuk have
5 a community-based harvest that, like the Ketchikan
6 Indian Association could, you know, apply for and then
7 have that community harvest to go back to their tribal
8 members? That's just -- I -- we don't really wanna a
9 full-blown harvest on that resource cause we've been,
10 you know, working 20 years to, you know, rebuild it. So,
11 we would want limited harvest but also provide an
12 opportunity for that community sharing and that kinda
13 community network that goes on with the resource that
14 they've utilized for millennia. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
17 Patti. That sounded like a worthwhile topic to discuss.
18 Any other comments or questions?

19
20 (No response)

21
22 Okay. Yeah, thank you for that
23 information.

24
25 (Pause)

26
27 Okay, so that was the Board summary, and
28 now we'll talk about wildlife closure reviews.

29
30 MR. MUSSELWHITE: Thank you, through the
31 Chair. Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the record just Jake
32 Musselwhite, biologist for the Forest Service here to
33 talk to you about WCR26-01. It's a standard review of
34 federal subsistence wildlife closure to the harvest of
35 deer by non-federally qualified users on Federal public
36 lands and a portion of Prince of Wales Island, or POW,
37 in Unit 2 from August 1st through 15th. WCR26-01 also
38 reviews the two buck harvest limit restriction for NFQUs
39 use on federal public lands and all of Unit 2, and the
40 analysis begins on page 77 of the meeting book. The
41 August closure was adopted by the Board in 2004,
42 following a similar closure, with a one-year sunset
43 clause starting in 2003. The two buck harvest limit was
44 proposed by the Council and approved by the Board in
45 2018. This is the second review of the closure and
46 harvest restriction, following a previous review in 2022
47 that maintained the status quo. The closure and harvest
48 restriction are intended to address difficulties
49 subsistence users face in harvesting deer in Unit 2.
50 Public testimony in Council meetings has frequently

1 described difficulties in harvesting enough deer to meet
2 the needs of subsistence users. The issues mentioned
3 include a declining deer population, competition with
4 non-local hunters, predation, and loss of overwintering
5 habitat. Monitoring deer populations in Unit 2 is a
6 difficult task, as there is no effective method to
7 directly count deer in Southeast Alaska. Deer pellet
8 surveys were conducted until 2019 but were discontinued
9 as they were found to not be an accurate measure of
10 population density. Currently reported deer harvest data
11 is the primary tool used to monitor deer populations in
12 Unit 2. However, data from harvest reports should be
13 used cautiously due to low reporting rates and concerns
14 over accuracy of the reports. Based on harvest report
15 data, the number of deer harvested in Unit 2 increased
16 gradually 2005 to 2015, then dropped sharply between
17 2016 and 2018 before leveling off through 2023, as shown
18 in figure three of the analysis. The estimated total
19 harvest averaged 3,425 deer per year from 2005 to 2017
20 and fell to 1,833 deer per year from 2018 to 2023. This
21 represents a 46% reduction in harvest between those two
22 time periods, and this reduction in harvest was roughly
23 equal among both federally qualified and non-federally
24 qualified users. This decline in average harvest
25 coincides with a similar decline in reported effort by
26 both user groups, as measured by the number of hunters.
27 The number of hunters in Unit 2 rose steadily from 2005
28 through 2015, then dropped sharply from 2016 into '18
29 before leveling off between 2019 and 2023. While effort
30 measured as the number of hunters has declined for all
31 users, it's declined slightly more for non-federally
32 qualified users, shifting from roughly 50/50 to 55%
33 qualified to 45% non-federally qualified users.

34
35 The month of August is a popular time
36 for deer hunting in Unit 2 and has become more popular
37 in recent years. From 2020 to 2023, an average of 24%
38 of the total harvest has been taken during the July and
39 August early season. However, harvest statistics are
40 tabulated by month, so it's difficult to determine the
41 amount of harvest taken during that August 1st through
42 15th closure. The majority or 55% of deer are taken in
43 November due to the rut, and the general trend is toward
44 deer harvest being concentrated in the November rut and
45 the August early season time periods. And very few, about
46 a 10th of 1% of deer are harvested during the January
47 season.

48
49 The two buck harvest limit for non-
50 Federally qualified users that took effect in 20 18th

1 May have reduced the overall harvest by non-Federally
2 qualified users, but the extent of any change is unclear.
3 Between 1997 and 2017, before the restriction took
4 effect, an average of 13% of non-federally qualified
5 users harvested more than two deer, which is no longer
6 permitted on federal lands. Over that time period, 1997
7 to 2017, an average of 560 deer in excess of two per
8 hunter were harvested annually by non-federally
9 qualified users. Since then, total harvest by non-
10 federally qualified users has fallen by about that same
11 amount, suggesting that the two buck limit was
12 responsible for the decrease. However, harvest by
13 federally qualified users fell by about the same amount
14 despite not being subject to the harvest limits, so the
15 effect of the limit is unclear. Ketchikan residents are
16 one of the primary groups of non-federally qualified
17 users that hunt deer in Unit 2. However, Ketchikan
18 residents appear to be doing less hunting on POW in
19 recent years, possibly due to the closure and harvest
20 restrictions. From 2013 to 2017, Ketchikan residents
21 reported harvesting about 70% of their deer in Unit 2.
22 However, Ketchikan residents reported harvesting an
23 average of 29% of their deer in Unit 2 from 2018 to
24 2022. The preliminary OSM conclusion is to retain the
25 status quo, the long-term trend of declining deer
26 habitat, decreasing deer populations, and increasing
27 competition between user groups in the most accessible
28 portions of POW warrants, retaining the early season
29 closure in northwest POW and the two buck harvest limit
30 for non-federally qualified users throughout Unit 2 for
31 the purposes of conservation and the continuation of
32 subsistence uses, and I'd be happy to take any questions.

33
34 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you,
35 Jake. So, I guess it should be noted that the Council
36 has not asked to actually take action on this closure
37 review until our fall meeting. This is just
38 informational now and you're looking for new
39 information, is that -- would that be a correct
40 statement?

41
42 MR. MUSSELWHITE: I believe that's
43 correct, yes.

44
45
46 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, well,
47 obviously.....

48
49 (Simultaneous speech)

50

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1 MR. MUSSELWHITE: I believe Lisa might
2 have some clarification.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Actually, we
5 have a lot of new information, don't we? So.....

6
7 MS. GREDIAGIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
8 Lisa Grediagin, for the record. And yeah, we're
9 definitely happy, any additional information that
10 Council has that could inform this closure review
11 analysis. But another reason we're presenting these
12 closure review analyses now at your winter meeting is
13 in case the Council would like to submit a proposal that
14 kinda addresses the closure but is outside the scope of
15 the closure review, cause the closure review, we can
16 only take really narrow, specific actions. And so, this
17 kind of informs the Council if you'd like to take
18 additional regulatory actions outside the scope of the
19 closure review. Thanks.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you for
22 that explanation, Lisa. That's an important component.
23 I mean, you know, obviously the new information is that
24 by the time this closure review would be enacted,
25 Ketchikan is no longer gonna be a non-federally
26 qualified subsistence user, so that changes the whole
27 dynamic here. And I don't know what, you know what that
28 means for the closure review. Do we -- essentially
29 becomes now a new analysis that would only deal with who
30 is going to be non-federally qualified, which would
31 basically be non-residents or anybody from Juneau or
32 other non-rural places in Alaska, which is very few
33 hunters on Prince of Wales Island. So, I don't know how
34 the Council should view this now. I don't know any
35 suggestions.

36
37 MR. MUSSELWHITE: No and I would just
38 like to clarify that this analysis was prepared before
39 this last Board meeting with the shift to Ketchikan
40 being.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: We realize that,
43 yeah. So, I don't know. I don't know what your
44 recommendation is on the closure review. Would you like
45 to go back and do a new analysis that treats Ketchikan
46 as a qualified subsistence users [sic], and redo the
47 closure review, just considering those who would be non-
48 federally qualified, which is -- you know, might be a
49 few non-residents or people from Juneau. I don't know
50 how to proceed here.

1
2
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4
5
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7
8
9

MR. MUSSELWHITE: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, there are a few alternatives listed in the analysis. Also, the analysis is absolutely chock full of information about what we see in terms of population and traditional uses and everything. So, yeah, on page 102, there is a section of alternatives considered there. Thank you.

10
11

(Pause)

12
13

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Patti, go ahead.

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15

MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can we begin section 804 prioritization analysis prior to the non-rural designation being put through, you know, the process it has to go through and get signed? Who signs off on that non-rural, the Secretary of Interior? I don't -- how long will that process take, do we know, Mr. Chair?

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Can you answer that question?

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DR. ROBERTS: Through the Chair, this is Jason Roberts. So, we are optimistically hoping that those new regulations will come out in the spring or summer. But I have heard that it may be up to 18 months before they get published. It's -- we don't really know.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Patti, go ahead.

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MS. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, we have heard from Prince of Wales Island residents, federally qualified users that there is a population problem for deer. We've been hearing that their subsistence needs aren't being met even prior to this non-rural re-designation for Ketchikan. So, it seems like we would be in line to begin a 804 process just based on our previous testimony from island residents. That's -- I think that, you know, this closure review is -- we -- sure it's there in place for another 18 months, maybe even longer, but it's gonna take time to go through a 804 prioritization analysis, so why couldn't we do them concurrently? Thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Patti. So, you know, there's been a lot of discussion, you know, prior to this meeting that in conjunction with our wildlife proposal process that's happening next, you

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1 know, whether or not we should be requesting an 804
2 analysis. So, we will have that discussion and that will
3 -- if we ask for 804 for analysis, I mean, that will
4 certainly inform the next wildlife proposal cycle, which
5 we're entering into, you know, how that would relate to
6 a closure review that's already in the works? I -- yeah,
7 I -- a lot of questions there. Like how long would it
8 take to do a 804 analysis? Would it you know, inform
9 what we need to do on this wildlife closure review? Is
10 this upcoming deer season? Is the Ketchikan rule
11 determination gonna be in place come August? We don't
12 know that. A lot of unanswered questions at this point
13 and we have to sort out how to proceed.

14
15 So, the wildlife closure review doesn't
16 take any action by the Council at this meeting. So, I
17 mean, we have time to reanalyze the whole situation,
18 whether that be done as an 804 analysis or just, you
19 know, rewriting your present analysis with the
20 assumption that the situation with the Ketchikan rural
21 determination is gonna be in effect come this hunting
22 season, or would you rewrite it assuming that it's not
23 gonna be -- I don't know. But the -- I guess what really
24 kind of threw a monkey wrench into my thinking was when
25 Jason says, you might not have that in the Federal
26 Register for 18 months, well that would -- that gets us
27 into next hunting season, which then would be affected
28 by Board actions next winter. But I don't know, I see
29 that as unlikely. I think -- I don't know, I would just
30 think we should proceed based on the assumption that
31 before this hunting season is over, we're gonna have
32 that non-rural or that rural determination in place.
33 It's either that or we gotta talk about -- well, another
34 issue involved in this whole thing is for this hunting
35 season, if Ketchikan is now hunting under subsistence
36 regulations, we're probably gonna be asking for some
37 special action requests as well to manage this season.
38 So, yeah, all of these have to be resolved before the
39 end of this meeting and that's a lot to think about. So,
40 I mean, just in terms of this wildlife closure review,
41 I don't know if you have any suggestions, but I don't
42 know at this point I just almost be tempted to say thank
43 you for your information and we'll get back to you. So,
44 yeah, go ahead.

45
46 DR. ROBERTS: You know, through the
47 Chair. Yeah, I was just gonna say, you know we have this
48 -- conduct a 804 analysis as -- well it's listed in the
49 alternatives for this closure review. But it is in there
50 primarily for you all to think about and with the idea

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1 when we were writing it that, you know, Ketchikan may
2 become a rule designated community. But conducting the
3 804 analysis would actually be something that would be
4 outside the scope of this particular closure review. So,
5 it would have to be something that the Council requests
6 outside of this closure review. And generally speaking,
7 you know, and we can go into more detail if you want,
8 but to do a section 804 prioritization, you have to
9 first close to non-federally qualified users. So,
10 there's a step-down method in that prioritization
11 process.

12
13 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, that was a
14 question that some Council members were asking prior to
15 this meeting. If that closure to non-federally qualified
16 would have to come before an 804 analysis. So, that's
17 good information, clarifying.

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19 DR. ROBERTS: Yeah, I will you know, I
20 will say that's generally been the case. But you know,
21 we have been going back and forth trying to get ready
22 for what might happen at this meeting. And so, you know,
23 there are novel ideas that could come up that we would
24 have to remain open to, so.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, we like
27 novel ideas. Cal, go ahead.

28
29 MR. CASIPIT: Maybe this is not a novel
30 idea. My question is, can we do a complete closure to
31 non-federally qualified users at the same time we
32 request an 804.

33
34 DR. ROBERTS: Yeah. So, yes, you could
35 certainly request that analysis, yeah. Make that
36 proposal.

37
38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Further
39 clarification, could we -- would it be proper to request
40 that closure to non-federally qualified as a special
41 action that would take effect this season? Because we're
42 not gonna have any Board action on proposals before this
43 season. Is that a possibility, a special action, or is
44 that go beyond the scope of what a special action could
45 do?

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47 MS. GREDIAGIN: Lisa Grediagin. And we
48 have gone -- like Jason said, in preparation to this
49 meeting, we asked some of these questions with our
50 Solicitors and receive some legal guidance on this

1 issue. And their response back to us was basically, it's
2 premature to submit a proposal for an 804 because there's
3 just no data. And I mean, this is again, just -- I know
4 you guys can say yes, there's lots of data, but that --
5 I guess from a legal standpoint, the previous analysis
6 for Ketchikan was based on when they were rural and now
7 -- or when they're non-rural, now that they're rural,
8 it's -- you kinda have to start over with analyzing the
9 data and the effects. And so, the legal guidance we got
10 was that it's kinda premature to submit this as a
11 proposal. But if concerns happen during the season and
12 like immediate action is needed, then you need to submit
13 a special action. And again, I mean this I'm just
14 relaying legal guidance we got. I mean, the actual
15 language is that if a problem does become immediately
16 apparent soon after the Ketchikan Federal Register
17 notice is published, then the appropriate approach is
18 to enact a special action. An 804 proposal would have
19 to come later. And basically, that they can't assume
20 there is a problem before any Ketchikan residents have
21 actually hunted under federal subsistence regulations.
22 So, maybe that's the difference, is that Ketchikan
23 residents have always hunted under state regulations.
24 Now that they're hunting under federal subsistence
25 regulations, it's a little premature to, like, preclude
26 them from that opportunity before they've even had any
27 opportunity to hunt under a federal subsistence
28 regulations. So, basically, the guidance we've received
29 from, you know, solicitors is the special action is the
30 best approach in this situation.

31
32 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Cal, go ahead.

33
34 (Pause)

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36 MR. CASIPIT: I'm trying to think about
37 how to say this diplomatically. But I'm not here to
38 watch a population vital to the people of Prince of
39 Wales get driven into the toilet before we take any
40 action to protect the people on Prince of Wales. I --
41 we can't add how many thousand hunters, federally
42 qualified hunters to Prince of Wales and expect that the
43 deer population is gonna come out on the other side just
44 fine. We can't make that assumption, that's not gonna
45 happen. We can't have how many thousand hunters show up
46 on Prince of Wales Island and shoot a doe. There would
47 be nothing left over the long term, I don't know, I'll
48 leave it at that.

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1 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cal.
2 Yeah, I don't think the Solicitor was necessarily --
3 Solicitors were necessarily considering the on the
4 ground impacts. They're looking at a different set of
5 criteria. I mean, yeah. Patti.

6
7 (Simultaneous speech)

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9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Let's give Patti
10 a chance here.

11
12 MS. PHILLIPS: What is a special action?
13 Tell -- how would -- would we implement that, or who
14 implements a special action? Mr. Chair.

15
16 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, Lisa Grediagin
17 through the Chair. A special action is a temporary out
18 of cycle regulation change. And anyone can submit a
19 special action at any time. So, the Council could submit
20 one now, you know, a Council member could submit one as
21 an individual in October. You know, they can be submitted
22 by anyone at any time and it's similar to a proposal
23 that sort of information you include, you know, what you
24 wanna change, why you wanna change it. And yeah, they're
25 to address unforeseen emergency situations such as, you
26 know, conservation concerns.

27
28 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: And who
29 determines whether or not that request goes into effect?

30
31 MS. GREDIAGIN: They are analyzed similar
32 to proposals. So, once a request is submitted OSM, you
33 know, assigns an analyst, they write an analysis, it
34 goes through some limited review, because usually we're
35 on a deadline, you know, we don't have as much time. And
36 then it's acted on by the Federal Subsistence Board.
37 Depending on the timing of Council meetings, sometimes
38 they're presented to Councils, but it just depends on
39 the timing, and so, if it's less than 60 days, it -- you
40 know, the Board can just vote on it by an email poll,
41 if it's longer than 60 days, we have to have a public
42 hearing and the Board has to have a public meeting.
43 Yeah.

44
45 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.
46 That's good information. Anybody else, questions,
47 comments? Patti, go ahead.

48
49 MS. PHILLIPS: So, Mr. Chairman, so the
50 way I understand it, I just want to be clear in my head

1 that what the proposed -- no, the actions we have in
2 place now are gonna remain in effect until the non-rural
3 designation goes through the Federal Register, which
4 could be 18 months or longer. So, for now, the rules we
5 have in place for POW are the rules until that goes
6 through the Federal Register. So, it could -- we'll
7 likely make it through this hunting season and -- cause
8 a year from now is February 2026 and you had another six
9 months and then you're, you know, you're going into the
10 next season. So -- and then we could submit a proposal,
11 but we can't really until we know that the Federal
12 Register process is done and over with. Is that what I
13 understand? But we could do a special action if we had
14 to? Am I understanding that properly?

15
16 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I know you got
17 the first part of it right. Yeah, nothing happens --
18 nothing changes until the Federal Register is published
19 and we don't know when that will be. And they might have
20 some comments on the second part as to the timing of,
21 yeah, submitting proposals and all that.

22
23 (Simultaneous speech)

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25 MS. GREDIAGIN: Lisa Grediagin. I -- the
26 proposal is really just a tough question because I think
27 you guys could submit one, but how OSM analyzes it, I'm
28 not sure how it would analyze it when there's just so
29 many uncertainties with the Federal Register, when
30 that'll publish. And like I said, you know, the guidance
31 we got from our Solicitor about doing an 804 is kinda
32 premature before Ketchikan even has an opportunity to
33 hunt under federal regulations. You know, I think you
34 guys could still submit a proposal. But the outcome of
35 the analysis and what, you know, the Board would, you
36 know, ultimately become is uncertain there's -- I.....

37
38 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Go ahead, Mike.

39
40 MR. DOUVILLE: One of our charges here
41 is to protect resource. And at our AC meeting in Craig,
42 we requested the newest information that we had on deer
43 populations and effort and so on from the department.
44 In 2015, 4,242 deer were harvested, in 2023 1603. I
45 mean, our job is to protect the resource, so we have to
46 have the tools to do that. There must be something
47 somewhere, no matter what the circumstance is with
48 everything that's going on, that's our job. I'm not so
49 worried about how many deer Ketchikan hunters might
50 take, but I'm worried about the resource and if you

1 further damage it, worse than it is now, it'll take a
2 long, long time. If you can get it recovered, if you can
3 get it to recover with the state mentality to raise
4 wolves at the expense of deer.

5

6

CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Ted, go ahead.

7

8 MR. SANDHOFER: I was just curious, let's
9 say the Federal Register, somebody just greases the
10 wheels, and it gets done and Ketchikan is allowed to
11 hunt on Prince of Wales this season. Couldn't the
12 designated federal official just close hunting,
13 subsistence hunting on Prince of Wales? But that would
14 be for everybody, everybody would be under the state
15 regulations. So, if in fact that happen this year, I
16 think there is a mechanism to close hunting --
17 subsistence hunting and Unit 2 to federally qualified
18 hunters and just have to hunt under the State
19 regulations. That's not true, Rob?

20

21 MR. CROSS: Through the Chair. It would
22 -- you can't close subsistence harvest and have state
23 harvest remain open, so it could.....

24

25 MS. GREDIAGIN: Sorry, Lisa Grediagin.
26 Sorry to Rob, but, yeah, I mean, the federal in-season
27 manager has authority to close or reopen federal
28 seasons. So, they could close the federal season, and
29 then, yeah, they could still hunt under the State regs.
30 They could also close federal public lands to the take
31 of deer by all users, they could close it to non-
32 federally qualified users, but they could not
33 distinguish between subsistence users. So, sorry, I
34 guess -- yeah, there're special action through in-season
35 management from district rangers and then special
36 actions that if they're outside the scope of that
37 delegated authority, like differentiating between
38 subsistence users, that would be, you know, another
39 proposal.

40

41 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Ted,

42 (indiscernible)

43

44 (Simultaneous speech)

45

46 MR. SANDHOFER: Yeah, just a follow up.
47 So, just a clarification. So, if there is a conservation
48 issue, the designated federal official could close Unit
49 2 subsistence harvest. And those residents both rural,
50 non-rural would be under state hunting regulations. So,

1 that would be bad for Prince of Wales residents, but it
2 would protect the population is -- I mean, it's a last-
3 ditch effort, but there is means to protect the deer
4 from the subsistence harvest numbers.

5

6 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: I don't think
7 that's right, Ted, but I think Cal is gonna weigh in on
8 that as well. Go ahead, Cal.

9

10 MR. CASIPIT: Calvin Casipit, Gustavus.
11 I'm about to challenge the staff on this. I don't see
12 how the designated official can close to federally
13 qualified users without closing to non-federally
14 qualified users. How can we allow non-federally
15 qualified users to harvest when we've closed to
16 federally qualified users? I don't think that's legal;
17 I don't think there's a solicitor in the world is gonna
18 say that's okay.

19

20 MS. GREDIAGIN: They have authority to
21 close the federal season. So, they're not closing
22 federal land, they're closing the federal season. And
23 so, if you're going to close things under State
24 regulations, you have to close the federal public lands
25 to deer hunting by non-federally qualified users or all
26 users. You're closing the lands. And so, if the season
27 is closed, if all they do is close the federal season,
28 they're not closing the lands, the lands are still open.
29 I mean we've -- have other hunts on the books like this
30 where there's a State hunt and there's not a federal
31 hunt because there's no open federal season.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Cal.

34

35 MR. CASIPIT: Then that's wrong. If
36 that's going in other areas, that is wrong. I -- when -
37 - I was one of the people that put together the original
38 stuff for this in-season management things and federal
39 designated officials. I was one of the persons [sic]
40 that originally wrote all that stuff, and that was never
41 our intention. That was never our intention that a
42 federally qualified user -- federally designated
43 official could close an opportunity for subsistence
44 users without first closing to non-federally qualified
45 users. I don't know -- that is wrong. We should not be
46 allowing that if that's going on. Before we close to
47 federally qualified users, non-federally qualified users
48 has to be closed completely, completely, before we start
49 talking about restricting subsistence users. I disagree
50 vehemently with that interpretation, because that was

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1 never our intent when we first wrote those regs for in-
2 season management.

3

4 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, well that
5 would not be something that this Council would request.
6 So, that's not gonna happen. Even if it is technically
7 possible. Lisa.

8

9 MS. GREDIAGIN: Yeah, through the Chair.
10 So, I'm sorry to get -- yeah, Cal and other people so
11 worked up, I'm just saying what -- yeah, technically
12 possible. I -- it'd be surprising if an in-season manager
13 would choose to do that. I also wanted to go back to
14 Mike's comment about the focus being on the conservation
15 concerns, and that there's certainly opportunities to
16 submit proposals to address conservation concerns
17 without necessarily getting into the Ketchikan issue.
18 And, you know, perhaps that's a way the Council could
19 submit proposals to address the conservation concerns.
20 And perhaps in two years, once you have a little more
21 data and time for the Ketchikan issue to work itself
22 out, you know, you could address that at a later time.
23 I'll also note, Lewis might know more about this than I
24 do, that the East Prince of Wales AC submitted proposals
25 already to eliminate the January deer season and
26 eliminate the doe season, so I think they're focused on
27 the conservation concerns for deer, so.

28

29 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, so those
30 are proposals that won't be acted on until next winter,
31 those proposals. The immediate conservation concern is
32 the potential for this season -- the additional
33 Ketchikan federally qualified hunters who would be able
34 to come to Prince of Wales and harvest five deer, one
35 of which would be a doe. And, you know, statistics show
36 that, you know, there's not a whole -- Jason went through
37 the numbers there. There's not a whole lot of harvest
38 by Ketchikan hunters over and above the -- in the past,
39 the two-buck limit. Oh, you know, records show that most
40 of the success from Ketchikan hunters has been
41 essentially tow deer. The way the situation is now on
42 the island, I would say it's not very likely that very
43 many hunters would be able to come up -- even be able
44 to harvest five deer. However, there are a lot of does
45 available on Prince of Wales. When you're out there in
46 the field, you'll see ten does before you ever see a
47 buck and some people go through the whole season and
48 never do see a buck. You'll see a doe almost every day
49 you're out there. If those hunters come over and they
50 are motivated to bring back meat and they start deciding

1 that they're gonna take does, and that harvest goes from
2 -- I mean, the numbers show 30 does harvested, which
3 will probably acknowledge is low, you know, there's
4 certainly more than that, but it's still a fairly low
5 number. And I can speak, you know, for my community, I
6 can't speak for all communities, but nobody in my
7 community takes a doe. It's just not done, it's allowed
8 and maybe somebody will if they, you know, really go
9 through the season and they haven't gotten any meat,
10 maybe they'll take a doe. But I talk to all the hunters,
11 you know, all the time, I don't know of a single doe
12 that's been taken in years. I mean, it just doesn't
13 happen. I don't know if that same ethic would apply with
14 Ketchikan hunters who are, you know, anxious to come
15 over here and -- or over to Prince of Wales and bring
16 back meat. That is the fear. If they are allowed to hunt
17 under subsistence regulations come October 15th when the
18 doe season opens, there's a conservation concern because
19 we don't know what that effect will be. There could be
20 a thousand does taken and that would be disastrous. So,
21 we're going to address that in some way, here at this
22 meeting. I don't know what it's gonna take, but we're
23 not gonna let that happen. So, we'll figure out a way
24 to do it if it takes -- you know, I think it's gonna be
25 a special action to do something with the doe season and
26 if that, if it requires a restriction on any subsistence
27 users taking a doe that will trigger a closure to all
28 non-federally qualified users. And the way this Council
29 has always viewed that, any restriction on a subsistence
30 take, which would include those by any federally
31 qualified user, we're gonna close the season to all non-
32 federally qualified users first. So, something along
33 those lines is probably gonna happen between now and
34 October, and how that whole process plays out, we're
35 gonna have to figure out. Special actions, I can see
36 where maybe we can hold off on a special action and if
37 this Federal Register doesn't get published before
38 October 15th, maybe we won't have to go there. But if
39 it does, then we'll have to do something. So, that's the
40 way I see it all coming down here. So, Mike, you got a
41 comment on that?

42
43 MR. DOUVILLE: My concern is with the
44 resource. We are harvesting less than half the deer we
45 did ten years ago because of the population decline. To
46 me, that is a conservation concern, not even having
47 Ketchikan rural status in the mix. There's already a
48 conservation concern that we should be addressing. And
49 if that means restricting other rural users not specific
50 Ketchikan, but all in the other units, then that needs

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1 to be done and we need to take that specific action.

2

3 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mike.
4 John.

5

6 MR. SMITH: Just a question. This could
7 be done as like, putting up a proposal because
8 conservation, but also at the same time doing a special
9 action to where actually there's no does that get
10 harvested, and that we restrict the amount of deer bucks
11 that can be harvested like only one buck, maybe. You
12 know this, I'm just throwing this up there and then
13 closure and out to the non-qualified users doing all
14 three of those just to protect. Can those things happen?
15 I mean, I don't know the process, but you know, that's
16 what I'm hearing on the table and doing all three of
17 those all at the same time.

18

19 (Pause)

20

21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: So, just to add
22 to the discussion, I think our purpose also in this is
23 to take what actions are necessary with you know the
24 least impact to the residents of Prince of Wales Island
25 who are already, you know, not being able to meet their,
26 you know, subsistence uses in deer -- with deer because
27 we're already falling short of the harvest that we would
28 like to have. So, at some point we are gonna have an 804
29 analysis that's gonna have to deal with all the user
30 groups involved. I mean, when we asked for an 804
31 analysis, you're gonna have to look at Wrangell and
32 Petersburg effects on non-subsistence qualified people.
33 You know, you may see some Juneau residents that hunt
34 there, you might even see some Anchorage residents that
35 come down. You gonna see a lot of non-resident, that's
36 increasing. So, you're gonna have to tell us all this
37 new information on -- breaking it down, community by
38 community and user group by user group, so that we can
39 get a bigger picture of how we wanna go about essentially
40 a new set of regulations that would do what 804 says it
41 needs to do, prioritize the communities that are most
42 dependent and look at other communities that have
43 alternative resources available to them and make a whole
44 new set of regulations for Unit 2 that would consider
45 all of that. But that's gonna be at least another year.
46 And for now, we'll do what we need to do for this season.
47 So, that's the way I see it. Patti.

48

49 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So,
50 the group that was there before this topic was asking

1 about community use, community harvest areas, seems to
2 me that the entire closed area on POW is a community use
3 area and should be -- and the forest should be managed
4 with young growth forest treatments with thinning, small
5 gap creation branch pruning that would benefit deer for
6 its development. It says it on page 85 of this, you
7 know, of this analysis. And I mean, because not only do
8 you have the impact of actual subsistence harvest, but
9 you have a landscape that's diminishing in productivity
10 for deer because of the stem exclusion stage that the
11 clear cuts have -- are reaching. And then you're dealing
12 also with the corporation lands that the Forest Service
13 can't say, do these things on your land because your
14 people need this -- the, you know, need the deer that
15 need the forage in this forest. So, I mean, what we can
16 do is make recommendations for Forest Service lands be
17 managed for deer productivity. And then this RAC can say
18 you know, whatever the steps are gonna take to get, you
19 know, to go from where we're at now, closed area, to the
20 Federal Register signing off on Ketchikan non-rural. We
21 don't know how long-time span that is, a special action
22 -- we know there'll probably be a special action needed.
23 So, what is that gonna be? We could kind of be more
24 forward thinking about that. What do we think a special
25 action should be? We got all these WAAs on this page 79
26 that, you know, shows where a bulk of the -- you know,
27 that's where all the -- most of the harvest is. So, what
28 might that look like? What -- you know, we need to be
29 ready, and you as our Chair, you know, you'll be talking
30 to the ranger -- district rangers for -- in case there
31 is a closure request. But it needs to be a closure
32 request that has the least adverse impact on those
33 federally qualified users.

34
35 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Anybody
36 else? I mean, we're getting away from this closure review
37 discussion, but it's all connected. It's all setting up
38 our proposal process that's coming here next. So,
39 anybody else who wanna add anything else to the
40 discussion? Cal.

41
42 MR. CASIPIT: I'll have more to say, but
43 I think I'll save it for when we actually discuss
44 proposals. And, you know, I think we can handle it all
45 then. But yeah, I'm done on this for now.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay. Jason.

48
49 DR. ROBERTS: Yeah, through the Chair. I
50 was just gonna say, you know, we can't really tell you

1 what to submit and not to submit. You know if you submit
2 a proposal that it falls under the Federal Subsistence
3 Board jurisdiction, right, it will be validated and
4 analyzed. We can't guarantee what the outcome of it will
5 be but we will provide an analysis for that.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, I know we
8 can count on that. We'll get a good analysis, and we'll
9 tailor our request to hopefully make it very clear what
10 we wanna have analyzed. So, thank you. John.

11
12 MR. SMITH: Is there any chance we could
13 just, like, take a break and actually -- so, that we can
14 chat a little bit about us actually doing something right
15 now and making a motion to -- I mean, if we take a few
16 minutes and just talk to each other off the record and
17 then come up with a motion of what we're gonna do, cause
18 I don't think you wanna wait. And this is just my
19 feelings, but it's just a suggestion, Mr. Chair.

20
21 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you, John.
22 I wanna get back to the topic that, you know, started
23 this whole discussion and, you know, the wildlife
24 closure reviews. And what you were recommending, I mean,
25 we're not to the proposal process yet. We're gonna get
26 there certainly tomorrow morning, that'll -- yeah. So,
27 we have time to wrap our heads around this tonight. But
28 you do have another closure review we need to talk about
29 and maybe we should do that now.

30
31 (Pause)

32
33 Thank you. Go ahead, Ashley.

34
35 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For
36 the record, my name is Ashley Bolwerk. I'm a subsistence
37 biologist for the Forest Service on the Tongass. Federal
38 Wildlife Closure 26-02 can be found on page 111 of your
39 meeting book and is a standard review of the closure of
40 the federal public lands in Unit 5A, east of the
41 Dangerous River, from September 16th to 30th. And west
42 of the Dangerous River from October 8th to 21st for the
43 harvest of moose by non-federally qualified users. For
44 these hunts, only residents of Unit 5A, which
45 encompasses the community of Yakutat, are considered
46 federally qualified subsistence users. Neither of these
47 closures impact the Nunatak Bench area. A map of Unit
48 5A can be found on page 112.

1 The annual harvest quotas for the moose
2 hunts in Unit 5A are set in partnership with the Alaska
3 Department of Fish and Game, and once the quotas are
4 hit, the hunts are closed using special actions within
5 the season. Since 2017, the quota for Unit 5A East and
6 West has been 30 bull moose each. No population surveys
7 have been conducted since 2020, and data from surveys
8 are hard to compare and condition dependent. In Unit 5A
9 West, each year from 2012 to 2024, the moose hunt has
10 been closed for the season prior to the end of the
11 federal closure, which indicates that only federally
12 qualified subsistence users were allowed to harvest in
13 this hunt. In Unit 5A East, which is farther from Yakutat
14 and harder to access, from 2012 to 2023, the moose hunt
15 has never been closed prior to the end of the federal
16 closure and has only been closed prior to the end of the
17 season one time. The moose harvest quota has only been
18 met once over that time frame, and the average annual
19 harvest over that same time frame was 19 moose. From
20 2017 to 2023, the proportion of moose harvested by
21 federally qualified subsistence users that took place
22 in Unit 5A East during that federal closure ranged from
23 0% to 50% and average 33%.

24
25 The preliminary OSM conclusion is to
26 modify the closure, to rescind the closure in Unit 5A
27 East, and retain the status quo for the closure in Unit
28 5A West and replace the regulatory language except by
29 residents of Unit 5A with -- except by federally
30 qualified subsistence users. The federal closure for
31 Unit 5A moose remains important to the residents of Unit
32 5A, as it provides for the continued subsistence use of
33 the moose population as mandated by Title VII of ANILCA.
34 Federally qualified subsistence users account for the
35 majority of the moose harvested in Unit 5A except Nunatak
36 Bench, and 100% of the moose harvested in Unit 5A West
37 in most years. As this moose population is closely
38 managed by harvest quotas, and these quotas are quickly
39 met in Unit 5A West, usually before the end of the
40 Federal closure to non-federally qualified users
41 maintaining the closure in Unit 5A West is necessary for
42 the continuation of subsistence uses of moose. Modifying
43 the closure to rescind the closure in Unit 5A East may
44 eliminate an unnecessary restriction on non-federally
45 qualified users as little federally qualified
46 subsistence use harvest occurs within the current Unit
47 5A East closure dates. The majority of moose harvests
48 by all user groups in Unit 5A East occurs outside of the
49 closure dates. The suggested language modification for
50 the Unit 5A moose regulations to change residence of

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1 Unit 5A to federally qualified subsistence users is
2 consistent with other federal wildlife closures and does
3 not alter the current C&T for this closure. The current
4 regulatory language implies that there is an 804
5 restriction in place, rather than a limited C&T
6 determination. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can take
7 questions for the Council at this time.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, Council
10 members, any questions on the closure review for moose
11 in Unit 5A?

12
13 (No response)

14
15 Okay, I'm not seeing any questions.
16 Maybe if our Yakutat member was here, he might have some
17 questions. He's but -- something from Patty. Go ahead,
18 Patti.

19
20 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do
21 we know the designated hunter harvest out of the harvest?

22
23 MS. BOLWERK: Sorry, Patti, I don't have
24 any of that info.

25
26 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, anybody
27 else?

28
29 (No response)

30
31 And as we said earlier, we're just, you
32 know, getting this information out. We'll see it again
33 in the fall. And like I say, if Patti, you want -- like
34 I say, that designated hunter information include in the
35 analysis, you know that -- this would be the time to ask
36 for that, so that's good.

37
38 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes, please, Mr. Chair.

39
40 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you.
41 So, those are the kinda things we're looking for now.
42 Any other information they want analyzed. So, I think
43 that might be it. So, thank you, Ashley.

44
45 MS. BOLWERK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

46
47 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: One more item we
48 can get to before we recess for the evening. And it
49 looks like we wanted to have a discussion on the
50 effectiveness in the Unit 4 deer closures.

1

2 DR. ROBERTS: Okay, it's me again, Jason
3 Roberts, anthropologist at OSM. Mr. Chair, members of
4 the Council. So, if you might remember, this was one of
5 the things that the Board instructed us to do, was to
6 collect information on these Unit 4 closures when they
7 went into effect as to the effectiveness of the closures.
8 And so, I thought it would be good to take some time,
9 hopefully to get some feedback from Council members,
10 particularly the ones who live in the areas where these
11 closures took place, Hoonah, Pelican and Angoon.
12 Unfortunately, Mr. Howard isn't here today but, just
13 kind of if you all could let me know, just generally.
14 And I know some of you touched on it in your opening
15 introductions, but how the deer season went, sort of
16 typical harvest patterns, weather impacts, population
17 trends and then sort of the impact of those ten-day
18 closures starting this year. Did they have any impact?
19 Did people seem to be following them? These sorts of
20 things. I've got other questions, but just really wanted
21 to get the discussion started and get some feedback from
22 the Council.

23

24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
25 Jason. Any questions from the Council or comments?
26 Harvey, and then Patti.

27

28 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm
29 just wondering, being it just started this last year,
30 is this gonna be an ongoing survey for a few years to
31 find out the pattern or...? Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: And Patti.

34

35 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
36 Jason, you had, you know, you had heard my community
37 report and we had our, you know, our ten-day closure
38 that the first half of that closure was bad weather.
39 Even for my skiff, I wouldn't go out in it. And we did,
40 you know, we did go out in some bad weather, you know,
41 prior to it. And it was -- you just really couldn't land
42 on the beach and the wind was blowing all over the place.
43 There was just no snow at the alpine until later in
44 November and December. So, it wasn't driving the deer
45 down from the alpine and you had to go into the big
46 timber and a lot of that timber is on like, slopes,
47 like, you know, straight up and down. So, you know,
48 that's why we like that November hunt is cause it brings
49 the deer down and we can, you know, get them at that
50 first set of what do you call that, like a step, yeah.

1 So, we didn't -- there were a few non-federally qualified
2 hunters in the area, but they, you know, they stayed on
3 State lands or on, you know, in the state authorized
4 areas like what below mean high. But they didn't really
5 have any -- soon as the ten-day closure went in effect,
6 you just weren't seeing deer. So, after the closure,
7 then the non-federally qualified showed up. And, you
8 know, I don't think they even got what they were hoping
9 to get because the deer just weren't down where people
10 could get them where they traditionally do it in
11 November. So, I think it was, you know, productive to
12 do it. I heard from, you know, the -- federally qualified
13 hunters in our area are saying, you know, yeah, it was
14 great that they could go hunting without that added
15 competition and without worrying about, you know, their
16 safety. And so, you know, that's about all I can say for
17 the Pelican area. I mean, I hunted both in inlet and
18 straits and, you know, almost on a daily -- every weekend
19 for sure. And sometimes when the weather was good on a
20 daily basis, and then some of -- sometimes it was just
21 a sightseeing ride cause you just weren't seeing the
22 deer. So, thank you.

23
24 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Thank you,
25 Patti. Anybody else wanna comment on the seasons hunt?

26
27 (No response)

28
29 Okay, you'll probably get more
30 information there as we proceed. Wait a minute, Cal.

31
32 MR. CASIPIT: Just for information for
33 the rest of the Council, I know that Ian has been working
34 on this issue, and I believe he was -- you might've
35 participated in one of the teleconferences that he had,
36 but he is trying to get some information to ask -- to
37 answer these questions from the three communities. So,
38 he is working hard on that. So, I know that's underway,
39 I don't know much more than that. I know he's working
40 on it.

41
42 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Yeah, thank you
43 for that, Cal. Yes, we -- I think we had heard that he
44 would be, good to hear that it's Hoonah Indian
45 Association, I believe right, it's working on that?

46
47 MR. CASIPIT: Yeah.

48
49 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: They're very
50 good, that'll be helpful. Anybody else? Okay.

1

2 DR. ROBERTS: Yeah, through the Chair. I
3 was gonna say that I have forwarded on the link to that
4 survey to DeAnna. So, she should be able to pass out
5 that to the -- send it out to the rest of the Council.
6 There are some other questions I wanted to ask you about,
7 particularly getting to some sort of difficult terms to
8 define when we go through these kinds of social
9 scientific type surveys about deer hunting and other
10 hunting. So, words like effort and need. So, we'll see
11 often questions, did you meet your needs this year? And
12 I -- really I'm looking to the Council to help me and
13 help others get a better sense of what that actually
14 means to you, or are there better ways to answer that
15 question? If anyone has thoughts on that.

16

17 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Have any
18 thoughts at this time or I mean, questions like that,
19 people can probably get to you, you know, during the
20 course of this meeting so they can mull that over. But
21 anybody have anything -- response now?

22

23 (No response)

24

25 Okay, thank you, Jason. Still got a few
26 minutes here before 5:00 pm, when we'd like to recess.
27 The call for federal wildlife proposals, I think that's
28 just -- that's not where we actually get started on the
29 proposals, I don't believe that just - yeah, okay, so
30 I'm also looking ahead here, developing proposals is the
31 next main item on the agenda, but we do have a wildlife
32 report, kind of as a prelude to that. Is that something
33 that can be done in about ten minutes or maybe we should,
34 or should we hold off? Yeah, it depends on the questions.
35 Maybe we should just recess for the evening, and we come
36 back tomorrow. We'll start off with the -- yeah, it'll
37 be fresher in our minds if we wait 'til tomorrow morning,
38 yeah, yeah. Okay, so we can recess for this evening.
39 Before anybody leaves the room, that's what I -- before
40 anybody leaves, though. The working group for the forest
41 plan, the six members. We gotta huddle up here before
42 we leave the room and decide where and when we wanna get
43 together on this. So, we'll do that, and then -- okay,
44 like I said, tonight, we have a chance to kinda clear
45 our heads and think about all the discussion we had on
46 where to go with proposals. So, let's just keep that
47 amongst ourselves here, amongst the Council members, you
48 know, mull it over tonight and be prepared to discuss
49 it tomorrow or -- and maybe we'll have to form a work
50 group before the end of the meeting to do that. But

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1 let's not do anything along those lines tonight, but
2 let's just think about it amongst ourselves and think
3 about where we wanna go.

4
5 MR. PERRY: Point of order, Mr. Chair,
6 just to remind you that all discussions for a FACA
7 committee must be on the record. So, if you wanted to
8 do a working group, when you are saying discussing that
9 off the record, I just wanted to be clear. Are you
10 forming a working group now?

11
12 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: No, and I'm not
13 telling anybody to discuss it off the record. I'm just
14 saying just think about it tonight and be prepared to
15 decide) what you want to do tomorrow.

16
17 MR. PERRY: I appreciate the
18 clarification, thank you.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON HERNANDEZ: Okay, thank you.

21
22 (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 130 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the SOUTHEAST ALASKA SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I recorded on the 18th 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 21st day of April 2025.

Rafael Morel
Chief Project Manager